

dust into quills for one measure, and weighing small nuggets against pebbles for another. Moreover, my interpreter found that Gomer also boasted another lucrative trade, which the Ras fairly supposed should be concealed from the European,—for have not the white men cajoled Menelik into some sort of agreement to suppress the slave trade in his realm? But his great vassals, far in the interior, where the troubling European had never been seen, feel no hesitation in maintaining the patriarchal relation of master to such Shankalis or other low tribes as may sell themselves or be seized in war.

Now, the Ras did not like to lie to me, I feel sure of that, for he was very much a gentleman; but in statecraft, alas! who is spotless? He fenced with a lie, while seeking a sure footing between new policy on the one hand and consecrated tradition on the other. So perhaps it was at Polu. We knew nothing of their wretched little placers (they may be direfully rich for aught I know), but when, within the short period of twenty years, four different sets of white men poke into an almost impassable valley and spy at things through tubes and are seen to write in books every night, is it not fair to presume that they are possessed of the Devil of gold-love, which is known to enter white and black and brown and yellow hearts all alike? And if you are snugly ensconced in life as the Beg of Polu, making by the sweat of the miner's brow an honest living for your hard-earned wives and children, would you not feel constrained to set a pitfall under the feet of a spying stranger? Ras Worke, Lord of marches in far Godjam, and you, humble Beg of little Polu! a