
HISTORY OF DARFUR

Author(s): G. D. Lampen

Source: *Sudan Notes and Records*, DECEMBER 1950, Vol. 31, No. 2 (DECEMBER 1950), pp. 177-209

Published by: University of Khartoum

Stable URL: <https://www.jstor.org/stable/41716624>

JSTOR is a not-for-profit service that helps scholars, researchers, and students discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content in a trusted digital archive. We use information technology and tools to increase productivity and facilitate new forms of scholarship. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.

Your use of the JSTOR archive indicates your acceptance of the Terms & Conditions of Use, available at <https://about.jstor.org/terms>



JSTOR

is collaborating with JSTOR to digitize, preserve and extend access to *Sudan Notes and Records*

SUDAN NOTES AND RECORDS

INCORPORATING

PROCEEDINGS OF THE PHILOSOPHICAL SOCIETY OF THE SUDAN.

VOL. XXXI

PART II

DECEMBER 1950

HISTORY OF DARFUR

By G. D. Lampen

GEOGRAPHY

DARFUR has long had an identity of its own due primarily to the conquests of the Fur race, but also determined by its natural boundaries. To the north Darfur ends in the Libyan desert which runs for nearly 1000 miles to the Mediterranean, waterless and without vegetation save for a few oases over which Darfur's claims were limited to those at the southern end, and even over these were shadowy and unsubstantiated. To the east a broad belt of sand hills provides an almost equally effective barrier against its neighbour Kordofan, while to the south the tsetse fly limits movement of domestic animals beyond the Bahr el Arab. Only to the west do we find a continuation of the same geographical conditions, and here the frontier has been decided by political and racial events rather than by conditions of soil, vegetation and climate.

Roughly speaking, the country is divided internally into three great lateral zones. The northern, down to latitude 14° 30', is rolling steppe country broken by hill ranges from which emerge *wadis* with good tree and shrub grazing. This is the country of the nomadic or semi-nomadic camel-owning tribes, Arabs, Tibbu or Nubian. The rainfall averages less than 10 inches a year, which provides good grazing, but precarious cultivation.

The central belt, which is in parts very mountainous, but sandy at the east and west ends, has a heavier rainfall and is mainly the land of the cultivator and mixed farmer. Its rainfall ranges from 25 inches in the hills round Jebel Marra to 12 inches on the plains.

The southern belt lying mainly below the 12th parallel has a rainfall of 25-35 inches, and this is the nomadic cattleowner's country. He moves down to the river-grazing in summer and comes up to the cultivator's high lands in the middle belt during the rains.

A word must be said about the main feature of the province, the Jebel Marra range. A huge massif with a large plateau of over 6,000 feet and rising at its highest to just under 10,000 feet, it is a respectable landmark from El Fasher, Nyala and Kebkabiya. Having been the home of the Fur race it became less a barrier than a *point d'appui* whence they debouched onto the surrounding plains, and the original administrative divisions of the country ran out in wedges from the mountain down the great valleys. Though its cultivable area is small it provides crops not grown elsewhere in Darfur, or even in some cases in the northern Sudan. Potatoes, wheat, coffee and olives will all flourish, and its perennial water-supply is a delight.

While these defined limits to Darfur on three sides have in the past given the province a separate entity, they have not been such complete barriers as to exclude contacts with its neighbours in trade, religion and war.

Until firm control of the Nile valley by one power was followed by the opening of communications in the Sudan, the most highly developed trade routes were those across the desert to the north. Hard as these were, their difficulties were known, and it is notable that W. G. Browne in 1793 and Omar al Tunisi in 1803 did not encounter any unexpected obstacles on the way. The stages were long, there was some fear of missing the way, some tribute was demanded by Arabs, and the fare was bad. But Browne dismisses stories of caravans being lost as nonsense, and says that a large caravan had not much to fear from Kababish, unarmed with guns. On the other hand he emphasises the difficulties of the route to the east through warring and uncertain tribes.

Two of the great trans-desert routes led to Darfur. The Darb el Arba'in, or Forty Days' Road from Assiut in Egypt, passed through Jebel Ramli (3 days), Kharga (1 day), Bulak (1 day), Beiris (1 day), Esh Sheb (5 days), Selima (4 days), Laqiya (5 days), Bir el Milh (8 days), Mazrub (11 days) to Kubbe, the merchants' depot (5 days). The other route from Tripoli and Cyrenaica came through the oases of Jalo to Zighen (7 days), Kufra (4 days), Beshra (3 days), Sarra (4 days), Tekro (5 days), Abu Junga (1 day), el Weiti (4 days). Thence the road divided, the western branch going to Abéché (8 days) and the eastern through Fada (5 days) and Umm Geras (6 days) to Darfur.

These two routes were in use until the coming of the railway to El Obeid finally diverted most traffic, even to Tripoli, via the Nile. They had given Darfur links with the north, not only in the exchange of slaves, ivory, rhino horn, gum and ostrich feathers for beads, cloth,

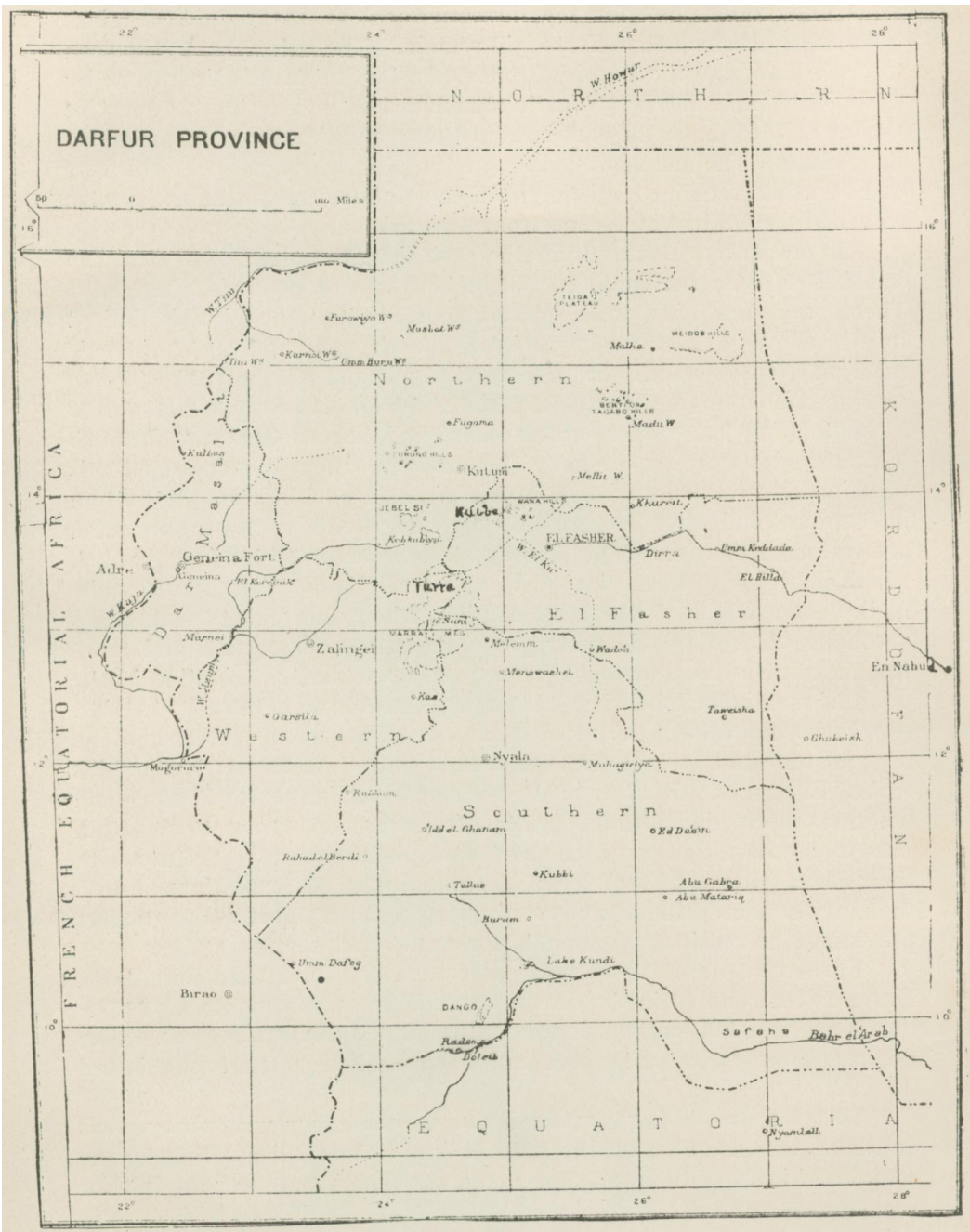
arms and coffee, but for the dissemination of ideas and religious influences, of which the effects still remain. The messages of Napoleon to the Sultan, and the Turkish propaganda for Sultan Ali Dinar came by these routes, and they were finally abandoned only when the conquest of Darfur in 1916 made the eastern route easy and free from suspicion by the Sultan. The merchant community at Kubbe, 40 miles north-west of El Fasher, remained in being until the Mahdia; men still living have travelled in trade via Kufra from the Fezzan.

