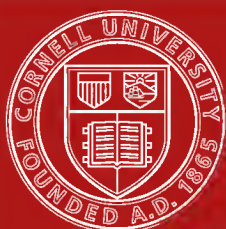


BACK TO THE LONG GRASS.



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BACK TO THE LONG GRASS  
MY LINK WITH LIVINGSTONE



# BACK TO THE LONG GRASS

MY LINK WITH  
LIVINGSTONE

BY

DAN CRAWFORD

AUTHOR OF "THINKING BLACK"

HODDER AND STOUGHTON LTD.

TORONTO

LONDON

NEW YORK

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THE BOOK  
I  
HAD HOPED  
TO PLACE IN HIS HANDS  
I  
CAN ONLY DEDICATE  
TO  
THE DEATHLESS MEMORY  
OF  
“STRUTHERS OF GREENOCK.”

*“There is a best way of living life, and it is best to live the best way.”*

*“We make provision for this life as if it never were to have an end, and for the Other Life as if it were never to have a beginning.”*

*“The Livingstone Cult.”*

## CRITICISM BY WAY OF PREFACE

*Here begins this sort of sequel to "Thinking Black." But whenever was a sequel an equal? Pencilled all along the African trail, perhaps this fact that they were written on the spot may help the reader to spot where they were written.*

1

*“Whoever reads these writings, wherein he is equally convinced let him go on with me.*

2

*“Wherein he equally hesitates let him investigate with me.*

3

*“Wherein he finds himself in error let him return to me.*

4

*“Wherein he finds me in error let him call me back to him.*

5

*“So let us go on together in the way of charity, pressing on toward Him of whom it is said, Seek ye His face for evermore.”*

*“The Five Findings of St. Augustine.”*

## CRITICISM BY WAY OF PREFACE

*“ But optics sharp they need, I ween,  
To see what is not to be seen.”*

**S**TRETCHING the imagination to the hypothesis that there is any need for a book for this preface, let alone a preface for this book, it does not correspond with the character of such a narrative to clog its course with any “ preliminary palavering.” As is perhaps inevitable under the circumstances, this book, built on Livingstone’s last pioneer journey, draws rather largely (deliberately and for its purpose necessarily) from his last recorded words. For I still stick to it that in trying “ to size ” Dr. Livingstone we must persistently underline nearly all his *Last Journals*.

They are innocent of artifice. They are, to use the African idiom, “ *Himself to him,*” and a good example of a shy Scotchman hiding the heat of his heart in the private pages of his last, lorn writing. These, the last lines he ever wrote (although intrinsically episodic and discontinuous), are good stuff. Do not, therefore, let London sniff at it all as very edifying, very decorous, yet very dull. Also, do not commiserate Livingstone for being alone. Heir to all the ages, he knew that throughout this mixed-up world he only is alone who lives not for another. There is a grimness in his silence on some subjects ; to him the only black spot in the sunshine was the suspicious shadow of “ D. L.”

There was murder all around him, and plenty of it—also the slavery he abhorred. But not even for one tick of the clock did Livingstone blink the fact that the truest evil in all the wide world is cold, creeping egotism, heartless selfishness. Waller, too, was the very man to edit these effusions from his honest heart ; no townsman he, no Fleet Street “ writer up,” but an old African traveller of the Livingstone cult.

The Luapula River, on the banks of which I now write, was the last word on his lips. “ *Siku ngapi ku Luapula ?* ” (“ How many days to the Luapula ? ”) This is the

black riverine artery that cut off his route up the right bank and is thereby a sure symbol of the two divisions of this chronicle. The crossing Arabs, the wandering hunters going east, all brought fuel to feed the flame of his dying desire to see this Katanga of his dreams. But it was not to be, not to be. That he died in a futile search for a geographic phantom is less than nothing when you recall the fact that the souls of the sons of men are greater than their business. Not to do a certain work but to *be* a certain thing was his African destiny in dying. Unless, indeed (and there is no "unless" about it), *his* being was his doing.

But it is well worth a paragraph to lodge one plea with the reader, a plea as pathetic as it is pertinent. The matter stands thus: one thing the reader must never forget if only out of mercy for us who hang on in these degenerating lands. I mean, that the whole of our Africa's languages from the Atlantic to the Indian Ocean are a jingle of alliteration, and suggestive of the old phrase: "apt alliteration's artful aid." Far from being a mere whim or conversational caprice, it is the cast-iron mould of this my mother tongue. And so, what would be unpardonable in an English writer as a studied straining after effect is to an old missionary his hourly and daily dialectic. Glancing back at these lines, I plead guilty to this alliteration, but claim exemption owing to this extenuating explanation. No African sees sense in writing "God is love"; by the Medo-Persic law of his language the opening consonant must open *every* other word in the sentence, thus: "God is love" = "*God gis gove,*" and so on and so on, all alliterative and musical as a song. Let this, then, be the defence of my annoying offence of alliteration.

To avoid a bald recapitulation my temptation was to throw all these diaries and letters into the melting-pot and let the ensuing narrative be their final crystallised form. But second thoughts prevailed. I will keep my promise made to Silvester Horne that day we spoke from the Royal Albert Hall at Livingstone's Centenary. He had just published his "Life" and was keen on these "first footsteps" seeing the light of day. Hence this redemption of my promise to a dead friend. There has been no artistic arranging

of facts and figures, no time for evolving accurately phrased work. But one thing I did try to do. Finding the retrospect of years far too seductive, the writer was forced to neutralise this mirage by a steady resort to the data of notebooks and diaries. Thus and thus only could this chronicle be anchored on the actual facts of things. Thus and thus only can one keep a tight hold on the reins of imagination and pull back Pegasus on his haunches each time he attempts a too daring flight.

James Payn was right. "The fault of most books of travel is that the writer delays to tell us his experiences until he has got accustomed to his new surroundings; in his solicitude to supply information he forgets the salient points which struck him on his first arrival, and therefore cannot communicate them to us stay-homes; and they are the very things we want to know. Moreover, he omits those details in which the difference really lies, and also the means by which he accomplished his journey, which to those who would follow his footsteps are absolutely essential. To find a volume of travel free from these faults is a distinction in itself." After all, probably the true preface lies there in those long antecedent years before pen touched paper. Haunting one at every turn is the great and grave problem how to manage one's perspective, for we missionaries, of all folks, are notoriously at fault here. Far too often the common caterpillars of actual life in Africa become the gorgeous butterflies of a missionary platform! Distance—of time as well as of place—does indeed jeopardise veracity of record; therefore do thou, O African Diarist, write on the spur of the moment when facts are fresh and stare you in the face. Plain prose, jerked down in pencil, rings out more real than a dreamy *ex post facto* tale viewed down the deceitful vista of years.

Finally, may I come to terms with my readers as to fact not form? Lurid as many of my facts look, the field of inquiry is far wider than our available space. At every turn, one finds oneself handicapped with the good old literary law demanding from a writer that he school himself in the art of compression. Bluntly on such sorry subjects as Slavery, Cannibalism, and the like, I have claimed

the right to eschew sugar-plum expressions and out with the truth.

Then as to Saint David. Avoiding, as I have sought to do, any slipshod carelessness as to fact, my good-natured reader must not be ruffled at this unmitigated method. Did not Boswell say of his "Johnson" that he would not make his tiger a cat for anyone? And so, *per contra*, Livingstone's *Last Journals* absolutely force my hand never to flinch from the high dignity of his end. Deep below the Scottish ice was the smouldering volcano of the true saint, and towards the end the ice is seen easily, so easily, to melt and the fire blaze out. For this reason the "preachy" phase of many a succeeding line.

The heat burned his body, but these last lines of his easily and evidently reveal a streak of heavenly coolness trickling through his soul. Let God's will be done, then, in *thus* telling of his last trek. Underlying a lot of the superficial contemptuousness for this kind of thing nowadays, you can trace a note of uneasiness that we white leaders of the blacks have, after all, only so much ability for so much liability. That you cannot be the principal person without having principles. And when Livingstone was dubbed "*Ingeresa*" or *The Englishman* he, there and then, became both national scapegoat and national hero, the blame and glory of a whole race being borne on the back of one man. The last stone of a pyramid is a whole pyramid.

It is late, very late, but as sleep is not coming my way I am in favour, shall continue to be in favour, of so redeeming the midnight hour by plying my pencil. A stubby fellow, this pencil is the soul of frankness, for has it not a point at one end and an eraser at the other? As much as to proclaim (and it is much to proclaim) that we are all human, all make mistakes, hence this eraser ready to rub out any erratum of the aberrant pencil. True symbol, by the by, of what all this Livingstone business is about; the sinner, with his sins recorded in the Courts of God, and the sinner's Saviour with plenitude of power to erase all such.

IN CAMP,

LUAPULA RIVER.

It is only fair to the reader to admit that some, only some of these fresh facts, were delivered in the Speech Room at Harrow, at Oxford, at Cambridge, and elsewhere.



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A FIRST GLIMPSE OF THE "DARK CONTINENT."



CHAPTER I  
BACK TO THE LONG GRASS

*Without proclaiming the inadequacies  
of this chapter, the reader is reminded  
that these lines were written on the  
spot, about the spot, by one who never  
wants to leave the spot.*

*“ The bed was made, the room was fit,  
By punctual eve the stars were lit ;  
The air was still, the waters ran,  
No need was there for maid or man  
When we put up, my lads and I,  
At God’s green caravanseraï.”*

*“ Lonely out here under the stars? How can I be lonely? Is  
not our planet in the Milky Way? ”*

## CHAPTER I

### BACK TO THE LONG GRASS

WITH a feeling of pleasure (let me confess it) wholly disproportionate to my fears, I now notify my arrival at railhead in the Far Interior. This Elizabethville where we jump off into the forest is our last outpost on the northward route. Thence letters follow us up in brown bags on brown negro's head across rivers, marshes and mountains. But there is change in the air ("other days, other ways") and the years that speed past also "speed up." There is less need nowadays of counterfeiting patience. Note this quarter-of-a-century surprise: from railhead to Luanza means less than a month, whereas, *per contra*, our old "buying the trail" route in from the West Coast meant about twenty-two months praying and palavering them round.<sup>1</sup>

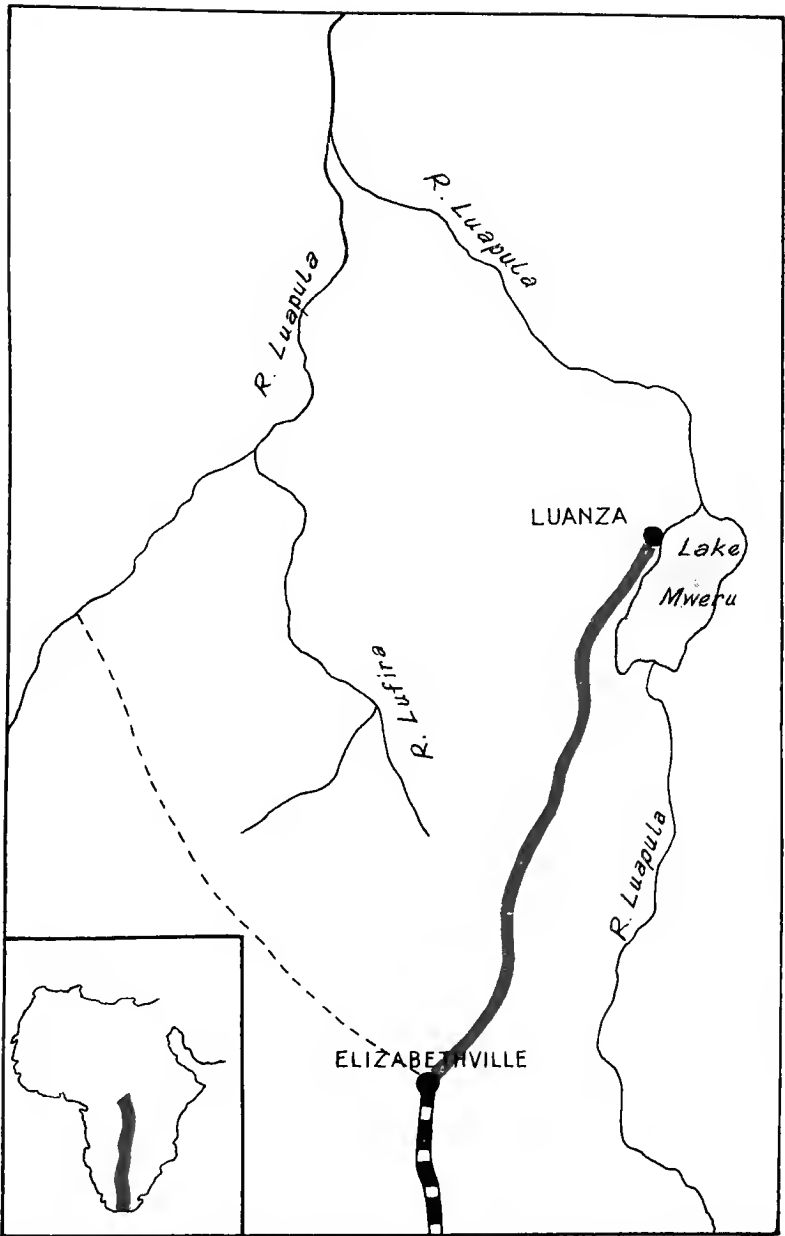
But now the forest calls. This Far Interior is bent on wrenching us out of the railroad rut of things. Turning our back on this "tin town" (last and lingering memory of civilisation), off we go with an absurd sense of unreality into the long grass. When well out into the forest, it sounded weird to hear the receding train give a farewell, friendly screech of its whistle. For thousands of miles the faithful friend of my (once in a quarter of a century) holiday, how pathetic of that old iron snail sending back this steam salutation in long and loyal farewell!—the harsh dissonance thinning down in a dwindle of diminuendo. Yes, good-bye to the clanking of thy couplings, O clashing, dashing train! Truth to tell, towards the end

<sup>1</sup> Not entirely without reason is one surprised at the quick growth of this mining town, Elizabethville. In 1910 it was virgin forest; 1911 saw the trees felled to form a wild camp of cosmopolitan adventurers; then in 1914, lo! a town of young homes and young babies,

there was more clash than dash about it. And whilst the train has more dawdle than dash about it that can only make—whisper it—fifteen miles an hour, yet here we begin a life on our legs on “Shanks’s pony,” when we are cheaply out of it at an *étape* of fifteen miles per day, from water to water, from camp to camp.

Not to flout the academic proprieties too openly, it may not be amiss to suggest that Plato’s theory of the child-man is belied by these ox-eyed blacks. This child-man of Plato’s fancy was to come to maturity in some dark cave; was one day to suddenly emerge from gloom to glory, and the light of day was to intoxicate him with the splendour of the universe. Well, here at railhead the onlooking negro is annoyingly disappointing from the spectacular standpoint. Peeping out from his dark cave of Central Africa he yawns nonchalantly at all you do or dare. Had he not *sixteen* genders to the noun and *twenty-three* tenses to his verb before ever Dr. Johnson was born? To gush out on him the glories of this confused repetition of fatiguing emotions called Civilisation is to invite a reception that is no deception. What is the good of telling this man you can send your thoughts thousands of miles by telegraph when he thinks you may have no real thoughts to send? Or where is the utility of travelling by train fifty miles an hour when you may have no real reason for taking the journey?

Having graciously accorded you a brief interview, he soon lets you know that you are merely the spoiled and petted child of a privileged civilisation. Why, what have you done? Only taken the trouble to be born white a little north of his south, nothing more. Why should he scrape and bow to persons with no more fingers and toes than he has himself? Even one very special incident failed to force his hand and evoke genuine negro surprise. It was a train, grim little three-waggon thing starting down the line. There are coffins on the train, doctors on the train, ambulance on the train, but it is all and only a post-Paulo future enterprise. Coffins for people not yet dead, doctors for folks still in riotous good health, ambulance for men not nearly wounded. These travellers will be



THE ROUTE NORTH TO LAKE MWERU FROM THE OLD RAILHEAD AT ELIZABETHVILLE.



rattling on for hours yet, all unconscious of their impending single-track doom; unconscious of the moaning telegraph message that has come down the line (it was before the "staff" system), a message telling the hair-on-end news of two mad trains started on the same line in opposite directions. Many hours must elapse before their cause-and-consequence smash, hours in which coffins can be calmly and confidently prepared for the not-yet-dead. Here, then, is a surprise for these wild on-looking natives, but will they be surprised? No, the same old "I have seen an end of all flesh" fatuity. I rattled it off, twisting in and out of their twenty tenses in telling them the tale of coming doom, but they did not, would not, see the marvel of a healthy man's coffin ready for him at 3 p.m. when he had yet to die five hours later! All you get out of it is that impersonal stare of these bottomless-eyed natives, not the intense, penetrating thing of Europe. You might be something worked on tapestry or painted on a china cup, so impersonally does he look at you.

The first day, after the usual legitimate activities in town (spending a pretty penny), we only do a few make-believe miles. This because Livingstone borrowed from the Arabs what we borrow from both, I mean that sensible old law of African travel: "A short journey for the start." This, my first mention of Livingstone, reminds me that in dying at Ilála he fell short of this very spot by only a few days' trek. The great man had unfortunately dedicated his high powers to the fictitious thesis that the Luapula and its confrères were the Nile sources. Hence it was heading for Katanga. Footsore and heartsore, he died fighting for a riverine phantom. From the time he parted with Stanley in the north, on through Fipa, through Itavwa, and again on crossing the Chambezi, this was his one obsession, the *caput Nilii*, Katanga or death.

Homer called the Nile "Egypt's heaven-descended stream" and, sure enough, his following up this fictitious flow meant more of heaven for him than Nile. "Old Nile," wrote Livingstone, "played the theorists a pretty prank by having his springs 500 miles south of them all." *Punch* in 1869 took this up and passed on the easy error,

“Father Nile presents his respectful compliments to Mr. Punch, and (with grateful remembrance of the delightful way in which that gentleman depicted saucy Miss Britannia discovering the Father among his rushes, a few years back) begs leave to inform Mr. Punch, and therefore the world, that the Father, at the suggestion of DOCTOR LIVINGSTONE, has removed his head-quarters to a delightful region, about eleven degrees south of the Equator, or Equinoctious line, where for the present he is to be found by—his friends. Carriages to set down at Cazembe a couple of hundred miles or so south of Burton’s Lake Tanganyika.” Even the natives saw what was on, and this Livingstone, who sets and keeps the tone of our chronicle, is known as WALAALA PA MAAVA, Mr. H-sleeps-on-the-waves. Every day getting grimmer, greyer and graver, this verbal snapshot of him reveals how it was only the pressure of ironclad necessity that urged him on, splashing all the way. You smile at this geographic nickname of his still surviving when you recall Livingstone’s own prophecy: “I asked about the waters, questioned and cross-questioned until I was almost afraid of being set down as afflicted with hydrocephalus.” In all the literature of baffled endeavour it is practically certain that no explorer ever scored such a cent. per cent. success. For to have “water on the brain” is the idiomatic equivalent for “sleeping on the waves.” The very thing he prophesied they would think of him *is* the very thing they say of him to-day.

Once too often did this great and good D. L. indulge the fine but fatal propensity of letting his high hopes unseat his higher judgment. There are men who after passing middle life find every plan go to pieces, every expectation frustrated. But not nearly so with Livingstone. Long before he *said* what long later he had to *live* to the last letter, “The end of the Geographical feat is the beginning of the Missionary opportunity.” “I am,” said he, “I am a missionary, heart and soul: God had an only Son, and He was a missionary and a physician. A poor, poor imitation I am or wish to be. In this service I hope to live, in it I wish to die.” Not that this will-of-



the-wisp chase lacks one single element of sublimity in it. Why forget that he did it all in good faith and better company? Did not Alexander the Great dream of visiting those very foundations of the Nile? Did not Cæsar say he would leave Throne and Empire if he might but see those wonderful dream fountains? Hence this method in his method; hence the fact that fanning the flame of Livingstone's life on to his last forlorn gasp was this glorious vision of a sort of North-West Passage in these four legendary fountains of the Nile.

But to proceed with our chronicle. The steady swish of the rainy season is over, and our African sky has settled into six solid months of sapphire. Six calendar months of it, sulking never, smiling ever. This means much to the traveller, means that here is your old friend the weather with a gleam of cordiality offering a 200 days' immunity from your three eager enemies, Messrs. Drip, Drizzle and Drench. It is Africa striking a business bargain and assuring the tramp that he can sleep out in the forest *sans* tent, *sans* impedimenta for the most modest monetary payment in the world. Moreover, as roads so rivers. Only a few weeks ago they rolled an angry and muddy flood, but now they are well on their way to shrink into mere threadlets of trickle.

I have no space and you no patience for all our forest surprises, but best of all is our great six-foot-high fire of logs as long as high. This 6×6 formula for the forest fire is to guarantee an all-night (and all-right) blaze. You can certainly face the *al fresco* night with fortitude. The morning will see you slink out in the raw air to find the red ashes of this reduced roarer will warm up both morning drink and morning drinker. The spot is some superior part of the forest where a maniac wind has crashed down several of these sylvan giants: why refuse their gracious generosity in so throwing themselves at you? This, then, settles it: here's your place, now is your time to pitch camp. Why be so grossly and gratuitously insulting as to pass these old warriors of the wood lying prone?

Nor would your native companions let you. They

are all of them out for making a sort of midnight sun of this firewood, "forgathering as for a festival like Esquimaux about a stranded school of whales." That old King of Aragon was right when he said that "among so many things as are by men possessed or pursued in the course of their lives all the rest are baubles besides old wood to burn, old friends to converse with and old books to read." Well, then, here in the far forest, O King, we have got 'em all: such capital Old Wood, such a capital Old Friend, such a capital Old Book that we print this tremendous three in capitals, they are all so capital.

But as this is not a diary, I need not weary you with diurnal data: once and again we faked a food from native products, and better still, tapped the trees for wild honey. Then guinea-fowl put in an appearance and filled our pots, five of these birds falling to one bang of a No. 12 Greener. Our biggest kill was a great bull sable, and with this my hungry men stuffed their stomachs. Shot far off from camp at sunset, we cut him up in the weird moonlight to the advancing roar of a malcontent lion.

This African forest, far from welcoming me, has only nodded a half-irritated acquiescence of my arrival. I did this route by night on the down journey four years ago, but this time the moon has failed us, therefore such a venture is barred. Farther on near Mukove there are six notorious lions who really rule the road. To be minus one moon plus six man-eaters is a losing transaction. With a sinister impunity these cunning *omnivora* are ambushed in the yellow grass alongside the road, and yellow grass so matches yellow lions that these six sinners boss the forest. One of our own boys has been killed hereabouts, and all the other men forbear and forswear this double dose of yellow peril, yellow grass and yellow growlers.

So after anxious deliberation we have decided on that not very dignified proceeding by which people live to fight another day. And not in vain. These lines were hardly down in pencil when a native rushed in, the breath catching convulsively in his throat. Yes, we were wise,



THE FOREST CAMP AND THE FOREST MATCH-BOX.



for these "executors of the wilds" have killed a man just where we passed. Nor is this all. A friend of mine has gone the same way, Monsieur Michau by name. I left this charming fellow farther back, and a lion gave him a horrible death, munching his arm clean off. And day has its dangers as well as moonless night. Hanging over us like a hideous doom all day, every day, we have (and they have us!) the ugly flies that give(?) sleeping sickness, I mean the plaguing persistent tze-tze. These are so blatant that we are forced to be off at about something to four in the morning. Only let the sun get up before you and that will mean, by and by, these millions of merciless "kazembe" flies will almost persuade you life is not worth living.

The sun is so preposterously sunny these days that every bit of tree shade is at par. Each of your men with 60-lb. load on shoulder staggers along under vertical rays. After the first few miles of this beast-of-burden business he spots some shady river, then down goes burden, down goes burden-bearer. Has he not broken off diplomatic relations with the forest during his lazy waiting at rail-head, where he cumberingly "gent's outfitted" himself? A few days ahead he will have got into his stride, but meantime every bone in his body is aching with the strain. Yet instead of being in a state of wild-eyed misery, what does he do? Masking all the mutinous feelings he quips out some merry, meaningless word with a face wreathed in smiles, the rogue.

Then comes surprise: amazed and amused by turns you see how this shade has the effect of stimulating his mental processes. In sharing the shade I also share some of his roadside philosophy; it is a case of cause and consequence; shade began it, so shade the subject continues to be. The tree sheltering us did it, a stubby not a tall tree. And, once embarked on his homily, the incongruity between his fine rhetoric and ragged get-up made me both blink and think. "Look," said he, "it is the very shortness of this tree that gives us so much shade at the foot. A tall tree is like a haughty hoity-toity man; the taller the tree the smaller the sheltering shade. So, *au contraire*,

the more humble the man the more welcome shade he has like the short tree. They all gather round him."

Nor is it difficult to penetrate into the secrecies of this symbolic speech: here is the very track, these the very men I sent down some years ago to bring up the King of the Belgians. And every man of them has a kindly word for him: calls him "Mr. Four Eyes" because of his glasses; talks about his concern for their sore feet on the march; recalls how he picked up several of their loads with a pliant hesitancy, wondering if they were not beyond the normal 60-lb. limit to carry. And finally gloats over the fact that he, yes, he it was who saw they got rations punctually, rations in plenty. All this they tell you with quick-breathed rapidity, the moral being that in this snobby world the beggars go on horseback while the princes do the walking. Therefore, O man, be humble, for he is helpful who is humble: play no haughty pranks before high heaven, for the shorter the tree the wider the welcoming shade.

This is the meaning of the greatest saying of maternal solicitude in Africa, "Where the shade is deepest," says the mother, "there it is I lay my child to rest while working in the fields." Here, also, we make a sure find in the elucidation of that tough old text: "With whom is no variableness neither *shadow of turning*." The revisers saw something vague here and rendered it "shadow cast by turning," and they were vaguely right. But they did not know that for many degrees of African latitude the words for shadow, *chimfule* or *chinshingwa*, are only the verb "to turn" in noun form. Therefore "the shadow" is the notorious "turner" because its daily direction is a turning from west to east, the morning shadow being diametric to the evening one. Had that mother trusted too long to the *morning* shade sheltering her cherub, she would soon hear baby awaking to the fierce rays of the sun that was there all the time, only the elusive shadow deserted her darling. Thus "with whom is no variableness neither shadow cast by turning" is a picture of the God who never deserts or deceives us. Let the sun but shine on me and the servile shadow follows me faithfully.

Ah, but let the bright sunshine leave me and my shadow leaves me too !

But up and off we go, lest the sun set with tropic haste and it become a case of all shade together. This African bodyguard of mine is composed of tough old roadsters who have the rare and wholly enviable faculty of sleeping anytime, anywhere. When the initial tramp is over, after considerable gastronomic exertions, we lie flat in the forest, pile up the blazing logs, and soon, in a manner that admits of no misconception, we are asleep in the Arms of God. Not that we neglect certain pious preliminaries. If peradventure you followed us up in the forest to see us off, let me tell you the why and where of our " bivouac of God " (*nkambi ya Leza*). Not sight but sound would give us away, and long before you catch the flare of our camp-fires making a clean breast of our whereabouts, you receive a prior promulgation in our evening hymn. Echoing through the woods we make every crag and hollow give back God's name, the whole sylvan orchestra quivering with the sound. Thus, *à la* Livingstone, we wind up the day enthroning God Almighty on our tell-tale praise, for,

*" Be the day weary, be the day long,  
At length it ringeth to evensong."*

Here round the forest fire these talkative tribesmen slip into extraordinary felicity of phrase. But the tide turns when as rival clansmen they start a sort of verbal sparring, their favourite fad being that old intertribal trick of—shibboleths ! I mean, the literal thing when the African men of Gilead of one bank of a river laugh at the cockneyisms of their friends of Ephraim on the off bank : an " h " for a " p," an " f " for a " v," and so on. At first blush it seems all for nothing, nothing in it all ; why should the very soul of him sing jubilee as he splits this phonetic hair with his black brother of Ephraim ? Instead, however, of this phonetic joke being a fairy tale to the Arab, it has a dark and sinister meaning. For to him, as to the men of Ephraim, it meant blood. A literal shibboleth killed all his kin in Egypt. The Mamelukes in Egypt rose and exterminated the Arabs of the Said, the

passport to life being a mere consonant, not "v" then, but "k," and the poor Arab died with a "g" in his mouth. Curiously and almost like the Luban, the choice of word was "flour," and the Arab who said "*dagig*" instead of "*dakik*" died the "G-death." I wonder if ever we of the northern races will be punished for our atrocities in phonetics, whistling and grunting and spluttering our gutturals? It is cheap enough to indulge in talk about "untainted, undying English," but practically we soon find out that the comparison between English and Bantu is as the scrunching over gravel to the softness of oil.

So here, away back beyond their old intertribal plundering, back beyond their raiding each other's territory for ivory or slaves, here lurking behind it all Livingstone saw the seeds of death sprouting in these silly old shibboleths. If a straw indicates a current, then this verbal sparring of theirs hints at the unholy hate that will spill blood for any foolish phase of their tongue-wagging trickery. Take for example the play between "f" and "v": this is so geographical in nature that a blind man could easily tell when he had crossed the Luapula River by the abrupt change of "f" to "v." In the Vemba language, therefore, "f" is the dominant note as against "v." The same thing as what a Greek or Roman would do with a "b" or "v" in old High German, and which Grimm embodied in his law. The Vemba are Greeks and the Lubans are Germans. Again, "g" versus "k" is as much a joke as it was in Egypt, though not such a tragic one: curiously the tables are now turned, and the Rugarugas, who are the Arab ghillies or Mamelukes, cannot pronounce "k," but boggle it into a "g"—exactly the opposite of the Said massacre. Another hint this of a sort of Grimm's law and in precisely the same relationship as that former: a German turned a Greek "k" into his Teutonic "g." And so on we go, the filing of tribal teeth, boring of the nose, the use of the spike labret, often creating a new shibboleth. This same Luapula (the Congo, call it) produces another hoary shibboleth in "s" for "ch." A mere trick of speech, yet one's mind reverts to the rivers of blood that flowed over that simple "s." Who can forget the dark shibboleth



night of 1282, when the 8,000 died at the Sicilian vespers : " Sisiri ! " said the Frenchman, and died with the " s " in his throat ? A Vembaman, in several of his conjugations, makes this very distinction ; but a Luban is a Scotchman in the matter, and would have rolled out his " ch " (i.e. x) with Doric joy.

It is the same old " dear dirty No. 1 " masquerading in the marshes and blind to the other tribe's point of view. Paint him white, brown, yellow or black in any land, this nasty numeral is so very clever that he can never just see a thing as it is. It is one of the superlative jests of life that no man ever really did see his own country, and it is by ignoring this preliminary postulate that these tribes plunge into a squelching bog of despair. Certainly, it is supremely here all the international trouble and treason arises. There is no subject on which the human heart finds greater facility in making a fool of itself than when it begins to prattle about its own place, own people, own anything. Mark Twain has settled this subject for us in his *ne plus ultra* manner : yea, has he not solemnly notified the wide world that no means or method was ever devised by which a sleeping man could hear himself snore ? You cannot both have your cake and eat it, nor can you have your own sleep and hear your own snore. Moral : No man ever saw his own country. The Central African surpasses even the erudite Mr. Twain ; his " Thinking Black " equivalent for all this is the more profound " No man ever yet did bite his own elbow." Make the mad experiment, if you dare ; crane your straining mouth to the elbow that never, no never, met it, then after that acrobatic attempt you will call it what the African does, " the non-biteable elbow."

This overhearing the African talk by the camp fire is the best way of " key-holing " the family secrets of a whole continent. To truly hear you must overhear. We are all looking up at the stars and I make two genuine stellar discoveries in as many minutes. Coincidence No. 1. Looking up with some old men I spotted Venus as she alone can shine on latitude 9°. One old fellow saw my star, saw my ecstasy and said nonchalantly, " Yes, the Queen

(*Moari*) is always very bright." Who told him that Venus was the *Queen* of Beauty? Coincidence No. 2. Up there, too, is that old cluster the Pleiades, so called. But how then? Here they call it "*tundimino*," the Farmer's Guide. Who told them that Hesiod more than seven hundred years B.C. had the very same idea concerning that very same constellation? In his *Works and Days* he too makes this "the farmer's guide," bidding the husbandman reap when they rise in May and plough when they set in November. The identical months for our local cultivators!

I have already intimated that Livingstone sets and keeps the tone of this chronicle, hence quite appropriately these *al fresco* fellows glide down from their stars to Livingstone and his end. There is neither space nor necessity for reproducing all their legends, but they little thought what a sensation they were unbotling when they spoke of an old woman who gave him his last voyage across! Across what? Across the last river, "river of lastness," they call it. And what was this great matron's name? Mother Kaponda is her name, famous name for famous ferry. What ferry? What if not the final ferry, "ferry of lastness" (*chavu cha mpeleshyo*)? She it was who glided into the marshes in her small bark boat (she ferries across only one at a time). Yes! she gave Dr. Livingstone his last voyage across the last dark river. Old Mrs. Charon the Greeks would have called her. They have all got it, all repeat with pious pertinacity that Livingstone is not really dead, for Mother Kaponda never loses a passenger, never fails at The Ferry.

Nor is she alone. They talk about a terrible old man, stout of limb, long of beard, who is running a branch business. Mr. Time his name, literally Mr. Days (*Nshiku*). They say this old fellow is a "One-Thingist," a fanatic with the monomania of Time and its terrible preciousness. Long white whiskers waving in the wind, he sends all over the land one clamant call. It is really a moneylender's phrase and used in the dunning for debts: "Debit! Debit! all Debit and no Credit: you must return it all!" (*Nshiku ka diilwa twanji u ka nduvwila*). Hard and hoarse

is this call of Father Time, and it means most meaningfully that all these Mondays, Tuesdays, etc., we are getting from him are rigorously handed back in a neatly packed parcel the day we die. We have paid our debt. Then he calls up the Old Lady and we get a free passage across.

Which is probably quite enough for a first chapter.



CHAPTER II  
NORTH TOWARDS THE GREAT LAKE

*Put it at this: these letters, while prodigal of details in different directions, really centralise on the claim that rain or shine, here we are, seeking à la Livingstone to supply that fertilising influence which will induce barren Africa to bring forth a flower.*

*“ Whichever way the winds may blow  
Some heart is glad to have it so ;  
Then blow it East or blow it West,  
The wind that blows, that wind is best.”*

*“ Sunshine is delicious, snow exhilarating, there is no such thing  
as bad weather, only different kinds of good weather.”*

*Ruskin.*

*“ All the trees are naked and the ground damp, but the year must  
go round.”*

*Dr. Johnson to Mrs. Thrale.*

## CHAPTER II

### NORTH TOWARDS THE GREAT LAKE

LET it be known, the more we get to know these natives the more we find that "folks is folks." The very "Bantu" applied to these negroid peoples gives the game away. It is generic not specific, Angels and Chinese are also "bantu," therefore no higher compliment can any native pay Europeans than by calling them "Bantu." Yet we coolly murder the meaning of this word and use it as a selective label for a special brand of blackish-brown folk, named, misnamed, "Bantu." It is all amusingly suggestive of the white man's failure to realise that there is no radical difference between black and white, and his own boomerang "Bantu" rebounds to claim him as its own. So, too, in some of the amusing tentative maps, you see many more generics than specifics: *Mitumba* Mountains merely means "Mountains Mountains"; *Vyaho* Plains means ditto ditto, and *Mukola* River works out at "River River," just as *Bantu* people means "People people"! All very suggestive of the amount of muddle that befogs the brain of new-comers.

If a deep-dyed linguist like Bleek could come such a philological cropper in this "Bantu" ineptitude, how much more the frank non-linguists who run in, run out of much-maligned Africa. Glancing at the list of new African words by a good linguist, I smile to see against English, "axe," the long phrase "*wa laka vyepi*." Which means, O my masters, "What are you saying?" Here you had neither a specific nor a generic but a plain piece of linguistic leg-pulling. And all as old as the early Australian days when the pioneers saw the strange marsupial hopping away, baby in pouch. Waving their arms like semaphores they actioned the question, "What is

that animal's name ? ” Came the same old answer, “ *Kangarru* ? ” “ What are you saying ? ” Here, then, Africa joins hands with Australia in a common howler ; echo answers echo, and the question is its own answer.

And so it befalls. All this can be amplified : some people prefer to call Africa “ The Dark Continent,” instead of averring that it is they who are in the dark about it. We first begin by calling the land an “ Africa ” that only exists and persists in our white brains. No black man ever knew it by that name. Then, down south you have the natives called “ kaffirs,” whereas it was the Arabs who first called *the Europeans* this taunt-name, *kafir* = unbeliever ! Then here is a river mapped “ Congo,” unknown as such to all these Lubans. Also, a country called “ Katanga ” that was only the name of one man, and he a smallish sort. Further : greatest conundrum on earth—where ever did mortal man find a place called “ The Garanganze ” ? The nearest thing to it is away out east hundreds of miles, Bugalaganza, from where Livingstone's carriers came, the Bagalaganza, really the Basumbwa. But “ Garanganze ” never, no never, was such a name known in all these latitudes ! Hence the official suppression of the same and the adoption of Livingstone's inadequate “ Katanga.” Finally here is our own “ Luanza ” falling into the same ineptitude : passing natives from far away west all say they come from “ Luanza.” Thieves and vagabonds, per dozen, who never looked down on us on the cliff, they have all agreed to unify hundreds of miles of territory with the one name “ Luanza ! ” A poor compliment to us who put that name on the map and kept it there.

So it is we blunder on with brow of brass, “ thinking white ” and certifying to all comers that our subjective guess work is the real article. It is the old story, stale old story of Bartolomeo Diaz. When he doubled the Cape, he frankly treated the Cape in the same tit-for-tat manner the Cape treated him. So while King John, away at the dreamy Tagus end of the line, toasted his toes and called it “ The Cape of Good Hope,” lo, here you have the man on the spot putting it down in his log as “ Cabo Tormen-



toso," the Stormy Cape. And, right along the African story from its Bartolomeo Diaz beginning, there has been the same sort of contradiction between the local man who gets all the "tormentoso" and the snug far-away European whose distance lends enchantment to the view. "A fool's eyes are in the ends of the earth," said Solomon, and many a cock-sure cockney knows more about it than the man who lives in, for, and because of old Africa.

Yet in these days of synthesis why not blend both? "Cape of Good Hope" has won the day, and after all lookers-on *do* see some of the game. Why should Señor Diaz's *pro tem.* storm of 1486 be perpetuated unto all generations? The weather is not the climate of a country, is it? And one swallow does not make a summer. So said Aristotle, and so said King John of Portugal long ago when in his easy chair he laughed at poor old "Tormentoso" Diaz tossing as he doubled the Cape. Did King John see brighter days ahead and summer seas? Did he mean to teach Bartolomeo how to get honey out of the bee that stung him? It is disgusting to say so, but the far-away King in the easy chair has won: after all, if you want to get a good snapshot you must come back the adequate distance for focus. To be too near is to get a blurred, exasperating result.

Livingstone in his usual fair-minded manner said that "quite as sensible, if not more pertinent, answers will usually be given by Africans to those who know their language as are obtained from their own uneducated poor. Could we but forget that two centuries ago our ancestors were as unenlightened as the Africans are now, we might maunder less about our superior intellect." Match an African against a European in a dispute and the wrangle becomes a smile-provoking affair. Tongue-tied as the white man is, with no linguistic ambitions, the missionary is often dragged in to do the thankless job of straightening out the tangled skein of speech and translate with the tongue where Kipling's man "translated with a stick, which is really half the trick." On the one hand, the negro's verbal strength lies in native sagacity colouring his thought with forest figures of speech. On the other, the white you

soon perceive has a mode of speech much more pointed than to the point: "When in doubt bewilder your opponent" seems to be his motto. Match, I say, this vehement foreigner against him and the caustic negro retorts are far more powerful than flowery English phrases. Here is a case proving Livingstone's point. This European is the kind of man whose progress through life is marked by innumerable half-masticated cigarette ends. This good fellow, having been wronged by some runaway Luban, is convinced that the whole black race are liars and thieves. Confronted by a wise and innocent old son of the woods, the dialogue is so typical of a Ham versus Japhet encounter that I cannot omit it, though I study to be brief.

"You robber you: you are like all the rest, a race of robbers."

"Nay, sir, do not be angry with all the trees of the forest because one branch hurt your eyes."

"What are you chattering there like a monkey for? you are all alike."

"But, sir, who would ever quarrel with all the faggots of the fire because one of them smoked? why, you would have no fire at all."

"Yes, you are worse than any thief."

"Nay, great sir, you are wrong: bees may enter at the one door of the hive, but they live in different bedrooms."

"All you black niggers are alike."

"Yes, we are one, yet very different, and varied: a bird has feathers, and a crocodile has teeth, yet both come from an egg."

"Yes, you live here like beasts with nothing but a pot and mat."

"No, we have not such nice things as you have in *Bulaya* (Europe), and therefore having only a little meat to cook we only get a little gravy out of it."

"Why don't you make trousers, man, and a jacket instead of wearing skins?"

"We have not got the calico, so you see when there is no rain there can be no mushrooms."

"And your children, too, they are just like yourselves."

"True, great sir, what can you expect? Like song,



SOME QUICKLY PASSING SOUTHERN TYPES.



like chorus : the chorus must be sung to the same key-note as the song."

All of which, being genuine, fortifies me in the three following conclusions : No. 1. Every man is a volume if you know how to read him. No. 2. That brains alone can appreciate brains. No. 3. That those who, knowing little, are assured that the African knows less are assuredly astray.

Turning our backs for many a day on this last outpost, it may not be amiss to say that the trouble with these tin towns on "the edge of cultivation" is that they are so mighty clever they cannot really see a thing as it is. Many of them long ago made up their minds to divide all negroes into knaves and fools, and when they meet an honest one they don't know what to do with him. With the best will in the world, I confess I may not be able altogether to disguise my sympathies and antipathies where these good fellows are in review. Smiling with a finality that defies debate, some in ducks resembling plate-armour and the Piccadilly poise, others with a more raffish appearance, they despise learning this native language and call it contemptuously "the bally lingo." But as Mr. Lowe once muttered when a Member rose in the House to express contempt for the classics : "I dare be sworn it is a contempt not bred from familiarity therewith." Many a white man in Africa spends his years fighting through a fog of racial misunderstanding, all because he ignored this initial claim of humanity, the negroes' right to be spoken to in his own land in his own tongue. For beasts cannot speak, but men can.

Yet these good fellows of the non-linguist league (after a dexterously drawn cork) with airy omniscience, with delicious insolence, claim to be *the* local authorities on native men, native manners. And—Gullivers among the Lilliputians—they give long imaginary conversations with natives in a lingo they never learned : great easy-going fellows in full-bellied content and tobacco-soothed repose. They boast too ostentatiously often about "a square deal" all round, forgetful of the fact furnished by Kent in *King Lear* (was it ?) how easily a bluff manner can conceal a tricky action. It is from the ranks of these gentlemen

nowadays the number of negro critics is strangely and villainously augmented. But happily for the African he has a tough integument, and both in the mines and offices it is Ham Junior who is learning quickly to run the whole place. I ran out with Bishop Johnson to inspect a bit of farm land the other day, six miles south of Elizabethville, and what did we find? On striking the railway line from the south we came on a signal box in charge of a local lad, 'phone and telegraph all operated by him. Then across the line was the complicated pumping station all run by a group of natives who saw that their engine operated in a normal manner. Finally, here comes our train rattling down the line wholly in the hands of local Africans; driver, firemen, and guard all waving wild welcome to their old missionary as the train pulled up to take us on. And but for Babel bringing about this fog of cat-and-dog clashing between blacks and white, I dare insist, 80 per cent. of their trouble could be explained as a mere misunderstanding of each other's verbal limitations. In other words: it is more a matter of *suppressio veri* than *propositio falsi*, the lack of adequate nouns, verbs and adjectives doing more suppressing than impressing.

But let me rescue this record from the least taint of recrimination. It is a pleasure when some of these good fellows speak the truth to bluntly thrill you and shame the Devil. Take one of the bravest of them all, Mr. Herbert Ward, one of Stanley's old bodyguard: he makes no sanctimonious pretensions, yet listen to his exact words: "At the little station of L— several white men had gathered from the different parts of the country. There were eight of us and we represented five different nationalities. A day or two previously a stock of provisions had arrived, comprising among other things a few demijohns of Portuguese red wine. The dinner that night was a lengthy one, tongues wagged and brains grew heated. By midnight things had developed into a carousal and the air was rent with drunken songs and shouts. It was the rainy season and the night was hot and heavy, foreboding the approach of a storm. During a temporary lull I went forth alone to seek fresh air. Never shall I forget my

experience, for I caught the strains of a familiar hymn tune chanted by little children of the Mission in a valley below. As if in gentle rebuke to us they sang :

“ *Wonso wuna usatu a mbikulu  
Wonso wonso bika Leza.*”

(“ Whosoever will—’tis life for evermore—  
Whosoever will may come.”)

There you have it scrupulously from the man who took the Gold Medal in the Paris Salon for his bronze statue. So the day is coming when God in mercy will yet give us a band of big brothers, “civilisation colleagues,” from the men who must lead the land for good or evil and therefore lead towards the light. Like all of us Paul preferred the raw heathen to his own countrymen ; I mean, the antagonistic Sons of Belial who froth at the mouth because “the Livingstone lot” seek to go steadily and soberly on for God—*id est*, go on obeying the very command of Christ that rescued our own land from the doom of Africa. Watch the Pauline order, please—which come first, the heathen or the other people ? The Apostle puts it, “in perils from mine own countrymen, in perils from the heathen.” There in that order of his, there in the sarcastic sequence of the heathen being only hinderers in a secondary sense, there you have the old Bible pawkily putting its finger on the sore spot of Africa. For just as we unify all Africans under the sweeping title of “the blacks,” so they reciprocate and muddle us all into a mad medley of “whites,” the character of our colour being, alas ! not the colour of our character. People talk sketchily about the colour question with the innuendo that all this is on the side of the blacks, whereas the contrary is true. For is it not the first law of colour that black is the absence of all colour ? Just as white is the concentration of all conceivable colour ?

In travelling out from these border towns we follow the old forest rule and “cut down the dead loads,” so many of the orthodox adjuncts of the explorer are thrown aside. The stagey personality with the big bill of expenses does not necessarily do deeds that make history : was it not Bismarck who called a certain statesman “a lathe painted to look like iron” ? And some of the jaunty gents who

arrive here with big burdens become themselves the biggest burden of all. As a concession to circumstances I am travelling without a chair or table and have thus become a creature of many expedients. To mitigate the hardness of the ground I find a few green leaves very inviting, but oftener it is dear, dirty earth that plays the part of chair, table and bed—all in one, one in all. God taught Paul, and us by Paul, how you can have a high old time on a very low limit of expenditure. The old Latin word for travellers' baggage has no hypocrisy about it and the more *impedimenta* you have the more your apostolic advance is impeded. The African idea on this subject is the same as his opinion about rats: "The rat," says the negro, "that has the shortest tail will get into the hole quickest."

Therefore, let us be men, not monkeys, for the rat with minimum tail boasts maximum security. Then take the boon of travelling without a tent. This means that all night you are on your back with only the stars as nearest neighbours in the upper flat. The burning sun by day knocks all the discriminating nicety out of your head, whereas here at night you perceive how the lesser went for the greater to come, and God only hides a world to unveil a universe. This, then, is where the logic of your tentless travel lands you. And if you only lose your big burning sun by day in order to exchange it for these delightfully distant star-suns by night, then so, too, with this lack of covering. The reward, royal reward, you get is that the stars think you a sport, take you at your word, and you make a night of it together—they look so near that it seems you split the difference, they coming down to meet you half-way as you soar up. Why draw the soul's curtains and light up artificially when all the while God is calling you out and up among the stars?

We talk a lot about *considering* matters and forget the old-fashioned philology that this merely means to look up at the stars (*con*, with, *sideris*, the stars). Small chance a Londoner has to consider things when a pea-soup fog covers the sky and stars with a pall. One of the red Republicans boasted to a peasant in France that they were going to



wipe God out of the country. Said this 1793 fanatic, "We are going to pull down your churches and your steeples, all that recalls the superstitions of past ages, all that reminds man of even the idea of God." "Citizen," replied the good old yokel, "*then pull the stars down!*" But sun, moon and stars are all minor as we recall what Spurgeon said, "Bless God for starlight and He will give you moonlight; praise Him for moonlight and He will give you sunlight; thank Him for sunlight and you shall yet come to the land where they need not the light of the sun, for the Lord God giveth them light for ever and ever."

While my pencil is in hand I feel tempted to write the very thing possibly *they* are more than tempted to think of us; I mean, that our brave "boys" are no doubt an infinite number of irreproachable things, but sometimes they fail us fatuously. You push on ahead, but what if you push too far and then the man with the roll of blankets does not turn up? Forgetful of all your entreaties, protestations and reproaches, he lights a forest fire on the trail and with the first flicker of that flame forges all the links in his chain of enchantment. The higher his as-many-as-you-like faggots leap up in the trees, the lower sinks your far-away prospect of blankets arriving: the warmer he gets (the rascal!) the colder the night creeps into your bones. There is only a paltry eight or nine miles of forest lying between you, but it might be a million: the fire has him while you have neither fire nor blankets. So with a sophisticated indifference to the creature-comfort business of blankets, you roll over on the ground and consign all such selfishness to the limbo of vanities. The loafer of a family does not supply the loaf, and the blanketman is seemingly of the same sort. Besides, if blame there be, you have to put the burden on your own back: is not the stipulated daily distance a full fifteen miles and no farther? And here in a special spasm of celerity you, yes, you, have exceeded the average amount of travel by half a dozen miles or more. So instead of indulging in the white man's panacea of a steady and seething rage, you must fortify yourself with the philosophic conclusion that the man who

broke the fifteen-mile bargain must pay for the pleasure of his vagary.

And so it might be amplified. There is an African saying that when "*the puddle dries the tadpole dies*," and a benighted traveller cut off from his baggage in an African forest that never boasted an inn is a sorry sight. The very "inn" with its double "n" reminds you how very much you are "out" of it. One explorer I know turned back to the ocean from near Tanganyika because his Lee & Perrin's sauce supply had run out. Why should he not follow L. & P.'s example and run out likewise? True, he deserted his companion, but this also was what the sauce did to the soup. The puddle was drying, so this tadpole of an explorer was dying for the culinary consolations of London. Besides, what about that "promised" book of African travels to be seen through the press?

Once embarked on this subject, the problem of our negro companions' toes is a facer: when we reach camp they generally hobble in with smiling face and bleeding foot. They might have sandals, but won't, and thus prefer to take all sorts of hair-raising liberties with hidden roots and thorns in the track. Looking at it quizzically, I wonder whether, after all, the smile is more genuine than the pain? There are no nerves in the jaw muscles of a trout, and probably the same Providence has given to negro feet what He gave to the mouth of a fish; I mean, that modified immunity from pain when hook rugs jaw. At any rate, this fishing metaphor is not a far-fetched conceit—Gordon Cumming has likened an African jungle to "a forest of fish-hooks relieved by an occasional patch of pen-knives." And, certainly, a whole crowd of Paul's commentators have missed the point that pedestrian Paul was (even with sandals) also bare-footed Paul, and, no doubt, in "journeying often" he went the way of all flesh and got many a limping thorn to deter him on the way. Hence his naming it (exactly as in Africa) an opposition "messenger of Satan," for he, the Apostle, was also a messenger hurrying on the King's business that requireth haste. And for every helper the Lord has, the Devil rushes out his outposts of hinderers, Messrs. Thorns, Stones

& Co. Delay the messenger and you delay the message. That deterrent thorn means delay, and delay means death. Small wonder Livingstone's "the Enemy" attacks the tender toes of God's messengers with his thorns. For as he hinted, all Heaven is especially interested in "how beautiful are the feet" of all such. Not how beautiful are their big mouths.

Walk is greater than talk; and it is much more easy to talk about our walk than walk our talk. As I write in the forest I see naïve Nature preaching at me another parable on this same subject. High in the speckled sky is an eagle, ignoblest of birds yet noblest of aeronauts. It feeds on filth down here, yet it boasts companionship with the bluest heaven up there. It is the symbol of royalty among the nations and yet it has the most debased diet of all the fowls of the air. George Herbert and Robert Herrick were both clergymen and poets, but the same calling does not mean the same manner of men. Coleridge called Herbert "that model of a man, a gentleman and a clergyman." But Andrew Lang characterises Herrick as "that pagan-parson with the soul of a Greek of the Anthology, and a cure of souls (Heaven help them!) in Devonshire."

To revert to this matter of the African bare feet. This, too, was Livingstone's concern: even the two pair of stout shoes sent by his old friend Waller soon softened in the constant splashing. When the Doctor's feet were bleeding from the weary march, he had the rather short-sighted expedient of slashing them with a knife to ease the blisters. King James called for his old shoes, "Old friends," said he, "are best." And was it not the old friend Horace Waller who had sent these other old friends for his feet? Before they arrived this down-at-the-heels Livingstone had written, "I thought of myself as the man who went down from Jerusalem to Jericho, but neither priest, Levite nor Samaritan could possibly pass my way." But the succour came at last and a good Samaritan *from America* brought both the two pence and the oil.

All the lip-worship of England about Livingstone was merely a mass of glittering generalities compared with this great cash-down act of this outsider from The States. It

is the old story of Atlas saying he would move the world if he could but find a fulcrum outside of it. And many a time America has been a fine fulcrum for London, the common English tongue functioning as verbal lever to remove mountains. Here was The States acting as arbiter and declaring that this foreign-looking person of middle height, this D. L. with bony frame, Gaelic countenance, had a fame more than merely national. Had America not fought the same slavery over there that Livingstone was tracking down to its lair in Africa ?

But that means another chapter.

CHAPTER III  
FIRST NIGHTS IN THE FOREST

*Fast as his five senses will permit, the reader is now invited to follow the writer into the new African adaptation. Into that Torrid Zone set of circumstances where quinine buzzes in the ears lest fever fire the blood. The more buzz the less fever-fire.*

*“To see the advantages of a disadvantageous situation is worth more than an income of ten thousand pounds.”*

*Hume.*

*“I pity the man who can travel from Dan to Beersheba, and cry, ‘Tis all barren.’ And so it is : and so is all the world to him who will not cultivate the fruit it offers. ‘I declare,’ said I, clapping my hands cheerily together, ‘that were I in a desert, I would find out wherewith in it to call forth my affections.”*

*“A Sentimental Journey.”*

## CHAPTER III

### FIRST NIGHTS IN THE FOREST

**B**UT watch how in my absence the wheel of change has quickened its revolutions even here. As things become more closely calculable I find the Natural History changes the most natural of all. Why should these "let your heart beat" quadrupeds drift into acquiescence of their own extermination? And no sooner do you get the new situation in focus than you see how the bigger antelopes around this urban atrocity have taken French leave. Elands, kudus, hartebeest, sable, pallah are all off for cover more than a hundred miles from the swinging dining-car that rattles and rocks with a thousand vibrations. Smiling sourly at this desertion, now it is their despised juniors supersede the absentee seniors—conies, hares, jerboas, foxes, earth-pig, wart-hog, hyænas, jackals, porcupines and shrews all glorying in the law of compensation that they are too insignificant to merit extinction. Another proof that "distinction only invites extinction," and (again a local proverb) "the taller the tree the more it must meet the blast of the storm."

The final factor in Africa's unity of charm is this camp of ours so near the mushroom town at railhead. If forests can think, if towns have thoughts, then this forest and yonder proximal tin town must have many rueful reflections concerning this dramatic jumble of yesterday and to-day. To be near as to place can mean distant as to time, and this six-miles-off forest is really six thousand years aloof in men and manners. It is a case of trying to co-naturalise Pharaoh of the Moses period and a modern tripper sitting on a fallen tree, "Adam's arm-chair," eating sardines together. The train led up to the tin town that produced this other tin with the fish in it.

And in the forest you find many a primitive and patriarchal Pharaoh of the genuine B.C. brand. If forests can think, if towns have thoughts, then every time this two-penny tin town prates its "Poor African forest" the sylvan dignity of the latter freezes the adjective on the lips of the brick-built boaster. For many marvellous moons here you had a forest fulfilling its functions in a modest but capable way; shade from the sun, logs for a hut, faggots for the fire and steaks for the soup. Then only the other day the vandalism began when up from the south came those two bars of encroaching steel—and everything happened at once. For rolling on them you have, smooth and easy and insulting, the transport wheels that do all the damage: wheels? When in all its centuries as a continent had Africa such a rotary runaway?

Lying like a log beside your faggot fire, if you only keep quiet enough you can hear the fine old forest dinning it in your ears that it has a tongue in its head. It is neither fluency nor flippancy, but its case against the town amounts to the old trouble with all sorts and sizes of towns, "the axis of the earth sticks out far too visibly through the centre!" Those straight unrelenting streets are only an annoying instance of the axle hitting you in the eye. The earth's axle, at any rate, is invisible out here in the forest. There is not a straight line in Nature, so this stubborn straightness should be as absent to the human eye as the ever-elusive axle. So, too, with the exasperating extremes of a spick-and-span West-End laughing at its East-End antithesis all asmeared with dirt and disease.

Johannesburg, far south, is probably the best and certainly the biggest of these African artificial agglomerations of mankind. The city is built high on the reef and, at night, its miniature Oxford Street is ablaze with many small Selfridges. Yet all the time you have thousands of natives, down a mile deep in the dark caves working away to the glimmer of their lamps. Picture the contrast: the outside glare and glitter of the street and the never-needless negro, far below it all, drilling and blasting in the ghostly gloom. Some of the company-promoting gentlemen who emerge from these mining enterprises with a fat



dividend could no more copy these blacks than milk the cow that jumped over the moon. But these good fellows of the Corner House are at least frank, and their Parktown across the reef has no hypocrisy about its intentional isolation. Mark that phrase about Parktown being "across the reef"; I use these last three words with intention. It tickles you to see that same reef of gold still separating the rich and poor by night, the self-same reef of gold that all day, every day is a barrier in business relations. Other cities politely put their poor in the East and hedge off patricians in the West, but here you have frank and fashionable Johannesburg building on a reef of gold; then, on either side of the barrier reef, sorting out scientifically "The Haves" and "The Have Nots."

In other words, Parktown to the townfolk of Fordsburg is Johannesburg's "better land far, far away." Masterton was right: in brilliant bitter talk it is discussed sometimes with impatience, sometimes with deliberation, whether this city-conception is the final word in the matter. If the desirable things which are possible to human experience are always to be sacrificed to Accumulation or Acceleration, or a joyless extravagance, or (at the bottom) a mere animal struggle for food and shelter? And, alas, Civilisation, in reply, speaks with voice less certain than in former days; being itself perplexed why, after the long journey has been attempted and all the modern miracles achieved, it cannot at least see clearly on the horizon the walls and towers of the Golden City of men's dreams.

Here, again, Nature (i.e. my forest) attacks the town in its most nasty manner for creating such emphatic rags-and-riches extremes: where in any forest of any land do you discover such annoying antitheses? True, until you kill your sundown buck for the camp pots it is a case of feast or famine. But, then, all feast, or all are famished. Get far enough from the town and the old earth soon puts you all on equal rations; the food goes round, at any rate, because the quality is levelled down to the quantity. When Thales at the dawn of history picked out water as the primal and final phase

of all things, it was because  $H_2O$  was as perfect in quality as quantity : there is plenty of it and pure as plentiful. So spake my invincibly voluble old forest unto me with a wily exploitation of good points and an equally careful neutralisation of weak ones ! More artful than actual : not the whole truth, but neither is it wholly untrue.

The first time I prayed in the forest with my natives round the flickering camp-fire was a memorable date. Every moment was a memento. Overhead the diamond stars blazing through the night. In the forest the hushed silence of my men squatting in groups, spears stuck point downwards in the ground. Small wonder if one's voice quavered in a queer little choke. But it is the great African moon, I think, that makes memory so measureless, so mighty. My mother far away in Scotland saw the same moon but not the same stars. And "mother" means "memory." Is not the moon a mere memory of the sun ? Therefore like memory, is not moonlight the reflection of rays emanating from an object no longer seen ? Small wonder memory erects its screen in the African moonlight, and flashes the *ex post facto* moving pictures thereon. They are both alike, moon and memory, both merely the reflection of reminiscent rays shed by something no longer visible. It was when David saw the moon (not the sun) that the memory of his mediocrity began to grip him : "When I consider . . . the moon" ; "what is man that Thou art mindful of him ?" And if "night" in the dialect of Holy Writ means the trials and troubles of life, then is it not written that the moon was given to rule the night ? The moon of memory still reflecting the rays of good days, good deeds, good desires, no longer visible. More than that ; it rules the night, and the myriad memories of the good piled up in the past conquer the sorrows of the present, and pledge a fine future.

But after all, it is the splendid stars that have a last look in. Before dropping over we have a quaint "Morning Star pass-word" repeated round the fires : this "Lutanda" means that we who are about to sleep hereby give honest rendezvous to be up and off with the Morning Star. Each recumbent group sends round the warning "Lutanda !"

(the Morning Star), then over they drop snoring steadily to the stars. Huddled up in somnolent attitudes you can hear one man after another, more asleep than awake, pass it on as his solemn sort of last will and testament for the day, "Lutanda!" What a picture of all who fall asleep in Jesus: they, too, rest from their labours with that word on their lips; they, too, will rise with "The Morning Star."

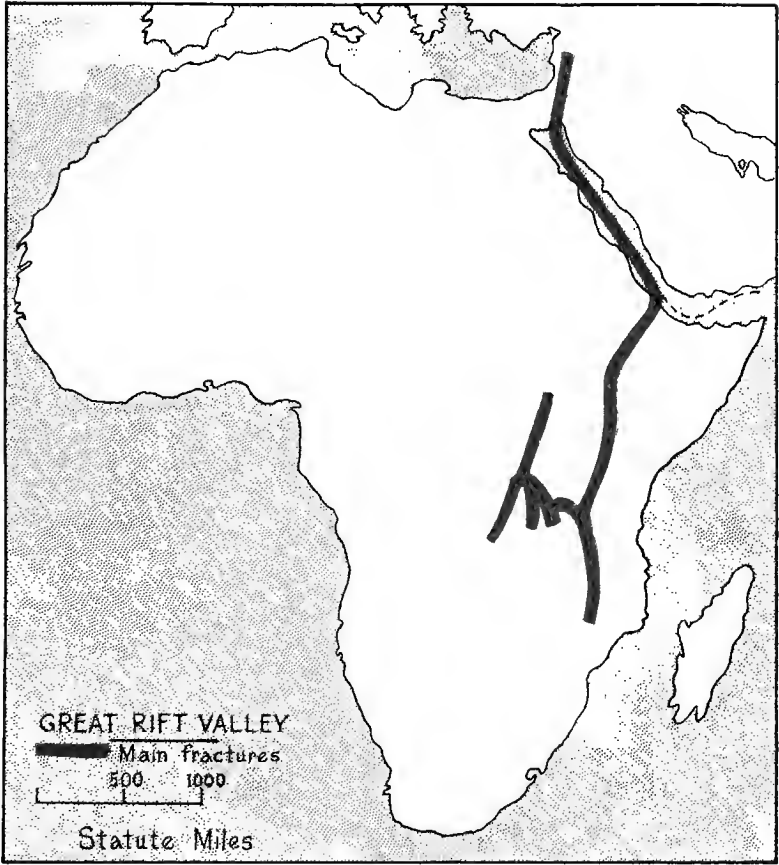
Lowell spoke of "the roaring loom of Time," and it roars all the louder here in the forest when the silence is deepest. "Isn't the noise of the machines awful?" was the question put to a young factory worker. "Yes," he replied, "but not so much when they are going on as when they stop." This is what any man feels in the forest after having been swept out of the swirl of the town with its everlasting roar. The silence makes it 1,000,000 miles off and the science of sound agrees with the science of soul; we only hear up to the limit of 40,000 vibrations in a second. Below this boundary when the vibrations are at their fewest the sound is deepest, and as you ascend beyond the 40,000 limit this shrieking sense of auricular sharpness gets so keen that it kills itself in the soundlessness of a sound we cannot contain. Thus the higher the sound the more certain our incapacity of hearing the same. Put it thus: Mr. Smith and The Sound of Mr. Smith are alike in this, that if Smith roars loud he won't roar long, and the shriller Smith's sound the shorter Smith's shriek. "Never less alone than when alone" is true in many more ways than one: the more subdued the silence the surer you can be that this forest's volume of sound is so superlative that our earthly limitations are incapable of containing the same.

Our own dead-and-gone Goldsbury put it all rather well. "It would be the task of a genius to point out the one definite factor in the charm of the country. And yet this definite charm, though intangible, undoubtedly exists. Maybe it lies in the sense of infinite space, of utter, vast loneliness. So far as the eye can reach there is nau ght but the exuberance of vegetation: tall, tangled grasses—tufted trees, fantastic antheps, the primeval rock—these

and nothing more. Here and there, a pin-point in the wilderness, lie little clusters of thatched huts, wreathed in a mist of smoke—tiny patches of human life and human thought hedged about with gardens, wrested from the void. And, outside, the dim, inscrutable silence of the virgin land where great beasts move noiselessly in the twilight, and where every twig and blade teems with insect life. But it is mere presumption to seek to analyse the attributes of such a land; the presumption of the pigmy who should essay to paint a giant. In the cities, perhaps—in London, Paris, New York—man is in his own domain. There he may classify, schedule, arrange to his heart's content. Here, in the bosom of the wonderful wilderness, he can only pause, humble or terrified according to his nature—can only live tentatively, as it were, with the knowledge that the elemental forces have him in their grip."

