NOTES ON THE SUDANESE TRIBES OF THE WHITE NILE.

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The Sudan, a word derived from the Arabic root, "Soöd," to blacken, was the name given by slave-dealing Arabs to their happy hunting ground along the White Nile and into Equatorial Africa; the land of the black people.

Under a geographical nomenclature, a number of Arab tribes might now be called Sudanese, since they are inhabitants of the Sudan. In this article only those tribes are so called that, dwelling in the Sudan, are free from all trace of recent Arab blood. The material to be dealt with, even thus limited, is immense, and only the very general ignorance that exists on the subject gives me courage to attempt it. It is, indeed, surprising that, seeing how deeply concerned we are in the development of the country, many English people know so little about it, and that the number of educated men capable of naming a single Sudanese tribe is insignificant. The number of pure Sudanese tribes left, after the Arabs have been eliminated, is very great. They differ from each other in appearance, in language, in occupation, and largely also in customs, though many customs are common to widely differing tribes, as one would expect, seeing that similar conditions and necessities tend to be met similarly by primitive peoples.

Even within the unit of the tribe itself there are sub-divisions, distinguished not so much by a divergence in customs as by the artificial barriers of old feuds and quarrels; by envy, hatred, and malice, and all uncharitableness. An observer cannot fail to be struck by the marvellous permanence and tenacity of tribal types, seeing how small, numerically, such units are, how greatly to their interest union with their neighbours would be; and, above all, seeing that marriage is not entirely limited to the tribe, but may bring in new blood either by capture or, in some instances, by purchase. And yet these little tribes continue to exist, each with its own language, traditions, and physical appearances, its customs and, in short, its individuality.

In strong contrast with this tendency of tribes to isolation and independence is the wonderful fusibility of individuals where placed under new conditions. This fusibility or adaptability is constantly
to be observed in the Sudanese battalions of the Egyptian Army. Here one finds Dinkas and Shilluks cheek by jowl with Bertas from the East, Nubas from the West, and Niam-Niams from the remote South, all living together under similar conditions; all, whether originally cannibals or cattle-men, eating a soldier's ration with great content; all proud of their uniform and exceedingly smart in their "turn-out," although the traditions of many of them declare garments unworthy of the warrior; and, finally, all equally engulfed by the irresistible flood of Islam.

Here, indeed, is a partial explanation of their fusibility. No individuality can resist the solvent action of Mohammedanism, a faith that devours the ideas of primitive peoples as locusts devastate a garden-patch; and that leaves behind nothing but a dull conformity with social and religious rules. The Sudanese in a battalion might easily be thought to belong to a single tribe, were it not for the marked physical differences that even Islam cannot modify.

This article attempts to deal only with the large and important group of tribes occupying the banks of the White Nile south of Kaka, the lands around the Sobat River to the east, the Bahr el Ghazal and its tributaries to the west, and also the Behr el Gebel as far south as Shembe. This group includes four tribes, Shilluk, Dinka, Nuer, and Jur, differing in language and mutually hostile, but presenting such marked affinities that they can be classed together in any attempt to systematise the Sudanese tribes.

To the east and south-east these tribes have for neighbours people that closely resemble them, but whose manner of life becomes abruptly modified when the mountains of the Abyssinian border are reached, to meet the new conditions imposed by dwelling in the hills. These border tribes, in turn, shade off imperceptibly into the Galla people and the mixed Abyssinian inhabitants of Menelik's western frontier.

Thus the White Nile group has no very definite and sudden margin to the east. To the West, however, and the south-west, the Dinkas and Jurs contrast markedly with their neighbours, the Golo, Bongo, Kraish, Belenda, and, more remotely, the Fertit and A-Zandeh tribes. So great is the difference that it compels one to believe the people essentially distinct.

To make the difference more apparent, I have arranged the following list of points of contrasts between the groups. To avoid the danger of prematurely docketing them under ethnological names, I call these groups "Herdsmen" and "Cultivators" respectively, selecting the chief interest and occupation of each as its heading.
HERDSMEN.
(Dinka, Shilluk, Nuer and Jur.)

**Physical.**—Head long and narrow. Figure tall and spare; very ill-developed calf muscles. Colour of skin nearly black. Features rather aquiline than Negro; lips prominent, owing to prognathic formation of jaws. Very scanty growth of beard as a rule, and the average man is without beard or moustache.