As one enters Darfur from the east along the main west road the sandhills of western Kordofan roll in their monotonous rises and falls. There are a few hills of no great magnitude and the view is limited by the *heglig* (*Balanites aegyptiaca*), *kedad*, *arad* and *sayal* (*Acacia raddiana*) trees which lie interspersed among the *mikhait* (*Boscia senegalensis*) bushes, with the occasional *tebeli* (*Adansonia digitata*) as a landmark. The grass grows long and is usually the *heskanit* (*Cenchrus biflorus*) or *bayad*. The outlook, though monotonous, is occasionally broken by a forest of *tebelis*, or a pool in a muddy bottom in the rains, and agreeably varied by the village with its clearing for grain and melon cultivation. This country stretches down to the 11th parallel, where it begins to merge into the great mud plains of the south, while in the north it goes up to Jebel Meidōb, where the rolling sand dunes gradually change to wider steppes with sparser vegetation and more frequent ranges of sandstone, granite and lava hills, culminating in the volcanic massive of Jebel Meidōb, and the granite peaks of the Tegābo Hills.

Proceeding along the main road to El Fasher, one enters a range of sandstone hills round Umm Keddada and then the Archaean hills east of El Fasher. Here the country changes again, for the Fasher plain lies ahead up to the foothills of Jebel Marra in the west and the Kuttum hills to the north. Deep *wadis* and mud plains now predominate with their *haraz* (*Acacia albida*) trees and *tundub* (*Capparis decidua*) bushes, though the sand dunes and steppes appear in blocks and fingers providing the cultivating grounds for millet and sesame.

Further to the west we now enter the main mountains with Jebel Marra as their crown in the centre, formidable spurs running far to the north, and isolated foothills to the south. Broad *wadis* with good water, mighty *haraz* trees and good valley cultivation, spread out in all directions.

To the south lie the great plains of the cattlemen with many pools and lakes and bounded by the Bahr el Arab. The villages cling to the southern fringes of the sand dunes, and the plains and river are left for the nomads' summer grazing.



In the north the hills break into broken gravelly country with enough grass and desert scrub for the camel. This provides a scanty living in normal years, replenished in years of exceptional rains by the *Gizzu* grazing which then comes up in the northern desert.

HISTORY

Pre-Mediaeval Period

Prehistory awaits the full attention of the archaeologist. We get glimpses of a period before dates and names when we see the tombs round Jebel Meidōb, the rock drawings and cave dwellings in the Tagābo and Daju hills, and the traces of old settlements on the Teiga plateau. The "Awlad Anag" and the "Awlad Ganaan" are credited with the deep rock wells or other feats of engineering beyond the abilities or perhaps the manpower of the present inhabitants. But for present purposes we need not look for detailed early history until the spade and the camera have made its outlines more clear.

No doubt the black man at one period was undisputed master of the area we now call Darfur. These were, we may assume, the ancestors of the Fur, whose claim to the central hills has never been disputed. But they may also claim as their descendants the tribes of the extreme south such as the Shatt, the Kara, Binga, Feroqe and Fungoro whom the Fur recognise as cousins through their ancestor Firat, the brother of Fir the begetter of the Fur.

But at the earliest period in which tribes began to have some distinct entity, new invaders from northern and Mediterranean races have appeared upon the scene. Some of these probably came from the river Nile, across what is now inhospitable desert, only retaining its association with human life in the traces of an abandoned camel route. It seems likely that at any rate the Meidob and possibly also the Birgid moved across from Dongola, while the Bedayāt and Zaghawa came down a more westerly route from north Africa. The latter retain their semi-nomadic life and indeed have hardly yet finished their south-easterly migration. No doubt the superior intelligence of these tribes enabled them to dominate the northern areas of Darfur, and eventually with their new superior weapons and the terrifying aid of the horse to drive the black races into their mountains and in their turn to found the chain of kingdoms which stretched across this middle belt of north Africa in the Middle Ages — Kordofan, Darfur, Wadai, Bagirmi and Kanem or Bornu. If the subjection of the negro to the north African in war was one element in the foundation of such kingdoms,

there was another which was more gradual but not less ruthless. We know from Idrisi (d. 1153 A.D.) that the slave trade from central to north Africa was highly developed in his day, and no doubt northern traders either established themselves in central Africa and carved out little kingdoms for themselves, or allied themselves to some existing chief whom they supplied with horses and weapons in exchange for slaves.

The main arrival of the Arabs accelerated these processes. They were never strong enough to overthrow the non-Arab strongholds in the north and centre, but they were allies who could be brought in by the highest bidder among the kings and sultans, and their presence gave a foothold to the Arab trader who came for the slave and ivory trade. The main immigration of the Arabs appears to have been from the west:¹ they had pushed down into Wadai from the Fezzan or across the steppes between Nubia and Chad soon after the Arab invasion of north Africa, and tradition says they entered Darfur in the days of the Tungur who preceded the Fur, and if so this places their arrival in the 14th and 15th centuries. There was Islamic religion and Arab influence before this period, and some tribes may have entered Darfur from the east at an earlier date, but the main influx may be fixed at this time.

Whether they came in two streams, camel and cattle owning nomads separately, or all arrived with camels in Darfur and then changed their herds as they moved south, is unknown, but there is every indication that they had divided into "Baggara" and "Fezzara" before they entered Darfur. Yet this division is so comparatively recent that there is not only an alliance between tribes back from Kordofan to Chad among the Baggara, but the Rizeigat Baggara are closely related to the camel-owning tribes of the same name in the north. Even down to our own day the movement from camel to cattle owning goes on. The Beni Helba had a big camel-owning section 100 years ago which has now moved south and merged in the Baggara, while Ali Dinar's ravages on the Northern Rizeigat have turned the Awlad Yasin into cattlemen within the last 40 years.

Though the Arabs in Darfur were never strong enough to command the course of history, they were able to drive a wedge between the black men of the south, penning the Fur into the mountainous centre, overrunning some of the tribes such as the Shatt, on the plains, and driving

¹ This is a doubtful question. Tradition among the Juhaina group in Darfur is that they came across the northern desert to Wadai and thence into Darfur, but they do not specify always that they came along the North African coast and then down to Wadai. Many consider they came across by Bir Natrun. At any rate I am inclined to think from the relationship of the tribes west to east, and their traditions, that however they got to Wadai they did come to Darfur via that province.

Binga, Banda and Feroqe down into the swamps. These tribes still claim to have lived formerly in Darfur.

Mediaeval Period

Traditionally it is believed that the Daju were the first to rule in Darfur.

If we are to connect them with the Tajuwin of Idrisi and the Taju of Ansari Abu al Fida and Ibn Khaldun, they must have come from the north, as they are placed west of the Egyptian oases, and between Nubia and Kanem and next to the Zaghawa in the 12th to the 14th centuries. But for our purpose in giving the history of Darfur it is clear that when they were the predominant race their habitat was in the south-east, and that they never had any power in the north, in the west or in Jebel Marra.

Tradition says that they were replaced by the Tungur, but though the latter were certainly the predominant race by the 16th century their power was rather in the north and never in the south and the kingdoms of these two powers may have overlapped in time, each in their own sphere.

With the Tungur we are getting to firmer ground. There can be little doubt that they came originally from the Dongola region and entered Darfur in the 15th or 16th century, and took up their residence in the northern and central areas where they still have their colonies. The Tungur did not remain long in Darfur and in less than a century they were either being pressed out of Darfur or had extended their conquests over Wadai, and lost their grip on Darfur. But at any rate they left one substantial memorial of their rule of Darfur in the palace of their last Sultan Dorshid at 'Ain Farah in northern Darfur.¹ Their *Shartai* (headman) now no longer wears the black 'imma (turban) of mourning for a lost Empire as he did in Omar al Tunisi's time.

The Tungur have a traditional link with the Fur sultanate as the first putative Fur Sultan was born of a Kayra (the Fur royal house) mother, and of a Tungur father; and it is extremely likely that the succession in the hegemony of Darfur came by intermarriage and matrilinear descent.

But with Dali we pass into the Royal House of Kayra which continued to rule the Fur Sultanate until 1916. Doubts have been thrown on the reigns of Dali and Kuru, but on Turra in Jebel Marra are the fortified palaces associated with these two and with Kuru's son

¹ See *Sudan Notes and Records*, Vol. 3 Part 1 and Vol. 19 Part 2.—*Ed.*

Suleiman Solong, and a little further east in Turra another ruined palace on Wadi Tulzum is ascribed to Tunsam who was defeated by Suliman and driven out of Darfur to form the Musaba'at tribe in Kordofan. As Arkell notes, the dismantled state of Tunsam's palace and the heavy defensive walls of all these buildings would be consonant with a period of civil war and a defeated prince.¹

From Mediaeval Times to the Egyptian Occupation

Suleiman Solong, like Dali, is said to have had a foreign father and his second name means "Arab" in Fur. The details given vary, and all we need assume is that some ancient Fur stock first intermarried with the Tungur royal house, and then with someone of Arab blood, but as the succession is matrilinear the Fur element predominates.

At this point it will be convenient to give a list of the Fur Sultans with their dates, which are fairly well established after that of Suliman. With the exception of Omar Leil, who died in Wadai, all the others down to Mohammed Hussain are buried in Turra.

	Probable Date
Suliman Solong son of Kuni	1640-1670
Musa son of Suliman Solong	1670-1682
Ahmed Bukr son of Musa	1682-1722
Mohammed "Dowra" son of Ahmed Bukr ..	1722-1732
'Omar "Leil" son of Mohammed Dowra ..	1732-1739
Abul Gasim son of Ahmed Bukr	1739-1752
Mohammed Teirab son of Ahmed Bukr ..	1752-1787
Abdal Rahman al Rashid son of Ahmed Bukr	1787-1802
Mohammed Fadl son of Abdel Rahman	1802-1839
Mohammed Hussain son of Mohammed Fadl ..	1839-1874
Ibrahim son of Mohammed Hussain	1874-1875
Egyptian occupation	1875-1883

Nachtigal collected traditions about the reigns of the Sultans and with the aid of W. G. Browne and Omar al Tunisi we can get an outline of their character and career.