Here is the ugly way to make trouble. Having just (May 12, 1915) crossed America from Maine to Mexico, I rather shivered at the deliberate delusion some good fellows in Africa foster as to the incapacity of the black man. As evidence: One "Transvaaler" runs into print with, "For over a hundred years now the blacks (in America) have had the finest possible opportunity for a thorough education; and what has been the result? Out of all the millions there, Booker Washington was the only one who rose to some degree of distinction." Then *in the same February* you find the *Johannesburg Star* frankly and fairly declaring that "the American negroes have 31,363 churches, valued at upwards of £5,000,000 sterling . . . the negro has by labour and thrift acquired 20,000,000 acres of land as his own; he has 500,000 homes of his own, 64 banks, and 396 newspapers and periodicals. He is not merely a proletariat, but is becoming a peasantry owning both land and house. There are 4,000 duly qualified negro physicians, 2,000 negro lawyers, 1,000 trained nurses, an educated clergy, a trained body of agriculturists, and many thousand primary schools."

Or take the jibe against the education of the native: "75 per cent. of the native criminals in our gaols are educated ones," is the cheap *ad captandum* criticism. But



THE GREAT RIFT VALLEY AS CONCEIVED BY PROF. GREGORY.  
 Right down from Lebanon and through the canyon of the Jordan and Dead  
 Sea the Great Rift Valley has seven sections, probably as far south as Lake  
 Mweru. [Page 62]



when you get home to facts and figures, this cool "75 per cent." soon evaporates into very thin air. Inquiry was made by le Roy at six of the largest prisons of Natal and Zululand, and the result was the following statistics :

Prisons.	Date.	Prisoners.	Literate.
Durban . . .	April 17 to May 6	260	2
Maritzburg . . .	May 19	507	31
Eshowe . . .	May 19	214	13
3 smaller prisons . . .	May 19	43	0
		———	———
		1,024	46

Of almost 2,000 native criminals received at Durban gaol, during the two years ended December 31, 1905, only 500, or 25 per cent., were sufficiently educated to be able to read the Fourth Reader. Statistics these good fellows want, and now when they get them they do not like them, as there is no small discrepancy between "75 per cent." and this poor fraction of figures. Is this a gauge of the validity of some of their own mining statistics—some, not all? When the Lord Mayor of London paid his annual visit to the Law Courts what did the Lord Chief Justice tell him? Deploring the need for a crusade for commercial integrity in the City, he cited from this very Africa a case of impudent fraud; a case, said the Lord Chief Justice, in which a property was sold, or at least purported by the vendor to be sold in Africa, for the sum of £48,000, when there was no property in existence at all. But an agent was sent out after this fictitious sale had been effected, whose report recorded the purchase of a property for the sum of £140 from a native negro chief, which the agent thought would nearly answer the description given of the fictitious property described in the prospectus!

Those stars again. I tried for hours to get some venison for our gaping camp pots, but all the antelopes seem to have had a prior engagement. In vain. Dog-weary with hunting I lie like a log and see my confrère, Orion the hunter, glimmering in the sky. He gets out of it cheaply enough,

for his hunting is a hoax. A first-class fraud, this constellation winks down at each accusation I assail him with. The more I upbraid him for boasting a hunting record he never had, so much the more does he without a conscience wink back at me most wickedly, most waywardly. Far from feeling lonely, surely these are the least forlorn moments in life. Civilisation away south has sent us to Coventry, yet here in the heart of the wilds give me my *esprit de corps* with these nebular neighbours of mine. "Lonely? Why should I feel lonely? Is not our planet in the Milky Way?"

One of the best features of these heavenly bodies is that they belong to everybody and in this they resemble the earth I lie on. We pay for neither board nor light and the bed is as broad as the earth it is made of. In this big bed we are all born and buried; it is as much made for us as we of it. You cannot read books under the stars nor can you barter real starlight for the artificial aid of a reading lamp. For as sure as night only blots out the earth to reveal a universe, so the reading lamp and the book read by that lamp is a cheap quack when measured with my spacious stellar library whose light is its own literature. Whenever did a bookseller give away a candle and a box of matches with each copy sold? Yet here you have my cheap constellation giving gratis light both literal and mental.

This explains why even the artifice of a chair is unworthy of a devout star-gazer. With face full up at the galaxy you lie flat on the ground because there is not a lower posture possible. In this reptilian attitude the longer you gaze the stronger grows the feeling that, seeing you were born and bred to this subastral situation, the "sub" part of the position should be as superlative as the ground will admit. Until one day the very man who lay low on the ground looking up at the stars to get a better view will die and *go lower* still to get the best view of all. For every time the forest tramp stretches himself on the ground to sleep off arrears, does he not so symbolise his longer sleep when all his trekking ends? So still I lie like a log, and still my shameless constellation, The Hunter, winks down at a more real hunter than he.



There is subtle charm in this gipsying the forest. Sir Arthur Quiller-Couch has said recently that, among the fascinating books which have never been written, his favourite, he thinks, is a history of trade routes from the earliest times. He lets his imagination play upon these trade routes, and sees the dotted ships on the wide seas, the crawling trains of emigrant waggons, the tribes on the trail, and men extinguishing their camp fires and shouldering their baggage for another day's march, families loading their camels with dates and figs for Smyrna, fishermen hauling their nets, and desert caravans with armed outguards. And, in later centuries, Greenland sailors and the trappers round Hudson Bay, and the puffs of smoke as the expresses thunder across Siberia and Canada and run northward from Cape Town. Then, passing from trade in its narrower sense, comes commerce of other sorts which has travelled along the roads and across the oceans of the world; how the seed of a wild flower lodges in the boot sole of a soldier and the boot reaches Dover and plods on and wears out and is cast by the way and rots in a ditch, and next spring Britain has gained a new flower; how the wandering scholars of the Middle Ages, young and poor, packed their knapsacks and set forth for the great Universities, each of them echoing the wistful cry of Augustine, "Oh, truth, truth, thou knowest that the inmost marrow of my soul longeth after thee." These routes and roads and seas, and the wayfarers and voyagers across them, are an entrancing spectacle. They speak of the unappeasable aspirations of men, and the desire of the mob for the law, and the passion of our nature to forget the things that are behind and to reach forth to the things that are before.



CHAPTER IV  
THE GREAT LAKE AT LAST

*This is only another instance of the disturbing difference between being effectual and efficient. It numbers not one but two chrysalis changes in its career: the grub stage, very grubby stage, evolved from a stubby pencil out in the bush; then the typing of the same by my black boy at the Luanza base.*

When Dr. Laws gave up Cape Maclear Mission Station to go north and found Livingstonia, "up in the jungle," says the author of his *Life*, "on the hillside, the baboons sat and witnessed the departure, and their raucous barking was more like jeering laughter than ever. It seemed to say, 'We told you so.' And in Scotland many human beings counted the Mission a failure. They tabulated the first five years by methods of book-keeping :

**LIABILITIES.**

5 European graves.  
 5 years' expenditure, £20,000.  
 5 years' hardship and toil.

**ASSETS.**

1 convert.  
 1 abandoned station.

*A single Christian, one station, which had proved a white man's grave, given up ; and everywhere seething masses of heathenism, slave drives, war raids, tribal fights, and poison ordeals. Surely it was a pitiful fiasco !*

*Laws of Livingstonia.*

## CHAPTER IV

### THE GREAT LAKE AT LAST

**A** LOT of the land we covered was depopulated and abandoned to sun and silence. Thus the days rush past, and at last here we are at Mulangadi's where the homeward run to Luanza begins. The rivers now begin to flow towards the Lake (flow, that is to say, in the direction we are going), and one glad day a flash of blue on the right reveals the south end of Lake Mweru. Struck by its interest more than its beauty, the thrill with which one looks on this Lake is really a triple thing compounded of Geography, Geology and even Theology. For here probably you strike the edge of the Great Rift Valley that extends from Northern Palestine right down thus far. Apart from the mere promptings of a healthy human curiosity, Professor Gregory of the Royal Society (in a manner by no means deficient in persuasiveness!) is quite competent to affirm that perhaps even here in Lake Mweru you have the self-same rift that begins *away up in Lebanon and splits down the canyon of the Jordan and Dead Sea*. Besides, who cares to ignore the inferred compliment contained in this tremendous theory that ties up nearly all our great African lakes in the same bundle as Christ's own Jordan? A little laboured, no doubt; a little visionary, but what sort of labour can you accomplish without the vision?

The practical part of all this theory of earth-fractures explains the steady drying-up process menacing the whole Great Lake system of Africa. For granted you can postulate such a vast region seamed by deep vertical cracks or faults, then is it easy to see how the surface water-supplies are lost underground. Yet even with all this going on, Lake Nyasa around Nkata can give 430 fathoms' soundings.

That is to say, although the whole of the Lake were to run out, the boats would still have a marginal 1,000 feet of water to float on, for the bottom of the Lake is something over a thousand feet below the level of the sea! This Great Rift Valley, of course, is of unguessable age, and Professor Gregory mentions many millions of years as though it was all a homely matter of parochial commonplace. Was there no chill of apprehension when his time-table pushed it all back to the day when East Africa and India were included in a continent extending from Brazil to Australia? Were there no manifest grunts and wheezes when this continent was named, *à la* the Postal Guide, Gondwanaland? That it lasted all through the Carboniferous period as a mainland joining Africa and India? That this *terra firma* called Gondwanaland soon began to break up; became, I mean, so doubtfully *firma* that the *terra* followed the *firma*? That, in fact, it went into literal liquidation when the sea invaded the coastlands of India and of East Africa? And then the fireworks, when the floor of the Indian Ocean foundered and the volcanoes finished it all?<sup>1</sup>

But is it necessary to premise all this? The time-table may be artful but the Great Rift is actual. Writing as I do on its very edge (?) at Lake Mweru, I venture to make one point endorsive of Professor Gregory's strong case for the unification of this far-off Mweru with its northern confrères, Victoria and Albert Nyanza. Mere Philology is a very remote handmaid to Geology, but in this case there are four angles of approach that all converge in upon and unify our Great Lake system. The first is found in the fact that (1) precisely as Victoria has its "satellite sea" in Albert, so Lake Mweru here has its corresponding Lake Bangweulu. Then (2) comes the curious identity of name linking "Albert" (so-called) Nyanza with Mweru: up north, *Dueru* is its own native name, just as *Mueru* is the name of our Southern Lake here; same root, same meaning, *eru*—a large glistening sheet of water. But

<sup>1</sup> Before the reader smiles at all this, let him recall how long after the Pyramids were built there was no North Sea and men walked from Yorkshire to Denmark.



LAKE MWERU IN THREE PHASES.





(3) this is only half the coincidence, for just as this *soi-disant* Lake Albert has a sort of surname suffixed to its Dueru, so, too, has Mueru the same sort of suffix tagged on to its first name. Then (4) this so-called surname (presto !) is the self-same thing in both these far-removed inland seas and means "The locust killer" (*Luta Nzige = Muvunda Nshe*), because "the locust swarms when attempting to cross these lakes fall from fatigue into the water in myriads." Add to all this, the curious resemblance in contour between Dueru and Mweru, then add again the fact that both these aqueous satellites lie off at the same sort of N.W. angle from their aquatic seniors, and the whole thing looks absurdly authentic in analogy.

Am I too conservative of details as to direction ? Our route north is too direct to be devious. The blue wall of Kundelungu ahead is seen closing in on the Lake and there are deep cañons all along the edge of this Range. Down in the Dantesque darkness there lurks a rare hamlet hidden among *landolphia* vines and the overhanging cliffs are crested with a fringe of noble trees. This means that far below all the cañon cocks crow much later than their fellows out in the open : long ago the savannahs are flooded with warm morning sunlight, the correct cocks going by solar clock and punctually saluting the sun. Not so deep down among the dark rocks of the glens ; sun peasants and birds are all late. "Slug-a-beds" you might call them, only they retort that it is King Sol who is the late riser. But the best bit lies in the tribal fact that they *in puris naturalibus* see a moral meaning in it and sing a song that platitudinises this symbolic action of the sun. Mark you, it is not the moralising missionary but they themselves who put it : *Bwa cha kala, cha chinga ni ngulu*. Which means : "Look out yonder through the cañon mouth, the warm plains bathed in morning sunlight. That's Europe far away, kissed with the sunshine of life's good things. But contrast our dark cold ravine with no belated sun yet awhile. That's Africa, black den of black people who have not got their sun yet. But it's coming, oh yes it's coming, and soon the symbolic sun will be over the rim of the Range, then our parabolic cocks will crow !" The trouble about

this parable is that it is true even in its ultimate details. The pinching part lies in the bursting in on them of an angry belated sun, not the pale easy thing of daybreak but a fierce nine-in-the-morning sun sending down burning bolts. There you have a true-to-the-life snapshot of the ugly African mining booms with their terrors of transition, and surely this is proof positive that the African in a parable of his own making calls his Africa "The Dark Continent" ?

It will readily be recalled that our destination ahead on Lake Mweru is a Mission Station. In its specialised form this "Mission Station" is a portmanteau-word with all sorts of implications. Better: it is a small (so they call it) City of Refuge (*Chinyemeno*) because the Government having only a 5 per cent. patrol of their vast territory this means that at any moment some old woman or man can be done to death. Done to certain and cruel death unless they rush over the hills and up the palm avenue to our ever-open door. To fail of arrival a few, even a very few, miles out would doom her. Take this grim old instance of the manslayer. Blood is blood and this time it is blood of man not beast. A lad lies at my feet on the path stabbed mortally in two places with spear and axe wounds. Ten minutes farther back we crossed the tracks of the elephants that brought it all about. The wounded man's brother had joined his fellow in giving chase to the herd, had overtaken and in easy error shot his friend dead instead of the haystack, the elephant. The Mission as City of Refuge was too far off and the avenger's weapons had already drunk blood: "Oh, Bwana!" wailed the moribund, "I am dying because I did not meet you sooner; even although the Mission as Refuge was too far, yet a *man shall be for a refuge*, and you were my man, you would have saved me had you come in time." Had you come in time! A perfect picture this of the change from the dispensation of Law to that of Grace: as pungent as perfect, for did not the former demand that the *man* run to the refuge, whereas in Grace the *Refuge* runs to the man ?

I was weary at the moment, but what put new life into me was the picture of God and the Prodigal in Luke xv: you can verify it at your leisure, but it is probably the only

time God is shown to be in a hurry, "the father ran to meet him!" Thus (to point the platitude) this dying man's inability to run in to us for refuge only half symbolises the wholly dead souls unable to come to a Mission that is able to go to them. All this I poured into his dying ear as Gilead's balm: that Christ had come to him here and now by the wayside, that some died of bullets and some of old age, but that the body was but a phase and we were all bound for the Eternity where many of the great would be small and the small great. So died in the forest my life-for-a-life friend, died because I reached him too late, died with the name of Christ his Saviour on his lips.

North, still north, we go, then a curious thing appears at Kilwa, rude reminder that you have only got to go far enough east to reach west. For here we enter the War Zone, yes, here are four sinister stakes stuck in the ground. Stuck in the ground, stiff upstanding stakes, to warn all travellers with a stab of satire that one inch beyond that barrier means Martial Law, which means No Law. What a reminder that this uncanny war is an all-the-world affair or nothing: even now, out east, the fighting is going on, blood for blood, stab for stab. Thus the geography of this wild wrangle is also its philosophy; I mean, if you go too far east you reach west and "the shrinkage of the planet" is proved in that the very war I was leaving far to the south I now find far in the Interior.

As gracious as you please, you can hear these natives talk politics for hours, but it is all blunt and decisive. Take their idea of the war; it is cut and dry owing to the fact that long ago, hundreds of years ago, many tribes in Central Africa have fastened on the verb "to begin" as their equivalent for "to sin" (*vala*). Thus, their idea is that all the sinning lies in the beginning, for the subsequent down-smashing of any far-rolling stone must point back to (and be punished on the back of!) that one who began this bad business of starting the stone on its roll, ruthless, ruining roll. To call Adam the beginner of it all is merely to make "beginner" rhyme with "sinner," and whether it be two nobodies fighting it out with fisticuffs, or twelve or twenty European nations warring *à l'outrance*,

all the African asks, calmly and crushingly, is, Who was the beginner, for he, oh, he is the sinner?

This explains why they pounce on Christ's words as their linguistic justification, for said He not that "offences must come" (shot-and-shell-and-starvation offences must come), "but woe unto that man"—who sets the brutal ball a-rolling? Gas will beget gas; liquid fire will be answered by liquid fire; reprisal will result in reprisal; but above all the wintry winds of Africa there moans out the wild woe unto the man who began the bad business. In other words, the mere fact that you come round a corner and find two in deadly grips proves nothing at all. The streaming blood may for the moment make you lose perspective, but the clinching factor in the fight is the finding out who began the brutal business: how do you know but that No. 1 most wantonly attacked No. 2? The mere amount of blood proves nothing, for who knows if No. 1 was not lurking for him like a leopard, got him unawares, therefore got more blood and almost got your approbation but for the decisive question, Who was the beginner, for he, oh, he is the sinner?

They are a breezy lot along the Lake, their breezes being both meteorological and verbal. One prisoner was being tied to a log of wood with the shrugging explanation, "Yes, these things must be, for a jackal is only docile in a trap." Then the African moving-picture reel unfolds and the chief turns on his heir-apparent with a roar of punitive phrases. But "threatenings are not thrashings," says their proverb, and the storm is superseded with the smiling remark, "A young lion does not fear its father's roar." It was the old trouble of a junior trying to ape his senior, hence the father's jibe at his son, "Look out now: a young chicken should eat things appropriate to the size of its little throat." Still profuse with his proverbialisms he raps out his paternal admonitions this time along the line of forest mushrooms: "Yes," says he, "there are more poisonous mushrooms than edibles, but a wise child will never be poisoned, for he has only to ask."

Later came the burial of an old fisherman, and of all the



THE OIL PALM AVENUE  
LEADING UP TO OUR  
DOOR, WITH THE STERILE  
BORASSUS ON LUAPULA  
AS CONTRAST.

[Page 62



words in all the world what could have been more fitting than this *jiika*, to bury? Is it not the very verb for "the grounding of a boat on the shore" after the long voyage? Here in a double delightful sense the old fisherman had arrived in harbour, *lit.* had "grounded"; *jiika*, to bury, also to arrive in harbour. How they would laugh at the English talking about anyone "landing in the water" when there is no land to land on, only water.

Last of all, the fisher chief has a knock at you, John Smith, the new-comer: this time he follows the analogy of the dark unknown hull of an approaching canoe, the faces of the distant passengers as yet unrecognised—friend or foe, stranger or fellow-tribesman, which? *Mu-tanshi ku lolwa ni bwato* is the loud hint that you, being a mere stranger, you are only analogous to the dark distant hull of the advancing canoe, what "passengers" have you under your waistcoat? Are they demons or angels? That is to say, your arrival is nominal not actual: *you* are yet miles away, for "you" are your yet-future phase of conduct hidden ahead in the tell-tale years. Did not the traitor Arabs so come long ago, but the ultimate Arab was very unlike the early Arab, all smiles and subtility. Great maritime metaphor of the mind of man, "We fisher folk first see the far-off boat, then only much more remotely do we see the passengers aboard." This, they carry right into all modern innovations (*vipyä*) and have a smack at the Science that was suspect long ago. "Yes," say they, "our forefathers used to say *pa pela dikumbi* (where the sky ends), but now we know the sky is circular and never ends! And the innovations of civilisation likewise are as endless and never cease."

But to resume our journey. At this point I went beautifully to pieces and got my first dose of fever, Africa, my jealous first love, refusing to smile on me after such a desertion of her beauty. Temperature shoots up, nasty taste in mouth, tongue as rough as a nutmeg grater. Then the legs begin to wobble and cannot be trusted for transportation, so this decides me to get into a native canoe, a one-logger, and make a dash for home two days ahead of my men. The dugout darts into the great lake at a point

where three hippos had the bay to themselves. Far along the west shore we see the bluffs of the Bukongolo Range buttressing the coast. What a day: will it never end? Away in the distance, detached against the sky with startling definition is a gaunt spike of headland, Luanza, my African home. For hours and hours we paddle on, never such an endless day, never such a longed-for goal. What if we never get there? What if a hippo charges our log of wood and shivers it to atoms? (Oh yes, Africa has got its submarines as well as the ocean!) Now one realises how

*“He doubly dies who dies  
Within sight of shore.”*

But forgive and forget these fever phantoms, for here we come at last nearing the cliff and night is falling. The evening smoke of supper fires begins to curl, the lights blinking and winking high up along The Range. They are in for a surprise. My avant-couriers are late so they think we are far behind, and will only arrive two days hence. Then my rifle goes bang! into the cliff and again bang! to signal our approach. Up into the gorge goes the echo with a great awakening clang. After a tense two or three moments of dawning silence, down comes the yell—wild, welcoming yell from the hills. Now for the point when the curtain must be drawn. It is all too sacred to tell. Besides, who will dredge the dictionary for adequate adjectives? Sufficient if all that follows in quick delirious succession is marked on my mind with vivid distinctiveness, a memory for life. Down they rush, a black mob of natives, and out I jump on the sandy shore, all the innocent joy-bells of my heart ringing. Then comes a meeting with the glorious missionaries who have held the fort when I was away. Here they are hand grasping hand, all of us in a dream, eyes dancing with delight and glad we ever lived for such a moment.





LUANZA: "THE CITY OF REFUGE."



CHAPTER V  
LIVINGSTONE'S "LONG LAST MILE"

*This chapter anticipates and follows up to his final phase the man who was doubly named "The Path-borer" and "The Dew-drier." The former because of the latter. To bore through the wet morning grass is to dry off the dew on to your own person.*

*“Some to endure and many to fail,  
Some to conquer and many to quail,  
Toiling over the Wilderness trail.”*

*“I will open up a path into the Interior of Africa or perish.”*

*Livingstone.*

*“I shall not swerve a hairsbreadth from my work while life is spared.”*

*Idem.*

*“My great object was to be like Him, to imitate Him as far as He could be imitated.”*

*Idem.*

*“Nothing earthly will make me give up my work nor despair ;  
I encourage myself in the Lord my God and go forward.”*

*Idem.*

## CHAPTER V

### LIVINGSTONE'S "LONG LAST MILE"

*"Carry me over the long last mile,  
Man of Nazareth, Christ for me."*

**T**HIS chapter opens with a rather propitious event as subsidiary conspirator. I am just back from the eastern shore of our great Lake, where no doubt the memory of many a broken resolution grinned at me with a leer. Yet there are better things to tell. The Central African says, "For a running deer a running shot," and as we live in fidgety times I shall probably best begin with the Who? the Where? and the Why? of it all. Dr. Livingstone's famous old L.M.S. is its Who?, a society lying half-way between our Lake Mweru here and far-away Dr. Laws on Lake Nyasa. Formerly only operating around Lake Tanganyika this L.M.S. (sort of shorthand for "London Missionary Society") twenty years ago put me under strong obligations to it by responding to my pioneer call from the Far Interior to advance into the Luapula Valley and occupy the country around Kazembe's, consecrated by Livingstone's own footsteps.

So said, so done (and done splendidly!), for there they have held on nobly since 1900 with nearly 40 out-schools and 5,000 adherents. And now comes the crown of it all: Messrs. Nutter and Turner, who love every stick and stone in the place, resolved to wipe away the reproach of their old tumble-down barn of a meeting-place and, at last, have built a stately cathedral, Central Africa's "one and only." No mere empty echoing building, but crammed with many hundreds of natives. The years were passing with objectionable rapidity and they (with an almost unnecessary and exaggerated caution) refrained from abandoning the old "salvation shed" until the said shed

impudently proposed to abandon them. 'Tis an old sneer that the threatening structure warned all entrants, "If you do not get out, I will crash down and chase you out."

The great day drew near for the official opening and I was requested to come from far away and do the deed of consecration. Europeans drew in from the scattered suburbs, the Government official was there, even High Anglicans came, and I opened the great Gothic door with a large ivory key carved from an elephant's tusk killed in the marshes around the Mofwe Lagoon. But when the great Kazembe (a stagey personality) arrived with his retinue, then it was the curtain of memory lifted and I thought of Livingstone in glory looking down at this cheering consummation of his path-finding long ago. And despite all those depths and distances of negro character yawning between, I poured out on that crowd the living Word for which the old Doctor died. Told them of his last recorded messages; of his "imprisoning words on paper" before he died; of how he rang out his last call in his last year: "My Jesus, my King, my Life, my All, I again consecrate my life to Thee!" White of hair and black of heart, these old men who knew "Ingeresa" were a sad-looking crowd of "burnt-out" individuals: what does that deep but rather tardy concern on their corrugated faces mean? Does it hint their own proverb that "you cannot get a fire from a heap of ashes"? Or why not prefer the point of view of Livingstone's favourite couplet:

*"As long's the lamp holds out to burn  
The greatest sinner may return."*

This is the point where the present chronicle hopelessly and irretrievably goes off at a tangent. This Kazembe, this L.M.S. and this Livingstone's last trail all recall the dear old hand-to-mouth heart-to-heart days when my wife and I came down here from the north, the very first to follow up Livingstone to his grave—grave of his heart, rather. This great ivory key they give me, local ivory in a casket of local mahogany, tells of long-gone days when we opened up the country which now sees this sequence of the opening of his great Church. Through the mists of memory

I can see ourselves following up the Luapula due south. Escaping death a dozen times, at last we near the historic tree under which his heart lies buried. Faint but pursuing we land on the edge of Ilála country, barest, weirdest of terrestrial spots. Down goes the sun like a ball of fire over dark Lamba country, and as if to climax weirdness, the bush fires sweeping through the long grass have covered the land with a dark pall, Livingstone's, of course, seeing the country is Ilála.

Yonder is the Lulimala River visible on the far left, flowing through marsh, a flash of blue appearing now and then. Looks more like lake than river, and lake it certainly was in the old days, probably an arm of Bangweulu. Through the gloomy plains we go, Lulimala coming alongside latterly; and soon we strike the Luwe, where the doctor, right weary of that endless splash and hard fare he endured, rested from his labours. But the tree is not reached yet; on the other side of the Luwe we move along floundering through the woods, tall grass and marsh; path there is none. They camped on that memorable day round the Mupundu tree, an old fire-stone (genuine find this!), used to steady the doctor's pots, being sole survivor. And they must have looked out on the sluggish Luwe, scarcely a stream, as the only hint of water is the deeper dye of green down its centre. There you draw water, the colour of bad tea. There, too, at sundown the reed-buck comes down to drink. And, as darkness comes on, the sounds of Africa's night are heard sobbing out the old saying, "The night cometh when no man can work." Significant, indeed, that we found The Heart lying under a *fruit* tree, but instead of moralising let us hope that fruit of another kind may abound. Old Chitambo, Ingeresa's friend and "Man Friday" of those last days, lies most appropriately on the off-side of the tree, so in death they are not divided. Livingstone wanted nothing more truly emblematic of his life than this. If it be true that a black man carried our Lord's cross a bit of the hard way to Golgotha, then here is an inverse instance of a black man helping to carry the Master's servant's cross.

Immensely inspiring was it to see the camp-fires flare

up round the "Livingstone" tree. This "Mupundu" shoots up a stately column, and every gleam from the faggots lightened up Jacob Wainwright's deeply cut tablet, Livingstone's truest memorial by a negro friend. Scenting a function the Iläla folks have drawn out from their hamlets for miles around. And here we are crowding the forest, himself, The Chitambo, Chief-Chairman of our memorial service. The first service ever held on the sacred spot; ours the first prayers to ascend since the dying hero yielded up his soul in supplication at Iläla. England, far away, did it "on the grand" when it swung back the Abbey doors to let him in, the weary wanderer's grave watered by a nation's tears. But there was no Chitambo there. No Iläla folks there who had wept him dead. No stately Mupundu tree with its genuine carved memorial in Africa by an African. "Talking trees," the native calls any such with a cut-out name on it. Talking, indeed, this one, and how eloquently.

Here in this leafy sanctuary in the Iläla woods we have the true shrine. Here we see far-off Westminster dwindling to its true cockney dimensions. The flicker of the camp fires light up fitfully the carved letters of his name on the tree, this Chitambo engraving recalling that other "D. L." far away in Bothwell woods. This Livingstone when a roaming lad, yes, he, too, practised this art, *à la* Jacob Wainwright, name-carving on Scotland's trees. Out near the old Roman bridge at Bothwell he, too, dug deep with his knife into a tree the polemic, "NO STATE CHURCH, D.L." The which is a parable, pawky parable too. For flicker! flicker! go these African faggots, and flicker! flicker! likewise goes the see-saw of memory between Scottish Bothwell and African Chitambo, two different trees, two different wood-cuts playing at hide-and-seek in the brain. For see what it all means. These wide-awake trees that "talk" are also seemingly trees that listen with cocked ears. And with the lapse of years these carved letters have most obligingly doubled their dimension, the expanding girth of the tree expanding the memorial. Sure outward and visible symbol of what the widening years have done with Livingstone's fame, growing with his



growing greatness, widening with the expanse of years. "No State Church!" that one "talking tree" says to this other far-away one, the jealous forest accusing stone-and-mortar Westminster of robbery.

And so we reach that shaggy bit of untamed earth called Ilāla (short ā, please) where, as the natives put it, *wa laala nalo*, "death and he lay down together." The lotus (*Nymphaea lotus*) is everywhere, but the lotus in such marshy, murderous surroundings that it has exactly the opposite effect suggested by grandpa Herodotus. I say, instead of this water-lily possessing the property of making strangers forget their native land, the more the millions of mosquitoes hum, the more the lotus makes you pine to get away. Your real longing is:

*"Oh to be in England  
Now that April's there."*

Yet the same sun that softens wax hardens clay, and this the negro proves, looking out on the mess. *He* loves the very look of this lotus marsh. And just when you have smiled indulgently at the Herodotus notion of this water-lily having the power to make you forget your homeland, just then one of my men gushed out a phrase utterly endorsive of the old Greek's idea: *Kuno muntu a ka lavukila kwavo-keko buya* ("Why, this is so lovely that a man could forget even his fatherland!"). Another sure Biblical link this, for here is the very lotus that adorned the capital of Solomon's Temple pillars, emblem of purity, yea, purity won out of odoriferous mud. But does this exhaust the lotus-type? Why not rather read into it the old *Lotophagi* legend that it *was* a type of the weaning of the soul from its natural home to the new and heavenly one?

But best type of all is found in good Livingstone finishing his course in a land of lotus, finishing it, I mean, on his knees in prayer. Does not the record read, "Upon the top of the pillars was lotus-lily work: so was the work of the pillars *finished*"? And did not Livingstone crown it all with the lovely lily work of his dying prayer? Lotus in the land, lotus in his soul: "upon the top [the end] . . . was lotus-lily work: so was the work finished."

"O Father! help me to finish this work to Thine honour" was his opening prayer in the Diary for 1871. The *prayer* to finish to God's honour was answered in this man of God *praying* at the finish unto God's honour.

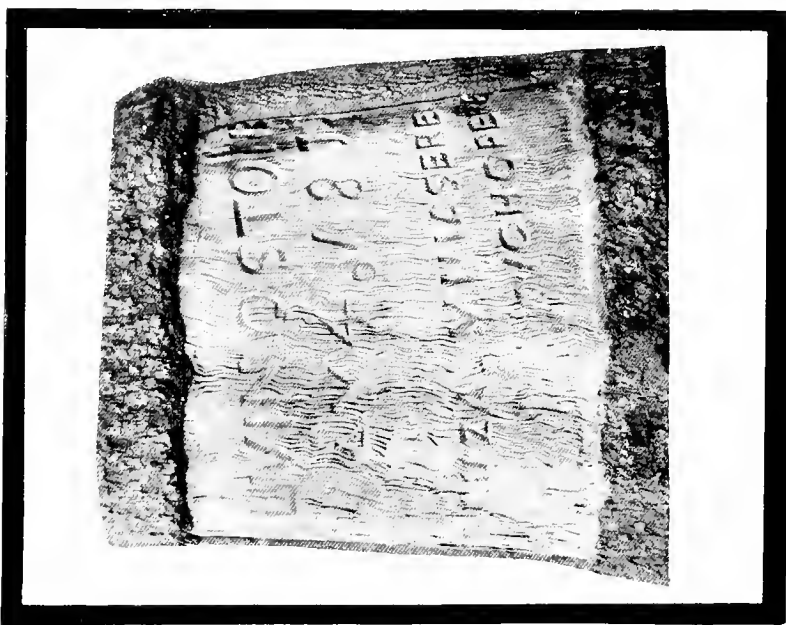
I sought out the very spot, kneeled where he kneeled, prayed the very prayer he prayed, and never did a line of Shakespeare weave more subtly into one's mood, "Nothing in his life became him like the leaving of it." One would have thought that by sheer impact of character Sir Harry Johnston's hand would have refrained from the verbal vandalising of this, Livingstone's supreme farewell act in life. "Last words are lasting words"—are not last acts equally lasting? Yet look at the perversity of popularity that doomed Livingstone's life to be written for "The World's Great Explorers" series<sup>1</sup> by the very man who attacked the two great gate-ways of his life, I mean, entrance and exit gateways, his conversion and dying prayer. When Sir Harry as early as page 59 pooch-pooched Livingstone's conversion as "no change at all but simply a faint simulation of the religious hysteria around him," one could almost anticipate what was coming in page 356 when he sniffs superciliously at the idea of a dying prayer.

When *Punch* punned his historic pun he little guessed what a double-barrelled thing he made of it:

*"He needs no epitaph to guard a name,  
Which men shall prize while worthy work is known;  
He lived and died for good—be that his fame,  
Let marble crumble: this is LIVING-STONE."*

For Livingstone's African tombstone was no mere crumbling marble but a stately tree, a literal living-"stone." South past Kazembe's, past Bangweulu it grew nobly until some years ago the Government vandalised the spot and slew the giant tree. Killed the old brave's loyal living-stone that had so sentiently kept abreast of the years, growing with his growing fame. The cocked-eared tablet expanding with his expanding fame. Certes, here you have both laugh and "counter-laugh," to use the clever African

<sup>1</sup> This seems too savage. His is a great book, remember, and in almost all other respects most admirable. Besides, many a good word he has said for all the ideals Livingstone lived and died for.



INSCRIPTION CARVED ON THE TREE WHICH MARKS  
THE BURIAL-SPOT OF LIVINGSTONE'S HEART.



THE TREE UNDER WHICH LIVINGSTONE'S  
HEART WAS BURIED.



noun: *Punch* has had his little one about a "livingstone," now let this Memorial Tree retort on the limitations of mere dead tablets in brass, marble, concrete or granite. For six feet square is irrevocably six feet square in dead memorial stone of any sort: it may crumble smaller but never grow larger like this living pillar of *Mupundu*. Not so, I repeat, this living-"stone" of the alert ears that keeps pace with his increasing volume of fame. More than dead stone can do. This was no weakling I assure you; the stately vitality of its genus along the brow of the plateau makes one regret the official B.S.A. Co. vandalism that felled the Ilála Tree. They sing a song about it, a song with a true gleam of African poetry:

*" Oh ! Livingstone Tree !  
Oh ! Livingstone Tree !  
Wherefore dost thou jut out  
So lonely and sharply on  
The fire-swept moors ? "*

*Answer from Tree :*

*" Jutting out lonely ?  
Oh no ! Oh no !  
I am waiting for the King  
To overtake me ! Waiting !  
Waiting for the King to come ! "*

True for you, St. Paul, "the whole creation groaneth—waiting for . . . !"

This vandalising of "the only tree in the forest" by the Government is not the first thing of its kind down here. What about the Memorial Tablet we brought in from the Atlantic in 1889? There was a present of assorted clothes for Chitambo from the Royal Geographical Society. Then came the bronze *plaque* with Livingstone's own name and date, the said Memorial to be placed solemnly at the sacred spot. Alas, our kind Belgian proxies failed to reach the "Mupundu." They stuck up the Tablet in the centre of a village, leaving an apologetic document with the words "Lost far away and in the midst of tall grass, it is only with more than hesitation that the natives point out the place where is interred the heart of Livingstone." Quite a polite way of saying they failed to go to the goal.

We should and could have taken it ourselves. But this

passing caravan seemed opportune, so we generously gave them the chance of a feather in their cap. Not, of course, a white feather. Result: here at last we come out at the "impossible" spot to find they never reached it: here is The Tree they never saw, albeit they wrote reams about their great deed. In that village where they so stupidly stuck up the Tablet, of course, its fate is sealed. The first war raid will certainly see it looted, whereas, *au contraire*, hanging up at the lonely spot by the grave it would have been quite safe. Safe because being a dead man's property it would have been inviolate from all human kind, particularly the African kind. The awesome austerity surrounding any grave in Africa would have been the Memorial Tablet's true shield and buckler, but once again, alas, for "thinking black." Sure enough, along comes the raiding Arab, Kasaki, the village chief and people retreat into the marsh, and to the victors the spoils. Never dreaming of a grave or graveyard memorial in a village (the abode of the living!), this Arab unthinkingly began to break up the brass trophy into champion bullets. Thus all unknown to him the poor peaceful Livingstone memorial roared in wrath from the Arab guns for many a day, bullets instead of benedictions, murder instead of mercy.

But we are not done, by no means done. The natives' eyes have a tell-tale twinkle when they divulge what happened soon after the Arab dared to so disappear with a "dead man's belonging." What *could* happen, what but that he died—died like a dog because he did such a dog's deed? Error? Oh yes, he, the Arab, did not know it was a grave-yard memorial: are not Arabs as superstitious as Africans? But facts are facts, and what fact so faithful as death and dead men? Death pardons no errors; indeed, death trades and triumphs because of error. Therefore, how could this or any Arab escape the preordained doom of "a grave-vandaliser"? All this incisive stuff, remember, from these Iläla twinklers who are really getting some of their own back: was it not their village the Arab looted?

Let us therefore (with a smile-redeemed severity) ask who is to blame for all this? Certainly not the genial

Commandant Bia, who, after all, did his best. This good Belgian, panting and lax, tottered west from the modern Chitambo's to literally die in my arms at Ntenke in the Lamba country. Nor is Arnot to blame, although he accepted the task of delivering this Tablet at a goal he never reached in all his life. A whole conspiracy of circumstances combined against him near the coast to debar his really going into the Far Interior to live. Who then was to blame? Who if not myself for listening to pretensions that were never intentions in this land of sun, stink and sickness. They never reached the great goal and the half-doing of the deed neutralised itself into its undoing. So despite their many and minute explanations the Memorial Tablet was lost for ever.

Livingstone's tough little Unyanyembe donkey was taken by a lion near a black rib of hematite. And as we approach the same spot, here comes the Chief leading ceremonially a young bull to the slaughter. For had we not come a long hard way to Livingstone's grave? Therefore, must we not be welcomed with the blood of a bull, blood of beast conciliating blood of man? My reply was to quote the old Mosaic words about "the blood of bulls and goats," then, pointing to the twin directions of bull and sky, ask: How much more did the Blood of Christ who through the Eternal Spirit offered Himself without spot to God, welcome Dr. Livingstone into glory after his desert wandering was over?

Poor place for donkeys down here where the marshes are so deep. With canoes so coggley, lagoons so swift, this is no place for the asinine race, bipeds or quadrupeds. The former has to carry the latter. And even if the latter "could and would" the former, what if fever or dysentery debar you from sitting astride for two steps? Livingstone was wrong in disdaining the Portuguese *tipioa* as a means of travel. He had reached the very age and stage when six of his hulking Zanzibaris could have carried him through a tze-tze country that debarred donkeys even. But his Highland pride held out until it was too late, too late. All Down-Southerners have the same jibe against hammock transport. The trouble is not so much the feasibilities

as the excusabilities. A grown man lying slug-a-bed in *tipioa*, as six swarthy sweating natives carry him across marsh and forest, is a dispiriting picture for the boy-scout frame of mind.

But the point is one of actual zone, not of *ad captandam* swagger. Never did adjective so severely qualify noun, for this is the Torrid Zone, not the harmless South Temperate. To the latter you go to save your health, the former to lose it. This Torrid Zone means a fictitious buoyancy that lures you on to the fever that will most surely fell you. And this is the whole point: Livingstone commenced and continued for some years in the South Temperate Zone where waggons and oxen ruled the road. But the day arrived when he came north and entered the zone called Torrid, new zone with new demands that ultimately evolved this defence of the Portuguese hammock to mitigate vertical rays. On the Manyema exploration every bone of his body was crying out for the help of this very *tipioa* he despised. This is proved when "the living skeleton" swooned into insensibility towards the end of the two years, and at last he required and received the hammock that would have obviated it all. Boots gone to pieces; ugly "blister" hose, "eight blisters and more coming," where the darning is worse than the frank old holes therein, what kind of a tramping could he make of it? <sup>1</sup>

No canvas was necessary in this expedient when he had to be carried. The inner bark of a tree was again their forest fake, same bark that in the end was improvised as his travelling coffin. This time they cut it into long narrow strips of bark rope, then wove it into a wide-meshed hammock dangling from a pole. Any African forest, any day, can easily produce such an ambulance in a little over an hour's work, and much better than being slung in a blanket. The fact is, this *tipioa* arrangement can be compromised rather agreeably thus: from daybreak through all the opening hours you tramp with the caravan, then when

<sup>1</sup> Witness his own words to Sir Roderick: "I have done it all on foot. I could never bear the scorn the Portuguese endure in being carried when quite well."



quite weary the hammock sees you the remaining miles to camp. This leaves you fresh to go off with your rifle and "fill the pots."<sup>1</sup>

I shall dwell on these bush expedients of Livingstone later because our last glimpse of the dead is his kneeling by the side of the rustic bed, body stretched forward, head buried in hands on the pillow. There is the double African artifice of a flickering candle stuck by its own wax on the box-on-end table. The great red dawn will soon be up, but, not ashamed of its lowly light, thus burnt-at-both-ends candle sheds its last rays on the dead man it so surely symbolises. Stuck by its own wax to the box, the candle is its own candlestick, the box its own table, even as the dying doctor must be his own doctor.

The last stone in a pyramid is a whole pyramid. No tent to sleep in? Then he waits in the drizzling rain while his last grass hut is made. No bedstead? Then cut your saplings and make one. No mattress? Then pull up a great bundle of grass growing on the spot, each stalk of it longer than any bed. No matches owing to swamping in the wet? Then he gets his light from a wild fig-stick twirled cleverly to ignition. (The pyramid is narrowing to the top.) No more coffee? Then he does without it. No more bread? That, too, is done without. No more breath? (Now for it, David!) Life's long last one. Long last one.

So he lay dead to the sound of the natives driving off the buffaloes from the corn.

So he lay dead to the wild screaming and "stridulous coughing" of the early hemp smoker with the gourd pipe.

So he lay dead for the land he loved because God loved it.

And all about one Jesus of Nazareth who was born in a cattle-stall in the year of Augustus's first enumeration—but His goings forth are of old, from everlasting.

Afar the golden-crested crane is calling.

<sup>1</sup> Of course all this is *ex post facto* reminiscence, for later the push-bike wormed its way along the wriggly trail with great success. Dr. Pearson, I think, was the very first to come across the Luapula with one on to the Plateau.



CHAPTER VI  
WHY HE DID IT

*Knowing the world to have a curiously  
hard-headed mode of judging a thing by  
practical results, old man Livingstone  
is ever at it, fighting for his dream  
though it fills not his stomach.*

*“ Instead of the Government Malarial Commission settling ‘ the fever bugs,’ the same redoubtable parasites pretty nearly ‘ settled ’ the Malarial Commission.”*

*“ Sweeter than any song  
My song that found no tongue ;  
Nobler than any fact  
My wish that failed of act.”*

*“ The right is the right, if the lads were the lads.”*  
*Motto of the Clans Macnab and Neish.*

## CHAPTER VI

### WHY HE DID IT

IT is hardly worth while to consider the old lie, amazing and amusing lie, that it was the Doctor who so ordered them to march to Zanzibar with his dead body. We have the black-and-white of Livingstone's "Journals" for it that when he lay dying in the Far Interior he (not he!) did not cast longing eyes to snug, comfortable England. Did *not* long for a national funeral in the Abbey. Did *not* want them to open the Abbey doors and let him in to sleep with king and sage. We have the cold ink of the great Diary for it that he longed—and keenly!—to sleep in the Africa he had loved and lived in. Read it:

"June 25, 1868.—We came to a grave in the forest . . . a little path showed that it had visitors. *This is the sort of grave I should prefer: to lie in the still, still forest, and no hand ever disturb my bones.* The graves at home always seemed to me to be miserable especially those in the cold damp clay, and without elbow room; but I have nothing to do but wait till He who is over all decides where I shall have to lay me down and die."

So wrote Livingstone when he "gave commandment concerning his bones." The Abbey got him, but against the dear desires of his heart. "Many," wrote he, "have thought that I was inflated by the praise I had lavished upon me, but I made it a rule never to read anything of praise." How symbolic all this burial of his *heart* in Africa and his body in England! The heart that hankered after an African grave got the African burial it longed for under this famous Mupundu tree.

It comes to this. The heart and body that had fought each other *à l'outrance* for sixty years ended this business

of separation by being separated at last. Heart buried in Africa, body buried across the seas make an almost painfully convincing picture of the seesaw of duty and desire. Again Shakespeare, his old favourite, comes to the rescue: *Nothing in his life became him so much as his mode of leaving it.*

And Livingstone spoke what he wrote. One day passing through the forest of Ukamba with Stanley they stumbled on a bleaching skull, the price paid for privations of travel by the man who once owned it. Then it was Livingstone began the old business of his "death desire," telling his companion how he never saw an African forest with its solemn stillness and serenity without wishing to be buried quietly under the dead leaves, where he would be sure to rest undisturbed. In England there was no elbow room, the graves often desecrated, and ever since he had buried his wife in the woods of Shupanga he had sighed for just such a spot, where his weary bones would receive the eternal rest they coveted.

It is admissible to remember that this ex-missionary Livingstone is a living-and-dying lesson to all past-tense preachers. The days of his "contract liability" to preach are over: but for Livingstone there is "no discharge in that war." Had he not given his word, once for all, to his own soul and to his God?

*"Better to enter maimed or halt or blind  
Into the Life of Life than be  
An exile from its courts eternally:  
If I should gain the whole world and find myself undone  
With every good gift for my own—save one,  
What utmost world-wide gain could succour me?  
Better to enter, maimed or halt or blind."*

"You know," wrote General Gordon to Sir Richard Burton, "you know the hopelessness of such a task as African Missions till you find a St. Paul or a St. John. Their representatives nowadays want so much per year and a contract." Here comes the test: will this free-lance Livingstone forget the vows of his youth, forget the God "who had only one Son and He made Him a Foreign Missionary"? Time will tell, you say. "No," says Livingstone, "Eternity will tell."

Past-tense Missionaries ? Is it a Stokes hanged in the African forest, or a Fenwick hunted for days in the marshes until finally killed for his crime ? Take the latter case, for there is a Livingstone link in it, the Livingstone who towards the end had arrived at the serene cast of countenance of a man to whom nothing more could happen. Be it noted this ex-Missionary called Livingstone had an old ex-load carrier called Chipatula. This ex-carrier ceased to follow his old master in more senses than one. Then he meets another ex-Missionary called Fenwick who also ceases to follow his former faith. Now see the sort of combination you have in this ex-everything alliance. These two, black and white, spurned the Livingstone initiative, made a kind of shepherd tartan partnership, ex-Missionary and ex-Missionary's servant. Soon they have gone the way of the tropics in headstrong high-handed action, hands stained with blood, both of them. Then one day they fall foul of each other in the dividing of the spoils ; a drunken wrangle, the crack of a revolver and he is dead, the ex-Missionary killing the ex-carrier of Livingstone. Then follows the inevitable end, blood for blood, white for black, and the ex-Missionary dies in the marsh, head cut off. O Africa !

I agree with Conan Doyle in this matter. The running of a tropical colony is, of all tests, the most searching as to the development of the nation that attempts it ; to see helpless people and not to oppress them, to see great wealth and not to confiscate it, to have the absolute power and not to abuse it, to raise the native instead of sinking yourself, these are the supreme trials of a nation's spirit. It is the old story : solar heat and soul heat have no affinity. The longer Peter warmed himself at the world's fire the colder he got. The African Missionary can get colder as he gets older. There is a climatic conspiracy to this effect ; European provisions go bad, Europeans dogs go bad, European Missionaries go bad. "The animalistic, self-indulgent white man approximates yet nearer the animal ; the intellectually active, destitute of the stimulus of conversation and encounter with diverse opinion and nimble wits, becomes an intellectual fungoid."

Although there was no clink of gold in it for Livingstone, off he went alone along the African trail, one really white man among his millions of blacks. This one-at-a-time path-boring business very soon robs a man of any little ability he ever had to do "team work" with another. The very configuration of the one-by-one trail lays down the law that no two can go abreast, one must precede, the others follow. This explains how Livingstone "the path-borer" was a bit of an exploring despot. Edwards, he broke with him; Bedingfield likewise; Baines likewise; Thornton likewise; all four broken with because of this simple old certainty that while in Africa "where there is a will there is a way," yet where there are several wills there is no way.

This is why in the end he set out alone: he simply "couldn't" be a second. How could he expect another man to tackle native mush and beans; or often the latter without the former; and sometimes neither former nor latter? In the old grooves of the old lands men work together unquestioningly because there is nothing to question in time-honoured precedents. Here in his pioneering, where every unknown mile ahead was conjecture, two travellers could never conceivably agree on the when, where and how of the venture.

Whom God appoints He anoints, and Livingstone's lone furrow was the exigency of exploration, not its egotism. Better than any of us did he know that when a man, any man, is wrapped up in himself he makes a pretty small parcel. "I think," said he, "one may be quite safe if alone and without anything to excite the cupidity of the natives. It might be six or seven years before I should return, but if languages are dialects of the Bechuana, I could soon make known a little of the blessed plan of mercy to the different tribes on the way; and if I should never return, perhaps my life will be as profitably spent as a forerunner as in any other way. I thank God I have no desire to accumulate money. Whatever way my life can be best spent to promote the glory of our gracious God, I feel desirous to do it."

The reason for all his weary tramping can be traced



back to the old L.M.S. Kolobeng days: there he was out on the edge of the unknown. And to go too near the edge means that you may fall over. *Mais oui*, and fall over Livingstone did; over to Ngami, over to the Makalalo, over to Loanda and all the weary rest. By "the edge," I mean that this outpost Kolobeng was the *ultima thule* of those early days in Missions. But even up to there, and beyond there, came the Gordon Cummings, the Oswells, and the Webbs, big men out for big game. So here came the challenge in the smoke of thousands of untouched villages far away to the north. Why should the hunter be first along the virgin trail? Was it not written that "in all things Jesus Christ must have the pre-eminence"?

And long prior to Burton and Speke, had not two Missionaries Krapf and Rebman (1844) told of Victoria Nyanza, and the Nile flowing north? Why not continue their tradition—missionary tradition? They were Germans, but was it not the German Gutzlaff who had roused Livingstone in his young manhood to resolve on a vocation, not a career, to go out for God, not for self? And (such is the stab of the story) in cruel contrast to the British official at Zanzibar, was it not the kind German Consul who forced Stanley to write that he "could not have shown warmer feelings if Dr. Livingstone had been a near and dear relation of his own"? Personally, I can never forget what Germans did for me on my first crossing of Africa from the west coast to the east. Leaving the Tanganyika plateau we cut due east towards unknown Rungwe, and then our *avant-courier* went on as a feeler carrying from me, Mr. Vague, to them, Messrs. Equally Vague, my "To all whom it may concern" notification of approach. Who will he meet in the unknown, friend or foe, Arab or European, we from the far West and they from the far East?

At long last, after some days' delay, I heard the bang of a gun ahead. And nothing more tangible than intuition told me that this, oh, this was our courier back with news of some sort. He it was who emerged from the grass. A page of white paper in his hand. No envelope. No date. No signature. No address. Only four lines written in red. Written in German, not English. Written in God's words,

not man's: "Be careful to entertain strangers, for some have thereby entertained angels unawares."

Who are they, I wonder? As this is a piece of curiosity that the reader may share, perhaps it had better be explained that these Moravians are here in the old Kraft-Rebman succession. And for a Moravian to merely welcome a conational would be only German meeting German. Whereas to "entertain strangers" means a chance for an angel-foreigner now and then. Hence this red ink effusion branded on my brain as a rubric for evermore. So red, so reminiscent of the blood of the Lamb "slain *before* the foundation of the world." Therefore, slain "before," long before, petty nations began their international nagging. Therefore, pleading priority over lesser because later improvisations born of Babel.

All of which recalls what Grey, with tear-filled eyes, said to Page on the black night of August 4. Let us have it in the American Ambassador's own words: "War had just been declared. 'We must remember that there are two Germanys,' said Sir Edward. 'There is the Germany of men like ourselves—of men like Lichnowsky and Jagow. Then there is the Germany of men of the war party. The war party has got the upper hand.' At this point Sir Edward's eyes filled with tears. 'Thus the efforts of a lifetime go for nothing. I feel like a man who has wasted his life.'"

The fact of my wife's being so far on into the Interior is *the* great idea that seems to have fastened on the imagination of these out-East natives—actually calling that slice of the map after her name. The thrill of this thing came out farther along when at sundown I stumbled into an Arab camp. Emerging from the long grass, I made for a fire in the centre of their huts, then squatted down beside some old men with white skull-caps. Swahili was the *lingua franca* and they were amazed at my direction, that is to say, out *from* the interior heading for the Ocean, not the *vice versa* of "tenderfoots." Then they quizzed me how far "in" I had come from. The Tanganyika Plateau? No, farther in than that. Itawa? Farther in still. Bemba land? Farther west still? Chienji? Not

even there. Then it was a sapient old son of Tippo Tib scored a bull's eye: "You cannot possibly have come from so far as the 'Mrs. Crawford country'?" (*inchiya Bibi Konga*). I complimented him grimly on his geographical acumen and notified that I was the Bwana of the said Bibi.

In pioneer days it is amusing to see how mere place is swamped by personality. We don't say that moving in from the Ocean you first find Lake Nyasa, then later Lake Tanganyika, then onward and inward to Lake Mweru. No, with backs to the Indian Ocean we speak of persons not places, of Hetherwick as first at Blantyre on the map moving "in"; then later comes Dr. Laws up in the clouds at Kondowi; north you go now to the Germans at Rungwe; then out on to the Tanganyika Plateau for the L.M.S. folks; and so west, due west, until you cross Lake Mweru and reach the Never-Never land, the "Mrs. Crawford country." Thus mere dead places are ignored for living persons; did not those old Lakes lie for centuries flashing under the sun until a few busy folks came along and put their name and fame on the map?

To conclude this chapter. In a plaguing and persistent way I feel all this may seem digression, deplorable digression. Yet the fact is there is more, much more, of this Livingstone legend to follow. Facing me, remember, is this modern Kazembe in this modern church at Mbereshi crowded with modern natives: the Lammonds are there from Kaleba, Leeke and Pulley from Chilikwa and Sims from Maansa, all in the Livingstone succession, all pioneer Missionaries who followed where he led. The floodgates of memory have opened and swept me out into the subsequent chapters that make or mar this book.

These things demand a record: they are fresh data of the dying Livingstone by those who know the language he never knew, he a mere passer-by. Nor did Chuma and Susi know Chibemba any better: this is proved from the farrago they made of his death-song improvised by the ballad singers at the Ilāla burial. Fleet Street with all its faults and follies never turned out a more elegant fiction than that. Besides: nearly all the unwarped,

unbiased old folks who knew the man, knew his manners, are all dead. Hence this chronicle of *their* endorsement of Livingstone as a man who lived in the faith and fear of Jesus Christ.

So we find our work. So let us work our find.







“LET THEM TAKE *PUNCH'S* MOTTO FOR KAZEMBE,  
'NIGGERS DONT REQUIRE TO BE SHOT HERE.'”—  
*LIVINGSTONE.*



## BOOK II

### CHAPTER VII

#### SOUTH TO THE GRAVE OF THE HEART

*This chapter is dedicated to the first lady who penetrated the Far Interior, where under such magnificent sanctions, amid such ignoble circumstances, she led the way.*

### THE HEART OF AFRICA

“The Government’s official organ ‘The British Central Africa Gazette,’ just to hand, contains a lengthy description of Mr. Hugo Genthes’ visit to Livingstone’s grave. The tree beneath which his heart was buried is still standing, and quite recently a strong fence has been erected round it—nobody knows by whom. Mr. Genthe was informed that a mysterious white man and a lady had come from the north-west of Luapula some months ago, and caused the fence to be erected. All they left to prove identity was their initial carved on a neighbouring tree—‘D’ and ‘G. C., 31.7.97.’ Who were they?”

“The Evening News,” April 13, 1898.

## CHAPTER VII

### SOUTH TO THE GRAVE OF THE HEART

**N**OW the South is calling, Livingstone's South. And if you would take our "D. and G. C." bearings it is vital you fasten on the fact that many a blatant potentate ahead is blocking this southern trail; Kazembe, for instance, who repelled Sir Alfred Sharpe and the chuckling Mirambo who plundered Giraud. Starting here on Lake Mweru and darting down the east of Luapula as far as the Zambezi, there is not one white skin all the way; only the Messrs. Negro in abundant aboriginal possession. To make matters worse, the British at Kalungwizi have got into grips with Kazembe, first blood has been shed, and Kazembe is resolved to fight to a finish. Yet Livingstone had warned to the contrary; had, indeed, given a guarantee of a good reception from this, "the good Kazembe." Speaking of the men who were to follow in his footsteps he said, "If they take *Punch's* motto for Kazembe, 'Niggers don't require to be shot here,' as their own, they may show themselves to be men; but whether they do or not, Kazembe will show himself a man of sterling good sense." Obviously, then, someone has blundered and that one not necessarily the Livingstone whose grave is watered by a nation's tears.

Must all the promise and potency of Dr. Livingstone's assurance be lost? Why not cross the lines; why not penetrate into Kazembe's den and test the truth of "Ingeresa's" code? This my wife and I resolve to do and here is the joint record of our venture. It makes the heart warm and the eye moisten to hear how the natives belaud the old man with the weary stoop; the Livingstone who abjured the silly strut of modern explorers and made them feel he was of the ordinary common clay.

But with so much pulsating quicksilver about, British versus Blacks, it is difficult, not to say dangerous, to cross the lines and slip in among primitive man who never dreamed of Red Cross rules. First blood has begun to flow and never more than now does the aboriginal native prefer your room to your company. Why this cardinal, this reprehensible error in putting your nose in a real war even although you profess to be "Livingstone's brother" ? Livingstone was all right, but these British who have followed him are all wrong, and we, D. and G. C., may be more so. We are like nothing in the world but Mr. and Mrs. Quixote troubling with trouble when trouble does not propose to trouble us.

It took us three days to plumb the bedrock of this how-to-penetrate business, but at last we won, and slipped in from the West among a crowd of wild beasts who had "red eyes," as the warriors put it. A mad mob of Kazembeites who never dreamed that kindness and good fellowship stand at the summit of the hierarchy of virtues. With the British guns going bang out in the manioc fields it was as easy to get killed as to wink, but the great King anticipated it all by ringing round us a skerm of 60 long sticks stuck in the ground, and lo! there we were caged in a sort of local Zoo with keepers patrolling the stockade and chasing off the more daring.

Twice, yes, twenty times did I try to placate them, but my voice from behind the bars was lost in the yelling dissonance. If they would only look *at* you instead of through you. Things grew calmer, however, after regulating my financial obligations with the tough old canoe men, the white of our "cash-calico" being emblematic of our white skins and whiter sympathies. Besides, one anchor we have all the time to windward ; I mean, that emerging as we do from their fabled Far Interior, their Never-Never land, it gives us tremendous prestige, we turning the tables and telling them for hours about *their* own unknown Africa.

Better : this is my second visit, the last being when I cut straight east from Mushidi's capital. As straight east, I mean, as the geographic conformation of the country would permit. Then I was beggar in rags, limping along



KAZEMBE, 1904-1919.  
Photo by Mr. B. R. Turner.



in old slippers in the rain. All along the route I found it was the first time the optical nerves of the excited natives had been disturbed by a white skin. *A la Zaccheus* they climbed trees, climbed roof tops, climbed stockades, climbed grain barns, craning their necks for a glimpse at this passing curiosity with the white pigment and shaggy unmanageable whiskers. Remember, all this, as I have said before, is a mere ovation to my white skin, not white character. And it is not at all flattering to recall the fact that yonder red-haired hobbledehoy of an Englishman, smoking his short pipe at the corner of Seven Dials, would get as royal a welcome. Besides, ovation notwithstanding, you need not go away and fancy everybody in the town is thinking of you : nay, verily, he is like you, he is *thinking of himself*.

It was *dies memorabilis* when last I struck the banks of this famous Luapula, the river Livingstone immortalised in his dying words, "How many days to the Luapula ?" We are not nearly dying, not we ; not nearly like Livingstone (we !), but the vertical rays are so vicious that many a time we long to sight its blue waters with the same craving cry, "How many days to the Luapula ?" (Note that technical travel-phrase in Africa, "How many *days* ?" not "How many miles ?" Any place is tragically so many "days" off, and a day = fifteen miles' journey.) This name, Luapula, comes from the verb *pula*, to pierce, and never shall I (or they) forget the great day, twenty years ago, when against the roaring of their war drums, against their tribal order forbidding the intrusive idea, we dared the first ascent (well done, Greenock !) of this their sacredly shut river in my Clyde-built schooner, *The Messenger of Peace*.

It was a river to be pierced, the prejudices of the local people being all against the very idea of outsiders sailing up its select waters. Cicero knew all about this when he insisted that the Latin word *hostis* means both "a stranger" and "an enemy," because all outsiders slipping in to spy out the leanness of the land were thus potential enemies. The poisoned arrows were there, so were the poisoned minds of tribesmen, but, nothing daunted (hush ! after a prayer

meeting), we performed the historic act of truly and technically opening this great waterway for the outside world. Livingstone kept far back to the land, we to the water, but both of us made the country send back the first European echo of God's praise. Never shot was fired, never poisoned arrow thrown, yet the day culminated in a true victory for the ways and words of peace. Thus it is when we strike the banks of dear old Luapula we feel almost pardonably a proprietary privilege about the place.

I got a dug-out, and down the middle we dart among the beds of oysters growing like clumps of flowers, while beyond these, there go the otters dancing out of the water in pairs. Schools of hippos, too, are playing where the water is dark and deep, but the crocodiles, I must confess, are beginning at last to break our old riverine rules; I mean, they are really out on the war-path leaping into passing canoes, whereas formerly they only surreptitiously grabbed from land. But all this paled into insignificance before a final funny thing: at sunset, I met my best lion in the best of all conceivable circumstances. I had only for the moment a miserable shot-gun, and just when my enemy the sun was setting in a red, revengeful manner, lo! out stalks this magnificent specimen on the bank, the most beautiful lion I ever saw. There was no gleam of cordiality in his eye, only the promptings of a healthy feline curiosity. Though that lion did not actually shrug his shoulder, his eyes, so to speak, did it for him. My boat boys stopped their paddle-song in a snap, and for a moment exhibited all the phenomena of funk. Then they accepted the absurd situation of a boat without a rifle and a lion without a carnivorous chance. Such is the perversity of circumstances: the width of flowing river forbids him to spring on us and the lack of one bullet in our boat debars his death.

Nor did he seem to fail to catch the sporting significance of the situation: he and we now know that on this exceptional occasion no blood can flow out instead of in. It comes to this: with a sophisticated indifference he flicks convention to the winds with one toss of the head and we settle down to enjoy, actually enjoy, this preposterous



pit-a-pat situation. Nodding to each other a half-irritated acquiescence of the armistice arrangement, in that long look we certainly used our eyes up to their full optical measure—lion looking at man, man at lion with a never-again wistfulness. Then it was, peering down the long telescope of history, I seemed to see how he, yes, he alone has brought the knack of standing on four legs with dignity to a fine art. Seemed to see how all ages, all nations were justified in deciding that this intensely kingly looking animal, enshrining great traditions, is the Prince of quadrupeds. At first, when the supreme deprivation of my rifle dawned on me, I was chagrined at the loss of its yellow, leonine skin, but now—by no means now. Charmed to meet him in any capacity, this is a thing I will never, no never, forget on earth, my long-sustained, Zoo-despising look at that lion for half an hour. Zoo? I will never care to enter one again. A lion caged in London is as bad as a Missionary parading a platform in the same city: it is like a fireless chimney in summer; like a soldier deserting the fighting line and trying his rifle at a cheap shooting range. When the sun disappeared, so did *Felis leo*. Then on I sailed into the dark water, scarcely believing that only yesterday, high up that very same river, I had baptized sixteen natives before a great crowd, including ten local chiefs, and not excluding everything that could walk, crawl or be carried in arms. Into the dark north we sail on water smooth as silk.

But to revert to old Kazembe. Conducted from our Zoo-cage to The Presence, the Mwata arched his aristocratic eyebrows when we proposed to shake hands, refused point-blank, and expected us to kow-tow. Is he not so great that he cannot be mentioned in the singular number, singular enough though he is in other respects? What would my Quaker friends do here? This means that the *Messrs.* Kazembe is the plural name of the singular man, *he* can do nothing, but “they,” yes, they, the *Messrs.* Kazembe can. Nevertheless this singular king with the plural name is very gracious and returned our salute with a fine cold dignity. There was an old-world politeness in his manner when he turned to my wife saying, “We, the *Messrs.* Ka-

zembe, do come of age to-day, in that we behold the first white lady who ever came from the salt seas. But know ye, Oh! Messrs. The White Lady, that you too come of age to-day on gazing upon our face, we the Messrs. Kazembe."