**Personal Decoration.**

***Men.***—Naked, or with a piece of leopard or sheep-skin suspended over the buttocks. Hair of head is shaved up to about an inch above ears, and remainder worked into a head-dress.

Helmets of a bee-hive shape made of thickly-woven grass, and sometimes ornamented with an interwoven mass of ostrich feathers. Suitable for defence against club-blows. Skin smeared with the ashes of burnt wood and cattle-dung. Ivory bracelets are worn above the biceps; smaller ones also at the wrists.

***Women.***—Head shaved. A pair of leather aprons from waist to knee; one in front, the other behind.

Both equally devoted to beads and brass wire.

***Cattle.***—Extensively owned and of the highest importance.

**Agriculture.**—Just enough grain is grown to feed the people and make “Merissa.”

**Cannibalism.**—Unknown, and the idea of it disgusting.

**Teeth.**—The lower incisors are removed.

CULTIVATORS.
(Western Bahr el Ghazal Tribes.)

**Physical.**—Head round and bullet-like. Figure square and sturdy, with great muscular development. Calf muscles very well developed. Skin plum-coloured or chocolate. Features resemble the typical Negro; flat nose with wide alae; lips tumid, eyes (especially in A-Zandeh) prominent and handsome. Beard, though scanty, is much better grown than among the “Herds¬men,” and is cultivated as an ornament.

**Personal Decoration.**

***Men.***—Clothed with a loin-cloth or a bark-cloth garment, almost amounting to trousers in some cases. Hair is plaited in lines down the side of the skull and (often) worked into “pom-poms” at the end of each plait.

Light grass-woven hats, either square-shaped (A-Zandeh) or “Panama”-shaped (Golo and Bongo); sometimes decorated with a bunch of cock’s feathers. Quite useless for defence, except against the sun. Skin as a rule not smeared. Possibly, however, coloured when in fighting trim. Ivory bracelets not often seen.

***Women.***—Head not shaved. A bunch of fresh leaves suspended in front and behind from a waist-cord.

***Cattle.***—Nil.

**Agriculture.**—The chief occupation of the people. This pursuit and the cultivation of poultry provides food and interest.

**Cannibalism.**—The A-Zandeh (Niam-Niam) are frankly cannibals. The Golo, Bongo and Kraish, though not cannibals, are said to have no objection to dogs as food—a probable transition stage on the way to better things.

**Teeth.**—Among the frankly cannibal peoples the upper incisors are filed to a point. Among the “transition” tribes the upper incisors are filed on the inner side only, leaving a V-shaped notch between the central incisors (perhaps a
The Sudanese Tribes of the White Nile

**HERDSMEN.**
(Dinka, Shilluk, Nuer and Jur.)

*General.*—Very conservative, and with great pride of race. Evince but little desire to copy their civilized visitor. In a sense, much more backward than the "Cultivators," being naked, thriftless in agriculture, too proud to furnish porters, and constantly at war among themselves.

**CULTIVATORS.**
(Western Bahr el Ghazal Tribes).

*decorative persistence of a once practical point)*.

*General.*—In spite of cannibalistic tendencies are very progressive. Wear bark-cloth or locally woven cotton-cloth. Attempt to copy Europeans, and delight in Western clothes if obtainable. Having many wants, they are glad to earn money as porters, and will generally furnish carriers when these are well treated and well paid.

The White Nile group of Sudanese (the Herdsmen), consisting of the Shilluk, Dinka, Nuer, and (ethnologically) Jur tribes, is of great importance and interest. Its importance depends upon its situation along the great waterway between Khartoum and the southern province of the Sudan, and on the fact that the tribes comprised in it are strong, brave, rich in cattle, and, in the case of the Shilluks, united under a single ruler, sanctified by his descent from a race of kings. The interest of the group is very great, since their remote position has preserved the tribes from the moulding and altering influences of foreign conquerors or traders; so that the observer has presented to him the picture of men living the same life, thinking the same thoughts, driven by the same wants to the same devices as, perhaps, our ancestors in times of remote antiquity.

