

**COLLECTIONS FOR A
HANDBOOK OF THE
SHAMBALA LANGUAGE**

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Collections for a Handbook of the Shambala Language by Edward Steere

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EDWARD STEERE

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P R E F A C E .

THE Shambala language is spoken in the country called in our maps, Usambara, which is a mountainous district on the mainland of Africa, lying opposite to the island of Pemba, and visible in clear weather from the town of Zanzibar.

Dr. Krapf twice visited the Shambala country, and described it as a most promising field for a mission. Owing, however, to some unfortunate political complications arising out of Dr. Krapf's second visit, he was never able to plant the intended mission, and Mr. Erhardt, who was to have been the first missionary, was hindered from even learning the language.

My own Collections were obtained in the first place from a native of one of the coast villages, who was well acquainted with the

Shambala country and language. They were revised by another man, a Zegula by birth, who made scarcely any substantial alteration. They do not claim to be at all a perfect account of the language, but are printed to serve as a basis for more exact researches, and to give the missionaries who will, if it please God, soon be sent into that country, some little previous insight into the sort of speech they will have to converse in.

Dr. Krapf called the language, *Kisambara*, the Swahili call it, *Maneno ya Kisambaa*, and the people themselves, *Mbuli za Kishambala*. I have omitted the *Ki*— because it is a mere prefix which one must know something of the language to avoid applying improperly. *Kishambala*, is used as a Substantive meaning *the Shambala sort*, and may be applied to any other thing as properly as to the language. The people are *Washambala*, one man is an *'Mshambala*. It seems to me much simpler in writing for European read-

ers to drop all variable prefixes, and use only (as we always do in the case of the Zulus) the unvarying ground form.

I have throughout written *l* for that peculiarly African sound, which seems to European ears at one time distinctly an *l*, and at another an *r* just as distinctly. I have found an *l*-sound always understood but not so a strong *r*.

I have avoided the introduction of new letters and diacritical points, because while it is impossible to define all sounds unmis- takeably, - complication and confusion must result from marking some peculiarities and omitting others. If the distinction is one involving differences of meaning in words which must otherwise be spelt alike some mark becomes necessary, but peculiarities of pronunciation which depend upon position and accent occur in all languages, and may safely be left to the ear of the learner.

Shambala conversation is always carried

on in an exclamatory style, and the pronunciation is throughout explosive, guttural and unfinished. P and T are often strongly aspirated, especially at the beginning of a word, and an initial B generally gets an indistinct m-sound prefixed to it.

EDWARD STEERE.

ZANZIBAR,

WHITSUNTIDE, 1867.

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