The genuine Kazembe this of Livingstone's day, here he is still reigning in septuagenarian majesty. There are spots on the sun, however, and the first you spy is the tell-tale enamel gloss on his face; the bondage of hemp-smoking, this. Fifty years ago he dared his first whiff of hemp, the deadliest of all the devil's drugs, and quickly was he drawn into the suck of the vortex. Now, though this alkaloid slay him yet must he cling to it: sold himself body and soul to the hell that binds him in the bonds of hemp. Truly this is the kind that cometh not out but by prayer and fasting. It fascinates him like a basilisk. Try to rouse him; shout in his ears like a wild prophet "to fly, tarry not in all the plain, escape to God's mountains" and poor old K. thinks you mad. He hath chosen the evil part that cannot be taken away from him. Puff, puffing at this hellish hemp for fifty years has sapped any soul he ever had. It first smiled, then caressed, then soothed, then seduced and finally damns him. Of course, having sold his soul for hemp, this old man will on emergency give anything for a smoke, a common price being the bartering of one of his many wives for a small packet of hemp—a wife for a smoke. (They have no payments in cash, remember; no cash, only kind, and that kind the best kind, the humankind.) Nor can *we* laugh when we recall the fact that only yesterday the great British poet who received the Nobel prize wrote:

*"A woman is only a woman  
And a good cigar is a smoke."*

Yet across river old Mushidi sang another song on this subject of smoking. He was a tobacco-fiend in the other-way-round sense of the phrase; in all his territory it was criminal to try it on as either snuff or smoke. This explains how, long after in Christianity, the African churches made much, too much, of "blowing a cloud." It was a



KAZEMBE.  
Died 1904



mortal sin, it was "to fall," and all because smoking in Africa often means much more than it does to us. Means too extreme a thing, means many women falling into the fire after the *one* awful gurgling inhalation, the literal "puff" that is singular in more than number. Hence the very noun *fwa* (ka) (tobacco) is only and obviously an enlarged form of the imperative, "die!" Thus where we gibly talk tobacco as a mere immaterial whiff these black "babes" tackle it as they do all things, in a terrible manner: like their beer—in gallons; like their marriage—wives per dozen; like their eating—great ventral distension. Thus extremes meet, and it is the black man who binds his brother black in tobacco taboo. Was it not the presence of millions of Africans in America that forced on Prohibition? He can do nothing by halves, his seasons are either too dry or too wet, he is a creature of feast or famine, and tobacco can burn and blemish hundreds of them in one year.

In Abyssinia farther north, the King issued an edict, that any of his subjects found smoking shall lose hand and foot. This Christian King is almost as intolerant as the Wahhabees. Palgrave tells how he once asked a doctor of that sect which were the great sins. "Putting on a profound air, . . . he uttered his oracle, that 'the first of the great sins is the giving divine honours to a creature.' . . . 'Of course,' I replied, 'the enormity of such a sin is beyond all doubt. But, if this be the first, there must be a second; what is it?' '*Drinking the shameful*' (in English, 'Smoking tobacco') was the unhesitating answer. 'And murder and adultery and false witness?' I suggested. 'God is merciful and forgiving,' rejoined my friend. All this is analogous to Africa, for 'drinking' (*nwa*) tobacco is their very phrase. Yet no country in the world, says Lobo, is so full of churches, monasteries, and ecclesiastics as Abyssinia. It is not possible to sing in one church or monastery without being heard by another, and perhaps by several. They sing the Psalms of David, of which they have a very exact translation in their own language, . . . they begin their concert by stamping their feet on the ground, and

playing gently on their instruments ; but when they have heated themselves by degrees, they leave off drumming, and fall to leaping, dancing, and clapping their hands, at the same time straining their voices for the pauses, and seem rather a riotous, than a religious, assembly. For this manner of worship they cite the psalm of David, ‘ O clap your hands, all ye nations.’ ”

Kazembe ordered a transcendent leopard skin to be placed for us to sit on, and when moving off, my servant coolly rolled it up and brought it along. As, however, it is not usual in our country to levant with the sofa one has sat on in a friend’s house, I protested at his noonday pilfering of royal property. The answer was unanswerable ; was, indeed, that the act and fact of our sitting on the same had made the skin ours for evermore. The leopard had sat on and in that self-same skin, why not we ? Yea, even as the leopard had worn that very skin until death did them part, so now that same skin is ours as long as we have a skin to cover us.

Livingstone, I find, went through this same *beau monde* oddity, only we came out with more finesse. First his trouble was how to get this highly-favoured “ cat-can-look-at-a-King ” audience at all. “ We did not,” he writes, “ get an audience from Casembe ; the fault lay with Kapika being afraid to annoy Casembe by putting him in mind of it, but on the 15th Casembe sent for me. This made me thank Him who has the hearts of all in His hand. He asked if I had not the leopard’s skin he gave me to sit on, as it was bad to sit on the ground ; I told him it had so many holes in it people laughed at it and made me ashamed, but he did not take the hint to give me another ! ”

Along with this royal skin came an old “ leopard ” authority who in telling of their doings fell a-chuckling so that his paunch shook like jelly. Both of the cat family, he tells the tale of a domestic puss one day meeting a leopard on the edge of the wood, the former reproaching the latter with its hate for pussy’s benefactor. The leopard in a passionless, predestined manner let it all out in explaining the reason of his attacking the human kind. “ One day,” said *Pelis pardis*, “ I overheard your kind

(forsooth!) 'humans' discussing my dead sister's body found rotting in the long grass. All they said, the callous fiends, was, 'Alas! *what a beautiful skin was spoiled by the white ants eating it.*'" No thought (they!) of the poor dead leopard's agonising death, only pique, only chagrin for the ruined skin to sit on. Then the domestic cat tried a few more inadequate phrases in defence of its kind friends, the householders in mud huts, but the leopard snarled at puss as a renegade and finally finished her with the crushing retort, "Skin? what size of a skin have you got? *Had your skin been as big as mine and as beautiful,* never a day would they have left it on your back: you too would have shared our 'flayed fate.'"

These Lunda people have a curious system of accurate wireless telegraphy and their little *Mondo* drum does it all. Far across the Luapula marshes the natives cock their ears to receive its tell-tale messages. Is a white man approaching, and is the said white a Missionary, not a warrior? Does he wear a blue, black or white coat, or no coat at all? Yea, all these things are nimbly told out by the mighty tambour-telephono *Mondo*. Is it peace? Then its sibilant whispers voice the same. Is it joy? Then this local Reuter throbs out the pleasing news thereof. Is it, alas! sorrow, even the sorrow of death? Then it moans out the name and address of mortal man, mortal malady. At the villages ahead we find the news has all been so telegraphed on, and a common phrase is "We heard *per Mondo* last night that accredited travellers were setting out," or "*per Mondo* came the warning of possible attack from the west," etc.

But what puts the authentic Reuter's stamp on all this is the definite code of signals used. These are all known to experts, and the cunning of the art lies in the skilful stringing of them together. Add to this the astounding articulation of the thing, not a dull senseless rub-a-dub, but a drum with a tongue wagging out even gossip: a drum that, provided you do not crack it, can actually crack a joke. Again and again, across some miles you can hear from a group of silent negroes a burst of laughter—they are laughing at the pleasant wit of Mr. *Mondo* five miles off.

One of the jokes is that chestnut about "Ingeresa"—Livingstone—as he is called, and refers to the nickname they gave him: the man who has no toes (i.e. they are hidden in his boots). No toes, yet he travelled so far: ho! ho! ho!

The King eats in a mysterious mode called *Kapodio*, the double idea being that he must eat when and how no one else can. The most extraordinary part of his extraordinary procedure is this: Kazembe dines to the music of a torrent of curses, two old doctors being famous "maledictors" who pour out a cataract of vituperation on the great Mwata's head. This cursing all happens in a private dining-room where the royal glutton squats behind a large veil covering his face, and the curious process of mastication is as inelegant as their own word coined to describe it, the "guzzling" it is called. Which being interpreted means that it is taboo for the great Mwata to take more than one bite of food, hence the curious "python" method of swallowing at one gasp a great junk. But, say fish and mush is the diet for the day, how can Kazembe have his literal bite of food without choking over the fish-bones? This difficulty is met by cooking only the fish-flesh, and when the chief has pushed home one long sausage of meat and mush, then out shriek the curses of the attendants. The little Mondo, too, snarls its wireless telegraphy maledictions, the rat-a-tat messenger running: K. should die! die! He is no man: a beast! Kill the beast; oh! son of Temena (his mother's name this).

This inevitable little drum, though, has more serious business on during the royal dining and its call is really a warning to all the town that no person may eat when the King is eating. For like the Khan of Tartary, who finally fired a post-prandial gun to tell all the world that it could now eat because he of Tartary had eaten, so too with our inflated Kazembe. The little Mondo; once so snarling and stand-offish in its telegrams; now soothes your ruffled feelings with a gracious message that you may eat and be thankful, has not The Kazembe had his "bite" of food? First in dignity, is he not also first in time? And first in time, must he not also be first in fashion? Hence the



double law : Thou shalt not eat as and when the monarch eats ; eclipse first, the rest nowhere.

This curious wrong-way-round cursing began long ago when these fish were being caught. Cursed in the cooking; they are likewise cursed in the catching. Transacting, in honest ways, the honest business of a fisherman, it is a pity he spoils it all by a curious mid-Lake ceremony called " the cursing." What this amounts to is a fierce cataract of oaths in which he apostrophises the dead men drowned in the Lake. Singling them out by name, he curses them with all the gall and bitterness of a presumably doomed man, the presumption being that, all alone as he is in far mid-Lake, in a mere cockle-shell canoe, the dead will drag him down to the deep. Then a pause, but the stubborn silence of the Lake only stiffens him in his resolve to keep cursing.

Making a clean circle of the Lake hamlets, he challenges the dead chiefs by name, his volley of oaths (*Mafinge*) being to the accompaniment of a rat-a-tat noise he makes with a drumstick on the side of the boat. The livelier the fish tug at his two long lines tied to his two great toes, the louder do these curses rend the air. Certes, if ever food needed to be " sanctified by prayer," these fish, the fruit of cursing, deserve a purifying " grace before meat." Yet what shall we see the great Kazembe do with these very fish ? Will he, too, not dine to a similar cataract of curses ? the very fish cursed in their catching being again cursed in their cooking. Yet here, incredulous as it may seem, the wheel goes full circle once again, and the erst-while curser can now be heard singing a solemn *Te Deum*. This fisherman, remember, claims he is only cursing demons, thus it is he forthwith with the same mouth blesses God.

Certain it is that for centuries this quaint old song of deliverance has been sung as a cast-iron formula by all Shila men who were capsized but came safe to land. Greeting him with song at the *Njiko*, or landing-place, all the women-folk burst out into a " God-song," as it is called, the escaped fisherman joining them in the chorus. Simple enough in its diction, the whole value of this praise-song

is to be found in its archaic terminology, the very grammar of the thing being steeped in most ancient twang :

*“ O God, the minnows  
Had nigh feasted on me,  
But Thou, O God,  
Didst rescue me.”*

Then, when the “ praise procession ” reaches the hamlet, first among all his treasures to be produced is the great “ horn of salvation,” as it is called, a horn this crammed full of charms, and in symbolic idea a real cornucopia. All life’s successes are ascribed to its mediation, and the “ horn is exalted ” accordingly.

These days, failing a finer grade of flour, we are punishing, in a desperately dissipated manner, large messes of native mush. This manioc is art and part of every native woman’s work, and the more pronounced the degree of decomposition, the more it is assumed to be an appetising article of diet. Put it down to prejudice or palate, but this preliminary putrefying of porridge, before making a meal, pleases you little and puzzles you more. Not so their simpler cereals, such as what they call “ the rainy-day beans.” When these are boiled by some person with brains, and in six or seven waters, I assure you they induce one to face fearlessly the oncoming issues of life. Thus you, far away without ever seeing the same, can suspect that this funny forest cuisine, while admirable as far as it goes, yet leaves too much to the imagination. Nevertheless according to masculine standards we do full justice to this one-course meal for the million. Besides in this vegetarianism you have the abiding culinary consolation of no spectre of biliousness hovering at your elbow. And, at least, the canteen arrangements are satisfactory : with a fine suggestion of affluence the adjacent river runs full and free, faithful fluid of our race, better far than “ soda and something.”

Kazembe’s mouth works in and out to assist the slow processes of his hemp-numbed brain. These days his downsitting and uprising seem all shut up into one desire which he doubles in the participial phrase, “ desiring I have desired ”—what ? In short, the great king is coldly

and carefully anxious that I get a parrot for him. Pointing over to our Far Interior, "Yours," says he, "is the parrot country over there, and no Mwata Kazembe can hope to retain his throne without a parrot." The Lubans are keen on them, and this reminds me of some parrots given by the Arab Raschid's wife to an official on the Congo, each bird having picked up some Swahili phrase the way it picks up peas. Drifting downstream, flocks of wild grey parrots would fly overhead to their feeding-grounds whistling and shrieking. The tame parrots in their master's canoe were too snugly domesticated to care a fig for such mad fly-away freedom. What did they do but acknowledge affinity with their poor relations in best School Board manner by crying up conceitedly as they passed overhead, "Good morning!" "What news?" "I hope you are well!" "Sit still!" "Don't disturb yourself!" All Swahili stock phrases, all picked up in their present parrot paradise—pure conceit! *The* lofty parrots were not high in the air, but in the canoe on a string. Alas, sometimes these snatch phrases are more nasty than nice. Instance, the well-known parrot that went east and changed masters and manners twice: No. 1 was a trader who taught the bird swearing, No. 2 a Missionary who taught him singing, poor Poll muddling up the swearing and singing in his old age, out of the same mouth blessing and cursing, therewith blessed he God, therewith cursed he men.

This reminds me how they tell of Livingstone travelling to the musical screech of his Manyema parrots. Then they add to the parrots his stubby little milch goats waddling along with dripping nipples. Then his half-way rest (*telekesa*) at some *en route* river for the favourite slap-jacks or dampers washed down with the liquid assistance of six or seven (yes!) cups of tea. This was the swagger moment when *Majiwara* flourished Stanley's silver teapot in the face of all amazed aboriginal onlookers, the sheen of that silver, so Livingstone wrote, fulfilling even the critical standard of an English butler. This is the same "slow, slow" *Majiwara* who was also drummer-boy for the caravan, and led the rub-a-dub way along the trail.

He it was who had first dealings with Livingstone every morning, giving him his 5 a.m. stinging coffee that "gargalises the night out of the throat," as the natives put it.

Later, and farther on, comes bivouac with sun-down made by Halimah herself, the sticky stuff that caused run-away Stanley to wail in despair, "' Oh for a wheaten loaf,' my soul cried in agony, ' 500 dollars for one loaf of bread.' " Made every day as fresh food, it was an old African insult, actionable at law, to ask anyone to eat cold mush; "*chimbara*," it is then called, and food for dogs. Thus Africa sees a double meaning in the old prayer, "Give us this day our *daily* bread." Cooked in and for one day, it is all finished off that same day. Dr. Johnson once desired "to write a cookery book on philosophical principles," and here in this African mush would have been his chance for a whole chapter of expatiation on edibles.

No doubt suitable protests will crowd to the lips when you hear that we ate a rat to-day. But this rat by any other name would taste as sweet. It was Livingstone who put us up to it: there is a "Last Journals" item that he, too, had rat for supper, real rat and good eating. *Kitoweo* or *munani* is the great word here and weakly Englished as "relish." This is the "one thing needful" of the Martha and Mary episode, and whether as fish, flesh or cereals it is generically called "*mpishishyo*" or "it slips it [the dry bread] down." No *munani* means no supper because the said supper lacks this  $\frac{1}{2}$  fluid  $\frac{1}{2}$  flesh thing called "it slips it down." Mere mush must, *de rigueur*, be washed down with the liquid assistance of this culinary concomitant, and it is despised when as a mere thick porridge it has no "kitchen" to grease its downward progress. Although the African never had a printed dictionary, this "relish" word bulks biggest in the lexicon of his lips. He is astounded that we have not a verbal English equivalent for this "one-thing-is-needful" *Kitoweo*. Like his year that halves into a dry and a wet season, so each meal is a miniature year that must have its correlative "wet" sauce for the dry sop of mush so greased down. "One's bread and *butter*" is a faint English hint of the idea, faint but hypocritical because we mean much more than mere

butter on bread in our gastronomic exertions. Not so this one-thing-is-needful negro; a rat one day, beans the next, fish another day, and so on as anxious alternatives for different days but never two sorts of relish for the same meal. Sufficient unto the day is the "relish" thereof. This is the word Christ used when He asked His disciples, "Children, have ye any 'relish'?" The dry bread He presumed to be in their possession already. But Christ wanted them to have something tasty and fresh, hence His calling on them to cast the net on the right side of the ship to catch the "one-thing-is-needful" relish.<sup>1</sup>

Meanwhile here is *The Kazembe* with big Bourbon face looking down on us in a scared and scandalised manner. We unfortunate "Godites" (*vena Leza*), born to correct the world, born to tilt at African windmills of prejudice centuries old! Livingstone did it, Livingstone died in doing it, the same death devouring good and bad. Why then can we pretend to be so specially "Godites" when our own God grants us no exemption from this devastating death, enemy of all, small and tall, poor and princely? So this is all the gruesome "gospel" Nature has for *them*.

It is easy to talk loosely of Nature softening men's hearts, but Paul agrees with Tennyson's "Nature red in tooth and claw" when he says that "the whole creation groaneth and travaileth together in pain until now."

<sup>1</sup> Greatest, therefore commonest word in Central Africa, this is the dipping-the-sop word that makes the Bishops blink, for it nullifies twenty thousand sermons they have preached with the wrong idea: I mean, that this grease-it-down *Kitoweo* is the dead-sure meaning of Paul's famous phrase "the wages of sin is death." We African translators are cowards in not giving "wages" its famous classical meaning of this technical term, "relish." Why should we kow-tow to the Jerusalem Chamber (poor thing!) that had no such word in currency, therefore could not give what it never had? We in Africa have the very word they lacked. "The wages," i.e. the *Kitoweo* or "relish," of sin is *death*, that is the oily and insidious thing that greases it down, sweet to the taste but "bitter to the belly," as the Prophet puts it. "Wages" is not the idea at any rate, unless there is any sense in saying that the fish rations served out to the Roman soldier who chained Paul were his wages, for this is what the original word (*opsōnion*) means. No; it is a dose of daily death Paul means, not the terminal "second death" of eschatology. It is not a "good time" the sinner is having, says the Apostle, for every sin is really a "dipping the sop" into the "relish" of death. First the mess of red pottage and then the exceeding bitter cry—"We did not know." We did not know.

And it is precisely this moan pouring into the negro ear that makes him think of God as a malignant demon, mocking at his pain, and pouring contempt upon his life. The impassive serenity of Nature in all the struggles and anguish of life maddens him into open revolt. For do not the serene stars rise and set with callous calmness over the storm and stress of his life? *There* is the Gospel of Nature for you. Moral: Herein is love: not that we get to love God by looking out on cruel Nature, but that He loved us and sent His Son a Victim of the same cruelty. Sent also Messrs. Livingstone & Co. as messengers of that Fact.

All along this trail the almost penurious absence of other obstacles is indemnified by the plague of "black jacks" (*sokontwe*). Take two steps into the grass, then two more, and these black jaggy things stick into your clothes like ten thousand miniature quills of a porcupine. Thus you pay for your progress through the grass in the ratio of so many yards for so many thousands of these *sokontwe*. Thus it is, too, all these road-blocking chiefs seize on the pertinence of this parable and call themselves *vasokontwe*, "the black jacks" who refuse a traveller right of way without prior jaggging. Put "black" for his pigment and "jack" for their jaggging and never did adjective so certainly qualify noun.

CHAPTER VIII  
MORE ABOUT THIS MAN

*They tell us that the face of this Livingstone was "set fair." And the reason for all his serenity of soul was his refusal to fret at delays because he had anchored on the axiom : "That which is to last for ever takes a long time to grow."*

*“ You enclose the cutting about Lieutenant Graetz. Well! When you hear a grunt you know there is a pig about. I get so inured to remarks of that kind about missions and missionary converts that it makes no impression upon me now.”*

*J. S. Moffat.*

*“ Dear Mr. ——,*

*“ I have duly received your complaint against that old native in particular and all natives in general. You and I differ rather radically on this subject, but I again venture to hint that (seeing you have been such a short time in the country) my knowledge however limited cannot be controverted by your ignorance however extensive.*

*“ Yours truly,*

*“ D. C.”*

*(A Postcard.)*



## CHAPTER VIII

### MORE ABOUT THIS MAN

**H**ERE on his old trail, it will be as impossible to keep the name of Dr. Livingstone out of this chronicle as it was to keep the head of King Charles I out of Mr. Dick's memorial. We gather, for example, that his was a deeply furrowed face and pretty well tanned. Of quick and keen discernment, strong impulses, inflexible resolution, and habitual self-command. Unanimated, its most characteristic expression was that of severity, lots of laughter being latent behind this mask of solemnity.

Here are some simple old African ladies who knew Livingstone, and this reminds me that by far the most pleasurable phase of Dr. Livingstone's African life was his *sans peur et sans reproche* dealings with the women of Central Africa. Sprinkled all over the *Last Journals* you have many a pawky little picture of them, with always the same access of pleasurable dignity to his pen. A tiny tincture of austerity in it all, perhaps, for had he not laid down the law that "the polite respectful way of speaking and behaviour of what we call 'a thorough gentleman' almost always secures the friendship and goodwill of the Africans"? There was an inner circle, too: the brave band of women, Halimah and Co., who went right down with him into the Valley of Death. No donkey for them to ride, no palanquin. They worked down for him the coarser native meal into a passable flour; they drew the water and gathered faggots; they went out in search of mushrooms when the last calf was killed. They, finally, on his death-day, cooked for him the last make-believe dish at his own request, gruesome dish for a dysenteric patient, millet and peanuts crushed in the mortar of wood!

Only mere chattels in the slave-market these women:

therefore, all of them of easy virtue in the sense that change of master in slavery means change of man. Yet Livingstone's written rule runs, "I shall try equitably and gently to make allowances for human weakness, though that weakness has caused me much suffering." Courtesy has been called "kindness dressed up," but here you have hundreds of undressed people who are as courteous as could be. Fancy a mother so anxious to say "please" to her child that she calls him "Father" as an equivalent for "please," then puts it all in the subjunctive mood to soften off her maternal request for some small service he renders her.

The reader need not be a prey of ambiguities if he remember that these near-naked old women rule the African roost. There is the famous case of Cecil Rhodes and how the mediation of one such old "sack of bones" saved Rhodesia from civil war. To this day on the wall of Rhodes's bedroom at Groote Schuur hangs the faded picture of an old and shrivelled Matabele woman. She was one of the wives of Umziligazi, father of Lobengula, and is so honoured because, in the words of General Smuts, "That is the woman who acted as the chief negotiator between Rhodes and the rebels." The moment the second Matabele war began, off ran Rhodes up north to his namesake, Rhodesia. There it was, out near his future grave, he made a camp in the wilds; refused the aid of Plumer's command five miles away, and with three unarmed companions began to mediate through this old lady with the most blood-thirsty savages in all Africa. Thanks to this "sable sister," the chiefs one by one came down from the hills, after two months of mediation, and abiding peace was cemented in sincerity. Rhodes never could or would forget the service she rendered him and caused her treasured photograph to be taken. So down they go into history, Rhodes the warp and she the woof of such a great work of conciliation. Handsome is as handsome does, therefore let us see in that faded photo of the shrivelled old soul in Rhodes's bedroom at The Cape, a symbol of many such who in the greater concern of Christianity can mediate a much more momentous mercy between man and God. Hence all Livingstone's concern for these weird old feminine worthies.

But depend upon it, a costly concern this as-gracious-as-you-please code of his turned out to be. When all was packed up and they were just off, sometimes a motherly-looking woman, all smiles and simplicity, would bring out a present of meal as though the thing could carry itself. But as each load was at its limit, and each man had his load, this all-smiles-and-simplicity gift of meal could not be accepted. So away goes soft-hearted Livingstone with this forced rebuff jarring on him the whole day, and the evening sees him confessing to his *Journal*: "It would have been better to have accepted it: some give merely out of kindly feeling with no prospect of a return. It is sheer kindness that prompts them sometimes, though occasionally people do make presents with a view of getting a larger one in return: it is pleasant to find it is not always so."

"*He is writing a letter to himself*" is the native boy's discrimination between the daily jottings his master makes in his Diary and the other letters he sends off per post. Certainly, in Livingstone's *Last Journals* the old man lays down the law to himself quite a lot, a law so lofty that it includes in its sweep the crowds of semi-nude women all around him. "A pleasant-looking lady," he writes of one of them, "her face profusely tattooed, came forward with a bunch of sweet reed, and laid it at my feet, saying, 'I met you here before,' pointing to the spot on the river where we turned. I remember her coming then, and that I asked the boy to wait while she went to bring us a basket of food. She had a quiet, dignified manner, both in talking and walking, and I now gave her a small looking-glass, and she went and brought me her only fowl and a basket of cucumber seeds, from which oil is made; from the amount of oily matter they contain they are nutritious when roasted and eaten as nuts. She made an apology, saying they were hungry times at present. I gave her a cloth, and so parted with Kañangone."

When Stanley came in from the racketing world and "found" Livingstone at Ujiji, they had quite a lot of "talking the sun up." Many months of verbal arrears had to be worked off, the hoardings of enforced reticence.

Many a good laugh rang out at many a better *bon mot*, for brain had met its match in "brother-brain." Yet there they were, men every inch of them, men not monkeys, with no "east of Suez" attempt at acquiescence in "the custom of the country" code of immorality. He is an ex-Missionary this Livingstone, the very "ex" usually connoting more suffix than prefix. I mean *connotes* more, much more than it really does denote. Yet as those faggots flare by the camp fires, Stanley, night after night, is bound by the spell of salvation. Livingstone seemingly is so eminently one of Christ's men that Stanley can believe there is a Christ because there is a Livingstone. "Here is," writes Stanley, "a man who is manifestly sustained as well as guided by influences from Heaven. The Holy Spirit dwells in him: God speaks through him. The heroism, the nobility, the pure and stainless enthusiasm at the root of his life came beyond question from Christ. There must, therefore, be a Christ, and it is worth while to have such a Helper and Redeemer as this Christ undoubtedly is, as He reveals Himself in this wonderful disciple." Surely, all this got home to Stanley's heart with indelible certitude because (I must reiterate it!) tweeds was talking to tweeds, layman to layman, and the nearest professional parson hundreds of miles away.

"Custom of the country, indeed!" Livingstone, with an unsmiling face that leaves you in doubt whether the remark is intended for a joke or the expression of a moral hypothesis, argued rightly that "custom" and "costume" is only a case of spelling the same Latin word in six letters instead of seven. Therefore if you adopt the native "custom" of promiscuity, why not literally go the whole hog and dress in the nude native "costume"! Do we not speak of a lady's riding *habit* and her bad *habit* of smoking cigarettes? Therefore "custom" means very much "costume."

This surprise of Stanley's is all part and parcel of the African story. Down around Zanzibar the "east of Suez" sort had stuffed him with the usual lies about "the idol." (1) That Livingstone possessed a splenetic, misanthropic temper. (2) That he was garrulous and demented. (3)

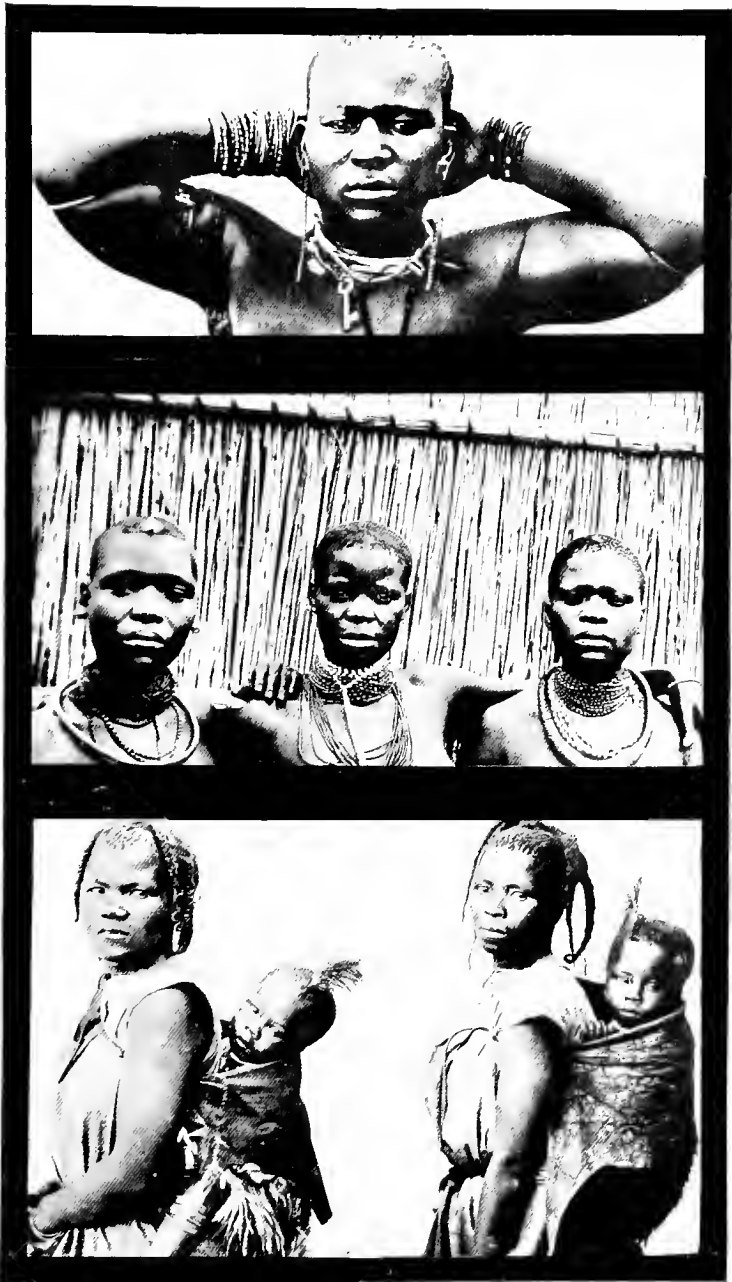
That he was utterly changed from the David Livingstone whom people knew as the reverend missionary. (4) With not too feeble attempt to be evasive—the usual “black woman” insinuation. “I defy,” says Stanley, “I defy anyone to be in his society long without thoroughly fathoming him, for in him there is no guile, and what is apparent on the surface is the thing that is in him. I simply write down my own opinion of the man as I have seen him, not as he represents himself; as I know him to be, not as I have heard of him. I lived with him from the 10th November, 1871, to the 14th March, 1872; witnessed his conduct in the camp, and on the march, and my feelings for him are those of unqualified admiration.”

But, as I have remarked already, Livingstone’s countenance had by this time set at the serene stage when anything could happen. Right off at the beginning of his missionary career he had heard five of his colleagues, married men all of them, roundly accused of immoral living. But wrote he, “*the charge in each case has been quite groundless.*” There spoke the man who saw the drift of things, saw that the Devil’s own name was “the accuser of the brethren,” saw that this devil’s deed of accusing others means excusing themselves, “*accuser pour s’excuser.*” The 1611 version is far more polite than Paul; twice the Apostle speaks of “false accusers,” but his word is “devils” (*diaboloï*).

It is the same old sinister story: the geography of Africa is akin to its morality. And if you accept the crushing old certainty that “Character is what a man is in the dark,” then you have only to modify your noun as an adjective and what do you get? Why, this, that Character is what a man is all alone in—the Dark Continent. Livingstone, long ago, did the right thing when he packed up, and off he went with wife and child on his first exploration. Where God called any man had not women a corresponding call to go to the same place with the same person? But when at last she died, it was a mourning widower who held on his way thinking of the happy old days beginning away back towards the end of 1844. “A matter-of-fact lady,” was his picture of her, “a little thick, black-haired girl, sturdy and all I want.” He would have agreed with General

Booth, another Explorer, the Explorer of Darkest England :  
“ My wife is in Heaven and I have no home, merely a place where I keep some furniture. How old do they say I am ? Seventy-nine ? What nonsense ! I am not old. I am seventy-nine years young. I have heaps of time yet to go around fishing—fishing for souls in the same old way with the same old net.”

These native women can be brave to madness where their graceless sons are concerned. Masaka was one such and here he is dragged in bleeding. His haggard old mother follows him bleeding likewise, for both of them have been saved out of a crocodile's mouth. It is a tale passing strange but enacted “ right here and now,” as the local idiom runs (*peka peka pano*). They were in a canoe and finally grounded among the *matete* reeds. The day was hot and my fellow slipped overboard into the water for a “ cooler ” as the sand was shallow. He was scarcely in the water when this aquatic deputy of the devil snapped at him and got him in his jaws, an easy prey. But (no fear, not so easy !) that old mother of his will deliver or die : if her boy goes she will go too. Therefore with primitive pluck in she springs after the beast, and there she is actually daring to attack empty-handed this blood-mad saurian. It is for his gleaming mouth she makes, determined to unlock those jaws that have her first-born in their deadly grip. Can you take it in ? Her plan is to wheedle the crocodile into biting her instead of biting her thankless boy. Succeed ? Yes, in the desperate sense that in so gripping the jaws she has forced the monster to leave off gripping her son, and thus materialise the maternal programme by biting her instead. But not for long, you believe it. Her blood is up as well as out : in her struggles she forces the gleaming teeth to let go, but this (so she says afterwards) was a tactical error. For the animal having tasted blood wants more, so back he springs on her boy out of whose back he has already dug bits of flesh. And now it comes to this : on comes the royal mother to renew the attack, but this time she is not handicapped with empty hands : she has broken off a stout stick, rushes for the red mouth of the monster and, brave old thing, rams it down



THE STRONG-WILLED AMAZON TYPE.





the terrible throat, thus releasing her son from its clutch. Victory! Away goes the disconcerted animal, having learned a sad but salutary lesson. Last comes the splendid service of Mrs. Crawford with the gaping onlookers adoring every inch of snow-white bandage winding round the wounds; well they know that the land crocodile of blood poisoning kills more natives than the other in the Lake.

A snapshot of these native women would reveal many a mediocre face, yet their liquid lingo is full of clever phrasing. Armed to the finger-tips with finish and polish, this is the dowager who brings six pots of beer to Livingstone's camp for his men, explaining apologetically that she brings only six pots of *water*. Does she cook meat for him? then she regrets it is only *vegetables*. Or is it only vegetables, the hunters having failed to kill any game? then she asks him to "eat affliction." And must he refuse her invitation? then the polite formula is: "I am *not* refusing." And are the lions roaring out on the plain? then she says, "The dogs are barking, sir." All super-correct, all absurdly polite, and (this is the point!) all "highbrow" speech in clean contradiction to her illiterate appearance.

Grammar, have I not already said she has sixteen genders to the noun and twenty-three tenses to the verb? Contrast our stingy English three genders (or classes) with this solid sixteen in Africa. And our indelicacy of making *feminine* gender the mark of a class. The African may be nude, but when he looks round Nature to classify all things, he wouldn't dare, as we have done, to fasten on *sex* as mark of gender, i.e. class. Besides they are so conceivably many that he can only do it on the modest minimum of sixteen divisions or classes (i.e. genders, same word). Thus things are categorised as (1) living or dead; as (2) long and streaky or short or stubby; as (3) soft, flabby or hard and unyielding; as (4) augmentative or diminutive; and above all—oh! stroke of grammatical genius—as (5) abstract, the great abstract class that comprehends wisdom, glory, love and the like.

Here you have Mr. Sixteen Genders Africanus stalking out of the grass and insisting that, at least, all abstract

ideas must be classed in one concise category or gender. Tell him that we have only three genders, one an indecent one, and he scorns us as the rubbish of the race. But we get our revenge : the origin of many of their words is as amazing as amusing ; “ the free-will ” of man, for instance. This is *chifu cha nguluwe* = a pig’s stomach affair, and refers to their notorious custom when cutting up a pig, that all or any portion of the pig is bestowable except its *intra dig.* stomach. This is neither saleable nor stealable ; any-one can off with it, no “ by your leave ” being necessary. Thus “ free-will ” (a word not without some claims to be called *the* word of humanity), lo, here you have it most inelegantly masquerading as “ a pig’s stomach affair.” By that free-will man sees, by that same he is blind ; he is free through his will and through his will a slave ; he is honest through that same will, and through his will a rogue. Yet the didactic dignity of all this is cheapened and coarsened (is it, I wonder ?) by calling it “ a pig’s stomach ” affair.

Or take this desecration of the supposedly sacred word “ peace,” *mutende*. Here surely is a word that claims the respect of the very man whose throat is kept uncut by the blessing of immunity from midnight raiders. Glad ? No, he merely yawns so literally that this noun for “ peace ” is only another spelling of that ugly modern little slang verb, *tendwa*, “ to be fed up.” Thus the noun for “ peace ” is only a verbal yawn, spoiling-for-a-scrap yawn ! This is proved from the meaning of that great sister-greeting of theirs, “ *Mwa poleni, mukwai ?* ” Like “ *mutende ?* ” it is an interrogation, not an invocation, and means, “ Are your wounds healed, sir ? ” A war-bled equivalent for, “ I wish you well ! ”

But to revert to those terrible tenses : the more you muse on this “ grammar ” expedient the more amusing such a linguistic fake becomes. Why demand that the African should have the self-same verbal mould as ourselves ? Who ever heard of a past-tense noun ? Yet, such is the Chibemba phrase, *ine wa fikile mailo* = I the-yesterday-arrived-one. Or a future tense noun : *imwe va kesa mailo* = You the-will-come-to-morrow ones. Here, then, you have

a verb easily a noun—and in all its tortuous tenses, too. Yet the oncoming English translator, with the deft touch of long malpractice, will politely and particularly kill all this. Kill it because English has no past tense noun, then (bow-wow!) why should “lesser breeds” have the same?

Therefore, instead of just floundering on, my advice to all you exquisites far away is to start in and learn to read God in His own glorious Greek and Hebrew: you will get to understand Him better. When Paul spoke to the people in their own tongue we read that they were the more silent. And so, too, when I read God in His own Greek it gets me nearer. His words both bind and liberate and are not the poor timid little phrases of conventional conversation. A charming and cultured old friend has just sent me a stiff admonition to try to stop long hyphenated phrases and be “more Biblical” in my speech. And that is just where the trouble comes in. For if I am soaked in God’s Greek then the original forces me to make a long tongue-twister of it and call Paul “an-against-the-people-and-the-law-and-this-place-all-men-everywhere-teacher. So, too, to be scriptural, I must talk of grass as “the-to-day-existing-and-to-morrow-cast-into-an-oven-grass.” Or to speak, sweetly but strictly, of our Lord as “The endurer-of-such-contradiction-of-sinners-against-Himself-One.” *Voilà!* God wrote it that way, at any rate. So do not let us be parochial, parish-pump folk who think that the world begins at our pillow and ends at the foot of the bed.

The lovely play of short and long tenses here follows the pure Greek analogy and should make any future Bible translator jump for joy. Wooden old English has killed these pictorial imperfects: they are a “moving panorama” and by switching on an imperfect for an aorist “the flowing stream of history is seen passing before the eye.” (“In Matthew iii. 4, 5, 6 the whole vivid Jordan scene is sketched by simply using an imperfect”—*A. T. Robertson.*) Here, then, is a gold mine, but will our African translators betray both Greek and Chibemba into the hands of dear old no-future-tense English? For we, oh! we had ebbed so low linguistically that we had no “future,” had it not, so faked one by stealing a verb called “shall” and another

verb called "will," yes, faked a future tense. Hence our old juvenile troubles in manipulating our schoolboy "shall" or "will." It was all an improvisation, all a stilted invention, nothing more. We *had* no future, so we borrowed two verbs and made one.

To all the hummers and hawers who deplored the danger of his African enterprise, Livingstone repeated what the Arab, Sef Rupia, told him of the number of slavers who died in one year of their devil's-deputy slave raids. "Sef Rupia," says Livingstone, "told me that about 100 of the Kilwa slavers alone died this year, so slaving as well as philanthropy is accompanied with loss of life: we saw seven of their graves; the rest died on the road up. It struck me, after Sef had numbered the losses that the Kilwa people sustained by death in their endeavours to enslave people, surely similar losses on the part of those who go 'to proclaim liberty to the captives, the opening of the prison to them that are bound,' to save and elevate, need not be made so very much of as they sometimes are." Hence his call from a longing heart, "I would say to missionaries, Come on, brethen, to the real heathen! You have no idea how brave you are till you try. Leaving the coast tribes, and devoting yourselves heartily to the savages, as they are called, you will find, with some drawbacks and wickednesses, a very great deal to admire and love." If Christ, said Livingstone, is such a superlative Saviour, then where are His superlative servants? Charles Wesley deplored that the Devil should have all the good music: profane music did not exist, only the profanation thereof. And so with Livingstone and these venturesome hell-hounds: why should the Devil have all the die-hards? The Paul who was so keen *pro* the devil, did he not see to it that he served Christ superlatively so?

So on we go with him—on into another chapter.

CHAPTER IX  
STILL SOUTHING IT

*These Africans would antagonise us less if we ceased to blink the main factor in this anti-racial folly. Our failure, I mean, to permit old Sir Thomas of Northwich to give us a prick of perturbation in the reminder that "we differ just as much from others as they from us."*

*“ Now that I am on the point of starting on another trip (the last) into Africa, I feel quite exhilarated. When one travels with the specific object in view of ameliorating the condition of the natives, every act becomes ennobled. . . . The effect of travel on a man whose heart is in the right place is that the mind is made more self-reliant : it becomes more confident of its own resources—there is greater presence of mind. . . . The sweat of one’s brow is no longer a curse when one works for God ; it proves a tonic to the system, and is actually a blessing. No one can truly appreciate the charm of repose unless he has undergone severe exertion.”*

*Livingstone.*

*“ Seldom can the heart be lonely  
If it seek a lonelier still,  
Self-forgetting, seeking only  
Emptier cups of love to fill.”*

## CHAPTER IX

### STILL SOUTHING IT

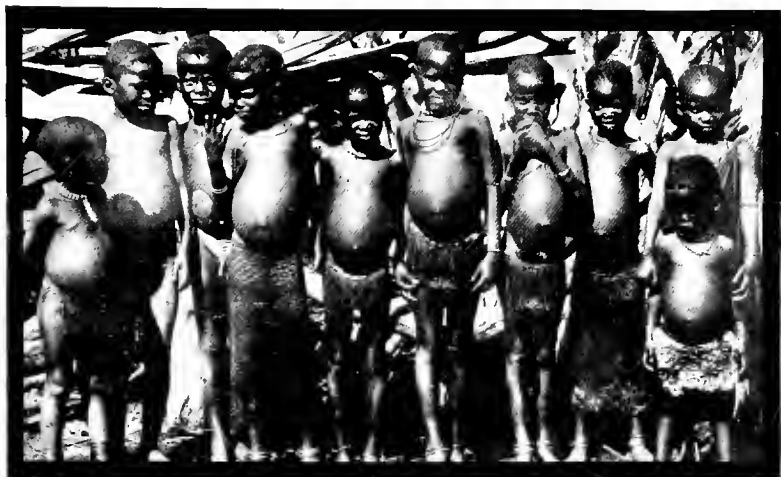
**T**HE nineteenth of June sees us pushing south through long lanes of green manioc, accompanied for miles by bands of boisterous Lunda boys with boundless glee. Their names are either Kanyembo, Kinyanta, Lukwesa, Kapumba or some other high-sounding name of the Kazembe dynasty, and beyond this royal nomenclature they seem to know nothing. Fancy England full of bouncing boys called only after Tudor and Hanoverian kings. These small boys are encyclopædic, any one of them singing out a long string of obscure forest insects, all, all, as utterly lost to a foreigner as needle in haystack. Indeed, this black walking encyclopædia jabbbers so endlessly that you regret he cannot be treated like the one bound in leather—at least you can shut that up. Here you have a precious little piece of impertinence (ætat 7) spouting natural history like a professor. The only book he knows is this big many-paged volume of Nature: and (pedagogues, please ponder) that book he knows so well simply because he does not know it is a book. I mean that each morning he springs from his mat to enter this vast library of Nature, poking into every nook of the forest in a far fresher way than we can poke into dry-as-dust books. And why not fresh, for this thing *is*, whereas the dry book merely tells about it. Surely, this is the meaning of that unfathomably French phrase for playing truant at school, “*il fait l'école buissonnière*” ?

Thus what they lack in nurture they get in nature, sharp as a needle and cunning as a fox. Besides, seeing he is thus so deeply learned in the living literature of Nature he proves this fact by being utterly unconscious of his own erudition, the hall-mark of real knowledge.

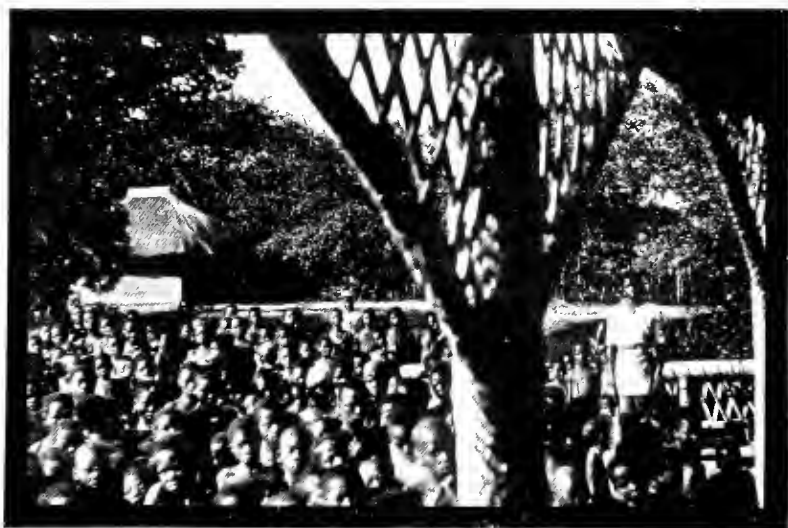
To a T each of these boys could technically claim to be a sort of Solomon Junior, for "he spake of trees from the cedar that is in Lebanon even unto the hyssop that springeth out of the wall: he spake also of beasts and of fowl and of creeping things and of fishes." With this difference though. Solomon got 3,000 proverbs out of them and the African gets (does he?) 3,000,000. Even classifications, the awful anatomy of study, are sublimely simple because they exist in clean-cut reality under his nose in Nature; trees, for instance, are all grouped by him in what he calls "brotherhoods," the degrees of resemblance being expressed by the various relationships of the human family. That is to say, the trees classify themselves and he merely acknowledges the fact. Nature a systematic index and not a tangled jungle, such is the negro notion. Unfortunately, as I have hinted, all this makes him mouthy and a great chatterbox. Indeed so voluble do these little walking dictionaries wax, that glad were we when these forty quasi-senile chatterboxes yelled us off from the top of a ridge. Adieu! the *Encyclopædia Africana* in forty volumes bound in best morocco.

But there are more farther on. Do not smile at my *infra dig.* group of dirty little herd boys as audience in the evening. They are the men of to-morrow and laugh at life's masks and mummeries. The very job of a herd boy is a challenge to Debrett. When Tennyson made "all the blood of all the Howards" his maximum of aristocratic status, look what an ineptitude he involved himself in. For here I have the charming grandson of a duke assuring me that the Howards were etymologically the hog wards or pig keepers, and this ancestor of the Duke of Norfolk was something like Gurth the Swineherd in *Ivanhoe*. And to prove that this is no mere spiteful dig at a dukedom older than his own, he complacently certifies that the Duke of Bedford is descended from a fishmonger at Poole, as the Duke of Devonshire descends from one of Wolsey's humble body-servants. Go higher still and the surprise increases with the ascent. To get among the Kings and Queens of England is at least to be safely removed from the realm of mere question and conjecture. Here, then, is what the iron pen





"THE ENCYCLOPEDIA AFRICANA BOUND IN BEST MOROCCO."



BREAKING IN THE YOUNG: ROLL-CALL AT NEW SESSION.



of history records: A pot-gill of Westminster married the master of the pot-house and she, on his demise, consulted and married a solicitor named Hyde. Their daughter was the mother of two Queens of England, Queen Mary and Queen Anne.

So cease from man whose breath is in his nostrils. Long live my band of little herd boys. When Plato defined Aristocracy as "The Rule of the Best Born," Aristotle saw the weak point in the Platonic phrasing. Thus it is the disciple modified it for the better by cutting off that old vain-glorious "born" and made it majestically "The Rule of the Best." For he saw what we all see; saw that the erratic flesh is full of successional vagaries, and if a man cannot even make one hair of his head white or black, how much less can he guarantee the head, hand or heart of his offspring? What then? Why all this plaint about pedigree? Simply and summarily to prove for my herd boys that Jesus Christ meets both Plato and Aristotle and blends their rival formulæ into one. In Him it is no longer the acrid antagonism of "The Rule of the Best Born" versus "The Rule of the Best." "The Best Born" are "The Best," because he is nobly born who is born from above. For as sure as the first birth being of the earth drags us down deterrantly, so, *au contraire*, the celestial calls commandingly from its source, and wrests us from the grip of the ground. Pulsford puts it all in all when he unfolds Livingstone's doctrine of the "double pull" thus:

*"Time and eternity touch me, for I am both. Time assaults more for the dust which I have, and insists that I give back to the dust every atom which I have derived therefrom. Eternity appeals to me for the spirit which I have. Owing to these two claimants, the partnership will soon have to be dissolved between my soul and body, that earth may take its own, and eternity its own."*

So so for the lads, but what about the lassies? This is a bad enough story. If the day in the woods makes a healthy animal, the negro night in the huts nearly undoes it all. That very precocity of the African "picaninny," at once a charm and an alarm, is all traceable to this poisoned atmosphere of morals in the pigstye hut. Each tot knows far too much, the future African matron having lost her shy girlish ways at the early age of seven. The

passing word we give is soon snatched away from the children, for no new ideas are allowed to build their nests in these young brains. They must all grow up to wear the tribal blinkers; look neither to the right hand nor the left, but straight in front of them, "look like a buffalo" is their phrase for this "blinkers" idea of following only straight ahead.

The secret society names *nangulu* and *mulumbi* tell the tragedy that not one of these girls will escape the dark orgie called "*butwa*," lit. the sharpening-up process, the getting "smart" in a sexual sense from *kutwa*, "to be sharp." The Ilála people make no subterfuge about it in their totem being the old Greek symbol of phallic worship. Thus nude man means nude notions: small wonder the first thing God did to man on the road to redeem him was to clothe him, clothe both his body and speech.

On moral and discretionary grounds you draw the curtain here, otherwise you need an ugly paragraph in Juvenal's Latin. What about the "Hottentot apron" beginning at The Cape and ending in Abyssinia? And the mad trans-African idea to begin this business when the girls are tots. No adolescence, no innocence, hence premature puberty falsely confounded with nubility. Hence mad, murderous maternity with premature old age as punishment for premature puberty. "Soon ripe, soon rotten" is their proverb that tells the tragedy: to be a "fake-woman" at nine means that she is sure to be a broken-down baby at thirty. She knows everything too early, therefore can learn nothing when it is too late.<sup>1</sup>

You see these tots carrying dolls (*chisungwa*), but this carved "baby" is a serious sex incentive and not the harmless marionette of civilised childhood. They say that one such doll changed the whole course of local history. Out East a wife of the king's son was bathing in the river, a little girl with her doll intruded and she drowned this girlie because her doll had gone in to the same water as herself, the implication being that this doll is no mere plaything

<sup>1</sup> Coincidence: Near this very spot Miss Mabel Shaw in later years faced this formidable problem of Africa's young women, her boarding-school at Mbereshi being a true model of its kind.

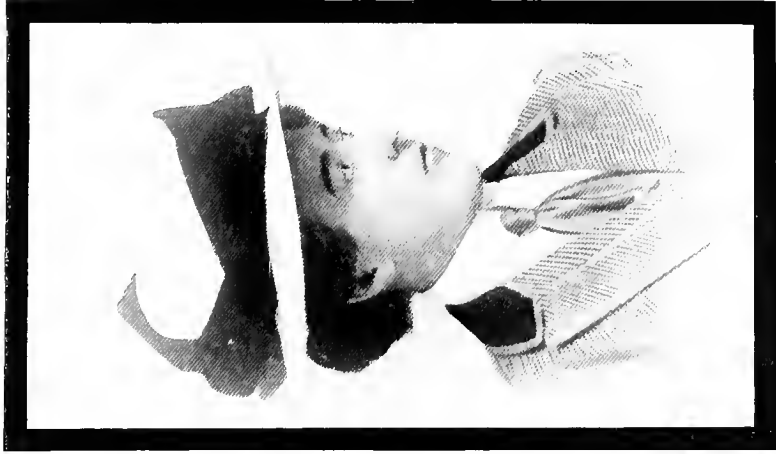
but has a deep sinister suggestion. Thus the king's son got embroiled in this vendetta and was driven from his father's jurisdiction, for is it not the king who is *imfumu* or death dealer? He alone has *ex officio* right to wield the *difumo* or spear, both these words being formed from the root *fu*, death. Therefore, a king alone having the power of death, and the wife of this prince having killed a human being in a flash of ill-temper, the king banned his abetting son from The Presence, calling him NKUVA or Lightning. "Yes," retorted the renegade, "Lightning I am, Lightning I shall ever be [*nkuva*], so off I go to seek my own kingdom." Thus and then began the western exodus to Lake Mweru, the initial pressure being this usurpation of the death penalty. And a mere doll did it all.

The women around here are a wild lot who band together in a female combination best Anglicised and abbreviated as "Freemasonry." What, then, is the why and wherefore of this mysterious, this incredible woman's movement in far Africa? The answer is precise for the proofs are complete, the motives patent. Polygamy did it all, for polygamy, a house divided against itself, cannot stand, hence this resolve of these women to combine against man the monster. For if one man professes to "love" from three to thirty wives, then it is equally certain the said three to thirty out of sheer self-respect profess to hate each other. One man playing with a dozen women, keeping them together as a circus juggler does a dozen golden balls in the air, rising and falling but never touching the ground. No wonder these women combine in a club to declare that they are really victims of the man. But what really rescued the club idea from the suggestion of being a mere woman's wrangle was the fact that kings had daughters as well as sons. And these princesses at once added their prestige to this club-protest in favour of their sex.

Nor did this protest end in mere pungent "tonguetactics" (*kuteya mulomo*). There is more than this that causes a swift jarring reversal of the ancient notion about woman being the weaker vessel. One famous lady actually took the field of battle against her own husband Kalembe, Livingstone's friend, and for many a weary day shots were

exchanged between husband and wife, the fighting all taking place down the Lualaba at a place called "God's meal pestles," where this Amazon carried on a fiery fight. The same Madam Kalembwe this, who was a famous polyandrist with the bouncing manners of a barmaid. Chased out of the house by his dear Xantippe, a pail of water following him up as a parting salute, Socrates quaintly opined that thunder often brought rain. But here you have a lady who produced the real thing, the real roar of "Tower" guns with a whizz of bullets directed against her homeless husband. Lombe, too, a bigger chief downstream, expostulated for the last time with his lady and then ran to his elephant gun and shot himself. Suicide caused by domestic bickerings. This the great Lombe, who pioneered potatoes in the land and lived to see them become a staple diet among the Lubans.

So infectious was this among the woman-kind that the sex lost its customary placidity and one woman at my camp in Butembo, with all the courage of the masculine gender, actually killed a lion with her hoe. Crouching out in the manioc where she was working, she found herself attacked in the fields, and splendidly split the skull of *Felis leo* with her short Luban hoe. Thus your Budindu club has developed a type all of its own, utterly unlike the old impersonal self-effacing womanhood of the "chattel" genus, and here it is you find the solution of that long-standing puzzle in Africa as to the chief's nephew often usurping the rights of his own sons. The Budindu club it was that exploited the doctrine that true aristocratic succession to the throne was only found on the princess's side, the argument being merely another hard knock at polygamy. "For," said the princess to her royal brother, "you, O King, may marry forty wives, but I may only marry one man. Therefore, that one man, being a spick-and-span aristocrat, the cream of earth's son, is, and must be, a blue-blood prince, whereas you, the Chief, can have a son who has a King for his father and a slave for his mother." The luminous logic of all this at once clears up an old difficulty, the "sister's son" being a blue-blood black. Therefore, and by parity of reasoning, a mere King's son is a nobody.



"THE LADY OF LUANZA" AND ONE OF HER MANY LEPRO PATIENTS.

Mrs Crawford was the very first white woman to penetrate these wilds.





But what about my wife all these days, the mysterious "G." in this "D. and G. C." duet? Hats off to the ladies, last at the Cross, first at the tomb! Africa is so essentially a domestic land that its pioneer ladies easily and evidently surpass mere men in their very special sort of service. (Do not dare "Poor ladies!" them; their smile of serenity freezes any such adjective on your lips.) But as their service is of a silent sort, this is the reason why I say something in the third person singular that she "would not, could not, should not" tell. With the passing days my wife contrives correspondingly to travel on a modest minimum of baggage. One mysterious box is so cleverly contrived in the art of compression that it serves for all her personal needs. This *omnium gatherum* contains just the very medicines, very garments, very books; not to mention many excellent etceteras.

The traditional Holland woman is so keen on cleanliness that she would either die of shame or die of scrubbing, and so with this pioneer lady and her passion for economy. Yet far from this suggesting a stingy sort of existence, she it is who always has something to spare for somebody else: it is the selfish folk who soon become so small, so mean, so ugly in their parsimoniousness. Was it not from that very box the King of the Belgians got his surprise, here far from the racketing world? Then it was—presto!—she dug out from its depths (amid bootlaces, needles, etc.) an incredible little packet of icing sugar. Next, she seems to marshal from nowhere all the orthodox adjuncts of Mrs. Beaton. Then with the light of tenacity and steady purpose shining in her eyes she—all apron and anxiety!—yes, she it was who "created" for him his own royal cake with his own princely name in pink on top. "Brussels!" he cried; "this is not Africa, it is Europe!"

It is a great business she has on hand, this disputing with the Devil over the souls of negro women. There is no need of placid nonentities in such a catch-as-catch-can matter. The first white woman who ever breathed their air, verily she pays the price of pioneer popularity, night and day nothing but a relentless negro stare. Out among the villages she is a huge? mark, one everlasting

“ why ? ” They look her through as if a human being were only an animal with a toilet. Rumour runs that her wheezy little American organ is a box full of tunes, and the lady has merely to deposit it on the ground when it—squeaks. This is only tentative, however, and the final decision on the music subject is the simple unarguable statement that there is a beast inside that squeals when you trample on its tail, the bass end of the keyboard the place where he howls, and the treble the corner where he squeals. The lady is also rumoured to have locks of hair so long that an easy toilet is performed by twisting the said locks round her toes. It is further fabled that once in olden time the said lady was purchased for two oxen by her husband. It is also *on dit* that the soap of her ablutions is medicine for the white skin, and that originally in pre-soap ages we were as black as coal. This soap fiction they repeat with a sort of grim hilarity, almost hinting that what soap has done soap can do !

The King of the Belgians was amused to hear how one chief paid her a high compliment when he laid it down as a self-evident proposition that the Queen of England was her elder sister who stayed at home housekeeping to admit of her visiting his land ! This inflated chief was a contemplative, rather stout gentleman of excellent digestion whose local ladies used their pierced noses as a sort of pin-cushion, and any borrowed needle is promptly run through their noses for safety. Fancy a group of these ladies presenting their most sugary compliments and requesting to pinch the lady's nose to verify the declaration that hers is not a nasal pin-cushion ! Now that she has gone off, the crowd of women have been taught to take up the needy corners and substitute theirs for her service.

Long before others, here she is pioneering this Far Interior, the first of her sex. With medical help hundreds of miles away, here it is our first-born saw the light of God. Here, too, for many a day she faced the coarse native fare and tried for Christ's sake to like what she ate when she could not eat what she liked. And the days when our supply of tea ran out. Our so-called “ tea,” last meal of the day, is occasionally brightened with a venison steak ;

but at last came the day when she masked the last solemn spoonful: masking it again and yet again, until it was a mere memory—and we sat down to have “tea” without tea. First it weakened off to a modest brown, then a faint yellow, then came the pearl tea stage, and the week’s end saw no tea at all. The terminal tea was so weak that it had to be imagined. We called it “Best Memory Blend.”

Leading the caravan along his trail, you must think of Majiwara perspiringly thumping the drum as he twisted in and out of the Indian file. The old symbol of war, Livingstone transformed it into the pledge of peace. The African says, “A drum sounds because it is empty,” and certainly this drum leading the caravan was as empty as it was innocent of the old bellicose business. In later days many an old devil’s drum was consecrated as the call to church or school. They say “dog does not eat dog,” but here is one drum out to destroy the other, the drum of peace out to abolish the other old drum of death.



CHAPTER X  
FOLLOWING HIM UP

*The reader may be disposed to pick and choose, approbate and reprobate the several sections of this letter, unmindful of the fact that it has been modelled on old Puritan William Perkins, who, beside his name, wrote on all his books the motto : "Thou art a minister of the Word, mind thy business."*

*“ A good many months ago I came across a little paragraph in an old newspaper in which it was said there were 38,000 promises in the Bible. . . . Thirty-eight thousand promises in the Bible? As well say there are 38,000 years in Eternity.”*

*J. P. Struthers.*

*“ Last night I came across two policemen looking at a verse in Mark’s Gospel by aid of a lantern.”*

*Idem.*

*“ Passed three carters to-day with their horses and carts. Saw one of them with a wee wee book in his hand. After I was four yards ahead I heard him read to his neighbour, ‘ Verily I say unto you, If any man hear My words.’ ”*

*Idem.*

CHAPTER X  
FOLLOWING HIM UP

**I**N a dainty quatrain, Dean Swift long ago wrote the Diary item for to-day :

*“ Cartographers in Afric’s maps  
With savage pictures fill the gaps,  
And o’er the inhospitable downs,  
Place elephants instead of towns.”*

This rhymes exactly with our experience to-day on the Luapula River. For as there is nothing more plainly disallowed by the facts of life than that a traveller should not lack a good map, we accordingly boasted the largest, loudest and latest. This speculation, however, turned out to be a superlative jest, for the first thing we found was that a dummy township on the Luapula, mapped “Fort Rosebery,” did not, never did exist. Yet thanks to the fertile brain of our map-maker and by way of making assurance doubly sure, here is this cartographic gem flourished in our faces in large letters, the cruel publicity of the thing being quite painful. The reason? There is a method in all this madness. Like the cocksure canals in the planet Mars, this arm-chair geography was a gambling with futurity, the hypothesis in London being that the British would (some sweet day!) have a walk-over on this Luapula. That Kazembe would climb down from his giddy pinnacle of Mwata. That consequent on his capitulation The Jack would eventually flutter south as far as the Falls. And that finally (in the post-Paulo Future) a fort would be built to redeem this map from mendacity. Meantime, here we are in the region of hard fact, a map of the moon in our hands when plain terrestrial data would be preferable to such lunar locations. The serious old

postal guide, too, endorsing this *non est inventus* fable. How much better, because much franker, Dean Swift's old gents who stuck down a modest sprinkling of elephants and birds by way of filling up the gaps in "Afric's Maps." Too often these quaint old cartographers have been laughed at, whereas in this case they could easily retort that at least they traded only in "black elephants of the genuine Luapula sort, and not the R.G.S. "white" ones.

I regret if such a criticism be too caustic, but this moonshine in map-making does not easily lend itself to dispassionate treatment. Had we been younger in the country, our throats could easily have been cut over just such a false guarantee of protection. We of "the land-ship" must either sink or swim to some glorious port. Rather a discouraging outlook this, perhaps; but in for a penny in for a pound and we must see this thing through. Besides, does it not give us one more opportunity of proving that, unarmed and almost empty-handed as we are, we can open up countries that are shut to the Government? Could not the *African Tertullian* boast as early as the year 209 that "even those parts of Britain into which the Roman arms *had never penetrated* were become subject to Christ." Deduction: We can never move Africa if we let Africa move us.

At the time (it is years ago) this innocent expostulation of mine caused the late Mr. Cecil Rhodes to spring into the ring with the roar of an angry tiger. He was nominally responsible, for was he not paying the Foreign Office £10,000 a year to occupy provisionally this B.S.A. Co. strip of territory from Zomba? And was this the hoax-goods he got for his money? Why should "those Crawfords" risk their necks for a cock-and-bull "Fort Rosebery" non-existent? Had they been killed, this mendacious map would have been to blame. Yes; rivers are mapped with a hypothetical flow thus . . . . ., but towns are only put down cartographically when they exist on solid ploughable earth. No wonder he soon sent up Major Forbes to make a B.S.A. Co. beginning for themselves: this map-muddle forced his hands.

'Tis passing strange. The Foreign Office, I regret to say,



has treated Livingstone's dispatches to Lord Clarendon in its usual polite, indifferent way. Here in Kazembe's territory he it was who saw the great palm-oil tree growing to perfection ; saw down the years how this could mean, should mean, millions of pounds in potential oil exports ; saw that the diluvial soil on the east bank of the Luapula was the very sort, very shade for a great palm-oil industry. And so seeing he shouted jubilee to deaf departmental ears —I mean, this God-send of palm oil to an otherwise barren territory. Yet such is the perversity of circumstances, despite (perhaps because of) this plain project of his for commercial development, the home authorities treated it to the usual languid indifference and well-bred contempt. Discover a new species of antelope, an Okapi or the like, and all the clubs are agog. But come down to brass tacks, talk development, especially the local development that gives the native a chance to foster home life, and it leaves your " big-game " hunter cold. London never cared much for God-fearing, cheese-paring Scotchmen, and so Livingstone's advice remains for some of the " broken brigade " to come along and scoop in a surprise.

