

I

"I shall never see it again!"

The early morning air was pleasantly cool, with a light breeze which could be heard plopping against the broad palm leaves. Coral sand still gritted under the soles of their shoes against the moist planking of the boat. Isaac had stowed the luggage neatly under a tarpaulin.

It was little enough, and the old man did not show any concern over the possessions of a lifetime. The punt man was ready to steer along the creek towards the open sea, but no oar had yet begun to slap the water with the regular beat that implied motion and sprinkled drops of water over your head and shoulders. There was a scent of sweat, coconut oil, a lingering suspicion of palm wine from the seamen. The skipper fingered his koranic amulet and rosary unrebuked.

A cry from the shore wished them Godspeed in several tongues and intimated it was time they should be on their way. The older man raised a hand in vague greeting, the boatswain issued an order and the shallow, exploratory poling began. The proverb advises, 'Never row when you can punt.'

"I shall never see it again," repeated the old man, not quite resigned.

"You have not seen it for a long time now," Isaac replied. "You will always keep it in your mind's eye, my father."

"That I shall," said Rebmann heavily, "but there is seeing and not seeing. You remember the scriptures, Isaac. The host of the Lord is encamped about, more mighty than that of the enemy. There is much that we need to see. Thousand upon thousand of the Wanika clothed in white before the throne of grace and singing His praises

in the Rabai tongue. Can you see them as well as I do with these blind eyes?"

"I believe there will be a harvest among my people..."

"You believe, you believe. You do right to believe. And you do well to claim no more than you have yet believed. Whatever else I have failed in, I have taught you this much respect for truth, Isaac. And that is something to be proud of if you remember the complaisance of your countrymen—'I will do it tomorrow,' 'I have nearly finished,' 'I quite agree'... But you do not see it, Jones does not see it, Price does not see it. What you see is a gang of useful people making tables and chairs and pressing their accounts for maize flour and copra. And this is needed too. To be close to Mombas, where you can get your trousers mended after they have been ripped on the march and receive letters forwarded from Zanzibar and be able to send within four or five months for a compass from Europe—we have these advantages which many of our fellow-missionaries lack. Other people have every right increasingly to want these advantages. You have read Dr. Krapf's book. You remember how these sentiments are reflected there from my mouth. Even in the old days, before your father came to read with us, King Kimweri asked for paper in preference to other gifts, for his Swahili scribes to use in writing letters for him. That was a sign of a new day coming, a sign we had not been taught about in Basel or Islington. It worked strangely on my heart... until others at Buyeni begged Krapf for paper to write charms on, and never understood how they dismayed us. But nevertheless the gospel is the gospel—it is not to be shouldered in exchange for freedom from slavers' whips, for trade apprenticeship, for neat houses or schools for the children. It is to be welcomed for its own sake and the rest can follow."

They must now, Rebmann sensed, be past Abdallah's plantation, where he and Krapf had sheltered, tossing with fever, the night before they had negotiated for the Rabai site. They would be among the mangroves, good, solid, saleable red mangroves, with green shoots pressing their way out among the dense, ripened timber, and little oysters clinging to the exposed roots. Eddies of pale sand must be rising from the bottom as the poles struck. It was necessary to keep talking, to subdue regrets to the continuing task.

"But you told the people your prosperity in Europe was a prod-

uct of Christendom. You told them so, my father says, though of late I do not recollect your saying it. But I have been taught to tell them so, I who have not yet seen the marvels of land overseas or even the fancy oil-lamps of Zanzibar. So much the more do the Bombay Africans say so—Jones and Semler, George David and the others—for they do not remember much of their childhood here in Africa before they were rescued from slave ships, but they are always talking about their education at Nasik, in trade as well as in school, and the big buildings and fine clothes and the industries of British India. Jones, especially, angers the people by telling them there is nothing good in their way of life.”

“It is true about the prosperity, Isaac, but there is no human society which does not have something good in it. We are all made in the Lord’s image, after all, however far we may have fallen from it. When I was young I felt very strongly that prosperity is a blessing, and I still believe that to be true, though typically an Old Testament truth, not one of the most important. Even when you are old and broken, it is hard to think that the Lord has allowed a lie to pass your lips when you were seeking to guard them so zealously with prayer and self-searching as young missionaries do, but much has happened here since then to increase prosperity, with the clove sales and the sesame, and much to ponder upon has happened in Germany too. You may have a chance to see some of that for yourself. Perhaps that is the good that will come out of their throwing me off—that because of the infirmity of my eyes they allow me your company, and so you will gain experience that otherwise they would not have found the money for... Missionaries, like other men, put a great value on money.”

He fell silent, and the young man, thinking him weary, was also quiet. True, the journey to London was an unlooked-for privilege, for Mr. Williams, had his own health been less precarious, might have escorted Mr. Rebmann and helped him present his report to the Home Committee. Up till now missionaries, apart from Rebmann himself, had not lasted long on the east coast. Mr. Price, of course, could not be spared, so providential was his arrival, with all his experience in Nasik, to open up the freed slave settlement which would take precedence over the sleepy old mission station at Rabai. But the younger missionaries did not seem to respect an

elder as they ought, and an official might find it hard to travel with Mr. Rebmann after his confrontation with Sir Bartle Frere. In any case, Mr. Price said, he would find it difficult to keep up with their movements. They would want to jump off the boat at Genoa and on to a train, another boat, another train, to make the most of their precious leave. Indeed, in the five years since the Suez Canal had opened up, the journey from Zanzibar to London was almost as commonplace according to Price as that from Rabai to Zanzibar—not that this was commonplace to many people in Isaac's view, and even then you were not supposed to compare the mercantile city of Zanzibar with the great port of Bombay. Isaac had never seen either, and had no very clear idea of the mechanism of jumping on a train.

He knew English very well, and so had been able to deal with Mr. Rebmann's correspondence since his sight failed. Some of his agemates envied him, but they had not themselves sought to study the books of the white man or the Mohammedan either, though a few had enlarged their houses and gardens after the example of the mission. Old man Rebmann was always talking about Christian families, though his wife was dead. Outsiders mostly assumed that missionaries kept wives and children back in the home place, but Mr. Rebmann had never been back.

The boat was close into the shore and the stroke of the outer and inner oars was not quite even. It would take them about four hours to reach Mombasa harbor, and there Mr. Price would meet them. Next day they would board the big ship for Zanzibar, and there enter the international steamer. This would be a new experience. They shall mount up wings as eagles' was the text that had been given them.