Suliman Solong (1640-1670) emerged victorious from a period of civil war, reconstituted the kingdom and perhaps reintroduced Islam, as Nachtigal says, for the mosques of 'Ain Farah must date before his time, but there may well have been a relapse to paganism during the

¹ See *Sudan Notes and Records* Vol. 20, Part 1.—Ed.

years of civil war that preceded his succession. His name "Solong" in Fur means "Arab" and may connote the Arab's peculiar tongue, religion or physical appearance. Thus bronze coinage bearing the head of King Fuad recently introduced in Darfur became known in Jebel Marra as "Solonga," of which the nearest translation seems to be "red faces." (The coins were all in mint condition). His palace still stands at Nami in Turra. According to Nachtigal he led 33 campaigns in person, and brought the Birgid, Zaghawa, Berti, Beigo and some of the Masalit under his sway, and had to subdue an attempt by the Tungur to regain the throne. He was buried in Turra.

Musa (1670-1682), his son, was of peaceable disposition. He was, however, forced to fight the Gimr and Musaba'at. He also resided at Nami and was buried at Turra.

Ahmed Bukr son of Musa (1682-1722) ruled some 40 years, revered by his people and feared by his neighbours. He endeavoured to make Darfur a Muslim country. (Since the time of Suliman Solong Islam had been confined to court circles). He introduced religious teachers, built mosques and schools, and compelled the people to adopt the three essentials of Islam, circumcision, fasting in Ramadan, and the five daily prayers. In view of the low state of civilization of his people, he persuaded educated foreigners to settle in the country by granting them exemption from taxes and other privileges. He resided at Gerli in Dar Kerne, Murra in Dar Fia, and Abu Asal in Turra.

After a seven years' campaign he secured the north-west frontier by conquering the Gimr. He also repulsed an invasion of Darfur by Arus, the sultan of Wadai. He had to retire to Abu Asal and spend two years organizing resistance by obtaining firearms from Egypt, and then, descending from the hills, he dealt the invading army a crushing blow in the pass through the hills to the west, in the vicinity of what is now Kebkabiya, and which gained its name from this battle, for "*kebi kebia*" in Fur means "they threw away their shields."

Mohammed Dowra, (1722-1732) the eldest son of Ahmed Bukr was a brave but cruel man. He killed many of his brothers, and waged a nearly unsuccessful civil war against his own son Musa Angarib. He died of leprosy, and was buried at Turra.

'Omar (1732-1739) his son, nicknamed "Leil" "the Donkey," was cruel and godless like his father: his bad temper and military

ambition strained the loyalty of his subjects to the limit. He moved the royal residence to Kogurma some 20 miles west of Kebkabiya, where the remains of his red-brick palace can still be seen.

He defeated an attempt made by one of his uncles, with Rizeigat help, to dethrone him. Continued military expeditions made the people tired of him, and he was finally deserted by most of his army when invading Wadai; he died there in captivity and was succeeded by his uncle.

Abul Gasim, son of Ahmed Bukr (1739-1752), was not a popular ruler, for he was given to favouritism, and preferred giving office and advancement to slaves rather than to free men. He made great preparations to revenge the defeat of Omar Leil, but the Fur army was again heavily defeated, and in the rout it was thought that Abul Gasim had been killed. The country was relieved to be rid of him and his brother,

Mohammed Teirab (1752-1787), who had also been wounded in the battle, was at once proclaimed sultan. Soon after that Abul Gasim reappeared, having recovered from a severe wound in an Arab encampment. The elders refused to allow Teirab to resign in his favour, and Teirab had him strangled. Abul Gasim, who had resided at Gerli, was buried at Turra.

Teirab was an outstanding ruler, who was respected at home and abroad. He, however, gave some dissatisfaction by the preference which he showed for Zaghawa, to which tribe his mother belonged. He made an uncle sultan of the Zaghawa Kobe, and in all appointed nineteen Zaghawa to high posts. He resided at Gerli, Kogurma and Shoba in turn (all in the vicinity of Kebkebia).

During his reign there was a rising of the Bergid, who believed he had been selling as slaves a number of the girls they had to deliver to the palace to be brought up as royal concubines or servants. After this rising, Teirab moved his residence to Ril in the south east. Thence he made expeditions against the Rizeigat and the Musaba'at. He eventually died in Kordofan on a campaign on which he had reached the Nile. He was a learned man, and imported books from Tunis and Egypt. He was, however, also a lover of women and wine, and his subjects became heartily weary of his military expeditions. There was therefore, considerable objection to his son Isagha, whom he had designated as his successor, for he promised to resemble his father in every way.

When Mohammed Teirab fell sick after his successful campaign against Sultan Hashim of the Musaba'at and died in Kordofan, there were still three sons of Sultan Ahmed Bukr who had claims to succeed, as well as Teirab's own son Isagha Doldum who had been left in command of Darfur; but the able Mohammed Kourra, eunuch and palace favourite, backed the youngest son of Ahmed Bukr, Abd al Rahman al Rashid, had him appointed after some cunning diplomacy, and then returned with him to defeat Isagha at Tebeldia and Taldauwa, and drove him into northern Darfur. Isagha there won two victories on Wadi Bawa against the *Tekanyawi* and *Basi Ryfa*, but was finally defeated at Girgo just west of Kebkabiya.

Abd al Rahman al Rashid (1787-1802) was a patron of the *Jellaba* (immigrant merchants) and of religion, but perhaps his chief interest for us is that, as was natural after the conquest of Kordofan, he moved his capital further east to El Fasher. He was also visited by W. G. Browne, the first Englishman to visit Darfur, and Omar al Tunisi came just after his death; both recorded their observations so that his reign is the best documented of any until Turkish times. He also had the curious distinction of receiving a letter from Napoleon, and of nearly being overthrown by a Mameluk who fled to Darfur after the Mamelukes' defeat by that conqueror.

The only big event of the reign seems to have been a war against Sultan Hashim in Kordofan who nearly conquered the country but was driven out by Mohammed Kourra, now the *Abu Sheikh*, who became the Viceroy of Kordofan. Mohammed Kourra spent seven years in Kordofan, sending pillage back to Darfur, but, as was inevitable, he was finally accused to the Sultan of wishing to make himself independent. Abd al Rahman al Rashid sent down a force with orders to bring him back in chains, but the discreet Viceroy put on the chains without protest and made his way to El Fasher wearing them. If he thus disarmed criticism for a time he was still doomed to suffer the fate of many *Wazirs* in Darfur.

On the death of Abd al Rahman al Rashid in 1802, Mohammed Kourra, by removing the guards of all opponents, presented them with a *coup d'état* and placed *Mohammed Fadl* (1802-1839) on the throne. He then had all possible claimants rounded up and slew them to the number of 60 on the Qoz al Sittin outside the town, and confined the rest in Jebel Marra. Kourra then ruled Mohammed Fadl and the country with a strong hand, until finding that the Sultan meant to get rid of him, he moved his residence to a remote part of Fasher, was cut off from

the water supply, attacked and defeated and killed with his stepson Shilfut.

As a youth Mohammed Fadl was dissipated, and as he grew older he became unjust, cruel and vindictive. He lost Kordofan, which was taken by the Egyptians. He was particularly hard on the Darfur Arabs, decimating first the Beni Helba and then the Ereigat, and continuing to raid the Rizeigat. One of his brothers Abu al Median fled to Kordofan in the hope of being put into power in Darfur by the Egyptians. Towards the end of his reign Mohammed Fadl sent an expedition against Wadai when there was a famine in that country, and as a result the Wadai prince Mohammed Sherif, who had taken refuge in Darfur, was installed on the throne of Wadai.

Mohammed Hussein (1839-1874) succeeded his father. His was a long and peaceful reign, but he was not a popular ruler. He had neither the royal manner nor military sense. He was looked on as a dreamy miser, and despised for his interest in trading. He got rid of enemies by sending them on expeditions against the Arabs of the south, particularly the Rizeigat, Habbaniya and Ma'alia. During his reign there were eighteen expeditions, most of them unsuccessful.

He succeeded in keeping peace with both Egypt and Wadai and was appreciated abroad for his generosity to learned travellers and pilgrims. He obtained firmans from Constantinople, confirming the independence of Darfur under the suzerainty of the Sublime Porte. He became blind during the closing years of his reign and his direction of internal affairs became in consequence increasingly weak, with the result that his relations secured an inordinate number of estates (*Hawakir*).

Ibrahim Mohammed Hussain (1874) succeeded his father. His reign was brief and only lasted one year. As soon as he came to the throne the slave raider Zubair entered Dar Rizeigat from what is now Bahr el Ghazal Province where he had his bases, to avenge some interference with his passage of slaves north through the territory of this tribe.

Zubair quickly dispersed the irregular forces of the Rizeigat, who at that time were not united under one leader while Madibbo and Egeil were both striving for the Maharia headship, and he established himself on 20th August 1873 at Abu Sigan (between Abu Gabra and Abu Matariq) with a loss of 700 men. He had, however, by entering this territory infringed the rights, however ineffective in practice, of the Sultan of Darfur.