Seeing that the Imperial Government agreed to govern these territories by proxy, by charter, one often regrets that the African Lakes Company did not get this N.E.R. Glasgow would have done better than London : most young A.L.C. fellows are better than their Managers, solid and keen with no taint of " old chappie " sniff about them. Do not misunderstand me : a good sort, very good sort are these " Chartered " fellows, but most superciliously anxious to inform you that " trade " is one million miles removed from their temperament. Thus it is, from Codrington down to the latest N.C., the whole type of official, while thoroughly and obtusely manly, is almost disgracefully ignorant of economics. These are no lands for red-tape or red noses. The solution will be, ought to be, in Rhodesia entering the South African Union : then you will have a real Afrikander type, keen on farming and conserving local labour. Not the decent young " Chartered " fellow whose only use for Cape Town is as a gangway *en route* to London. This is no mere persiflage. Northern Rhodesia's financial year

ending March 31, 1920, is a disgrace. Year after year the disproportion between revenue and expenditure has developed to such a derogatory degree that here you have a £130,371 11s. 4d. deficit, *even after* pouring out thousands of natives into the Congo mines in order that they might get tax-money.

Take them all, gold mines, copper mines, cinemas and what not, "great art and invention is begotten for a worthy purpose, but sooner or later certain perverted men, who prefer what is profitable to what is proper, debase the art or invention, and prey upon the weakness of human nature to its undoing. Then arises the need for the restraining power of the State. The need of such restraint is an acknowledgment of human weakness, but the time has come when we must invoke the power of the State to save our African youth."

It is the same sick old story. In after-years N.E. Rhodesia paid bitterly for this neglect of Livingstone's advice. Having no internal resources, nearly all the able-bodied men were drafted across to the Belgian Katanga mines, with the usual break-up of home life and resultant degeneration of tribal stamina owing to promiscuity. Yet all the while this diluvial palm soil of the Luapula's right bank was, is to-day, shouting out a million pounds investment, the proof being Mr. Bernard Turner's great L.M.S. results in these same palms at Mbereshi. At Mbereshi, *ma foi*, almost the very spot where Livingstone wrote the despised report. The very latest facts farther south force my hand in this matter of the expatriation of natives. Dr. R. A. Keith Fraser, Medical Inspector for Venereal Diseases for the Union, in his recent lecture wondered why the treatment of syphilis among natives as a vital business proposition had not yet appealed to the big labour magnates of this country. Syphilis was steadily depleting the labour market of South Africa, and with such rapidity and certainty, that in twenty years it would, if not stemmed, render coloured labour so rare that only the very wealthy would be able to pay for it. He dealt with the unnatural lives of the 300,000 natives on the Rand through the absence of their wives, and said it was up to

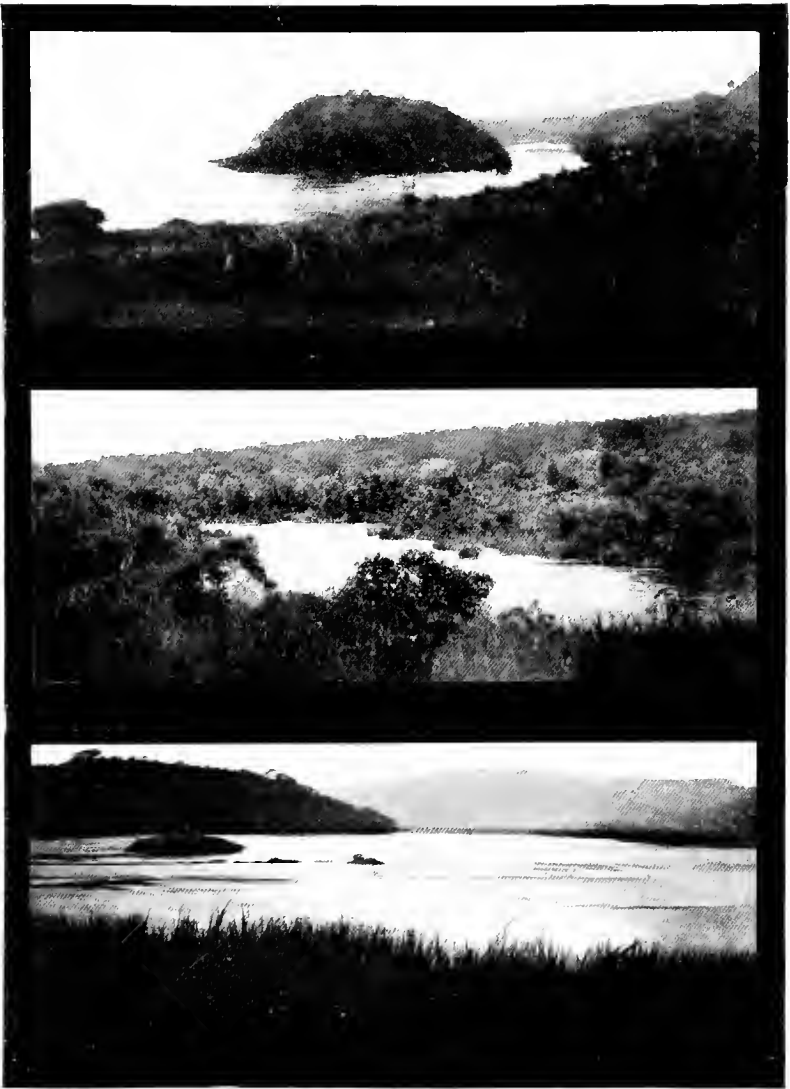
the Chamber of Mines to reorganise the living conditions of the industrial native, so that he might bring his wife and family, and be able to lead a domestic life on the mines. He offered this solution to the industrial authorities, as the Chamber of Mines was of opinion that such a gigantic scheme was impracticable. An alternative policy would be short-service contracts for the native, rigid medical examinations on arrival and departure and exhaustive treatment for such as became infected. Women admitted on the industrial areas would, he said, have to be rigidly dealt with.

But to revert to these oil palms. Lubaland is the true because literal Phœnicia, and the farther down river you go, the palm proudly lords it over the natives. The tribal life revolves round their great *Mukoma*; food, drink, clothing and oil all welling out of it. (Watch this word for palm, *Mukoma*: why should it mean "victor"? Who told these cannibals that a palm was the symbol of Victory?) Certes, had these Lubans a flag it would be woven out of palm cloth and tied to a palm-rib for a flag pole, while centering the said flag would be a proud palm as national emblem. The very flag-bearer would probably perpetuate the palm idea, for would he not be a man who had dined on roast palm nuts, washing down the same with their favourite inebriant, palm wine? Would not his body, moreover, be smeared with palm oil shining like varnish, and would not his only covering be a kilt of palm cloth? Thus with palms in his land he soon gets palms on his brain, and any particularly rich corner of Lubaland boasting more palms than usual is a regular cock-pit. Do not the Lubans say: "A fruitful land will be also fruitful in war"?

Thus the poor palm, at once their boast and their reproach, seems doomed as an emblem of victory. That palm toddy of theirs has also cracked many a Luban's skull in a double sense; beginning as a harmless lemonade, it ultimately gets as bad as brandy—the "strife-stirrer," they call it. This name is very pat because eloquent of the wild rows resulting from a palm-toddy carouse, each one of the black drunks beginning right off to rake up the mud-heaps of memory for a *casus belli*.

No wonder the really great Luban King Mukenge tackled the problem like a giant and ordered the deforestation of miles of these profuse palms ; prohibition in this case being equivalent to the terrible English analogy of destroying all farmers' grain lest it should be sold to breweries or distilleries ! Yet hundreds of white men have libelled the negro race by declaring that the black man will never quarrel with his bread-and-butter. The best thing about this anti-alcohol crusade is the backing it gets from the Luba language, *penda* being primarily the verb "to poison," hence, "to be drunk" : a man drunk is poisoned, they say. Akin to tobacco being called "the killer" (*Fwaka*), this is only one of many instances of their own language rising in revolt to convict them. So much, indeed, comes out of this wonderful tree, food, fibre, drink, dress, that they crown all their other compliments by calling it *Kiti cha Mweo*, or the Tree of Life. So here you have their own language laughing at their folly and getting death out of their "tree of life." This rebuke from their own dictionary, moreover, is seconded by the palm's own whim—it dies when they tap it for toddy. So palm-brandy is a national robber, for if a man must have his drink, he thereby dooms himself to a slow starvation. Is it not the tree of life, and yet he dares to sap the life of the land by killing the great central asset of Lubaland ? This was the mighty Mukenge's argument when he felled all his national palms ; said he : "You will kill them in any event for your brandy, but you will also kill your own brethren in carousal. Therefore in cutting down the *Mikoma* I am at least saving human life." A dumb palm preaching a sermon : if ever trees clapped their hands those Luban palms surely saluted such a kingly deed. There was no House of Lords to reject his Licensing Bill. Listen to Mukenge's logic (*loquitur*) : What makes drunkards ? The palm. Who grows the palm ? My Lubans. Where grows the palm ? On my land. Who owns both Luban and palm ? The King thereof. Who is the King ? I am the King ; and I doom thee, O Palm, to deforestation !

Take this tale of turpitude. Here is a fellow such a slave



THE YOUNG CONGO IN LUBALAND.  
"Millions of gallons of not flowing but flying water."



to beer that this fluid diet has unmanned him into a flabby mass of smiling incompetence. Which means, most meaningly, that he and all his brand of boozers are the first to die when an epidemic comes along. Over they go, big hulking soakers, the very first to fall on infection entering a tribe: they burned off their reserve ammunition in boozing and here comes along pneumonia to find his puffy body an easy prey. For him the whole world seems to contract into this wild cordial, a thing he slyly suggests every time he lifts the beer gourd. With quivering nostrils well into the tippie, the circumference of the big beer-bowl becomes to him the horizon of the universe. Here in these two-in-one horizons (if the old toper would only see it), here is a complete commentary on his life, this beer the beginning, middle and end of all earthy measure and treasure.

We had a great Prohibition meeting in our town, and swept beer out with a bang. The old Jewish saying was, "Where Satan cannot go in person he sends wine," but here in Africa the Devil runs the beer business in person, not by proxy. "Drink beer, think beer," is their rule, and the whole catalogue of crime can be traced to a big beer-brew. No sooner does this Devil's drink get into the man than it proves possession by kicking the man out who took it in. It is a curious concession to make, but the tragedy of Africa is that it never had a bottle, and this lack of the cork in a bottle gives them the wholesale debauchery that would be reduced to retail by the more limited receptacle. My point is not an extenuation, but an explanation. Their process of brewing, I mean, is the complicated business of a week, when it culminates in an angry tell-tale froth: the beer is now technically "ripe" (*pia*), and unless all the inebriating contents of these big jars are swilled off on that very day, then the next day sees the same drink degenerate into pig-wash. The *non est* bottle would have mitigated matters, for this brewing being a big business, they only tackle a big supply at a time. The week of preliminaries climaxes in a brutal beer that only keeps the head on it for one fleeting day, hence one mad concentrated debauchery.

The greatest asset of a tribe is its number of clever women-brewers, and the more heady the brew the more hearty the tribal thanks. Now, there is a moan all over because many of these strong-drink specialists are being converted. The outsiders think they have lost their reason, whereas on the contrary we have given them four good reasons beside their own old reason they never lost : (1) their head is clearer ; (2) health better ; (3) heart lighter ; (4) purse heavier.

True for you, Dr. Livingstone, there *is* room for a missionary, for read this. Here is a chief who detests foreigners, and is so sure about it that he sharpened all his anti-European ideas to a point and drove them home in a sort of "Yellow Peril" lecture. But he has no sooner used this word "foreigner" than he contradicts himself by saying, "I hate all foreigners except one, and he is so foreign to our land that we will all welcome him to heart and home if he will only come along." "Whom do you mean?" I asked, wondering at this marvel. "Ah," he said, "*his name is Mr. Satisfaction [Chikuta]—our fellow-townsmen is Mr. Craving and he never leaves me ; but should Mr. Satisfaction come along, oh!*" I turned sharp on the Chief and got an arrow in between the joints of his African agnostic armour. "Look you," said I, "he is here in my heart, the Mr. Satisfaction you name ; *we* call Him the Lord of Glory." Christ is "the desire of all nations," and here you have the oldest longing of the sons of men. The mad old myths of Greece are tell-tale in this longing of the aching void : Sisyphus always pushing the stone uphill and the stone always rolling back again. Prometheus, with the vulture always and awfully gnawing at his vitals. Tantalus seeking, ever seeking, the water that ever eludes him. A proof all this, written across the international sky, that if the Soul of Man were of earth then earth would satisfy it. Reflection : the thirst for the infinite proves the infinite.

Many of our trials, though, are only a morbid way of looking at our privileges : is not all this vision of sin and sorrow only God asking us to look at the hole of the pit from whence we were nationally dug ? We read out to



the camp from a Pauline Epistle this morning, yet who were the reputed cannibals of Paul's day if not our own kith and kin? St. Jerome is a good enough witness on this human-beef business: "When I was a boy in Gaul," says he, "I beheld the Scots, a people living in Britain, eating human flesh; and although there were plenty of cattle and sheep at their disposal, yet they would prefer a ham of the herdsman or a slice of female breast." So Solomon was right after all: "The thing that hath been," said he, "it is that which shall be: and there is no new thing under the sun." Even the Jews, who rightly claim to be the world's aristocrats, even they were told by their own Amos they were no better than "niggers." "For are ye not," asks Amos, "are ye not as the children of the Ethiopians unto me, O children of Israel? saith the Lord." No better than the blacks.

*En passant*, we came on an African cairn (*mfinga*), each traveller throwing his stone on the heap as he moves on. The curious (shall I say contemptible?) cause of this ever-increasing heap is a fall, the fall of some previous traveller who came a cropper on the slippery path. Hence this cairn of contempt, literally "stones of stumbling," thrown as a taunt on the great and growing heap. Why should a two-legged man fall? Why become a baby again groveling on the ground? All this the jeering cairn says to passers-by, and the hint has in it the double dig of a double fall, material and moral. Thus do they trumpet abroad their African self-righteousness, casting a stone with gusto at the *contretemps* of their fellow who fell. That cairn for the "down dog" is a continental symbol of the negro custom of swooping down on any unfortunate and glorying against him. Never a thought that thereby they are cutting down the bridge they themselves will wish to cross one dark day, their day of visitation.

A little later, down goes the sun like a ball of fire and this last hour of the day seems to concentrate all the pleasures of the past. It is like the African evening sky, full of farewell rays all the rosier because they are the last. Then comes the evening altar in the woods. This is a great meeting with which we wind up the hard day, and if the

sun made his exit gloriously, we, too, have as fine a finish. Now it is the pilgrimage culminates in its happiest moments. All of us, men every inch of us, look into each other's eyes and talk of Eternity. None of the nonchalance of the professional preacher about this bit of business.

CHAPTER XI  
ON THE ZIGZAG TRAIL

*In all the literature of baffled  
hopeless endeavour, there is no case so  
contradictory as this of Livingstone's,  
where all ill is well, all bad good, and  
the very worst the very best.*

*“Worth makes the man, and want of it the fellow,  
The rest is all but leather or prunella.”*

*“What profits it to understand  
The merits of a spotless shirt,  
A dapper foot, a little hand,  
If half the little soul be dirt?”*

*“No man treats Jesus Christ well who treats his brother wrong.”*

## CHAPTER XI

### ON THE ZIGZAG TRAIL

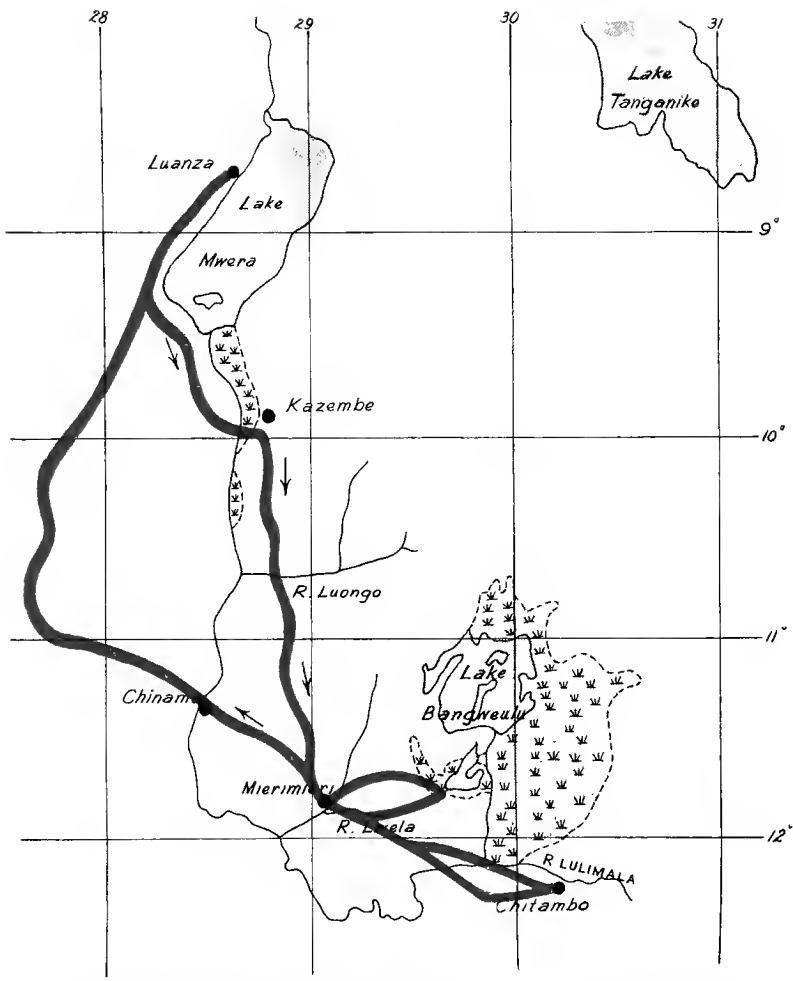
WITH perspiration beading the brow, we pass town after town encircled by its own loop-holed stockade and high rampart thrown up from the ditch. A sort of portcullis gate bangs down at sunset and there they are cooped up for the night, safe from predatory attacks. A tell-tale skull, here and there, is stuck up on the stockade. This bleaching symbol smiles sourly, as both threat and consolation, according to the differently disposed natives. Here, then, is a picket-fence hamlet sometimes more prominent on the map than on the planet earth. Yet no matter how small, having an encircling wall of wood is it not literally "a city" in the initial meaning of the word? Thus starting with such a "stockade" = "city" analogy, you soon see many other verbal babies born of this etymological union. It is a matter, too, not of twins, but triplets, for "civility," "politeness" and "urbanity" are all three easily from *civis*, *polis*, *urbs* = a city. The picture is that of the coarse country bumpkin versus the five-fold *polished*, *polite*, *civil*, *urbane* city dweller, with (same root!) the *policeman* at hand, all five forms being from *civis*, a city = a fence. Here it is, then, you see this word-growth begin inside a tightly packed African town, with so little elbow room for the co-occupants that there is need, much need, for mutual forbearance = civility = a city = *the fence* that hems them in. This encircling stockade has started the whole code of courtesy, just as the first city (= civility) only meant a similar stockade.

It was the first murderer who built the first city: his offence made him build a fence for defence. In England, by curious contrast, a cathedral creates a city, but the first Bible city was created by the first murder. And

the last city? There is "no temple therein," "nor death." Yet is it *the* city because there is so much real civility therein. Country folk have any amount of space to sprawl over, but the city man is forced to adapt himself to "the code of crush," hence urbanity from *urbs*, a city, and a respecting of the other fellow in the common crush of the city. In other words, it is all as amusing as this: civilian and civility being derived from *civis*, a city, which derives from a *fence*, lo, the civilian doubles the business by wearing his stand-offish civility around him the same way a city wears its wall of defence. This is the reason why even "policeman" is only another form for "politeness": strutting up and down among his civilians, the policeman is the man to teach the rabble "politeness," or city manners, from *polis*, a city.

It is not for nothing nor yet for mere verbiage that they fix on this stockade idea as constituting a "city." Before ever a hut makes its appearance inside, all the foundation ceremonies circle round the fence as defence from wild man, wild beast. Rarely (or more correctly never) do they begin a new town without a flourish of religion in the face of the unseen world. The native priest sees to it all: (1) an oblation of fine flour on the new site of their choice; (2) a prayer to the spirits of the land; (3) a Gideon-like challenge that if the white flour be found unpolluted on the morrow then this bodes well for the new abode. Then (4) with rejoicing the priest leads off by cutting the first stake for the stockade; further (5) he smears the same with a decoction from his "horn of salvation"; next (6) the king and queen hold fast to this stake of their wooden wall until it is rammed home into the soil. Then the whole town soon finishes the circular stockade, the last phase after the last stake being a sort of doxology to the spirits when priest, king and queen stand by this *last* stake that closes the last gap singing, "O ye spirits, may our fence [or "city"] never fall, for ye are the defenders thereof!" "Religion," no doubt, but one is endlessly reminded by their post-ceremonial antics that (what could you expect?) a stream can rise no higher than its source.

I tell them almost too incessantly that the Livingstone



THE PIONEER ROUTE OF MR. AND MRS. CRAWFORD.  
 South through Kazembe and Mierimiere to the grave of Livingstone's heart.





way is the best, the foundation everything. God builds from the top downwards, "Behold, I lay in Zion a foundation." So in all this "city" building of theirs it is either the Babel way or the Zion way, for there is none other. Babel builds a tower to reach up from earth to heaven, and John saw Zion coming *down* from heaven to earth. These rival methods indicate rival results, the flesh lusteth against the Spirit and the Spirit lusteth against the flesh. Babel starts from earth and ends where it began: Zion begins from above and descends from above to wean us from earth to heaven. This is St. Augustine's point in the famous words, "Two loves have made two cities: the love of self reaching on to the contempt of God has made the city of the world; the love of God reaching unto the contempt of self has made the heavenly city."

Beyond these half-way house spirits, remember, there is the one and only God, LEZA. In this matter of true African belief in Deity (a belief as indelible as death) traveller-critics have got to learn that a little bit of grammar goes a long way. African syntax is rigid and ruthless in character, and many a long debate is cut short by one blunt rule of Bantu speech. Take, for example, this God-title in the light of the tough old anti-Mission jibe that this "Leza" Livingstone claimed (and claimed convincingly) means "God," may after all merely amount to place not person, merely a sort of "happy hunting-grounds" of the Red Indians, not a personal God. Our retort is almost ruthless in efficiency. A cast-iron law of African syntax kills this place-not-person idea: *KWA* can only and always govern person, therefore *KWA LEZA*, i.e. where God (the person) is. *KU* for place, *KWA* for person, such is the Medo-Persic law. Livingstone went *KU* (to the place) Buckingham Palace, but also *KWA* (to the person) Queen Victoria. It is all clean cut, all crushingly certain, yet more than a dozen non-linguist travellers have tried to pooh-pooh this indelible African belief in God. Livingstone was right, for although his bias was all that way, yet when brains back bias then look out for brain storms.

But greater and grander link is the root-name for God.

Here this subject that "spell-bound" Livingstone before his death ends on the crescendo. I mean, not merely that these natives have the genuine idea of God, *but that they have the identical name Moses used.* LE the root for Deity (as in LEza) is found all over, and what is LE but the wrong-way round spelling of Semitic EL? This mere transposing of the vowel is only our old Saxon way of spelling "thrid" for "third," or "brid" for "bird," or "brent" for "burnt," and so on, following Max Müller's law of transposition of vowels.<sup>1</sup> But this is not nearly all. Beginning thus with the same Deity root LE = EL, your gusto becomes keen when you see that (1) as in Hebrew, so here, both these roots mean doubly, "to be" and "to be strong." Also (2) that as Hommel traces back EL to its minimum form "I," even so here you have *eight* languages spelling it LE or LĪ, as against *seven* with this self-same "I" of Hommel. And, remember, all these right through Africa claim most stoutly the substantive verb as their meaning (1) *to be*, then (2) by emphasis, *to be strong*. The double idea being obvious that if *God* is, then *He is* in no mere mediocre sense, hence "to be strong." Thus Gesenius, Hommel and Davidson all combine to certify this thrilling proof.

I know that to be brazenly dogmatic on this El discovery will only react prejudicially on my philologic position. But stripped of all disguises and evasions I would pin myself down to the following seven facts :

*ETHNOLOGY*.—I. The great incursions of Negroids from Arabia down into Central Africa.

II. The later flood of the Hamitic branch pouring south to Bantuse the Continent north and south of the Equator.

<sup>1</sup> A glance at any book on Philology will sustain this transposition of vowels. For instance, Max Müller, *Lectures on Science of Language*, vol. i, p. 294: "The root *ar*, which root again was originally RI or IR." Again, Farrar, page 135, *Language and Languages*, says, "The root MA (or AM) which is the same thing." Farrar again (i, 35, 5) proceeds: "The mode of attachment is different. In Aryan if R represents the root and S the inflection, the words are according to the formula RS, whereas in Semitic they are generally SR. Again, Isaac Taylor, *Origin of the Aryans*, page 294: "Finnic ablative *ta* corresponds to Aryan ablative *at*." Mere random quotations these, but sufficient to prove such an initial fact in Comparative Philology as this transposition of vowels.

III. The certainty that these early emigrants came south, with their "primitive Shemitic speech," or to be more definite "particularly Southern Arabic"—watch these inverted commas, please; they will occur anon.

*PHILOLOGY.*—Turning to Dr. A. B. Davidson's famous article "GOD" in "Hastings," I fasten on his data for this "EL" title.

I. The name EL is "the *most* widely distributed" of all names for Deity.

II. Not only is it used in Babylonian, Aramæan, Phœnician, Hebrew, but also in Arabic, "*particularly Southern Arabic.*"

III. It is thus "primitive Shemitic speech" *before* it became modified into dialects.

IV. All this naturally so, for as EL = LE denotes "being," and as this is the first phase of all thought, the initial intuition of all lands, then why be surprised at the same root in Africa seeing it was cradled in the same Arabia?

Thus we work out at a very sane Q.E.D. For while the Ethnological phase shows us Africa being peopled by those hordes pouring down from Arabia with their "primitive Shemitic speech," here you have endorsive Philology fixing "particularly Southern Arabia" as the linguistic home of EL = LE = I, God.

As we pick our wondering way south, the inevitable thought comes of Giraud, the young Frenchman, running north for his life along this very trail, with bleeding feet. Imprisoned by Mieremiere, his whale-boat in five sections (stolen for bullets) was captured, but midnight saw him escape towards the north where his caravan awaited him at Kazembe's. Armed to the teeth he left Zanzibar with 121 men, 20 porters carrying the 25-foot-long boat. Four months passed before he reached Lake Nyasa, then he cuts across to Bembaland. July saw him on Lake Bangweulu, and farther on the plunder began at Kalambo's. Then fifteen days later Mieremiere got him and the boat. This flight of Giraud's, marked with great precipitancy, has spoiled matters for us who are next in chronological sequence. (*He failed to reach Livingstone's grave, though!*)

The tribesmen are all at "half cock," and banking on the certainty that the first whites to emerge from the forest will be his avengers, perhaps those very fighting men now hammering at Kazembe's gates. But lo, the mountain produces but a mouse, and here come "D. and G. C.," a mere male and female mouse, no avengers, but a couple of fools of the Livingstone cult. Yes, fools is the unwise word. *Bwaume* (manliness!) is their swagger word around here. The idea being a magnifico with swash-buckling strut, and if possible the index finger curved round the trigger of a persuasive six-shooter. Yet young hot-blooded Victor Giraud (ætat 23) had so many arms that they tricked him into intertribal trouble! And here are we with walking-sticks moving along to meet that same Son of Belial, Mieremiere. Arms? Yes, two per person, five fingers on each.

This is how they do things between Cancer and Capricorn. Marriage is the great "game" here, and an "eligible" swoops up to the door of his "future's" hut, brandishes bow and arrows, yelling out the hundreds-of-years-old formula, "My game of the chase, where is it?" Then peering in, he aims at a bull's-eye mark in a clay image, a miss or hit being greeted with *ho! ho!* or *eya!* derision or congratulation, as the case may be. Next day comes the shaving, bathing and anointing; then the muster in front of the hut, the girl sitting with bows and arrows across her knees, a nasty notification that death is the doom of infidelity. Then comes the long antiphonal Marriage Song.

1. O thou Nightjar (*Kambasa*), preen thy plumes; the winter is ended and spring begins.
2. The little Mulea has found her husband; shake thy plumes for joy.
3. Let us, too, dance, though we be strangers, since they have wakened us for the wedding.
4. The huge roan antelope in the thicket hard by hears our song and awakes.
5. The Sibwinga, my bridegroom, is waiting at the cross-roads to bring me a bracelet.
6. I see his beard: let us escape. He is like a lion, and will devour me.
7. The form of my betrothed is as supple as the *taui bot*; take him not from me, ye passers-by.
8. He is as swift as the mpombo and as agile as the gazelle, or like a little zebra gambolling before its mother.
9. The bride is no longer a child; respect her, therefore.

10. She is like the stem of the nut tree, bending almost to the ground.
11. No longer does the bride weep, for she is stout-hearted.
12. Come, little mother—let us go bathe, and turn ourselves into crocodiles.
13. I do not want to marry another: I love my husband.
14. My betrothed, who could find only an old crone to marry him, is not like his friend.
15. Let not the Sibwinga stumble when carrying bow, lest ill-luck come upon him.
16. The fish-eagle gnaws his bones in solitude, pining for want of a mate.
17. In our village there are no barren women—saving only my gluttonous aunt, who eats the beans and the stalks as well.
18. In vain does the village sorceress point at me the finger of ill-omen, so that I may bear no children.
19. If the bride has jealous rivals, let us seize them and break their heads against the grindstones, so that they may die of shame and sink beneath the earth.
20. Every day the bride will sweep out the house, and, setting all in order, take victuals from the grain-bins that are full to overflowing.
21. Young man, prepare thyself—to-morrow thou goest to the fire. (Referring to the arduous *bwinga* [marriage] ceremonies.)<sup>1</sup>

But polygamy spoils it all. Paul has been badly handled by the Critics on the score of bad grammar. Has been made a quibbler in that old polygamic phrase sounding across Africa, "Not unto seeds, as of many, but unto thy seed." Really here it is you almost defy a monogamic professor in Oxford to see the good sense in this "bad" syntax. One of them commenting upon this "*Unto seeds, as of many, but as of one*" in Galatians, characterises this as "hair-splitting" on the Apostle's part; "it shows traces of his Rabbinical training," he says, and questions whether the verse has "ever been intelligible to any man." Now here it is polygamic Africa can teach monogamic England: here Sarah, the "Moari," and Hagar, the concubine, (*mawilombe*) is the daily story. The very plexure of the ramification of polygamic kinship compels them to tie down the rights of succession to *one* son; so that this very sentence "not unto seeds, as of many, but as of one" is a trite bit of African chatter all the year round stereotyped in the language. Out of ten or twenty brave, well-oiled polygamic boys the choice either at birth or in youth is made of *one*, and the remaining nine or nineteen are utterly ignored, for *not* "unto seeds as of many" is their Prince of Wales-ship due, but as of *one*. Of course, the status

<sup>1</sup> This is a clever Frenchman's translation which I copy.

of the mother generally determines the choice. Yes, both in Galatians and here, there is a riot of grammar to obviate the other riot of princelings: they are all "the seed" royal, yet administrative unity demands that one "seed" *par excellence* sweeps away the plurality of "seeds," that have "no glory by reason of the glory that excelleth."

Aback of all this tribal blood-letting surely there is some silent reason seducing these tribes into the signing their own death-edict of annihilation? Why does the Arab find it possible to play the match to the African mine, and why must the local negro aid and abet at his own tribal explosion? Are they not the common stuff of which the world is made? And here even among nobodies, is not the earth green and the sky blue? Answer (and in italics, please, Mr. Printer): *Polygamy is the root cause of the whole turmoil.* Here we bring in a true bill, the Lubans in their thousands witnessing against themselves: down-river all the storm-centres of civil war are around the Kingships of Kayumba, Kahongo, Mulongo, Kalamata, Chiyombo, etc., and each of these Kings boasts, at least, forty wives per throne. Sequel: each throne has at least twenty royal rival sons, all playing the ancient game of Cain and Abel, all equally infatuated with the craze for succession. Contemplating that vision of inter-fraternal jealousy, it might have been in and of Lubaland that Socrates uttered the corrosive words: Envy is the filthy slime of the soul. Which leads me to explain that each rival wife poisons the mind of the swarms of young nursery princes, every baby boy drinking in this lethal doctrine of civil war with his mother's milk. "*Luana lwa nyeke lwa Valwa*" is the well-known proverb for all this: The eternal warfare of the Luba people—"eternal" because polygamy is eternal, and "warfare" because a throne is at stake.

"Whose is it?" shouts one hot-brained black to another, pointing, as he shouts, to the veins of blood in his right arm. "It is not *his* own blood [i.e. the King's] and *did I ask him* to give me of his own right royal blood in my veins?" Just here, then, in these deadly notions of "prince prestige," you have the guarantee of unbroken strife, for by this very flourish of spear is he not demonstrating how fit

a cut-throat King he, the aspirant, would be? Did he not begin life just thus? When a mere baby, did they not applaud him when he gave his own Queen-mamma a stinging smack in the face? That very smacked mother, too, did she not in very joy turn to him the other cheek also? "What a fine warrior he will make!" is the vain maternal commendation bestowed on that young dog who dared to bite the hand that fed him. So back we swing to the cast-iron formula, "Not unto seeds, as of many . . ."

Yes, polygamy does spoil it all. Quizzing them on this problem you find it is often the women who want it for domestic economy reasons. Is not the man an eat-all who must dine with a few invited guests at each meal? So Mrs. No. 1, with a woman's fatal quickness, sees she would need to slave it to keep the pot going, hence her solution in advising him to marry even a second and third wife; the more women, the less work for one. In fine, according to this Luban liar, only two good women are known in palm-land, one dead, the other unborn. We chanced on one such marriage to-day, the bridegroom marrying his Number Eleventh. Instead of being ashamed he looked as conceited as the famous cock that thought the sun had risen to hear him crow. There was a wealth of beer and mush for all-comers, the sort of cake and cards of Lubaland; no ring, and what should be the incredible substitute but a cupid's dart—the Luban arrow being the sacred symbol of marriage? When this dart is proffered and accepted, then the maiden becomes a matron, tied as tight as an Archbishop can make them.

Then they danced like demons for a night and day, the stream of changing partners in this wedding-dance being quite typical of the negro wedding itself, marriage a mere matrimonial dance with constant change of partners. Instead of a garland of orange blossoms, they deserve their appropriate bunch of nettles, "bridal" being spelt "bridle." Of course, this much-married Africa has to pay for all this, the result being daily, disgusting divorce. In one village I found all the women had worked almost right round the town in wedlock, changing wife being sure of changing husband. But it gets worse than that, and

oftener the woman who has tried marriage half a dozen times, throws the idea up and lives on the loose. Like she of Samaria, "thou hast had five husbands, and now (*with brow of brass*) *he whom thou hast is not thy husband.*"

The approaching wet season has a way of forcing sharp decisions and unless we hurry we shall be meteorologically murdered. Yet chief after chief bars the trail and even after a week's stay at a town these dawdlers who never had watch or almanac want to know why we are running away? They are shocked at this horrible, this insulting "delirium of speed." That look of odium seems to suggest that it is all as bad as a man rushing through the National Gallery on a bicycle to study the pictures. It is therefore with a sick sense of futility we try to elaborate our explanation: it all ends in high words and higher heads. Not much *Imitatio Christi* about that business.

Even Livingstone on one such worry-beset day lost his head and whipped out a revolver *à la* St. Peter. And his was no fly-away nature, remember: Scotch caution flowed in his veins. The local chief insisted for days (with all a weak man's obstinacy) on barring his progress, and the Doctor flashed back in irritated expostulation. But the fact that he had not even a nodding acquaintance with their dialect made matters worse and tricked him into some silly empty-revolver melodrama. Just so: the very thing they were egging him on to do, the very thing Livingstone regularly did not do. He regretted it afterwards. And in his regret one mighty fact swallowed up all lesser emotions; I mean, the clear comprehension that this Dick Turpin stunt was against his own ideal mode of moving amongst these black Sons of Belial. He had written against it, spoken against it, and years afterwards they cited this stupid pistol-pointing episode against him to Giraud when he came in from the East. Good old man; his eyes had less fire and more fatigue in those lessening days.

North near Mukungu's the natives had yelled at him, then threatened, then threw stones at his canoe, but Livingstone refused to hit back and ran on. Beaching the boat at last on a sand spit he seasoned his frugal meal with a little moral philosophy until calm contempt was



chased out of his brain by the compassion that exculpated the natives but saddled the Arabs with the blame. Or was it because Feraji was grilling the legs of a guinea-fowl with one hand while he roasted deliciously scented coffee with another on a mimosa log fire ?



CHAPTER XII  
STILL STRAIGHT SOUTH

*You cannot get to London by sitting on a Bradshaw guide, nor can the African get anywhere by merely buying a Bible he cannot read. What's the use of a looking-glass to a blind man?*

*“Time enough for the longest duty, but not for the shortest sin.”*

*“We lie to God in prayer, if we do not rely on Him after prayer.”*

*“Self-conceit is self-deceit.”*

*“The Livingstone Cult.”*

## CHAPTER XII

### STILL STRAIGHT SOUTH

**W**HITHER away? We follow up the Luapula ("The Piercer") as far as Kavira's, then say good-bye for quite a month as it rather resentfully takes a biggish bend west. Well-wooded hills now lying athwart our path go rolling on and up into Ushiland. The Luongo on its right bank is the Lunda limit of jurisdiction and old Kazembe's safe-conduct, thus far and no farther, works wonders. Across stream is the northern border of Ushiland, while farther up this same Luongo the Kishinga people lord it under Chikumbi. These latter, though not known to fame, are first in prowess and actually drove off my old Mushidi's *ne plus ultra* war parties on the west. But the British defeat at Kazembe's north gate has now put the clock back for many a day and the blacks are all cheeky. Moreover streaming up from the unknown south come all sorts of congratulatory embassies, the bearers of many a king's gift to the great Kazembe who dared to stem the tide of advancing English. For his fight was verily theirs, and is not he the northern gate-keeper for the whole south? "The tallest trees are most in the power of the winds," so the local proverb runs, and does not Kazembe's challenge-name *Mwangapubula* mean the "Ever-green-tree:—lop-my-branches but I-will-still sprout"? Hence these complimentary visits they are paying him, for being the tallest monarchical tree in the land, he gets most of the English annexation blast. But they all wonder who we are, and whether Kazembe is mad to let us thus through the lines to spy their land of promise.

You dare not be even a little casual. A lot of ready resource and fine tact are necessary. Your inflated post-victory negro can be insolently familiar: no Geneva Red

Cross rules in here. The Chief treated my "Livingstone" message in far too jaunty and jocular a way, and began to be desperately conversational, examining my camera with extreme absorption, and finding it a good excuse for changing "the salvation subject." He peered and pried into the thing, and was surprised to hear that, having no developer, long months might elapse and yet the minutest detail would come out in developing, and all the result of that fraction-of-a-second snap he saw me take to-day. As, however, he had begun this camera subject far too obviously to shut me up, I resolved to turn his own camera expedient against him by way of a parting puncture. "Good-bye, Mr. Chief, you despise it all, but remember, as the photoplate, so the soul of a negro; a missionary hurries into your town, hurries off, his 'three words' a mere snapshot, and away. Days grow into months, months into years, but who knows if one day somehow, somewhither, you will not go plunge into the bath of regeneration and then this little snapshot sermon of to-day will all come out in finest detail!" These words measurably reduced the stature of the man who locally ranks as No. 1, Class A. He drops the inspection of the camera idea, at any rate, and by way of a change is now looking with intense curiosity at nothing whatever, "doctrine dodging" is their phrase.

No bull-at-a-gate methods either. The greased-lightning express is not yet running in these latitudes. On the fourth of July we found the earth revolving just as usual, and the informative Chisunka took us into his confidence as to the finesse necessary in approaching this mad Mieremiere. He (C.) is a good sort who sees no visions and dreams no dreams. Thinks our plan to cut through all obstacles is like the curate's egg, only good in parts. Our minimum baggage is maximum to him, and he thinks most benevolently that we should leave it all with him. Even such small, selfish adjuncts of life as blankets and pots, what do we need with them? Denuded of all impedimenta *we* could go anywhere. So he comes to business. Admiring our nerve but not our judgment he smiles indulgently when I wave my hand to the spotless sky and repeat my pet dictum that the boundaries of nations are not the frontiers

of human hearts. In a sincere more-in-sorrow-than-in-anger tone, he insisted that we must now be placid nonentities ; must not run in upon him abruptly ; must in fact have two sets of heralds, two going on five days ahead and two following these up. His third must is really a mustn't. " And don't whisper about the plundered boat. Oh, no ! "

Then we get off and do a modest ten miles when we slacken pace until Mieremiere expresses his desire for working us into his scheme of things. We are supposed to have no scheme of our own in another man's kingdom. Freedom is only another form for selfishness. But do not yawn at this red-tape of black men. Counterbalancing a multitude of villainies is this compensation of their stringent ceremony defying you to throw it to the winds. Not to platitudinise : we are here for the Christ of David Livingstone Whose name is " the nail in a sure place. " And probably we can best explain this title by remembering that a nail in hard wood needs much preliminary boring by the gimlet of courtesy and ceremony. Otherwise the hard wood of this repellent land will make a crooked nail for you. To pooh-pooh all this negro ceremony is as bad as trying to drive in a nail into ebony without a preliminary use of the borer.

Across the bare plains in the morning comes a faint but bitterly cold wind, a wind that has not ceased insidiously to cut even when the sun is well up. River courses on these pampas are not steep-banked as lower down, and the result is soft marshes damp all the year round. Well spoke a negro to-day, " A river is a man, give it time to dilly-dally and it will soon make a mess. " The terrors of taboo in Africa are such that even here where a bit of beef is the tribal boon you can encounter a Vegetarian (*mushilanyama*) whose very life lies in abjuring meat in any form—here, mark you, where flesh of beast or even reptile is *summum bonum*. No mere food faddist, this solemn Vegetarian's very name " Thou-shalt-not " challenges all comers to prove against him even one breach of his cookery code—thrives on it too, if one may judge from his aldermanic abdomen. On the march it is amusing to see him spot with gusto a mushroom peeping out of the forest

undergrowth, "The Vegetarian's antelope," he calls this fungus. Then clown-like he acts the part, simulating a hunter's creeping stealthily on his bogus prey. You may now behold this mock Nimrod solemnly stalking his mushroom like a living thing, actually aiming his long stick at it with the pleasant pretence of a baby boy playing at shooting with papa's umbrella. Then finally the infantile imitative bang from his explosive lips, as he pounces on his slain mushroom! The aggressive manner in which he struts past the caravan, conceited curve on lips, flaunting his dinner of "vegetable venison," is an amusing instance of the pertinacious propaganda of vegetarianism. He believes not only in cause and effect, but also in God who causes all effects. Has in fact a "grace before meat" idea, the ritual of which runs:

*"No rain, no mushrooms.  
No God, no anything."*

And no wonder, for as I have said, he thrives on it, this dinner being quite a success from the gastronomical point of view. He is fat as a thanksgiving turkey or a Christmas goose, beans alone giving him more proteids than actual venison; say, 24.5 from ground nuts as against 19.3 in lean meat. These ground nuts, too, run out in analysis at 50.0 fat as against 3.6 in average lean meat. Even his ill-smelling manioc treats the stomach far better than it does the nostrils: an Englishman may hold his nose at the manioc odour, but he cannot turn up that same member at its marvellous chemical analysis. Peckolt proves it to be more nutritive all round than wheat, stronger in proteids and fat than this latter, and almost equal in starch. So the cry for millet and maize as against manioc is only partially justified; the former have only 9.3 and 9.5 proteids to the latter's 12.78.

This bed-rock business of soil tillage recalls how each child at birth is consecrated to the axe or hoe in the mid-wife's cry, "He is for the axe," or "She is for the hoe." Be it baby boy or baby girl, the very moment of birth has an agricultural implication in it. This "he is for the axe" is the technical farmer's tool, and means that the man





THE FIGHT FOR SANITATION: "GUTTING OUT THE CLOTTED MASSES OF TROPICAL SLUMS."

1. The shady streets.
2. Another glimpse behind a house at the hour of evening prayer.
3. The cleaning up of the native compounds at back.



makes way for the woman's hoe by clearing the thick bush with his axe. This tillage of theirs is so amusingly the be-all and end-all of the African's life, that right on into civilisation his word for work of any sort (bricks, sawing, etc.) is the same old "*midimo*," i.e. cultivation. To smile at this verbal vagary of the African merely means that we are twitting our own English tongue with the same etymological error. Why forget that an *artist* in velvet coat, an *artisan* with no coat at all, both derive from *aro*, I plough? For, coat or no coat, who will deny that the artist and artisan are forced to go back to the land for the bread that is the staff and staple of life? Is not the verb "to be" in Latin the same as "to eat"? The artist cannot eat his pictures, can he? Nor the artisan his bricks? As Professor Max Müller said at Oxford: "Even in such a word as *artistic*, the predicative power of the root *ar*, to plough, may still be perceived. The Brahmans, who call themselves *arya* in India, were no more aware of the real origin of this name and its connection with agricultural labour, than the artist who now speaks of his *art* as a divine inspiration suspects that the word which he uses was originally applicable only to so primitive an art as that of ploughing!"

Towards the year's end and on into January, is the time when semi-famine haunts these lands, almost 50 per cent. of the staple red millet having been brewed off in a most insidious fluid, hot heady beer. All this swilling (so they say) because they "want [*uku lava*] to forget." Hence this Nemesis famine as penalty for resting their cracked heads on the breast of Old Booze. "To forget" was their drunken objective, they sought oblivion in their beer; but famine never forgets, famine defies you to be oblivious. Cassava (manioc), sheet anchor of the tropics, they despise because there is no malt in it. Yet the God of David Livingstone sends His rain on the evil and the good, and He it is who again dramatically intervenes to save these famished toppers from their silly selves. This is the very season, this the very month, when man's extremity is God's opportunity, and over twenty, to be exact, twenty-two, different sorts of "God-grown" wild fruits are edible; not to name eleven sorts and sizes of forest roots, with nine

more (perhaps twelve more) specimens of leaves of various plants mashed into a spinach. All for the picking. All in the same December, same January, that clamours for some equivalent in edibles. Such is Heaven's revenge on black boozers. We try all the time to clarify stupidity with common sense, but they think we have the stupidity and they the copyright of all common sense. Prepayment, for example, is their initial demand for any purchase, the verb "to die" being equivalent to "to pay" (*fweta* from *fwa*). Buy a spear, an axe or a hoe and they say that the said spear, etc., "dies" at a certain sum, the purchase price. Penetrating their fog of metaphor I find this "die = pay" analogy is the same as our English "the debt of nature" equating "to die." Thus it is, as death looms ahead, *the* superlative sum to be paid by every mortal alive, and as the lesser is contained in the greater, so through life all smaller sums "paid" are only minor "deaths" compared with *the* debt, *the* death, last and largest of all.

In order to change a subject that has not yet begun, I must remark that the nakeder the natives about here the merrier the mob. Livingstone, it is said, died leaving a pathetic one shilling and sixpence in his purse; pathetic, for money had no currency in these lands, his great barter being beads. He set out with 14½ loads and these beads were clamoured for in some places, but repudiated as not *à la mode* in others. Get the right size and colour and you have captured the tribal heart. Mere calico is minor compared with beads: "We do not want cloth," is their cry, "give us something to wear! Give us beads." More clothes means more worry, their euphemism for "worry" being an indelicate phrase about fleas gendered in the creases of the cloth. Such is their symbolism for the worries attendant on the clothed state—these scratchy clothes.

Worse than that, they say only the dead deserve to be clothed, this obviously to hide their offensive corruption; hence the verb *fwala*, "to dress," is the same root as "to die." Thus, at the back of the black man's brain, "dress" as a technical term means "deformity hiding," hence this cheeky mob of nearly-naked smilers boasting they were ("look at us!") formed not deformed. As a concession

to circumstances, however, they wear skins flapping fore and aft, saying, *à la* Genesis iii. 21, they are "God-made" garments because no weaver ever turned out an antelope's skin. The looms of God gave both man and antelope their skins, but as antelopes were made for man (not the man for the antelope) so the one skin is stripped to keep the other skin warm. Oh, but they are a mad lot and many a missionary in the future will find the clothing of their black bodies operates conversely to the stripping of their souls. I told them it is rather like the great Persian, so unhappy that his astrologers declared the royal happiness could only be assured by his wearing the shirt of a perfectly happy man. So they searched high, searched low, searched court, city, country, but all in vain till they got him at last, yes, got the perfectly happy man of their quest. And he was a labourer coming from his work. And he, oh! my masters, he had no shirt at all. On hearing this no-clothes-no-sorrow episode they laughed the laugh of self-justification, again making their execrable etymology "fleas" = "worries" run together like steel to magnet. "For no shirt on his back means no fleas thereon, and no fleas means no worries, etc." But I wasn't taking any. They laughed loud at this, but I did not give it even the benediction of a smile. My conclusion was quite the contrary: what is the good of our meeting, mystifying and misunderstanding each other? "No," I rattled out, "this no-clothes conception must stop, for the first thing God did to man on the road to his redemption was to clothe him."

Slaving parties having swept the land, this explains how all through the *Last Journals* the bitter problem seems to be how to get even the meanest sort of native cereals for sale. Yet he gets his little laugh out of this extremity in edibles. "The Ptolemaic map," he writes, "defines the people of Africa according to their food. The Elephantophagi, the Struthiophagi, the Ichthyophagi, and Anthrophagi." If we followed the same sort of classification our definition would be the drink, thus: "the tribe of stout-guzzlers, the roaring potheen-fuddlers, the whisky-fishoid-drinkers, the vin-ordinaire-bibbers, the lager-beer-swillers, and an outlying tribe of the brandy-cocktail persuasion."

All very breezy for a hungry dying man with a supper of wild mushroom or brown beans. The old monks said, "Man is what he eats," and this, as I have pointed out, their own Latin language reminded them : every time they said "*non est*" they were proclaiming the fact that the verb "to be" and "to eat" are the same. Do not even we speak about "com(est)ibles" ? The African says, "Drink beer, think beer," and all over the vast interior the verb "to be" (*di*) and "to eat" are the same. Even that devil's deputy, a Luban cannibal, defends his defiling meal of "black beef" by saying, "Eat man and you become doubly man."

"Folks is folks," and here is the reason why. The world is not so wide after all : St. Paul gripped me to-day ; his one line to Timothy "give attendance to reading" set me off. Hence my giving a mere *en passant* lesson to some boys in syllables. Paul began it and Paul was in the whole ding-dong attempt. Picking out *ta* and *da*, I tried to drum it into my Juniors, but never a *ta* or *da* would they, could they echo back. They of the pug noses nasalised the whole lot, *nta*, always *nta—nda*, always *nda*, but never once plain *ta* or *da*. I was piqued, but finally burst out laughing when it dawned on me that Paul, as a small boy, had learned this very rule in his Greek school that *n* can only stand before *t* and *d*. Besides, Paul is not done with us : try them with the labial *p*. Ask them for a hundred hours to say *npa* and they will be forced to pronounce *mpa* for *npa*. Thus the Paul who began this business with his "give attendance to reading" was as much in the lesson at the end as the beginning : all *his n's* before *p* became *m à la Africa*.

St. Paul again : this time it was an inadequate attempt to translate a bit of his Epistle to that same Timothy. The first rough draft is futile because wooden : but what spurs you on is Paul's own cry, "Fulfil ye my joy." Come to the point : Is not Paul in Heaven interested in the fate of his glorious Epistles not yet translated in our far and foreign tongue ? Yes, down comes his cry, "Fulfil ye my joy" in seeing these Epistles of mine reach out to the earth's end, for the last shall be first. Yes, "fulfil ye my

joy" in the translating and printing of my Romans, my Galatians, my Ephesians and all the rest, for they are not mine but thine. To use that great prepositional Americanism it is "up to us" because it comes *down* to us from the excellent glory; I mean, Paul *pro* Christ sounding down night and day this "Fulfil ye my joy, my Pauline joy, in this matter of my Epistles"! Was his "Corinthians" written to those at Corinth only? Did he not add, "to *all that in every place* call upon the name of Jesus Christ our Lord both theirs and ours"? So it comes to this, drastically to this, that Africa, all Africa must get that "Corinthians" of his.

When these polyglot natives gather for service, then it is, *à la* Livingstone, a powerful contrast grips you; I mean, that old obvious difference between The Old and The New, between Law and Grace. What an inversion between our forest hymn and those exiles by the streams of Babel who whined against singing the Lord's song in a strange land. "How shall we sing the Lord's song in a strange land?" said they—how not, indeed? In the New Testament a strange land is the very place to sing it. The stranger the land the newer the song. The farther you go the nearer it becomes. This is no digression, remember; these exiles hunched up and disconsolate have set me going in a double sense, because but for Babel, literal or linguistic Babel, I would never have seen these lands, never studied their languages, never written this book. "Babel," the very word is a contrastive challenge between Genesis xi. and Mark xvi.: was it not at that very Babel God in judgment scattered men abroad on the face of the earth? Just as in grace He follows up those very wanderers in Mark xvi. by sending the Gospel into all the world to every creature? Look at the literal Genesis xi. words: "So the Lord scattered them abroad from Babel upon the face of *all* the earth." Then run on to the Mark xvi. command that follows them up: "Go ye into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature."

There is a double check. For does not this preaching postulate some sort of lingo in which to preach? There is no need here for any slipshod surmising. The Babel-

deed is doubled when you contrast the confounding of the language of those scattered polyglots with the day of Pentecost when God caused every man to hear the Gospel in his own tongue. Mark and contrast "that they might not understand one another's speech" of Genesis xi. with "now hear we every man in his own language wherein he was born" of Acts ii. 8. Then, ye of the Livingstone Cult laugh loud, not the laugh of levity but loyalty, as you see the same old amusing "confounded" occurring in the same Genesis, same Acts. The former says they were "confounded" because of not being able to speak. The latter says they were "confounded" because they all heard in their own tongue.

"Go to, let us go down and there *confound* their language, that they may not understand one another's speech" (Gen. xi. 7). "Now they were *confounded*, because every man heard them in his own language" (Acts ii. 6).

It is, I suppose, superfluous to remind the reader that far from my having gone off at a word, this is the very expletive of tongue-tied newcomers' "confounded"! In their exasperation the natives call it "*kankalwa!*" ("confounded," from verb "to confound"), and the English in rousing old Anglo-Saxon echo the same "confounded!" both uttering this Babel-password with that old quick gesture of repudiation reiterated round the globe. Too often this leads to the Kiplingese solution of pudding-stone pronunciation, when, as with the Sergeant,

"It was neither Hindustani, French nor Coptic;  
It was odds and ends and leavings of the same,  
Translated with a stick (which is really half the trick),  
And Pharaoh harked to Sergeant What's-his-name."

To get off into the long grass, means that any permanent and permissible picture of the route must never ignore our little path twisting ahead like a cork-screw trail. This is the old slave track, and even at the risk of being accused of lacking a true literary discretion or reticence, I propose to restore the balance of this narrative by recording the fact that "saintly" souls have, in days gone by, so trafficked in the bodies and souls of negroes. This is only another annoying illustration of the truth that the



ecstasy of a mystic is a poor proof of sanctity : that in fact, feelings are only like fiddle-strings—screw them up and play any tune you like on them. Nor need you go far to prove it. Here in the middle of this old slave track we camp to keep the Lord's Supper, the witness of our corporate life, and in this connection a curious case of disillusionment occurs. The hymn we sing is John Newton's grand old favourite, "How sweet the name of Jesus sounds," a hymn hushed in that leafy sanctuary in the heart of the forest ; sanctuary, alas ! through which the old slave track ran out to the ocean.

True, we are the guests of God enjoying the hospitalities of Heaven, but there is an ugly discord of the worst teeth-on-edge kind. Where does it come in if not in the ugly fact that this dear John Newton of Olney did most damnably continue to carry on the slave trade for many years after his conversion ? You may draw all your distinctions, allow all your extenuations, but finally must face the fact that he it was who penned these ugly words : "I never knew sweeter or more frequent hours of divine communion than in my last two [slave !] voyages to Guinea." Fancy the Lord's Table spread across that slave track, then fancy the Lord further the conflicting emotions of the same John Newton as arch-slaver and arch-hymnwriter, both the slaving and hymnwriting in his Christian career. This singing-slaving atrocity rankles all the time the wind tries to make amends by producing cathedral music from the swaying trees. Is not this the very slave track and this the very hymn of the slaver ?

Such are the contrary yet co-existing tendencies of the human heart that the very Bill of Lading of a slave-cargo contained the Christian tag that these chattels were duly shipped by "the Grace of God." But, after all, good John Newton could shut our mouths in this matter of distracting thoughts at the Lord's Table. For who ever suggests that his hymn ran : "How sweet the name of Newton sounds" ? Does not the memorial command brush aside all such human phantoms in the sweeping, centralising words : "This do in remembrance of *Me*" ? And if the supreme Eucharistic privilege

be to forget ourselves and remember Christ, then can we surely forget the John Newton who really, after all, did die a beloved bond-servant of Jesus Christ. William Jay saw John just at the end of his life. The mind and tongue of the old preacher were past their business: "My memory is nearly gone," he murmured, "but I remember two things: that I am a great sinner, and that Christ is a great Saviour." The same stout old warrior this who passed along a word of cheer to all Missionaries: "I, John Newton, cannot despair of the ultimate conversion of the heathen when I remember the power of the Gospel upon myself."

Looking west across the Luapula reminds me that we are now cut off from the Atlantic by the blocking of the western slave trail. Thus the salient and unassailable truth now stares us in the face that we must link up with this eastern side and the Indian Ocean. This we accept with alacrity when we remember what a predatory creature our west-coast Bihean is, a man who has been merely exploiting us for his own slaving purposes. With his keen faculty for drawing rapid deductions he had reckoned on penetrating the interior under the wing of the Missionaries, the delivery of even a few letters being his perverse pretext for plying the old trade in the souls of men. Certainly, the Belgians have resolved to break the back of this western traffic, and under the name "Vamoyo" have struck terror far out west into the Luvale country. Thus the duel begins between the Congo State and these Portuguese slavers, a struggle that will be marked by many rough reprisals. Large slave caravans led by old roadsters like Sachitota and Luiz have been attacked and plundered by the Belgians, but when this news spread west a passion for Martinis began, and large sums were paid to the Portuguese for breech-loaders. Ten, fifteen, and even twenty slaves were paid for one repeating rifle, the accessory cartridges even fetching higher prices still. One slave per ten cartridges was considered a fair figure.

A sorry story this gun-running finally became, for one oily little Englishman wriggled in from Loanda and, with all the *sang-froid* of Captain Kettle, hoisted The Jack and

sold dozens of Martinis for slaves. Followed up by a band of State soldiers, this little man was deserted by his natives, so he calmly piled up his iron trunks across the trail, took cover, and in a series of long singing shots opened fire on the advancing soldiers through the loopholes formed by his 60-lb. trunks. But when the soldiers saw one after another of their number roll over wounded, the forest rang with their hullabaloo and back they rushed to headquarters, saying in sober earnest, "Never man shot like this man." A black-art notion this, that because it was only one man who thus struck terror into them, that therefore they must flee. As clever with his tongue as with his .303, this little Captain Kettle is the type who sits down in the forest and gripping your arm with a confidential emphasis calmly gives you chapter and verse for slavery from the Law and the Prophets, adding blandly that there is more serfdom in urban England than in rural Africa. All this silly screed as though no Jesus Christ had ever lived, died, and rose again to abolish it. Another smuggler of a more truculent type was an Irishman to his bone and marrow—a Tipperary boy (I could swear to the brogue!) who could scarcely write his own name. This waster's endless brag was that his brother was an Irish M.P., and his stock phrase to brow-beat officials was the threat in broadest brogue, "Shure and I'll write to me brother in the House."

With this shutting of the Lualaba crossing our old Biheans have poured into the north and sold tons of powder to the Lubans. Shut out from our Katanga they now resolve to reciprocate and shut us in, so out there at the Kapa cross-roads in mid-forest these slavers gathered the other day in their thousands and dramatically put this country under formal curse and interdict. Standing at the "fork-roads" looking east, there they are waving their fetishes threateningly and pouring torrents of tirade into the African air. Then they proceed formally to "block" the road in to us by "the ceremony of the curse," regardless of the reflex law ordaining that compliments come home to roost. What is this "ceremony of the curse"? (1) A powder barrel is ominously filled with sand to remind us

of the sort of powder the interior tribes had before he, the Bihean, had mercy on them and imported the European kind from the west. (2) This taunting barrel of sand is now put across the eastern trail (i.e. our old trunk road in from the Atlantic) and then an old bow and blunt arrow are laid on the top of it, eloquent with irony as to their primitive weapon, and finally topping all comes a worn-out antelope skin—the climax of insult as to their old-time nakedness. Farewell, burly friends! in a less flattering sense we agree that ye did make these far-interior lands what they are, a pandemonium of slaughter, a charnel-house of woe.

Is there no gleam of hope even here? Yes, my former senior colleague, Mr. Swan, adds a postscript to it all. Years ago one such slaver saw Christ as the liberator of slaves, he, an old slaver, greatest slave of all. Living in illicit union with a black woman, he proved sincerity of soul by marrying this mother of his children. Then came the conversion of this surprised wife, surprised at the change in her partner, surprised at the new life beginning for her. The next phase is a break with Africa, and in 1911 he goes home to Portugal, boldly bringing wife and children with him. But there is trouble lurking ahead for him, trouble with lawyers and legal documents. Be it explained, although his old partnership with his brother was mutually and morally dissolved, yet a failure to get this duly documented by a lawyer is going to be his undoing. The brother in Africa has neither relented nor repented: he still continues to exploit their joint-names, runs up a pile of debts and—absconds! Then the long arm of Portugal, having failed to catch the real culprit, stretches across from Angola to Lisbon and arrests the astounded brother who had washed his hands of it long ago. The authorities also take possession of all money he has in the bank. Then comes a nice point. What about that sum of money, hard-earned money, he had handed over to the Mission some time ago for aggressive spiritual work? Surely the Missionary is right in refunding it *pro tem*. Yes, refund is the verb but *pro tem*. is its authentic adverb, and this *pro tem*. he never forgets, no, nor the intervening 4 per cent. Thus it

was he was taken away back to Africa for his trial, but God so stood by the man who so stood by Him that he was released on promise to work off all those debts of another. It was a ten years' struggle, but he did it all and nobly, the last payment being his proudest and pleasantest. I mean, of course, the refunding plus 4 per cent. of that old gift he gave long ago, a gift for the progress of God's work in the souls of men.

Livingstone's favourite, the Apostle Paul, boasted about his "manner of entering in among them," but I am afraid our caravan coming out of the grass must look the advance guard of a travelling circus. The milch goat leads the way on a string, then comes the cook, our camp clock ringing out the early hours with precision, then a dog, then one of the many local monkeys, and then, perhaps the great Circus Hengler himself—a Missionary on a donkey. So on we go "southing" it, and to introduce you to the sort of country we are passing through is simplicity itself. A strip of thickish forest with lofty trees, slabs of grey granite lying awkwardly around, then the inevitable soft peat bog, The first notion, as you come out of the trees, is a velvet-like meadow, but soon, splash! splash! undeceives. Livingstone coming down from Kisinga, in one stretch of sixty miles only, had to cross twenty-nine of these squirting sponges, one for every two miles. They are super-saturated with oxide of iron from the big patches of brown hæmatite that crop out everywhere, and streams of this oxide, as thick as treacle, are seen moving slowly along in the sponge, like small red glaciers. His own description is best: "These sponges are met with in slightly depressed valleys without trees or bushes, in a forest country where the grass, being only a foot or fifteen inches high, and thickly planted, often looks like a beautiful glade in a gentleman's park in England. They are from a quarter of a mile to a mile broad, and from two to ten or more miles long. When past the stream, and apparently on partially dry ground, one may jog in a foot or more, and receive a squirt of black mud up the thighs: it is only when you reach the trees and are off the sour land that you feel secure from mud and leeches. As one has to strip the lower part of the person

in order to ford them, I found that often four were as many as we could cross in a day."

They tell us that right on from September 1866 to December 1868 he never saw sugar, never saw coffee, never saw tea, and when some one at Kazembe gave him a 'dish cooked with honey "it nauseated from its horrible sweetness." "This is the true Lent," says Livingstone, "why not spend the forty days off among the outlying tribes bearing unavoidable hunger and thirst with a good grace? Fastings and vigils without a special object in view are time run to waste. They are made to minister to a sort of self-gratification instead of being turned to account for the good of others. They are like groaning in sickness. Some people amuse themselves when ill with continuous moaning."

Thus this man was not David Livingstone for nothing, so let us follow him farther south.











