

Now, I wonder how many Aucklanders are aware that there is a memorial stone to Dr. Sinclair in the Symonds Street cemetery? Right alongside the footpath on the left-hand side coming down Symonds Street there is an ageing stone bearing the following inscription:

TO
THE MEMORY OF
ANDREW SINCLAIR M. D., R.N.
LATE COLONIAL SECRETARY OF N. Z.
WHO WAS DROWNED IN THE RANGITATA RIVER IN THE
PROVINCE OF CANTEREURY
ON THE 26TH. MARCH, 1861

R E Q U I E S C A T I N P A C E

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We have pleasure in publishing a further instalment of Mrs. G.F. Allen's article, "A Journey in Africa" (Part 3).

I went through a patch of forest, very like Malayan jungle and saw many interesting ferns. Cyathea were common, a Dryopteris and a Rumohra (in the New Zealand sense, and very like adiantiformis) and mixed with them were Elatostema and Balsams. On the outskirts were Hypolepis, Histiopteris incisa, Blechnum and Pteridium aquilinum. Although only a few miles from the equator, I was delighted to see in cultivation, Rambler roses, Irises, Fuchsia and Foxgloves, to mention only a few.

Regretfully we left and descended again into the Rift Valley where the road wound round the steep sides. On these rocky crags was the Cape Chestnut (Calodendron) with the lovely lilac flowers,

but the trees were much poorer specimens than those in Auckland gardens. In the Rift, we visited a lake which was literally pink with countless flamingoes. The vegetation of grasses and short sedges had been flattened by the birds, but I did find a lovely yellowish-green Crotolaria and a tiny Hibiscus with a colour I see I have noted as deep flamingo red! Here we met a farmer who was sending his son the following year to Massey College!

Up the other side of the Rift and into the lichen-draped cedars again, and at 9,000 feet we passed the equator, and photographed the sign whilst we were wrapped in warm coats and standing on wild Kikuyu grass. On the roadside were small Veronicas or speedwells (V. mysinioides) with very blue flowers, a Cynoglossum and plenty of Trifolium, and patches of the very pretty blue Salvia nudicaulis.

Eventually we came into Uganda and stayed a night on the shores of Lake Victoria but it was too much of a tourist place and so we hurried on. In Entebbe we found a nice patch of forest preserved in which I saw Marattia fraxinea, Microsorium, Pyrrosia and Davallia. We ran through more or less flat land (albeit at 4,000 feet), with varying crops of sugar-cane, coffee and bananas, and of course Silky Oak as a shade tree. The countryside became damp looking, more like Malaya in appearance and very green, with Tulip Trees (which are very commonly cultivated in Malaya), growing wild. They are Spathodea and have bright red flowers. A tall grass Phragmites, which seems to be in every country except New Zealand that I have visited, and an Erythrina excelsa grew in wet places (this ought to do well in Auckland). There was Gloriosa with red and yellow flowers climbing over small shrubs, Dombeya sp, and on the banks of the Nile and in swamps, was the papyrus sedge, amongst which was growing the common Cyclosorus gongylodes. We drove to Fort Portal, at the base of the Ruwensori Mountains, better known as the Mountains of the Moon.

Our object was to climb this, but again fate was against us, and early rains set in. We waited for a fortnight but eventually had to abandon the trip. This was a bitter disappointment as I had set my heart on seeing the giant lobelias and senecios for which these African equatorial mountains are famous. In the meantime we managed to get along a hair-raising road to a place (not even a village) with the equally hair-raising name of Bundabugya, on the flanks of the Ruwensori, on the Belgian Congo border. Here the famous Ituri forest was just in Uganda, and we saw the smelly little pygmies (as well as many spurious ones) who inhabit this forest. It was tall, gloomy and wet, but quite easy to walk through, with a few lianes to dodge. I saw Athyrium, Nephrolepis, Adiantum caudata, and many of the ferns I saw at the Aberdares. As well, there were several species of ferns identical to those in Malaya. Outside there were Melia trees, a yellow flowered Cassia, and on a patch of rock I found the curious little African fern, Actiniopteris australis, with dichotomous fronds. Near the mud hut in which we stayed was Opheglossum reticulatum. It was rather amusing because this hut had been kindly rented to us by the local headman. We had been

repeatedly warned not to leave anything where Africans could steal them (I may say we did not lose a thing on our trip and they had plenty of opportunity to do so at odd times) as they would remove anything they could. So imagine our apprehension when we found that the lock on the door had been broken, and we had so much camera equipment to leave when we went out. So we told the headman we were worried and he kindly sent us some guards who were really charming. We found that they were prisoners. (he was in charge of the local prison workers) and said we hoped they were not in for theiving. Whereupon he looked pained and said he would not have done such a thing, these were carefully picked and everyone was in for murder. They could not have been nicer, and everything was kept intact and tidy for the week we were there.

Abandoning Ruwenzori, we visited Queen Elizabeth National Park, on yet another side of the mountains, where there was queer open country with vast candelabra Euphorbia, under which elephant hid in the most disturbing manner, completely concealed, and low bushes of Capparis. We drove on over very bad roads, again to the Belgian Congo border, near Ruanda-Urundi, to climb into the range of tall mountains there, to look for Gorilla. On the way, the road rose high and there were Eucalypts and then rain forest, on the edge of which I saw my first giant lobelia. It was quite common, about 9 feet high with a tall slender spike, not unlike an Echium. The pale blue flowers were hardly out and were hidden by green bracts. On the mountain we climbed, the ground was under cultivation to about 7,000 feet, then we started the mixed bamboo forest which became more or less pure at about 9,000 feet. This is where the gorilla lives, eating the bamboo shoots. At about 10,000 feet the scrub started but we went no higher for the gorillas (and my husband) do not like that type of vegetation. I saw very few new ferns, but a small yellow Senecio was common. Most of the undergrowth seemed to have been well cropped by animals. Most of this chain of mountains is made up of extinct volcanoes, but one is still active, and we saw it glowing weirdly at night.

We retraced our steps through Fort Portal to the Murchison, in the north of Uganda, passing on the way, in an open and almost arid place, a stand of Cyathea. I collected some, nearly falling into enormous holes which were hidden in the undergrowth. This was a rare species, so I found later (C. dregei) confined to areas where there is much iron in the soil - hence the holes, from which it had been extracted.

(To be continued)