"You see, Isaac," Rebmann was saying, "You must get these things clear before you reach the fleshpots of Europe. Fleshpots are not sinful in themselves. It is only if they take your mind off the work in hand that they become dangerous. The son does not have to live like the father. I certainly don't live like mine—it is 30 years since I tasted a proper German sausage or sat indoors before a blazing fire. You do not live altogether like yours, and this journey will change you more. Dressed up like a dandy, I don't doubt, as we used to say when we were young, sitting on a wooden chair at a table

instead of on the uncomfortable round stool of a household head. You are writing business letters instead of holding your breath to see if the crops will grow (and not be stolen) without magic charms as I am sure your father used to do when he was first under instruction; and you argue with your old missionary godfather, instead of sitting in silence in the house and only letting your criticisms out when you are safely away in the bush trapping hares for the pot."

He broke off as the boatswain entered into ribald dialogue with a friend on the shore, but resumed with an old man's tenacity.

"I grew up in a quiet, rural place. It was more comfortable than Rabai, I should have said then, but we worried more over a cold winter or a low harvest than over wars and great inventions. I did my training at Basel, which looked like a big city to me: visitors from America and England used to come to see the mountains, the lake and the behavior of people who did not speak English, and felt themselves very adventurous.

Then I went to London and got used to speaking English instead of German: I was thought good at reading English, but to live in it was at first very hard. I got along, but I found that we Germans were expected to be more than humanly clever. Weitbrecht, when he was in training, had studied English, Arabic, Amharic and Tigre simultaneously, and because he was not too confident in his English (no wonder!) he was allowed to answer the Bishop of London's examination in Latin. I wonder if they have a proverb in Ethiopia like ours, *akili nyingi huondoa maarifa*, much expertise takes away wisdom!

In England we were treated as gentlemen rather than workers, and we found that a lot of people were proud of living comfortably with modern amenities such as gas lighting and the water closet. I wonder whether my good wife explained these to you? Myself, I wanted to present the gospel only in Nika terms. Poor Jones...

So, some of us got a feeling of being on top of the world and doing someone a favor by going out to wilder regions. It was in London that I saw Africans for the first time. Some of them worked in or around the ships in the docks, and would be going back to their countries. Others worked as house servants or porters. These had been declared free (or their fathers had) when slavery was abolished in Britain and they had just stayed around. They spoke only

English and lived and ate like everyone else in their own station in life.

One West African was in training with me: his name was George Nicol, and his English was a great deal more fluent than mine. Sam Crowther had left the year before—the same who is now a bishop in Yoruba land, a good man and clever too. The tutor, Dr. Scholefield of Cambridge, took away his answer papers to show how much better his presentation was than ‘some of our Trinity fellows.’ We never heard the last of it.

It was good for me to have been humbled already before I set foot in Africa, and know that what you people needed was not any superior faculties of mine but to share my privilege of praying and learning the gospel at my mother’s knee. And indeed I wish it could be so for all—it *will* be so for you people of the land, but although Price thinks it easy to teach the slave souls, there remains that void in them where they were snatched from their own community. See how different Matthew Wellington is from the others because he still has his own name—Chengwimbe—and his own language—Yao. Polly is different too: I am happy that you have been able to share so much with her and perhaps help her to shake off that terrible emptiness. However close you wish to get to those others there is that alarming self-reliance that is afraid to trust anything less than the Lord—and we are all vulnerable to one another, my son: we need to admit it.”

“Yes, my father, Polly is different, and I am glad you brought her to me from over the sea. My brothers laugh at me for conceding so much to a woman, but I wonder how I would have found a Christian wife among our girls, so set in the old ways. And I know she will manage everything while I am away. That will irritate my brothers too, but I am content, even though in my Nika fashion I am sometimes tempted to give contrary orders just to show her I am head of the household.”

“It relieves me, my son, to hear so. For I remember when I went to Egypt to marry Mrs. Tyler, as she then was, an English school-ma’am, as you well know, and me a simpler farmer’s son from Wurtemberg who people thought needed a wife—and I did, I did, and have given thanks for her every day since—I was near to turning tail and running back to Rabai. It is an awesome thing to pick

a life-partner for another person, Isaac—and neat white tablecloths we must have, and tea with milk in it, and curtains, and little pots to hold the hair she combed out—oh, how good she was to put up with all my rough and readiness.

It was a great joy to her to see you and Polly married, and George and Priscilla David too, a few months before she died. Those were our first Christian weddings, and women all over the world love a wedding. They were the first I had conducted too, and made me think hard, though as you know, I have since come to the conclusion that marriages are not made in church: the church can only confirm what is made by human necessity.”

“Yes, indeed,” murmured Isaac, who had taken dictation on the subject until his wrist ached. “You were telling me about your training in London. All these years you have hardly mentioned it to me.”

“Ah, yes. I tried not to hark back, you see, or to have you people look outwards over my shoulder. London, Bombay, Rabai, Kornthal, Cairo, they are all equally training-places for Heaven. But the West Africans, I was saying, were better than I at understanding the strange talk of the Irish courts where we went to do our practical work. Perhaps it is as well I did not learn to understand it all: English can be a dirty language when people set their minds to spoiling it.

So we were sent off to the mission-field, Isaac, with hymns and prayers round us, as though we were making a sacrifice by just going. In fact many were, because they did not live long in the countries of their calling, and this is a hard thing to accept or try to explain...” The boat began to rock, pleasantly enough, and the oars slapped more vigorously. They were out of the creek, then. The air was still, the sun almost overhead. No point in hoisting the sail. The hot salt stung.

“Your father will remember that Dr. Krapf had some hard words to say about young missionaries. ‘The missionaries of this generation are effeminate and drifting; they are not fit to go out and conquer the world.’ I felt them hard myself, especially when I was brought low with fever. I was only ten years younger than he was himself. But you grow in insight, not always consciously, as you grow in the flesh, and, indeed, as you get hollowed out with

sickness and disappointment and the daily abrasions of living in a place where you feel yourself alien. For it takes some of us obstinate ones a long time to see that the notion of being alien is not something that others impute to us but something we impute to ourselves, and it takes digging and toughening rather than varnishing and polishing to make us fit into the niche the Lord has made ready for us. It is not nice, kind Johannes giving up comfort and society to represent the Lord in a reverential position in Rabai. It is the good Lord inviting arrogant, half-baked Johannes to accept the hospitality of Rabai and see how the words of scripture can take life within it. Do you understand?"

"Yes, I think I understand, though you are stretching the words to their limit..."

