

Rabbai Empia, 22 June, 1848

Dear Sir!

Your kind and interesting letter of the 7th of April last reached this place on the 14th of the same month together with some other letters & newspapers. The box of biscuits you so kindly sent us at the same time, came the more seasonable as I was then preparing for a journey to Jagga, nearly 3 degrees inland in the direction of W.N.W., on which I took with me a good supply of that most valuable article of food. – My dear fellow labourer Dr. Krapf having made known our object to the government of Mombas, which on that occasion not only entirely abstained from making any attempt of impeding or preventing us from our proceeding into the Interior, but at once rendered us all the assistance we could expect, charging the famous caravan-leader, Bana Kheri, whom we had chosen to be my guide, in the most earnest language, to take the utmost care of me. – I started, accompanied by 9 (nine) men, 8 of whom were employed as porters & one as my guide, in the afternoon of the 27th of that month & took the same route I went on my journey to the Katiaro-mountain in the Teita-country, until we came again in the neighbourhood of that mountain where we directed our course, which was W. to the NW., towards another part of the Teita-country, called Boora or Kilimakibomu (the great mountain) which, as I have noticed in the account I gave you of my journey to Teita, forms by far the greatest part of that country, stretching a three days' journey from S. to N. &, as I now learnt, does not consist of only a single range of mountains, but of about 5 or 6 parallel chains, all of which are nearly of the same height from 4 to 5000 feet, with several peaks of about 6000', one of which, which I think to be the highest, is called Veroooga. Those chains of mountains with their beautiful dales & rivulets between them, while they extend to a good distance from S. to N. (or perhaps more accurately from SSW. to NNE.) they, from E. to W., only occupy a space of from 20-30 miles. After having paid a thousand compliments to all kinds of thorns hanging over our narrow & miserable footpath, at one place hollowed out by the rain, at another overgrown with grass easily entangling the feet so much so that once I fell headlong on the ground as did also one of my porters – we arrived on the 3rd of May at the foot of the eastern range of the Boora-mountains in the neighbourhood of the village Dokhavia, which was situated on the top of the mountain. My people made known our arrival by firing the two guns they carried with them, when soon a good number of Teitas made their appearance bringing with them a great plenty of sugarcanes, bananas & Turkish corn for sale. On the day following we ascended the mountain for about half an hour until we reached their plantations, where the sickness of one of my porters & the rainy weather obliged us to make halt until the 6th inst. when we continued our journey across three ranges of the Boora-mountains & their intervening valleys, which generally were under considerable cultivation, the natives planting a great deal of bananas especially besides Turkish & Indian corn, some kinds of beans & the sugarcane, which they also plant on the sides of the mountains. Walking over

the heights of the Boora, the whole landscape around & the fresh air I had to breathe, raised in my mind the most pleasant remembrances of parts of my own native country as also of Switzerland in the neighbourhood of Basle (the Jura-mountains). From the nature of the country the climate cannot be expected to be very healthy. After descending into the third valley we stopt [*sic*] again for several days near the village Mesagnombe and the chief Mainna, whom in contradistinction from the chief of Dohavia I found to be a very thoughtful & understanding man, to whom I could not only fully explain the great object of my journey, but also declare to him the leading truths of the Bible, which, when asked what was the purpose of my visiting this country, I never failed to shew them, telling them that this book contained the word of God whose will it was that all nations should be taught it, for which purpose we had settled with the Wanika to write this book in their own language & to enable them to read it themselves & to understand & to follow it for their temporal & eternal welfare – that our forefathers had lived in a condition like theirs but that through means of that book they not only were brought to a saving knowledge of the will of God, but were also enlightened as regards the things of the body in being able to prepare & manufacture so many useful articles of which in their state of heathenism they had been entirely ignorant – that I therefore was come to ask them whether they were willing to follow the example of our forefathers & to receive teachers as the Wanika had received us & allowed us to dwell with them for their instruction. After hearing about thus much of the object of my journey the people generally contented themselves & began to put great confidence in me, so that it was little necessary to tell them farther of my good intentions & my disinterestedness, that I was not come to search after gold & silver or for the purpose of trading, or only to see this country. This good will toward me was best manifested in assuring me of their earnest desire that I should dwell with them to instruct them in the word of God. Such a consent to my request was given to me in a still more decided manner by the King Masaki in Jagga, than it was the case by the chiefs of Teita, as it may be expected from the nature of the will of a king and that of a chief only.

