

"I got to Dara alone, about 4 p.m., long before my escort, having ridden eighty-five miles in a day and a-half. About seven miles from Dara I go into a swarm of flies, and they annoyed me and my camel so much, that we jolted along as fast as we could. Upwards of 300 were on my camel's head, and I was covered with them. I suppose that the queen fly was among them. If I had no escort of men, I had a large escort of these flies. I came on my people like a thunderbolt. As soon as they had recovered, the salute was fired. My poor escort! Where is it? Imagine to yourself a single, dirty, red-faced man on a camel, ornamented with flies, arriving in the divan all of a sudden. The people were paralysed, and could not believe their eyes."

SLAVE-HUNTERS OVERAWED.

"Dara, Sept. 2, 1877.—No dinner after my long ride, but a quiet night, forgetting my miseries. At dawn I got up, and putting on the golden armour the Khedive gave me, went out to see my troops, and then mounted my horse, and with an escort of my robbers of Bashi-Bazouks, rode out to the camp of the other robbers, three miles off. I was met by the son of Sebehr—a nice-looking lad of twenty-two years—and rode through the robber bands. There were about 3,000 of them—men and boys. I rode to the tent in the camp; the whole body of chiefs were dumbfounded at my coming among them. After a glass of water, I went back, telling the son of Sebehr to come with his family to my divan. They all came, and sitting there in a circle, I gave them in choice Arabic my ideas—that they meditated revolt; that I knew it; and that they should now have my ultimatum—viz., that I would disarm them and break them up. They listened in silence, and then went off to consider what I had said. They have just now sent in a letter stating their submission, and I thank God for it. They have pillaged the country all round, and I cannot help it. . . . I am running a great risk in going into the slaver's nest with only four companies, but I will trust to God to help me, and the best policy with these people is a bold one.

A CARAVAN OF SLAVES.

"*Entre nous*, I think I am conveying from Shaka to Obeid a caravan of Slaves. I cannot help it. One man says that seven women who are with him are his wives! I cannot disprove it. There are numbers of children—the men say that they are all their offspring. . . . When you have got the ink which has soaked into blotting-paper out of it, then Slavery will cease in these lands.

"I have not yet made up my mind what to do about the Slaves and the Slave question; but I mean to stop, and that at once, the Slave-markets at Katarif, Galabat and Shaka; next, I must prevent the raids on the black tribes near the Bahr Gazelle, for which I have given orders. Galabat is a place under a semi-independent chief of the Tokrookia. The Tokrookia are immigrants from Darfour, and are a fierce set. Then at Zeila there is another semi-independent chief, of much power with the tribes, named Aboubec'r. He is a great Slave exporter, and is too strong to touch unless you have plenty of troops. . . . It turns out that the men of Sebehr's son had nought to do with one of the Slave-gangs I met. The Slaves came from Dara, and had been captured and sold to the pedlars by my own officers and men. . . . One of the Shaka men who is riding with me tells me that hundreds and hundreds die on the road, and that when they are too weak to go the pedlars shoot them. I believe this man to be quite truthful."

The risk that Gordon ran by going almost alone into the camp of the greatest Slave-dealer in the Soudan can scarcely be over-rated.