"Indeed I am, and tomorrow we must use English together, Isaac, in case the British officers think we are jabbering treason in Kinika. And in the days ahead I must say goodbye to you and learn once more to think in German. But it must be so, because now it is *your* turn to be the guest and try to penetrate every thought of his host in order to make the gospel message clear."

"Yet we have been taught so much about the superiority of Europe."

"Well, you have never traveled in a carriage with wheels. The only bridge you have seen is the little one at Ribe, apart from a few tree-trunks cut across a stream. You have not been down into the tunnels of a mine. You have not seen a factory with whole big rooms filled by machines producing goods. Indeed we have not even taken you to see the rope walk at Zanzibar or the boat yards of Mambrui. You will come across many gadgets that are better, in terms of usefulness or pleasure, than you have dreamed of before. Better, but not different in *kind*. I remember how eager you were to walk the 16 miles to Ribe to see the Wakefield piano that they managed to ship out without very much damage, but you recognize it so as instrument akin to the *marimba*. You have admired my big walking boots ever since you were a little boy, but you have never seen a Teita person going barefoot.

I shall also come upon many things that we could not have imagined in Germany 30 years ago. I believe there are little rooms now in which you can be lifted high up into buildings by a pulley

and save the stairs, and wheels attached to foot pedals which will propel you along the road without the aid of a horse or donkey. But that does not make my young nephews better fellows than their fathers were.

In matters of relationships and morality, yes, you will find Europe has some advantages in having had a society instructed in Christian values through many centuries. People do not openly put a deformed baby to death as they do here, and those who leave all the labor to their wives, or beat them, try to conceal the fact. They do not like to be caught out in a lie, and those who exercise malice do not do so by crude magic but by sleight of tongue. There is a custom of affectionate behavior within families which is a directly Christian heritage, and in some places it extends to the master-servant relationship. There is some public provision for the relief of distress.

But this is not really what I mean. The missionary, at home or abroad, must obviously draw on all his experience in presenting the gospel and making his judgments live, especially his own experience of sin and repentance. What has he left behind that can be compared with the comforts of the gospel he carries with him? What are his few lonely fevers in comparison with the black night of sin and suffering his Savior endured? ..."

This seemed to Isaac uncomfortably like a sermon starting. Since his sight deteriorated, Mr. Rebmann had not gone in much for sermons, and had confined himself more and more to language work. But it was not the usual tenor of a sermon.

"They are wrong, they are wrong," the old man was muttering and Isaac was angry to see the sailors gesturing towards him as though invoking their Mohammedan angels towards one stricken with madness. "Or rather I am wrong to let their words prevail. And yet does it not seem arrogant to suppose myself always right, to stand out continually against them. They are better educated than I am, blessed with physical strength and use of all their faculties. They think it a matter of preaching and teaching, building houses and going on journeys. I have done all these things— who else? But if you think it is Rebmann's faculties that the Lord needs to use, so that when Rebmann is old and weary and blind he is no longer witnessing, then you do not see—I with my blind eyes see more than

you do. It is not a matter of saying to Abe Gunga your father, as I used to say: 'Look, I can make a better house than yours and plant a better garden, learn of me,' though it may be good for him to learn. But it is—and your father, being a little bit my elder, was used to teach me this—a matter of being enabled to say to your father: 'Abe Gunga, is it well with the child'—that was you, Isaac—'who has been spared to you after so many disappointments?' 'Brother, I know your wife finds it hard that you are enquiring after what she sees as false gods, but women too are strong in the service of our God.' That one failed him, but your mother came back, Isaac, and helped keep you and others on course once she was strengthened in prayer. 'Brother, your village head has slighted you because of your loyalty to me, but God does not let his servants down.' 'Brother, we have received a gift of plantain and thought you might like to have a share of it.' 'Brother, I hear a leopard made off with your dog: have you got another one, for no Nika homestead can be complete without its dog.'

This is the daily habit of life, to be sustained whether one is feverish or not, whether one has had letters from home or not, whether the teaching is being well received or not. And this cannot be if half one's heart is in another place one still calls 'home.' On safari I—and you, who are embarking on the biggest safari of your life—may have to pause and calculate: is it proper to pay a visit here, to give a present there, to eat before marching or burden oneself with more provisions to carry. But at home in Kisulutini these things must become matters of course and expectation: only then is the vessel in place for the gift of God to fill.

This little I saw perhaps more clearly than brother Krapf, though he was more learned than I and also suffered more, having lost his wife and infant daughters before I joined him. He had great visions, in which I heartily concurred, and was well advised to plan our travels as he did, to point where other helpers may follow. But he was restless, here and there, here and there, and felt a need to husband his strength for the time to come. I never did till now. But to face Germany after all that has happened, I do not know how I shall find strength enough for that."

"We are coming to the harbor now," Isaac interrupted him. "There will be much to make you tired and upset. Let us prepare ourselves."

“Very well, my son, very well. It is a matter of burning one’s boats, as they say in English—you follow me? It is not a pleasant idiom to think about when we are in the course of a journey. The baggage is in your hand, and when we board Mr. Williams may need assistance from you too, so you are the headman of the expedition this time.”

Rebmann sniffed at the sea air and the increasing odor of the fish market as they approached the shore and the small noisy petrels wheeled around. It was March, the last days of the northerly monsoon season, and the harbor would be full, as he had seen it countless times. But his mind was not on the familiar bustle around him or even on the appropriate scripture,

my heart panteth, my strength faileth
for the light of mine eyes it also is gone from me

Over and over again he was mulling over the scene two years before when he *had* finally burned his boats by—what? Telling the truth to a human embodiment of the devil who would not be shamed? Or allowing pique and sarcasm to overcome his better judgment and dislodge him from the only place he ever felt at home? There was plenty of pique and sarcasm in the prophets—

And it came to pass that at noon Elijah mocked them, saying, ‘Cry aloud, for he is a god; either he is talking or he is missing or he is on a journey, or perhaps he is asleep...’

But one did not catch Sir Bartle Frere sleeping—oh no; that courteous, modulated voice from somewhere above one’s head, that iron hand which had pushed out to the limits (or beyond) his powers as Governor of Bombay, that devastating logic which had refused government servants the right to spread the gospel in India, all bore relentlessly upon the stroke of fortune that had given him a new commission as the power of Bombay was curtailed. He had leave from the India Office and four ships of Her Majesty’s fleet with which to impress upon the Sultan of Zanzibar his privilege

of becoming an equal signatory with Britain to the end of the East African slave trade.