Baker speaks of these tribes as being, in all probability, the direct representatives of primitive man in these regions. This is a bold statement; but there are grounds for the belief that they have occupied their present position from very early times. The physical type is so constant, the customs and habits of the several tribes so closely allied, and so very different from those of their western neighbours, that a common origin can fairly be attributed to the communities constituting the group. Since, however, they have been long enough separated to have evolved separate languages, different traditions of origin, different deities, and a sense of "race," and since these traditions refer almost exclusively to the country they now occupy, it may be inferred that they have been in their present position since remote antiquity. Their traditions, indeed, must have taken very long to become differentiated, since they appear to tend very little to change. The story of the miraculous origin of their kings, for instance, with a genealogy of these monarchs, was almost exactly the same as told by the Shilluks to
Father Banholzer at or near Fashoda, and as related to Mr. Giffen on the Sobat. Some idea of the time required for a complete branching off of one language from another among such people may be obtained from a short paper, "The Stability of Unwritten Languages," by the Rev. H. Codrington, which recently appeared in a periodical called Man (No. 11 in the issue for 1903). Yet this group of tribes has had time to develop within itself four languages, closely allied, no doubt, but sufficiently distinct to be characteristic.

I have hitherto emphasised the points in which the tribes in this group resemble each other, and the qualities they have in common. I must now attempt to indicate the differences between the tribes.

The Jurs claim a common origin with the Shilluks, and seem to resemble them in the closest manner, so they may be put aside as a section (long separated) of the Shilluk tribe. The Nuers, again, would seem to have many affinities with the Dinkas, but nobody has yet had an opportunity of closely studying them, so that they had better be left alone. The contrast, then, is between the great tribes of the Dinkas and Shilluks.

Language.—The most important and suggestive difference is, of course, in language. The extent of this is not accurately known, as no official has yet had time to go deeply into the question, and Mr. Giffen and his colleagues of the American Mission on the Sobat, although they are already able to converse with the Shilluks in their own language, have hitherto been unable to make far-reaching comparisons with others. A Dinka cannot talk to a Shilluk, but apparently each can pick up rapidly the other's language, when opportunity arises. The Jurs, who live in close proximity to the Dinkas, talk Dinka or their own language with equal facility.

Father Banholzer says: "The natives (Shilluks) have perhaps a greater aptitude for languages than the average European. Nearly all the Shilluks can speak Dinka, and a great number understand Nuer." This is probably best explained, not by assuming a great aptitude for languages, but by the close resemblances between the tongues of these peoples. That the languages are or have been closely related is proved by the large number of names of men and places common to the tribes. I expect that a better knowledge of their languages will tend to connect, rather than to separate, these communities.

The Shilluks display one quality rare among the Sudanese peoples. They are, and for ages have been, united under a single monarch. This probably originated in the necessity for unity while
The tribe was spreading north along the White Nile, opposed in its advance by powerful enemies. The proximity of the Beggara Arabs, has no doubt, tended to make it permanent.

The Dinkas offer a strong contrast in this respect. They are divided into sub-tribes, all bitterly hostile to each other. The sub-tribe itself has no continuous administration, but would seem often to be ruled by the family possessing the greatest number of cattle. This, however, is a more permanent arrangement than it sounds, as the principle, "Unto him that hath shall be given," obtains, making it easy for a ruling house to continue ruling.

The Jurs appear to have neither marked adhesions nor divisions, but to be a weak tribe living on the borders of a strong one, and desiring peace and quietness before every thing. The little I know of the Nuers leads me to believe that they resemble the Dinkas rather than the Shilluks, and have adopted "decentralisation" as their guiding principle.

Traditions.—The Shilluk traditions as to their own origin are closely bound up in the story of their royal house, and so differ, as one would naturally expect, from those of the Dinkas. The nature of the difference might also be foreseen. The Bahr el Ghazal Dinkas, so far as we can learn, have been stationary in one place, and have not, except in the case of their recent White Nile offshoot, overlapped into fresh territory. Consequently their stories are not concerned with locality, which is taken for granted, but rather with the problem of how they were first created. The Shilluks, on the other hand, migrated, and occupied new lands. Their stories, then, have for their object primarily to explain how they came to be where they are, and accordingly deal with their Hegra, and the prowess of their kings.

