

AFRICAN AFFAIRS.

LETTERS FROM A NELSONIAN.

(Concluded from Yesterday).

In view of the state of social and political affairs in Africa, the appended extracts from letters written by Mr W. W. Anderson to his father, Mr W. B. Anderson, of Rivaka, on his way from the Transvaal to England, should be read with much interest:—

Hotel de la Grande Bretagne, Cairo: 26th November, 1898 (continued): . . . The following morning I was in front of the temporary palace of the Sultan, (and a very dingy temporary palace it is), whilst the Sultan was holding a reception. There was a company of Soudanese drawn up, and a British band, and we saw the British Consul and other foreign officials coming and going, and several gaudily-dressed Arab chiefs, many of them very fat and unwieldy though there were also representatives of the lean and slipper pantaloon stage amongst them, but all wearing their jewelled weapon in a ludicrously awkward manner. I am told that many of them are very rich—largely from the slave trade. There are a lot of Mohammedan mosques in Zanzibar, and they are absolutely unpretentious, plain, square white buildings without windows (very different from the mosques at Cairo) but with archways through which the worshippers are plainly to be seen and heard standing and muttering their prayers, and at times bowing low (towards Mecca) falling on their knees, bending their foreheads to the ground, and rising upright again continuing their mutterings and prayers.

The next morning I took a guide and went for a long walk through native, Indian, and Arab quarters, and also to see various public offices, consular buildings, post office, etc., and then a pretty walk in the environs of the town and stopped for a rest at the club of the seamen of the British men-of-war.

We left Zanzibar at 10 a. m. I do not remember what date, and started on a journey of eight days to Aden, only broken by a stoppage at Tanga, a port on the north of the coast of German East Africa. I went on shore there and saw what there was to see, which was not very much, as it is only a small place—plenty of natives, Arabs, and Indians, but only about 100 Europeans. The vessel anchored out in the bay as usual and we were rowed ashore. On the beach were a couple of camels, the first I had seen in use, a large fish also—like a shark which some natives had caught and were cutting up, and some old boats—probably slave dhows. Then we went to see the railway station. A new line runs from here two or three hundred miles into this German colony. After a walk into the forest (palms, mangoes, etc), we had a walk around the small fort which the Germans have built, and then returned to the ship by the steam launch which had

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been sent for us. I think it is about the 10th November, but am not sure, however I have not to go on shift, so it does not matter. We have been travelling along in sight of the N.E. coast for the last two or three days, and a very rocky, sandy, barren-looking coast it is. I am told that it is sometimes called "No Man's Land" but that it is claimed by Abyssinia. . . . At Dar-es-Salaam three German nuns came aboard, 2nd class to Naples, and a black girl about 18 years old, who has rather a queer story as I heard it. Some fellow sent her home to Germany to be educated and then got her out here to German East Africa again. She arrived to find that the man had got sentenced to a long term of imprisonment for illtreating natives or something of that sort. She, being educated, is too good now to live like others of her race so the German authorities are sending her back to Germany again. I suppose they were puzzled to know what to do with her.

If I could understand German I should enjoy the trip better. On my left at table is an Italian who talks to me in broken English and I only understands half of what he says. On my right and at the head of the table is a young Jewess, and next on her right a German jew, I think. To him she speaks German, at least she did until they fell out—now they do not speak as they pass by, before they used to monopolise the conversation. To the Italian she speaks French, to me she speaks broken English, but she is going to improve on that—"To you I vill speak vis my eyes" she informed me, indicating those organs with her forefinger. She is seasick more or less all the voyage, but does not allow that to prevent a proper enjoyment of the good things of the table. Some of the fellows are illnatured enough to say that she cannot expect anything else than to be sick when she stuffs herself with such a miscellany of food and drink. She says—with a wave of the hand towards the sea. "Zis morning I vas sick two time, I am sick from ze first to ze last hour, when I get to lunch I tink 'Now on ze table' and I have to go away quick." She told me that she was taking notes of the trip for a report for a Frankfort paper and that she was observing the character and peculiarities of the passengers for the purpose, so perhaps she will be "taking me off" and have an unconscious revenge for the above. I had thought to overtake myself—that is, to arrive in Cairo in this letter, but I think I had better stop at this point now.