"Why, Mr. Rebmann," cried Sir Bartle Frere, seizing his hand with the violence of those who think the blind unaware of their proximity, "you are still here? I just heard it in Mombasa and hastened to pay my respects. In fact I feel like Stanley approaching Livingstone—overwhelmed. My name is Frere. I have lately come from Zanzibar."

"Welcome, Sir Bartle," replied the old pastor. "We heard of course that you were at Zanzibar. We have followed your career since you administered us from the Bombay Presidency. Now that the system of dependency has changed, we have to wait on the decision of the Viceroy. I have not the habit of being overwhelmed, as you see, even by the army you have brought with you. You have no doubt met Isaac Nyondo here, who is my hand as well as my eyes. And our evangelist, William Jones, one of those so excellently trained at Nasik and returned to help their fellow-countrymen."

The seven English gentlemen among the retinue were introduced, together with Kazi Shahabadia, a minister of the Rao of Cutch, whose father had long ago renounced slavery in his own dominions, so that they were now honorably associated with the anti-slavery lobby. Clement Hill and George Grey were from the Foreign Office, Colonel Pelly was the Resident in the Persian Gulf, the Reverend Dr. Badger was in attendance as interpreter, Captain Playfair had once acted as British Consul in Zanzibar and Major Euan Smith accompanied the Commission as Frere's personal secretary. Young Bartle Frere, just through Eton, had come along for the ride. The five European servants and 50 soldiers remained outside.

"Isaac, you can no doubt arrange some refreshment."

"I believe my wife and Mrs. David have this already in hand."

"Ah, do not trouble yourself," Sir Bartle Frere replied airily. "We do not come to descend on you like locusts. Our men have brought their own provisions and I am sure your mission people will show them where they can commence preparations. The boatmen, I believe, are helping the soldiers with the purchase of livestock. It is quite a little picnic for us amid this tedious business of arranging a new treaty with the Sultan to stop the slave trade. I am sure you know of our commission. I believe some of my colleagues would like to look around the station. It is a novelty for them."

Novelty indeed! But what kind of novelty would a slave camp then be?

"Of course: but you are not new to Africa and the East, sir, and you cannot fail to be aware that we expect to welcome our guests according to custom. After some small refreshment we can release you."

"Release? Ah, yes, very good. It is all a matter of releasing, after all. You know what that fellow Barghash said to me, 'We are a poor and narrow-minded people and require time to see your way.' Humbug! He has no alternative to complying with our demands."

"That may be so, but every missionary knows that compliance is not the same thing as change of mind. ... You are staying in Mombas?"

"Yes, we shall leave here well before dark. ... Your name is legend, Pastor Rebmann. I am ashamed that we have let it sink from view. Be assured that I shall not rest until some comforts fit for your station and infirmity have been arranged. I had no idea..."

His eyes roamed expressively from the rough-hewn walls I had labored over long ago to the flat roof supported by a criss-cross of rafters, the rickety wooden chairs and the shutters folded back from the uncovered window spaces. Although I could not seem him I was quite aware that they did so.

"I am quite comfortably provided, thank you," I replied, trying to still the note of reproof and avoid the ridiculous manner in which the English addressed their titled fellows, "and by no means lost. Any more, of course, than was Dr. Livingstone, whose skill with the instruments of travel we all revere. But, unlike him, I have not for these past many years journeyed beyond ease of communication. In fact the Home Committee is quite badgered—you will excuse the pun, Dr. Badger, old friend, you and I live by changing words—badgered, I mean, by the number of letters we inflict on them, Isaac and I. They are still sending us recruits. But alas the constitution of these days seems not to match that of the time when you and I were young." (Let him ponder that, for this heartiness. If I look older than him, that earns me respect in Africa, but I am not near 60 yet.)

"Your society here is limited, Mr. Rebmann. Do your converts support you?"

"Most gladly so. Isaac is the second generation of the first fruits: his father is my second disciple and his mother also attends. Of the freed slave people from Nasik, George David assists us here in the region, William Jones returned to Bombay for a while to seek further recruits, and Semler will escort them to Mombas. Three of our converts live nearby and take communion with us, so that we may strengthen one another: others live at a greater distance, and so spread the word. Some are hearers, not yet prepared for baptism. Patience, as my dear brother Krapf never tired of saying, in Africa (and elsewhere, I don't doubt) patience is of the essence. Men of my age have grown used to me as a neighbor: they drop in to hear a story from the Good Book and tell me one in return."

"And you have been here—20 years, is it? That is patience indeed. Think what enormous strides have been made in Zanzibar in that time."

"Twenty seven years. Think what strides have been made also in Europe. 1848, they say was the year of revolutions. And now Wurtemberg acknowledges the King of Prussia, if that is the sort of stride you have in mind. But here we have not stood still."

"The material progress is not—ah—very evident. You feel the Rabai people are better off than their neighbors?"

"Indeed, no. That is not what I meant at all. Hereabouts to promote inequality is to provoke witchcraft. And a good thing proclaims its goodness by spreading."

"You refer to...?"

"Well, for one thing the killing of infants with some slight abnormality appears to have become less over the years. Of course it is hard to be sure. To believe he is trusted is the mark of the novice. But whereas the people told us, when we first came, that they had stopped exposing twins, there are far more twins to be seen under 20 than there are above. And one does not hear—my wife used to tell me—such fearful enquiries into the order of teeth or precocious movement. I do not say none are done away with but the compulsion can be avoided. Children survive with a finger missing or a foot twisted, though no doubt serious deformities are still a cause of death. Perhaps it is as well, for there is little chance of living a physically inactive life here."

"But I heard that your first convert was a cripple."

"Yes, indeed. I understand his misfortune occurred when he was near to growing up, or else in those times he could not have survived."

"Are there other changes?"

"Oh yes. Do you not see the space we have here on open ground. Our first site was on a steep ridge, and many people lived in a fortress, within the kaya rampart. Now almost all the coastal communities have spilt over into the open countryside. Partly it is a growth of numbers, you may say, whether or not our simple health care has helped in that. But partly it is due to greater security—people mix more and do not feel the same tight bonds that led to fighting, group with group."

When I was new at the coast you did not meet a man by the roadside without his weapons, either bow and arrows or a spear. Now he is more likely to be carrying a hoe or a water-pipe or a gourd of palm wine.

I do not say everything is safe in the interior, even now. I warned New,

when he set off on his first trip to the snow mountain, things are more turbulent than when I made my journeys a quarter of a century ago—but on a broader landscape. I have often censured the Wanika for living only a day at a time. Gradually one comes to see that this carelessness is not the cause of slave-hunting, even at one remove, but its result. They fear too much attachment to something it is beyond their power to preserve.