Villages.—The Shilluk villages differ markedly from those of the Eastern Bahr el Ghazal Dinkas. Among the Shilluks, the houses stand on the ground-level and are grouped close together, forming a compact community. The Dinkas, on the other hand, build their houses on piles to raise them off the ground-level, and a village straggles for miles, each house being as remote from its neighbours as possible, and surrounded by its own patch of cultivation. This difference is not, however, an essential one, but probably depends on the fact that the Shilluks, united under a ruler, have less to fear; whereas the Dinka, trusting nobody, is impelled to isolate himself as far as he possibly can. I have been told that the Western Bahr el Ghazal Dinkas (in the angle between the Jur and Arab Rivers) build in true villages and on the ground like the Shilluks.
It is thus apparent that there are wide differences between the tribes, but none of a kind inconsistent with a common origin. The only reservation is that, if from a common stock, the tribes must have separated in remote times.

On the other hand, there are so many similarities, that in describing the group many points may be spoken of as common to all the tribes. To begin with physical characters, the type is so constant that, from the appearance alone, it is practically impossible to say that this man is a Shilluk and that a Dinka or Nuer. All alike are spare, hard, angular fellows, with elongated heads, prominent jaws and teeth, thin but serviceable legs, and a marked development of heel. The head-dress might give one an idea of the wearer's tribe, as the Shilluks are the most elaborate in this respect, often with great diligence working their hair into a "Sainty Nimbus," as Father Banholzer has aptly called it, or perhaps into a fashion that resembles nothing so much as a Grecian helmet deprived of its plumes. These head-dresses are made permanent by treatment with grease and clay. The Dinka is less remarkable in this respect, often confining himself to a circle of matted pendants, decorative with red clay; and, in fact, when in full fighting trim, concealing his hair by a beautifully made grass-matted helmet, decorated either with a fine clump of ostrich feathers worked into its texture, or a single long feather from the very top of the helmet. The Nuers apparently resemble the Dinkas in this, as do also the Jurs.

In personal decoration, too, and what may be called, out of politeness, clothing, the tribes exactly resemble each other. The women wear leather aprons from waist to knee, one hanging down in front and the other behind. The men are naked, or sometimes clad to the extent of a sheep's tail or a piece of leopard-skin suspended from a waist-string behind. Ivory armlets, made with great skill from a section of elephant tusk, and worn above the biceps, are the favourite decoration of the men, though brass or copper wristlets, a necklace of beads, or a grass-plaited anklet, often serve to make the costume more complete. A few throwing spears, a club-shield, and an ebony club are carried; and a bunch of charms, the most important part of the defensive preparations, is worn round the neck.

The women are magnificent with beads and brass rings, whenever they can obtain them, but leave the elaborate head-dress to the men—in fact, usually shave the head. This latter is worthy of note, as it marks them out from the Arabs on the one hand and the
Western Negroes on the other. A border of coloured beads round the edge of the leather apron is greatly admired, and a series of little brass rings (the little rings used for fixing the buttons to the coats of a brutal and licentious soldiery are priceless) are usually worn in the ears by really smart women. In appearance the women, while young, are rather handsome; but the hard life (their destiny is to constantly crush and shift grain to make food for the warriors, their lords) soon deprives them of their beauty, and they rapidly wither to the half-clad, half-fed, and entirely repulsive hags that horrify the traveller. The quality most characteristic of the whole group is the interest which the tribes devote to breeding, tending and understanding cattle. As is also the case among the Galla tribes, traditions give all honour to the possessor of large herds; and indicate even the tending of cattle as a more suitable occupation for a man and a warrior than the plebeian cultivation of the soil. Since, too, cattle are the only currency in large transactions (iron hoes, beads, brass rings, &c., being reserved for smaller bargainings, and being to cattle much as our pennies are to golden sovereigns), the element of avarice joins with the worthier motives of hardihood and self-respect to raise the cult of fat cattle above all others. The Shilluk tradition of the origin of the royal house claims a God-sent cow as the first begetter of the race. National or popular songs celebrate favourite bulls, and the most complimentary nickname for a fine young spearman is "Majoke," which means the leading bull of the herd. The children amuse themselves with making clay models of cattle, the women sing of them, the men devote all their time to them, and are ready to fight to a finish in defence of their own or in the lifting of their neighbours' herds. All drink the milk and regard it as the best of foods, only excelled by the rarely tasted beef to be had when, on some unique occasion of rejoicing, an incredibly extravagant owner kills a bullock.