## BOOK III

### CHAPTER XIII ALONG LONGITUDE 29°

*Livingstone detested what he called  
“geographical Christianity,” and, to  
test his talk, here bidden in Africa he  
has God as Spectator, all the way, all  
the day.*

*“My views of what is missionary duty are not so contracted as those whose ideal is a dumpy sort of man with a Bible under his arm.”*

*Livingstone.*

*“I read the whole Bible through four times whilst I was in Manyema.”*

*Idem.*

*“The Bible gathers wonderful interest from the circumstances in which it is read.”*

*Idem.*

## CHAPTER XIII

### ALONG LONGITUDE 29°

**B**E it remembered we are still going straight south. Aping the Kazembe arrangement down-stream, a dual chieftainship is common up here, even a triad is not rare. But the ideal is a young man, thick-necked and vociferous, with greed vulpine and wives legion. However, life is not all strawberries and cream, even for this fortunate fellow: his harem often gets out of hand and goes on strike, "the crowing hens and the silent cock" idea. Add to this the decline in prestige of his little law-court under the big tree, a decline caused by most astounding decisions, for Mulundu said to me with a tricky twinkle: "Litigation is our profession." And don't they generally victimise the honest old mat-maker or the fisherman? Seest thou a man diligent in his business in Ushiland, verily he will soon stand before kings—on a summons for seizure of his goods.

All the ingenuity of their laughable law, and all its cruelty, are brought into operation to crush the industry out of the town, and why wonder that the iron-workers combine to form a formidable cult? But even this Chief, fertile in false expedients, is forced on occasion to own up that the decision in some of these curious lawsuits debated is utterly beyond his ken. Of one such lawyer's puzzle he said: "Ah! gentlemen, this tangled case is a mote-in-the-eye difficulty. If it were merely a *mucus-in-the-nose puzzle*, I would blow it out, but alas! a mote-in-the-eye difficulty—ulu! ulu!" Nevertheless this contrasting of the eyes with the nose is very uncommon, for the Vemba rule is the reverse. For instance, here are two men who struck up such a close friendship of the David-and-Jonathan sort that they were called "Messrs. Nose and Eyes." The reason is, that these

two members are in such close sympathy with each other that the eyes water when the nose is in trouble, even as vice versa the nose runs when the eyes are in a fix. Again : any chief who slams his village-gate on us and refuses to "receive" is also called Mr. Eyes. Ask them why, and they respond : "The eyes receive no visitors ; if even a speck of dust enters, they weep tears." A good description this of us two Missionaries, two specks of dust who, if they entered the town of Mr. Eyes, would make him weep.

These lawsuits are long verbose things full of rockets and red fire. Beginning as a mere trickle of nouns, verbs, and adjectives, the stream of this bush lawyer's rhetoric flows on with gathered and growing volume in an ever-deepening channel of united purpose and unexhausted resolve—to rob the other fellow. His loquacious climax would make you laugh unless you knew and anticipated this antic. For he winds it all up with a song ! This cracked tune is the technical climax. It is a parable he is singing, and this parable when sung (not spoken) is equivalent to a man underlining what he has written. To merely *speak* this legal parable is equal to only writing it ; whereas to sing it for emphasis is like italicising the words already written. Fancy the Gilbertian fun in European courts if every lawyer in clinching his argument had to burst out in warbling song by way of emphasising his point. The wizened old man who snapped off his gibble-gabble and shrilled his terminal song in parable, certainly the one and only point he did prove was that he could not sing a note.

Here is a specimen charge-sheet for you. (1) Paying sweetly for sweets : The accused was begged to buy honey and demurred to purchase. "Nay, but taste a little to sample same," quoth the honey man. Result, one lick of the proffered honey and—a lawsuit. (2) Look out how you look : The accused looked at a manioc field too long, too intently. Result : the evil eye—and a lawsuit, for a cat may look at a king, but a native must not look at another's field. (3) A case of one cross making him more cross : Accused came to cross roads, found a "patteran" of green sprig of leaves lying across one of the bisected paths,



THE KING ADJUDICATING.



THE KING ARRIVES.





stepped over the leaves and—a lawsuit. (4) He would have wood: Accused gathered a few twigs in the woods, and was told that the parcel of ground on which he stood was a man's field, prospective field, and—a lawsuit. (5) Three sorts of "wells": Accused drank from a well and—well, it was not well with him—a lawsuit. (6) Two "dumps": Accused entered a camp, dumped his load on the ground and—a lawsuit. "How dare you, a mere stranger, camp without a royal permit to do so?" (7) Two "finds": A having left a basket on the trail, disappeared for a moment, and B coming along the road found what he thought was a lost basket, but found—a lawsuit instead. (8) Three plays on "rest": A sat down by the road to rest, but there is no rest for the wicked and—the rest of the story runs that, like a bolt from the blue, B drops on him, charging him with disturbing the graves of his ancestors—a lawsuit. (9) Solemn saliva: A man spitting on the ground successfully evaded four of a local man's intruding toes but left the faintest trickle on the fifth. Sequel: one slave and sixty yards of calico as solatium and damages.

It is the old inversion that the law of many a "lawsuit does not suit the litigant." The very vagueness of data is the reason why their forensic shouts rend the air. The gesticulation is so wonderful that it would have pleased even that Irishman who, while complimenting his undemonstrative but clever advocate on the successful issue of his pleading, protested nevertheless that he did not "squander his carcass enough." The crowning absurdity in these lawsuits (literally, "words!") is their digging up the name of God from the depths of their devildom and trying to get leverage for their lie from the name of deity. What, then, does it all mean: this inveterate racial habit of punctuating a black lie with blasphemy? You have not long to wait for your answer: going along the path a few miles, you peer into a hamlet and one glance discovers the true key to this lock of lying. There you have a dozen natives grouped round a small pot and you can see the boiling-water ordeal appealed to. That is to say, so hard-mouthed is the negro that both sides brazen out their denial of a

crime until the only resort is the scalding-water ordeal. What has driven them into this stupid legal cul-de-sac? The hard cross-swearing of a nation of liars is such that they are forced to gamble away the decision by appealing to the "poison" test. Hardness of mouth could not decide the matter, hence they demand the "boiling-water" test, in order to make the decision hinge on hardness of skin. What with hard mouths and hard skins no wonder the Africans are such a hard lot.

What hours of wrangling could not do, behold this "heads I win, tails you lose" solution, and the two litigants decide all as they plunge hands into the scalding water. A timid truthful woman with soft hands is sure to lose her appeal. Yet this ordeal, although the falsest of things, is the strongest thread in the fabric of tribal life; here, indeed, "every mouth is stopped," and the appeal crushingly final. Deduction: mere hardness of skin is the African touch-stone of truth, and the more thick-skinned the liar, the surer of acquittal by this scalding-water appeal. Think of a race for centuries with this fact soaking into its soul, that the biggest liars can bluff the "boiling-water" ordeal, and be publicly declared guiltless. It means (and mark this!) that each negro believes each lie is the truth, his mental warp being hopeless because this "poison test" is such a hoary institution, utterly silencing in character. This supreme touch-stone of "truth," in other words, is a mill for turning out liars, hence that most famous saying in African law-courts: "*Let a liar alone! lies are not actionable at law.*" Do you wonder now, that the African is a liar and the truth is not in him? Farther east they despise the mere *Juramento* of boiling water and drink pure poison, the Calabar bean.

All this is deplorable, but the trouble is that any new on-coming official who cannot speak the native lingo may blunder into a "bush lawyer's" decision just as "chancy" as this very ordeal. Certainly on this subject Gordon Pasha is nothing if not the very soul of breezy frankness: his famous "bag-of-rice" simile will descend to posterity as a true picture of hundreds of officials and their random deeds in Central Africa. Watch what he wrote to Sir Richard

Burton, and all the more dangerous stuff because galvanised with a false Calvinism: "I daresay," writes Gordon, "you wonder how I can get on without an interpreter, and not knowing Arabic. I do not believe in man's free will, and therefore, believe all things are from God and preordained. Such being the case, the judgments or decisions I give are fixed to be thus or thus, whether I have exactly hit off the circumstances or not. This is my raft, and on it I float along, thanks to God, more or less successfully. I do not pretend my belief could commend itself to any wisdom or science or in fact anything: but as I have said elsewhere, a bag of rice jolting along these roads could, *if it had the gift of speech*, and *if it were God's will*, do as well as I do. You may not agree with me. Keep your own belief. I get my elixir from mine, viz. that with these views I am comfortable whether I am a failure or not, and can disregard the world's summary of what I do, or what I do not do."

Now here is a man, the cream of earth's sons, at his old glory of speaking in plain English. A master workman, too, of the whole tribe of administration officials, this irrepressible Gordon tears aside the veil that hides so many of these anti-negro "bag-of-rice" decisions. (Gordon knew as much of Arabic as the Irishman did of the page of Hebrew: a bit of a musician, Patrick, in answer to the question whether he could read some Hebrew characters they showed him, said "Read it? Shure, and I could play it!") Gordon does not seem to see that his "bag-of-rice" proposition when fully stated has in it the elements of its own disintegration and decay, "*if it had the gift of speech*" is just the whole point. Neither the rice nor the Gordon who ate the same could speak the language.

It needs no proof, and scarce even a reminder, that the best because busiest bees in the hive of Central Africa are those tough old blacksmiths who turn out the iron ore.

*"The little smith of Nottingham  
Who does the work that no man can."*

These sons of old Tubal Cain can boycott the whole country because they have the local chiefs wholly in the

hollow of their hand: no smith equates no soldier; no T. Cain means no sword or ploughshare. They have long bony hands on which the muscles stand out like whipcords. Made not of flesh and blood but of asbestos, these funny fingers of theirs can juggle with live coals and scarcely be burned, hence the common conceit is to call their fingers "Firetongs" (*Fimanto*). There is poetry in these brawny blacks, but they live their poetry like men instead of singing it like birds, and far and near they surely have their reward. All eyes look Kishinga way, when the roar of the rains is near. Those hundreds of miles of smiling African tillage are all traceable to this man who digs the ore from the hillside and manufactures hoes, spears and axes. Although their ideas are crude, still they combine in a clever cult, the caste of Tubal Cain call it. Bound by a code of stringent laws, their "thou-shalt-nots" are a pathetic mix-up of soul and matter, faith and works, mud and stars. They are sworn to temporal celibacy; severely dieted; can only eat out of certain pots; cannot, dare not, eat certain animals, e.g. the hare. Their guild furnaces make quite a show of hard enterprise, and the function of filling these is the occasion of a solemn fast when no soul of man other than these sons of Tubal Cain can be about. Then it is all the folks shut themselves indoors while this "furnace-feeding" process is going on, the men of the cult calling out menacingly the while. But as most things in Africa are a mad mixture of mind and mud, the fetich, i.e. religious element, is of primary importance in it all. This in the end is the one mighty fact that swallows up all their lesser emotions.

For it is "God's ore," they say, and this Spirit-mediation theory of theirs is only a frank refusal of these blacks to admit that mere stout arms and tough muscles have all the say in God's own world. "Who first drinks, first thanks," say they. And this African of ours with his "other-worldliness" is deeply touching—wouldn't even condescend to argue with an atheist. "How do I know there is a God?" he asks. "How do I know my goat passed over that wet ground if not by the footprints she left in the mud?" Thus any such phrase as "laws of

Nature " is unknown to him, for an act postulates an agent, and what is Nature but God's mere minion? No atheist could hoodwink a black man with the notion that mere laws explain everything, for your negro retorts, " As if a law does not require construction as well as a world! " (It is as bad as forbidding Livingstone the use of his favourite word " providence " because it postulates a god. But why forget that its verbal alternative " fortunate " only drives you back into the arms of a heathen goddess, Fortune?) Another of these men proved the existence of God by the quiet query: " Who ever forgot there was a sun? " A proof this that he reads his Book of Nature so well that in every rock and tree God is staring him in the eyes and shouting in his ears.<sup>1</sup>

Ushiland unrolls the panorama of her rivers before us, still switchback a little but ascending withal; path of pudding-stone and oftener soft sand. These negro vandals have deforested long stretches of land for the cultivation of red millet, then admit like the most advanced scientists that all this tampers with rainfall! For every fifty yards of garden about two hundred yards of adjacent trees are pollarded, branches dragged to the chosen area, heaped up to dry, then six weeks later the whole goes up in smoke to produce a rich fertilising potash. But in all this let us copy Livingstone and keep our partialities in sharp check. We need never lose perspective in this forest vandalism, need never forget that our own word " field " is most surely only the corrupted spelling of " felled." A loud hint that long ago we did the same sort of devastation with our axes. I wonder, did we contrive to dissimulate our own corrupt agricultural methods by corrupting likewise the spelling of " felled " into " field " ? At any rate, in this axemadness we need not turn up too much of the white of our English eyes for blacks and whites had the same tree-felling start in field making.

There is method in this madness, and the idea is to grow a tiny brown seed wherewith to brew a heady beer. Thus, at one stroke, the country not only goes to the Devil, but

<sup>1</sup> These two paragraphs are restored to their original position in the narrative.

the Devil comes into the country. Plead for manioc as staple diet, and they will only laugh, and say that manioc is mere food, whereas this *malé* is beer. Heading for a hamlet you conjecture that here at last you will steal one calm Sunday's rest from the hot roaring week. But even here beer makes bedlam. Moralise mentally if you like, that Sunday is the golden clasp that binds the volume of the week together, but your negro has no such idea, and, of course, the "golden clasp" notion makes the row seem really worse than it is. As moreover the moon is the African's only candle, this roar grows wilder into the night, and where is your wink of sleep in all this? And where is your famous African blot-sheet theory of sleep now? Like a sheet of blotting-paper lying between the wet pages of the doings of yesterday and to-morrow, this sweet sleep was going to dry up the smudges, but alas for vain metaphor! The morning sees your eyes as bleared as a boozers'.

I have found out that after bringing in his hot drink at 5 a.m. (Sunday was Livingstone's exceptional day), then Majiwara was told to go back and lie down a while. Later came the other hot water for his "daily" shave. And so into the old grey tweed trousers, with the red-sleeved waistcoat covering one of the four welcome shirts sent by his daughter Agnes. How could she surmise that one of these four was fated to be both shirt and shroud?

*"Keep not your kisses  
For my cold dead brow;  
The way is lonely,  
Let me feel them now."*

Livingstone, they tell us, was a great stickler for his Sunday. When the day of rest came round he took this day at its face value and, *omen nomen*, got twenty-four hours' rest out of the titular Day of Rest. Every cripple has his way of walking and this was our old Highlander's way of getting over the crust of the planet earth, one in seven, please! Sometimes circumstances were politely inflexible and forced him to move even on Sunday—e.g. a stretch of "hungry country" ahead, nor village nor food therein. So off goes the Doctor grudging this breaking of his Medo-Persic law: when in all the centuries had Africa

a day of rest? And was not that the very reason why it was about time it should get a start in rescuing one day in seven? Nevertheless, before this deplorable Sunday-morning move was made, he held his service by way of an apologetic flourish in the face of Africa. He twinged at this sort of move, and wrote: "Obliged to travel on Sunday. We had prayers before starting, but I always feel I am not doing right; it lessens the sense of obligation in the minds of my companions, but I have no choice."

Hunger drove them, but all they found ahead was some sour elephants' meat; "high," he writes, "is no name for its condition. It is very bitter, but we used it as a relish to the maëre porridge: none of the animal is wasted; skin and all is cut up and sold: not one of us would touch it with the hand if we had aught else, for the gravy in which we dip our porridge is like an aqueous solution of aloes, but it prevents the heartburn, which maëre causes when taken alone. I take wild mushrooms boiled instead, but the meat is never refused when we can purchase it, as it seems to ease the feeling of fatigue which jungle-fruit and fare engender. The appetite in this country is always very keen, and makes hunger worse to bear: the want of salt, probably, makes the gnawing sensation worse."

Our mail runner has followed us up, the herald of a noisy world far away. Devouring this belated news reminds us of that famous letter-bag marked "Nov. 1st, 1870" arriving with Stanley after its 365 days' delay from Zanzibar: what did the Doctor do? Do? Was it even a dilemma? The living person versus the written words? Livingstone did on Tanganyika what he is doing now in Heaven: the Bible he read four times in his voyage to Lubaland he reads no more because the person of the Living Word supplants the copy of the written Word. So the Doctor kept the letter-bag on his knee and looking at Stanley asked *him* to tell the news. "No, Doctor," said he, "read your letters first, which I am sure you must be impatient to read." "Ah," said Livingstone, "I have waited years for letters, and I have been taught patience. I can surely afford to wait a few hours longer. No, tell me the general news: how is the world getting along?"

Then it all oozed out, growing quickly into grand proportions, into a marvellous history of deeds. Stanley the living messenger found himself enacting the part of an annual volume ; The Pacific Railroad completed ; Grant, President in America ; Egypt flooded with savans ; the Cretan rebellion terminated ; a Spanish revolution, Isabella driven from throne ; General Prim assassinated ; Prussia had humbled Denmark, annexed Schleswig-Holstein, and her armies were now around Paris.



CHAPTER XIV  
THE POTENTATE PROBLEM

*I may not carry my reader wholly  
with me in the following chapter,  
but let him remember that in these  
matters the dead-and-gone Livingstone  
is wholly with me.*

*“ It is one of the great advantages of those who stand up for Christ that they have the consciences even of their adversaries on their side.”*

*“ If His way be our way, then His joy will be our joy.”*

*“ All the things we know about Him make us trust Him in the things we do not know.”*

## CHAPTER XIV

### THE POTENTATE PROBLEM

**L**OOMING unpleasantly ahead all these days is Mirambo, *alias* Mieremiere, the Lord Paramount of Ushiland, the same who plundered the French explorer and stole his iron boat in 1883. Since then no white man has been allowed to approach, the land being as straitly shut up as Jericho. Of course, as all the adjacent country ought soon to be opening up to our race, this potentate, having blocked the road, naturally sets an overweening value on his kingship and is both inflated and dangerous. It seems he has bolstered himself up with the idea that as he drove off the Arabs successfully in the southwest, and as Kazembe has likewise repulsed the English in the north, that, therefore, he will be lord of hill and dale to the end of time. Rumour, moreover, with its thousand tell-tale tongues has run on ahead and told lies about us, the commonest legend being that since Mushidi the Great in the west died from a pistol-shot, every white man carries this portable death in his pocket. Is not this the very reason why a white man wants to shake a chief's hand? Has he not a pistol up his sleeve?

Finally—to your tents, O Israel!—farther back on the Luapula the incipient rebellion among our men came to a head: every knave of them is unduly obstinate and refuses to enter Ushiland unarmed as we are. So cleverly engineered was this revolt that every soul of them took French leave, and here we are with our “land-ship,” our caravan shipwrecked in mid-Africa, if not mid-ocean. The old story: where there is a will there is a way in Africa, but where there are many wills there is no way. Without a qualm, these hare-hearted negroes propose to desert us in a foreign land, their argument being that our errand

is too quixotic to be of any use to either God or man. Why die for a fool's phantasy? In an African caravan of exploration there is always a sprinkling of temporisers and timids, men who in your hour of trial become the little leaven that leaveneth the whole lump. But speaking generally, these blacks of ours, after having gone into committee on the subject of retreat, make three sects of it, the only three in all the world: The won'ts, The don'ts and The can'ts. Only three ways, wanton ways, of spelling the negro negative. The nasty bit about it is that this seems an invitation from our own men to the aborigines hemming us in—to gobble us up.

As it is these latter are getting very nasty, the commonest type of enemy being a chief's son surrounded by a knot of slaves, who takes advantage of our thus being knee-deep in perplexity to insult us openly. Oh! if only Kazembe had not driven back the English, things would have been softer. This is their way of beating the tom-tom of "property-in-danger," the idea being that their country will be stolen by the advancing whites: "Impanga yesu!" ("our fatherland") is their cry. This, of course, is not quite the case, but it is so nearly the case that we are bankrupt in argument, e.g. did not "Missionary" Livingstone wear a Consul's cap? Probably they *are* right and we are the thin edge of God's great wedge.

A Missionary told me quite sketchily, as I was entering Africa, that, really, as the Bible was so very much about one people—the Jews; and as, moreover, these Hebrews, unlike the African, had a written Bible to quote from, that, therefore, we could find very little in the Bible appropriate to the case of a raw African. For what Bible has he, what but the mere customs of his forefathers? Where then could we quote from? The answer to this curiously benighted objection is found in the simplest known statement of our message, a message seen at a glance to be identical for Jew and negro alike. For did not Christ redeem us all—black and white, Jew and Gentile, from the *vain conversation received by tradition from our forefathers*? All day, every day across broad Africa, this is as precisely the bone of contention with the African as it was long ago



TWO OLD DECAYED INDUSTRIES: IRON SMELTING AND COTTON SPINNING.



in Judea : The Word *versus* this vain conversation received by tradition from their forefathers. The issue, I urge, is identical. Like a dam of rocks, relentlessly solid, this barrier stretches across the world and centuries, to wit, the traditions of the elders blocking the advance of salvation. These murdered Christ long ago, these to-day form the normal and incidental enemy of Christ in Africa. Thus the Jews and negro are so absolutely one in the rejection of salvation that Paul declares both Hebrews and Heathen to be *under Law*.

The farther south we " bore " (*sava*) the tribal grumbling gains in volume. But, like Livingstone, we pillow our heads on the old saying : Leave to-morrow's trouble to to-morrow's strength ; to-morrow's work to to-morrow's time ; to-morrow's trial to to-morrow's grace—and to-morrow's God. They object to our speed : Livingstone went slowly, why not we, his brother and sister ? Those who blame him for failing to make more than five miles a day often forget that in these early days of exploration there is no fulsome subserviency about the old road-blocking chiefs, Kazembe & Co. Every mere explorer or missionary is only out to spy the nakedness of the land. Be a slaver ; be an ivory trader ; be something with a tangible *raison d'être* ; but what does all this mooning around the country measuring rivers mean ? " You are stealing the land on paper first of all, and then you will actually annex it afterwards." Nevertheless as the sanctity of a grave in Africa supersedes all things, we, whose only objective is to reach Livingstone's grave, we verily can boast the premier passport of all Africa. Are we intriguing south ? This we flourish in their face even although the British have drawn first blood behind our back—a grave is a grave subject indeed. Our venture is really an adventure and the latter is what fresh air is to a slum child : wild horses will not drag us back if only to prove that the Missionary cause is not an absurd attempt to put old women's heads on young men's shoulders. To be on Livingstone's trail is glorious : it may mean an odd fever, but it also feels very much like getting up in the country at six in the morning to drink milk from the cow. Never a prospector has

been here since he died, never a trader, and the Government will only follow in our steps to ignore our priority with civil insolence and well-bred contempt.

Livingstone was too much of a philosopher to break into a whirlwind of ferocity because these old sons of Belial refused him right-of-way along their rivers. Why be angry with them when he himself had been forbidden the banks of his own River Clyde when a boy? The son of Sirach said "all things are double," and one suspects Livingstone put a double dig in his meaning when he first sighted the Kasai River and thought it "looked like the Clyde." The Scotch Clyde like the African Kasai had many a no-passage-this-way barrier in the dead old days of Livingstone's boyhood. I have just chanced on this new, quite new, bit of his early history. Apiece with David and his young brother Charlie poaching salmon, and Charlie slipping the fish inside his trousers to simulate "swollen leg," take this other Clyde = Kasai incident. He never lost perspective; never forgot the hole of the pit from whence he had been digged; never ignored the fact that only the other day we in England hanged a mere boy for stealing one shilling and threepence. And who ever in broad Africa was made a criminal for poaching "God's fish" as they call them?

Rankin, his old boy-mate, tells of how they were both piecers to the same spinner, David, being of a pensive bent, at 1s. per day. Then came the riverine trouble that long after was to be re-enacted many a time in Africa. Let Rankin, the "wee piecer," tell the tale of his chum David. "The proprietors of Blantyre cotton mill," says he, "assumed Potentate power over their employees, even in non-working hours." Which they had no shadow of right to do, except by an unjust law of their own making. They interdicted their employees from walking on the bonnie banks of Clyde at the back of their works; a great grievance this to the workers, more especially on fine summer evenings. However, "a man's a man for 'a that," and notwithstanding these unjustifiable orders they, in those far pre-Union days, were often violated by one and another. Latterly, these economic Czars of Blantyre determined to make an example of some of them by fine or dismissal,



and our St. David happened to be the first victim who fell to the first bullet. He was caught by the manager "red-handed" taking his stroll one fine evening with his book of travels in his hand, which was his wont to do. Court-martial on the following forenoon before one of the masters in the counting-house. Judgment: young D. L. must pay a fine of £2 or lose his work. "Master," he replied, "I prefer leaving at once: what right would my parents have to pay this unjust fine for me? I did no wrong of any kind; the banks of Clyde are not yours in any view of the matter; they have belonged to the public since time immemorial, and as long as I remain in Blantyre I will take my stroll on the bonnie banks of Clyde just as it suits me; and though you are unjustly putting me out of my work, there is a just God above who sees all our actions, whether good or bad, and we shall be dealt with accordingly. I am young, the world is wide; and you are perhaps doing me a good turn; it is quite possible and probable also, I may perhaps have a chance yet of seeing a good bit of the world, which I never could by remaining in your cotton mill under petty tyrants."

This suddenly settled the question: off went David, got whatever trifles were due, put on his jacket, and left the place quite unconcerned—for a thousand Clydes were far away, and calling. All this recalls one of his dying phrases when in the old mist of misunderstanding he opined he had struck in these marshes the fountains of the Nile: "Apparently," writes he, "here is the Nile enacting its inundations *even at its sources*." A true tag these italics make to John Rankin's tale of Livingstone's boyhood: as then at his boyhood Clyde, *his* source, so here at the end on these African rivers, he had the same no-passage-this-way enactments: *they* were his Nile, and whether at life's source or delta Livingstone was in for riverine trouble! A river dismissed him in his Blantyre boyhood, and at the end it was a river that did for him.

Therefore do not be too hard on these real chiefs who block our way as they did Livingstone's. There is some slumbering nobleness in the idea: did not Cicero say that the Latin *hostis*, an enemy, meant at first the same sort of

idea as *peregrinus*, a pilgrim, an incomer? These are not lands in which you come thousands of miles merely to leave your card on any man. And here was Livingstone leaving both his bones and his card, the latter carved up on a Mupundu tree by his boys.

To local fooleries there is no end, and there is quite a wrangle going on that has come to blows, all because one black Monsieur stood on another's shadow. Is not the shadow the primal part of man, *the man*? This means, that, unlike ourselves who only claim a modest space for a footing on the soil, these arrogants claim double place for big feet and bigger shadow. Their idea about the shadow is that a man in robust health is supposed to cast a black sharp one, whereas a weak man casts only a faint shadow on the ground. So hard-mouthed are they on this subject that they push their theory right into the death-chamber, all agreeing that a dead man has no shadow. Confronted in *Bunkeya* by heaps of skulls all bleaching in the sun, all casting as many shadows as skulls, they wriggled out of it by saying that the word for "shadow" is the word for "spirit," and as the spirits are only "the shadows," therefore a dead man can have no shadow. After this, who will deny that the negro is not an etymologist? Another Plato link this, for does not Socrates contend that things have names by nature?

This is the great reason why a normal negro objects to be photographed; a man's photo is called his shadow and to steal his shadow is obviously to steal his spirit, to steal the real inner man. No mere crotchet this; there is a specific verb, *Kushendula* = to steal one's shadow, the photographer's title being *the shadow-stealer*. A Kodak with its nozzle of a lens is therefore really a polite revolver. The negro's form flashes across the "finder" of the instrument, click! goes the shutter, and at that moment something is simultaneously supposed to snap in the negro's internal regions. The curious idea about all these spirits, too, is that there is cleavage between them, and *Kalunga*, or *Kumbo*, "the Spirit World," is composed of two rival camps named titularily: the Spirits of the Right Hand, and the Spirits of the Left. Why is it that even in the far

black bush, good = the right hand, and evil = the left? Again and again, they equate "sorrow" = "the left hand," and the question is a fair one whether we have not altogether missed Jacob's point when he called his youngest Benjamin or "Son of the right hand." Rachel's phrase, "Ben-oni" = Son of my sorrow," would be rendered "Son of my left hand" and surely there is an intentional word-play here, the mother moaning out the black side and the father the bright: "Son of my left hand" she; "Son of the right hand" he.

On quizzing these funny folks, I found a whole group of them named after rocks and stones. A sort of deputation, I suppose, sent in by *Geology* to listen for half a week to *Theology*, Mr. Granite and Mr. Sandstone, accompanied by Mr. Limestone and Mr. Freestone and all the dear little chunky stones. "Peter" (*Dibwe*) is a fairly common stone-name in the whole district. So here is another rebuke to our impatience: is not geology the key to the patience of God? And although these negroes have hearts of stone as well as names of stone, yet can Livingstone's God make them living stones. This, in fact, is the very hope shut up in one of these strange stone-names, *Mankole* or Mr. Laterite. They argue it is a bastard ironstone, the sure promise of real ore deeper down. Geologically, it is really a baked crust of rock due to sunlight, the carbonic acid of rain-water and iron salts combining with the underlying rock to form a shell which resists denudation. And here is a young Hopeful, saying, "I am Mr. Laterite, a bastard ore in my surface outcrop, but dig deeper into me and oh! yes, there you find the real ore!" Yet Fleet Street says this Africa of ours has no future!

This mention of names reminds me of an amusing phase in our adventure. The farther our men from the north penetrate south, the more they begin to adopt new names, name of town or name of river. This new *alias* seems to be a verbal swagger and he is going to flaunt it to the far-away stay-at-homes when he gets back. He has got half a dozen such *aliases* already, but the farther he goes south the more certain it is that in this matter of names he will be off with the old love and on with the new. The new

name is supposed to symbolise some new change of nature, but how can change of climate cause change of character? Do not the old Aberdeen fisherfolk say, "New boats but old rocks"? In the same way, Livingstone's men troubled him by changing their names, but he was good-natured enough to remember that his family used to be called "McLay" but changed their old northern name to the eleven-letter "Livingstone."

The long grass will soon be ablaze, and then it is you see how this Africa of ours has somewhere secreted in its composition a strong sense of the dramatic. At the end of every year these millions of miles of long grass go up in smoke as a sort of spring-cleaning for the land. Listening to a Government official out west as he sternly charged a chief to forbid these annual fires, I saw the poor man was incredulously bewildered: did that chief wink, or did I only imagine it? A few days passed and that wink justified itself: out on the skyline, huge volcanoes of smoke were advancing, and that, too, in the teeth of this red-tape command to the contrary. The chief dragged in as suspected culprit was accused of law-breaking, but, "Don't blame me," said he with a tantalising twinkle, "blame God, for HE can light His own fires without a man's help." Then came the belated explanation that "God" (it is always "God" with them) "descends on the great plains in the lightning and kindles His own sanitary blaze: "He grew His own grass and burns it Himself."

This same chief proceeded to protest against the white man's cast-iron mode of legislation, and pleaded for some elasticity of law. "Is not Africa a land of farmers," said he, "and is there not a persistent ebb and flow of feast and famine in the agricultural returns? Why then be wiser than God?" Of course, as Tax Collector, the orderly official could only rejoin that ebb and flow in his schedule of receipts would mean dismissal: the seasons could be spasmodic, but he, never. Then it was the black philosopher proved his right to sit in Parliament by the clever sarcasm: "Yes; when God twisted out His rivers so 'serpentine' [*bunyoka*] and covered the land with their twisting flow, He seemingly did not ask the white man's

advice. No, for the white man would have told God to *make them straight!*” This is an African’s stab at our cast-iron methods of civilisation in which nature is measured with a foot-rule, dictated to like a poodle-dog. No doubt, this negro satire is genial, but it gets home on our weaknesses. Watch how these ugly old blacks will neither temporise nor tamper with the idea of God being over all in His own world: even the word “climate” he avoids, and in its place will substitute the Creator’s name. Even a Missionary bravely battling against African climate is told by his pot-black brother that he is “fighting God” (i.e. climate).

The uncanny thing is that all over they know the name of “God” but never hint the personality of the Devil: be it evil or good, it is all “God” this, “God” that. Ralph Erskine builded better than he knew when he said “*There is no devil so bad as no devil.*” Here he hits the African nail hard on the head; this is the first and last of all our trials, a vast continent full of devilish deeds yet no devil: the satanic enemy of souls unknown and therefore unnamed. There is deceit but no deceiver; evil everywhere, but no evil one. True for you, Ralph Erskine, “*There is no devil so bad as no devil.*”

Here near the feeders of the Zambezi a good example of this occurred when a poor man drove in a cow one morning for sale. This initial purchase being successful, soon quite a cattle market was opened, sundown seeing us with a fine show of stock. But here came the poser; stretching far north along our return route was many a belt of *morsitans*, the cattle-killing fly, and the problem stands how to get our troop of oxen through these menacing tsetse. This the quaint old chief promised to do, so he “raised up” an expert to see us north, a weird old African veterinary surgeon this. Watch his curious solution, half medicine, half magic. Night after night on the northward march, he makes a decoction of herbs and sprinkles it over the herd, then after each application he caps the climax with a droll speech. Before we turn in, with the certainty of a gramophone, he treats us to the same old anti-tsetse curtain-lecture each night. Thus: “Ye have heard it said that a certain deadly-to-oxen fly exists, Kazembe

the name—but I hereby declare that (ahem!) the said fly is now to be reckoned non-existent. No longer is such a name to be in our vocabulary, a new name I give it, *Luké* let it be called; old things are passed away, behold all things are become new, for this new name of *Luké* will surely *make a new fly of him.*”

How like many a good Britisher who calls Hell by the politer name of Hades, and thinks he has thereby put the fire out! The effrontery of the tragic thing, Africa, Satan's head-quarters, with no Devil at all! Like the Christian Scientist doctor who claimed to have cured Mark Twain's broken bones with imaginary surgery: “Oh, no,” said the C. S. specialist, “the fractures were merely imaginary and the Alpine fall did no harm.” But when this charlatan presented Mark with a heavy doctor's bill for treatment by imaginary surgery, Mr. Twain twinkled with pleasure at the huge sum demanded and—at once issued an imaginary cheque in payment! Invisible surgery should be paid for with invisible money: “No rain, no mushrooms,” is the African's way of insisting that every effect must have a cause; “no cure, no cheque,” laughed Mr. Twain. The end of all this “no Devil” deceit came like a flash of lightning when we merely and mildly introduced the *name* of their continental Enemy. Like one lighted brand thrown into the long grass, away went the name and nature of “Satana” like a roaring fire foretelling the other and final fire of Eternity. Yet, after all, how stupid that surprise of ours at finding no name of Satan here in his own hunting-grounds. For is he not a fallen Angel, by name *Diabolus*, and if they do not know the name of Gabriel, an unfallen archangel, why expect them to know the name of this fallen one?

CHAPTER XV  
THE ROAD-BLOCKER

*Precisely as the old Physicians could tell by the patient's tongue the state of his health, so with the African's tongue in the linguistic sense. It is the tell-tale negro tongue that declares his moral diagnosis, and a foul mouth means a foul man.*

*“ To make the loss the more galling, they took what we could least spare—the medicine-box, which they would only throw away as soon as they came to examine their booty.”*

*“ I felt as if I had now received the sentence of death, like poor Bishop Mackenzie.”*

*“ Everything of this kind happens by the permission of One who watches over us with most tender care ; and this may turn out for the best by taking away a source of suspicion among more superstitious, charm-dreading people further north. I meant it as a source of benefit to my party and to the heathen.”*

*“ It is difficult to say from the heart, ‘ Thy will be done ’ ; but I shall try.”*

*Livingstone.*



## CHAPTER XV

### THE ROAD-BLOCKER

**W**E are now in July—the 5th to be exact—and our guides declare a halt, speaking most mysteriously, most conflictingly as to the whereabouts of the phantom Lord Paramount. It transpires he is raiding his own outlying villages, the Ushi mode of tax-collecting this. Finally, at nightfall, our own heralds come with the wondrous news that he was seen of them in a camp beyond Maansa, and that he has appointed a rendezvous two days south, to which point he will march, arriving simultaneously with ourselves. Thence, the programme runs that he conducts us south for three days to his old town, bear-on-a-chain fashion. He said bluntly to my boys that white men were frightened of him ; witness their having left him alone all these years after his plundering Giraud. Meantime, we are invited to believe that this gad-about king has the gift of ubiquity, that he is planning a thousand counter-strokes, that he has had scouts far out on the road to size us up, and that once he himself actually lay in ambush to the left of the trail peering out of the grass on us passing. When oh ! and how oh ! will this hideous game of hide-and-seek end ?

Frontiers as presently existing are no real guide to the extent of a tribe, for the tribal division is some *totem* or tribal badge, called Bukoka (*mukoa*), which federalises (with right-thinking folk) all who claim it. Therefore the “ Sons of the Lion ” are a unity, though separated by several degrees of latitude ; ditto the “ Sons of the Clay,” the “ Sons of the Rain,” and so on, right round nature, excepting always the sun, moon and stars—the sun, moon and stars, *s'il vous plaît*.

Here in the wilds the day's panorama of Livingstone's

travel exactly corresponds to that other map of his soul's itinerary for the day. One phase sees him breasting a hill, the next alternates him down into the valley, then comes the inevitable river with the triple problem of where, when, how to cross. These days the rivers are all mad, have burst their banks and even the strongest bridges are swept away. On approaching the Mufufushi I guessed trouble ahead in the initial demand to wade hundreds of yards waist deep in water before even the submerged banks were reached. Then it was the last appearance of plausibility vanished, for the flood had done its worst, leaving nor bridge nor hope for crossing. And must we sleep in the cheerless forest waiting for the subsiding stream? Not a bit of it. The Angels of God (there they are again!), yes, those Angels, the Royal Engineers of Heaven, bridged the gulf before my eyes. For what do you think? The same flood that destroyed the bridge is now swirling round the roots of a famous tree, a tree hundreds of years old, growing on the bank. Many a flood so attacked it in the past, and the river lost the battle; year after year the great tree stood strong. You, my reader, can shrug a doubtful, though indulgent shoulder if you care to—but, I say, let the Angels finish this story, please. Truth to tell, the very flood that swept away the old bridge is now going to give us a better one. The end of all things has come at last, the long-defeated river wins the day and crash! falls that giant tree right across the river, bridging it automatically as never engineer could dare do. Can you blame us, *pace* Pecksniff, for politely raising our voice half an octave in a joyous cry of thanksgiving?

But there is a "per contra a/c" to all this. Our new Luanza bridge went in the great storm, or shall I not rather put it, the new storm and the great bridge? For never did such a tornado sweep down from the mountains, and never before did we build such a bridge as that. Much labour went into it, much money, much prayer: the Government publicly congratulated, and hundreds blessed God and us for all that bridge meant to the traveller whose terror of anticipation is how to cross the foaming rivers that lie ahead. Then came this record storm to test and tear

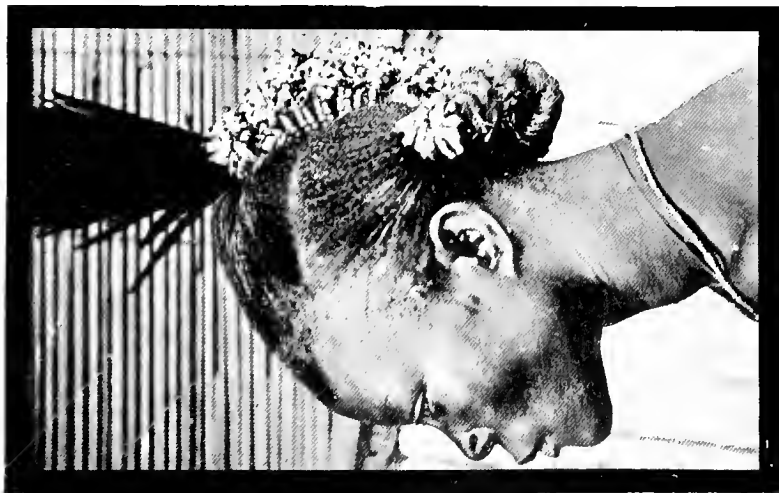
to pieces this record bridge, a wild down-rush of wind and water when the river leapt its old bed and rushed down uprooting great trees in one sucking swirl. But even then we would have won the fight but for the following funny fact: the river was rogue enough to know he could not wash our work away, hence his actually arming himself for the fight. Tearing up the trees lining the banks, on he came like an armed man flaunting these weapons of wood. It was this battering-ram business did it, and thus we come to the old saw, "Man plans—God spans." So there you have old Africa at its usual uncompromising attempt to clear us out of the country: first it was the fire that burnt us out, and here comes his great confrère, water, trying to get at us by a flank movement. But the young Christians get a sermon out of it, and one old man preached a most searching message on the mutations of all earthly things, and how all must pass away that the things that cannot be moved should appear. His text was that old Africanism, "This world is only a bridge we are passing over," and, said he, "if the world, biggest bridge of all, passes away, why not these tiny toy bridges of ours likewise?"

Have struck it strong at last. On the 9th, out from the grass springs the great man precisely as though he were shot out of a catapult. This Mieremiere, *alias* Mirambo, is a middle-aged man, clean-shaven and shrewd. Another rotten old *rex*, whose glazed eyes, enamel skin tell of hemp slavery. Moses "wist not that his face shone," and here is another who wists not his is shining—for the Devil. After every smoke he smacks his lips, calls it honey, but he himself will tell you that he is licking his honey from a very sharp knife that makes his lips bleed every time. His hemp pipe is a huge gourd-thing bulging out like a water-jar, and this he pats pettingly the way a child strokes the coat of a cat.

This, then, as he bumptiously told us, is the central figure of Ushiland, the Sacred stone, known all over the land by the name of "Makumba," being in his possession. Throw beads upon this stone and they will stick to it, yea, blessed is the man called upon to be its bearer during any occasion

of removal. All his "Tom Touchy" litigation, however false, will be successful. Mirambo, being custodian of this infallible oracle, has therefore a far safer seat than any of his compeers, for in Africa no roots go so deep as those of superstition. The visible and tangible pall on the taste; not so the unseen and mysterious. With a commercial instinct quite in accord with the best traditions of priestcraft, they make cash out of all this—to capitalise the credulity of the negro is the safest source of revenue in broad Africa. Hence Makumba has become a huge religious "penny-in-the-slot" machine with a whole staff of officials who "eat Makumba" as a profession, and for us to preach a salvation "without money and without price" is a degradation. So ingrained is this *£ s. d.* idea of religion that you can see a literal catch-penny device from Africa in the British Museum, a pious contrivance this, thousands of years old. There you see those African priests artfully formed some earthen vessels so as to dribble out holy water to those who slip a certain-sized coin in the slot. And all this, not hundreds but thousands of years ago.

This Mirambo—to give him his snob-name—is perfectly inflated with the idea of his "Emperorship," and delights in moving over the country confiscating other men's belongings. His unique mode of making magnificoes like Chinama and Kalasa pay up tribute is characteristic of the man. Messengers beard these lions in their den, placing mutely on the ground an old bow and arrow, relic of the ancient lords of Ushiland. This is an exalted and touching proof of loyalty and at once these "children of the past" capitulate. But as whispers come in from the outer world of a more humane mode of life, Mirambo increases his bribe to his warriors; not a bribe in money or kind, but of increased licence to loot, which means a fall in the weather-glass and stormier times ahead. Here then is precisely a regime that puritans of the Commonwealth would have rejoiced to exterminate, in fellowship with God, according to their thought. But our call is to another and higher fellowship which practically makes us knaves and cowards in the African's eyes. Livingstone's Lord and Forerunner



A CONTRAST: THE NORTHERN AND SOUTHERN TYPE.



was hurried out of the world ignominiously at an early age —(1) “ No room for Him in the inn ” ; anon (2) no room for Him in His own Palestine ; soon (3) *no room for Him in the world !* and *our* call is to the fellowship of that Son who was cast out of the vineyard. Meantime, here is Miramibo beaming at us, and saying “ Welcome ! ” And strange to say I could detail little local items that go to show how The Omnipotent is doing double duty all the time : on the outside of the door turns the key ; in the inside oils the lock into obedience.

Mieremiere still coming out of his shell and appearing in the rôle of traveller. Seems painfully anxious to pose as first class in everything, all his remarks couched in an I'm-clever-do-you-follow-me ? sort of challenge. With eyes fastened on us like gimlets he is not at all sure of our sincerity, and denies point-blank we have only come to preach : as for “ mere ” preaching (*cha fye !*), he tells us to preach away, what harm can it do ? Are not a farthing candle and a green log safe companions ? He was at our camp betimes, and intends conducting us through Ushiland in person. His party took the lead, flying a couple of flags, H.R.H., gun on shoulder, jumping through a marsh occasionally, quite briskly, and we know when a village is ahead by hearing the “ royal salute ” going up at the chief's approach. The Arabs, he tells us, have treated him badly, looting his capital on the Luella River, but of course he made reprisal, raised the Ushi chiefs and drove them out. This brisk tramping across country of his to-day is to show us that he is a *man*, albeit a potentate, and is a delightful anti-pomp demonstration. He has received no white man since Giraud : says that our coming heralds a new epoch, and somehow we feel it deeply after a fashion. Oh, for sixty brave Missionaries to line out along this peninsula.<sup>1</sup>

Convalescing from a wild booze, our Mieremiere is now bringing up the rear ; has put up at one of his depend-

<sup>1</sup> Since then the Moffats and Wilsons (Livingstone's own blood) have occupied Iläla, the Sims Fort Rosebery ; the Universities Mission at Chilikwa ; the Lammonds at Kaleba and the L.M.S. at Mbereshi. All in a straight line towards the south.

encies for more beer. The aloes are all out in bloom, "hanging out their golden bells, to mingle glory with corruption." And the streams crossed all cold, callously cold, making even our Africans shriek. We are now at Kumbura's, a bi-lingual village on the Lukulashi, the last Yeke stronghold in these parts and a reminder that even all about here the old Mushidi had his garrisons. Miere-miere, too, went west and paid homage to him, receiving on that occasion the *omande* shell imitation, and the new Grand Duke name, Mirambo. But Ushiland quickly threw off allegiance; drove the garrisons back on us in Bunkeya, only this one having been spared, and that because long ago it was leavened by Ushi people; the chief as glib in the one language as the other.

The potentate leads the way to-day, robed in white, with red turban: a bit of soap he begged yesterday brought about the transformation. His plan is to reach his town on the Luela at midnight, climbing the stockade to catch "conjugal" criminals. The most awe-inspiring bit of his luggage is the sheaf of old bows belonging to the previous chiefs of his dynasty. There are nine all told, and when they pass it is not lawful to say, "There pass the nine bows," but, "There pass the nine kings!" On Miere-miere's death (and who dare name or hint thereat?) a tenth bow will be added. The morning sees this royal fellow-traveller of ours a very smart and sensible man, but as the sun mounts the sky, the beer he is boozing also mounts to his head and makes him reckless, even dangerous. It is difficult to string into a coherent whole the mutterings of this scoundrel: *in vino veritas*, however, and here are some of the sentences the beer brings out. Cogitatingly: "Well, I am a fool, showing people through my own country, which they are going to seize." Abruptly: "Look over there at Chivala, the Arab; since he defeated the Belgians he has been manufacturing wooden shackles in which to imprison you white men." Still in his best moment he remembers courtesy, and moves off the path to let us pass! Even in the matter of a dose of medicine, this silly chief must certify his priority of status by taking two pills for his slave's one. Why be biggest man in town if you do



not swallow the biggest doctor's dose ? Does this not also announce that the chief when sick is doubly so, hence the double demand for fuss and flim-flam ? Like the old days in Russia when one tear in the Czar's eye cost a thousand pocket-handkerchiefs !



CHAPTER XVI  
MORE OF IT

*This chapter is dedicated to the memory of the farmer who went to market so extremely anxious not to be cheated, that a philosopher told him when he became just as anxious not to cheat anybody else his market waggon would be as noble as the chariot of the sun!*

*“ Nothing is done while anything remains to be done.”*

*Julius Cæsar.*

*“ If you set out on a journey of ten miles, remember that nine miles is only half-way.”*

*Chinese Proverb.*

*“ I have finished the work that Thou gavest Me to do.”*

*N.T.*

*“ But I’ll tell you this : a middlin’ doctor is a pore thing, and a middlin’ lawyer is a pore thing, but keep me from a middlin’ man of God.”*

*Owen Meston.*

## CHAPTER XVI

### MORE OF IT

**N**UMBERS of cropped ears tell the tale that the local law-breaker was taken out to the cross-roads where he literally lost the ears he had already metaphorically lost long ago in "won't listen" = lawlessness. This subtle symbolism of cross-roads and cropped ears is a serious concern and shows much moral penetration: the cross-roads as place of execution signify that the criminal has crossed his rebel will (= "path") with that of the sober will (= "path") of the community. This cross-road symbolism is only the first phase, though, and the second? This, tremendously this: why not crop the ears, for are they not "irrepressible," only cartilage, so that if you bend the ear forward by force, when the finger pressure is released—presto!—does it not spring back to the old *irrepressible* position? Here, then, is the key to their ear-cropping symbol: this refusal of the human ear to bend-and-keep-bent without pressure (unlike the obedient finger or leg, for instance). This is held to typify human incorrigibility and rebellion. *Ku twala matwi ku petame?* is their reminder that the wobbly ear is only cartilage, will not, cannot, lie down submissively; *must* be bent down and kept down, thus most surely symbolises its sort of "I will not listen" kind of attitude to life. Hence the cropping of the same is supposed to cure both such sorts of cockiness, literal and moral.

But do not let us substitute one exaggeration for another. The burning of witches is in full blast in all these territories, yet, be it wizard or witch, the case is perhaps generally an affair of some local recalcitrant who dabbles in the black art. Had, therefore, both the desire and design of murder. To sniff at it all as "Salem superstition" does not face and

finish the fact that the accused did so plot murder ; did, perhaps, even procure poison to finish the victim off. But even granting the actual potion is *non est*, all the sting of your civilised indignation is neutralised in the dead-sure knowledge that these very objects of your pity generally indulge in and confess to such secret malignity. In other words : (1) If a tribe or town has so many of these anti-pathetic temperaments, then (2) their so crossing the tribal will amounts to abnormal aberration—against, always *against* popular persons or precedents, which means that (3) this “rebellion *is as* the sin of witchcraft,” so you reach the same result by another road.

All this I discovered on the roaring day when they were leading out one such woman to die, Muvinga by name. My mind ablaze with the memory of those nineteen hanged at Salem, I rushed out to the rescue, when lo, here was my lady giving me cheaply away in a concise confession that poison was her trade, and that many a one she had made away with. Then I thought again of Salem, this time not of the nineteen hanged but of the fifty who were pardoned on *their confessing* to such a calling. Let not the reader of these lines, therefore, bridle at my unmitigated manner. The Mosaic economy did ordain the death of all such. And, mark you, in the same Samuel where Saul did call up the dead, there it is, in this same Samuel, the whole thing is modernised in the easy explanation, “rebellion *is as* the sin of witchcraft.” At secret war with their kind, designing their death by subterranean subtlety, what sort of rebellion could equal such? Remember, in a certain sense, in judging of Africa one must use African weights and measures. The figure “3” is a recurring decimal though you write it for a million years, and so is “No. 1” first, last, all the time, in all lands. Thus when this impudent human numeral forgets the other co-occupants of the same town, remembers them, rather, only to malignantly plan to murder them, really this it is that makes you go to the “rebellion *is as* the sin of the witchcraft” source of all that tends to make, and ends in making, a witch or wizard.

A man to-day kept strumming a native guitar, but there was method in his madness for he was “a freemason”

(*mutwa*) and this "password-song" was code telegram to the town that the oneness of all *vatwa* endorsed his claim for free bed and board. "To die *butwa*" is the official phrase of their cult, and this "dying" gives them bacchantic authority to annul all the sanctities of sex, married women and maidens being shut up in this Satanic club-house where an orgy of licentiousness runs riot. This frenzy is fed by a drug that swoons them into a stupor when they "speak with tongues" and finally fall into a trance. This is the "dying *butwa*" of their rite, and on reviving each neophyte gets a new name for the new life now entered upon. They even speak a new lingo. To tell it all would be to tarnish and smirch these pages, but one point must be made as proof that hell is the antithesis of heaven. I mean this "dying" dodge. In four of his Epistles St. Paul speaks of "dying *unto* sin," and here the devil steals this participle for the diametric business of "dying" *in order to* sin. *Verb. sap.*

Here is a local nobody who with one little finger puts to shame (1) Messrs. G. H. Lewes, (2) J. S. Mill, and (3) a full bench of British judges. I shall prove all this, for it is a mere matter of arithmetic and the chief is counting on the ground. Exactly like the hieroglyphic texts of Egypt, he has scratched a vertical line for each "one" of the years he is trying to reckon back to Livingstone's day. It certainly seems a sleepy sort of arithmetic, sleepy but sure, for his "tortoise-total" gains in accuracy what it has lost in speed. Better protract than subtract. Look at the gains he has for the pains of scratching down the five lines IIIII instead of our abrupt figure 5. Watch, I say, what we lose: even Oxford is oblivious of the pains we pay for our gains. For at this point the Luban etymology becomes sarcastic about "counting," the verb is *soroshya* or *vala*, lit. to "one" things. Sarcastic, I mean, for when *we* dash down 5 or 9 on paper, how often do we recall that we are really saying 5 *ones*, 9 *ones*, etc.?

We mean all this but do not mention it, in fact have forgotten it; hence not one in a hundred pauses to reflect that a hundred = a hundred ones. This is where Solomon adds a subtle dig in the reminder: "counting *one by one*

to find out the account (Eccl. vii. 27). Sarcastic, I suggest, is this "counting the matter one by one" because there is no other way of counting! When Gesandi's madman at 4 p.m. cried, "That clock has just struck one o'clock four times!" his madness agreed with the wisdom of Solomon. Even a "million" can only mean a million "ones," and this the sensible millionaire knows on recalling the old hand-to-mouth days when he only made his "million" by stingily conserving each "one" that goes to aggregate this amount. Yet a whole bench of Scottish judges broke on this rock of ellipsis by ignoring the complementary word, unpronounced and unwritten, "ones." Statistics were pouring out of a specialist, when Lord Craighill begins it all with, "But 2 and 2 do not always make 4, remember." "Then," frowned Lord Young, "what are we here for?" At this point Lord Maclaren rushes to the relief of Lord Craighill: "Well, you know, it all depends: 2 candles and 2 carts of coal scarcely make 4." So there (according to Africa) you have seven big judges in a fog: even Lord Young who is right does not know *why* he is right; does not recall, rather, that "four" is an elliptical expression, "four *ones*," the ellipsis being of the numeral "one," not the simpleton "candles" and "carts of coals"!

Meantime here is this African chief of the town (also chief of all arithmeticians) wondering at the intellectual insanity involved in forgetting that you are only "one"-ing things no matter how high you count. The same error this as when the Master of Trinity set the same ball a-rolling in criticising Kant. Standing four-square on this rock-of-ages of arithmetic, Dr. Whewell insisted that "3 and 2 *must* always and altogether amount to 5." Then out darts the whole wasps' nest of critics: G. H. Lewes, fortifying himself with a citation from Herschel, argues bluntly that other conditions are easily conceivable where 3 and 2 might not nearly be 5. Then comes J. S. Mill to the same silly effect, and all because having gone too far east he has reached west! Yet the Master of Trinity was right (though he did not know why he was right) when he said, "Three and 2 make 5: we cannot conceive it otherwise. We cannot



by any freak of thought imagine 3 and 2 to make 7." All very massive, all very Master-of-Trinity-like, yet politely evading this African explanation of ellipsis. Gesandi's mad man cut them all out when hearing the clock strike at 4 p.m. he cried, "That clock has struck one o'clock four times!" For (to repeat it) did not Solomon try to keep us all straight long ago when he wrote, "Counting *one by one* to find out the account"? There is no other way to count. To speak about "five ——" or "six ——" is equivalent to me, John Smith, calling my brothers "Jim ——" or "Will ——," the "Smith" being obviously only for outsiders.

The king always comes with his orchestra, and many of these professional ballad-singers have their ears cut off, the reason being that the chief, fearing he would lose his organist, clipped the ears close as a sort of trade-mark. Thus, long hair in one land, short ears in another are a peculiar proof of "many minds, many manners." This Mr. Clipped-Ears, though, is not one whit abashed, and by way of *solatium* he is allowed to be pert and even insulting to his betters. The chief has actually paid him damages for mutilation, in the form of a slave: he dines, too, on the fat of the land, so that relatively speaking this ballad singer lolls in the lap of luxury compared to many a poor English musician. No wonder this Mr. Clipped-Ears is the most contradictory type of man in the land, for his is at once the easiest and hardest of occupations, plays when he works and works when he plays. They open their eyes when I unfold the lot of that type of delicate little grey-haired lady in the heart of London who has all her life been pinched by giving music lessons to children at ten shillings a quarter. Rain or shine, walking all the way to Dulwich or Battersea or farther because she cannot afford an omnibus fare, and even then only earning bare bread and scanty butter. For regarding the butter, does not Mrs. Flyn, her landlady, say that it will not let the knife spread it.

To see the serious way this mutilated musician takes poetry as a profession is amusing. Even the plainest facts of life receive from him a polished coat of verbal varnish, and for him to stoop from verse to plain speech is resented

as much as a fancy race-horse forced to drag a team, Everything is grist for his poetic mill, so he,

*" In the course of one revolving moon,  
Is fiddler, statesman, poet, and buffoon."*

The eternal monotone of his music is at first maddening to a new-comer, but after long years that very monotony becomes your anodyne of the night. Here, indeed, is music, but not of the German band sort, no sawing of loathsome jig-tunes here. From the intoning of the opening bars, right on to the far remote end, monotony is the law, now falling in weird cadence, spasmodic throbbing, now soft, languorous, and disquieting. The African, like John Milton, believes that rhyme is a kind of "disease of poetry," and thus, refusing to be shackled, he has a free poetic style, so delicately modulated that the absence of rhyme is not missed. Force him to use the "jingling sounds of like endings" and many a fine stanza would finish with a jolt and an artificial tag. (Poets, beware!) Thus his very blank verse saves you from being harassed with copious outpouring of intolerable jingle: you feel quite sure that if each line twanged in rhyme, you would go mad with the penny-trumpet jangle. Not the twang merely, but the certain knowledge that, to keep the artificial rhyme up, some words were obliged to be thrown in under compulsion. But listen to him: what he is really doing is sending back to the woods an echo of their own voices. Precisely as all the sounds of the African forest and plains are in the minor, even so this weird note has invaded the negro mind, and he can only send it back again in song. Even dazzling coloured birds have no note but the minor, and the native argues that the bird has only borrowed this idea of the minor from the sighing tree on which it sings, the tree having stolen the sigh from the babbling brook. Thus Paul was right (Romans viii.) and dark Africa is like the dark African, sighing from sea to sea.

Peering inside these stockades you see how first, last, all the time this ancestral spirit-worship of theirs grips the land. The little two-feet-high temple is the local letter-box, "left till called for" by the *mipashi* = spirits. But it is a

parcel's post they believe in, beer and meat being stuffed in as staple supply. Perhaps there is a spice of exaggeration in calling these tedious little two-foot-high structures "a temple," but the exaggeration is suspiciously sardonic in character. With an upward wave of the hand at the immensity of the universe, their hint seems to be that this very smallness of temple suggests that *if* so small as two feet nothing, then why not a still more sarcastic shrinkage to nothing of the two feet? Why a temple at all? Why a tangible building for the intangible spirit that leapt out of the old prison house it loathed? Here is a man who as a tiny boy, long ago in war, was swooped down on in his natal village. Query: How can he worship a mother he never knew? The boy's retort is that, albeit he was so torn away at birth from his unknown mother, yet he, surely he too was *born* as much as everybody else? That he never knew her is less than nothing, nothing at all to him, for he has only to pinch his flesh to remind himself that *she* gave him this blood, this body. So there he is, working away at the building of his little temple to the "unknown god," his nameless mother's spirit. Proud of it, too, this two-foot-high temple: Michelangelo taking in the full effect of his finished Sistine Chapel could not have had more thrills of self-satisfaction than this long-grass youngster. Although unknown, yet is she well known—here is her own blood flowing in his own veins. Hence the double deduction he makes that (1) even in the spirit-world, throb for throb of his earthly joy is hers, even as (2) stab for stab of his pain is hers too. (It is all "mother," "mother," mark you, and no mention of his father. Often he does not know his name, and just as often—hush!—the mother knows it not either.)

So he "bridges the gulf": for does he not believe that in every pang that rends his heart his guardian spirit still has a part? The victim of many a cruel and ungenerous blow in life, does he not still reckon on the dear old maternal solicitude for his welfare? God, he thinks, is too busy up among the stars to bother about him, but not so, never so, his defunct "mama." Watch the subtlety of all this, for like a dam of rocks relentlessly solid, here is a barrier

ever blocking the advance of the Gospel. To preach Christ as kinsman-advocate before God is to the negro only, in other words, a branch of the same spirit-worship. Wearied by the well of Sychar, thirsty on life's road, and pained with the pangs of sufferings, does He not now sorrow with us in our sorrow? Poor old African, groping after, if haply he may find. The only way he hopes to capture the stronghold of The Unseen is by this flank movement of kinsmanship—to him the line of least resistance being the warm, cherishing heart of his defunct mother. No wonder Livingstone longed for ten thousand Christians to advance in God's name for God's sake and shout above all the wintry winds of Africa: "I am the way."

By the fourteenth of July all our craven carriers have got this big man on the brain, and when he fixes them with his cold glittering eyes they quiver. Short and middle-aged (forty at a guess), he strongly approves of the late Mushidi for having introduced a new squat style in kingly stature. Like the familiar fox and the traditional grapes, he objects to tall men and quotes the coarse post-mortem proverb: "The more flesh, the more worms!" This hemp slavery of his, though, makes the man a bad bundle of contradictions, the distinct effect of the drug being a dislocation of personality when opposites chase opposites in and out of his brain. You can time to a second when the fit of dissolving in smiles will be sharply superseded by its opposite in which he is intoxicated by the fumes of passion. Benignity versus malignity is the idea. Wait a few minutes and round goes the circle into a caressing, hypocritical voice, all deference and even diffidence; a pause, one, two, or three minutes, then the eyes begin to glitter dangerously and once again you have the erstwhile simpler shouting out in a stand-and-deliver tone of voice. The very eyes play the same game of paradox, for the same man who one moment is looking out moodily at vacancy with a glassy stare, is the next fiendishly beautiful. Counting six minutes apiece for the play of each set of opposites, here you have a man who has the sensation of summer and winter crammed into twelve minutes as against the twelve months in nature. No wonder all the terrible murders

in Africa are hemp atrocities, and of the hemp-slave it is true in a rather tragic sense that he has chosen the evil part that cannot be taken away from him. The plain fact is we are in a dangerous trap, and prisoners every soul of us. As far as he can lucidly explain himself he fixes the date of our departure at—at doomsday.

Yet wants us in his haze of hemp to be off like lightning, tarrying not a second by the way! To verify this double-personality idea, I resolved to keep a sharp look-out for a conclusive instance. Here it comes. Fortifying himself with one great wheezing pull at the pipe, I watched sharply the sequel. Came the usual speech of the half-and-half kind, now graceful and polished, now sinking into pun and quibble! up, up, soaring in empyrean heights, then crash down to earth with the plunge of a broken-winged aeroplane.

There are no words in or out of the dictionary equal to the explanation of how this chapter ends. It closes to the *chanson* of the African rain bird, a simple little thing sung in three descending notes of the diatonic scale, very simple yet very sweet because of its round-it-goes-again soft repetition. For my initials are not D. C. for nothing.



CHAPTER XVII  
SOME OLD PALAVERS

*One more African attempt to make works balance faith. For as faith is to works so light is to heat, and while you can chemically discriminate between a candle's light and heat, yet put out the candle and good-bye both.*

*“ If one has served thee, tell the deed to many :  
Hast thou served many ? Tell it not to any.”*

*“ In this world of froth and bubble,  
Two things stand like stone :  
Kindness in another’s trouble,  
Courage in one’s own.”*

*“ We may not use God’s name merely to fill up the gap in an  
argument, for God is love, and love is not in word but in deed.”*



## CHAPTER XVII

### SOME OLD PALAVERS

**T**HIS potentate must be a lineal descendant of one of Ali Baba's forty thieves. Creditors have better memories than debtors, and here you have Mieremiere foaming at the mouth over some old "Livingstone palavers," as he names them. I am to blame, I am Livingstone's "brother," and the older the debt the more interest is accruing in the intervening years. No, I say, in my country old clothes do not fetch high prices in the rag market.

They have jumbled them all up: (1) Livingstone's Safene shooting a man in error instead of a cow, then (2) the bigger business of Chawende's town attacked and plundered, and all by Livingstone's men on the return north with his dead body. He was surprised when, in a welter of blind rage, I told him I knew all about it, knew especially the surly welcome these Ushi people gave the body of this man made of such very special clay. Their towns and territory spurning that dead body so soon to be acclaimed by all England! Then I cooled down a bit and, restraining my inclinations at the call of refinement, I blamed booze for it all, the whole fight being brought about by the chief's son who defied their own proverb, "Drink beer, think beer."

Then I push the point that our dead hero must not be blamed for the dare-devil doings of men who, having lost their master, lost likewise, with him, the curb against their cupidity. Also: I press the point that Livingstone strictly speaking had only an inner circle of five faithfuls, and all the rest were a rabble sent up from the coast by Stanley, who toyed with the name of "soldiers," calling his carriers by a name Livingstone never did. These

were the miserables of whom the Doctor wrote derisively : “ The pugnacious spirit is one of the necessities of life. When people have little or none of it, they are subjected to indignity and loss. My own men walk into houses where we pass the nights without asking any leave, and steal cassava without shame : while if we are at a village where the natives are a little pugnacious they are as meek as sucking doves. The peace plan involves indignity and wrong. I give little presents to the headmen, and to some extent heal their hurt sensibilities. This is indeed much appreciated, and produces profound hand-clapping.”