But, for better or worse, there is now more mobility, and so people learn more from one another—trade from the Digo, clothing from the Swahili, readiness to travel and take employment from the Kamba among us. And, if that, why not industry and order from the white man, more systematic gardening, German-style, and English concern for freeing slaves? They do not want to concede land to them or to forfeit labor they feel they have paid for, but few have tried to make a profit by turning runaways in. Their horizon has been enlarged. Only a few have whole-heartedly come to Christ, but many at least know His name and how our practices differ from the Mohammedan."

"Ah yes. An intelligent chief remarked to me that more missionaries would provide protection against the Maasai and the slave-traders. I made particular note of that for my report.—Does not the school provoke enquiry as to the faith?"

"We do not have a school at present."

"The people do most urgently desire a school, sir," broke in David. "On every journey we meet with their requests and would like to fulfill them."

"Ah, yes, George, on every journey. But let us remind ourselves—the Sparshotts had a school, and when they became sickly and moved to Mombas you took it over. The school moved to a breezy place—what is it called?—and then one of the families went away. A second family was raided—the father and his slave wife were killed, and two of the three sons captured. The third one moved to stay with relations, and for want of pupils the school collapsed. It has been so again and again, since I started the school at Bunni while Krapf was still here. You, Isaac, attended classes with my late wife, and how many others persisted? Classes come and go, but the reading of the gospel, somehow, continues."

"But people say..."

"Yes, George, people say. One at Jilore asks,

'How do you come to dress in these fine clothes and change words from one language to another?'

You tell him, 'I went to school,' and he says,
 'I wish my son could go to school and become like you.' But at such a school as we might have here his son will not learn to earn money or speak like a Banian. One in Digo says to you,

'If we had a school, we could teach our young people to make chairs and boxes and fine sandals such as we see in Mombas.'

But if you tell him,
 'Then bring good timber from the forest, and a hide for the sandals, and a goat to pay for the knife and the saw,' he will say to you,

'No, in other places people are paid to sing their ABC. We do not want a school enough to pay for it.'

They do not get paid at Ribe, but the freed slaves and the traders tell them this is so in distant places, so I suppose it must be true. Do not think, Sir Bartle, that we are cut off from news in this sleepy, slow-moving place. Compared with Gerlingen, where I grew up, East Africa is a hotbed of rumors.

And even if you do bring one man from each clan, William, to learn a trade, and a couple of young Kamba settlers who are good at craft work, how will you find a central place to suit them all and teachers which each one will respect? It is not yet time. When they hear the drum, they come to sing. They begin to understand what they sing. Those who can read, read aloud, and those who listen come when they are eager to read, or eager for baptism and therefore must try to read. Then a new class opens. It is as with their own initiations. You do not say, 'This will be the day: find candidates to be prepared,' but 'The candidates present themselves: therefore we will fix the day.'"

"One must start somewhere," exclaimed Sir Bartle Frere, looking suspiciously at the tea and fritters which had been brought in, while Mrs. David recited a long grace in English.

"Excellent, excellent," interjected Mr. Hill of the Foreign Office, "the cup that cheers but not inebriates."

"We find it so: palm wine from the village is refreshing too, in moderation."

Kazi Shahabudin condescended to a short conversation with Mrs. David in Hindi and complimented her on her knowledge of the language. Major Euan Smith compiled a report in his head, sensing that, as with oriental monarchs, it would not do to take notes. Dr. Badger glumly counted the odd cups and hoped for a chance of speaking with his old friend Rebmann later. In Arabic, may be. Inshallah. It was too late to save him now.

"One must start somewhere: this is exactly what I have been saying, sir," broke in George David, but was quelled with a look.

"Your catechumens, then, are required to read?"

"We like them to read, yes. Isaac's father, Abe Gunga, was the first, after Mringe died. I started him off and then left him with Erhardt when I went away to Egypt to bring my wife. That was in 1851, and by the time we came back he was doing well, very well. For the time, it was remarkable. It was not the same as for those who lived among the Mohammedans, as people increasingly do, and had the notion of book learning."

"Your wife?"

"Yes, I had a wife, sir. In fact we stayed with Dr. Badger, here, on our wedding journey back to East Africa. She was an English lady, and was 15 years here with me before the Lord took her, and a great blessing to us all. Our baby boy died early and we had no other: perhaps we should be thankful, or she might not have been spared so long."

"So. That is fortitude indeed. Did you not need to send her to Europe for her health in all those years?"

"Indeed, no. She came to serve as I did, and had lived a long time in Egypt before, used to the heat and other discomforts. And of course, compared with many missionaries we have lived a metropolitan life, so near to the civilization of Zanzibar. Nowadays there is even a hospital there: of course you know it. We used to go over often, when I had my sight, that is."

"And did Mrs. Rebmann take the women in hand? Sewing classes, that sort of thing?"

"Oh, she did much—so much. Not exactly making tiny garments—if you have looked around you on the way you will have seen that is hardly necessary. Until the Bombay ladies came there was no stitching of dresses. The women used to have their pretty pleated skirts they were so proud of, like a double petticoat, quite adequate for decency. You will still see them among our Kirياما neighbors—their movement from south to north is one of the big changes over the years we have been here. But that is less a matter of needle and thread than the art of winding it round and tugging and prinking—my dear wife explained all that to me, though she was hardly in a position to be worldly about her own dress.

And one would not particularly advocate dress-making as more of the women adopt the kanga and lesu from our Mohammedan neighbors.

Those two pieces of cloth are adequate, cheap and easy to launder. Nor did they need any advice from her on what the training school calls inti-

mate matters. A lady of Siu had already done all that in a Kiswahili poem called *Mwana Kuponu*. These women here do not exactly hear Kiswahili, but I guess this sort of information gets about, as it does in Germany or Switzerland or England, even." Sir Bartle Frere coughed uncomfortably. Isaac looked at the floor. George David rustled some notes, finding a place ostentatiously.

"I should be most interested to see a copy, Rebmann," put in Dr. Badger. "And any other manuscript you might have come across."

"I have collected what I could..."

"Bartle, my son," said Sir Bartle, "If you have finished your tea I expect you would like to take the opportunity to look round the place. Play-fair, take a walk with him. And get some specimens of that wild cotton we saw in such abundance."

"Thank you, sir."

(Thank you for nothing. As though you finished Eton without getting hold of 'this sort of information.' As though you needed a naval officer to steer you past a bare-breasted woman carrying your gear uphill while the goddamn soldiery sat around waiting to be fed. As though this old German geyser was not capable of running rings round your exalted official papa.)

