

# WELCOME AND VISITORS

Do unto others  
As Ye Would  
That They  
Should  
Do unto  
You.

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## Through the Dark Continent.

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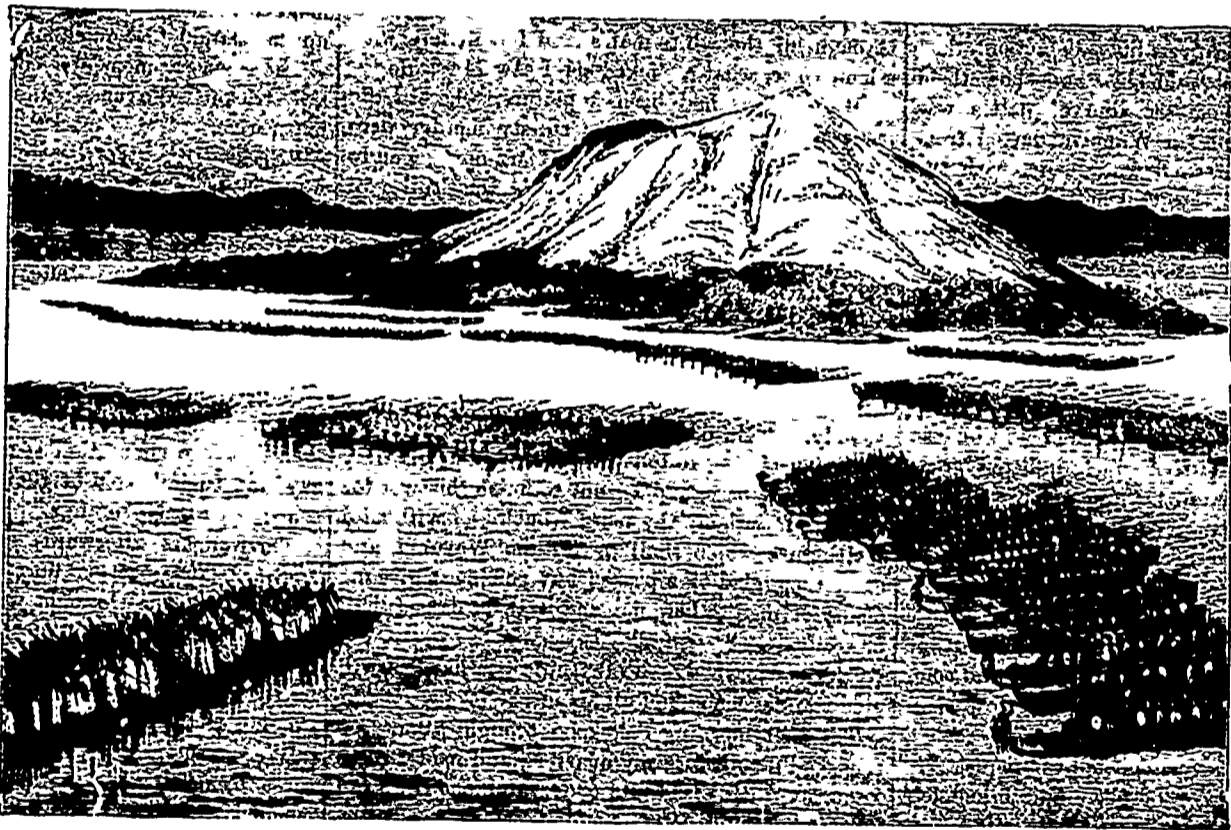
IX.

On the 14th September, 1875, the Emperor of Uganda decided to give battle to his enemies—the Wavuma. A hut of ample size had been erected on the mountain slope overlooking the strait, into which Mtesa retired. When the Emperor was seated, the "prophets of Baal," or the priests and priestesses of the Muzimu, or witchcraft, came up—more than a hundred in number—and offered

battle, these wizards and witches chant their incantations, and exhibit their medicines on high before the foe; while the gourd-and-pebble-bearers sound a hideous alarm, enough to cause the nerves of any man, except an African, to relax at once. The spectators were seated, safe from harm or danger, on the slope of Nakaranga mountain, from the water's edge to the mountain summit, tier above tier, and rank above rank, in thousands upon thousands. At a given signal from their chiefs, forth from the reeds and rushes shot the prows of the Wavuma canoes; and then, giving utterance to

This was all the battle; but, short as it was, it had sufficed to prove to me that Mtesa would be unable to take Ingira Island, garrisoned and defended as it was by such a determined foe.

During the afternoon of this day, Mtesa held a grand levee, and when all were assembled, he addressed them publicly, to the effect that in a few days another battle would be fought, but, as he had heard very important news, he intended to wait a while to ascertain if it was true. Suddenly, on the 18th September, at early dawn, orders were communicated to the chiefs to prepare for battle. The



GREAT NAVAL BATTLE BETWEEN THE WAGANDA AND THE WAVUMA.

the charms to Mtesa, one after another, in a most tedious, ceremonious way, and to all of them Mtesa condescended to point his imperial forefinger.

The chief priest was a most fantastically dressed madman. It is customary before commencing a battle to carry all the potent medicines or charms of Uganda—thus propitiating the dreadful Muzimu or evil spirits—to the monarch, that he may touch or point his forefinger at them. They consist of dead lizards, bits of wood, hide, nails of dead people, claws of animals, and beaks of birds—a hideous miscellany—with mysterious compounds of herbs and leaves, carefully enclosed in vessels ornamented with vari-coloured beads. During the

most shrill war-cries, the rowers impelled them from all quarters, to the number of 194, with an extraordinary velocity upon the Waganda line, which now began to retire slowly towards the causeway. On the causeway, at its farthest extremity, were assembled a force of a hundred musketeers and four small boat howitzers, under the command of the Katekiro. But, owing to the want of skill of the cannoniers and the nervousness of the musketeers, very little damage was inflicted on the Wavuma; but the noise and whirring of lead and iron sufficed to check them, and caused them to withdraw, with much of the baffled aspect of hungry crocodiles cheated of their prey.

first intelligence of it that I received was from the huge war-drums, which summoned both sailors and warriors to action. But first a burzah, or council, was held. At night, gossipy Sabadu, whose retentive brain I knew I could trust, conveyed to me a faithful report of the proceedings; and I cannot do better than give it to the reader in Sabadu's language:—

"Ah! master, you have missed a sight. I never saw Mtesa so angry as he was to-day. Oh, it was awful! His eyes were as large as my fists. They jumped from their sockets, and they were glowing as fire. Didn't the chiefs tremble! They were as children, whimpering and crying for forgiveness.