In Europe some of us pursue wealth, some honour, some merely amusement or food. To the White Nile tribesmen all these motives—wealth, honour, amusement, and food itself—are alike included in the pursuit of cattle. The mention of cattle naturally calls up the idea of wives, since these latter are purchased and the price paid in cattle. The customs relating to marriage and sexual morality are practically identical throughout the whole group, and depend almost entirely on the high intrinsic value of a woman as a marketable asset. The cynic might well claim to have here traced purity to its origin in an almost sordid materialism when he finds among primitive tribes that lust is restricted by customs as
binding as laws, not because immoral, but simply as inexpedient. A man pays from five to ten cows for a wife, and hopes to receive as good a price for his daughters; and as for his sons, they can help him with his herds; so it is well worth while to be clear as to his actual ownership. One suggestive comparison will make the position of the women clearer. Among the primitive Dinkas adultery is usually punished by the killing of the man, but the woman, too valuable to be destroyed, is spared. But with the Arabs, who have arrived at an idea of honour, the woman is killed, as her crime has brought disgrace upon her house, and the enormity of her offence outweighs her monetary value. Some of the Dinka sub-tribes and many sections of the group itself permit adultery to be compounded for by payment of a fine, in cattle, of course. In fact, the whole arrangement is business-like and material to a rather revolting extent. I have before me as I write a tabulated list of marriage laws, discovered to be in use among the White Nile section of the Dinkas (Captain Wilson’s report). They relate to nothing except the decisions as to the payments of cattle for wives, the return of the cattle if the wife prove unsatisfactory, the safeguarding of the owner of the woman (be he the father or husband) from loss through fraud, and the disposal of this valuable female property on the death of the proprietor. For instance, here, adultery may be compounded by a fine. The husband can put aside (if he like) the wife, demanding back the purchase-money from her father. The father, in turn, is entitled to recover this amount from the man who has been guilty. Again, if a wife dies before she has been received into her husband’s house, he receives back the entire price he paid for her; and so on.

It is obvious that the idea of morality for its own sake does not emerge. The important point is that the owner of a woman shall be at no monetary loss through the unbridled passions of another. One restriction, however, does exist, founded on a sanction other than mere property. Marriage with blood-relations is strictly forbidden. A cattle-raising people would probably have early discovered, by analogy, that such unions are unwise.

In spite of this absence of ideals, the position of the woman is not entirely bad, but in many ways compares favourably with that of her sister in Mohammedan communities. Safeguarded by these legal restrictions and customs, she is free to mingle with her fellow-creatures, unhampered by the severe barriers imposed by Islam. Love, as contrasted with passion, may be a highly complex growth denied to very primitive peoples; but maternal love is the most
essential of instincts, and is as strong on the White Nile as on the Thames. So the women are good mothers, and, incidentally, good wives.

The daily life of the tribesmen must, on the whole, be a pleasant one. In the wet season there is considerable work to be done in sowing and weeding the durrha fields, and, later, gathering and storing the harvest. The process of weeding is of the greatest importance, as the grain is planted at the time of the early rains, the ground having been cleared by fire; and the young durrha would have but a poor chance in competition with the rank and luxurious grass that grows with a rapidity almost visible from day to day at this season of the year. Parties work steadily over the fields every few days with their iron hoes. After about two or three months the durrha has so far asserted itself as to demand all the available moisture and nourishment from the soil, and weeding can then be discontinued. A great deal of this work seems to devolve upon the women, as the men prefer to look after the cattle. In the dry season, when there is little to be done and grain is still plentiful from the last crop, people begin to move about in a sociable manner, relations visiting each other, fishing parties starting for the now shallow rivers, young men making expeditions to trade their beads, iron hoes, ivory, &c., with their neighbours, or, if already wealthy enough, starting in search of a wife. The older men do not work at all, but at this time of year the juniors must exert themselves to patch up the houses and make them safe against the coming rains.