Sultan Ibrahim "Gerad" therefore despatched his three *Magdums*, Ahmed Shatta of the south, Saad al Nur, the *Magdum Dali* of the east and Abdalla Runga, the *Magdum* of the west, to attack him in his *zariba*. The Fur numbered 10,000 horsemen and had 3 guns, and attacked Shakka on 21st January 1874. The result was disastrous as all three *Magdums* were killed and their army defeated after an action which lasted only an hour and a half. Zubair lost only 200 men. Zubair then advanced through Kalaka defeating a second Fur army on 19th June 1874, and then turned back and advanced to *Magdum* Ahmed Shatta's headquarters at Dara occupying it on 7th August.

Sultan Ibrahim now arrived in person leading his main army. He found Zubair strongly entrenched in Dara and armed with cannon. Evidently non-plussed by the strength of the invader he hesitated to attack and was jeered by some of his army with the cry "The bull won't fight." In a fit of rage he turned his *jehadia's* (bodyguard) fire on to those who mocked him and the army broke up. He himself with a few relatives was caught and killed at Menawashei on 25th October 1874, where he was buried in the wayside mosque.

The Egyptian Occupation

When Zubair Pasha defeated Sultan Ibrahim Hussain "Gerad" at Menawashei, he advanced and occupied El Fasher on October 29th. The Egyptian Government who had already had differences with Zubair in the south, but had overlooked this and sponsored his invasion of Darfur on their behalf, were not prepared to let him hold this reserve of grain and men, and Ismail Pasha Ayub the Governor General arrived in el Fasher on 7th November only a few days after Zubair. Zubair was given leave to complete the conquest of Darfur and pursued Ibrahim's uncle and successor Hasaballa into Jebel Marra, where he captured him; he then sent him with Abd al Rahman Shatut (Ibrahim's brother), Abd al Hamid (his son) and other members of the Royal Family to Cairo, where the first two died but the third-named lived to return to Darfur in 1929 for a brief reign in Zalingei. In a further campaign Sultans Bosh and Saif al Din were killed on 19th July 1875 at Seraf el Gidad near Kebkabiya. After this campaign Zubair disappears from the Darfur scene. He quarrelled with Ismail Pasha and they were both summoned to Cairo to lay their case before the Khedive.

Harun, a grandson of Sultan Mohammed Fadl and son of Saif al Din, now took the Sultanate and continued to hold out in Jebel Marra. He made many sorties from the hills on the Turkish-Egyptian garrisons, being credited with raids as far as Dara, Jebel Hereiz, Tina and Murtafal.

The Turko-Egyptian forces gradually closed in at the exits, and the remains of their forts can be seen at Doba and other places. They are remembered by the older people as having moved slowly but with a resonant tramping when on the march. Actions took place at Sarandito (in the borders of Turra), Dobo, Nyuringa, Killing (where the Egyptians left tomatoes to start the thriving cultivation of that vegetable in the hills), Kigima and Kulkul, whence Harun was chased by al Nur Angara, the Governor of Kulkul, into Dar Gimr and killed at Abter in March 1880. It is a relief to discern among the shadowy lines of fugitive or puppet Sultans of this period this living and gallant man with his horse Derb al Rigala which was hairless from the bullet wounds it received. His son Ibrahim seems to have inherited some of his character and became one of Ali Dinar's commanders. After a brief rule by Sultan Bukr, who was killed by Slatin, his son Abdullahi Dud Banga, a cousin of Harun's, became Sultan.

Meanwhile other notable figures had for a moment crossed the stage in Darfur. General Gordon had been appointed Governor-General of the Sudan in 1877. The Fur under Harun had taken the offensive against the Egyptian garrisons in February 1877, and at the same time Suleiman, Zubair's son, had crossed the southern border in an aggressive mood. Gordon in May hurried to Darfur, and when Harun had withdrawn into his mountains he was able to bluff Suleiman into retreating back into the Bahr el Ghazal, but in the next year Suleiman openly revolted, cut up Government troops and declared his independence. Gordon called in his ablest lieutenant, Romolo Gessi, who marched in the rains from Rumbek through the swamps and beat Suleiman into flight round Deim Idris, west of Wau. Suleiman fled to Darfur, but found Gordon on his flank and after a meeting¹ between Gordon and Gessi at Taweisha, the former returned to the east while Gessi caught Suleiman at Gharra south of Dar Beni Helba, defeated him and shot him and nine of his lieutenants early in July 1879. This gallant Italian, worn out by his exertions, had to be carried to Suakin and died on his way home in 1881. His name is commemorated by a street in Khartoum, and was borne by at least one Baggari born in the year of his defeat of Suleiman.

Meanwhile the Austrian, Slatin, had been sent in July 1879 to Dara in Southern Darfur as *Mudir* of that sub-district,² whence he waged

¹ It must have been at this time that Gordon met the Khalifa's father with his family and pupils near Abu Gabra on their way east. (Emir Musaid Gaidum, one of the party, told me of this meeting).

² Messedaglia was Governor of Darfur at the time.

a desultory campaign against Sultan Harun. Slatin now had a year of peace but early in 1881 Raouf Pasha, the new Governor-General, appointed him Governor-General of Darfur. Slatin moved to El Fasher in April 1881, where he found the affairs of administration in a terrible state of confusion. He reduced them to some semblance of order, and then found time for a visit to the Zaghawa and Bedayāt in the north-west, but greater events were at hand. On his way out he got news of the Mahdi's revolt, and by the time of his return to El Fasher there were serious disturbances among the Baggara in the south. Early in 1882 Slatin left El Fasher again for Dara, to which circumstances immediately compelled him to transfer his headquarters, leaving Said Bey Guma as Governor in El Fasher.

The Mahdia

The trouble in the south was serious. The Mahdi had called on Madibbo, the Sheikh of the Maharia Rizeigat, to occupy the southern Government outpost of Shakka (Abu Sigan). Collecting his own people and the Ma'alia, and distributing the Mahdist proclamation, he fell on a detachment of 200 men at El Alali and annihilated them in July 1882. An attempt by Slatin to relieve the Shakka garrison, though it held off the Rizeigat at Ed Da'ein, had to be abandoned, and the garrison of 300¹ at Shakka withdrew, fought a rearguard action on the *Qoz* country and proceeded towards Dara. Slatin made a second attempt to re-establish the Shakka post with the aid of friendly Bergu, Bergid, southern Zaghawa, Messeria, Daju and Ma'alia (who were hostile to their Sheikh Abu Salama) numbering in all 7,400. Proceeding via Hashaba, Ed Da'ein, Kindiri (near Kurriu) to Umm Waragat they were ambushed by the Rizeigat and though they held off the rebels the position in thick forest was untenable, and Slatin withdrew to Dara after heavy losses. A fierce action on the way back, however, resulted in heavy losses (2000 men) to Madibbo, who thereafter remained quiescent. Slatin now received information that the country to the north was in revolt and put Dara into strict defence. Sultan Abdullahi Dud Banga had seized his opportunity to emerge from the mountains and create this diversion, and the central tribes were in revolt. A campaign in which the Mima were defeated at Wadaa and the Khawabir at Umm Luai, subdued the north temporarily and reopened communications with el Fasher and Umm Shanga.

The relief was only temporary and early in 1883 el Fasher, Dara and Kebkabiya were practically isolated; Said Bey Guma'a trying to

¹ Wingate says 600, Slatin 300.

clear the neighbourhood of el Fasher was heavily defeated in August 1883 and only 99 of his men returned. Slatin got orders to concentrate his men in El Fasher, hand over to one of the Fur Sultans and retire to Khartoum, but never received this message. He managed to visit Umm Shanga in the midst of continued fighting, but by October he was penned into Dara, and was awaiting relief from Hick's force. He nominally adopted the Muslim religion, wrote offering to surrender the province to the Mahdi, and at the same time wrote to inform Hicks of his straits. The letters were entrusted to Mohammed Khalid Zogal, a Ja'ali, the *Mudir* of Dara, and a connection by marriage of the Mahdi's. Zogal arrived at El Obeid when there occurred the terrible disaster to Hicks at Shekan, and he threw in his lot wholeheartedly with the Mahdi.

The Mahdi nominated Zogal Emir of Darfur and in December 1883 he left El Obeid on his mission. Umm Shanga surrendered without a shot, and Slatin, after consulting his officers, handed over Dara, and advised Said Bey Guma'a at El Fasher, and Adam Eff. Amer, the Officer in Command at Kebkabiya, to follow his example. Both these officials agreed, sent in the keys of the treasuries and said they had taken the Mahdist uniform into use.

Now occurs one of the few comic notes in this grim story. The bearer of Zogal's letter, a Feki Abd al Rahman, imbued with the new puritanical doctrines of the Mahdists, rebuked Said Bey Guma'a for smoking a cigarette. The irascible Governor ordered the *feki* to be shot and his troops to strip off their *jibbas* and don the Egyptian uniform again. So Zogal, instead of an easy surrender, had to bombard the town from where Sultan Ibrahim's palace stood. But the garrison numbered 1,000 men with 10 guns and one machine gun, and it was not until January 14th 1884 that Zogal filled in the wells under the walls, and the town surrendered on the 16th. The officers were cruelly treated, but as some satisfaction the *feki* was shot. By Slatin's intercession the life of the Governor, Said Guma'a, was spared. Both were sent to the Mahdi at El Obeid.