"Ah, yes, well, I thought you were discussing our impact on real life in Nika country... My wife was able to apply some unguent or plasters for women where their husbands had beaten them, and teach a little hygiene and just—well, you see, old-fashioned, evangelical love. 'She called her friends and they searched for the lost piece of silver,' that sort of thing. Naturally they didn't find her a very successful woman, not having a baby, getting married at what seemed to them a horribly advanced age to an old man of another tribe, living in a place like this. They were sorry for her, and a lot of virtues can grow out of sympathy..."

"But reading...?"

"Of course they would not learn to read before their husbands, would they? Imagine how they would have suffered. It was the young boys she helped with reading. But she taught the women songs and bible stories—I had to help her with the translation—and maybe a certain kind of—modesty, should I call it?"

Terms vary so much from country to country. I had much to learn myself from being married to an Englishwoman"

"Indeed?"

"Oh well, I am ignorant. Perhaps a German woman would have sur-

prised me just as much. She seemed to be content with so little if you understand me. The women were heart-broken when she died."

"Quite so, quite so. ... We shall make the trip to Ribe from Mombasa another day. I hear that Mr. and Mrs. Wakefield have achieved marvels."

"Indeed, yes. They are very close to the people. They even have one convert from Islam, the first to my knowledge in East Africa, Mwidani by name, who has been in service with them. They have practically adopted a little Galla boy. Mr. New, you will be aware, is away on leave, and his book is being published in London."

"I understand they have even built a bridge."

"I hear so. Of course, I have not been in a position to travel recently. But Wakefield used often to be here, and their place in Mombas is near ours. A very likeable young fellow, not too proud to ask for advice when he needs it. Their little girl seems to flourish and I understand another baby is expected soon."

"Hmmm. We shall not be a burden to them, of course. We want to see the progress of the schools."

"Schools? Oh yes. Well, they will be glad to receive you. ... You say the soldiers will be cooking meat?"

"Indeed. They expect good rations. Do you not think your people will be able to supply?"

"These days everything has its price. Perhaps goats will do."

"That is hardly my province. Are there no cattle? I thought we saw a few?"

"Yes, of recent years there are some cattle, but the Nika do not ordinarily eat them. They require them for trading purposes."

"Ah, ingenious fellows like the Kamba, are they good with their hands and suitable for caravan work? What do they get for their cattle?"

"They are not very interested in caravans, and there are enough Wakamba settled near here to supply their peculiar skills. The Wanika trade their cattle for plantation labor. That is what they have learned from Zanzibar."

"Free labor?"

"The law of the Sultan's dominion does not insist on free labor, Sir Bartle. There used to be seasonal slavery during times of famine and warfare, to be compounded on agreement when things returned to normal. Now there is a new economic order. To compete with it people will take advantage of the times."

"The spirit of the times is the spirit of abolition, Mr. Rebmann. You have been too long cut off from the movement of the age."

"Not cut off, Sir Bartle, just attached to the receiving end. If we were all Christians, we should all pay just wages or go without service, which is what it would mean for many. I was glad when I heard, twenty five years ago, that the last feudal laws had been abolished in Wurtemberg: when I last saw that country some people still owed customary labor to their ancient masters, though not to the extent of serfdom. I was glad when Lincoln freed the slaves in America—only seven years ago, was it not? Alas that he was killed before he could oversee the implementing of that freedom. But I am not so far gone, Sir Bartle, as not to know that American ships delivered cotton cloth—marikani as we call it here—to Zanzibar all through the Civil War, though we knew it was bought at a loss from Manchester. The system did not allow those merchants from Salem and Boston and Providence, Rhode Island, even to admit to themselves that they might lose the advantage of cheap production. Do you suppose our Wanika are better informed than they are, sir?"

"Their education has lain largely in your hands, Mr. Rebmann."

"Hardly as much as in England it lies in the hands of the British and National School Boards, Sir Bartle. (We studied the system, to great advantage, in Islington.) It is estimable indeed that pupil teachers should instruct poor children in reading and counting, but it is still their parents, if my grasp of English idiom does not forsake me, who teach them how many beans make five."

"You are weary, sir, through long labor. You have lost hope of improvement."

"Far from it, sir. Without hope, one does not labor so long. But my hope is, shall we say, less workaday than yours."

The servants came whispering. The picnic was spread in all its magnificence, villagers standing by to stare and comment. Rebmann refused to join his guests, making the ambivalent excuse of his blind clumsiness. Badger managed to waylay him, accompanied by Mr. Grey.

"Pray excuse us for a while, Sir Bartle, and go ahead with your lunch. I have not met with Mr. Rebmann since—1862, was it, when Brigadier Coghlan and I slipped away from the Governor's reception to call on you here, Rebmann? And his language work is of great interest."

"Indeed, indeed, Badger. Do impress upon him the urgency of publication. It would be sad indeed if new laborers to the harvest did not profit from his long application to the task."

"You came the same year, Colonel Pelly, to inspect our two stations, when you were in the consulate at Zanzibar."

"I remember it well, Mrs. Rebmann's gracious hospitality and the refreshing air up here compared with Zanzibar. I must say the Persian Gulf is hot, but it is less enervating than the island. I am distressed about your eyes, Rebmann, but that is the more reason for you to entrust the manuscript to Dr. Badger, so let me not detain you."

"You see how it is, Rebmann," said Badger, taking his arm. "They will take what they want from you. The Wanika already have much to remember you by. Do not fear."

"It is not a matter of fear," insisted Rebmann. "It is a matter of enlightened common sense. But let us not waste time—Isaac, Isaac."

"I am here, sir."

"Now those manuscripts, Isaac, that I made to take with me to the Cape. We should have gone, Badger, if my wife had lived. Afterwards I had not the heart. Some you made spare copies for me—no, not the English poem, nobody values that, the coastal manuscripts, I mean. Make haste and bring the spare copies. And bring the single copies in another folder, so that you may note those which Dr. Badger would like to have, and prepare them later. If I had had more notice, my dear fellow, it would have been done. Isaac's hand is so like my own, you would hardly tell the difference."

"You are more than kind."

"I should have liked your help with the Arabic, too, Badger, but the time is now past for me. An Arab friend in Zanzibar assisted me greatly: the Kadhi at Mombas, Sheikh Ali Ben, also made great efforts, but Sheikh Muhiddin is a true scholar: both of them showed me how the gospel appears to the Mohammedan."

"And the English poem?" asked Grey.

"A toy I trifled with when my mind was disturbed: I don't think there is any urgent need for preserving that."

