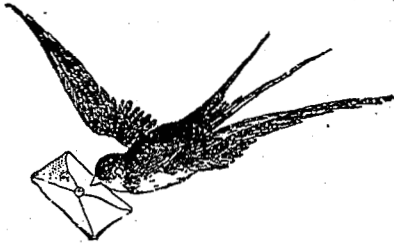


Our Foreign Letter.

EXTRACTS FROM LETTERS FROM BRITISH
CENTRAL AFRICA.

Zomba, Sept. 13th, 1899.



"We have been having rather exciting times lately; Look on the map and you will see south of Tanganyika a little lake, Chilwa, and one that is not

marked is Lake Chinta, a little to the north—All along that Portuguese boundary the "nigs" are always raiding the English side. The "Ports" have absolutely no attempt at government. Down the river they have prayas or farmed out districts (most iniquitous) but further north they make no attempt to rule or colonise and their natives have immense quantities of guns and are most unruly. The three big chiefs are Quamba, Zasagi, and Mataka. Lately a rubber caravan was cut up by Quamba, and the English arranged to put a stop to it, but the Portuguese said they would do the show themselves, so they have sent a swarm of Angolas and Quilmane boys, all armed, and about 160 Portuguese, and they are making such a mess of it. Our forces went up to a bare camp we made at Tombove, and squashed Quamba, the Portuguese having asked us to help. Then they puffed themselves out when they saw how easily Quamba was vanquished and said they would manage the rest themselves. So Mr. S. withdrew all our men, who are waiting here now for developments.

Meanwhile, out of the 160 "Ports" 76 have just come into Zomba starving and ill, and we are nursing them. I'm now on night duty with a decrepit old officer who "couldn't have been fit to squash a fly for the last ten years past."

"I went with the troops to Tombove and had an exciting time. No sick amongst our people so I went shooting all day—shot a hartebeeste and just enjoyed myself in a natural manner. They were all most awfully nice to me—though I kept a good deal to myself. Most of the time the troops were away, and there was only half a company, one officer and Dr. H. at the camp. All the tents pitched in a row with grass nitarsas over them looked so picturesque. It was rather comic being the only woman amongst a camp of 1,500 men. . . . It took me four days to get there in machilla—sleeping in a tent by the roadside—though most of that was native path. All sorts of wild beasts about, but I made them peg my tent down awfully tight and build big fires round and all sleep between the fires and me. I went there, and back by myself—a different way to the troops, who kicked up too much dust for me. Whenever I came to a village it turned out and seized my machilla and just rushed me along. They are awfully glad to get a light-weight and yell and shriek and dance round you. One village dropped me and were so scared they all bolted into the wood, and I had to wait on the floor till my own men ran up. They all said, "God d—" and "Blo—y fools" indtu, all the English

they know, but as they sometimes drop me themselves they need not have been so self-righteous about it. When I stopped for the night, generally about five, my boys brought me my ulendo, folding chair, and table, one got my tea, and the other boys put up the tent, whilst my valet laid out my things *à la* bachelor. Then all the ladies within a mile, with babies on their backs, and all the children came and sat round me—squatted in a ring, each one saying, in a sort of voice you caress a baby in, "Morny" or "Abale," and I say "Jama." Then they all laugh immoderately whilst I take my tea, and one after another go off and fetch the "presents," generally a chicken or six eggs, or some wine. Ali (my boy) brings out my cloth—red or white calico—and I tear off half a yard, and give them each a present in return, which they put beside them and don't even look at, but continue to stare at me and laugh. Then I go and poke their babies and give them sugar. Then one by one they will move off and congregate about 40 yards off, when they talk and shout just like a board school let loose. It's all so amusing; how you would enjoy it! The Ali comes to tell me my bath is ready and I go and have a lovely hot clean-up and get into my dressing gown, have a read till dinner which I have outside my tent with a great fire burning to keep off 'skitoes and then to bed with a revolver and rifle beside me and Ali across the door with another rifle. Up again next morning at four and away after breakfast at five. I always walk the first hour and then machilla till eleven when I halt and have breakfast, start my loads off again at twelve and myself follow at one. It's such a jolly life, much more fun than stupid trains, though I am looking forward immensely to rushing up from Southampton. If I begin to think about it, it keeps me awake far into the night.

"Ar'n't you very excited about the Transvaal, though of course you must be. I'm awfully sick, the "Ports" have let the cartridges for the Boers go. To withhold them was the first plucky thing they have tried to do in Africa. They are a set of curs, and look like inferior Italian organ grinders in cold weather.

It is evident from this letter that the male sex has not the monopoly of courage. A nurse of the mettle evinced by the one in the above letter would be invaluable to "follow the flag." It seems grievous that blasphemous words should be the only English with which these natives are familiar.

"The Nursing Directory."

A new edition of the "Nursing Directory," which is compiled under the authority of the Matrons' Council of Great Britain and Ireland, will be issued early in the forthcoming year. Trained nurses are asked to note that only those who hold a three years' certificate of training in a general hospital of 100 beds are eligible for admission, and the Matrons' Council therefore asks for this Directory the support of all those who desire the establishment of a definite standard of nursing education. Any nurses who possess the above qualifications can obtain a form of application from the Editors, "Nursing Directory," 11, Adam Street, Strand. Such forms should be returned, filled in, by December 1st; the Editors will also be greatly obliged if those Matrons and Nurses who have not yet returned the forms in their possession will do so by the same date.

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