Among Europeans the struggle for existence has become so artificial, so complex and so engrossing, that we tend to be interested only in the struggle itself. We are apt to lose sight of the end in devoting ourselves to the means, and we sometimes forget that our "output," be it literary or scientific, might be justly expressed in terms of the food that it brings us.

The Shilluk is so much more direct in his methods, that when we see him devoting his whole life to his cattle, his crops, and his women, it is difficult to regard him as more than a mere feeding and breeding machine. To do so is to make a grave error. Reticent as he is, and jealous of his thoughts and beliefs, the White Nile tribesman has his store of traditions and ideas, his songs, and the transmitted recollections of old victories and prowess to interest him and to evoke the pride of race that is so strong in him.

The following is the Shilluk story of the origin of the race. It is taken from a most interesting paper by the Rev. J. K. Giffen, of the American Mission on the Sobat.
"Jo-uk," the god whom the people worship, or rather whom they fear, sent to earth a white cow called De-ung-Ad-duk. She came up out of the Nile, and gave birth to a man-child, Ko-la. The third in direct line from Ko-la was named Oo-qua. No mention is made of the mothers, or where they came from.

Oo-qua, in his wanderings by the river, often saw two maidens come from the water to play in the shallows near the bank. They were very beautiful, with flowing hair; but Oo-qua was not so blinded as to fail to notice that their lower extremities were uncommonly like the tail-end of a crocodile. In spite of this, the young man found them sufficiently attractive, and often asked them for a drink of water (not quite ingenuous, I fear, as the river was there for his drinking if he really required it), but was always refused.

One day he saw them seated together on this bank. The opportunity was more than he could resist. Stealthily approaching, he seized them and, heedless of their clamour, carried them off to his house.

Responsive to their cries appeared their father, hitherto unseen by Oo-qua, and whose very existence had not even been suspected. He must have been in painful contrast to his pretty daughters, for while the left side of his body was human, the right was green, and frankly saurian; an arrangement with fewer aesthetic possibilities than the bilateral symmetry of his children.

"Who are you?" asked Oo-qua. "I am called," replied the parent, "Ood-dil-jil, and you have stolen my daughters Nik-kai-ya and Oong-wadh. Why do you want them?" "They shall be my wives," said Oo-qua. "You are mistaken," answered Ood-dil-jil, "they can never marry; moreover, they can give birth but once!"

Oo-qua, however, in spite of these hard sayings, made a feast and married the ladies. Nik-kai-ya belied her foretold character by giving birth to five children in all, two sons and three daughters. Her sister, however, had one son only.

The eldest son of Oo-qua, by Nik-kia-ya, was Nya-Kang, a person of unequalled importance in Shilluk tradition. He favoured his grandfather and his mother by being partly crocodile in appearance. He was the first of the Shilluk kings, and is deified in their religion, being in the position, perhaps, of an intermediary between god and man, as to him, and not direct to Jo-uk, sacrifices are made.

Oo-qua had three other sons by a third wife (as to where she came from, nothing is said). On the death of Oo-qua, a quarrel arose as to whether Doo-wad (the eldest of these three) or Nya-Kang should succeed him.
The quarrel waxed so fierce that Nya-Kang, with his brothers and sisters, and also his half-brother, Jew, the only son of the crocodile lady Oong-wadh (i.e., all the “Crocodile” stock), fled, and after a long journey settled at Fashoda (as the Shilluks on the left bank think, or at Sobat, as those on the right bank assert), there to found the great kingdom of the Shilluks that still exists.

To more rapidly people his kingdom, Nya-Kang, who seems to have possessed magic or divine powers, changed hippopotami, crocodiles, antelopes and other wild creatures into men and women. When these had sufficiently increased and multiplied to ensure the future of the race, all the directly animal-created men and women were destroyed, in order that this origin might not be remembered.

Their descendants form the common people, as opposed to the royal house of the blood of Oo-qua. These latter still exercise authority, and are said to preside over all religious ceremonies. Father Banholzer also mentions that the descendants of the kings are called “Gwared,” while the common people are called “Ororo,” and are entirely subject to their aristocracy. It would be interesting to carefully compare the physical characters of the Gwared with those of the Ororo, as among primitive people the aristocracy is so often a conquering tribe, with its despised and vanquished enemies for its slaves. The contemptuous story of the origin from wild beasts also may point to hostility between the classes, unless, indeed, it be connected in some way with Totemism, which may well be the case.