In the afternoon of the 9th of May we broke up again to continue our journey to Jagga, & arrived about sunset at the side of the small river Gnaro, which unites in itself all the small rivulets of the Boora mountains & goes into the sea in the neighbourhood of Wasseen under the name of Voomba (if I am informed aright). There it was that my guide, recollecting that not very long ago the caravans were obliged to carry with them for their protection 500 pieces of firearms, while ours were only two & myself carried no other weapon but my umbrella, - looked on me with astonishment as to the great changes that had taken place in those quarters – the formidable Waquafi having a few years hence been perfectly driven back into their original confines, a country called Kaftei to the N. of Jagga. The number of firearms, which at present caravans think necessary on the road to Jagga, has been diminished to from 10 to 20. 10 my guide had thought requisite for our little caravan also, but we told him that the purpose for which

we would travel to Jagga commanded us to trust in Him alone, whose Kingdom we sought to establish in those regions.

The only footpath that connects Teita with Jagga is that over Dafeta, which however my guide did not like to pass through as he was on no good terms with the King of that country, thus I was obliged to walk three livelong days through the wilderness spreading between the Teita country in the East and the Jagga mountains in the W. without any beaten path, which circumstance rendered my journey the more troublesome not so much on account of thorns which in that wilderness are by far not as many as in that to the E. of Teita, but on account of the grass which in many places was full of burs & needles vexing my feet up to the knees most dreadfully. From the Gnaro, where in the early part of the night some hyenas had raised their lamenting voices very near to us, we continued our journey at sunrise on the day following, & as my people knew, that for two days no water was to be found in the desert, travelled with great expedition in order to keep pace with the supply of water calculated to suffice for that space of time. In the course of the forenoon we arrived at a place where the Teitas had dugged many large pits for catching elephants & other animals. The more we entered into the desert, the more we saw the simple vegetation which covers its eastern parts to diminish, the desert thus assuming more & more a very barren aspect, which however seemed diversified by a greater number of all kinds of game. The first we saw were large herds of Giraffes & Zebras. In the afternoon we also saw a rhinoceros at a distance which did hardly allow it to become dangerous to us. On the 11th of May we could already well distinguish the fore-mountains of Jagga. About 10 o'clock I observed one of the tops covered with something remarkably white, which I first thought was a very white cloud, but to ascertain whether I was right in my opinion I asked my guide whether that white thing on the mountain-top was actually a cloud, which question he at first answered in the affirmative. – I don't know whether he did so because in that instant some cloud actually covered part of the mountain, or because he would conceal the truth from me -. Having gone on for some paces I was still more struck with the extreme whiteness of the object in question & asked again the opinion of my guide, but while I was speaking to him and hearing his reply, that yonder was a cloud, but what was that white he did not know – I felt the great delight of recognizing a well known guest of Europe – called snow. All the strange stories we heard in these countries with regard to the great silver-mountain Kilimandsharo in Jagga had now at once become intelligible to me. I immediately told my people that silver of that kind fell down from heaven in my own country at great plenty every year, but that it was of so transient a nature that one hot day would turn it into water, on high mountains however like the Kilimandsharo it was also to be seen throughout the year – when they appeared as if they were not to trust my word at once. Soon after we stopt to rest a little, when in the order I read the Psalms of David I happened to arrive at the 111th, which in the sight of the mountain covered with eternal snow, gave the best expressions to my feelings. At noon my people again saw some rhinoceroses, but at such a distance that I being very shortsighted, could not discover them. Soon after we

saw some elephants with their young ones very near to us. My guide fired his gun to scare them away, but quite unnecessarily, as even before the shot fell, they had respectfully though at slow paces gone their way. In our course in the afternoon I observed the desert to shelve much toward the W., while almost on every side we were surrounded by very large & high mountains – in the E. Teita, W. Jagga, N. Kikumbulu (the southern boundary of Ukambani) SW Ugono. Though we did not on that day reach the river Lomi as we had expected, yet we were well supplied with water in the evening, which we found in the cavity of a large rock. May 12 in the morning we passed the river Lomi, which where we forded it, ran to the S. & was about 10' in breadth & 1 in depth. My guide positively stated that it went into the Panyani, he himself having followed its course to the place where it discharges itself into that river; in what country it took its rise, he could however not tell me. From all that I saw I have not reason to doubt his report. In the evening we forded another river, called Gona, which I found 3 or 4 times as large as the Lomi, & which evidently has its source in the large snow-mountain Kilimandsharo & joins the Lomi after a very short run of its own. In that river (Gona) at which I was nearly at my journey's end, I took a refreshing bath.