This opens up the whole rignarole of *why* they carried his dead body so far, so persistently. Here on the spot analysis is the death of sentiment, and their “ why ? ” is found in as many reasons as realities. First, there was the old African law forbidding such a dangerous thing : any African found dead in the forest dare not be buried except after prior consent by his relatives. Livingstone’s nearest friends were out at Zanzibar. Thus these wild fellows were doing a deed that would save both their face and skin. And much more the latter than the former. They were all men sent in from Zanzibar by the Stanley who had threatened Livingstone’s other runaways with dire vengeance : “ I told them,” says he, “ that it was well I had found Livingstone alive, for if they had but injured a hair of his head, I should have gone back to the coast to return with a party which would enable me to avenge him.” Add to all this menace Stanley’s “ find Livingstone alive or *dead* ” slogan to his men, and it is plausible almost to the point of conviction that these men were not doing six degrees of latitude and ten of longitude with a dead body for nothing.

Take my own experience with the dead Lucascoff. One day there came a Russian in from the far east, nearly seven feet high was this man with long black beard. He shot a number of elephants and built a log cabin at the south end of the Lake. Then, later, he broke camp and asked me to give him men to follow my old trail over the Range, and so away out, far out to the Atlantic. Off he went, to die, alas ! of blackwater in a lonely forest half-way across. But

my men would not dare bury him like a victim of their spears. What then? Following the analogy of the dead Livingstone, on they go with their ghoulish burden, on and on for hundreds of miles until at last, with a bound of trepidation and triumph, our outpost station at Kavungu was reached. Only and obviously grim necessity and not a spark of sentiment! All those breathless, blazing days, with plugged nostrils and vertical rays, they fought the great blue-bottle flies and rank emanations from their burden of woe. Sentiment, far from having even a subordinate interest in this gruesome job, was *non est*. The natives themselves know themselves so thoroughly, know they are such champion liars, that the wrong cause of *en route* death could easily be concocted, so they cut the knot and decide on delivery of the corpse to its nearest relatives. Here, then, is collateral proof that these wild fellows were not out to establish a credit a/c with the Recording Angel.

And surely this explains the austere action of the Consul-General on their arrival at Zanzibar, nothing but a stand-offish reception of the "faithfuls" and their burden. Captain Prideaux has been flouted for many years for doing a deed that easily and evidently proves him to be the only man of the lot who did an exact amount of "thinking black." Even although nothing had developed to incriminate the action of any of "the 57," the boys *themselves* knew that this alone could be, should be, the rigorous mode of reception by this "brother" of the dead man. Had he gushed effusively over those bearers of a dead body, they would certainly have conjectured that the gush was expressive of delight (fact!) at Livingstone's death. Can you stop the circulation of your blood with an effort of the will? No more can you change the African belief in the awfulness of death; and even an archangel would have been punished by them for "death damages" in a like situation. Therefore, although tradition has hallowed the popular notion that Livingstone's men were nonplussed and dejected at their gruff reception by this official, it is a "dead cert." that they were glad they escaped so easily.

Then the trouble was that some of the leading men being Stanley's old "soldiers," the gentler methods of Living-

stone were despised by men who made him "the sport of adverse circumstances, the plaything of the miserable beings sent to him from Zanzibar." When Stanley sent off those 57 men for Livingstone, did he not take care to lock them all up the night before in a courtyard? There were three Mabarukis in that crowd, one a Burtonite, the other a Spekeite, the third a Stanleyite, all three whites who were known as *mkali sana kama moto*, lit. as angry as blazes. No wonder the Livingstone who had no blazes of his own was to pay bitterly for those other blazes belonging to Messrs. Burton, Speke, and Stanley. In fact, Stanley bribed them off from the coast with the guarantee: "Livingstone will not beat you as I have done: when did you ever see him lift his hand against an offender? When you were wicked he did not speak to you in anger, he spoke to you in tones of sorrow."

This then explains the tangle they have got us into to-day: they were rough diamonds but more rough than diamond. In these parts, at any rate, they took the bit in their teeth and bolted. All the guns were now at their disposal, too many of them, not forgetting their own Enfields, the sixteen shooter, and the famous Reilley with the Fraser shells. Even of Susi himself, the best of the lot, yes, of Susi it might be narrated how drink was his bane, and when once in liquor he made all sorts of mad antics. Actually, at Makumba's, lying down in the same bed with his master sleeping so deeply that only the early dawn revealed this black sot asleep by his side! This was the same Susi whose same passion for booze lost for Livingstone at Mukungu his supply of sugar and flour with the 900-fathom sounding-line.

But where are we now? At last we reach his old capital, which during the last few days has been burned to the ground, stockade included. Beneficent antiseptic blaze this burning of their local London, for fire, and fire alone, could wipe out the filth. Dignity equates dirt in Africa and the so-called Capital was a dark mass of dilapidated huts: all the dainties and decencies of life despised. The sacred "ark" = "Makumba" had of course to take refuge in the woods and the guess is that it is a stone, only a

guess remember, for none dare whisper its form or nature. It is personified always, and worshipped as a supernatural being because all insist that it *came down from heaven*. "Makumba's" house was destroyed in the fire, but—ahem!—it would not have been so destroyed, say they, had Makumba been in it. Mieremiere has halted two hours back on the road, not daring to enter the old town until Makumba has been brought back and installed; we too had to steer clear of the place and are now camped on the right bank of the Luela. Mieremiere appeared by the roadside this morning, face furrowed with ill temper, and ordered the boys to lay down their loads and camp. I had therefore to admonish him for five minutes as he was never admonished before, and in the end he graciously said we could go on.

But this is not all nor nearly all: now follow days of enforced halting, as the chief won't hear of our going on yet. As far as he can explain himself he merely wants the fame of our visit to spread far and near: offers, moreover, many bribes to us just to stay on with him, including an initial present of six oxen. Very mad and erratic he gets, sometimes loses all shame as to dress, and will crouch down at rebuke (bluff?) like a little child. Again and again, face flushed and festal, he is so preposterous that you his prisoner must tell the lord of the whole land that you would rather have his room than his company. On the 17th in presence of a large crowd he formally handed over Monsieur Giraud's plundered boat, five sections all told, the third badly torn and battered on the upper plate. "Guardian," he styled himself (*Wakulama*), and in this character he took his seat among the sections to be photographed. At first he refused nervously, saying, "No! no! don't carry me away to Europe," but he soon consented on hearing that it was to emphasise this rôle of guardianship (!) that he was being "written down with the boat." Therefore, to the glory of God we write it, after much praying and palavering him round we broke away at last from Mieremiere. The crowd of men were told off in his presence to take Giraud's derelict across country to Chinama's, where it will await our return from the south. The veneer of

his "friendship" peeled off rather quickly towards the end: demands for one thing after another had to be refused and only the sternest of rejoinders kept him in place. He was really disconsolate that here we were slipping through his fingers, having only realised a very small exchequer amount from us.

I saw some malachite to-day ground down and laid on the wound with a feather. This was also Livingstone's expedient when a review of his dwindling possessions revealed that he had run out of medicine. They even put it on the eyes for ophthalmia, and it comes across river from the Sanga country where there are millions of tons of copper. This bluestone is panacea for all ills internal and external, and when I was sick the big chief affably waved his big hand at a big sulphate of copper mountain, as much as to say: "Now don't forget that you are to take a shovelful of bluestone in a barrel of water after each meal!" When Livingstone lost his medicine chest, then he knew his near future to be his final days. It cut him to the bone to think that onward from this dark day of drug-deprivation he must do business with Africa on the hair-trigger basis. For the moment he forgot everything else in the numbing realisation that old Africa with disconcerting seriousness of purpose was out to kill him. The soldier has lost his sword, the carpenter his adze, the blacksmith his hammer, and the doomed doctor has gone out of the profession. At first flash he faced this horror of a drugless Africa with almost as much loathing as he used to regard a bottle of patent medicine. Later, with light heart and lighter luggage, the tune changes: disturbed but not daunted he sees the sunshine through the mists of mercy. *God* is his "Doctor" now, in the final philological sense that "doctor" only means "teacher"; and did not Job, after all his toils and boils, shout "Who teacheth like Thee?"

But do not miss the point of the lost medicine chest: he was not so much downcast for No. 1 as for No. 1,000,000; the Africa that stole the drugs only robbed itself of his splendid medicinal succour. Did not the self-same Africa that stole millions of its own Africans for export slavery

thereby rob *itself* in so robbing them? All along his route, remember, Livingstone's loss became a diurnal disaster revived when those natives with limited means and unlimited infirmity streamed in on him with their wounds. Not forgetting the malingerer who seems somehow to suffer from all the ailments in the Medical Dictionary. Besides, what a lost key it was! How often in Africa the long-closed tribal door will only open to this very medical help from an outsider who otherwise would be spared not a single humiliation, not a single indignity.

Take our first case in point: watch how we conciliate these cut-throats. Picture a tall hunter of powerful build, with a smile that would frighten a bull-dog. But when his tale is told, it is a wonder he has a smile at all. Have not two years dragged past since his right arm was torn to pieces by the bursting of his old "five feet of gas-pipe" gun? The story runs that, being a big brave black, he had enough of the child left in him to want his weapon to go off with a bang; so, one day in hunting, he loaded up inordinately, the charge of powder nearly a foot deep in the barrel. Of course, the bang that should have flattened the elephant on the ground burst back on the hunter, and the biter was bit. Thus began the twenty-four dragging months of agony, when the quacks from far and near exploited the gaping wound until the one became many. At last, we come on the scene, and the problem now stands how to break this ring of rascals and cure our man. Well, my plucky wife, after much judicious wheedling, finally conciliated the whole gang of kinsmen, the stoutest objector being the man's own wife, who resentfully sniffed a very gem of a sniff in protest. To the last, this good lady—one of the well-meaning, fussy type—turned up her nose at the idea of a "death-sleep" operation; but this turning up of her nose was not to be wondered at, for the said snub-nose is naturally adapted for that purpose. Yet was she a kindly little body, and no doubt it was out of genuine affection for the sufferer she resented the terribly business-like look of the table and gleaming instruments. Just as a peaceful cat dozing in the sunlight becomes a thing of bristling wickedness and fury when an enemy

comes on the scene, even so Mrs. Hunter and her dislike of this "death-sleep." But, at last, we won her round. Result: a splendidly successful amputation of the arm by my pioneer wife, the poor hunter getting the first moment of peaceful calm in two years when he entered that soft fleecy cloud of chloroform. Then after three days, all the premature wrinkles of pain smoothed out of his brow, and once again the old *joie de vivre* flamed up in his face—a triumph of antiseptic surgery. In the coming years, no doubt, when Africa is a gridiron of railways, smart brick hospitals will grace these latitudes, but no surgeon will ever boast of such fame as this "death-sleep" lady and her pioneer operation.

The broken fragments of that old gun were nursed solemnly like sentient things, and the hunter often whispered his apologies to his broken "Brown Bess." He told me that he learned to shoot with it, and had never forgotten this, his first love: "Shooting," he said, "is like learning to play the hand piano [*Chidimba*]  
—who ever learned to play on borrowed instruments?" But after all, man is a comparative race, and he can only learn by contrasts. Here is another old hunter, dying in a dirty hut, but no cure for him. His son nurses him, and this is the dialogue overheard. Asked the young man, "What is life, father?" Answered the old 'un, "Life, my son, is one hit and many misses!" Of course, in all this, the poor old black "medicine-man" gets scurvy treatment for his professional pains. One sarcasm I heard was directed against a native boasting that he was only moderately rich, but immoderately healthy: "Take care! Your doctor is dead since he gave you a health certificate!" Poor doctors! professional etiquette demands that they dare not die. Wild kill-or-cure treatment is their idea, hence the negro professional proverb: "If the drug is not bitter you cannot get better." In sober earnest, these quacks with their mordant medicines seem to know more about the verb "to smart" than the verb "to be smart." They have variety, too. There was a case in which a sick son tried two doctors (or rather, they tried him), but what with rival doctors and rival medicines they nearly killed their man. Does not the



native proverb run : “ Drink two doses of different medicines and you will vomit ” ? A warning this to avoid calling in rival doctors. Well, at this point, the genial mother intervenes, and, rescuing the son from the clutches of the two medicoes, cures him in as many days. The natives, by way of compliment, now make a triple pun of the business, and luckily for once, English, as a language, renders the idea, if not the actual words : “ Better than allopathy or homeopathy is sympathy ! ” This, however, is exceptional, for very rarely will an English phrase rhyme with a Bantu equivalent. But by no manner of means can you persuade these old medicine-men that they are not “ servants of God.” Their cry is, “ Not unto us, not unto us, be the glory of any cure,” and then they break out into a weird little song of “ God-praise,” as they call it. Here it is translated :

*“ Up in heaven yonder  
 There is a travelling Doctor  
 Who passeth through the lands  
 Bringing healings unto man.”*

Thus, unlike the Italians, who say “ Three doctors—two atheists,” this old leech praises God at every turn, the sleek suggestion being that God is indeed God, but this local Mahomet is His precious prophet, mis-spelt “ profit.” It is only right to restore the balance of this story, however, by stating that if he thus sings such sweet language to God, it is certain that his worst Billingsgate is reserved for us. The lady “ doctors ” are even more bitter than the men and abuse you with a fish-wife’s tongue.

Look what leverage we get in talking about their two tribal “ unmentionables ” : God and death. Naturally and normally these are taboo, yet simply because we are heading for the grave of a “ God’s man ” (*wa kwa Leza*) all the verbal barricades are down. Thus we have both *brevet* and vouchsafement to go for them *à la* the following adroit formula : “ Now, here is the story that lay deep in Livingstone’s heart. He could not tell it to you and your fathers, for he, a dying man, did not know your lingo : spoke only a little Swahili and that by interpretation. Yes, this was the sum of all he longed to tell you, the message

he wrote to his son : ' Take God for your Father, Jesus Christ for your Saviour, the Holy Spirit for your Sanctifier and all is well.' ”

Meantime, here we have this uxorious King sitting, actually sitting, on one of his wives as a living sofa or ottoman. He boasts of dozens such. And (worse still) with sleepy defiance in his bloodshot eyes, he swears they will be buried alive with him. This affords me the appropriate opportunity to digress across river and describe these holocaust deaths, the living buried with the dead.

CHAPTER XVIII  
THE PASSING OF OLD "PERHAPS"

*The matter stands thus. Just as in "the servant question" of Africa one boy is a boy, two boys half a boy, three boys no boy at all, so it is with the bag-and-baggage phase of bush life. "Cut down the dead loads" was the old pioneer watchword, and the choice still stands between too many dead loads or "dead" Missionaries.*

*“ I have heard people say that Christianity made the blacks worse, but did not agree with them. I can stand a good deal of bosh ; but to tell me that Christianity makes people worse—ugh ! tell that to the young trouts.”*

*Livingstone.*

*“ We are adherents of a benign holy religion, and may by consistent conduct and wise, patient efforts become the harbingers of peace to a hitherto distracted and trodden-down race.”*

*Idem.*

## CHAPTER XVIII

### THE PASSING OF OLD "PERHAPS"

**M**ENTIONED very rarely, visited more rarely still is this Chona district to which I am now hurrying. The King, my oldest African friend, has just died and the question nagging at the back of my brain is whether the old deeds of burial-murder will still go on? Such is my agonising anxiety: will the living once more go down into the same grave as the dead? And the devil's "old reliables," the necromancers and wizards, will they still rule the occasion? An affirmative answer will pour reproach on our efforts, for this King got the succession on my nomination and a great twenty years we made of it.

Farther down river Ward saw much of this human sacrifice and tells of one instance which happened just before the decapitation of a slave, who was being sacrificed according to custom after the death of a chief. He observed a relative of the recently deceased chief engaged in serious conversation with the poor man, whose hands and feet were already bound, and just about to be executed. He ascertained that the victim was receiving a message which, after death, he was charged to convey to the spirit of the deceased chief. The conclusion of the message was somewhat as follows: "And tell him when you meet that his biggest war-canoe, which I inherit, is rotten." Not a dying yell, remember, but only a great dry sob. O Africa!

One cry there is, though, so uniform the words that it almost amounts to a horrible technical term. Reminiscent of the Epistle to the Romans as it is, you cannot resist the steady conviction that Paul must have known it too. Take, perhaps, a dozen such cases known to me, I mean, the living forced to embrace the mortifying corpse. The

terrible formula of their cry was just Romans vii. 24 over again : " Who shall deliver me from this body of death ? " No negro could ever read Paul's anti-sin moan in Romans without a special shudder at that metaphor : well he knows what it means, for often did he hear that cry. And long may he shudder at sin, say I.

But let this genuine witness tell the whole story. " The air," says he, " was filled with dust, tainted with the smell of heated African bodies and a sickly odour from the log fires. The evening breeze occasionally wafted the columns of smoke across the wild revellers, momentarily hiding them from view. By the lurid glow of the huge log fires, despite the almost fiendish appearance of the savages, I was deeply impressed with the vivid effect of the scene, with its action, and with its striking contrasts. As my eyes grew more accustomed to the surroundings I observed many natives dancing at the edge of a deep hole which had been recently dug in the ground. Whilst leaning forward to obtain a clearer view, and conjecturing upon the object of the wild proceedings, I was startled by a mighty shout uttered from hundreds of hoarse throats. Turning, I saw several men forcing their way through the multitude in the direction of the dark abyss. A jingling sound of bells heralded a procession of dancing figures, whose forms stood forth in bold relief as they passed in front of the blazing fires. A space was cleared in front of the hole and in a few moments there bounded forward the great charm-doctor, painted and bedecked with leopard skins and rattling charms, outward tokens of the absolute ruler of the destinies of heathen African savages. This hideous-looking creature, with whitened eyelids and body smeared with fowls' brains and blood, commenced the dance of Death. With sinuous movements of the body he pranced around the clear space, kicking up a perfect cloud of dust, and chanting a quaint savage song. Round and round, each time faster, whirled the uncanny figure. At length he stopped, bathed in perspiration, dusty and bedraggled, and seated himself at the edge of the hole. Another hideous shout rent the air. Ten women, the former wives of the deceased chief, with hands and feet bound, were dragged

forward and placed upon the ground in front of the charmdoctor. Shortly afterwards a number of young men, formerly slaves of the chief, were also brought forward to the brink of the hole. Then amidst a scene of wild confusion the corpse of the great chief, now swathed in yards of cotton and grass cloth, was borne forward. Above the heads of the swaying crowd I caught sight of dark bodies being hurled into the hole. I could just distinguish the agonised shrieks of women, the unfortunate wives who were being sacrificed. The body of the chief was next placed in the hole. The crowd surged, swayed and shouted even more vociferously than ever when a hundred hands commenced to heave the earth into the living tomb of the chief's wives, who were thus buried alive. Hemmed in by the crowd, I found myself unable to retire from the horrible scene. The hole was soon filled in, and crowds of natives then danced upon the spot. The first of the slaves was now brought forward. His head was fixed in a framework, suspended to an overhanging branch. A bright gleam of the executioner's knife, followed by a frantic yell from the multitude, denoted that the first of the numerous band of the late chief's slaves had been decapitated."

Thus you see it is not for nothing I am speeding over the hills to try a counterstroke. Why not outwit the Devil even here at his head-quarters? Now Chona has gone and I am "chief" mourner in the double sense of this adjective; chiefs are pouring in from all points of the compass so what a converging chance for me and my Gospel panacea. Was not this Paul's idea when he so pertinaciously desired to see Rome the great centre to which all the roads of the world radiate? For granted he gets to that roaring cosmopolitan Capital, then all nations will flow in to the prisoner Paul, who could not move out to call upon them in his chain.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Later: Disturbed but nothing daunted, I am certain my presence on the old sacrificial spot saved human lives. A letter just to hand seems to point that way. Often our Government officers, with the deliberate concentration of aloof indifference, ignore what a mollifying factor the Missionary can be in the hindering of tribal murders, but the bigger the official the bigger the complement. For instance, here on my return from this successful visit of mine, I find a letter awaiting me from our Administrator territorial, Baron

This dead King's name is a long tongue-twisting thing, *Chimfwamalembachivulemvulachidimulanga*. But there is very much thought in this unmasticated mouthful, for it means, "A - fog - of - a - fellow - yet - do - not - judge - him - too - quickly - for - an - African - fog - means - either - much - rain - or - much - sunshine." In other words, this Chona knew he was not much to look at, knew also that facial beauty often means a disappointing degree of ethical attainment, hence his choice of the local fog as a name because of its equivocal character, may mean bad rain or sweet sunshine, "don't-trust-appearances" sort of hint. Like the fog on the Welsh mountains where a man groping his way saw on ahead a monstrous figure : nearer, it turned out to be a man : nearer still, lo ! it was his brother. All of which you can see every morning you stand on the edge of the wall of mountains overhanging the King's ancestral valley : far below the eternal fog exudes from the marshes, an aqueous pall resisting the sullen and smouldering ferocity of the sun for several hours until forced out of business by the ultimate blaze bursting down. Curious, is it not ? that this very word for fog, *Chimfwa*, also means "death," the very point I now drive home to those mourning crowds who know too well the equivocal effect of their fogs ; perhaps good, perhaps bad weather resulting ; perhaps a happy heaven or unholy hell, *Chimfwa* = a fog = death = perhaps ? = who knows what will happen ?

Once I snapped his profile with a Kodak and he was exasperated about having only "the half of his face." "No," said he, "I want the other half of my face." True to his double-innuendo name of "the fog," I never saw that other half, but in his very death he left me the lovely legacy of a large Bible School built right up near his own private compound 50 feet  $\times$  36. Not only this, but across stream in his territory he encouraged the building of five such Bible Schools, at Kinkonka's, at Kanswa, at Mutavi's, at Duvye's, at Chipata's, all of which are now running

Fallon : "Hope you are all right in Luanza now," writes he. "I am glad, very glad, to hear things went smoothly up there, for I was anxious : I am quite certain it is due to your prestige and I am very grateful to you to have been up there."



strong. These are the cocoons from which we hope to hatch a Spurgeon and a Moody. Besides, his royal initiative was infectious, then followed the Bible School at Kasenga, then the one at Mpweto, then the Lukonsolwa one, then the one at the Mukuva River, besides three more in the outskirts, not to mention the mother of them all in Luanza, 800 on the roll, perhaps 1,000 soon. Well done for the Luban monarch; surely this dear old non-committal King Fog eventuated in sweet sunshine at least. I should like to think so, at any rate, for they tell me that, well on to the end, he stuck to the personal supervision of "God's House," urging the workers on with beat of drum and native orchestra, a sincere, a dignified African who never was on talking terms with a lie. So there it was in his own memorial building we mourned him dead, his own name "Fog" = "Perhaps" goading me on to gush out those dozens of "we knows" gladdening John's Gospel.

But to return to these royal burials; here is a sardonic custom for you, and, to avoid a distracting multiplicity of issues, the reader is requested to note a curiosity of a fact. Your logical Central African whose tribal life is so full of dear little conceits must even in the sacred matter of death sport these. Hence this erratic whim of his called a "dynastic death," a given dynasty of Kings actually specialising on a private mode of dying, it is the dynastic "patent." Here, among his islands, you have the old King Mwenge down this Lualaba River. Now, the Mwenge of any given year may not, *ex officio*, die a mere "*Lufu Leza*" (God-death, i.e. natural death) like the ordinary stock of Adam, oh no! There is a dynastic conceit ordaining that he, the said Mwenge, must die with a windpipe perforated with needles. This Medo-Persic law is specialised in the language as the technical "Mwenge death." So when your Mwenge is down with even a bad cold, he lies warily awake o' nights, the well-known Luban dagger in his hand, fearing a raid from the "young men with the needles." Very loud and lively is the sick-chamber kept the whole night, faggots blazing, and for life's sake he must really be afoot and lively in a day or two.

Across the Lufira the Sampwe people arrange such matters rather differently; still the same dynastic death idea, though. They, also, have this antipathy to a chief dying on his mat a "God-death," therefore, when death is really suspected as near, the chief and a wife or two, and even an uncle, are hurried along their dynastic *via dolorosa* to the well-known cliff from which they are dashed headlong to their dynastic death. Meantime, within the royal stockade the "Prince of Wales" of those latitudes has ascended the *Chipona* (throne). He it was who wire-pulled his father's death, and now he is acclaimed amid deafening jubilation, wearing a wealth of coloured calico in voluptuous folds. The sharp intended contrast of all this is dramatic, the old King's dying shriek at the ancestral cliff being timed to coincide with the shout of acclamation as his son ascends the throne in lineal descent from Old King Cole I.

The reason of all this is obvious: interregnum is the African's horror, for it spells loot and rapine. There is then red anarchy, for autocracy is so utterly the negro potentate's boast, that the day he dies the natives pay his bereft kingdom in his own coin. Desolating the land, that is to say, on the ironical plea that, of course, as the absolute monarch is dead, ergo, there being no King in Israel, every man may do what is right in his own eyes. Is this the hoary source of the herald's cry "*Le roi est mort, vive le roi*"? surely, the same horror of interregnum this? Watch, too, how that very word of theirs for "throne" (*Chipona*) is eloquent of the precarious regal tenure of the King. This ebony carved throne, though it could grace a London drawing-room, really means: "You'll tumble down," the idea being that the heights of autocracy are too giddy. A cannibal variant this, on the old "uneasy-lies-the-head-that-wears-a-crown" idea. Here again, seemingly, you have a whisper of Biblical analogy, in talking about "The enthroned on his royal 'you'll tumble down,'" for Ezekiel uses this very word of The Throne, "I will overturn, overturn, overturn . . . remove the diadem and take off the crown." This triple usage of the word "overturn" is precisely the "tottering throne"

idea. Their neighbours, the Mufungaites, being the mountaineers of those parts, climb up the face of their "munitions of rocks" at an angle of  $80^{\circ}$  with their royal death. There, far up in the wind-swept ancestral cave, they all lie rolled up in the "last mat." Curious, that far away into the penetralia of cannibal life, you meet that old ghost, the eastern position? "Head pointing to the east, sir," is what some old ceremonious elder will whisper in your ear at a negro burial function. A whisper all this of the far past when in the desert dreary Israel "pitched their tents towards the sun rising." The western sky of sunset is the same word as "the spirit world," so this means that the Flanders phrase "gone west" is borrowed from the black man.

But better far than these bumptious burials of King Somebody is the chance a Missionary gets all over the country by the graveside of the hundreds of little Africans dead in innocency. What more appropriate of *their* end than to open the Bible at *its* end and see how Heaven exalts all such "insignificants"? For death is the royal reverser and here in the closing chapters of the Word ("Revelation" indeed!) I find God, in one pungent pen-stroke, reverses things in that sarcastic phrase, "I saw the dead (1) small and (2) great." Mark you, there is a triple ending here, end of baby's earthly life, end of the world, and end of the Bible. And here on the edge of Eternity the tedious old conventionalities are gone for ever; no longer pigmy man, strutting even up to the grave's edge and talking tall about the "great and small." I say, here in the Bible's last book, here out on The Edge where we plunge off from the planet earth, here it is not once but five tell-tale times God gives us the other way round phrasing, "the dead (1) small and (2) great." Therefore, this small-and-great point is far too obviously intrusive to be ignored as a hair-splitting ineptitude; do not the five recurrences force you to face them? All this I gush at baby's graveside in the mosquito marsh, and insist that we should not be surprised one little bit when we recall that this last grave-side document in the Bible bears the name of "The Unveiling." That is to say, up goes the veil, and in goes

our gaze to the Eternity that turns topsy-turvy all the 1, 2, 3 arrangements of tedious little pall-bearing man; five times, I repeat, this "small-and-great" transposition is used with a repetition that rings out God's own ratification of reversal. And in each of these consistent five the lesser precedes the greater in the land where "a little child shall lead them," where "of such is the Kingdom of Heaven."

*"Solomon, what of thy glory? it's gone in the wind.  
Babylon, what of thy story? it's gone in the wind."*

This means, of course, that there can be no such being as a "heathen" baby; heathenism is a thing you cannot be born into, but only grow up into. Born in it, yes, but it cannot be born in baby. "I saw the dead, small and great," means that the Bible put Heaven's V.C. in the little coffins of every child killed in an air raid. "Of such is the Kingdom of Heaven" means that the smaller you are the higher you go; the pyramid is narrowing to the top. Yes, these poor old Africans drink it in by the open grave I helped to dig myself, when I tell them that the big boasters get their place at last, and it is the last place. No, I have not gone off on a word; that all this exegesis is as austere as it is authentic you can prove by tying it down to the lone word of words, "Eternity." Now, here is a word only once used in the Bible, yet preachers thunder it out thousands of times, whereas the unabashed Book only gives it one mention. Face, then, this one-and-only usage of the word and see how it bears on our "small-and-great" hypothesis. A mere glance sets any sinking sense of appreciation at ease; here you have it. "Thus saith the high and lofty One that inhabiteth *Eternity*. . . . I dwell in the high and holy place, with him also that is of a *contrite and humble spirit*."

CHAPTER XIX  
LIVINGSTONE'S "LAST SPONGE"

*Livingstone in his medical profession had found out that medicine need not be nauseous to be effective. So, only much more so, in his "Last Journals" moralising: sunny Africa puts as much sun into it as sermon.*

*“ We now end 1866. It has not been so fruitful or useful as I intended. Will try to do better in 1867, and be better, more gentle and loving ; and may the Almighty, to whom I commit my way, bring my desires to pass, and prosper me ! Let all the sins of '66 be blotted out for Jesus' sake.”*

*Livingstone.*

*“ May He who was full of grace and truth impress His character in mine. Grace—eagerness to show favour ; truth—truthfulness, sincerity, honour—for His mercy's sake.”*

*Idem.*

## CHAPTER XIX

### LIVINGSTONE'S "LAST SPONGE"

**L**EAVING them on the far east, we have given all Livingstone's "sponges" (i.e. water-sodden morasses) the slip by choosing a different time, different place. In keeping well up from the marshes near longitude 29° there is a gratifying facility about the pace we are making; weeks for his months, land for his waste of waters. (He lost half a month alone by a guide's useless detour!) Had he only kept to his old trail straight south, he would have seen England again. But what explorer ever took the same route twice? Why leave plums to be picked by someone else? Nevertheless, when down in Kavende, I resolved to cut across near the west shore to get my first picture of the sorrows of his end. Lake Bengweulu begins rather indefinitely about fifteen miles from here over the plains; watch the new spelling in the two terminal "uu"; all Livingstone's use of "o" really equates our Italian "u." I press rather pertinaciously this matter of African vowels, for when Stanley heard of Livingstone's death he blandly mistook *Chitimbwa* for Chitambo, Land's End for John o' Groats, and ran off a long erroneous description of the wrong spot because of wrong spelling. He never came down here at all, never even reached the south end of Tanganyika, hence his ludicrous error of mistaking Chitambwa's for Chitambo's, South Tanganyika for South Bangweulu.

Yet England seems to like this sort of "travellers' twaddle," and the men who resolutely remain on to live and die for these lands stifle many an impolite yawn at the errors, easy errors, of these run-in and run-out explorers. His advance is usually notified by an *avant-courier* with the usual S.O.S. missive: must have food for his men, must

have so many canoes for so many negroes at the Lualaba crossing. And so on for him to get on. Then the great greenhorn himself arrives: two words overheard between master and man, only two, being quite enough to tell the tale that he, Mr. Bombast, is living in a linguistic fog, easy and endless errors because he is guessing ingloriously all his African data. Worst of all: when he does frankly sit down and listen greedily to *your* story, hours and hours of it—I say, worst of all, is his ultimate distortion of your tale in the inevitable book he publishes. But there, let us stick to our chronicle.

Three or four villages, Kalasa's dependencies, lie on the road, the last on the edge of thin forest bordering the savanna. For three hours a long difficult marsh is encountered, at many points looking like a lagoon. This marsh, the natives say, is characteristic of Bangweulu in its southern reaches in the floods, the problem being to find where the wash of prussian blue is to be laid off, not on. The natives in their lowly way have done a good thing in engineering here. Unlike the usual African custom of stolidly staring Nature in the face and attempting no subjugation of its forces, the whole community, answering this harsh challenge of Nature, turned out and threw up a long earthen weir right through the marsh, joining the one strip of dry land to the other. Along the backbone of this bank you go, the marsh being on either hand, and the Blondin art is to find and keep just the proper poise, otherwise you plunge.

Fish, of course, was the primary idea of this great weir and every wet season fabulous quantities are caught in the wicker baskets. Mostly all coarse Siluroids, though. These mud-fish belie even the old saw about a fish out of water for I am informed they can live long months under the sun-baked surface of a dried-up stream. Before the water finally disappears, the creature drives a burrow downwards into the mud of the river bed, then turning its tail up so as to cover its nose, and encased in slime, it passes into a deep sleep which may endure for a whole year, or longer. Nor are they alone in this. A considerable number of other fishes have, in like manner, contrived



to tide over long periods of drought ; as, for example, the lung-fish (*Lipidosiren*), the serpent heads, the climbing perches and the *gouramis* as well as several of the cat-fishes. The marsh crocodiles also, for example, when the stream in which they have been living is reduced to its last trickle of water, either migrate or bury themselves in the mud of the river bed. In the latter case this is soon baked hard, and here perforce those which have elected to stay must remain till released by the restoration of the stream by the rains. Thus they may remain prisoners for months, for, once the mud has hardened, escape is impossible. In like manner the water-tortoise (*Clemmys leporosa*), to survive prolonged drought, passes into a state of torpor. When, by degrees, the stream is reduced to a series of stinking pools, these tortoises seek such shelter as they can find under ledges of rock, remaining, to all appearance, dead for months.

This marsh crossed, you strike Kampolombo Lagoon once perhaps the most south-easterly contour of Bangweulu. Vena Kavende villages are on this side of the Bay, a stretch of wire-grass savanna separating village and lake. *Nkwa ! Nkwa ! Nkwa* is the metallic sound heard as you approach these "city" villages, the men hard at work beating out the bark cloth with a wooden mallet. This soon accumulates in little packets in their huts and of two varieties ; the better sort is made from the "mutava" tree afforesting the villages, the coarser in great quantity from the first "musamba" tree met with in the forest. The *Vatwa* are the poor riverine population, amphibia, they might almost be called, so very much in the water are they. Even on a dark night you can see him far out, a cresset fire flaring luridly in the bow. Fish thus attracted are speared. They rarely cultivate, scarcely build anything worthy of the name of hut, and come over here to barter fish for flour.

Vena Kavende get their wives from among them, that too being only another bit of barter. The Chief is linked with every hamlet in his country by marriage, his Queen being often some hard-working body promoted from the ranks. The Lake is known in its northern limits as Chifunabudi and here in the south as Bangweulu, the last two "uu"

(may I rub it in?) being most distinct. Translated, it has in it the note of *immensity*, and this the Lake's full name brings out. The whole name really is "Lake Bangweulu, wawikilwanshimangomwana," i.e. "the journey is so long across that you must take aboard provisions." This is neither the fantasy nor poetry of the globe-trotter, but plain philology.

"Ye have heard of the patience of Job," but know also that here are people who have that same virtue miles long, centuries old. Hunger gnaws, cold numbs, and they are down at the very bottom of life's hill yet give never a twitch. I am prepared to be told that any analogy between these blacks and our far-away whites is only a studied straining after effect. Yet just under my nose I see two stout "old 'uns" binding Britons to blacks: (1) "salary" the noun, and (2) "pecuniary" the adjective. For here (1) they pay for everything in salt, the real old root for "salary." And (2) as all the Chief's wealth is in his cattle, when these die off he is literally in *pecuniary* trouble, from *pecu*, cattle. Thus "folks is folks" and the round world akin. When Livingstone died down here with his "one shilling and sixpence" to the good, that or any coin had very cold comfort in it. These natives never had cash currency. Therefore, never put a monetary value on any such coin. Looking astutely one day at the king's head graven on the first shilling they ever saw, I wondered what *their* idea of this novel thing was, this "compressed sweat" called a coin of the realm. They were five men doing this scrutinising, one coin passing from man to man, all ten eyes on the unwinking two eyes of the graven face of the king. Then it came out. The five men snapped out the *same* opinion about money, and in so speaking they reached the bed-rock of all economics, revenues and riches: "*That, oh! that is the face that never smiles.*" Nor does the face of a dead man smile. Nor does the face on this dead coin. "Cold cash," for the dead are cold. Business is business, and there is no sentiment in silver currency—is there?

Nature by way of relenting at the lowness of the Lake's shore makes amends by spreading this flood for many a

wearily mile among the dead-level plains. Here in the great marsh ("Livingstone's Last," let us call it) the natives did the deed and actually killed sixteen elephants in one day when the river was in flood. This great tribal "kill" is an annual thing with all the sporting significance of our English August 12, September 1, or October 1. The long spear-grass is jealously watched up to the moment when, with one fire-brand, the chief officially sends it up in smoke. Thus hounded on to their doom, the miles and miles of roaring flame make the first glitter of water a joyous relief to driven-to-desperation Jumbo. Now it is these monsters with gleaming white ivory get into the young bog far up-stream, thinking no doubt it is just one of their ordinary little puddles for play. But, alas! they get involved from deep to deeper, deeper to deepest, and finally cease to flounder from sheer elephantine exhaustion. Out dart the canoes, torpedo boats versus dreadnoughts, the chuckling fishermen all armed with hippo javelins, and even little boys with axes and bows and arrows. Then begins the massacre, the resultant foul fat and meat slowly poisoning the community for months.

Thus sped the *quid pro quo* killing, for of course all this is red revenge, nothing more. It is not uncommon to come on a village wrecked by elephants, villagers chased out, grain-stores pulled down from their pedestal, grain strewn like gravel all over the derelict town. But this is rarer than the persistent damage done to crops in a single night, damage so deplorable that a local famine looms ahead for the red-millet devotees. Eland and roan make things hard enough, but an elephant is prince of all pirates, and doubles the devastation by first destroying the fields, then finishes them off by pulling down the town. In later days many a hunter made and unmade himself with these elephants. There was the man who killed his 112 and elephant No. 113 killed him. The man who half-killed one, followed it up, saw it shamming death, began to measure its tusks when the half-killed monster turned and wholly-killed the hunter. The other, who although badly shaken crawls out alive from under the monster's body. Also the incredible elephant who seemed so decidedly dead that they cut off both

trunk and tail, then (like Mark Twain's "the report was premature") it rushed off. Fifty-two men it takes to carry a male weighing two tons; but the bones are spongy and meat so full of water that when dried it is about half its beefy bulk. The meat is stringy though and only the trunk, feet and heart make good eating.

They travel Indian file against the wind, snip off food to right and left when on the move, and cleverly take a dose of salts in the form of a saline earth containing nitrate of potash, rock salt, etc. This purges the short and large intestinal worms. More than two miles away each fruit tree or edible scrub sends its marconigrams down the wind, hence the straight tracks an elephant always makes. It is literally a "trunk" call, for the "meat messages" are streaming in on him from two, even three, miles away. Water calls, pumpkins call, the young bamboo shoots call, and, so to speak, the dinner bell is ringing across all that distance up his trunk receiver. As I have said, this accounts for an elephant's straight-as-an-arrow tracks: intervening trees, anthills, and obstacles are brushed aside *en route* for the one grim objective of edibles. For, remember, "grim" is the word: each elephant needs nearly eight hundredweight of food every twenty-four hours, so his bill of fare is a big concern. This means, of course, many miles of elephantine travel when grass, reeds, bark and their favourite thorn shrubs are eaten with sorghum, maize, pumpkins and even tobacco. Even tobacco, and lots of it. His red-letter months, however, are December, May, June and September, when his favourite fruits are ripe and swallowed whole.

It may assist the reader in understanding the trend of this narrative if I here explain this somewhat Boy Scout digression on elephants. This tale of African quadrupeds brings us abruptly to our black bipeds on Lake Mweru. History attests that the elephant did it all and the great Nkuba dynasty is really founded on ivory. The first usurper of that name was a mere adventurer hailing from the Vemba country in the east, his quest being ivory precisely as Mushidi came from the same direction seeking copper. Thus, like the Indian who believes the world is carried on

the back of an elephant, this little world of Mweru is also seen to be superimposed on Jumbo. And precisely as the same Indian thinks the elephant walketh not on air, but only carries the earth because it in turn is borne aloft on the top of a tortoise, even so, only much more so, with Lake Mweru before the ivory craze. Ere ever a Nkuva sighted the curvatures of its shores, there were aboriginal "tortoise" chiefs who slept on in the interior, never dreaming that plans were being hatched out east for the wresting of the Lake from them.

Dotted all round its shores, each of these little ragamuffin kings played for his own hand, thus ensuring a population riddled with discontent. Such was the aboriginal germ of government found by Nkuva, the adventurer, on Lake Mweru, and no wonder the elephant got on the tortoise's back so easily. Nor was there bloodshed in it all. For when this ivory hunter struck the east shore of the Lake near the delta of the Kalungwizi, the wide waste of pitiless waters that met his gaze made him resolve, not to fight but rather, to worm his way among the Shila people. Therefore, avoiding the provocative policy of begging a boon from them, he specialised on the most worthless thing in the whole interior, to wit, ivory, or "the bone with no marrow fat in it." Now, if all great victories are won by following the line of least resistance, then Nkuva deserved his literal "walk-over." Did ever fisher chief, ever in his wildest dreams, guess that mere worthless ivory had brought this keen-eyed hunter? What they really dreaded was that the foreigner had come to steal the elephant's *beef* from them, for truth to tell, one or two tons of meat from one Jumbo is no small butcher's bill. The real bones, too, make a choice negro broth, for are they not full of fat?—but as for ivory!

So it came to pass when Nkuva crossed to the Shila shore he found ivory riches beyond the dreams of avarice. Bestrewing the plains lo! the discarded tusks bleaching in the sun, the accumulated elephants' teeth of years. Thus he read them the old lesson that the very ivory despised and rejected of aborigines, the same made he the cornerstone of his kingship. Here was the thin edge of the great

coming wedge. So thin, indeed, that it seemed nor edge nor wedge at all. With a fatal facility for sharp business methods, Nkuva, dissolving in philanthropic smiles, let them gormandise on their tons of beef and broth, he merely claiming as a beggar's boon "the only two bones in an elephant that have no marrow fat in them." This ivory, of course, he speedily passed out east, and in return received old Crimea "tower" guns and English powder from the Arabs, thus ensuring the Nkuva ascendancy all round Mweru.

Some objected, of course, for what about the salt deposits, and would the new-comer deal high-handedly therewith? Away down in the marshes of the south end, Mudimba adroitly begged the usurper not to approach his salt pans, and calmly proposed to give Nkuva the real recipe for the "growing of salt from seed." Sure enough, his embassy crossed to the east shore bearing two gifts of "seed salt" and "seed fish." These latter were natural and normal enough, a jar of water, full of sprats with instructions to let the young fish loose in the first stream, then would they bring forth and multiply. Next came the curious bag of "seed salt," with instructions as solemn as stringent that this salt, ordinary salt, was merely to be deposited in a hole in the ground and forthwith would appear a rich harvest of—chloride of sodium! But Nkuva at this stage had "grown a moustache," as they say on the Lake, and was no longer the beaming black adventurer of his "salad" days. Had he not fortified his position in the country with an Arab alliance? So they fought it out at the south end, and finally after some months of war Mudimba's counsellors got him really to believe that, after all, this indeed must be a stupid sort of strife that wrangled for bones—bones, forsooth, not even of the genuine Mother Hubbard sort, but merely the worthless ones minus marrow fat. And so they buried the hatchet on the clear stipulation that Nkuva would never tamper with their aboriginal rights to the beef and bones of the elephant, this pact of peace being closed by the usual marriage on such occasions; usual, because the oldest custom on the Lake is this cementing of intertribal peace by intermarriage. Again and

again, a wild war has ended in wedding bells, wedding drums, I mean, the old Spanish-Africano idea being that if Castile is to be successfully united to Aragon, then must the negro Ferdinand marry his black but comely Catherine.

"Sponge" was the word Livingstone coined for the thing that finally murdered him; this curious species of wild asparagus belonging to the *Cyperaceae* makes the navigation of many an African river impossible. But "bog" is not the right word; a sort of floating vegetable spring-mattress it is, hence the name *Ntemfuma*, the bouncing one. A sure death-trap to foreigners, and alive with leeches, this is the reason why the whole tribe have built "dummy" villages round the edge. Far out into the treacherous heart of these marshy mazes they have each their own sacred spot whither they flee on attack, and leading up to these retreats are mysterious little tracks known only to wily aboriginal eyes. A foreigner's false step means a watery grave. The natives insist (but what won't they say?) that I am the only white man who ever reached the centre, and the chief danger I found was that at noonday one was deep down in pestiferous gloom, the black bog was full of too many inviting little avenues along which you wrongly conjecture you can pass. These are named "The paths of death," and the human otters who grub there in the mud can throw taunts at their enemies from the invisible hole in the heart of the marsh. Millions of frogs are there, croakers these who have taught the tribe its manners. Vulgar like their many frogs, lo! the tribesmen sit on the edge of their morass croaking out one note Pay! Pay! then—plump! into the mud again.

They despise Livingstone's Gospel do these frog-folks, but what would the nightingale care if the toad despised her singing? She would still sing on, and leave the cold toad to his mud and misery. "When," said Carlyle, "Solomon's temple was building, ten thousand sparrows sitting on the trees around declared most chirpingly that it was entirely wrong; nevertheless it got finished.

But to business: farther along this so-to-call-it "sponge" softens into blue belts of water and new troubles arise in the canoeing of these. Firstly and oh! so forcibly you

find there is nothing to canoe in, so you strip a tree and make your own bark boat. Made in an hour, the thing is so coggley and cracked that one tooth of a hippo can tear it to tatters. So far so good ; you have barked your boat, the next phase is more bewildering, for here comes the most whimsical of all these happenings. A rebel to the last, this bog has betrayed us a second time : given your cockle-shell canoe, the problem now stands how to produce your water. You had no boat for your lake (betrayal No. 1), now you have no lake for your boat (betrayal No. 2). What has happened ? The whole aspect of the quondam waterway has changed behind our back, a few fleeting hours robbing you of both a way on the water and water on the way. First it was nothing to canoe in ; now it is nowhere to canoe to. This is how it happened. Lying down to doze off fatigue, we left our bark boat on a sort of shore and the last glimpse we have is the deep *lapis lazuli* blue water all round. Awakening later, we find ourselves in a tangled jungle of "sudd," the Lake choked with dense bewildering marsh. Be it understood, this solid mass during our sleep has sailed in to shore as a fleet of separate islands to combine into *terra firma*, only and obviously as *firma*, I mean, as a bog can be called *terra*.

Then begins a curious kind of aquatic leap-frog *à la* Peary trying for the Pole, only for floating ice read floating islands of "Nile sudd." The Arctic circle seems the last place to seek an accurate analogy of African life, but, excepting always the erratic extremes of Polar cold and equatorial heat, here you have the same old fight, sledging your bark boat over a constantly changing surface of moving marsh. Two, three, or four islets combining and dispersing in as many minutes ; a channel of half an hour ago is now choked with marsh grass and your bark boat "bog-bound" along with it. "The key that locks is the key that opens," runs the native proverb, and those cantankerous currents that liberate are the same that hem us in among new networks of moving marsh. Nor does your boat rock ; it is the islets that do the rocking, any attempt to land sending this floating freak a-bobbing all over. Happily my absurdly abbreviated trousers cannot be much





THE NEW AND THE OLD.

1. The old-time folks. 2. The wayside Gospel meeting. 3. The old city of Bunkeya rebuilt. 4. A whole family of hopefuls. 5. The old way of feeding the folks.



wet, for there are not many inches to wet, but my leap-frog boatmen have managed the minimum. Ashore their favourite garments are the fashionable monkey-skins, but here afloat they almost only wear their own skins minus any tailors' trimmings. And if you think my native negroes are embarrassed you certainly do not do them justice, the only painful point being the monkey-skins ashore. "Nature's pensioners," is the name of Messrs. Monkey, and here it is they apologise for having deprived these monkeys of their overcoats, the reason running that the said monkeys deprived the negroes of their corn. Therefore, these animals having created quite a fashion in food for Luban corn, the Lubans retaliate by making a fashion in dress of monkeys' skins.

Under the gnarled fig-trees sit the old fellows, the "Messrs. Hitherto," of whom Livingstone wrote: "I like to see them weaving or spinning or reclining under these glorious canopies as much as I love to see our more civilised people lolling on their sofas or ottomans." Far from the futilities of town life, he saw some slumbering nobleness in the assorted mentalities of these toothless old men whose wide world is contracted within the tribal boundary. One of them had actually heard of books and umbrellas, but had seen neither. Yet there he stood on, and for, the spot where God had given "commandment concerning his bones." Neither a nobody nor a know-nothing, was he not skilled in soils, agriculture, hut-building, basket-making, pottery, manufacture of bark-cloth and skins for clothing as also nets, traps and cordage? All this with fishing and hunting, and never a gad-about move away from the old stockade on the edge of the forest. After all, even the clock that stands still points right twice in the twenty-four hours. And, clock or no clock, is it not generally two o'clock—just about that time in the afternoon?

Certainly Livingstone was the last to laugh at these hearty old farmers and fishers when he recalled the inscription far away in a little churchyard in England: "*Here lies Peter Bacon, born a man and died a grocer.*" Later on these ancients, haggard lines multiplying on their brow, are

the stock critics of missions and the very last to yield. Let one or two young folks in town break with heathendom and at once these aged monitors demand from them a Christianity in best apple-pie order. But when they do own up to the conversion of a neighbour, the breezy ring of their frankness is refreshing. This time he gets a parable out of the fact that no native hut has a window, therefore no streak of daybreak can enter his dark hut. It is only the daybreak *sounds* that get in on him to tell what the eye cannot see. This is his picture of a man's hidden heart and its conversion, this the simile that seems to invite elaboration. "Yes," said an old sapient, singling out one of them, "that man *is* saved, and why do I know it? Why do I know it is daybreak without even leaving my dark hut to see if there are streaks of dawn? *I know by the singing of the sunrise birds.* Their music gets into the blackness of my house without my bothering to get out and see if the east is reddening. So, too, a Christian and this new heart of his: I cannot get in, past bone and blood, to inspect it, but the new heart comes out in song like the sunrise birds."

Yet this old gent. is a hardened sinner who throws off this while he twirls an imaginary moustache. Very tenacious of their status are these dogmatic old men and the young upstarts have a rough time at their hands. They have no Sinai, no fifth commandment, and the commonest wrangle is between father and son. As they are so provokingly quotable, let me repeat a conversation overheard:

The son: "Oh, old man! we differ; let us take our case to the court of the elders."

The elders (with studied rebuke): "In this case we appoint your father to the presidency of the eldership."

The son: "Oh, I'm of age; look at the height of my shoulders."

The elders: "Shall the shoulders be higher than *the head?*" (i.e. his father).

CHAPTER XX  
THE VATWA AMPHIBIA

*Written on the spot, these recollections are based on collections. All the trouble begins when you try in a dreamy manner to recollect the thing you failed to collect in your notebook. "Down with it and done with it," is the good old lead-pencil rule.*

*“ A darkened soul that shuns the light,  
A heart indifferent to the right—  
And this, and only this is right.”*

*“ Not all that heralds rake from coffined clay ;  
Nor florid prose nor honeyed lines of rhyme,  
Can blazon evil deeds or consecrate a crime.”*

*“ Yes, one unquestioned text we read ;  
All doubt beyond, all fear above :  
Nor crackling pile nor cursing creed  
Can burn or blot it—God is love ! ”*

## CHAPTER XX

### THE VATWA AMPHIBIA

THEY make their nets from *lwimbwe* fibre, then christen them with names as vainglorious as a British battleship. "The gobbler" (*Mina tonse*); "The all-the-town supplier" (*Chikushya chaalo chonse*); and so on through all the sinuosities of fishing swagger heard in a Yarmouth gin-palace. There is religion of a sort in all this, hence the first basket is placed on the ancestral spirit's grave. For do not these mediators, "the good ones," live out beyond the edge of the planet earth, out at some half-way house to God? Therefore, have "a say" with God on mundane matters, particularly family affairs? Particularly family affairs, for (1) who indeed brought that left-behind family into being if not the said ancestor *plus* the said God? Therefore (2) the ancestor who did so co-operate with God unto the bringing of them into the world, who (3) did likewise co-operate with that same God unto the leaving them behind in that same world, wide and weary world, lo, (4) why should not the same ancestor and the same God still continue the same co-operation in the interests of the bereaved humans?

These four interlocutors, the key to the blackbrains theory of mediation, invite the Missionary to proclaim the dovetailing doctrine of Christ *the* Mediator between God and man. Shut up into one sentence, the kernel idea is the negro attempt to rob the awful and unknown spirit-world of its double sting of loneliness and frowning distance. Does it not envelop him, and out from the unseen depths thereof are not daily darts showered against him? Hence his solution in this bridging process, i.e. the boast that a deceased mother is still linked with her living children by the very blood she has bequeathed them. That is to say,

yonder in that frowning lonely spirit-world, menacing his life at every turn, he has actually a blood kinsman as daysman and representative. She, too, was once hungry, once weary, once jagged with earthly pains and penalties. To prove this link as both intimate and dear I have heard a man murmur in spirit-worship, "Oh, mother, behold this blood now coursing in my body; thou didst not merely bequeath it unto me, but it is thee."

Here, then, you find the tenacity of belief that he, the living being, can bridge the awful gulf because the dead did not entirely die—did *they* not leave some of their own blood on this earthly side of the gulf as an intentional link? There, then, is his bridge across the chasm, and if you urge that it is not real, but merely his own mad conjecture, he will retort that the bridging initiative was not *his* at all, but rather that of his own guardian spirit, who will not (because cannot) sever the link between the living and the dead.

Leaving my wife not far from the spot where Livingstone wrote facetiously of a lion roaring at him, how does this coincidence dovetail? Tell me, can a lion only hinder, not help us? The answer comes from my wife, who with a gratification that is almost gratitude speaks up for the lion that certainly saved her life. She is just back from a long trek across river, and at one stage would have been hopelessly lost but for the intervention of a fierce-but-friendly lion saving, instead of swallowing her. I am painfully aware that here you have the incongruous carried to the verge of the bizarre, but let the truth be told though seventy sinners shrug their shoulders in disdain. To understand the situation you must look at the map and see where away at the south end of this Lake the great elephant marshes begin. After a long day canoeing this sea of uncertainty, at last towards evening, in order to reach land and camp, they entered the final phase of thirteen-foot-high bulrushes with nothing visible save a little ribbon of sky overhead. In they twisted into this maze of marsh and having no compass they were soon lost as to direction; lost, I mean, because the canoe had to take each and any new twisting phase of the waterway that presented itself



—that or nothing, and nothing at that. So round and round they go like a watchspring, then in exasperation night comes down with its many mosquitoes, but where, oh, where is land? In a voice that seemed to come up from his ten toes the guide declared they were lost. But ashore they must get, and no amount of scolding volubly and without reserve can mend matters. Then comes the discovery that makes no claim to be original: what about prayer? and what about the dear old jingle:

*“Prayers and praises go in pairs,  
They have praises who have prayers”?*

The answer is so authentic that no number of scoffers can gainsay same; no! despite all their allusiveness and politely impudent personalities. Mark you, what is wanted in this desperate situation of lost bearings is some clear call from the direction of land: but how can a human voice respond from a lonely spot where never human dwelling was? Then it was God heard prayer: like the two buckets in the well, up goes the one and down goes the other; up goes the request and down comes the answer—a lion roars. For a lion means land above all things, and the non-aquatic lion saved the situation. Right off they swing round the canoe and head straight for the roaring lion; no fear of being eaten by it, none at all. Would the God who sent the wild beast to deliver, allow that same beast to harm them? Still it roars and still they approach it, but as sure as they are advancing, so surely is the roaring receding; receding, yes, because Christ is interceding. Surely in this lion running away at the precise point where it had finished its God-sent service; I say, surely here again we have an exalted and touching proof that the Infinite God is the God of the infinitesimal. Even the rough old fisherman was forced to see God in it. There is something rather charming in a plain man's attempt to be ornate, yet even he made quite a secular sermon out of it. He is one of the sort who does not mind using God's name all day provided you do so with none of the odious affability learnt at the Mission. Yet now he owns up to a personal deliverance when man's help was of no avail: in fact, lions loomed

so large for the moment that to him all the world seemed to divide into three, and only three classes—The Biter, The Bitten and The Unbitten! Thus with all his quirks and quirks and homely philosophy he testifies to what he had neither part nor lot in, a blind man admiring the rainbow. Certainly these old orators have the style of genius if not the genius of style.

So you see how the God who overruled Satan at Calvary once again got the sweet out of the bitter. For is he not a “roaring lion seeking whom he may devour”? And was it not the very roar of this lion that brought the needed signal for dry land? Thus the very roaring that is a scripture symbol for devouring was transformed into a sure mark of mercy, for where a lion roars must be dry land. So God rules by overruling; all ill, well; all bad, good; and the very worst, the very best. At the Cross where Satan roared the loudest roar in all his devil-destiny, just there (and justly there) God got the greatest glory of all. It was farther up this self-same river the half-dead Livingstone in a tropical shower-bath of marshes wrote with a dying smile: “A lion wandered into this world of water and ant-hills and roared night and morning as if very much disgusted: we could sympathise with him!” Amos put it the wrong way round for Mrs. Crawford’s case of succour: “The lion hath roared, who will not fear?” Say rather, Mr. Amos, who will not rejoice in this hopelessly lost canoe on hearing such a land signal? For did not the same herdman write, “Will a lion roar in the forest” (*not in the water*) “when he hath no prey?” So it all ends in a crescendo of praise: even the young lions “seek their meat from God,” and that call, carnivorous call from land, was an assurance that the God who could feed Mr. Four Legs would lead and feed Messrs. Two ditto. *Felis leo* when he neatly and dramatically sent out that saving call, not merely hinted *terra firma*, but also announced a sort of Wild-Beast Restaurant where, to quote Brother Amos again, “the shepherd taketh out of the mouth of the lion two legs or the piece of an ear.”

This Amos announcement agrees at any rate with my wife’s diary-item for the 3rd of the month. At the Chitile

River the dinner-bell rang in Heaven, and up in the fork of an acacia tree lo! you have a half-finished antelope awaiting consumption in "the leopard's cupboard." Not the Mugsby Junction Restaurant this, but the one at the junction of the two main "forks" of a great tree, these branching forks being the only things of that name they provide at this Wild-Beast Restaurant. On climbing, the boys found the usual *hors d'œuvres* elimination of the abdominal contents, but head, body and legs are all in first-class condition, toughness at any rate a tale of the past. Meantime, while one is up in the fork dislodging the venison, his fellows, with guns at the ready, have made a circle of iron round the tree awaiting the spring of the leopard who is lurking somewhere in the long grass for his venison to reach the "high" stage in his high cupboard. If he can take it let him come and try, did he not kill the antelope? But we can kill him. This is the third time the *carnivora* have freed us *against* all their feline fancy so to do. Elijah knew something about this: we'll compare notes anon.

This "Amos" sing-song may seem too repetitive in character. But that good man was so keen a herdsman that lions were in his lively line of business. Being in the same sort of profession myself I rather cotton to his practical phrasing of the matter; they called him "a burden" (= Amos), but he grew up to bear the burden of the whole nation. And out in the bush, like Livingstone, he certainly learned literature, for in his first and second chapters you can find first-class strophes. (Lowth insists he is "not a whit behind the very chief of the prophets," at any rate he knows about lions, *voilà tout*). May the God of Amos grant that those who "shepherd" bipeds may likewise specialise on the ways and wiles of The Lion who goeth about seeking whom he may devour.

I agree with Sir Harry here: on this low-banked lagoon, after incessant passes at Livingstone's old insect foes, one is forced to face the fact that Africa belongs in some sense to Beelzebub, Lord of flies. Do not flies lord it over Africa? The liberal assortment of these creatures could conceivably infect you with every ailment in the Medical

Dictionary. If the white ants cannot undermine your house, then their cousins, the warrior ants, will chase you out of it. The beetles may fight shy of you, but they bore your timber instead of "boring" you. The tiny ants do not tamper with you because they mean to mess up your jam and sugar. The *ephemerides* do not trouble you by day because they mean to rise in clouds from the river by night to swamp the soup and extinguish lamp or candle. If the testse (*morsitans*) does not kill your dog, then the other sort (*palpalis*) may give you sleeping sickness. The blue-bottle fly's specialism is to spread blood-poisoning, but if he miss the mark then the gad-flies and maddening sand-flies will not fail to leave their card on you.

And so on and so on: the hornet politely leaves you alone until it gets you off your guard, then pays up arrears in one stab. The grubs left by the beetles eat off the roots of flowers and plants underground, while aboveground thousands of caterpillars left by moths and butterflies are sucking the juices of anything green; "blight" is the useless word covering hosts of such small horticultural enemies. Last of all (most of all, perhaps) you have my friend the engagingly definite mosquito, a fair and frank fighter, who sounds his bugle as advance warning. Wants blood, your blood, and gives you a burning-freezing fever as *quid pro quo*. Last, did I say? Nay, a jigger just now is tickling my third toe to intimate that no list of African Zoology can be considered complete without a word of warning against this burrowing flea which arrived in Africa not so long ago, in the earlier "fifties," say. Ever since the day it was unloaded from a West India-man in some sand ballast at Ambriz, it has stuck to the sandy soil right across Africa, and it is only when it loses its power of choosing its sort of soil by burrowing in the human feet that it spreads all over. First it tackles the toes, then it tackles whole towns and chases the people out.

All of which hints rather loudly how this hot Africa is cool enough to notify all comers that any business they transact with it must be on the hair-trigger basis. At any rate, this zoological "true bill" becomes more actual than artful when you pin together the prophet Isaiah's two Afri-

can snapshots: (1) " Ah, the land of the rustling of wings which is beyond the rivers of Ethiopia," (2) " whose land the rivers have spoiled." Plain as print, here you have a mere matter of cause and consequence, for (1) these dozens of rivers leaping over inadequate banks and weltering in the marshes surely equate " whose lands the rivers have spoiled " ? Moreover, and just as surely, this cause finds its consequence (2) in the millions of mad flying things generated in the putrefying marshes, " Ah, the land of the rustling of wings which is beyond the rivers of Ethiopia." Besides, when the same prophet in the same breath goes on to snapshot the occupants of these rivers as " a people scattered and peeled," did he not hit off the African ? Or when he snapped them again with God's kodak in the words " a people terrible from the beginning hitherto " ? Or even, better still, when he gave the whole of their hard history in eight, and only eight, words, " a nation meted out and trodden under foot " ? No wonder Livingstone read the Bible four times through when he was in Manyema : this downright, honest, four-square picture of Central Africa explains so much.

And now we near the end.



CHAPTER XXI  
THE ENDLESS END

*Even the decent sort of fellow who has a healthy prejudice in favour of minding his own business must face the Livingstone dictum that God has a business in His own earth. And ours it is to be about our Father's business.*

*“ The spirit of Missions is the spirit of our Master : the very genius of His religion.”*

*Livingstone.*

*“ I am a missionary, heart and soul. God had an only Son, and He was a missionary and a physician. A poor, poor imitation I am or wish to be. In this service I hope to live, in it I wish to die.”*

*Idem.*

*“ I never made a sacrifice. Of this we ought not to talk when we remember the great sacrifice which He made who left His Father’s throne on high to give Himself for us.”*

*Idem.*



## CHAPTER XXI

### THE ENDLESS END

LIVINGSTONE'S last month of March came in like a lion and went out with a real one in full blast. "30th March, Sunday: A lion," he writes, "roars mightily. The fish-hawk utters his weird voice in the morning as if he lifted up to a friend at a great distance in a sort of falsetto key." Then topsy-turvy Africa tries its old tricks. Crossing a river a canoe capsizes, girl drowned, cartridges spoiled and donkey saddle lost. This means the improvising of a pad with stirrups faked of brass wire fourfold. Then they punt six hours only to gain a treeless islet ten yards wide, grassy sea on all sides. No sooner do they land than down comes pitiless, pelting rain, their only refuge being to turn over a canoe and seek this catch-as-catch-can sort of shelter. The boys, meanwhile, are tugging at the tent, but the wind blowing great guns tugs harder and swishes it away. The loads, of course, are all soaked, including his poor bedding that began to be wet long ago lying in the bilge of the canoe.

Not "bed" but bedding is the word, for they tell me Livingstone hadn't one. Every night they snicked off four forks of saplings from a tree, made these forks the bearers of two parallel bed-sticks with small bark slats across, then clean sweet grass over all. Each new camp ahead must produce its new supply of saplings for the new job, a new neither-convenient-nor-conventional four-poster each night, the four forks dug deep in the soft soil. This is the self-same style of bed he died on. But, alas, here on a "treeless" ten-yards-wide Ararat, nor wood nor grass is available, so they prick the problem by lining out the loads with a blanket on top. Not standardised boxes, but some higher, some lower to pinch his poor old bones.

Yet these knocked-about boxes did many a smart stroke of policy for him : the men carry them on their shoulders by day, and now the loads carry Livingstone all night into the broken land of slumber. This is rare though ; only to-night the boxes make this stop-gap bed, but every night one of these on-end boxes make his bedside table. The supreme stratagem of this trick-table lies in the fact that being doubly load and table, the former by day carries the contents of the latter by night.

Now it is more rain wetting everything, but near sunset they spy two Vatwa fishermen paddling quickly off from an ant-hill where they find a hut, plenty of fish and fire-wood. There they spent the night, watching by turns lest thieves haul away their canoes and goods. *They* did not touch the fish, not a sprat. Morning brings the beating of a distant drum, so on they go misled by this signal : it is not his land party after all, but only the amphibious Vatwa. Thus they punt on through papyrus, tall rushes, arums, and grass full of large dark-grey hairy caterpillars. Tired out, nightfall sees them taking refuge once more on a " life-belt " ant-hill, a god-send because God sent. A lion roaring, they fire a gun into the stillness of the night, but get no answer save the lion's relentless roar. Livingstone is now pale, bloodless, and weak from bleeding profusely ever since the 31st of March last. " An artery gives off a copious stream and takes away my strength," he writes. " Oh how I long to be permitted by the Over-power to finish my work."