To return to our legend. The mother, Nik-kai-ya, seems to have accompanied the flight of her sons, and to have reached their new country. It is said that she still exists, and will never die. She is able to assume different forms, but her favourite one is that of the crocodile, and she is always near the river. In her rôle of crocodile she takes people from time to time. This is looked upon as an honour to the family of the victim. The latter, indeed, sometimes returns, and a case of this resurrection from the Nile was recorded by Mr. Giffen as having very recently happened on the Sobat.

Nik-kai-ya is even invoked as a judge in complicated cases, her decisions being particularly unerring as to the parentage of illegitimate children. The suspected men are taken to the river bank. A goat is also tied up close to them, either as a sacrifice or to attract a crocodile. The guilty man is recognised and carried off by Nik-kai-ya. One imagines that, with this ordeal in view, many men prefer to “own up” and pay the fine.

The Kings.—The list of twenty-six kings from Nya-Kang to the
present "Melik," was obtained by the Rev. J. K. Giffen at Sobat; and Father Banholzer, on the left bank, independently drew up a list of the same number, with a very close correspondence between the names; showing that, though with no means of record beyond oral traditions, history is not forgotten among the Shilluks.

Father Banholzer talks of the appointment of kings by combined inheritance and selection; in other words, the kings are selected from within a certain group of claimants, all of the royal stock.

Banholzer’s report mentions selections from among the "Sons of the Kings," an elastic term which may include near relations perhaps. The right is, however, acknowledged to belong *primarily* to the sons of the late king, and even then usually covers a wide field, in a nation whose kings vie with Solomon in the number of their wives. The descendants of the kings constitute a nobility, the "G-wared," and, as has been mentioned, exact respect and service from the "Ororo," or common people.

Mr. Giffen has ascertained that there is also a hereditary priesthood from the family of Jew, son of Oo-qua and Oong-wadh. The selection of the king takes place at Debalo in the Kwom district, and is carried out by the leading men of the country from among the royal claimants. On being selected, the new king proceeds at once to Fashoda, the royal headquarters, and the defeated rivals find it convenient to leave Debalo as quickly as possible also. The life of a king would appear to be precarious, as there are many malcontents among the disappointed candidates for the throne, and many enemies as a result of the royal exactions of cattle. The late king had his food prepared in his presence or "tasted" for him. He is said to have slept in the day and remained all night awake and armed. It was his custom, when hearing complaints, to place the complainant outside his courtyard, whence the latter shouted the story of his wrongs. A picture of the home-life of this monarch is recorded by Banholzer: "10 a.m. to 3 p.m. was the usual time for the king to sleep; it was the duty of nine girls to be at his side, fanning him, during his sleep; he meanwhile lying quite naked on his sheep-skin, like a black snake."

To constitute his penal code, the king has the unwritten but very binding laws and customs of the tribes. Disobedience of these laws is punished by a royal raid on the village of the delinquents; and the cattle and women that accrue to the king through the misdemeanours of his subjects make the administration of justice a most profitable source of revenue. This is, no doubt, open to all sorts of abuses; but on the whole the system appears to suit the
people and the country. To quote again from Father Banholzer's description of the last monarch: "He was a strong king. People from Kaka, as far as Junago, feared him. Very few thefts were committed during his time. Unmarried girls could go any distance without the company of men; whilst disputes, rows, &c., were comparatively rare. Witchcraft and other secret arts, which lead to much trouble, were prohibited. Dances were regulated." The efficiency of the whole system depends on "a strong king."

Religion.—The religion of the Shilluks appears to be primitive in the extreme, but by no means non-existent, as Baker would let us believe. Probably fear, rather than love, is the active principle of their attitude to their God; but such expressions as "God has carried you," "God keep you," as greetings between friends, imply some genial attributes at least to their deity. When ill, a common lamentation is "Er ra, Jo-uk? (or why, Creator?)"—a touching repetition of the cry of puzzled and suffering humanity in all ages and all creeds. Jo-uk, the creator, is conceived to be a vague being who permeates and influences the fortunes of men, and who must be appeased by offerings. These offerings, however, are made to the deified Nya-Kang, and not direct to Jo-uk. Dances seem closely bound up with religion.