In the forenoon of May 13, we at length entered Kilema, one of the many small kingdoms of Jagga. Our way from the river at the banks of which we slept, led first through a thick jungle & then over two trenches which surround the whole kingdom at all those places where the country is not bordered upon by the river Goma on one side & a deep water-brook on the other. Both trenches were about 8' deep & about 10 broad. The bridge over the first one was formed by a single narrow pole, which made it necessary for me to put out my shoes in order to pass it in safety. The space between the first & second trench was meadow-ground & perfectly clear of wood (its breadth about the 3rd part of a mile). Before I passed the latter one, whose bridge was somewhat superior to the first, I had to crawl on my hands & feet through a door about 4' in thickness. Having passed over this bridge also, which I did on my hands & feet like an animal, I found myself in the presence of the King Masaki & his ministers, to whom my arrival had been made known previously. In shaking hands with the King & some other great men I had first according to the custom of the country to seize some grass in my hand, which they had done likewise. After this a sheep was presented to me, which immediately was slaughtered by my guide, in order to get the token of friendship from the King by putting a small piece of the hide of the animal, cut out of the forehead, on the middle finger of my right hand. When this was done, my guide told me that now I was the son of Masaki. After having been conducted into a small hut I delivered to the King a present of the worth of about 10 or 12 dollars, in a small box, the little lock of which seemed to please him more than other articles of much more value. A fork which I had given him together with a knife he had some days after – when we paid him a visit – stuck in his hair! From all I saw I was convinced that the young king was very much pleased at my visit. With regard to the great object of my journey to prepare the way for establishing missions in the Interior of this continent, I was told that I should not go into

another country but stay with him to instruct his people in the word of God as contained in the book which I shewed him. – Masaki is about 24 years of age; his features are expressive of a good intellect as well as a mild disposition; he is like all other kings of Jagga (I have the names of 15 in my journal which are nearly all) absolute in power though surrounded with a council. The greatest of them is however Mamkinga in Madshame, the son of the former Rungua, who appears to have been a great despot. On one day I ascended a mountain of about 2000' in height, from which I got a view over the whole little kingdom of Kilema, which however is not the smallest of all Jagga, which itself is after all no very large country (its greatest extent seems to be only a 3 day's journey) the western side of which at the same time appears to be wholly uninhabited, most likely because on account of the lofty snow-mountain the sun must be expected to rise there at a very late hour. Judging from the extent of the little Kingdom of Kilema, the number of its inhabitants can hardly exceed 3000, & the population of all Jagga will therefore amount to about the same as that of Teita (70000). All the males of Jagga are Wasoro (in the Jagga-language) which word implies the idea of both a slave & a soldier. While not only all domestic business but also the cultivation of the ground is wholly left to the females, the Wasoro, carrying always their spears in their hands (some also shields well made of the hides of Buffaloes), are chiefly employed in the service of the King & the country, *ex. gr.* to stand watch at the different royal cottages (which do not much distinguish themselves from those of his subjects) digging the trenches & keeping them in a good state, forming aqueducts through all parts of the small Kingdom, wherever they find it possible. Besides these public employments the Wasoro also engage themselves in making, together with their implements of war, also those of peace, as hoes, hatchets, knives, various kinds of wooden vessels, snuff-boxes nicely made of pieces of leather, men & women (who have made a good beginning in embroidering by beads) thus evincing great sense for industry & works of art, which they also did by the pleasure they took in inquiring into all the things they saw with me. They also put to me some questions of a geographical & ethnographical nature, so for inst. whether I knew the place of the rising & the setting of the sun – whether it was true that in my country were people so tall as to be able to take hold of the sun! (Such little fables they are told by the mendacious Suaheli, who had also told the chief Mainna in Teita, who had recently visited the coast, that the Wasungu (Europeans) were cannibals!) Much inquiry they made also with regard to sorcery – I was asked whether I could not cause the rain to fall as well as to prevent it – whether I could not cause the lion to kill the men of Marango & Mamba (adjacent countries with which Masaki is at enmity). As to rain I answered them that this was entirely in the hands of God wherefore any man pretending to be able to cause or prevent rain by means of sorcery, was a great liar & deceiver & a robber of God's glory, & with regard to the lion I told them that it was the King's duty to protect his people against the enemy, so he ought likewise to entertain thoughts of peace & love towards him as his neighbour. In declaring "uganga" (sorcery) to be deceit I was always borne out by my guide, Bana Khai, I don't know whether from some conviction of his own or only from a desire to please me. We had made it a condition with him,

that if he would be my guide to Jagga, he was to abstain entirely from all sorts of uganga, & by the grace of God our whole little caravan having safely arrived again each at his home, & having at all places many times firmly testified against that work of darkness, I have much reason to believe that its use suffered some shock in the minds of many.