The Emir Zogal was now installed in El Fasher with 1400 (black) Sudanese troops and *Bazingers* under Emirs Babikr, Wad al Hagg, Omer Wad Shair, and Ali al Nur Imam, and with local arab forces numbering 20,000 at his command. He was free to devote his entire attention to the Fur revolt. In June 1884 the late sub-Governor of Kebkabiya, now Emir, Adam Amer was despatched to Jebel Marra with a mixed force to defeat Sultan Abdullahi Dud Banga. The Sultan is said to have replied to an invitation to surrender that he had withstood

the Egyptian Government since Sultan Harun's death and was not going to surrender to Zogal, who had been a slave in his father's time. He repelled Adam in his first assault on Killing, but with reinforcements Adam was able to reduce him after a siege of two months, and Sultan 'Abdullahi Dud Banga was sent to El Fasher in September 1884 and on to the Mahdi. (He eventually joined the Khalifa, lived in Omdurman for many years and died at Gedaref in 1907).

Resistance from the Fur was now temporarily at an end and Zogal was able to turn his attention to administration, which he is said to have run well, and to amassing wealth, which he did even more successfully. Darfur was temporarily out of the main run of events, and Zogal was left in uninterrupted possession of the province until the death of the Mahdi on 22nd June 1885.

The first trouble in Darfur came from Madibbo of the Rizeigat who no doubt disliked the assumption of power by the Ta'aishi Khalifa, and openly refused to obey his order that he and his family should proceed to Omdurman. The Khalifa thereupon despatched the Emir Karamalla, who was in charge of Bahr el Ghazal, to join forces with Karkasawi, the Emir of Shakka, and to bring the recalcitrant chief to his senses.

Karamalla sent the Emir Katemburu to Shakka with 600 riflemen and surprised Madibbo at Ed Da'ain¹ capturing 200 prisoners and many cattle. Madibbo failed in a counter-attack, and Katemburu despatched part of his force to attack the camps on the Bahr el Arab while he himself attempted to round up Madibbo. The latter however fled through Dara and took refuge with the Beni Helba. At the end of the year Karamalla himself arrived with reinforcements at Dara and began a campaign against the Beni Helba, who deserted Madibbo and his 500 men. Karamalla dispersed this force and Madibbo fled to Jebel Marra, but he was caught and handed over to Sultan Yusif who sent him to Karamalla at Taweisha. The latter sent him to El Obeid, where he was beheaded.

Zogal had been induced to leave Darfur in March 1886 after most peremptory summons from the Khalifa who thought he was collecting forces to proclaim independence. Zogal was in fact chiefly occupied in making money, but Abu Anga was sent to meet him at el Obeid and Zogal found himself deprived of troops, money and liberty. Before leaving Darfur he appointed Sultan Yusif as Emir in his place, but took all forces with him.

¹ According to Wingate 40 miles N.W. of Shakka. Shakka was really the name of the Rizeigat country as a whole, but the fort occupied by Zubair Pasha was at Abu Sigan.

Meanwhile Karamalla had received the submission of the Ma'alía, beheading Mohammed Bey Abu Salama and his three sons at Nyeleila, and had subdued the leaderless Rizeigat. He then despatched a force to Dara to raid for cattle and slaves, with the result that he clashed with Yusif's authority. The latter told his *Magdum* Imam Jarut of the Bergid to offer resistance, and in May 1887 a raiding party of 500 under Wad 'Alim were annihilated by Imam. Yusif then sent *Magdum* Abu Dembo (of the Messeria) with 4,000 men to Taweisha. Abu Dembo overwhelmed the garrison under Hassan Agha and proceeded to Dara. The opposing army of 2,000 led by Katembur met Abu Dembo in Wadi el Masria (Messeria), defeated him and forced him to retire to Jertobak near Ghor Abeshe: there he entrenched himself and applied for reinforcements to Sultan Yusif who sent a Sultan Zaid with a large force. Katembur was completely defeated on 29th June 1887 and fled to Dara. Karamalla then evacuated Dara and fell back on Nyeleila where he entrenched and wrote to the Khalifa for immediate assistance. The Darfur forces were now in almost complete command of their own country once again, but the Khalifa at once despatched Osman Adam (Gano) the Emir of Kordofan, who joined Karamalla at Nyeleila, assumed command, invited Sultan Yusif to meet him and when the latter replied by sending 10,000 men under Adam Bosh and Rahma Goma, completely defeated this force at Khumma, just outside Dara.

Zaid was again despatched with an army to defeat the Mahdist Emirs, but was heavily defeated on December 16th 1887 at Wadi el Masria. Zaid with a remnant of the army escaped to El Fasher, but in a last stand on Wadi Baira or Golo on January 8th 1888 he and Sultan Yusif were defeated. They fled to Jebel Marra but were pursued by Wad al Khatim who killed Yusif and brought his head to El Fasher on 14th February.

The Mahdists were now again in complete control of Darfur, and started a campaign of recruiting which drove the people to revolt. The revolt had a religious leader, which made it all the more dangerous.

The Fur leaders had after the death of Sultan Yusif fled to the west and taken refuge in Dar Tama, where they appointed Abu al Kheirat Sultan of Darfur. They found the people here ripe for rebellion against the Mahdist overlords, under the leadership of a *feki* whose real name with either Ahmad or Mohammed Abid Zain, but from his place of teaching was universally known as "Abu Gammeiza." This man, whose father had been imprisoned by the Mahdists, proclaimed himself a Khalifa with a mission to overthrow the Khalifa Abdullahi. He first wrote a letter, apparently recognising that Abdullahi was his co-equal, and when this was spurned, determined to drive him out,

Early in October 1888 Abu Gammeiza and Abu al Kheirat started their advance from Dar Tama and at Kebkabiya they met the Emir Abdal Gadir Dalil whom they heavily defeated. On October 16th, and a week later a second force under al Khatim suffered the same fate.

Osman Gano now prepared for a siege in El Fasher but Abu Gammeiza retired to Dar Tama and consolidated his force. In February 1889 he advanced to El Fasher but was struck down by smallpox near Kebkabiya, where he died. His second-in-command, Feki Adam, continued the advance, halting at Magdub west of El Fasher for two days and then, when he found that Osman Gano awaited him in El Fasher, advancing to the attack on February 23rd. The battle was fought on the plain just outside El Fasher. The western host was described by Osman Gano as being "in such numbers that they covered the whole plain and the dust raised in their march rose to the sky. They advanced with their women and children behind, beating the drums." The battle was between a multitude ill-armed with spears and throwing sticks, and a fairly disciplined army with firearms, and though the western army broke into El Fasher on one wing they were in the end utterly defeated; in the words of Osman Gano "We followed them even as far as the caves and the forests where they tried to conceal themselves, but they were all killed; even those who transformed themselves into apes, wolves, dogs and rabbits (for the natives of the western countries can be so transformed), were all killed even to the very last."

Sultan Abu Al Kheirat escaped to take refuge once more with the western Sultans.

Ali Dinar

In Dar Sila however, they were such unwelcome guests, so quarrelsome and even scheming against their host—the Sultan Abu Risha of Dar Sila, that they were told to leave for Darfur. Here perforce they were confined to Jebel Marra and the western hills and with the Mahdist control becoming firmly established on all sides their position became constrained. Abu al Kheirat in 1890 was faced with a revolt, reportedly engineered by his cousin Ali Dinar, and was murdered at Kajko. Ali Dinar assumed the crown, but by 1896, deserted by his men, he surrendered to the Messeri Emir Abd al Gadir Wad Delil in El Fasher. He is reported to have attempted to kill the Emir and been condemned to death and only to have been saved by the Khalifa's instructions that he should be sent to him at Omdurman.

Meanwhile Osman Gano led a punitive expedition to the west following the Abu Gammeiza rising and had reached Kulkul when an

epidemic fell on his force, so leaving one of his Emirs, Fiki Senin, at Kebkabiya he retreated on El Fasher, but died on the way. His death was concealed, his body brought to El Fasher and buried in his house (now Ali al Senussi's house), and a request for a new Emir sent to the Khalifa. The Emir Mahmoud Ahmad arrived in 1889 and took over Darfur.

Mahmoud Ahmad appears to have been a better administrator than Osman Adam Gano. He completed the subjection of a broken country, and overran Dar Tama in 1893, but though he waged continuous war against the Masalit he never conquered their Sultan, Abu Bakr.

Mahmoud was recalled to El Obeid about 1896, but returned to make the great recruiting drive in 1897 which finally depopulated Darfur, and was a prelude to the battle of the Atbara in 1898.

Ali Dinar was a very small man in the Khalifa's army but he never relinquished his intention of ruling Darfur. He was sent on an expedition under Ibrahim al Khalil against Mek Geili of Tegale, but returned to Omdurman before the British and Egyptian forces drew near. Sizing up the probable course of events he fled with a handful of followers on the night before the battle. Some say he had only seven companions at the start, but he collected followers as he went and by the time he arrived at the borders he had sufficient forces to dispose of his rivals. The first was Ibrahim Ali, a nephew of sultan Abu al Kheirat and grandson of sultan Ibrahim Gerad. He had deserted from Mahmoud's army in February 1898 before the battle of the Atbara and had been despatched by the Sirdar to hold Darfur. Ali Dinar, however, out-marched and outwitted this ineffective claimant, seized el Fasher from the Emir Umm Beddi al Radi, and defeated his general, the Rezeigi Kieran and the remaining Mahdists with their puppet "Sultan" Abu Kauda, whom Ali Dinar made King of the Blacksmiths. He then turned his attention to consolidating his kingdom.

