

PREFACE

THE following pages contain an account of an expedition which roamed through extensive tracts of Central Africa under the author's leadership during the years 1907-8.

This expedition had for its aim a systematic investigation of the German East African Protectorate, the Central African rift-valley, in its expansion from Lake Kiwu to Lake Albert, and finally the north-eastern confines of the Congo State. It ended by crossing the Dark Continent.

The plates used to illustrate the text have been selected from amongst some 5,000 photographs. Though some of them may not possibly pass muster before very critical eyes, it must be remembered that many of them had to be developed in our tents. The troublesome dust blown up by gusts of wind adhered at times to the coated sides of the plates, and did not, of course, improve them. Those of the undeveloped plates sent on the long route from the centre of Africa to Germany, despite most careful packing and hermetical sealing, were subjected to the greatest changes of temperature, which have often worked injuriously. It is mainly due to the skill and pains bestowed upon them by those who developed them that many plates which were feared to be hopelessly spoilt were saved.

I owe a deep debt of thanks to those who helped in such a spirited manner with magnificent material support, and, in fact, enabled the expedition to take place. I harbour a special feeling of gratitude towards Geheimrat Hans Meyer, of Leipzig. The successful inauguration of the expedition and the entire, carefully studied plan of its execution were due to his initiative. It was through his exertions as President of the Commission for