"You under-rate yourself. Your facility in the language astonishes us, Mr. Rebmann. Is it not very difficult? Or is it that you have special gifts?"

"I would not say special, Mr. Grey. To some are given tongues and the interpretation of tongues. And by a tongue I assume the apostle to imply something that intends meaning, not just a sounding brass or a tinkling cymbal."

If you fall into water you usually find you can swim. Too bad if you are one of the few who can't. If you are thrown into a place where no-

one understands you, you are likely to find a way of understanding those others. For months together my alternatives were Kinika or Kiswahili if my fellow-missionaries were away. It is a matter of asking the lord for strength and patience. But of course acquaintance with a few other languages broadens your understanding and sharpens your ear.

Even now, I do not claim to have a perfect comprehension of Kiswahili or Nika conversation. It is easy for people to exclude the outsider, if they wish, by adopting a tone of banter, of intimidation or of ribaldry in which words change their meanings."

"Are the languages as flexible as Arabic in this way?" asked Badger.

"Every language has its subtlety, its logic and its variations, which are not at all related to the deceptive simplicity of a people's mechanical culture. Even our missionary Intelligencer explained this, which must have come hard to people who feel that English is the supreme achievement of linguistic science. Our coastal languages are beautiful in their regularity and their precision. The art of oratory is greatly respected, and poets and story-tellers play upon the language like an instrument. (You have heard the special tones of our instruments—the zomari, the bungu—which is like the black notes of the piano?) This is a study by itself."

"And they write in Arabic script?"

"With the addition of three Persian characters to cover the sounds more accurately."

"Just a minute, Rebmann, let me get my notebook. Grey, why don't you go and have lunch? Tell them I'm collecting the manuscripts to take back with me—that will keep them happy."

"I am ready enough for some sustenance. Pastor, you will excuse me."

"He has had an audience with the Pope, Rebmann. He is even empowered to pay the Sultan's subsidy to Muscat for him. Canning laid it upon Zanzibar, but now there will be a loss of revenue even if the slaves are still shipped clandestinely—Barghash will not be able to collect the duty, and I do not think he would even try to, once the treaty is signed. He is an honorable man according to his lights. So they will call paying the subsidy an act of sympathy for the destruction caused by the hurricane last year. Really it is to silence the French, since they had the bad taste to describe the subsidy as the Sultan's payment to the British for a license to carry on the slave trade. So for the Lord's sake believe Frere will get his treaty. Whether it can be enforced or not is another matter. You and I know, and Col. Pelly knows, that in the monsoon a slave dhow can outrun any patrol boat that

we send after it, but all the same we have to do what we can for the poor devils. I thought you would be so pleased that he wishes to entrust freed slaves to the missions, rather than set up a government agency."

"Well enough, well enough, so long as the mission does not become a cloak for a government agency..."

"Frere didn't do so well in France, where they oppose us on principle, you would think, but King Victor Emmanuel of Italy gave him a gold medal to deliver to Livingstone, and the Khedive tried to convince him that Egypt was leading Africa into civilization. Now he has got nearly all the consuls here to urge compliance on the Sultan. They were cool when Hill visited them, but Schultz, the German, went with Colonel Pelly after getting instructions from Berlin. F. R. Webb will come round for America—they dare not appear less than enthusiastic about their own emancipation policy. Bertrand is only the Vice-consul, and more Levantine than French: when de Vienne comes back from leave Kirk will persuade him to keep his navy out of it, you mark my words. They cannot face English hostility so soon after being beaten by Prussia. Paris bombarded—can you imagine that? ... He carries a lot of weight, Rebmann."

"So he does, so he does. That is not a good reason to be condescending with me... and after he has been so particular about freedom of conscience in Bombay that mission work is hindered."

"I wouldn't say hindered, my friend: kept within bounds, perhaps. You yourself are so scrupulous not to offer material advantages to your converts that you may not realize how strongly others are tempted to put on pressure."

"But when the consuls put pressure on the Sultan they are pursuing strategy rather than succumbing to temptation? This is too devious for me, old friend. If anyone gets a signature out of Barghash I am sure it will be Kirk, who keeps his place and never visits the Sultan alone, only in the presence of his counselors, the proper Arab way."

But these diplomats of yours are in a hurry. You are ready to take down some examples of Kiswahili?"

"Yes, certainly. Fire away, Rebmann."

"In Tumbatu, for instance—you are familiar with the place, off the coast of Zanzibar?—they help you to hear the Song of the Dhow. As the vessel leaves the shore, the pulley calls watoto, watoto, children, children: as the sail is hoisted, the rudder says ao, ao when it scrapes on the sand, and as the prow strikes the waves it shouts taa wa saa, taa wa saa, the lamp of the time, the lamp of the time."

And in Zanzibar they interpret the cry of birds. They are fond of keeping caged birds too. The turtle dove calls, mama akafa, baba akafa, nimesalia mimi tu, mother died, father died and only I am left alone. Another call is kuku mfupa tupu, mimi nyama tele, the chicken is only bones, but me I've lots of meat. Can you not just hear the bird calling? But the mwigo, the big dove, can be asked to prophesy, so you don't preempt what she is going to say. The owl is unlucky, like the silent chameleon, but he has his song too, calling shimeji, niazime mkufu, my sister-in-law, get me an ornamental chain, and the female replies, usiku huu, usiku huu, tonight, tonight. But the night-jar is followed by a wizard, so it would not do to imitate him."

Isaac hurried up with the manuscripts and began conferring with Dr. Badger about them, when young Bartle Frere appeared, obviously sent to call him away. "You see my secretary has brought what was needed," said Rebmann, recognizing the boy's voice. "We won't delay you much longer with chatter about birds and wizards."

"Have you seen a wizard, then, Mr. Rebmann? It sounds as though you are fully conversant with them."

"I think the wizard would run away if he saw me first. So tough and talkative a Christian would surely dismay him. But if I were not shielded by this faith of mine, there is a noted charm one can get—at a price—which will make wizards think you are a tree, so that they hang their clothes on you and go away. Otherwise you could fasten phosphorescent fish bones to our door to keep them away."

"What would you do with the wizards' clothes?"

"The charm book does not say. But I suppose if you found an unwary customer you might sell them to defray the cost of the charm."

"That sounds like a good idea. But my father sent me to say the carriers are ready."

"I understand, yes, indeed. Just give me your arm, will you?" (My boy might have been a bit older than this one if he had lived.)