There were four threats to his power. The Rizeigat and Ma'alia in the south-east were not inclined to submit to him, the Beni Helba in the south-west were equally recalcitrant, and Feki Senin, the Mahdist commander, held Kebkabiya and barred the door to the west. Lastly, across southern Darfur the Mahdist Emir from Rejaf, 'Arabi Dafaalla, was retreating to Dar el Ta'aisha followed by a mixed force under the leadership of the Hamar chief, Abdal Rahim Abu Duggal, and the army officer, Hassan Warrak.

The first expedition was against the Beni Helba whom he attacked with success in the winter of 1900/01, killing and capturing many, including the Nazir, and scattering the rest to Dar Sila. He then turned

his attention to Feki Senin in Kebkabiya. Feki Senin resisted the attack behind his barrier of hills, and isolated though he was, managed to hold out until 1908, a serious obstacle to Ali Dinar's control of the west.

The Sultan was not much more fortunate against the Rezeigat. Their Nazir Musa Madibbo had visited Fasher soon after Ali Dinar's arrival and was detained for a while. But having been allowed to depart he made such haste that the Sultan's pursuit party, sent on the monarch's change of mind, failed to catch up with him, and Ali Dinar was left to regret his momentary generosity. Repeated invitations and threats during 1900 and 1901 met with no response and in September 1901 the punitive expedition was launched. The general Teirab Suliman advanced against Musa Madibbo and Subahi Ogeil with 1,000 rifles and 500 horsemen. They first fell on the unsuspecting Ma'alia after marching from El Fasher in five days, and killed 400 of them, driving off women, children, slaves, camels and other animals (including ostriches). After looting for three days they advanced on the Rizeigat, who retreated into Dar Humr. Subahi, however, eventually surrendered to Teirab, who was looting Abu Gabra, and was beheaded. Teirab now returned but suffered much from the harrassing tactics of Musa Madibbo on his flanks and rear.

Emboldened by these campaigns Ali Dinar now attacked and burned villages in Kaja Serug, whence Nuba and Kababish had been robbing and raiding. The timely appearance of a Company of the Camel Corps deterred this force from raiding further into Kordofan.

Meanwhile 'Arabi Dafaalla had withdrawn to Mandua in Dar Ta'aisha and encamped there. The Government-sponsored force under Abd al Rahim Abu Daggal and Hassan Warrak dispatched letters inviting him to surrender; but Abu Daggal's men who took the letter tried to loot 'Arabi's animals and were driven off. In December 1899 the two forces lined up at Mandua, but while Hassan Warrak was conducting negotiations Abu Daggal attacked, and when a further meeting was arranged Abu Daggal said he would loot 'Arabi whether he surrendered or not. Rather naturally 'Arabi Dafaalla broke off negotiations. A fight ensued which, though indeterminate, forced the Government party to retire as they were short of provisions. Abu Daggal then withdrew his men, looting Kalaka (from Hambali) though the people had welcomed the Government forces.

'Arabi Dafaalla now retreated to the Kara river and opened negotiations with Sultan Abu Risha of Dar Sila, but his troops gradually deserted him and on 9th July 1902 'Arabi marched into El Fasher, was disarmed, given the *amān* (safe conduct) and swore an oath of allegiance.

(He was put to death in 1915 or 1916 on suspicion of complicity in the Government's intention to occupy Darfur).

The Sultan started early on the policy of removing his ministers and generals on the all too frequent suspicions sown in his mind.

His first general, Kierain, was suspected because he left El Fasher marching eastwards in 1902 when his objective was the Rizeigat in the south. He was recalled and carved to pieces by Ali Dinar's slaves at a dinner party.

In 1901 Salih Gibril, an agent, found that the first *Wazir* Mohammed Wad Fadl had fallen into disgrace following a visit to Khartoum, and that three men shared the power of *Wazir* Somit, Teirab, and Sollum Idris, a Habbani. Teirab fell into disgrace in 1904 and was banished to Jebel Marra where he was imprisoned for two years; after this he mysteriously disappeared and is said to have been thrown down a well to die. Adam Rigal now became *Wazir*. Sollum lasted on as head of the Sultan's bodyguard until 1912, when he was killed by the Sultan's order at Nyala. Adam Rigal himself was arrested in 1911 for being too popular, and disappeared.

The power was then shared between Ramadan Burra, Suleiman Abu Hawa and Hassan Sebil in the inner Councils, while Mahmoud al Dedingawi was an influence outside.

Meanwhile the Sultan had consolidated his power by expeditions against Sultan Idris of Dar Gimr in 1902. Sultan Idris had rashly refused to give his daughter to Ali Dinar till the latter had conquered Feki Senin. The latter proving too tough, Ali Dinar sent his army to annex Dar Gimr, drive out Idris and bring back his daughter, all of which was done.

Early in 1904 the Sultan sent Adam Rigal against the Zaghawa Kobbe in the north west, capturing Sultan Abdel Rahman Ferti. He still had Feki Senin on his left flank in Kebkebia but having subdued the north he felt at liberty to put pressure on Dar Masalit, which had been in the Fur Sultanate before the Mahdia. As early as 1903 he had put to death the Emir Karamalla for intriguing with the Masalit, and in 1904 some indecisive actions took place against that tribe. But in 1905 he seized his first good opportunity. The Masalit had murdered some tax collectors sent to them by Mohammed Salih Dud Marra, the sultan of Wadai, and the latter sent a force against them. Ali Dinar simultaneously attacked them with a force under Mahmoud al Dedingawi, who captured their sultan Abukr at Dergeil, whereupon the Wadai army withdrew without fighting. Mahmoud al Dedingawi remained in Wadai for 2 years, and with the Masalit defeated a second Wadai army sent against them.

Ali Dinar was highly elated by this success and wrote reporting his victory and captive to the Governor General of the Sudan. But in 1906 Tag al Din, the son of the captured Abukr, who had fled to Wadai, returned with help from Sultan Dud Marra, defeated the Fur and killed Mahmoud al Dedingawi's successor, Gamr al Din. Ali Dinar promptly executed Abukr and sent Adam Rigal to restore order which was done at the expense of recognising Tag al Din as a tributary Sultan.

Sultan Mohammed Salih Dud Marra of Wadai from this time on was engaged in concentrating against the steadily advancing French, and Ali Dinar found the time propitious to try to extend his influence in the West. In 1906 the Fur invaded the Wurada District and Ali Dinar encouraged Bakheit Abu Risha of Dar Sila to refuse tribute to the French. The French heavily defeated Dud Marra in March and June 1908 and Capt. Fliegenschuh occupied Abéché in the latter month driving out Dud Marra and installing a certain Asil. The French then complicated their task by claiming Dars Tama and Masalit as part of Wadai and thereby provoking violent opposition from Ali Dinar. The position was still further exacerbated when the French on invitation from Sultan Idris visited Dar Gimr in October 1909.

In reply to these moves Ali Dinar in concert with Dud Marra, who was fugitive in the north, and with Sultan Tag al Din, invaded Dar Gimr in January 1910. Sultan Idris as usual fled, but his son Hashim was captured and kept in El Fasher, (buried alive, it is said) for some years. Ahmed Beida was installed in his place. In February the Masalat invaded Dar Tama and drove out the French nominee Hassan, who was reinstated by the French and then again driven out by the Fur under Adam Rigal. (It was during these events that Boyd Alexander on his trans-African journey was killed by the Fur at Nyera on 2nd April 1910).

The French pressure gradually proved too much for Ali Dinar and his confederates. Senussi influence could never combine Adam Rigal, Tag al Din and Dud Marra for long.

The Fur and Masalit however made one big raid in conjunction, penetrating west of Bir Tawil in March 1910. On 7th April 1910 Commander St. Julian following them up heavily defeated a large Fur force at Gereida in Dar Tama and then caught up and defeated Tag al Din at Umm Gorain. As a result both French nominees were reinstalled, Idris in Dar Gimr and Hassan in Tama. The arrival in May 1910 of Dud Marra as a refugee in Dar Masalit was followed by Masalit raids across their border and brought a French expedition to that area in November. An action at Darotj on 9th November resulted first in the

death of Colonel Moll and many French troops, but the rest re-formed and defeated the Masalit, killing Sultan Tag al Din, who was succeeded by Endoka, the present ruler.

In January 1911 the Fur again tried to re-establish themselves in Dar Tama and Dar Kabga but were chased out by French in May. From this time on Ali Dinar and Endoka seem to have accepted the position on the western frontier. In 1911 Dud Marra quarrelled with Endoka who allowed a party of French to come to Daroti to recover the remains of their dead. He appears from this time on to have been on good terms with the French, who with ambitions for further expansion in this area fostered his friendship. Active measures by the French were, however, confined to the occupation of Loz Beida on the borders of Dar Sila on 1st January 1912; this led to a treaty with Sultan Bakhit Abu Risha of Dar Sila, and to an attack on the Zaghawa Kobbe where the French sponsored an usurper Haggat Toke against Sultan Abdel Rahman Firti. They surprised and killed the latter on 2nd December 1912. In May 1914 their ambitions in this area culminated in an attack on the Zaghawa whom they chased into Darfur as far as Musbat Wells.

Sultan Ali Dinar had meanwhile been fully occupied elsewhere, and we must revert to the year 1904. After his defeat of the Zaghawa the Sultan was able to open the route to Kufra and to obtain more modern firearms, but it was not until 1908 that he felt able to mount a full attack against Feki Sinin, who still held out in Kebkabiya, under Adam Rigal and Mahmoud al Dedingawi, his best generals, and it was not till the end of 1908 that this gallant old man's defences were broken down, and his head sent to the Sultan.