This means that when Livingstone staggered south bleeding every yard, the few remaining days left to him all tended towards a swoon into insensibility rather than sleep. But instead of spitting out an unprintable word like some modern explorers, he shut his teeth, opened his heart, and wrote on March 25 : " Nothing earthly will make me give up my work in despair. I encourage myself in the Lord my God and go forward." Six days before was his last earthly birthday and this Livingstone, who was a bit glacial and none of your oh-be-joyful saints, wrote, " My Jesus, my king, my life, my all ; I again dedicate my whole self to Thee. Accept me, and grant, O Gracious

Father, that ere this year is gone I may finish my task. In Jesus' name I ask it. Amen, so let it be!"

You choke down your regrets when you reflect that, in a double sense, this was Livingstone's last "March" on earth, lunar or sublunar. Born in the month named after the God of War, D. L. was at war all his African life—with No. 1. There is not a taint of censorious criticism in all his *Journals*, and every morning looking into his four inches of looking-glass, he summed up his whole rule of sanctification by shaking his fist at himself, saying, "Old boy, I'll fight *you to-day!*" There was no need for that alternative "or" when he said, "I will open up a path to the Interior *or* perish." "And" was his conjunction, not "or": he did both, and bravely perish he did, but to open it also was his attainment.

All this pain of his with never a moan. His grim theory was that a man should only moan "when too ill to be sensible of what he was doing." This explains that Spartan set of the lower maxillary in all his photos. A frankly middle-class face, there is bravery lurking in his Highland bashfulness, and beyond the bravery an optimism born and bred of both. "Bled all night: got up and took lunars" was a typical trick of the undying optimism that saw a chance for his map, when there was little for the man. The same optimism that (with a dexterity born of practice) could write: "My dysentery is bad but, then, why forget that it wards off fever?" There again you have the old warrior hitching his waggon to a star.

Not that this were easy to do. Again and again he wrote: "So cloudy and wet that no observations can be taken for latitude or longitude." Or: "Owing to clouds and rain no astronomical observations worth naming during December and January; impossible to take any." Or again: "Tried lunars in vain. Either sun or moon in clouds." Last of all—sure symbol of the night soon to be swallowed up in the day!—"Tried hard for a lunar, but *the moon was lost in the glare of the sun.*" That last pathetic winding up of his watch, Susi holding it flat in the palm while Livingstone wound it up, is a queer little picture of what all this roving is about. How could

the run-down Explorer let this time-piece run down? No mere watch this, but his chronometer for "sky work," as the natives called it. "All things are double," said the son of Sirach, and every night he held Divine Service there was generally this other sort of subsequent "sky work"; sextant and chronometer with eyes again heavenward. Two different sorts of "sky work," spiritual and temporal, different in design, but both anchored in the formula that you can *only determine your terrestrial location by a celestial position*. The first was a matter of shutting his eyes in prayer and looking up: the latter a looking up with eyes very much open. Yet both acts were Divine Service in the sense that you lose your way on earth unless dependent on the celestial vision to tell you where you are, whither tending.

This astronomical work of Livingstone's began long ago when outward bound to Africa: it was Donaldson, a skipper of the old school, who taught him sextant work. Taught him that laconicism about being only able to determine your terrestrial position by a corresponding celestial one. At any rate, let all the world know that Livingstone, far from mere star-gazing, got solid salvation out of his stellar studies. The numeral 4 did it: "Bode's Law," they call it although Kepler and even Titius adumbrated this marvel of the skies, this fearful fidelity of the numeral 4. We talk of the "four corners of the heavens," but this other "four" did for Livingstone what the four anchors cast out from the stern did for Paul's water-logged ship. "No God in heaven?" said D. L. "Then what do you make of this royal, this rhythmic regularity in 4: Mercury, Venus, Earth, Mars, Jupiter, Saturn, Uranus and Neptune, all our planetary system, ruled by this majestic 4 in the same ratio of separation?" Here you have no frivolous guess work in this law of planetary distances. Opposite each planet's name you coolly write the figure 4. Then, in succession, just as complacently, you go on doubling the numbers 0, 3, 6, 12, 24, 48, 96, etc., to the 4. Always doubling the last numbers to this famous 4. You thus get the good God's planetary distances lined out so methodically, so marvellously, that as James puts it "even the

devils believe and tremble." Molière began it long ago when he said that "two and two make four," but here Livingstone got such a saving dose of stellar "four" that he would have been blind as a bat not to see God in it all.

Mercury, distance	= 4:4 + 0 = 4	Jupiter, distance	= 52:4 + 48 = 52
Venus	" = 7:4 + 3 = 7	Saturn	" = 100:4 + 96 = 100
Earth	" = 10:4 + 6 = 10	Uranus	" = 196:4 + 192 = 196
Mars	" = 16:4 + 12 = 16	Neptune	" = 388:4 + 384 = 388 <sup>1</sup>
Ceres, etc.	" = 28:4 + 24 = 28		

And why not this "fantasia in four"? When Kant wrote his *Critique of Pure Reason* he found that long before he was born all possible human conceptions had only as many forms as the four corners of the earth: Quantity, Quality, Relation and Modality. There never were more than these four and never can be world without end. Existence is anchored on these four facts: then why be surprised at this stellar 4?

Thus Livingstone got honey out of the bee that stung him. "This trip," he writes, "has made my hair all grey. If the good Lord gives me favour and permits me to finish my work, I shall thank and bless Him though it has cost me untold toil, pain and travel." His last message to Scotland was, "Fear God and work hard," then off he went to live and die on his own recipe. The harder he worked the more he feared his God, on, right on to the endless end. Allowing for the last ten days of his swooning into insensibility, the 20th April may be fixed as his last day of active service. "A great downpour in the night," he writes, "burst all our now rotten tents to shreds." But off he must go at 6.35 a.m. for another three hours' swaying on the back of his poor old donkey, soon to be killed by a lion. Then came Sunday, day of Christ's victory over death, therefore day of proclaiming His promise of Life. Will he fail the Saviour who never failed him?

Why not use up his available breath in extolling his Lord? Had Livingstone not boasted that "the end of the geographical feat is the beginning of the Missionary enterprise"? And now comes Land's End, no more lunars,

<sup>1</sup> At the last moment I am particularly glad to verify these figures from the *History of Astronomy*, published for the Rationalist Press Association.

no more map making here out on the edge of the planet Earth where he plunges off into Eternity. His tent, torn last night in the wind and rain, symbolised the rending of that other old Earthly tabernacle. He has only an old stump of pencil, this he sticks into a steel pen-holder, then a bit of bamboo finishes the fake. And among his pre-swoon words you find this :

*20th APRIL: SUNDAY, SERVICE.*

Right to the end, and at the end, far from the abominable blur of cant and humbug, Saint David nailed his own watchword to the mast of heroic resolve : " The end of the geographical feat is the beginning of the Missionary enterprise." He was no parson, a layman, an ex-missionary, a Consul, but a Christian " lock, stock and barrel " as Stanley put it. Nor does this 20th of April swan-song lack one single element of sublimity when you discover, as I have done, that it was the CII and CIII Psalms he dwelt on : David the First sending succour to this later David in the sinking African marsh. CII a moan, and CIII a shout of liberation ; the former a frank picture of his body, the latter the First of May arrival of his soul at The Source.

" I am like a pelican in the wilderness," reads the half-blind Explorer, " I am like an owl of the desert, I watch and am as a sparrow alone on the housetop."

Then on he goes to the silver lining in this, his last black cloud : " From heaven the Lord did behold the earth, to hear the groaning of the prisoner ; to loose those that are appointed to death."

Out he goes now from Psalm cii, out into the light and liberty of his last Psalm on earth ciii, " Bless the Lord, O my soul : and forget not all His benefits : who healeth all thy diseases, who redeemeth thy life from destruction . . . so that thy youth is renewed like the eagle." Away back in August of last year when his " relief " arrived from the Coast these were the very volcano-under-the-iceberg words this austere Scot shouted. And now when the real " relief " arrives it is the same over again, " Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me, bless His holy name.

Amen." This was his last April, next year's April was to see the bells of St. Margaret ringing him in to the Abbey at a quarter to one.

This 17th of April in both years has contrast yet real resemblance. The literature of the subject reveals that both dates saw them digging for Livingstone, and both the soils were soft sand, sand in The Nave, sand in the desert. *The Daily Telegraph* of those bygone years contrasts weirdly with the dying man getting water so near the sandy surface. On the same 17th of the same April the same sorts of sand. How eloquent these italics!

April 17, 1874

"The grave of Livingstone is in the very centre of the nave. . . Like all graves in the Abbey it is *not a deep one*, the soil is so sandy that it is scarcely safe to go far down."

*Daily Telegraph*, 1874.

April 17, 1873

"A tremendous rain burst all our rotten tents to shreds . . . the boys got water *near the surface* by digging in yellow sand."

*Last Journals.*

Cicero could write of the "death etiquette" of the gladiators: "What gladiator, however mediocre, ever groans? who of them ever changes countenance? which of them when down ready to be dispatched as much as draws back his neck from the stroke?" And should one of Christ's men wince? "Christianity is effeminate, you say?" roared Carlyle, "look at the men it has conquered."

Besides, said Livingstone, was it not written that "in all things" Jesus Christ should have the pre-eminence? Then why not Christians first along the African trail on the first of all errands? The Authorised Version is wrong in making Paul say to Timothy, "Endure hardship as a good soldier of Jesus Christ": the middle voice means "Take your share of hardship," a proof this, that we should all go in for it, and not professional parsons merely. "Cheer up! the worst has yet to come!" was the old first-century call from brother to brother because they were all in for it and not a select few.

Mere Lambeth loquacity about unity pales into insignificance before this real thing, unity in suffering. Look what the austere accurate Lecky said of it all and mark the royal result of this community of suffering, "There has probably *never existed upon earth* a community whose

members were bound to one another by a deeper or purer affection than the Christians in the days of the persecutions."

Even John Wesley, a keen ecclesiastic who elaborated an intricate system of checks and counter-checks, what did he say in his old age? "I am sick of opinions. I am weary to bear them; my soul loathes the frothy food. Give me solid, substantial religion; give me a humble, gentle lover of God and man, a man full of mercy and good faith, a man laying himself out in the work of faith, the patience of hope, the labour of love. Let my soul be with those Christians wheresoever they be and whatsoever opinions they are of." And such was Livingstone.

On setting out from Ujiji had he not prayed "the good Lord of all to help me to show myself one of His stout-hearted servants, an honour to my children, and perhaps to my country and race"? Here at the end of all things, God is seen to have answered in power that starting-out prayer. Right on to the end, his dying dream was of those four fountains gushing north to form the wondrous Nile of Herodotus and Ptolemy. The very fact that they were four fountains, four only, set him off on the old Garden of Eden analogy of four such fountains flowing forth. The analogy is his own, remember; these two sets of four seemed to clamour for affinity in his brain, even although the Geography of it all mocked it as mirage. "Oh if this Lubaland were only Armenia," said he, "then these four fountains I am following up would lead me to the real old Eden of Genesis." Yes; good indeed, it was, this nearly dead-and-gone Livingstone has such an Eden-anchor to windward all the time. For, mark you, it is scientific failure we are here contemplating: these four Nile springs were away north where Speke had found them long ago, and this splashing through Bangweulu marshes is a phantom chase. The four fountains of Eden will soon be reached, real Eden, real fountains, real Paradise at last. The four converge into one, "a pure river of water of life clear as crystal proceeding out of the Throne of God and of the Lamb." This was his dream, this the reality; "a river went out of Eden to water the garden; and from thence





20<sup>th</sup> April 1873 = S. service  
cross over <sup>spring</sup> the Moenda  
for good to be near the  
head man of these parts  
Muari-z-a-bamba - I am  
excessively weak -  
on R. motor der <sup>spring</sup> 7<sup>th</sup> April.

25.88 } 66°  
26.12 } clouds  
25.70 } high

cross Lake in a canoe  
R. is about 30 yds broad  
very deep and flowing  
in marshes - 2 knots  
from S S E to N N W  
into Lake

---

21<sup>st</sup> - tried to ride but was  
forced to be down and  
they carried me back to  
and exhausted

---

22<sup>nd</sup> carried in Kitanda  
over Munga S W 2 1/4

AUTOGRAFH FACSIMILE OF LAST ENTRY

Reproduced by kind permission of Mr. John Murray.

Between 280 and 281]

23 <sup>rd</sup> go	1 1/2
24 <sup>th</sup> do	1.
25 <sup>th</sup> do	1
26 <sup>th</sup> to	2 1/2

---

to Kalungo djoju  
 total 33' = 8 1/4

---

27 knocked up goats  
 and remain = women  
 sent to buy milk  
 goats. We are on the  
 banks of R. Molelamo



it was parted, and became four heads, Pison, Gihon, Hiddekel, and Euphrates."

Standing by that dear, dead body behold! one more of life's little ironies. Mabruki is there, Speke's ugly deformed "bull-headed" boy wearing his medal for assisting in the "Discovery of the Nile Sources." Every day that medal had caught Livingstone's glance to challenge his contrary certitude. The cock-sure engraving on that medal put in the past tense a discovery claimed by the Doctor as yet future. It was a metallic taunt and none the less exasperating because worn by one of *his* own men, on *his* own expedition to "discover" what had been already discovered. Raging far away in London clubs as a war of words and sectarian stupidity, here you have "the Nile problem" pushing its propaganda right into Livingstone's caravan and taunting even his dead body.

Also on that same spot at that same time stands another type. He is Jacob Wainwright; he is the model of all Mission "boys"; he takes the prayer book from his master's dead hand and carries on when Livingstone passes. The whites only come to go, but the abiding black fills the gap, the local man for the local job. At the call of England he it was who crossed the ocean to see Livingstone's "second end" in The Abbey and heard his own old burial service repeated

*"With pomp and rolling music, like a King."*

The records of that day remark dryly that this African onlooker—"a simple-looking quiet honest lad as he stands by the grave takes his wonder stolidly." But the fact is it is the contrast of it all that is stupefying his black brain, the pall versus their old covering of leaves to keep the birds away; the polished oaken coffin shaming their bark cortex stripped from a tree; the inscription on the plate outclassing his simple lettering dug into the tree. The very crudeness of all this contrast should make us beware of expecting high-flown English ecclesiastical formulæ among simple Central African folks. The Abbey is a far cry to The Upper Room both as to time and taste: beginnings in Antioch or Africa are humble both in manner

and measure. Let us be exceedingly merciful with these young African churches and their young Christians.

It was reserved for a namesake of Livingstone to put all this nobly thus: "One praises the heroism of the missionaries, but what of the heroism of a native, with his inherited instincts, living in a village saturated with lies and uncleanness, often the only Christian in a community given over to sin, and yet a faithful disciple of Christ? There are some, formerly witch-doctors, head-hunters, beer-drunkards and worse, who have risen to heights which white persons, with all their advantages, could hardly surpass. How terrible the back-pull of habit and temptation is no European can realise. There is no greater nonsense written than by some white travellers who essay to describe mission work from isolated examples of this or that 'boy': it indicates lack of imagination, of inability to put oneself in the place of another less favourably situated. Think of the passions which have been surging unchecked throughout the centuries, suddenly arrested by the stern command, 'Thou shalt not.' It is not a wonder that the old nature, penned up, and restrained by a moral faculty only some years old, should occasionally break out: the marvel is that so many succeed in resisting it."<sup>1</sup>

This Livingstone of ours died in the hope of resurrection and here is a coincidence. Getting at these people means that sometimes you stalk straight into an intellectual surprise. Like one who having gone forth lightly to shoot rabbits suddenly comes on a lion, here in one of their "down at the heels" little towns you meet a mild-mannered man who does a bit of the devil's deputation work on *you*. His manner, too, all the more deadly with each word wrapped up in a smile to redeem it from impertinence. As a sure mark that the devil in person is pushing the propaganda this meek mentor makes straight for the Resurrection and tries to cover himself with glory and you with shame. Mark you, this native is none of your vapouring and purblind mortals so I must meet him with Paul's cheery "Why should it be thought a thing incredible with

<sup>1</sup> *Laws of Livingstonia*, p. 378.

you that God should raise the dead ? ” Then came the sight, refreshing sight, of my youngsters rallying to the resurrection and pinning their sceptic down to this Pauline challenge : Why, oh why ?

My old school friend Shakespeare made a jingle out of “ but me no buts,” and here you have them making merry out of this “ why me no whys.” I mean, of course, their why-should-it-be-thought-incredible defence of such a divine deed. They have made of it a runic rhyme with three “ whys ” beginning as many lines, but it defies true translation. I am ashamed to offer such a poor pretence at rendering the deathless defiance of the last “ why,” as it laughs its logical assurance concerning the “ dust-destiny ” of our race : *from* it we came, *back to* it we go, and *out* from it we come again.

1st Why : *Oh ! if from the ground we first of all came ?*

2nd Why : *Oh ! if back to it in death we return again ?*

3rd Why : *Oh ! then how can it be absurd to rise from it again ?*

These simple folk lying on the lap of Mother Earth beat us town-bred elegants in their gush of certainty : you cannot get out of a difficulty with them under the fog of a definition. This explains this glorious jingle ; they get out of it that which sends the laugh back on Sir Oracle : to them *the* incredible thing is that the same earth from which we were first formed could conceivably find it difficult to repeat the same result in resurrection. Better than mere dialectical skill, than mere torrential flow of speech is the lofty obstinacy in that loyal laugh of theirs as, again and again, they chuckle it out with content, “ Where is the absurdity of coming out again from the very earth from which we came first of all ? ”

So there you leave Mr. Sceptic with his mouth shut for him, sitting as silent as a sack of flour. (To anyone with an ear for African phonetics, the triple rattle on the terminal uses of *chini* in Swahili make this quite good hearing :

“ *Tu me toka chini !*

*Tu ta rudi chini !*

*Tu ta toka tena chini ! ”*)

Gordon said of the men who murdered him : “ I like

the Arab ; he is not ashamed of his God." I, too, am glad that all these millions of Islam believe very stoutly in a resurrection of the dead. But just as their "pray" is better spelt with an "e," so this "praying" distorted into "preying" suggests another denial of this doctrine of theirs. I mean the sinister implications of the fact that these slavers carry an old tootling bugle boasting the theological title *Baraghumu*. Now this is the very word they use for the last trump at the Resurrection, the local blast of the slave raiders being one of murder and rapine when the victims are killed, whereas the same word *Baraghumu* tells of the last-day raising of those very dead. Yet they do not see the clash of inconsistency in it all: the same word warning them that they will answer for it all at the bar of God. These Arabs blow their own trumpets very well, but when the last trump sounds it will be another story.

Where Livingstone died there also die the Ilāla *indigens*. Here you have a death in a small round hut, their usual one-door circular construction. Why not, then, remove the body for burial through the same old doorway *en route* the graveyard? Why break irregularly through the wall ignoring the one and only doorway? One does not need to be immeshed and drowned in metaphysics to find the reason why. The answer is that this *new* exit cut out rudely with axes is to recognise the fact that the human spirit has left for ever the old beaten track. No longer will the ten toes pad in and out through the old orthodox door, hence this newly cut exit for the *new* journey beyond the grave. It is more than dramatic to see these rival exits in one tiny hut, the regular rectangle and this new one wrenched open, a clumsy any-shape-at-all aperture for the dead body to make its last exit. Picture a death in Park Lane: add the additional phase of the conventional cortège gathering at the door, then spring the surprise of a gang of masons spurning the regular doorway, and breaking a hole in the masonry through which the coffin is passed, disdaining the old doorway. The old doorway was for the old methodic movements of a man in the flesh: here the spirit having flown, they symbolise its flight with this new exit.

I must repeat it. Dominating one's regret is astonish-



ment that (not at all in his best manner) Sir H. H. Johnston should have tampered with Livingstone's supreme consolation in life—prayer, prayer and more prayer. It began long ago when Sir Harry had a dig at Livingstone's initial failure in examination as a Missionary, which he puts down to "utter failure as a preacher, hesitating manner and lack of fluency in extempore prayer." (Poor extempore prayer: whenever did a dying man pray any other sort of supplication?) Then comes his second fling at this pathetic praying of his. Livingstone has now passed his exam. and the Devil runs away with Sir Harry's pen in the dirty explanation that he passed because he had become "sufficiently conversant with the glib phraseology of commonplace prayer to scrape through his examination." Finally, and in no way mitigating one's displeasure, comes this last sacrilege in robbing us of our boyhood belief that Livingstone did die in the act and fact of prayer.

For look at these four points that fix the act as a fact. (1) You have his boy Majwara sleeping in the old attitude across the doorway ready for the faintest call. (2) Here you have an everlasting spectator to the most private phase of his master's movements, the more so as these boys pad in and out silently. (3) Why, then, was Livingstone cold dead when they discovered his decease, why if not that Majwara, seeing his Bwana at the old devotions in the old attitude long known to him, had slipped off to sleep, the awakening still finding Livingstone "kneeling by the side of his bed, his body stretched forward, his head buried upon the pillow." (4) Mark you, the men who tell all this were intimate with his every movement, knew when and how he prayed, knew the attitude so well that even when all was over, long over, they even temporised about touching the dead body. "They watched him: he did not stir, there was no sign of breathing; then one of them, Matthew, advanced softly to him and placed his hands to his cheeks. It was sufficient; life had been extinct some time, and the body almost cold: Livingstone was dead."

On that double-daybreak of the 1st of May, the turtle-doves and cocks give their customary call of the dawn. But there is one bird, sure sentinel of Livingstone's very

soul, the fishing eagle, plumage of rich chocolate brown and snowy white. It haunted him to the end. That metallic cry kept clanging him into eternity. He had found it on all the great waters of Africa, Zambezi, Nyasa, Tanganyika, Mweru, Bangweulu, and to him there was always this message from the other world. Both kept to the water, riverine man and his riverine bird. Let but *Haliaeetus vocifer* call, and then and there is water for any then-and-there man. The old companions are parting at last. The dying-by-degrees Livingstone wrote near the end: "With the south-east aerial current comes heat and sultriness. A blanket is scarcely needed till the early hours of the morning, and here, after the turtledoves and cocks give out their warning calls to the watchful, the fish-eagle lifts up his remarkable voice. It is pitched in a high falsetto key, very loud, and seems as if he were calling to *someone in the other world*. Once heard, his weird, unearthly voice can never be forgotten—it sticks to one through life." We awoke at cock-crow and recalled that other cock-crow just after Livingstone had gone to God. All across Africa this shrill clarion is the negro's only clock, only chime to tell him *bwa cha*, "night has gone." Black of pigment, they have such affinity with the night that these Iläla natives never speak of the day as breaking: *bwa cha* means, "night has gone," the day in due course being implied. This black penchant is proved by the foolish way they refuse to say, "two or three days," it is always *nshiku shitatu*, "three nights," a month being thirty nights! Thus the Dark Continent has this clannish "dark" calendar.

But there is more in this: true to the topsy-turvy character of this continent, the curiosity of the local African calendar is that their word for "day" is "night" (*lushiku*), and this you soon find when your herd boy comes in the morning to report a leopard as having raided the goat-kraal with, "*To-night* a leopard came," etc.: not, "last night," mark you. In other words, we are away back at the beginning of all things where it is written "*The evening* and the morning were the first day," Africa once again scoring off exalted Europe. Well done, Africa: what is the good of being black if you do not give this black

of yours a prior position, a black night before the bright morning. It shows he has a good opinion of himself. What if even such an unlikely verse as "Until the day break" should mean the absurd opposite? Few Bible texts have obtained a wider currency than this from the Authorised Version of the Song of Songs, occurring, as it does, in the only passage (ii. 10-17) which finds a place, as an Easter lesson, in the lectionary of the Church of England. It has been inscribed upon countless memorials of the dead, and it expresses surely with fresh force in these dark, distressful days the yearnings of many hearts after the eternal morning—*yet it is all wrong.*

There is more than a literary interest in noting that, rightly translated (as it is in the Revised Version) and in its original setting, it is a description, not of the morning, but, *au contraire*, of the evening. The Shulamite maiden tells how on some spring morning she has heard the voice of her shepherd lover calling to her, "Rise up, my love, my fair one, and come away. . . ." But the delightful tryst must be delayed, for she hears, too, the severe summons of her "mother's sons" to stop that sentimentalism of hers and work in the vineyards of which they have made her the keeper (i. 6): "Take us the foxes, the little foxes, that spoil the grapes. . . ." So, with a sigh, she replies to her lover that he must return over the mountains across which he had come leaping and skipping, the mountains of Bether, "of separation," "till the day is cool and the shadows flee away"—i.e. stretched out as the sun goes down. Remember in all this I have followed the commentators, who remind us of the parallel Hebrew word in Gen. iii. 17, "in the cool of the day," and again of Pss. cii. 12, cix. 23, "the shadow that declineth," or "is elongated." Does the correct version really lose anything in literary or even in spiritual beauty? May not the evening, in more senses than one, bring a foretaste of the full and final "joy that cometh in the morning" of eternity? The first chapter of Genesis puts night before day, and the "evening and the morning" were "one day."

Here at Livingstone's grave there is much subdued tongue-

wagging: the "death-puzzle" (*akafunda ka mfwa*) is their great theme. This word "puzzle" is only their noun "knot" masquerading in metaphor; *the* knot that never was unravelled; the death-knot that defies man to untie it. Better: it is the real Gordian knot for the sword only can cut it, hence their phrase, "the dead know all things." They kill, kill, kill, and are never tired of killing, yet the idea of death in their language proves they are sinning against a blaze of light. Sitting at translation work with the chief squatted ten yards off, I fished across for an idiom expressive of Christ's dying a fool's death. "Died like a sheep," said he laconically. This gives an opening, and, hot on the scent of discovery, I sit greedily pencilling the chief's royal dicta as to his tribe's idea of death. For a few minutes I had to fight my way through the fog of a new set of secret words used by the priests, but after this initial adjustment, I wrote on and on, driven to the unfaltering conviction that here was a whole majestic doctrine of death, simple yet sublime, African murderers, too, the custodians of such a sacred creed of mortality. Who can deny that, having so sinned against light, they will answer for it to the bar of God?

The first of the tribal titles for death is "The Secret" with its twin idea "The Puzzle." This the chief used when he looked me all over as type of the unknown European race, looked at boots, looked at cut of coat (cut coat, call it), looked at gun and all the other *et ceteras*: "Marvel of a tribe," said he, "is the white tribe: but one thing they lack, *the solving of the death-puzzle!*" The next death-title is called "The Arrival" because the Unknown is now The Known, and akin to this is death as "The Perfect Education"; don't the dead know all things? Yes, on Death's head are many crowns: the next tribal title is "The Wages" and this means that the familiar verse reads "The Wages of Sin is *The Wages*, i.e. death." So, on and on these titles run: The Stripper, The Chastiser, The Revealer, The Joiner, etc., all technical terms for death in the land where blood flows like water.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Constellating round this death-prefix *FU* you have *fula*, end; *fuka*, corrupt; *futa*, pay; *funa*, threaten; *fuma*, depart; *funda*, teach, etc., the initial *fu* unifying the whole cycle of thought.

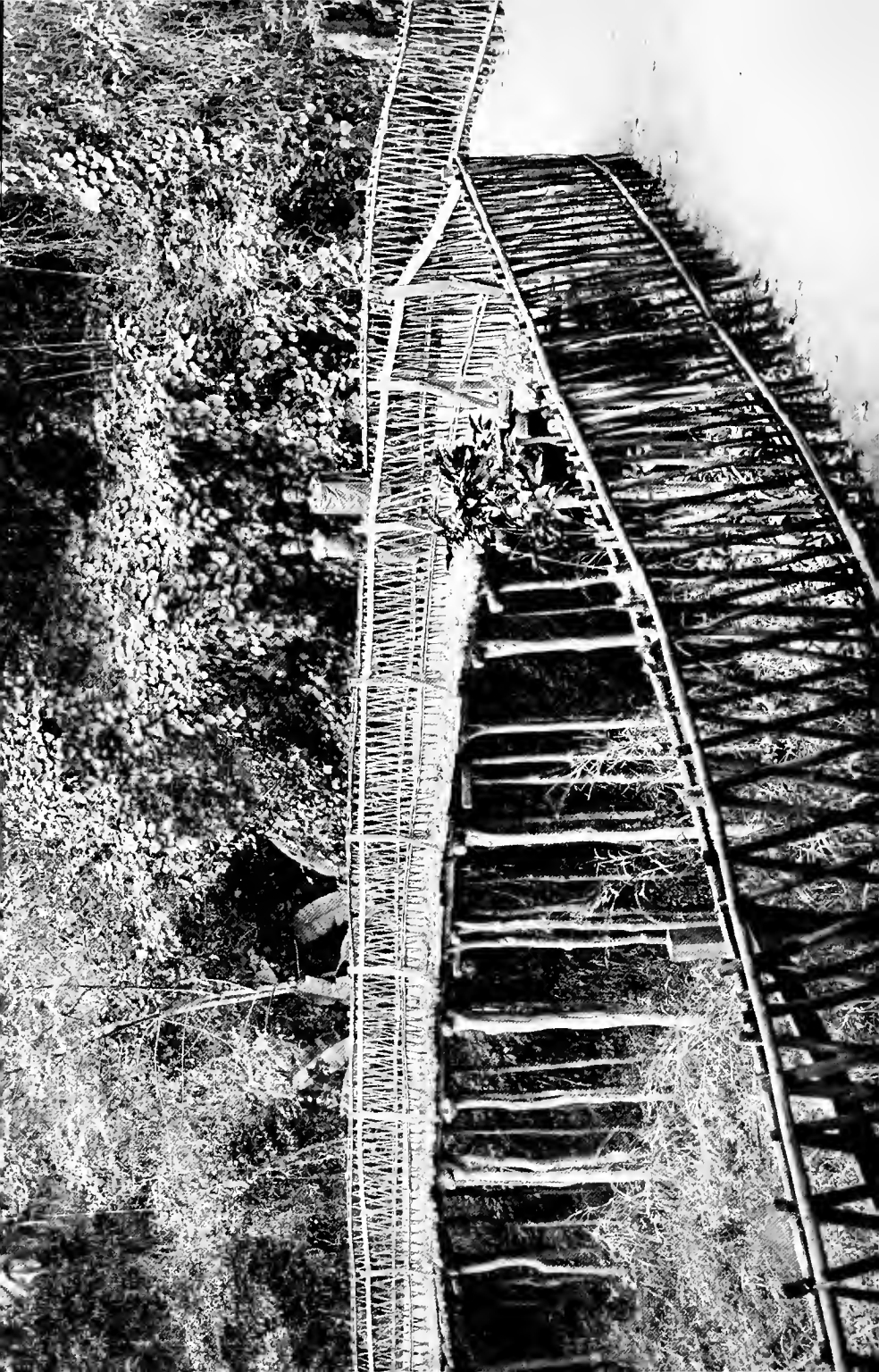
Yet the light of immortality is flaring high in all this darkness. No doubt in Africa 2,000 years of slavery have done their work well, yet I repeat never in its darkest night did Africa deny the instinct of immortality. With the well-known perversity with which expectations are falsified, here is the African prisoner at the bar giving evidence against himself. This is the kind of thing: He has killed a man, but this is no mere dead-and-done-with proposition, for all across the land and moaning through the marshes is the haunting belief that "*the dead do not really die.*" Hence their great system of Spirit-worship unifying the land and life of the African. Then with what a quenchless delight does he insist that the "*body is the cottage of the soul*"? The house made of earth, the body made of earth, and back they both go to the earth from which they came. What is his picture of human language if not that of an imprisoned prince (the soul) peeping out through the loopholes of the senses, seeing pictures passing, and these pictures he vocalises in speech? Or take the case of my old friend Kalala who died the other day: notifying me of his death comes an ancient dame, bleared of eye, an African of the Africans. With not one tiny seed of sentiment in her composition how does she report on the supreme deprivation of life, called death? Mumbling her old gums she says soliloquisingly, "Yes, Kalala has left the suburbs and gone into the city." Again watch how to them Eternity looms larger than time in this fateful, final thing called death. We perpetrate the platitude that the defunct has "departed," a poor enough sophism, for if we only waited long enough death would declare that departure-phase deplorably enough. The African with a charming imperiousness which is irresistible says not "he has departed," but "he has *arrived!*" a much more gloriously graphic thing.

Livingstone has been dead his half a century, but what do they say of him? Staggering down to this Iläla grave, he finally died under this fruit tree on the edge of the great marshes: dead? They say of him, *Wa Laala*, "he sleepeth." And if all Europe with the sophisticated indifference of materialism insisted that Saint David was as dead as

Queen Anne and not sleeping a wink, then all Africa would arise and retort royally, "Dying he died, but sleeping he sleepeth." What is more, this much-scared and scandalised negro would tell you that the same death they call "the sleeping" is also named "the awakening." This also explains why his very common word for "to teach" (*Pundishia*) is from the root "to die"; for do they not say that death is "the perfect education" because the dead know all things? This is why the dead are all buried with their eyes looking east: is not their sun rising and is not death day-break? And so on and so on. Despise them if you dare for their conical occiput and receding chin; call them "child nations" if you condescendingly care to, when you contrast their stunted ethical growth with that of the spoiled and petted children of a pampered civilisation. Yet do not for a single moment of time deny that God has hereby made good His word that out of the mouths of these anthropological "babes and sucklings" He has perfected praise of immortality.

Neither inductive nor inferential, you have all this and much more than this flaming like a fire in the darkest den of Africa: not a dry, discussable doctrine, but an imperious instinct of Immortality. As a duck takes to the water and an eagle to the sky, so surely do they swim and soar instinctively in this idea of Infinity. And if analysis be the death of sentiment, then to dare to argue this would be to desecrate the deep design of God. He who never fails the birds will not ever fail man. It is as sure, aye, surer far than the bee when it elaborates instinctively the cell for the future honey. Surer than the bird of passage never deceived in its migrations; than the instinct of the butterfly and the beetle when they prepare the cradle and the food for the offspring they will never see. The thirst for the Infinite proves the Infinite.











## BOOK IV

### CHAPTER XXII A SURPRISE FROM THE SOUTH

*These lines tell of the surprise sprung on us when they from the South met us from the North. A reminder of the Coming Day when God Most High will say "to the North, 'Give up'; and to the South, 'Keep not back; bring my sons from afar.'"*

“ ‘ *A strange coincidence,*’ to use a phrase  
*By which such things are settled nowadays.*”

*Byron.*

“ *No quest, no conquest.*”

“ *Jesus Christ is too effeminate, you say? Think of the men  
He has mastered.*”

*Carlyle.*

“ *What can ennoble sots or slaves or cowards?  
Alas, not all the blood of all the Howards.*”

## CHAPTER XXII

### A SURPRISE FROM THE SOUTH

**L**IVINGSTONE, you recall, rather dreaded being forestalled by some second party advancing from the west. His pleasurable surprise surrendered to dismay when at Kazembe's the news reached him of some roving Portuguese having "cut him out" in Katanga. And so, *s'il vous plaît*, with ourselves. Picture Peary reaching The Pole to find someone simultaneously climbing up to it from the opposite side, from the Asiatic, I mean, as he from the American side. Yet it is neither exaggeration nor extenuation to say that this is what is now happening in our case. We, coming out of the interior, are all unconscious of the approach of explorers from the spick-and-span South. What spoils matters, too, is that Chikwanda has been raiding and burning villages all around us, guns are banging across the plains. The clouds of it we see are not the honest, hospitable smoke of hamlets, but King Cain out on the war-path.

Here, then, at the world's end is the last time, last place, to expect visitors. Yet my wife on ahead is nearly shot dead. Nearly killed by a dazed white man who has taken cover and (with all this fighting around us) coolly takes aim at this unknown "something" stirring in the grass. Can this be Chikwanda outflanking them? Will this dead shot shoot her dead? In a bound of trepidation it all comes out as the lady emerges, smiling instead of shot. With a most raffish appearance, here is an English gentleman profusely apologising for his benevolent intent to put a bullet in her. How could he even or ever dream of a white woman coming *out* of the unknown interior? It is Frank Smithe-man, great African Scout and first man to enter Mafeking. They are exploring, groping their way up. Have heard of

Giraud's plundered boat. Have hoped to get far enough north to take it by "force, finance or finesse." And lo! we have forestalled them from the north and got the boat for nothing.

They are just out fresh from London. Their hounds are drunk with the scent of so much game criss-crossing the trail. They have fever these great dogs, get quinine like their masters, and are canine exiles from England. Poor pampered beasts! when they spied my wife's skirt rustling out of the grass they made a bound of loyalty for her. And clannishly stuck to those symbolic skirts, thinking, yes, thinking furiously all the while that just round a bend in the forest somehow, somewhere, somewhen their old United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland would break into full view. Poor old dogs, they soon snuffed out like flies.

And so the South meets the North, here where Livingstone died. Then came the great Memorial Service around The Tree. There were the flashing camp fires, the distant skyline red with burning villages, the dull boom of a gun speaking across the plains. Then the little organ piping out "Abide with me," followed by "Only remembered by what we have done." Chitambo was there as Chairman-Chief and I read the 11th chapter of Hebrews, the "Westminster Abbey of the Bible." Livingstone too was there, as saith that same "Hebrews": "encompassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses . . . the spirits of just men made perfect."

Charles Reade in *Hard Cash* is less hard on Livingstone's Evangelicals than on hard cash. Writing of Jane's death, and how a timid girl who would scream at a scratch could meet the King of Terrors with smiles and triumph, he says of her evangelical death: "Thus died the member of a religious party whose diction now and then offends one to the soul. But the root of the matter is in them. Allowance made for those passions, foibles, and infirmities of the flesh even you and I are not entirely free from, they live fearing God and die loving Him."

And so Livingstone: all through his *Last Journals* he is never ashamed of his Gospel: *per contra* he pushes it



SOME MORE OF LIVINGSTONES' OLD FRIENDS.





as the panacea for all Africa's ills. What more sensible, what more satisfying proposition can you present than this : " The prayer to Jesus," he writes, " for a new heart and right spirit at once commends itself as appropriate."

Then he rubs it in : " I have heard people say that Christianity made the blacks worse, but did not agree with them. I can stand a good deal of bosh, but to tell me that Christianity makes people worse—ugh! tell that to the young trouts."

Then he tackles, not young trouts, but young men, all young men, and sums it up to Tom, his son Tom : " I have nothing better to say to you than to take God as your Father, Jesus for your Saviour, and the Holy Ghost for your Sanctifier. Do this and you are safe for ever—no evil can then befall you."

I told those good fellows the Prospectors that the last time his honest old father gave him the rod was when David revolted against reading Wilberforce's *Practical Christianity*. In a sleepy voice not innocent of irritation he said No! to Wilberforce and Yes! to this unwise whacking. " Practical Christianity ? " Why not practise this capital C without reading about it ? His botany, geology and Ruddiman's Latin, were all these outside the pale of " Practical Christianity " ? Poor old adjective " practical," what drastically different values have been put upon thee ! Nevertheless that rod of the righteous resulted in a not-too-late vote of thanks for Messrs. Wilberforce and Livingstone Senior. Unlike the modern Master Cocksure, this revolt against any such " salvation " topics is tracked down by David himself to its lair in David's own heart : Livingstone Junior refused to stroke down his soul with snug complacency *à la* Sir Harry Johnston. He discovers as he is getting on to his twelfth year that his early " convictions were effaced " and his " religious feelings blunted." How, then, can he work *out* a salvation not yet worked in ? True for you, Mr. Wilberforce, how go in for a " Practical Christianity " if you are not first of all 'a Christian ? "

Then came the crisis of his life : " the theory of a free salvation," says he, " by the atonement of our Saviour

I had no difficulty in understanding, but it was only about this time that I began to feel the necessity and value of a *personal application* of the provisions of that atonement to my own case." To use his own words again: "I saw the duty and inestimable privilege immediately to accept salvation by Christ. Humbly believing that through sovereign mercy and grace I have been enabled so to do, and having felt, in some measure, its effects on my still depraved and deceitful heart, it is my desire to show my attachment to the cause of Him who died for me by devoting my life to His service." Not dry old dogma, not a bit. There is the sap and spice of salvation when he breaks away thus: "What is the atonement of Christ? It is Himself: it is the inherent and everlasting mercy of God made apparent to human eyes and ears. The everlasting love was disclosed by our Lord's life and death. It showed that God forgives, because He loves to forgive. He works by smiles if possible, if not by frowns; pain is only a means of enforcing love. If we speak of strength, lo, He is strong. The Almighty; The Overpower; the Mind of the Universe. The heart thrills at the idea of His greatness."

*Pace* Sir Harry, one does not need to be immeshed and drowned in metaphysics to see in Livingstone's "conversion" *the* formative factor in his character. Stanley was last with him, saw him at the closest of all quarters—African travel, blistered feet, and vertical rays. The great analysts would have revelled in this chance Stanley had to find out just *what* had tamed this tiger. And here is what it all ends in: "The wan features," says Stanley, "which had shocked me at first meeting, the heavy step which told of age and hard travel, the grey beard and bowed shoulders, belied the man. Underneath that well-worn exterior lay an endless fund of high spirits and inexhaustible humour; that rugged frame of his enclosed a young and most exuberant soul. In him, religion exhibits its loveliest features; it governs his conduct not only towards his servants, but towards the natives, the bigoted Mohammedans, and all who come in contact with him. *Without it*, Livingstone, with his ardent temperament, his enthusiasm, his high spirit and courage, must have become uncom-

panionable, and a hard master. Religion *has tamed him*, and made him a Christian gentleman : the crude and wilful have been refined and subdued ; religion has made him the most companionable of men and indulgent of masters—a man whose society is pleasurable.”

The late Dr. Alexander Whyte probably held the key to Livingstone's theology when he made that most merciless attack upon Nature's darling, the rich young ruler. Him he hated in the name of the Lord. We are indebted to Dr. Kelman for telling us how he described in most amazing terms his immaculate babyhood, boyhood, and youth, then ran him along his goody-goody career until at last he died, watched him (and made his congregation see him) wheeling blindly down the black depths of the inferno circle after circle, until he disappeared on his way down its bottomless abyss. Then he, who had been bending over the pulpit, watching him with blazing eyes, shouted, "I hear it. It's the mocking laughter of the universe, and it's shouting at him over the edge, 'Ha ! ha ! Kept the commandments !'"

That is exactly where Livingstone stood : "do-your-bestism" gave him no spiritual status with God. Kelman goes on to elucidate this Livingstone bent of mind when Whyte scourged the good easy men and women of his time and the fashionable life of his land. Some who preferred smoother words blamed him for this, and did not know the power and the bite of it upon those more sorely tempted. He was preaching once upon "If I make my bed in hell," and the gist of the sermon was that of course if you make your bed in hell *you will have to lie upon it*. Walking homeward from the Assembly Hall in which the address had been given, along the dark wintry streets of Edinburgh, just as he was passing the end of one of those streets that enter Prince's Street from the north, a cloaked figure sprang out upon him and seized his arm. A voice whispered hoarsely, "I've made my bed in hell," and the man vanished into the night.

You may roundly condemn all this as "too preachy," but what else can you expect at Livingstone's first (and last) funeral sermon under The Tree, his own Tree, soon to be so

tragically destroyed? How could we know that there *never would be another* opportunity to so encircle that noble "Mupundu"? Livingstone's "Dew-drier" name, *Mukuntalume* began it all. And by a strange concurrence of circumstances here, if you please, is our "text for the day" finding its explanation in this very "dew-drier" name of his, in this very grass of his, soaking us in two ticks. Blame Livingstone for this sermonette; unlikely text with unlikely solution, what has this damp morning grass to do with such a verse in "Hebrews" as, "It is evident our Lord (and Livingstone likewise!) came of Judah"? How can we hope to explain this "It is evident" unless by something very evident indeed? The authentic African answer is (it may not be amiss to suggest) that probably specialists have rather persistently missed the point why "it is evident" our Lord came of princely Judah. For Judah, pioneer Judah, like Livingstone, *led the desert trail*, and the reference is surely to the same writer's preceding "wet-grass" declaration where Christ is the "Captain" (or File Leader = Dew Drier) of our salvation." This was Judah's "path-boring" business: they officially led the way each morning into the unknown and got first blow or first blessing as the day's lot might be.

Here in the long grass, following in Livingstone's wake, we too get off betimes to escape the sun and soon learn, after two minutes of soaking, that the African equivalent for "File Leader" is the title, too-truthful title, "Dew Drier." Therefore, this gives the "Hebrews" picture its original African value; a narrow trail sinuous with hidden surprises ahead, the clotted overhanging grass brushing against the dew drier with hidden ambush lurking to kill. Such was princely Judah and such, much more such, was He, Lion of the Tribe of Judah, Dew Drier of our salvation, who comes knocking to the soul with the uncontested claim, "Open to Me . . . for my head is filled with dew and my locks with the drops of the night." He got wet that we might go dry. His the first sting of the blast, and ours the sheltering behind Him as we follow in His steps.

Surely, then, "it is evident" the Lord of David Livingstone came of princely path-boring Judah, for He dried off

more dew for those following than Judah ever did. When Peter calls on us to follow in His steps he hastens to explain that we are called to have fellowship with Christ in His sufferings as "Dew Drier." And then the Apostle unerringly points to the inevitable end and how all his Footprints on the rough road of life merely lead up to His Nail-prints. The road of life leads up to the Rood of death. I have spoken of "a strange concurrence of circumstances" in our day's doings, and by this I mean that it culminated in another coincidence when we came out on a meadow but unfortunately scared off game, scared them by our rustling with tell-tale resonance over some dried leaves that telegraphed their treachery to the animals in league (yes!) in league with these very leaves. This reminds us of our easiest error in Bible study, the easiest, the earliest error in Hebrew where for the first time the phrase is used "the voice of the Lord." It was not the speaking of His voice they heard for that comes later, but it was the symbolic sound of His footprints when the Lord God was walking in the cool of the day: literally, the "crackling of thorns" spoken of later in Eccl. vii. 6. And surely the loudest voice Christ ever uttered was the sound of His holy footsteps echoing down the centuries. Well might this be the *first* mention in the Bible of such a solemn phrase, "the voice of the Lord": His talk was His walk and His lip His life. The true Shepherd of the soul who in Chaucer's gracious phrase "first wraught and then taught." He lived the Righteousness that He loved and He died for the sin that He hated. Consistent in His life, the Cross crowns it all as a consistency unto death. The heart of the God-Man had a holy alliance with the hand of the Man who was God, and thus it is with an eye of pity, an arm of strength and a heart of love He saves us to the end.

But (alas for my sermonising!) what completed our chain of coincidence was when I breasted a hill and looking back saw our caravan coming wriggling along the trail. Only a head here and there was visible above the grass, and often it was moving grass, not moving man, which revealed where it passed. Here, then, in this one-by-one caravan you complete our coincidence, for the prolonged picture in

Hebrews is a long Indian-file of the saints of God with Christ the File Leader away ahead leading many sons unto and into glory. It is in the 11th chapter of Hebrews where we seem to emerge in the open and come into full panoramic view of the long caravan of Christ-followers from Abel downwards with Christ away in the distance breasting the hill of God then disappearing within the veil of azure. He disappears; then there is a prudential pause after which He who disappears is seen to appear leading back the very same vast caravan of Christians. This explains why that other usage of "the dew-drier" word occurs in the double title, "The Author and *Finisher* of our faith." This "Author" is only another form for "The File Leader or Dew Drier," because He who disappears is seen to appear to finish what He began. So the two titles are inseparable, for He entered the Holiest as Author, and will come out again as The Finisher of it all when not a hoof will be left behind. He who led the many sons unto and into glory is to return with them at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ with all His saints. Then we shall see the scars of the "Dew Drier" and all the marks of the wounds He won for us; He founds His claim on us because of this very thing, "Open to me, my sister, my love, my dove, my undefiled, for my head is filled with dew and my locks with the drops of the night." The Man of Sorrows claims by all the sorrows of His soul for us. No one ever passed that way before, for there was no way to pass until He pioneered it for us. And this is the inscrutable reason why He (who went the way that never was a way until He went it) is Himself called "*The Way*."

Next comes the great Chitambo's contribution to this Memorial Service. After Tubal cometh most appropriately Jubal. Replacing the "iron" men, here is the musician fellow who gathers his congregation round the faggots and gets every man of them enthralled. So little said, so much suggested. A snatch of wild music, only a line often, and in quaintest Chaucerian Bantu, stirs up all the deeps of memory, every eye peering far into the red ravines and crevices of the fire, pondering life. Only a monochord in a monotone, but more tender than a harp,

more stirring than huntsman's bugle! Certainly here it is I make a discovery. Chitambo called up the genuine old ballad maker who wept Livingstone dead, and the programme was his singing *the very words* to the very tune of this famous litany. A glance at the *Last Journals* version of this death song makes one bow one's head in despair, not a line of it rings true. The monotonous refrain is very simple parsing :

“ Tell me, oh truly tell me  
Where wilt thou emigrate to ?  
For the charms of our country are gone :  
Because, alas, Livingstone is dead :  
An elephant is fallen from a spear wound,  
Oh, the Lovely One is gone ! ”

As he drones it on and on, your heedless African of the scorching sunshine is now softly meditative, comes far out of his heathen shell and looks across at you, “ almost persuaded.” He calls this magic music “ the evening bath,” and small wonder, for does not music wash away from his brain the dust of the hot day ? The fact is, this type of black ballad-monger is one day coming to his own, for surely this is mighty Homer in sable skin come to life again. Let croakers croak, this, supremely this, is the “ grand manner ” and nothing else ; here is a black bard who sings solid sense into his songs. Waves, say, are his theme ; well, he not only sings about waves, but waves sing audibly in his song. Like Homer he can easily make a tiny wavelet caress the shore in your ears as he can change that same wave into a league-long roller crushing the rocks with a roar ! When he turns from waves to wind, the style is the same, and he makes the breeze blow in his song precisely as you can feel the gust of wind rushing out of Homer's pages. And so, too, right round the facts and forces of life : the arrow that hissed past in battle is still hissing out of his Bantu song, the crash of splintered bones is still crunching in the black poet's snapshot language. The fact is, we are here at the old tale of the nude man and nude speech : all artificial trapping must go, and so nudely does he see or hear anything (the same word in Bantu for both) that a gleam of light is still literally gleaming in the word

coined to stereotype the said gleam into speech. In Exodus, did not the people *see* the thunderings, and did not John say "I turned to *see* the voice"?

Thus and then it was, we ended the first (and last!) Memorial Service for David Livingstone around "The only tree in the forest," as the natives named it. "My link with Livingstone." Long later, "The Unknown Warrior" was destined to be buried in the same Abbey as Livingstone. And what better epitaph could be found for him, found for "the one who symbolised the many," than these lines beloved of this "no-flowers-by-request" Livingstone of ours? They are Charles Reade's greatest lines from his greatest book:

*"Not a day passes over the earth but men and women of no note do great deeds, speak great words, and suffer noble sorrows. Of these obscure heroes, philosophers and martyrs, the greater part will never be known till that hour, when many that are great shall be small, and the small great."*

Then we "talked the sun up." Around the roaring logs we had a great time with these Prospectors, they walking and talking telegrams with fresh facts from home—we, walking encyclopædias of the unknown Far Interior. Where might coal be? And where copper? Yea, where, oh, where did the gold lie? All of which we answered freely to the tune of thousands, many thousands, many millions of pounds. The steaks of venison sizzling on the fire stung our thin blood. That night we ate the food of Angels, white bread, the first and therefore finest for many a long day.

This is that same exciting North-and-South meeting that began to take larger proportions far away, when the home newspapers made a mystery about "the mysterious lady." The proverbial inch soon exceeded the traditional ell. One little lion incident of that day of surprises, travelling far south, gained doubly in data and distance. It was a mere nothing. My wife had hurt her foot. Was, therefore, being carried, the whole day, for a wonder. There was a weary lion sound asleep by the trail. Just for one tick of time her sagging *machila* brushed him awake with a roar. And lo! this inch of fact becomes a fictitious ell. Becomes



the "tremendous stretcher" that Mrs. Crawford rode on the back of a lion up to Livingstone's grave.

Where there is smoke there must be fire, and in these African legends you generally find a modicum of truth as initial incentive. This time it is not the riding of a lion but a hippo, and many a dozen times this has been done—but a dead one. You killed your hippo; you waited four hours for it to float, then it does float blown like a balloon. Here at last is your aquatic steed and you ride your dead trophy in to the river bank. Where there's smoke there must be fire.



CHAPTER XXIII  
LEAVING LIFE BY THE BACK DOOR

*The moral: Why bear three kinds of trouble when you only need to bear one and even that is not yours to bear but God's. All the trouble you ever had, all you have now, all you expect to have, why be burdened with these three sorts of trouble when God, thy God, would bear them all?*

*“ This soul shall either rule this body or quit it ? ”*

*John Foster.*

*“ Thirteen at our High School class dinner. One hundred and thirteen in our class. Thirty dead. Six of them suicides. The last of the six joined the class the same day as I did.”*

*J. P. Struthers.*

*“ I bought Principal Shairp’s book on Burns to read, and have just read this on the poem ‘ Willie brewed a peck o’ maut ’ : ‘ Within ten years these three men, Burns, Willie Nicol, and Allan Masterton, were all under the turf.’ ”*

*Idem.*

*“ Isn’t that a wonderful piece of insight into the nature of evils ?— ‘ Jesus we know and Paul we know, but who are ye ? ’ Poor Paul lashed and beaten and shipwrecked, but Satan afraid of him. ‘ But who are ye ? ’—that’s the way he answers his own friends.”*

*Idem.*

## CHAPTER XXIII

### LEAVING LIFE BY THE BACK DOOR

I THINK I have already said that we Missionaries found the oyster, and other people get the pearl. But with the finding of gold, these good fellows, the Prospectors, are a new figure in the Far Interior. You see him, don't you? Lean, brown and pleasantly plain. It seems a physical impossibility for this prospector fellow to wear anything heavier than shirt sleeves. Shirt sleeves and torn khaki trousers, the said tear having been laboriously mended with clumsy, man-like stitches. Disdaining a helmet, the African sun has rewarded him with the traditional burnt-brick complexion of the tropics. Accustomed to be farther south in his travels, he is quite excited at getting so far north, and although only on latitude 13°, he expects one of these days to "go jam-smash against the Equator." He prefers minerals to cereals and despises farming. Likes stock but not farm-stock; prefers shares to ploughshares. This is the man who meets you in a forest, and, balancing his cigarette daintily between his first and second finger, tells you smilingly that he prefers to seek for lost gold rather than lost sheep. Missions to the African is to him a lark of the first dimensions: "Oh, yes," says Mr. Prospector, "I believe in you good fellows: you seek very high ends, but I prefer high dividends!"

Let me beg this man's photo to present to you: here it is. A rolling stone all his life, this particular prospector has tried everything under the sun, and ascribes all his failures to "bad luck." Starting say in the City, his firm goes bankrupt or his heart fails: he scrapes up a few pounds, goes to Canada, works as a farm hand and then takes up a farm himself, his crops get frozen, or he simply "can't

stand it," so he works his passage home on a cattle-boat and turns up at the paternal dwelling (if there is one) with no possessions except a spare pair of socks. But the door is slammed and a request proffered through the keyhole that he should have sufficient sense of decency to go to the dogs well out of their sight. He loafes in England a while, enlists, gets his corporal's stripe, promptly loses it for fighting his sergeant, and buys his discharge; thereafter he is a bookmaker's clerk, tout for a window-cleaning firm, advance bill-poster to a touring theatrical firm, and any and all of the hundred-and-one odd things peculiar to his like. Then comes war as a boon, so when a Kruger determines to stagger humanity, your square peg gets into the roundest of all holes. He sails to the Cape on a tramp steamer, deserts, joins a Colonial regiment, and goes all through the campaign, getting captured and wounded, but revelling in the excitement and uncertainty and constant change. You ask him to a good square meal, and the delightful fellow will make a mock plan of campaign on the table with your cups and saucers. Demonstrating with the only two forks how they engineered the Wakkerstrom turning movement, building a Vaal Krantz with the Bovril-tin salt-cellars, and finally riding into Ladysmith on the mustard-pot.

Reappears in England after the war, does this typical Prospector, and you might discover him working as a groom in a bus-horse stable with the imminent prospect of losing his job owing to the introduction of motor-buses. But he does not worry: by the law of compensation he is blessed with perennial optimism, "Something 'll come along all right," he says, "maybe there'll be another war presently. Got any baccy?" The writer might, indeed, add that the prophecy came true and something did "turn up," for here he is, Mr. Rolling-stone Prospector endlessly turning up in and around the Katanga. But as metallic stones are not rolling stones like himself, and moreover as they do not oblige him by turning up, in the volitional sense, he must "get a waggle on" and turn them up in his quest for quartz. Nevertheless this good fellow who comes out of the grass to greet you with boisterous cordiality can make the average

Missionary blush in one particular. The snug and cosy Mission is fast losing all the old laurels for roughing it, whereas here is a bold tramp who cuts across country for hundreds of miles with only a blanket and iron pot as complete outfit. Like the treasure hid in the field, here is a man who strips himself of all until he finds it. Indeed, only the little, untrammelled prospector can hope to poke into all the holes in the land.

Of course, this historic North-and-South meeting of ours is more prophetic than personal : this is the thin edge of the great coming wedge. Wave upon wave will soon break in on us from the south and mining towns will spring up all along the soon-to-come railway. Even now far, very far to the south, the towns " on the edge of cultivation " call covetously to many of our young natives, and away they go to lose head and heart in the whirl of the " tin " towns. Goliath of Gath is down there, and happy is the young man who has the Gospel stone in his sling. By going there they can make big money and big mistakes, yet it all begins in a simple unsuspecting manner. The economic pressure on the tribe where the Government demands silver taxation forces them to roam far afield to find the needful. It is not the deliberate deed of an up-to-date Demas, but something, more insidious, more subtle, soon sucks him into the whirlpool. And all because he is caught between his necessity and his inadequate resources. Down there he is now removed from his old folks, old friends, old home by a month's travel, with practically no means of communication. Thus no supplies come back until he comes back, if ever.

And do we face this phase of failure in an adequate manner ? Or is it only a matter for " texts and tears " ? No, we have a good workshop here where many a lad has got a good chance, and this year we have employed hundreds in building our new plan. But, even this is only fumbling on the fringe of things, and away they go in hundreds to return never, never more. It is the old story ; first the mess of red pottage and then the exceeding bitter cry. They did not know ! they did not know ! The old men put it with much shaking of the head thus :

the small snail puffed itself out with pride when he got into the large empty lobster shell: *but that night he died of cold*. And there is many a slimy snail-like soul that makes for a palace to find it a prison. Then along comes that insufferable Son of Pride, by name Pomposity, and inflates it like a windbag. Thus what with warm wind inside, and cold wind outside, he dies the death of a dunce—hell is full of such.

In later days, with the advance of far-away civilisation from the south, one is rather dejected to hear of repeated suicides, lonely men, prowling prospectors or the like. When a forlorn man has all his time to himself, the time in its tedium becomes a sort of eternity in its endlessness. Hence his ending what would not quickly enough end itself—suicide, “leaving life by the back door,” as the African puts it. It is a poor beetle-headed expedient, for in trying to escape the “eternity” of time hanging heavy on his hand he plunges into the real one that never ticks a tick of time. All the home these good fellows have is a mud cabin in the far forest, a one-room shanty with no chimney, for would not the grass roof have revenge? Like a head without eyes in it, like a face without a smile, such is this cheerless room without a fireplace. The only window in the place is a hole here and there left unplastered in the mud walls, a house with plenty of air but no atmosphere. Here and there bits of the mud wall are hidden behind photos impaled on pins like entomological specimens. Some of his old pals, some of his old girls, some of the old boy himself, all jagged to the wall like dead beetles or butterflies, and—and there he lies himself dead with a bullet in the brain.

A bit of a theologian in the old days, he broke, so he said, on the Four Gospels, but his very petulance on this subject of The Synoptics made one suspect that he only broke with them because The Four were out to break him. At any rate his fancied non-agreement of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John seemed to be silently settled for me by four tell-tale photos (the exact coincidental number!), four decisive photos stuck on the dead man's mud walls. These fearful four, *à la* the Four Gospels, were all snaps



of the poor old chap himself, and looked far more different than any *seeming* discrepancy between Mark and Luke, between Matthew and John, or between the latter and all the former. Absurdly different from each other as these four photos of the same man were, who could see any conceivable unity in the diversity of such varied forms of the self-same person: (1) as a raw lad, then (2) as a bearded man, then (3) in the complete transformation of a colonial outfit, and finally (4) a home-made snap of the same good-fellow under vertical rays in shirt and trousers. Four phases of the same man, four photos looking down on the dead-and-gone doubter and declaring that Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John have the same unity in diversity cementing the certainty of *their* credentials. Alas, this tale is killed in the telling, but to my dying day I shall certainly see these *two sets of Four* playing at hide-and-seek in my brain. The Four Gospels that never lied to any man, and the four contradictory photos of my dead friend. Four phases of the Saviour, four snaps of a suicide.

The other day we cut down a half-dead man who had hanged himself because a fire in his grass hut had burned him out, destroying his "papers" of which he was (so well he might be!) very proud. Seeing them destroyed he resolved to destroy himself, and the deed of death was almost accomplished. He was rescued back to life. And what a royal return it has been! There he is saved for eternity, and rejoicing in the God who called him back to prepare for the call of Heaven to come up higher. When the chains of sin are struck off these days the first blow of the hammer goes for their chain of gambling. The natives are all dice devotees, and were accustomed to spend hours of time and their world of wealth on the throw of the dice. Now, with no pious prompting from us they learn that the best throw of the dice is to throw it away. It is that "Calvary-verse" does it all, I mean, where Christ's murderer gambled for his garment: that is enough for the clear-eyed soul who is out for the real thing. He is done with juggling of any sort, word juggling or dice juggling, and Christ's murderers are going to be no guide for him. But mark you, a mere anti-gambling crusade could not

have produced these results, not a bit of it. Make it an anti-sin crusade and you have the lesser contained in the greater: tackle the root and the fruits are finished. Then it is the man gets such a surprise that he turns the laugh against himself saying the silly old saw: "Ducks lay eggs, but geese lay wagers." A man can stop gambling and for all that be as bad a customer as ever: in other words, he who bets is a better and he who does not bet is—well, no better if he is still in his sins. It is not giving this rescued man too much away to say that one half of his name is "Thomas" and his gloomy face always reminded me of the sensible arrangement of the Church Festival where St. Thomas gets the shortest day and longest possible night. Poor "Thomas," doubt does not mean much daylight.

But do not forget that on this subject the natives lead the mad way. Here are three broken-hearted Africans who "cut the knot" (what a bull!) by hanging themselves. (1) A father hears of his only child's death and off he rushes to hang himself. (2) A native mine-worker returns from the far south to find his wife unfaithful, the wife he slaved for. So spurning all his gains he hangs himself. (3) A daughter learns at the ferry crossing that mother ("mama," the same old word) is dead, so she defies life and dashes in among the crocs. All proving (oh my brothers!) that the sad, sad old world is kin. That the heart knoweth its own bitterness. That "ilka blade o' grass keps its ain wee drap o' dew."

Far from the cooler, crisper air of the North Temperate Zone there is tragedy, I suggest, lurking here in the tropics. A high dignitary I knew landed in Africa with the usual vigorous stock of youthful manhood. His mental history was mapped out in epochs, laps of intellectual territory, so to speak, in which some "immortal" ruled his brain with a rod of iron. Sitting out, one starry night, he took me away back in thought over his map of mental epochs, an Emerson love, a Ruskin love, a Spencer love, each and all in evolutionary sequence writing for his obedience the sort of Statute Book of his soul. (No Jesus Christ love, mark you and no Bible as life's chart across the ocean waste.)

All this, superimposed on a good Cambridge course with the Church as goal. Religion, of course, has gone by the board : all that remains is the mere memorised phrases of the catechist. Thus the years pass, the ceaseless ebb and flow of his poor tidal brain finding no rest for soul or body. Meantime, the spick-and-span graduate has gone the way of the tropics, and finally " King " Huxley is enthroned in the citadel of his life, the dreary last chapter of his soul's history rounding off in mad negation ; no heaven, no hell, no anything, for does not Hegel say " being = not being " ? The precision and glitter of Huxley's language did it all, but watch the ugly issue of this " no hell " fiction. Had he not, like the old Latin poet, dropped a plummet down the deep, broad universe and said, " No God " ? But watch the developments, I say. Morphia is now his solace, seductive morphia that promises to fight negation by, at least, building for him " a castle in Spain " of most gorgeous and stately proportions. Thus slowly, thus subtly the slavery begins that will never end, and all to the tune of " no hell " beneath and " no heaven " above. (N.B.—Man in all lands has an aching void, and must have something positive to grip at.) A fight only freshens faith, but with no nucleal belief all is vague dreamy nonsense. And, remember, in Africa it is fact that " to him that hath " (this nucleal thing called faith) shall be given : and from him that " hath not " (this initial imperative) shall be taken away even that which he hath. It takes a living fish to swim up-stream.