"Well, sir, I am sorry you have to go so soon. I do not move far myself, so if any of you gentlemen are back in Mombas, please remember to look me up. ... I understand you have something in mind for the freed slaves. If you had a way to see it made official... You know we are much hampered by the civil law in helping these poor fellows as much as we should like. Jones sometimes lets his heart rule his head in this matter, for which I respect him the more..."

"Provision will be made, Pastor Rebmann, provision will be made. Do not over-exert yourself trying to keep up with us. I am sure Nyondo and David will see us on our way. Goodbye, goodbye..."

Isaac remained silent, aware that Rebmann was seized with the recollection of some of the controversies that were forcing him away from the home and habits of so many years. When he chose to speak, Isaac would listen, but just as with his own father, he could not find a way into that past experience which had changed him and all about him.

"We are getting close to the harbor," he repeated.

Price was at the harbor to meet them of course. He would not trust so delicate an assignment to anyone else. Although contemptuous of the Mombasa accommodation, as of everything done before his arrival, he had arranged for Rebmann to lodge overnight in the upper room of the old cliff-top house where he had spent his first night, hoping that this would please him. It would also be easy to lead him back down the uneven steps next morning and into the rowing-boat from which he would embark.

Price had, in fact, tried to win the blind man over to accept retirement with the help of sleeping-draughts and questions about his manuscripts without for a moment comprehending the weight of grief that was being forced upon him. The East African mission had begun its new lease of life. There was no need to bring to the attention of the authorities a rambling, sightless old man who had lost his sense of European values.

Rebmann was lying on top of the made bed looking pale and listless as Price poured out his plans and instructions. Good land was going to waste, he said, and it was obvious that freed slaves should cultivate it. (Yes, yes: but at what cost in envy and witchcraft?)

He was certain that Sparshott would have to go, drawing up a long indictment. Rebmann, long experienced in disappointment as new colleagues failed him one way or another, agreed with every point, but still pleaded for Sparshott's retention.

"Why?" asked Price, "why? You have quarreled with him repeatedly. Even when you disagreed with everything I proposed last year, as though Kisulutini (or any other place) could be a refuge for your precious converts from the wiles of the devil, you

still shook hands with Remington and me, though you would not pray with us. You refused Sparshott's hand, telling him, 'You know why.' And yet as soon as you consented to leave he rushed up to Rabai and spent hours in private talk with you: what was it about?"

"Mr. Price, I am old in your eyes—though only five years older than you, I am blind, and, as you allege, I have never been to Kiriamia. I have been to quite a few other places, but never mind. I am still a clergyman in Anglican orders, as you are, and you have no right to challenge the confidentiality of people who come to me with their troubles."

"True. I apologize. Sparshott has never come to me for spiritual counsel, and I was thinking of him just as one of my staff, at loggerheads with the rest. Like you he works hard at building. I know that has been a sore point in the past, but I must congratulate you on the excellence of the layout of Kisulutini. If it had not been for your physical infirmity, I am sure the buildings would have been better maintained. I have sent for technical books, by the way, to supplement our small skills in that field.

As for Sparshott, I know that his wife had a miscarriage and the children are ill, but that doesn't excuse him for positive ill-will, saying he will rename his boat *The Serpent* in contradiction of our *Dove*, and that the best of the Bombay Africans, by which he means Matthew Wellington, is the only one fit to be his cook. And yet look at what Wellington has achieved, a man who accompanied Livingstone and helped to bring the body back. And after all that he is to be employed as a cook! If you ask me to re-engage Sparshott, you must give me reasons..."

"Your reasons and mine do not harmonize, Mr. Price. You must increase and I must decrease. I have accepted that."

"Well, Rebmann, that is the way of the world. We have gained much by your language work and your endurance. You must not stand in the way of a new era now."

"That may be so," said Rebmann, clambering carefully down from the bed to mask the effort of controlling his feelings.

"You organize according to your lights. Let us at least say the Lord's prayer together."

Price was happy to comply: he was too old to take lightly the task of supplanting a failing colleague, however convinced that he was always right. Each prayed extempore and without constraint.

"You prayed that God would over-rule: in this you and I are one," murmured Rebmann, now exhausted. It could not be wrong, he supposed, to pray with a sincere person, however misguided. He had often been present at his Mohammedan friends' devotions. Sparshott was more cantankerous than any of them, perhaps, but he had more spark, more emotion in him. He had almost broken his heart over that baby.

The darkness hummed with insects. The town watchmen clattered outside carrying their lamps. Every door would be closed after ten o'clock. If you were ignorant enough to answer a call or knock after that time the Djinn who had got hold of your name would, people believed, kill you on the spot. A Sparshott child wailed briefly in the rooms below, and Rebmann reached out in the dark for Emma's remembered hand.

Next morning they were to board a British naval frigate bound for Zanzibar. Price had booked a British India steamer from Zanzibar to Aden and entrusted Williams with the rest of the passage money. He gave £20 to Rebmann to use on new clothes and other necessities for the journey. Price himself and Williams would spend the night at the Methodist house, since it was too late to get a hired boat back across to Freretown.

British naval patrol-boats passed Mombasa regularly, and Price had sought their assistance when he saw how frail Rebmann was getting. All the noise and smelly juxtaposition of freight and passengers—shark meat, oil, hides, copra on an Arab dhow riding barely a foot above the water seemed too much for the blind man to bear, no matter how familiar it had become over the years. Price pleaded Williams' weak condition, afraid of Rebmann's reaction to special treatment or shelter from memories.

He need not have worried. Rebmann was acquiescent, eager, in fact to get the goodbyes over and stand in his new relation to the world. He greeted the captain courteously and asked Isaac to place him somewhere in the shade where he would not impede the work going on. Williams, physically the weaker but well aware of the strain on his older colleague, sat beside him describing in low tones what the sailors were doing.

The Kadhi and the old Governor (back to take over from Seif after the Al Akida business) came to take their leave, not just ceremo-

niously but with urgent, quiet speech, awakened to their own grey hairs and the flux of time: both had already been senior functionaries when Rebmann was a raw recruit to the mission. The son of the old housekeeper was there, and Tulsidass who had helped to find a surgeon that terrible night. Abdallah, portly now and slow in motion, had come down from Jimboni in his own boat, Wakefield had come from Ribe to say goodbye, Mwidani with him. Amri, long retired from domestic service, dealing in ships' stores now, came to seize Rebmann's hand. Sparshott had led him down to the harbor and still stood, well away from Chancellor, while the children, who had come with their mother to see the ship, dutifully kissed Rebmann and Williams. Mrs. Price made hearty conversation. Price prayed portentously when the time came and chivvied the visitors ashore. At last, with a rattle of chains, they were away.