Ali Dinar thereafter became embroiled in affairs on the French border, as previously recounted, but by 1910 these affairs were having their reaction elsewhere. Beni Helba, Fellata and Habbaniya were being called on to supply many recruits and were fleeing to Dar Sila. Nazir Abd al Rahman Abu Habbo took 2,000 men off to Sultan Bakhit Abu Risha in March 1910. When his western campaign finally collapsed Ali Dinar found that he had to re-establish his authority over the Arabs.

His *Wazir* Adam Rigal, in spite of his heavy defeat at the hands of the French, remained Commander-in-Chief, but the armed regular infantry probably only amounted to some 3,500 men. The cavalry were much depleted by the Beni Helba emigration, and consisted of 600-700 Zayadia and Zaghawa. Basi Tahir, a Furawi, and Tigani Mahidi were the other generals. Armed posts were at Jebel el Hilla under Mustafa Gelgham, at Kuttum under Beshir Wad Nasr, and at

Kebkabiya under Mansur Abdal Rahman, but before Ali Dinar's preparations to attack the Arabs were completed he had fallen foul of his general Adam Rigal, who was becoming too popular for his master ; Adam was arrested in June or July 1911 and was put to death before the end of the year.

[*The latter part of Ali Dinar's reign 1911-1916 is to be dealt with in a later article.*]

ADMINISTRATIVE SYSTEM

THE FUR REGIME¹

The early Fur administration was based in Jebel Marra with its headquarters at Turra, and the first stage in organisation seems to have been the appointment of four regional Governors whose names derived from their situation in relation to the Sultan if he looked south-east from the mountain. The *Tekanyawi*, or left arm of the Sultan, was overlord of the north and was of Tungur stock. The *Dimangawi* was lord of the south-west, and was the right arm, the *Umangawi* of the south-east was his trunk. Even more important than these seems to have been the *Abu Sheikh Dali* who was lord of the eastern marches, though he was a slave and sometimes at any rate a eunuch. The post of *Abu Sheikh Dali* lapsed after the revolt of Abu Sheikh Kurra Gabr al Dar in the reign of Mohammed Fadl, but the others exist in some form today. The *Tekanyawi's* office is a sinecure in Kuttum, where his duties seem to have been completely absorbed by a hereditary *Magdum*, but the *Umangawi* is still a chief of some importance, while the *Dimangawi* emerged recently to become the paramount chief in Zalingei, when it was thought his position and prestige had disappeared for ever.

We get evidence of other State officials, some of whose names remain, without the power, until today. The *Abu Forei*, or Sultan's neck, who was chief of the rear-guard ; the *Abu Gebbai*, or Stomach, who was in charge of the granaries, the *Urundulung*, or face, who stood before him, but had a special and powerful position as Governor of El Fasher ; the *Konyinyawi*, who had charge of the war drums ; the *Kerningawi* who was overlord of Kerne, Fia, Madi and Kunyar ; all these men retained throughout the first Fur regime (however their powers varied or decreased) their position as members of the Council of *Muluk* (rulers), who in the last resort decided who was to be Sultan. Without their backing, voluntary or compulsory, no Sultan could have established his claim.

¹ See also *Sudan Notes and Records* Vol. 29 Part 1.—Ed.

The household officials who were so evident in Sultan Abd al Rahman's time seem to have largely disappeared by this century, but it is of interest to record the important positions once held by the *Kamni* or King's shadow, who had to die if the Sultan perished in battle, the *Iya Kuri* or principal wife, the *Iya Basi* or sister of the Sultan, the *Basi* or chief male relative. Of those only the two last seem to have held their old positions under Ali Dinar, and his sister, Meiram Taga, was a dominating figure as *Iya Basi*.

The old organisation of four regional governors, the state officials and the household staff, underwent a gradual mutation in the course of time. The regional governors whose position was hereditary were reduced or superseded by appointed *Magdums*. These in their turn tended to become hereditary holders of office, and when they eventually became too powerful were broken. Thus the *Abu Dima* continued to hold something approximating to his old position in the west, though his original twelve shartaiships were gradually reduced to eight—Dima, Wana, Nyoma, Surra, Kubra, Kutiu, Zami Baya, Zami Toya and Tabella. A *Magdum* of the west came in to hold Fia, Kerne and Madi and Koinye to the north of this area, and the *Abu Dima* found himself for a time under the *Magdum* of the south.

The *Abu Uma*, whose control of the south-east can never have been effective over the southern Arabs, was also subjected to the *Magdum* of the south, and gradually reduced to a command of the hill-men in the south-east of the Jebel.

The *Tekanyawi* in the north was in time completely subjected to the *Magdum* of the north, while the *Abu Sheikh Dali*, who was *Magdum* of the east, had a wide command in the central and eastern marches.

This "Magdumate" system seems to have come into being late in the eighteenth century, but it had a short life. The last *Abu Sheikh Dali*, the famous Mohammed Kutra, was killed in fight against Sultan Mohammed Fadl, and his office not renewed. The last *Magdum* of the south, Ahmed Shatta, and of the west, Abdulla Ranga were killed by Zubair in the reign of Sultan Ibrahim Gerad. Only *Magdum* Hassan Sherif of the north survived into and through Ali Dinar's reign.

The Egyptian Regime and Mahdia

The Egyptian was perforce a military government, primarily interested in collecting taxes and maintaining public security. They had a Governor at El Fasher, Sub-Governors at Dara, and Kebkabiya or Kulkul, and smaller military forces with junior officers at various posts such as Shakka (Abu Sigan), Barakandi, Abu Qorain, and Umm

Shanga. Later the Governor Slatin moved his headquarters to Dara, and El Fasher became the seat of a Sub-Governor.

We may say that the system was based on a line of communication to the east and a cordon against the recalcitrant Sultan in Jebel Marra and the Rizeigat in the south, rather than on any administrative plan. This system was handed over complete to the Mahdists, who in fact took on many of the Egyptian Army officers. The Egyptian method of dealing with the tribes was to give suzerainty with the title of Bey to leading Sheikhs, who then presumably became responsible to collect taxes, or fall on the defaulters.

There were many intentions and plans for development under the Purdy Mission, but the Mahdia prevented such plans being put into effect.

The Mahdists, who simply used Darfur as a reservoir for recruits, seem to have made no attempt at administration and to have abandoned the various posts as they yielded neither men nor money. El Fasher was retained to the end and Kebkabiya handed by Osman Gano to the redoubtable Feki Senin, but no trace of their administration remains if we except the bitter memories of their punitive expeditions and driving off of the population.

Administration of Ali Dinar

Sultan Ali Dinar greatly modified the old Fur administration. As has been said, the old layout of *Tekangawi*, *Umangawi*, *Dimangawi* and *Abu Sheikh Dali* had, if it ever existed in the neat arrangement reported by tradition, been largely superseded during the 19th Century by the appointment of *Magdums* in the north, south and west. The older chiefs remained in name with truncated areas but under the *Magdums*; and during the 19th century the *Magdums* themselves had tended to decline.

Sultan Ali Dinar did nothing to revive the older system, though he allowed the *Dimangawi* and *Umangawi* to hold their reduced commands. But he gradually abandoned the Magdumate system also. The *Magdum* Sherif Adam in the north was never given much power. His *rub'a* of troops (200 men) was one of the smallest. The Magdumate of the south was not revived; The Magdumate of the west was largely in abeyance because of the wars first with Feki Senin at Kebkabiya, and then with the Masalit, and Abdulla Runga in the time of Sultan Hussein is the last famous figure. Mansur Abdel Rahman Shartut and Osman Mohammed Abu el Gama did however hold some such office over the *Dars* (regions) of Madi, Fia, Koingya and Kerne under Ali Dinar.

But in effect this was not Ali Dinar's system. He had been brought up under the Mahdia and he believed in military and personal government. *Mandubs* were sent out with the troops who were quartered in various areas, to "assist" the *Shartais* and *Dimligs* to collect taxes. They were frequently moved, and as their commands varied in size according to the Sultan's whim, overlapped with the commands of old hereditary authorities such as the *Dimangawi*, and were cut across by the private domains of the Sultan, his family and the *Muluk*, it is not possible to discern any consistent system, or worth while trying to unravel the history of who ruled in each area.

Below these personal envoys of the Sultan we came on the more stable orders of *Shartais* and *Dimligs* or *Sheikhs* who no doubt lost or gained power according to the energy, greed and proximity of the local *mandub*.

Above this local administration the old central government by the Council of *Muluk*, who had great traditional power, also suffered a decline. Of the old hierarchy, only the *Abu Gebbai* (Mohammed Fadl), the *Malik* of the Drums (Tibn Saa al Nur) and the *Urun-Dulung* remain. The *Abu Forei* is a nonentity and the *Kamni* has disappeared.

In their place we find a new Council composed of a few officials, personal favourites and household slaves. In the former class were:—

The *Qadi* Idris Abdullahi (still alive)

The *Wazir* Successively Teirab Suleiman, Adam Rigal
and Ramadan Ali Burra.

The Chief Minister. Mahmud al Dedingawi

The *Magdum* of the North—Sharif Adam.

Among personal favourites were:—

Nazir Ali al Senussi

Sullum Idris .. Head of the Body Guard

Melik Mustafa *Gelgham*

Hassan Sebil .. Court Chamberlain.

But power latterly tended to get into the hands of the Sultan's slaves such as Ramadan Ali, finally *Wazir* and Commander-in-Chief, and Bakhit Omdurman, and these two with Hassan Sebil were the real council of state in the latter days.

