

witnesses testified, the conduct of many Italian officials was such as to create acute tension among the people of the land. Governor Dulio's somnolent inactivity, which evinced solicitude mainly for the customs, in some respects tended towards detent, but rapacious customs exactions caused hardship. Dulio established four Bezas per day as the rate payable by a slave to his master if he undertook paid employment for someone else when his master did not require his services.

Reference is frequently made by the Chiesi-Travelli and other contemporary reports to slaves of the interior; it should be explained that slavery did not exist in the northern part of the Italian colony, nor in the greater part of Somaliland. As is made clear by works of writers familiar with that area before and during the period immediately under review, while slavery had no part in the typical Somali economy, certain tribes which to-day number about two per cent., are described by European observers as low caste tribes, the Midgans, Yebirs and Tomals, who, like the Gipsies have a language of their own which is not usually imparted to others. They are not unlike other Somalis in appearance, but tend to be somewhat shorter. Like the Gipsies the Yebirs deal in charms and omens; they attend births and marriages. The Tomals are craftsmen in metal and produce knives, hatchets, swords and spears. The Midgans, who are the most numerous are workers in leather, making saddles, shoes, wallets and prayer mats; they are hardy fighters with bows and arrows, skilled hunters and trappers, employing cleverly trained dogs. They live among the pastoral tribes who are rich in flocks and herds. The position of these craftsmen is not at all that of serfs, though some Midgans may work as hewers of wood and drawers of water for the herdsman whose own function is to care for their animals. Most of the drudgery, both heavy and light, in the pastoral tribes is traditionally performed by the wives of the proud nomadic herdsmen. Burton, in his famous "First Steps in East Africa," describes a couple of these gallant damsels who accompanied his caravan and performed hard work of every type. He expresses his admiration for their cheerful zeal for all needful labour. Seeing, as one may do to-day, a group of slender Somali women, charmingly robed in draperies of harmonious colours, gracefully reclining in the shade at noonday, one could not imagine them bearing heavy burdens.

The leather and metal work of the Midgans and Tomal craftsmen are essential to the pastoral population and are part of the distribution of functions, which, in one form or another, has been developed by peoples all over the world at some stage in their evolution.

Though slavery had no part in the northern Somaliland economy, the slave trade existed in Italian Somaliland in its complete and unregenerate form. On page 31 of the Chiesi-Travelli Report, Lieut. Badolo is quoted thus:—

*"Everyone knew that Lugh and Bardera were veritable markets for slaves, that almost all the askaris of the district had them, and*

*that the caravans escorted by Signor Icheri from Gesira to Mogadishu transported as much white ivory as there was black."*

Here is a clear indication of the existence of the classic slave trade in which the African people were bought and sold; slaves were habitually described as "black ivory," and we have this statement of the Assistant Governor of the colony that an official of the Chartered Company escorted these caravans.

In the classic African slave trade, "the African heart disease," as Henry Drummond well described it when it was at its height more than fifty years ago, slaves, ivory and guns were inseparable; guns to effect captures, slaves to carry ivory on the long march to the coast, and then if they survived the terrible ordeals of the journey, to be sold with the ivory for shipment overseas. The small local craft, the dhows, drawing shallow water only, could put out to sea where the vigilant watchers on naval ships could not observe them.

The phrase, "there is a considerable transit trade via Lugh and Bardera on the Juba, which is chiefly concerned with the products of big game hunting," obviously covered much—of all the products of big game hunting, none could compare with ivory; of all the big game hunted, none could compare with man. The Chiesi-Travelli Report quotes a statement that the profits of the slave traffic were 25 per cent. but they may have been much greater.

In the South Eastern corner of Italian Somaliland in the cultivated areas along the banks of the Juba and Webbi Shebelle which are irrigated from the river, some 44,000 people are now engaged in agriculture, a proportion of whom speak a Bantu language, whilst others have adopted the Somali dialect of their neighbours. In the comparatively fertile area between the rivers, which is dependent on rainfall irrigation, being too far from the rivers to receive water from them, is a population of about 292,000 people who are engaged in mixed farming. They speak Sab, which is closely allied to Somali.

What the conditions were in these areas when the Italians began to establish their colony has been obscured by the many diverse statements made by the Government, the officials of the Chartered Companies, and by their various employees in the colony, when enquiries were held. The following statements by Enrico Perducci, Italian Resident in the Lower Juba under the Bendir Company, to the Chiesi-Travelli Commission, and reproduced in their report, appear to be substantially correct. Perducci was regarded by the two Commissioners as one of the most trustworthy men employed by the Bendir Company. The Commissioners therefore appointed him as provisional Assistant Governor under Ugo Ferrandi, when Governor Dulio and his assistant, Lieut. Badolo, were dismissed for maladministration. Perducci stated that an agricultural population of about 35,000 occupied the entire length of the east bank of the Juba, to the width of a mile inside the Italian colony, the west bank being then held by the British. The fact that only about 44,000 of