On the 25th May I ascended with my guide on the special permission of Masaki the mountain mentioned above (2000' high), where a most extensive view was presented to my eye, seeing over an ocean-like plain extending to the S. & SE. & E. at distances of at least 200 miles respectively, for in the SE. we could well distinguish (without the use of a telescope, as I had none with me except a very small one of some inches in length, which I gave the King, neither was I provided with any other geographical instrument) the large mountain Yombo or Jombo in the neighbourhood of Wasseen, from which, as my guide informed me, you can also see the island of Zanzibar. (What a remarkable fact for geography!). To the South we saw at about the same distance as Jombo, a mountain, of which my guide did not know the name, but of which he told me, that like in Jagga there are also to be found the traces of the Portuguese, i.e. the ruins of a large castle. In Jagga my guide had seen with his own eyes on his way from Kilema to Userit (not quite a two days' journey in the NW. of Jagga) a kind of breastwork for cannons. The tradition of that nation once powerful in these quarters, is still to be heard from the people of the Kingdom of Ma ishame, who are the aborigines of Jagga. To the East the Kadiaro & Boora presented themselves in their full grandeur to our eyes, to the W. our eyes would have been delighted by a view of the snow-covered Kilimandsharo, had it not (as it usually is) been enveloped in thick clouds. (The natives have of course no name for snow, as it never falls within their reach, & the attempts they have made to ascertain the nature of the strange guest – with great loss of lives, they not being guarded against the cold – were not sufficient to establish its appellation.) To the SW. we saw at a distance of about a 3 days' journey, some mounts, which appeared like pieces went asunder, thus indicating the state of its poor inhabitants, the Wandorobo, a name denoting despal, as all nations around avail themselves of every opportunity to rob & most likely also enslave them. But the Church of Christ will honour them with the gospel of love & mercy. The countries nearest to our view (1 day's journey in the SE.) consisted of the large mountain-masses (from 5 to 6000' of height) Ugono & Usanga, of the latter of which I could however see but little, as it was situated behind the Ugono, i.e. farther to the SE. At Ugono, where, I am told, the same forms of government are met with as in Jagga, much iron is found as is also the case in Jagga. (The view to Usambara –ESE – was most likely obstructed by the large Ugono-mountains stretching for about 40 to 50 miles from the SE. to NW.) To the East of Ugono we still saw the mountain Kisungo, between which and the Kadiaro in the East is still to be mentioned Pare, a small but mountaineous country, which I had seen previously at different places in the course of our journey. At the foot of the Ugono & Kisungo I saw the large lake Ibe (Eebe) also called Aciaro (in the Kiquafi language) which with an angle to the S. stretches about 50 or 60 miles from E. to W. , & would

therefore, if navigation was introduced, considerably lessen the fatigues of a journey to Jagga or Ugono. The lake is said to be full of crocodiles & riverhorses. At the northern boundary of the lake lies the country Dafita whose inhabitants like nearly all others of the surrounding countries keep up much intercourse with Jagga for the purpose of trade. The only hostile nation on the large plain spreading between the mountains mentioned above, were the Waquafi, a nomadic people, who had also encountered many struggles with the Gallas in the N. & NE. One tribe of that nation, called Masai, is still in the neighbourhood of Jagga & appears to be of a hostile disposition.

As to slavery it has also some source in Jagga by the hostilities occasionally breaking out between the many little despots, who will sell the prisoners taken in war to the Suahelis, especially – my guide told me exclusively – women, as they find it in their interest to increase the number of their Wasoro by those captured in war, inducing them to remain with their new Mangi (King) by honouring them more than their nation-soldiers.

On the 29th of May, when, on account of the many wounds on my feet, which had obliged me to keep to my hut the greater part of the time – the King also would not allow me to depart sooner – I had stayed 17 days in Jagga. I left it again for the coast. To the Boora we took the same route through the wilderness, travelling again without any beaten path, but from there we went to the Kadiaro mostly on a way different from that we had come & somewhat better. Desiring to take also a different route from the Kadiaro to the coast (that by Endunguni to Rabbai I had now gone 3 times) I went to Shimba, 1 day's journey S. of Rabbai & safely arrived at Mombas in the 11th of June in the afternoon, greatly fatigued – having gone the whole journey on foot – but in good health. On the day following my dear brother Dr. Krapf came down from Rabbai to Mombas – having been apprised of my movements by a letter I had written to him from the Kadiaro & which had been delivered to him by my Wanika-porters – when we had the great pleasure to seeing each other once more. On the 14th we went together to Rabbai, which I found a much better place for refreshment than Mombas. But footache & headache at once attacked me soon as consequences of the fatigue I had undergone & have until now (June 27) not quite left me.

As to the companies you write of in your letter, they will in these countries meet with no greater difficulty but that presented by the badness of the wages, after which comes that of the beggarliness of the many chiefs & kings, if however their proceedings will be conducted in the principles you have stated in your kind letter, some hope may be entertained for their success.

Giving you our warmest thanks for the kind assistance you are always ready to render unto us, especially for the biscuits & vermicelli you lately sent us, & commending ourselves to your farther remembrance in that respect,

We remain, dear Sir, yours most respectfully & faithfully

J. Rebmann