Justice was administered by District *Qadis* subject to *Qadi* Idris. But the *Muluk* and *Mandubs* also saw many cases and even *Shartais* and *Nazirs* dealt with minor crime. The Sultan alone punished with death or maiming, which were the penalties awarded for theft, adultery, wounding or the selling of male slaves.

Taxation consisted of *Zakat al Bahaim*, which was 1 rial (20 P.T.)

per camel, 10 P.T. per cow, 1 P.T. per sheep and 1 or $1\frac{1}{2}$ P.T. per goat. These taxes were paid each year in the month of Dahia, often in kind, and one fifth went to the *Masakin* i.e. the *Jehadia* (bodyguard) and native levies.

Futra was collected in the month of Ramadan, and was a poll tax of one *mid*¹ of corn on every man, woman and child. When collected in cash it of course cost more in a bad year than in a good one.

Each tribal group paid a cloth tax to clothe the army (*Takia Takaki*) at the annual festival of 'Id al Dahia, and there were many other imposts in kind, grain dumps for the army, ropes, horses, ivory and slaves as the occasion demanded. The most unpopular imposts seems to have been slaves to feed the Sultan's armies.

The people had also to support their local chiefs who took *Ushur* (tithe) on the crops and dues on gum. They also of course inflicted minor fines and "ate" the proceeds.

There were also royalties (*Khums*) on natural produce, such as tobacco, pepper, ivory, or ostrich feathers, often of course collected in kind. Trade and export was subject to *Tasrih* (lit, permit). while imports were subject to *Mubrak* (the place where the camel kneels down or "barraks") as well as frontier dues. In theory Ali Dinar's system was not unsuited to Darfur, but when we examine it more closely we see that the ordered system of a Sultan with a powerful hereditary Council at the top and an administrative hierarchy of *Magdums*, *Shartais* and *Dimligs* or *Sheikhs* was giving place to a personal autocracy run through military channels. Of the old *Meglis al Muluk* only a few of the hereditary office-holders remained while personal favourites and slave officials were taking their place. *Mandubs* who were army commanders were replacing the old rulers as administrators. The taxation system was vitiated by bargaining and *diafa* ("hospitality," i.e. a present) to these officers, who if well bribed only collected and remitted to the Sultan the minimum they thought he would expect.

The legal system is so shadowy and was so beset by bribery that it is difficult to set it out as a coherent system. The *Mandub* figures more largely in the peoples' memories than the Assistant *Qadis*.

This is not to paint the old Fur regime as a golden age, but at any rate tax restraints imposed by the traditional Muluk or the Sultan were disappearing, and the attempt to finance a large army and an extravagant household on Darfur alone without the tribute and slave of Kordofan, Wadai and the south, was breaking down financially in Ali Dinar's time.

¹ About 12 lb.—*Ed.*

The Sudan Government

Administration under the present Government followed the main lines adopted elsewhere in the Sudan. There were Districts based on El Fasher, Kutum, Umm Kedada, Zalingei and Nyala. Sub Districts were formed under Kutum at Mellit and Kebkabiya in northern Darfur. Dar Masalit was not fully taken over until February 1922, but a Government post was placed at Kereinik in March 1918 before Geneina was occupied.

The personnel in the British section was for some time military. The first Governor and all the first District Commissioners in 1917 were military except for Gillan at Nyala. All Departments, (although those represented were only Medical, Veterinary and Public Works), were run by soldiers.

The Governorship passed to a civilian, Munro, in 1923, but there were soldier District Commissioners in some districts until the late twenties. The work in the earlier years was primarily maintenance of public security, judicial and tax collection.

Administration below district level was run through *Nazirs* and *Shartais*. They received no pay at first, but got remuneration for taxes, were allowed to "eat" fines, and of course large customary dues, which, as military commanders and *Mandubs* no longer competed for them, were probably larger than under the Sultan.

Their judicial powers were limited to a small fine which was later legalised under the Powers of Nomad Sheikhs Ordinance. This Ordinance of 1922 was not so revolutionary a law in Darfur as elsewhere, for the State courts and magistrates had never attempted to hear all cases there. It did, however, shift a great burden of legal work from the District Commissioner to the Sheikh's Courts which had hitherto had no powers of imprisonment. The new Ordinance was accompanied by better salaries, and later by payment of all fines into Government chests, and soon after by a simple form of Native Administration budget in certain areas.

Darfur was, however, to go through a period of trouble in tribal administration before a reasonable system was evolved. Whereas in the eastern Sudan, customary powers of tribal chiefs had never been recognised and the exercise of new powers to fine and imprison was accepted with caution, in Darfur the very reverse was the case. The *Shartais* and others had long been used to punish their subjects, but only as subsidiary authorities. The official presentation to them of Warrants, and a mistaken policy which taught that their authority must be upheld by seldom reversing their decisions, led to overmuch fining

and imprisonment, often for the vague offence of "disobedience of orders." Not only were appeals often rejected, but the last refuges of the subject, voluntary exile or revolt against his chief, were repressed when possible. From 1926 to 1928 and later in some places, some injustice, nepotism and selling of posts were allowed under this mistaken policy. By 1930 more sensible counsels had prevailed, and tyrannical chiefs were being punished, or dismissed.

Another false step at a higher level was being taken at this time. It was clear that the grouping of tribes under regional Courts which tended in time to develop administrative powers, was not the last step in devolution. Such groups were limited by physical factors to fairly small areas, and these areas could not support a sound budget. On the analogy of Nigeria, there was an attempt to form Emirates which would be at least the size of an administrative district.

The Sultanate of Dar Masalit was already in being when we took over the area in 1922. The son of the old *Magdum* of the North was returned to Northern Darfur with his father's title first on trial in 1926 and then in 1930 with full court powers. Next Southern Darfur was invited to accept one of the Khalifa's sons as Emir in 1929, but the proposal came to nothing. An Emir was found for Western District in the person of the aged Abd al Hamid, the son of Sultan Ibrahim Gerad, who was drawn from his retirement at Kosti in 1928. A respected old official was offered the headship of the Eastern District, and the dominance of Feki Salih in El Fasher seemed to promise another autocracy there.

Now there was much to be said for this plan, yet barring the Sultan of Dar Masalit, not one of these Emirates or Magdumates survives today except in name. It was right to think that the old tribal administrations were too small financially and economically to form self-supporting local government units. There was also some historical justification for re-introducing the higher grade of local government which had always existed in the powers of *Magdums* and *Mandubs*. But there were some fatal flaws.

The old hereditary Magdumates had disappeared except in the north, and the new occupants proposed for Eastern Darfur, Nyala and El Fasher had not the traditional prestige which would have ensured their acceptance. The Magdumate system had in any case been broken by the Sultans and it was too late to reinstate it. The Chiefs and people were looking for something based on justice and ability rather than divine right, and this wrecked even the two administrations in Northern Darfur and in Zalingei where the hereditary system gave prestige to the

new ruler. The revival of tribal administration under the Sudan Government had, in the measure of justice to be obtained from the District Commissioner, given the people and chiefs an insight into something better than the old hereditary autocracy. Emir Abd al Hamid Ibrahim reigned with the respect of his people if without marked ability from 1929 to 1931, but the son Mohammed Fadl had to be dismissed in 1936. The *Magdum* of the North never succeeded in establishing his authority except over the few *dars* round Kutum, and remains only *primus inter pares* with the *Maliks* of Zaghawa and Meidob, the *Shartais* of Mellit and Kebkabiya. The Eastern Emirate never took shape at all, and El Fasher's history developed on different lines recorded below.

The attempt to institute these emirates lasted on for some time. The *Magdum* of the North was nursed until 1944, but it was clear before that date that he was never going to command the allegiance of the chiefs. With the fall of the Emirate of Zalingei in 1936, Abd al Rahman Adam Rigal, son of the Sultan's one-time *Wazir*, was appointed as *Magdum* of Nyala and Zalingei, an impossible amalgamation geographically. The void in Southern Darfur was to be filled by appointing Ibrahim Musa of the Rizeigat as *Nazir* of all the Baggara, but it was another impossible geographical unit, apart from personal considerations. *Malik* Mohammed Mahmud al Dedingawi at least kept his title in El Fasher, while *Shartai* Daw al Bait Abd al Daim established a supremacy by his ability and integrity in Eastern Darfur. But the system was kept going by accident of ability or by Government insistence; it had no hope of prolonged survival.

The coming of more formal local government in 1944, and the creation of the Advisory Council with its foreshadowing of a Legislative Assembly based on constituencies, marked the end of the attempt to create Emirates based on personalities rather than on history. The Nyala and Zalingei *Magdumates* were disassociated in 1945, and the idea of a Baggara confederacy reduced to a combined court. The *Magdum* at Kutum was formally confined to control of the home *dars*; the title of *Malik* was withheld from the new President of El Fasher Central Court. Administrative powers are now being vested in councils for the various areas and independent local "budgets" have been granted by the Central Government. It is still too early to assess what the next stage in Darfur will bring.

The chief published sources for these notes are :—

W. G. Browne : Travels in Egypt ;

Omr el Tunisi : Voyage on Darfur ;

R. Von Slatin : Fire and Sword in the Sudan ;

Wingate & Slatin : Mahdism in the Anglo Egyptian Sudan ;

G. Douin : Reign of the Khedive Ismail.

The Author has also drawn largely on papers in the Darfur Province records, and must express his great indebtedness to unpublished notes by Sir Harold MacMichael and Mr. A. J. Arkell which have been largely incorporated in certain sections of the article.