

Church still holds in reverence. His face reminded me of a deep still well; the tones of his voice were so calm that unconsciously they compelled me to imitate him. He expressed himself as only too glad that I should explore his country. It was a land, he said, that white men ought to know. My parting with the genial old man, who must be about sixty years old now, was very affecting. He shook my hands many times, saying each time that he was sorry my visit must be so short.

From the 17th of January 1875, up to 7th April 1876, we had been engaged in tracing the extreme southern sources of the Nile, from the marshy plains and cultivated uplands where they are born, down to the mighty reservoir called the Victoria Nyanza. We had circumnavigated the entire expanse; penetrated to every bay, inlet, and creek; became acquainted with almost every variety of wild human nature. We had travelled hundreds of miles to and fro on foot along the northern coast of the Victorian Sea. We had then struck south to the Alexandra Nile, the principal affluent of Victoria Lake.

During our march, ancient "Bull," the last of all the canine companions which left England with me, borne down by weight of years and a land journey of about 1,500 miles, succumbed. With bulldog tenacity, though he often staggered and moaned, he made strenuous efforts to keep up, but at last, lying down in the path, he plainly bemoaned the weakness of body that had conquered his will, and soon after died—his eyes to the last looking forward along the track he had so bravely tried to follow.

We were making capital marches. The petty kings, though they exacted a small interchange of gifts, which compelled me to disburse cloth a little more frequently than was absolutely necessary, were not insolent, nor so extortionate as to prevent our intercourse being of the most friendly character. But on the day we arrived at Urangwa, lo! there came up, in haste, a messenger to tell us that the phantom, the bugbear, the terror whose name silences the children, and makes women's hearts bound with fear; that Mirambo himself was coming—that he was only two camps, or about twenty miles, away—that he had an immense army of Ruga-Ruga (bandits) with him!

I had 175 men under my command, and we had many boxes of ammunition. The king of Urangwa said, "You will stop to fight Mirambo, will you not?"