I have mentioned the hereditary priesthood, and quote the following statement on the subject from a letter of Mr. Giffen's: "As to priests, I understand that they hold their office as hereditary. Jew, who was the brother of the Nya-Kang, was made his priest and prime minister; and from the line of Jew are the priests to-day. These priests, and there is one in every village or group of villages, with a sacred spear strike the first blow at every sacrifice. This seems to be their chief official function, although they are held in esteem above others." Doubtless there is much to be learnt about the Shilluks beliefs, and many interesting points to be settled, as, for instance, the relations of priests to magicians, doctors, and rain-producers on the one hand, and to the tribal morality and law on the other.

As to the religion of the Dinkas, they too believe in a god and creator, known as Deng-Deet. Their information about him is of a more familiar nature than that of the Shilluks about Jo-uk. They attribute to him a wife and family, and a malignant relative, expelled from heaven, who corresponds to a devil. Their traditions record that men were formed from boiling fat by the wife of Deng-Deet, at his request.

There are various points about both the Shilluk and Dinka
traditions that call up a suspicion of ancestor-worship. For instance, the deification of Nya-Kang and his mother Nik-kai-ya is a case in point; and these ancestor-gods, again, were the descendants of a white cow, sent from Jo-uk, and, no doubt, divine. The family party worshipped by the Dinkas, and credited with the creation or fabrication of the human race, suggests a group of ancestors elevated by accumulating traditions from earth to heaven.

As to the beliefs of the Nuers and Jurs nothing has yet been described.

Description of the White Nile Tribes.—The question of the origin of these White Nile tribes is very obscure. Baker inclined to think them the aboriginal people of the land, but founded his opinion on slender evidence. In fact, he was not always consistent in that opinion.

Glancing at the group and its environment, a sharp line of demarcation—founded on such solid distinctions as the average shape of the skull, the general physical type, and the possession of a devotion to cattle—is apparent between the Dinkas and their western neighbours, the Golo, Bogo, and ultimately the Niam-Niam tribes. To the east and south-east no such line can be drawn, but tribes shades off into tribe gradually and imperceptibly, until Hamitic or mixed Hamitic and Semitic (Abyssinian) peoples are met with.

Speaking of the Gallas (a Hamitic tribe), Keane lays stress on the following points: "All still retain their tribal organisation, each tribe comprising two social divisions—the aristocratic “Protuma” (herdsmen) and the plebeian “Argatha” or “Kutto” (tillers of the soil). These probably represent the agricultural aborigines subdued by the pastoral Gallas, who at some remote period penetrated from the north into their present domains, where they still regard them as invaders." . . . "Some are still Pagans." . . . "The men wear a cotton loin-cloth saturated with butter . . . and ivory armlets, one for every enemy killed in battle." "The dressed-skin smock and short tunic of the women are supplemented by copper or tin bracelets and a profusion of glass beads worn round the neck. Polygamy is prevalent." . . . "All authority is centred in the Protuma class." These points remind one of the Shilluks. The two classes, one aristocratic and concerning itself entirely with cattle, the other subordinate and plebeian, and compelled to carry out the less distinguished work of agriculture, are very like the Gwared and the Ororo.

One thing at least is certain, that the White Nile tribes have been settled in their present lands from remote antiquity; and if
related to the Gallas, probably preceded them—an earlier wave of invasion from the east or north. Of course, to mention such an origin as possible is the merest speculation. Before offering it as an opinion it would require confirmation by the results of closer study of the language, beliefs and physical characters of both tribes than has yet been made. They are, as I have said, clearly marked off from the tribes to their west, and very hostile to them, and full of unspeakable contempt for cannibalism. They, with their lower incisors removed, and their contempt for cannibalism, contrast with their neighbours of the filed teeth, sharp and horribly suggestive, and with avowed or tolerated man-eating propensities. One is almost tempted to find here an explanation of the removal of the incisors among the White Nile peoples that puzzled Baker so much. May it not have arisen as a symbolical distinction between them and their hated enemies? However, one should fight against the temptation to speculate as to the origin of savage customs, although it is so much less troublesome than to investigate. With this sentiment as a corrective to the perhaps rash suggestions of a Hamitic origin for the White Nile group my article must close.