But now Nemesis is advancing swiftly on this morphia victim, the vice fastens firmly on him with an iron grip. Beginning with a rose-coloured paradise, it ends with hell on earth ; born of negation this drug habit swings full circle into the most positive slavery on earth. Morphia strangling his soul in awful earnest, the same cheat that, in the first instance, seduced the weary man as an angel of Light. Once as straight as a pine, he is now broken-backed, prematurely old ; face florid, puffy, and telling the tale of a soft, flabby mind. Slavery, mark you, is no mere catch metaphor in this chronicle, for the passion for this poison is, at last, so mechanical that the will is wholly

inoperative and the whole fibre and constitution of the mind sapped. But again watch, and tremble at the crushing climax of this tragedy: "no hell" is the old mocking echo of it all, and the louder the non-existence of hell is proclaimed the plainer do you behold a real tangible hell coming out on the road of life to visibly clutch the victim. Hundreds of men die in feather beds, and only wake up to find themselves in hell; here is an instance of the hell that was denied as non-existent actually projecting itself out into Time as a living hell and defying denial.

And the end? A lonely river and a lonely man; a revolver and a plan to commit suicide on the edge of the flood so that the bullet having found its billet the rushing river would complete the Huxley-tragedy, and destroy all traces by carrying off the corpse. But unlike the accurate revolver that did the deed of death with precision, that rushing stream turned traitor and failed to fulfil the promise of secreting the poor body. Thus the morphia that mocked in life, mocked also in death, this final trick being only a symbol of the long life of seductive lies. Why add any conventional tag by way of pointing a moral? Rather, let us write our sad *hic jacet* by that dark-flowing river.

The poet John Davidson, friend of my boyhood, died a suicide's death of despair. The Davidson who deserved literary immortality if only for one of his epigrams, "*There is no illusion so great as disillusion.*" Poor Fleet Street hack, why not live a little longer by living your own epigram? Live and not die, by laughing at your disillusion as a delusion. Like a very stone of Sisyphus back it comes on himself, his own weighty word of warning. The disillusion was so deadly an illusion that it did for him. Such is the futility of mere clever phrasing—like the staring eyes in the heads of dead and flayed oxen in butchers' shops.

It is one of the charms of the African forest that you never can tell. I met coming along the trail a curious couple of roaming Hebrews who talked anything but Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, let alone Jesus Christ. The elder of the two, a good-hearted waster, sits down on a forest log and after many days of enforced reticence wants a long

“bottled-up” talk commonly called (commonly indeed) “swopping lies.” But it must be on his own conditions this terrible talk, for as he spies the audacious end of their own Epistle to the Hebrews peeping surreptitiously out of my pocket he suddenly squares up belligerently, “Now, then, none of those yarns about canker worms, or hell fire, or any trimmings of that description.” What then are we going to talk about with these two candid customers? (Verbal ratio: one grain of wheat to two bushels of chaff.) Of only common capacities, they seem to have spent all their available time dividing the yearnings of their spirits between strong drink and dog-fights. Would you believe it: from such an unlikely jack-in-the-box source, out jumps the historic old Jew making a very funny fight for his “faith”? They talk the Old Testament as though it was the end of the world; thought of it, I mean, as people did the Old World before Christopher discovered the New. All I said seemed as simple as A B C (to me!), but this very metaphor of the A B C is as exact as exacting. (I mean, just as the Hebrew alphabet begins at the opposite end of the paper from our English, even so with our opposing watchwords, Moses and Christ, Law and Gospel). No wonder we were always crossing each other, seeing we did it so literally in this wrong-way-round mode of reading the O.T. and N.T. Then it was (1) “Do,” now it is “Done”; then it was (2) “Do and live,” now it is “Live and do”; then it was (3) “Often,” now it is “Once”; then it was (4) “Wages,” now it is “Gift”; then (5) the law blotted out the sinner, now it blots out the sin; then (6) it was stripes and stones for the rebellious son, now it is the kiss and the best robe; then (7) all the men of Shechem were slain, whereas in the Gospel the men of that very same town came to Christ.

The Law left them “without excuse,” but Grace gives “an advocate”: it stopped every mouth, whereas in Rom. x every mouth is opened. So I rattled it all off with rejoicing, like a true son of Martin Luther, closing on the *crescendo* with the contrastive climax of the first acts of Moses and Christ: I mean, where Moses’ *first* deed in Exod. ii is to slay a man, whereas Christ’s *first* act recorded

in Mark is the healing of a man. Alas, in fog I found them, in fog I left them, and who knows if these very men may not live to look upon the face of Him they have pierced and mourn for so rejecting Him in the far-away forest of Central Africa ?

CHAPTER XXIV  
LIVINGSTONE'S "LOBSTER" ARABS

*Livingstone's lip and life were in agreement. Following up his last trail, here it is we find a rare and irrecoverable essence of his final example and endurance.*

*“ I can be rich without money.”*

*Livingstone.*

*“ The day of Africa is yet to come.”*

*Idem.*

*“ A life of selfishness is one of misery.”*

*Idem.*

*“ Be manly Christians and never do a mean thing.”*

*Idem.*

*“ Depend upon it, a kind word or deed is never lost.”*

*Idem.*



## CHAPTER XXIV

### LIVINGSTONE'S "LOBSTER" ARABS

**H**ERE we come across old derelict Arabs who were Livingstone's friends. Some men like salmon never go back, some men like lobsters cannot go back. Dotted all over our route you encounter little groups of these "lobster" Arabs, lost traders from the coast. They have been thrown high-and-dry by the waves of circumstances into Central Africa, and like a lobster have neither desire (?) nor ability to get back to the coast again. Rip van Winkle every man of them, their dates are either all out or all too ancient, socially sound asleep for years. The charming polish of some of these old-world gents is a nice feature of their kind.

They drench you with showers of absurd adulation; their phrases full of polite frills, not mere "salaams" but millions, then millions more. Thus: "Many compliments, indeed, so many that the sand on the sea-shore is inadequate to indicate the number of same." This they twirl round to "*illa u wapo usingisini*," meaning "salaams at all times, all places, excepting when you are asleep, i.e. which would only disturb you." This fitted in finely with Livingstone's own gentlemanly mode of making Africa safe for those who followed up his trail through the grass. The Semitic sons of men are solid on this basic demand for decency in verbal approach to each other, and what is the Arab "salaam" but only the local Chivemba word of felicitation, "*Mutende*," meaning "Peace"? Once an invocation, alas! in these war-bled times, with the Mazitu attacking everywhere, it is an interrogation, "Is it peace?"

This Swahili of theirs is the true *lingua franca* of Africa, and probably the various Missions have lost years of pro-

gress by dissipating their energies in local dialects, mere sprats of speech soon to be swallowed by the Swahili whale. Were not Livingstone's last words in Swahili? Besides, to a Missionary, is there no thrill in the thought that in such words as "blood" (*damu*), "bless" (*barak*), "seven" (*saba*), "the grave" (*kaburi*), he is using the selfsame words that the other David used thousands of years ago? These Arabs tell me that Livingstone gained great prestige because he came straight from the Sultan of Zanzibar, having presented him with a beautiful steamer, the gift of the Indian Government. Thus he came in on the crest of the wave, armed with their Sultan's passport. Being a doctor, too, worked wonders. Often all the medicine they take is a line of the Koran written in ink, then washed off with water down the throat.

Several times this journey some of these fine old Arabs, with an air of faded gentility came out of the grass by the trail, to chat of days long past. Livingstone's is the magic name: "Bwana Dawid" they call him most familiarly, but familiarity is eminently the wong idea. He is plain "David" in the same stalwart sense as Abraham and Solomon are majestic men of no surname. They don't know that it is only the Christian name of one who was very much a Christian, but they do know the authentic latter. The only surname the Arab believes in is the Highland "Mac" which he uses in his "Bin," and the curious proprietary rights they claim over the memory of "David" seems to mean that they, the Arabs, gave Livingstone his convoy into Central Africa as the sort of Cook's excursion people of those days. The far interior they claimed as Arab Hinterland and it was duly garrisoned by "black-flag" hordes of slavers. One such old gentleman told me that he had met Livingstone in Itawa, when the Doctor had run out of supplies, and that he had given him coffee. Then, again, when the lads passed up from the south with his embalmed body, they all turned out with Komba Komba's men near Nsama's and fired a volley of honour. Thus, far away in the wild bush, Westminster Abbey was antedated, and by the Arabs, of all folk. They will give you hours of it, this Doctor D. L. subject. A



A TYPICAL ARAB FANATIC AND HIS MORE DRESSY FOLLOWERS.  
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clever mental photo they have of him, this "Dawid" of theirs: hair reddish brown, bright eyes hazel, teeth thinned with bad fare: height—little over ordinary, with slight stoop on shoulders. Exactly Stanley's farewell picture of him at Ujiji, with this addition, a hearty laugh from head to heels, the laugh of the whole man. My own servant of years joined in these same honours farther north. This Arab, Ali Masi, is a smith by trade, blunt by nature, and long ago, when a mere boy, he was up north around Unyanyembe. At sundown who should warily move in by the south gate but a small group of jaded men, staggering under a burden tied to a pole. The burden was carefully placed on a bed of potatoes, and the famished carriers began to negotiate for a needed supper. A little later and the whispers went round that it was a dead white man they were carrying, Livingstone, *en route* for Westminster Abbey.

Another delightful affectation of these derelict Arabs, who will never sight Zanzibar or Muscat again, is the vain way they flourish their bygone knowledge of European politics. In 1895, here am I most anxiously asked by one old gentleman if the Franco-German War is finished yet. Very fondly did he linger over the bellicose combination of these European names, relishing the very delicious idea of Allah having so permitted two great "Christian" nations to hew each other to pieces. So, too, with his sage guess about the "Cotton" war, as he called the North and South conflict in America. As the Arab's famous texture is "Americani" they somehow think that that old war may break out again, and limit the African cotton supply. Fancy being quizzed solemnly by a sleepy old Arab *if the American Civil War was over yet?* The "nephews," the Americans are called, and they humiliate the English by reminding them that they are dependent on the United States for their principal export! "Cotton-beggars" is our name, for we use "Americani" calico. To all of which I retort in my best John-Bull manner: "You Arabs seem to forget that the principal export of Great Britain to the United States *is* the United States itself."

But the Franco-German War is only yesterday's news

compared with the ancient history they gossip over. "Magueda! Magueda!" was a name I heard them use; and who was this "Magueda," please? "Oh," said the Arabs, "she was the mother of the Abyssinians." "And who was their father?" "Oh," they replied, "you don't know your history: 'Magueda' (or Makeda) Queen of Sheba was the wife of King Solomon of Jerusalem, and her son was educated in Judea by the priests. That is why the Abyssinians hate us Arabs." Arab literature has it that in those long-gone days a venturesome General of Solomon's army—Boul-Boul, i.e. the nightingale—penetrated south to Saba extolling the Queen and land thereof. Then came another embassy from Jerusalem, but Makeda only sent rich presents in response. Finally in the 24th year of Solomon's reign, away she went herself north to Jerusalem through Egypt, hers the first real "camel corps" to cross the desert."

And there they are to-day between latitude 10° and 15°, their priests getting up at 3 a.m. in knots of two and three to chant the Psalms of David in wild, melodious manner. Islam, long ago, would have swept them off the map but for Mohammed's promise never to touch them because of one kind deed they did in the fifth year of his propaganda. Hard pressed, he sent eighty of his people for shelter, and the kind treatment they received made him pledge peace with them for *all time*. Thus one kind deed saved Christianity when all around Islam had stormed and swept away every other rival. In fact, through the haze of history this one kind deed began to assume such fantastic proportions that the Arabs believe God will punish them in the last days through the Abyssinians destroying the Kabba!

Superstitious as they are, probably this is the unlikely point where we not only approach but reach the first real conversion from Islam to Christianity. It was even before The Prophet died. One of Mohammed's own companions left Arabia, went to Abyssinia, and there the impact of a living Christianity, although superstitious, opened the eyes of that Arab so that he wrote to Mohammed, as the Arabs themselves relate: "I now see clearly, and you are still only blinking." Imagine his surprise on reading this

apostate epistle. Also the vision of his taking a long breath as he searched his mind for some expletive that might suit the emergency.

Another good old retainer of mine for years is Juma (lit. Friday), a polite little Arab this who, however poor, always manages to keep his turban neatly set on his head. An old sailor on a slave dhow, he has spent most of his time cruising up the East African coast as far as the Red Sea, with an occasional venture into the Persian Gulf. Cast up high and dry into the far interior by the metaphoric waves of his stormy slave cruising, the natives are agape at his salt-sea tales. Around the camp fire he sways his listeners as he describes the wonders of the Indian Ocean, and ranges from whale stories to "man-o'-wari" encounters. This latter of course is only another iron whale spouting water at the bow. Captured and transferred aboard an English gunboat, the thrill of warmth around the engine room is still a treasure of the mind. "Why did I leave the ocean," you ask, "to come in here to dwell in the long grass? I left it because there were not only those sharks under water, but also these 'man-o'-wari' sharks above."

Salt water seems to splash in all his speech, but the most touching of his sayings was about the Grave of Livingstone's Heart. They told us of the dying doctor's moribund pain, and his never-a-murmur acquiescence in it all. Then it was the old salt produced his usual suitable splash of salt water in the speech, *Penyi wimbi na milango i papo*, "At the harbour bar just where the breaker curls in foam there it is, just there, you find the entrance through the reef!" Surely here it was he antedated Tennyson's "Crossing the Bar," for this is an old Arab sailor saying as they see the dawn breaking on the reefs with only that one tell-tale curl of foam to guide them inside the haven. Good for you, old Juma: Livingstone's last agony was only at the entrance of eternal rest and rejoicing: no splash of foam means no entrance to the harbour; the higher the wave, the surer the sign of haven; if we suffer we shall reign.

Great explorers in modern times have wearisomely run in and out of Africa only under the sheltering wing of

these Arab guides and guardians. Yet the inevitable retrospective book of travel, so full of ego-prestige, generally ignores this Arab as first and final factor in the whole itinerary. Picking him up at the coast with all his baggage, did not the said Arab carry the said Traveller across mountain and flood as though he were a hamper labelled "Fragile"? This is not hyperbole: literally, an Arab has been overheard saying respectfully of the white occupant of a hammock: "*Pole, Pole!* [gently, gently!] or you will tumble the baby!" Fancy a famous man known in many a home, nay, every home in England, called by the Arabs pathetically "a baby." Ever so gently, furtively, as it were, they carry him dry-shod over every stream, depositing the Bwana Mukubwa as tenderly as a China teacup on the opposite bank—the eloquent Arab look all the time seeming to say patronisingly to the inflated foreigner, "You are a good little boy, and you shall have jam with your tea." Yet the subsequent English "Book of Travels" will run into several editions. Of that same traveller I have heard that same Arab say: "Mr. Fulano [i.e. Mr. So-and-So] is a bad man, for instead of rationing us, he served us out cartridges, and told us to take food by force." Of another "great" German explorer an Arab told me that he injected morphia the whole "personally conducted Arab tour," and finally bade him good-bye with the words: "*Kwahedi!* I am now a great man in Europe."

More or less (and much more than less) Livingstone entered a world of unfriendly faces every step he took with these Arabs. This was the price he had to pay for their "caravan" companionship (*wa safari moja*). The Sultan of Zanzibar's letter did it: and the many Sydes, Jumas, and Abdullahs he met, all true sons of the Sultan, were forced to honour the royal letter Livingstone bore. More than a mere passport, it was a blank cheque, his producing of which meant a share of their supplies. Ever-welcome supplies in a far-off land where, as *Punch* put it in 1869, "You are heartily welcome to any refreshments which you may bring with you!" Yet these sons of darkness were slavers and murderers, and many a time Livingstone was





A TYPICAL FISHING-WEIR LIVINGSTONE HAD TO TACKLE IN A MORIBUND CONDITION.

Among the last words he wrote were these: "18th April. On leaving the village we forded the Kazya . . . a large weir spanned it, and we went on the lower side of that: fish are returning now with the falling waters and are guided into the rush-cones set for them."



lied about, even the Nyangwe massacre being blamed to *his* men. We had the same bar sinister coming in from the Atlantic where we crossed Livingstone's route up to Loanda. We, too, had noonday slavers in our caravan, yet not an onward, inward step could we make without them. All very regrettable, but all very necessary in a land where the caravan is its only means of transportation.

My point is this : a glance at Livingstone's *Last Journals* will remind you how he, like ourselves, only followed in the wake of roaming Arabs. When, therefore, we speak of Burton as discovering Lake Tanganyika, or Speke the Victoria Nyanza, we are only fumbling on the fringe of things. The Arabs, claiming centuries of priority, were as truly and technically explorers as the English ; only their R.G.S. happened to be in Zanzibar and Muscat. True, these Arabs were only rogues who came to fatten on honest men, but that does not and cannot tamper with their rights to be acknowledged as the pioneers of the African trail. English explorers arrived only to borrow that Semitic route first cut by Arab sandals ; and long before a European ever dreamed of penetrating our far interior, wave after wave of Arab traders had poured in from the east coast. Of course, these caravan routes were the same old narrow thing resembling a wheel rut, but to this day they are our only authentic "short cuts."

Nor did they pioneer the trail only. The Arabs made maps when England was benighted, witness the word "azimuth," not an English but an Arabic term. The African map of the Arab Abulfeda may have been crude, but at least it was not arm-chair geography, for hundreds of wanderers in the unknown had added their quota to that cartographic whole. So, too, the map of the Arab Edrisi. Even from Zanzibar, as far back as A.D. 1154, he got data of a kind. Of course, these Arabs also wrote books of travel, and not all of the romantic and rambling sort. Mas'oudi's record, for instance, is as old as A.D. 943, and his title was, *The Golden Pampas or Savannahs*. Here you find the data of a man who spoke in the first person, and had crossed over from Arabia to the east coast of Africa several times. Even the most modern

grammarians cannot better his tenth-century statement that the Bantu "express themselves with elegance, and are not wanting in orators." Again, when he speaks of their "filed teeth," we know where we are. It is of authentic hints of this sort that the negro himself says: "Where there is smoke there must be a fire." Compare this sensible, and earlier, historian, with the erratic Persian Abd-*Er-Razak*, who as late as 1442 said of Muscat: "The heat was so intense that it burned the marrow in the bones, the sword in its scabbard melted like wax, and the gems that adorned the handle of the dagger were reduced to coal. In the plains the chase became a matter of perfect ease, for the desert was filled with roasted gazelles"!

Next to the Jews they hate Romanists, for the Arab grudge is that when the Roman Church could not win a Moslem convert by heart-to-heart appeal, a prince of that church resolved to break them with their own rod of iron. This was Cardinal Lavigerie, founder of the "White Fathers," and a possible pope had he lived. As the history of Missions to Islam has proved, the Moslem heart is sterile soil, so the cunning (*mujinga*) Cardinal abandoned the old frontal attack common in India, and took the Mohammedan position by a flank movement. Bitter experience had taught him a lesson. As far back as 1867 he began the long agony of the see of Algiers, the Arab scorning the very notion of such impossible monkery. A poor pendulum of preaching this for Arab Algeria, the Moslem son of Shem with half a dozen wives versus the papist son of Japhet with no wife at all! What then was this subtle strategy of shrewd Charles Martial Allemand Lavigerie? Answer: the old Roman solution of force, for who but Peter cut off the high-priest's servant's ear? This, in two words, is what he did. Rousing Europe for an anti-slavery crusade he successfully compromised nearly all the European powers, and forced their hands into an anti-Arab campaign, Roman really fighting the Arab with his own old weapon of cold steel, and

*"Proved their doctrine orthodox  
By apostolic (?) blows and knocks."*

Of course, this annoyed these sons of Shem, annoyed them



THE MIXING OF THE TRIBES: SOME MORE LIVINGSTONE TYPES.



"YOUR HUMBLE SERVANT ON THE GROUND, BECAUSE NO LOWER POSTURE IS POSSIBLE."



very much : *he* boasts of being *homo unius libri*, and does not the Koran certify slavery as divine ? So it came to pass that this African, who promised to be such a safe follower of Islam in polygamy and worse, was rescued from the Arab's grasp, the *civil* power (don't forget it) doing it all. Therefore if Satan so cast out Satan, then surely the Kingdom of God has come very nigh unto this, the last of the world's continents. God is thus seen enthroned above all the turmoil, for men with such wildly divergent intentions were overruled for blessing to a vast continent. The snug Islam accustomed to toleration in the East was very much taken aback to find that it had overreached itself in this unblushing slavery of Central Africa. Good it was to see the sin of Shem exposed in the sunshine, Mohammed with the mask torn off, a bloody sword in his hand, and not a Crescent, but a skull and cross-bones on his flag of slavery. In terse and stinging phrases, this Arab accuses the Christian of "not playing the game" (*ujunga*) in thus settling the slavery subject with shot and shell, forgetful of the fact that the ground was of his own choosing. The Arab loved the sword, and he has perished thereby, for against his effete percussion-cap gun "the Kaffirs" of Europe out-classed him with deadly breech-loaders. He *would* appeal to Cæsar's sword, and by that sword he was hewn to pieces :

*" Ah me, what perils do environ  
The man that meddles with cold iron."*

Nevertheless, even some of those good Algerian *Pères Blancs* admit it is a half-mad, wholly desperate idea of Rome trying to win Africa with a celibate priesthood—Africa, a conjugal continent from Cape to Cairo ! There is neither sense nor salvation in the idea of Lavigerie's army of bachelors trying to combat the equally mad extreme of the Arab harem, such a swing from zero to a hundred being madness. All this in a land where your cook boy seriously thinks of wedlock in his early teens. Listen to the mocking Moslem words : " Allah sent Jesus and gave Him the gospel, and put in the hearts of those that follow Him kindness and pity, but monkery, *they invented it themselves.*" No wonder the Arabs insist

that it was because the Cardinal up in Algeria could not get even with them theologically, he resolved like Peter to cut off the ear that would not listen. How a Romanist ever even attempted to contradict this saying of Mohammed about their "inventing monkery themselves" is not on record. On the road out east towards Nyasa, you pass the good Romanist bishop, and farther on encounter the humblest of Protestant Missionaries with only a plain "Mr." tacked on to his name. Yet, what a contrast between the warm little Mission nest feathered by a kind wife, and the cold monastic look of the Bishop's palace in the bush. If you take counsel of Paul you will at once transfer the titles, for the Bishop "*must* be the husband of one wife." So if a Bishop "*must*" (?) have a palace, and if in the said palace he "*must*" have one wife, then that plain Protestant is the real bishop, and his plainer home the real palace. It is obvious, at any rate, that only a Protestant of the very simplest sort can make any headway against these hawk-eyed Arabs. Himself a man of one Book, the Moslem strikes out against innovations, and only as you give chapter and verse for it can you stand on holy writ, a "workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of Truth." Stabbing Rome on the matter of enforced celibacy ("forbidding to marry" is a Pauline mark of apostasy, remember), the Arabs also laugh in derision at their priestcraft. Now at least, here they are as consistent as Luther. More than a hundred millions of the human race, and sadly lost to Christ though they are, yet do these Arabs despise the mediation of any man in the matter of his daily devotions. No man can eat his breakfast for him and no man can say his prayers for him!



CHAPTER XXV  
THE ADVERSE ARABS

*Picture this short-cropped Livingstone as engrossed in the activity of a great enterprise, not the mere effusion of a passing excitement. Thus you catch the real point of view of the real man—never forgetting Africa's safety valve, the saving humour of things.*

*“ Fold up their tents like the Arabs,  
And as silently steal away.”*

*“ A crow exclaimed : ‘ God is the Truth.’ Then quoth one, ‘ The  
dirt scraper has become a preacher.’ ”*

*Arabic proverb.*

*“ The hunting dogs have scratched faces.”*

*Arabic proverb.*

*“ Thou kindlest the fire and criest ‘ Fire.’ ”*

*Arabic proverb.*

## CHAPTER XXV

### THE ADVERSE ARABS

**Y**ET curiously it is just up here in the Luapula valley, and right in the heart of his own much-scorned "Wasenshi" (barbarians) the Arab knocks his head against another of life's little ironies. They scorn idol worship and twit the Luapula negroes with worshipping a stone, but what is this stone if not a true lineal descendant (perhaps ancestor!) of their own black one in the Kabba? Here in Ushiland behold the negro Kabba, "Makumba," and the worship of this meteorite (?) is found to ramify and unify the whole vast land. Far north in Lubaland and far south among the feeders of the Zambezi, there is no cut-throat potentate who does not quiver with response at the very name of "Makumba," the heavenly visitor, the meteorite or quartz that fell from "the clear sky." (Compare Diana of Ephesus, the heavenly visitor which "fell from Jupiter." This last phrase is really a translational error for "fallen from a clear sky." See Eurip. *Iph.* i. 977, 1384.)

Arab scorn, notwithstanding, there you have an elaborate ritual and priesthood all pathetically built on this heavenly stone. See here, I repeat, one more of life's sneers, for what is this Makumba if not the foster-brother of their own Kabba of Mecca? Year in, year out, millions of the world of Islam cross sea and land to kiss that "fire-stone" (?) that came down from Heaven. Yet they laugh at our Central African for doing precisely the same thing, and their sectarian compliments most surely come home to roost. The fact is all this meteorite worship is a theme, not for ribald laugh, but for the splash of tears. Where is the good of explaining to him that asteroids are the chips of an old planet and a meteoric stone only a chip of an

asteroid? The whole thing, as touchingly explained by the native, amounts desolately to this: their kissing with the million kisses of the centuries of an authentic heavenly stone is all and only pathetically admmissive of the fact that *no man hath ascended up into Heaven*. When the worst is said against it, that black austere stone is after all a *genuine heavenly meteor visitor*. The mere dross and refuse of Heaven though it be, it has been higher up than any of them! Hence the iron law that this is the true oracle of the land: hither shall they all come to seek counsel from the heavenly stone.

It is pathetic all this, for there was I, itinerant missionary, merely completing the same neat geometric figure, same triangle of idea. At the one apex behold the Arab boasting of *his* heavenly stone. At the second, the negro with a like authentic stone. And lastly here was I, tramp preacher at my apex, also boasting of Christ the Heavenly Stone, "the Stone cut out without hands," upon which He builds His Church. Of course, Messrs. Arab and Negro spurned my Stone. Nor was I surprised. Is it not the "Stone of Stumbling"? In a glance, one could see why Christ is only a rock of offence: their stones were tangible, and mine a metaphor. Memo for preachers: In Africa it is better to suffer for speaking the truth than that the truth should suffer by our silence.

My own matured opinion about this heavenly stone is against the meteorite idea and for their hexagonal quartz, "the stone cut out without hands" called by the oldest name in Africa, *Kizimba*, the worshippers being called *Vakizimba*. This I support with the following four reasons: they (1) call this quartz "light" or bits broken off the sun; they (2) stupidly multiply instances (?) of this quartz falling from the sky; and (3) they clinch the whole thing by pointing to these six straight hexagonal sides not of earth because so geometrical, not of nature for there is no straight line therein. Creatures of crooks and circles, and more crooked than circular, they all centralise for certitude on these clean-cut hexagons never carved by man like an ugly wooden idol. Brainy-looking objects turned out of some celestial workshop, "visitors from Heaven, yes,

picked up from the hill-side, but only there because they fell from the sky." Hence (4) all the northern chiefs must have a "Kizimba" as their mark of kingship. Hence all this juggling with the straight-as-a-die quartz, "the stone cut out without hands," as oracle. Its very geometric *straightness* of sides is perverted into crooked quackery.

It is, in fact, this circle-on-the-brain African seeking an escape, and seeing that possible escape symbolised in these two hexagonal postulates: (1) see those six straight equidistant sides; (2) they *must* have come from the sky, for mortal man never chiselled them into such geometric shape. This is the reason why, in divination, they make this aristocratic quartz the key-stone of it all. It is the geometry of God they appeal to: "His ways are *sawa*, i.e. equal," and so saying they seize on this token as their link with the "Unknown who knows all." Thus it surpasses a meteorite in symbolic suggestion, for the mere height the meteor fell is a minor matter compared with its haphazard crudeness of form. Not so, never so, the delicate finesse of their adorable hexagon. Thus even when you pin him down to the certainty that quartz, like sandstone or any other stone, is terrestrial, not celestial, he swings round on you with the all-Africa belief that God made them all, so they *all came from above*.

And here it is the Arab turns out to be an African *pur sang*. He beats the black at divination. Was it not Shereef, a drunken little Arab tailor, who plundered Livingstone politely by divination? Piously produced his Koran and divined thereon that the Livingstone who had disappeared into Manyema would never return, could never return. For did not his Koran divination declare that he was dead? And, therefore, why should not he, the said Shereef, plunder his supplies at Ujiji?

Although, as I have said, the number of anti-negro critics have been strangely and villainously augmented, yet the Arab is not one. Bound to the African by the two great bonds of polygamy and slavery, he is a witness not at all poisoned by prejudice, albeit he so long bought the

negro as a two-legged animal. Take and try these six nuts our Arab asks us to crack :

## I

Was not the Prophet descended from an African woman ?

## II

Were there not many mighty negroes like *Wanshi* whose exploits as "Liberators" are celebrated in secular poetry ?

## III

Were there not negro poets too ; yea, and was not *Antarah* one of them ?

## IV

Poems (*Inshallah !*), yea, prize poems ?

## V

Nay (*El hamdoo L'illahy*), is not the 31st Chapter of the Koran inscribed to a negro ?

## VI

Yea ; was he not the great *Lokman*, the same known to the Greeks as *Æsops* ? For does not *Æsops* = *Æthiops* and was he not praised in secular poetry as "brimful of wisdom black as night" ?

These Arabs, then, although Sons of Belial, took him all over the country and they warn us not to be cheap, and boast a bundle of easy geographical error for the Livingstone who *never claimed it for himself*. It is difficult to imagine any study that would prove more fascinating in itself and more embarrassing to the rival nations of Europe than this who-was-first ? history of exploration. "History !" it is called, forgetful of the fact that "history" is only the old Greek word for "inquiry" and not a lot of dogmatic drivel. Who, for instance, discovered the Victoria Falls ? Certainly not Livingstone, although nearly cent. per cent. of the R.G.S. believe it. Fair play, please : sixteen years before ever Livingstone saw Victoria Falls (i.e. 1832) a valiant Voortrekker saw them, Carel Trichardt (eldest son of Louis T.). Not that he claimed to be first there, for my old friend Silva Porto, greatest of all African explorers, boasted to me at Belmonte in '89 that they of Portugal saw them long before.

So, too, with Lake Mweru here. No doubt tradition

has hallowed the popular notion that Dr. Livingstone discovered it, but wait a moment. He it is who is most eager to inform us that seventy-two years before he, David Livingstone, saw Mweru, Manoel Caetano Pereira came up to Kazembe : then came Lacerda (" Charlie," the natives called him), a native of Brazil, Doctor of Coimbra University, also Governor of Sena. Then followed Major Monteiro ; all Portuguese, all keen on the traditional exploration of their race, and long prior to the English. It is Livingstone who frankly and finely tells us all this, just as he admits that Lake Maravi (or Nyasa) appeared on old Portuguese maps as early as 1546. So, too, with our Far Interior, the Katanga. He tells of three Portuguese arriving at Mushidi's (" Merosi," he calls him), Jaõ, Domasiko and Domasho. They had " cut him out " ; this was the Katanga he never reached, this the place the women out east sang about blithely as they pounded flour for the expedition :

*" Oh the march of The Old Gent to Katanga !  
Oh the march to Katanga, back to Ujiñi."*

Did he regret, did he recriminate against his bad fortune ? How could he, when his own recorded plans were all built on James iv. 15 : "*With help from above*, I shall yet go through Lubaland, see the underground excavations first, then on to Katanga " ? The fact is we Britishers came late on the scene of Mushidi's great Babylon. When I was his secretary, Mushidi himself gave me the names of quite a dozen who had preceded us, " cut us out," to use Livingstone's chagrined phrase. Before Fred Arnot of undying memory reached " the Garenganze," had not the distinguished Capello and Ivens been there and taken Mushidi's only photo ? Then, still before Arnot, came two Germans, the leader that famous Reichard who had been one of the most ardent promoters of the colonial movement in Germany. A bit of his house is still standing in the old Bunkeya capital. Thus it was we arrived to find our passion for virgin soil flouted by these obvious facts of prior pioneering. Hence Luanza, hence our pushing out to " find and found " new untouched territory.

It is the old undignified story of Burton and Speke that ended in death. There you had two men, a junior following his senior as far as the discovery of Lake Tanganyika. Burton is very much head of the expedition, Burton gets the glory ; it is *his* Lake, his discovery. But now comes the absurdly arrogant phase of this egotistic exploration. Away goes Speke to the north, north where never Burton trod. Here is virgin soil beyond Sir Richard's ken ; here is a new great Lake, true source of the Nile, the quest of the ages, and Speke's very own discovery, Victoria Nyanza. And the result, degrading, disgusting result ? A green-eyed jealousy and reams of Burtonese print endorsing the Socratic dictum that "envy is the filthy slime of the soul." Meanwhile here you have the Arabs laughing at them both and saying that *they* "carried in" the two travellers. Then behind the Arab is the real fellow himself, *genus homo Africanus*, winking out of the grass, every wink being a hint that he the man on the spot, yes, he took them to the spot. Thus it is old Ego in all lands is seen to smirk and snigger behind an international mask of make-believe.

I mention this (it must be mentioned) because high authorities trace Livingstone's ultimate desire and death to his believing Burton's error instead of Speke's I've-been-there data. I regretfully insist that the jealousy churning and fermenting in the soul of Sir Richard did finally eventuate in our Doctor's death. Who could juggle with nouns, verbs, and adjectives like "Arabian Nights" Burton ? And in the dust of their geographic brawl then it was the devil got busy : England was deluded, Speke, the true discoverer of the true source of the Nile, lost life and knighthood, though Baker got his "Sir" for a lesser find. And this Livingstone of ours, a man miles above even imagining such trickery, "even Barnabas was carried away" as Paul would put it. Deluded by Burton's bombast, he, too, lost life and knighthood in seeking for something already found so finely by a poor fellow who was tricked out of his reward. Both dead for an error, error born of envy, envy born of the devil, for did not dear, dirty No. 1 do it all ? ("Dear," No. 1, I mean, for is he not myself ? "Dirty," yes, for is he not *self* ?)



Small wonder the young African learning to write his letters is astonished at the way we "poor white trash" give ourselves so cheaply away in *always* writing the first personal pronoun and none other as a capital "I." These young blacks are quite agreed that this is "the nasty nominative," so nasty are its tricks in caligraphy. The whites, he thinks, might at least have done it more discreetly. True, both black and white have tons of "ego" rather tightly packed away under their skin. But why should we allow this "I" to outwit all the other pronouns by becoming the *first* person singular; why should it not be the second or third person if only to hookwink appearances? Then, nastier still, what does this brow-of-brass pronoun dare to do? *S'il vous plaît* it conceives itself to be such a capital fellow that it can only and always be written as a pronoun with a capital, never mere lower-case "i," but always arrogant "I." Yet even "we," also a first person *plural*, even this all-inclusive "we," a bigger fellow, is not *always* written in capitals like absurd "I." This "we" means many more people than this "I," yet see the conceit of the latter, not merely talking tall but stalking so tall among all the syllables!

"Who planted the nutmeg tree on the Katanta?" There is a thrill in this surprise Livingstone got in the wilds to find that somebody had passed on before who thought of those who would follow? This is where some later selfish pioneers failed: why plant a citron or an orange when it would only first-fruit in five years? Why should others eat what *they* could not? It is only in the Millennium where "one shall not plant and another eat." But this is not the Millennium, and many a good fellow has planted in faith only to leave the young saplings to a nonchalant successor. Not always so, however. When Livingstone was on the Zambezi he planted under the spray of the cataract a hundred peach, apricot, and a quantity of coffee seeds and the steady spray was surety enough that the seeds germinated. But along came Livingstone's successors the hippos, who in order to make up their modicum of five bushels *per* night swallowed the young trees! Did the Messrs. Hippo surmise that the men who were coming

one day to eat that fruit were also out to eat their flesh ? Therefore, no foreign fruit might mean no foreigner to eat the same, therefore no hippo eaten ? Long after the sixteenth-century Jesuits have passed away, hundreds of years after the old churches were in ruins, the broken bell with its I.H.S. rusted in the sun, their endless memorial will be those groves of mangoes, limes, and tamarinds planted in the wild. Thus it was Livingstone got a nasty little jag (a reminder that after all he was *not* first along this trail) from that anonymous act at the Katanta River long ago when someone, sometime, planted the tree immortalised by Livingstone. In two places in his small metallic notebook he asks imperatively : “ *Who planted the nutmeg tree on the Katanta ?* ” Had any of those seventy-five whites who came up with Dr. Lacerda wandered over here seventy years ago ? Or any of the long prior Arabs who as far back as the fifteenth century had been installed at Kilwa on the coast ? Echo answers Livingstone’s wondering “ *who ?* ” from the Africa that never kept a visitors’ list. It was :

“ *Men of the plain heroic breed,  
The Bravely Dumb that did their deed  
And scorned to blot it with a name.* ”

The fact is, Livingstone’s priority in all this is not of time, but temperament : these men from Lisboa were real noonday slavers carried in tipioas by slaves and the raw natives know all about it. Certainly the reflex reward has come back on them, for in some parts of Africa it is common to refuse to denominate a Portuguese as a white man : when the jingle of an approaching hammock is heard, the host asks his servant to spy out the land ahead and find who the advancing visitor may be : “ *Is he a white man ?* ” “ *No.* ” “ *A black man ?* ” “ *No.* ” “ *Who ?* ” “ *A Portuguese.* ” Napoleon was right when he said that “ *Africa begins at the Pyrenees,* ” and the Lubans call them the “ *Western Arabs,* ” all unconscious of the good Moorish substratum of history there is in the idea.

Beginning with a date so late as January 1909 and working back, how quickly the figures appal you. Try to strike a grand total : if you address yourself in earnest to

the statistics of slavery in Africa, the figures mount up passing strange. Put pictorially—and what a picture!—it has been reckoned that the negro victims would make a double row round the earth at its Equator. Across morass, fen and jungle were they dragged out to the ocean, the Eastern Arabs being long anterior to the Western Portuguese. On the west coast Paolo Diaz got a footing as far back as 1576 and probably a dozen years later the real trans-Atlantic export slavery began. Even the Protestant Dutch who captured Loanda in 1641 had no higher ideal than to work their American possessions with negro slave labour. Seven years later they were expelled, but by whom? An historian seriously informs us that “the inhabitants of Rio de Janeiro largely contributed to the expedition as they saw how hurtful to their interests the loss of Angola would be from the failure in the supply of slave labour.” After his long residence in the country we can now listen to Joachim John Monteiro who worked the copper deposits of Benguella. The leap from 1576 to 1875 is a long one, but all that time slavery was raging. “The number of slaves,” says Monteiro, “shipped in Angola could not have been far short of 100,000 per annum. I was told by some of the oldest inhabitants that to see as many as ten to twelve vessels loading at a time was a common occurrence. I have seen as many as 1,000 slaves arrive in one caravan from the interior, principally from Bihe. . . . Average price of a full-grown man or woman was about £3 in cloth or other goods and as low as 5s. for a little nigger.”<sup>1</sup>

Finally, who can fill the gap of years between 1875 and Mr. Swan's data of 1909? The law of the equality of ratios surely demands that in these intervening years the increasing demand extorted from Africa an increasing supply. Yet all this not far from the spot where, centuries ago, Diego Cam was welcomed with open arms by the natives and escorted in triumph to the Capital of the Congo Kingdom. The old chronicler assures us that 100,000

<sup>1</sup> *The Spectator* as late as July 19, 1920, quoted at length their own Lisbon “*O Tempo*” to prove that slavery was still in full blast in Portuguese Africa. Hence my pertinacity on this threadbare story.

natives became Christians "in a trice," including the King, who, accepting the baptismal name of John, also changed the name of his city to San Salvador. Alas, whether it be the city of Mansoul or the city of mud huts, to alter the name is not equivalent to altering the nature: can the Ethiopian change his skin?

And, remember, Mr. Pharisee (some later, some earlier!), we were all in it, very much in it. Out on the west coast you need not for a single moment of time blame the Portuguese only; Africa has an ugly way of levelling European nationalities: where, when or how was virtue ever nationalised? Dutch, French, Flemish, Spanish, Portuguese and English, they are all alike labelled "Ovindele" by the negro, the old west-coast law of lawlessness being:

*"To do as all men ever would—  
Own no man master but their mood."*

Only a few years ago a British Consul had to accuse of wholesale murder one "John Scott, a merchant trading at Ponta da Lenha, and a British subject." It was the old dark story of another alleged attempt. A slave boy is arrested and tortured until he, "under the influence of great agony," accused first one of his fellow-slaves and afterwards several others of participation in the offence. The first victim, who at the time of the offence was many miles away, was captured and, I quote the Blue Book, without being interrogated at all was bound hand and foot, taken out in a canoe into the middle of the stream and afterwards drowned. The rest shared the same fate, twelve being taken up river to Boma (of all places!) by the said John Scott, who caused eleven of them, men, women and children, to be "all attached to an iron chain and drowned in the river in front of his house." The same John Scott, this, who in the early days acted as agent for the Missionaries and tried once to get a £40 a/c paid twice. Little room have the good missionaries to be surprised at the doubling of a debt by the very ruffian who for a conjectural crime of arson could extort, not mere money, but the blood of man, woman and babe. The superintendent and soul of this massacre, the commercial agent of a Mission!

“ In all,” the British Consul reported, “ I am assured that about thirty-two unfortunate, helpless beings were murdered,” and he added, “ I am also informed that the murder of one or more slaves by white men is almost a daily occurrence, and that the torture of the thumb-screw was applied to many more besides the boy first alluded to, and in some instances it was so severe that the bones of the fingers of these most unfortunate people were completely crushed before they would implicate others ; and beyond a doubt, under their excruciating agony they accused many innocent people, for children of tender years were included and not spared.”



CHAPTER XXVI  
THE SPELL-BOUND LIVINGSTONE

*These technical pages are dedicated to the fulfilment of Livingstone's dying desire : a seeking and a finding, even in Africa, of some divine data that dovetails into τὰ βίβλια. "This spell-bounds me," said he.*

Livingstone's doctrine of the Bible : " This is doubly the book of God and the God of Books, because it unfolds God to man and man to himself."

Also : In any land there is the same old international sing-song of conscience : " I know and God knows, and God knows that I know that He knows."

Also : " The O.T. opens with man made in the image of God, and the N.T. opens with God in the image of man."



## CHAPTER XXVI

### THE SPELL-BOUND LIVINGSTONE

THE further we squeeze south the more the "Ingeresa" gossip squeezes out of the old men who look like tortoises. Each camp has its new contribution, and many an old waster with an edge on his tongue makes no effort to eliminate the news that Livingstone was "a God's Book Man" (*wa nkalata ya kwa Leza*). But the man who marks his Bible is likewise marked thereby: "I read the Bible," says the Doctor, "four times over when in Manyema." In his reading he saw his leading: Christ did not trick his David Livingstone into all these trials, for unto such was he called. Those four readings of the whole Bible in Manyema-land had opened his eyes. Although he came out at Ujiji a "living skeleton," yet was the inward man renewed day by day. Like Paul's breaking-up ship that cast four anchors from the stern, so this "living skeleton" initialed "D. L." got his four anchors out of his "four" readings of the Bible when cut off from the world's libraries. His Newman, Carlyle, Arnold, were ant-eaten hundreds of miles away, good thing too. Has not G. K. C. said, "If Newman seemed suddenly to fly into a temper, Carlyle seemed never to fly out of one. But Arnold kept a smile of heart-broken forbearance, as of the teacher in an idiot school, that was enormously insulting"?

All this is far less an interruption than a continuity when you see his *Last Journals* sprinkled with soul-saving Bible in dozens of pages. I press this point of his reading the Bible four times through in Manyema, because this was the most putrid place in all Africa. This was where he saw "the measureless atrocity" on July 15, 1871, giving him the impression of "being in hell." Thus it was he wrote the most tremendous thing in the exegesis of the

soul: "The Bible gathers wonderful interest *from the circumstances in which it is read.*" This confession sweeps us into a new sphere of spiritual vision with new horizons, new possibilities. Be it sick-bed or sick land, then it is your text gets its true context. Often the smug, soft-cushion reading is more mere pretext than text or context.

And as the reading so the writing. How often does the homeland remember that nearly all the New Testament was written *from* the Foreign Mission field? It was when "Satan hindered" Paul to go to Thessalonica, then it was he, right away, sat down and wrote Epistles No. I and II, read ultimately by many more millions than that old Greek city could ever contain. John saw heaven opened on his island of *exile*. "The heavenly calling" was revealed to Paul in his cold, clammy Roman *prison*. Well might we modify Livingstone's phrasing: "The Bible gathers wonderful interest from the circumstances in which it was (not 'read' but) written."

From the standpoint of the superficial truculencies of modern literature I am afraid I am spoiling my picture by over-emphasising Livingstone's Bible study. Did not he himself say, "My views of what is missionary duty are not so contracted as those whose ideal of a missionary is that of a dumpy sort of man with a Bible under his arm"? No, my point is that long ago he had severed his official connection with any sort of Missionary Society, and it is the non-lapsed Livingstone who lives *The Life* and talks *The Talk*. It was not a case of "cash-down Christianity"; that Consul's cap he wore, far from making any difference made all the difference. To the burning end it was the same old song: "I am a missionary, heart and soul. God had an only Son and He was a Missionary and a Physician. A poor, poor imitation I am or wish to be. In this service I hope to live, in it I wish to die."

But he never lost his balance; was no shrieker, and probably the sum of the whole Livingstone philosophy was that to "put off the old man" *you need not put on the old woman*. Did not Sydney Smith divide mankind derisively into three sexes—men, women, and curates?

Small wonder, then, the Livingstone so helped by the Bible wanted in turn to help the Bible.

"I pray the good Lord of all," says he, "to favour me so as to allow me to discover anything to confirm the precious old documents (τὰ βίβλια), the Scriptures of truth: may He permit me to bring it to light and give me wisdom to make a proper use of it."

Then he contrasts the glory of mere geography with this more glorious God-graphy: "Some," says he, "seem to feel that their own importance in the community is enhanced by an imaginary connection with a discovery or discoverer of the Nile sources, and are only too happy to figure, if only in a minor part, as theoretical discoverers, a theoretical discovery being a contradiction in terms!" Then he returns to it, his presentiment of death having been lost in the desire to dig out of this African darkness some seal of certitude that God's Word was truth, not trash. This would be all the reward he wanted: "I had," he writes, "a strong presentiment during the first three years that I should never live through the enterprise, but it weakened as I came near to the end of the journey, and an eager desire to discover any evidence of the great Moses having visited these parts bound me, *spell-bound* me, I may say, for if I could bring to light anything to confirm the Sacred Oracles, I should not grudge one whit all the labour expended."

This mention of Moses will be misunderstood unless the reader notes that these Arabs around us are always talking about the supposed journeys of Moses through Central Africa. They express surprise when you demur, and deplore your ignorance of such easy data. Really they may not be far wrong. I think the Bible must love to be translated into these languages, it is all in their own type of talk. Across the river they seem soaked in Bible, yet never saw or knew a copy in their life. As though to minimise the monstrous fact of cannibalism, Lubaland is full of such hints as to its link with a Palestine they never heard of. To translate the numerous names, you could easily do so in the exact terms of Holy Writ, and this in spite of the all-encompassing gloom. The river crossing here is literally

translated *Bethabara* (in equivalent language, of course) and the keeper thereof is called *Jonah*, i.e. the dove. Another chocolate-coloured negro here is called *Gideon*, or the breaker; another, *Ezra*, the helper; and another, *Samson*, or the sun. The very mountain with its rounded knob is translated Calvary, or the skull-like place, and this is verifiable from fact that the human head is called "the mountain of wisdom." A man rescued from the crocodiles is called Moses, or the drawn-out-one.<sup>1</sup>

Nor would I care to be local cannibal Postmaster over there. If that official had the puzzle to deliver letters in these parts, he would be nonplussed by the length of negro names. Curiously reminiscent these of the same mouthful given the members of "Barebones" Parliament; among wild wasters (forsooth!) how surprising to hear a man puritanically called "Mr. Fear-God-but-never-fear-man." Here is his neighbour, too, boasting the pious cognomen, "Mr. Tell-God-that-only-is-left." So, too, any foggy old man-eater is called "Mr. The-Friend-of-God," the idea being that his mere lengthened tenure of years is a proof that he is far into God's favour. Secular names are, of course, more common; one man before me boasting the ugly puff: "Mr. Owl-a-bad-one-but-there-are-just-as-bad-in-the-town." Again, here is "Mr. Plenty-of-names-but-not-plenty-of-riches," who, by the by, is the bosom friend of "Mr. He-is-his-own-enemy-not-his-neighbour's." To ask them what it all means, this spinning out of long names, is to be reminded for the thousandth time that mere "Smith" or "Brown" or "Jones" is no name at all in the Bantu sense of the word. It is a label, not a name in the conventional cannibal sense. For, unless the name be accurately photographic of the man's nature, then obviously it is not his name at all, but descriptive of either somebody or nobody else.

Of course, the fellow got a baby-name at birth, but this negro is at bottom a bold Baptist. *Nomen omen* is his motto, and he rebels against the idea of anyone, even his "mama" (yes, the same old word), knowing his hidden

<sup>1</sup> But see the argument from Ethnology at p. 152, *ante*, which may explain where all this comes from.

heart or nature. So when he grows up he spurns that old baby-name he got from outsiders : does not name equate nature ? and the latter being inside, he alone knows and names that nature lurking deep down in his being. The dearest kinsman is only a rank, a frank outsider where *this intense inside business* is involved of naming *à la* nature. Did not Tennyson call it " the word that is the symbol of myself " ? Why should not your *nomen* fit all the facts of your *omen* ? This is the good God's way at any rate, for The Day is coming when He shall strip us of all external make-believe, and then we get a new name that *no man knows save him who has the same*. For what man knoweth the things of a man save the spirit of a man that is in man ?

So, too, farther down the same Lualaba, at a town bereaved of its time-honoured chief Ngwena, by name and nature. Entering the place, I found a vision of chaos and inertia consequent on the death of such a busy ruler, the town a rioting bedlam. " Ah, yes," spoke up an Elder, " a city is a Body of which the King is Head ; cut off the head and the body is dead." How precisely Pauline all this is : the Church of Christ being both a City and a Body. Their very word for " body," moreover, only makes assurance doubly sure as to Pauline analogy. For the body means " the two-in-one thing " (*muvidi*), the idea being that a human being is a unit made up of two perfect halves : two eyes, ears, arms, legs, etc. Identically Biblical, this, of course, for does not Paul say of " the body of Christ " that of *twain he made one* ?

Take the Fisher Chiefs, too, and listen to their metaphor for the mixed character of their subjects : " Oh, we must take what we get ; a Kingdom is a *Bukonde*, i.e. net, and all sorts of fish are gathered in it." So, too, with the dozens of Chiefs who call themselves after trees. What is their idea if not the very Biblical one that every subject in the Kingdom is only a branch or a trunk in the King-trunk ? How like " I am the vine, and ye are the branches."

Take again this common instance of a widowed woman : All such, in their loneliness, are called " the spouse of God " (*Muka Leza*), because their human helpmeet is no more. How like lonely widowed Israel being comforted with

the words: "Thy Maker is thy husband." Surely all this means that you can really get to close quarters with the Bible, here at the world's end? But this opens a large subject, too large for a mere chapter.

Take, however, three final Mosaic facts. I find, for instance, an easy and obvious link in circumcision; verbal, I mean, not anthropological. For why should the word for "law" (*mukanda*) be the same as "circumcision"? Again: mere straw indicating the current, this Hebrew link is seconded in the word for "slavery" (*ntundu*). Here again you wonder why this very word should also mean "the bored ear." Was not the boring of the ear the fixed mark of Mosaic servitude?

But greater and grander link still is the root-name for God. Here surely this subject that "spell-bound" Livingstone before his death ends on the crescendo. I mean, not merely that these natives have the genuine idea of God, but that they have *the identical name* that Moses used.

Not Hebrew only, but Greek links they have, for is not the whole world kin? If you call the chief K—— you can easily prove a Grecian link with Lubaland. Asking this cheery chief the sum-total of his ideas on a model Kingdom, says he: "Oh! Thou of the Boots, the bow needs the arrows and the arrows need the bow, and a Kingdom divided against itself cannot stand." Pausing in the problem, he continues: "This death! death! cry in the land is madness, for porridge is sweet [i.e. life is precious]. Besides, we are all such spicy food for worms [*lit.* teeth-watery food] that we should live for life, not for death. Don't boast of your strength, for the world is split into two bands only: one the band of the blind and the other the band of the lame. Now," continued K——, "this teaches us good-brotherhood, for what would a blind and lame man do in a burning town?" (At this point our Luban gives such a literally Greek answer to the query, that I will juxtapose a quotation from Lord Neave's Greek Anthology by way of contrast.)

K——— *the Luban*

"Fleeing from a burning town, as I shall be thy legs—so shall we would not Mr, Blind say to Mr, Lame: escape this burning town and teach

' As we are so mutually dependent on all men what full fellowship means ' ? ' ' each other, be thou mine eyes even

*Lord Neave's Anthology*

Deficient one in limbs and one in eyes,  
Each with the other's help his want supplies,  
The blind man lifts the lame man on his back,  
And by the other's words directs his track :  
Wholesome necessity this lesson taught,  
By mutual pity mutual help was brought.

This curious coincidence of Greek analogy is as nothing compared with the fact that here in this parable of a " lame and blind " fellowship you have the picture of K——'s own life : the whole thing looks like this chief reading out the programme of his future. For, remember, this David, to wit K——, has his negro Jonathan, to wit M—— ; both chiefs ripe for perdition, as black and bad morally as they make them. Now, this friend of K—— yielded to Christ for evermore, salvation finding him in bodily sorrow. Once as fleet as a deer, a wounded foot brought him very low, and day by day my wife worked for a cure. The cure came and so did salvation, but M—— became the literally lame man of his friend's parable. Now, if Jonathan, *alias* M——, has no legs he certainly has eyes, both sight of body and sight of soul ; alas, his old friend David, *alias* K——, has legs and to spare, but he is still blind to God and grace abounding. Yet it all turns out well, and the Greco-Luban parable becomes the true programme of their double escape, K——, too, becomes a Christian. The lame man in the burning town, saying to his blind friend : " Let us flee ; you will be my legs and I will be your eyes, so let us teach the world fellowship ! " Moral : If lame Smith laughs at Jones's blindness, Jones can retort on Smith's lameness : but life is made up of sterner stuff, therefore why not combine as Messrs. Smith and Jones Limited to fight life's common enemy ?

But all this analogy goes deeper. Here is a snatch of pure Greek philosophy proving the cannibal link with Eleusis. The verb " to be," " to exist," is *Di*, and the noun for an egg is *Di*, and if you ask the reason why, they will start you on their old " will-o'-the-wisp " chase round the circularity of existence. Thus : " Which was first, first

egg or first fowl, first acorn or first oak?" Quizzing the heirophant as to why an egg should be the chosen type of endless existence, he said smartly that the egg symbol was a double one and therefore perfect. For (1) the ideal circularity contained in an egg endlessly begetting a fowl that in turn gave another egg was a symbol of (2) the actual rotundity of the egg-shell, which has no break in it.

Or again, take this pure Pythagorean idea embedded in the dry grammar of their language. The great root for "evil" is the trans-African syllable *Vi* (as in *buvi*) just as the great plural prefix is precisely the same *Vi* = plurality = evil. Now, what is this if not the oldest idea on earth that goodness = unity, just as badness = disintegration, plurality? Nevertheless, mere etymology is so notoriously conjectural that probably the surest proof of a Luban being a Hegelian can be found in the serious structure of his grammar. This you can check even in England by looking at any atlas, where many a long streaky African river is seen to begin with *Lu* (e.g. Lualaba, Lufira, etc.). Well, you have only to push your investigations from this starting-point of *Lu* = long, thin, streakiness, to find that by going too far east you reach west: the paradox swings full circle, and now you find clustering under the same *Lu* prefix all short stubby objects like a bullet (*Lusase*) or *Lushama* = a pea! So, too, with the notorious trans-African prefix *Ka*. Here again, a frank outsider can check the data by noting that many great Kings have *Ka* titles, Kazembe, Kasongo, etc. Yet this also is only insolent paradox, for what is the notorious diminutive prefix but this same *Ka*? Here then in an intricate, because structural sense, the curious contradiction of the Bantu is proved. That is to say, not by mere whim or caprice does he contradict himself, but foundationally it is so. There, constellating under a common prefix you have sharp cleavage of idea: the long thing *is* the short thing, even as the hard thing *is* the soft. A black "bull" this, that puts to blush the worst Irishism ever perpetrated.

The fact is, if Egypt is the door of Africa, then is it tolerably clear that in these Luban mysteries and philosophies we see the African's brain whirling round the



Osiris cycle of nature, and seeing unity in the constant dissolution and reorganisation going on all around. The very ears of corn of the Isis statues prove this, for the cannibals sing a lovely "resurrection" chant in honour of the corn: "Ah! it went away into the cold dark loam a tiny seed, but when it came again, oh, it came gorgeously dressed!" Finally, to carp that because they are cannibals all this cannot be, is to forget that Herodotus mentioned this very man-eating as a certain characteristic of the Egyptian orgies. *Voilà tout!*

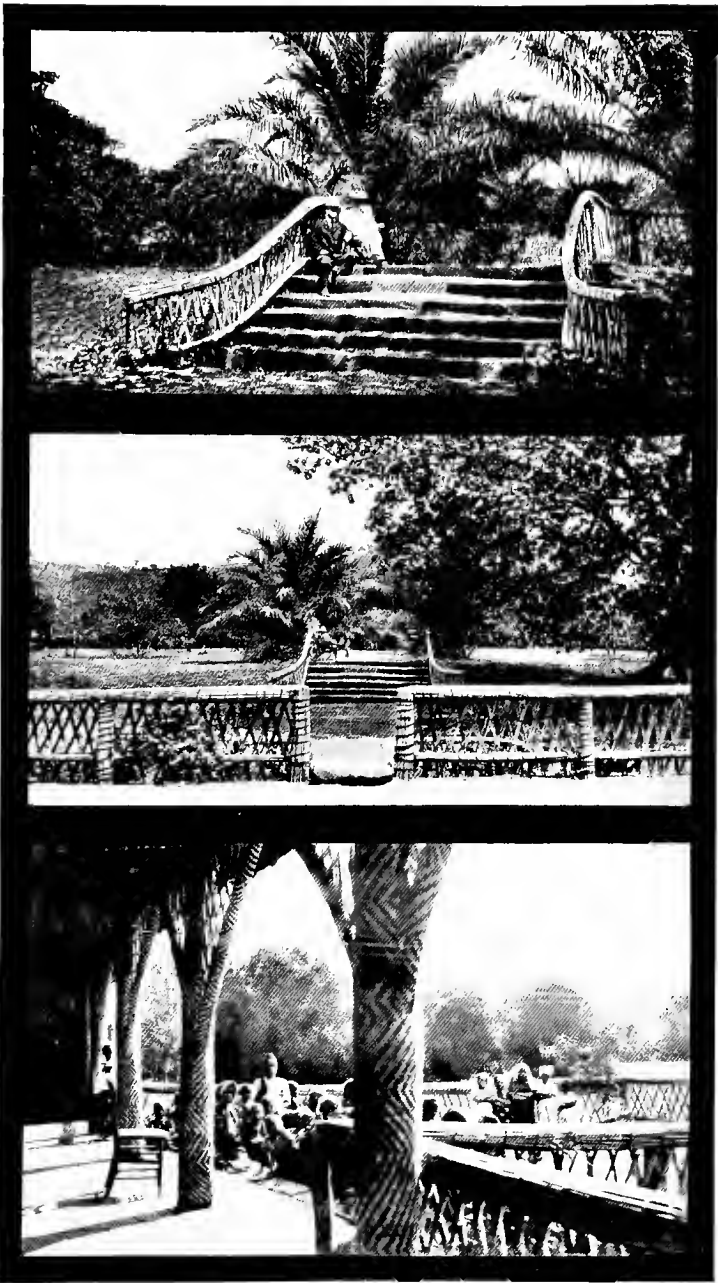
Not entirely without reason, therefore, have all the African grammars gone smash on this rock of paradox. We are all too British, all too full of common sense to dare build our books on clear unclouded contradiction. How can the negative be the affirmative? The only man who ever saw this was Diaz, a fine old African grammarian, nearly as far back as the days of Charles I. He puts it quaintly: "*No-man may signify both 'less than a man' and 'more than man.'*" Here, then, was the long-found key that we moderns despised to our detriment and linguistic disgrace. Paradox, yes, but what is paradox if not Truth standing on its head to attract attention? The African's circular hut is the seed-plot of his philosophy of circularity. These funny folks in a meeting first crowd in a circle, then, in true sarcastic sequence, they think and talk in a circle. The eye is circle No. 1, and looking out on the landscape of life it is a case of like eye like landscape, 360° every time. He rambles round in a circle of speech in the same way as he sees the circularity of seasons in Nature or the day-and-night cycle of sleeping and waking. His carved stools and utensils are all circular and he borrows from Nature the idea that rotundity is the only safe shape of things.

More "mysteries," in fact, literal Greek ones. In its deep penetralia, it seems this tribe is a gross unit of Freemasonry, with initiation of the various dark degrees. The *Londe* is their club-house, a long low-roofed shed the scene of their revels, fees of initiation are considerable, and they facetiously flourish that old scarecrow, death, the penalty of divulgence. This, they declare, is their only

true link with the pitiless past, and it comes straight down from God as their black Bible. No nation, they say, has a monopoly of Him, but as we English dwell away out on the skyline we are consequently nearer God geographically. Nevertheless they all aver that each race has its *Bible*, a curiously cunning hit in the dark this. For, undoubtedly, as you penetrate the maze, the whole machinery of the cult is undeniably Eleusinian in character, and does not Paul call his Gospel a *μυστήριον* precisely as the *Luban* calls it his "black Bible"? Moreover, so cunningly devised is the labyrinth of initiation that of any Judas who betrays their secret they merely say indifferently, "Oh! Mr. Break-the-fellowship-only-breaks-his-own-fellowship."

An excellent shot this at apostates of any sort, whether pagan or Christian. Asked why they do not fulfil the club threat, and kill a Judas of this sort, they retort that he will kill himself! The treadmill of initiation is intentionally long and exasperating, this tedious time being supposed to overawe the acolyte with the supposed sanctity of the freemasonry. Is this the cradle in which was nursed the idea of a long Christian catechumenate? Thus, at long last, he wriggles into the sacred circle of the Eleusinian Election, "*Suvula*" or anointing being the goal. This is called his "new birth," and the new man must speak a new lingo, the *Vambudie* all having a secret vocabulary of brilliantly poetic ideas. Thus even ordinary universals like food, water, fire, can only be named with some dazzling title of honour, the idea being that everything has now become new; water, for instance, is called "the golden gleam of light." There is, besides, the sacred feast at which the bread of fraternity is eaten, and this banquet finally tails off in a rough musical drama the chief feature of which is the really clever *bons mots*. Generally, stinging epigrams these, they hint at local abuses, the nasty nip of the saying being all the nastier because hidden subtly in the kernel of thought. Thus a mere grammarian can parse these perfectly and still be befogged, the latent meaning being lost in parable.

But as I have suggested, and now repeat, the crown of all this initiation is The Anointing. Those dragging days of



HOME-GROWN SUPPLIES: THIS SIMPLE "REED-WORK" AT LUANZA IS A TYPICAL ADAPTATION TO LOCAL CONDITIONS OF LOCAL LAKE MITETE.



delay when The Doctrine was distilled into his soul drop by drop, those were a mere hyphen and connecting link : now it is, in this Anointing, he is loosed from his bonds, the hierophant with pompous pride declaring him a freeman whom "The Truth" makes free. It is in one phrase, however, that all the subtlety of this devil's counterfeit comes out, the whole standing stripped to its essential value ; a phrase this, word for word, Bible Greek. This final formula runs : *Ye have now an anointing (Ku suwula) and needeth not that anyone teach you.* Step by step, and line upon line, it is all over at last, and there he stands glistening in oil, his anointing a pledge that he needeth not anyone to teach him now. Contrast this devil's own treadmill arrangement with God's sudden illumination of the soul in conversion, one vivid, electrifying flash of faith versus this long, laboured, ante-anointing process, the priest's fees, too, enormous.

But many of these chiefs are doubly due their designation : chief of their country and chief of sinners. Be sure of it, 99 Lubans out of every 100 would have let me preach away with insouciance, but the great Nyemba Kunda (whose other name means "The Smoking Firebrand") is the 100th, and must boldly strike back. Under soft disguises and calculated euphemisms, the ordinary run of natives twist the "Nay" of their hearts into the "Yea" of their lying lips ; not so this magnificent rebel, N. K., mentioned by Livingstone.<sup>1</sup> In parting, I laid down the law to him that my pocket Bible was by no means such a foreign book after all, and to prove my point I promised, there and then, to show him his own named down in black-and-white in the Book—yes, he, the "Smoking Firebrand" actually "tattooed" (sic), written down in the Bible. This astounding man was astounded and a nightmare pause ensued as I fumbled (shame !) not too successfully among Isaiah's 66 chapters, like a needle in a haystack, seeking for the well-known "Smoking Firebrand" verse. At last, putting finger on it dramatically, he poked his nose right on the printed page,

<sup>1</sup> This is the same chieftainship barred by Livingstone, and exceptionally mapped by him as "non-visitabile," being too menacing. We have now a Bible School at his place.

the chief's brow wrinkled in the intensity of concentration.

He who could not spell a line took it all on trust, and believed his name-therefore-his-nature down in Isaiah vii. So this was the foreign book he had waved off with disdain ; this the astounding Book that has now become a real Luban Directory, his own name and nature down in it ! Yes, a devil's-own-firebrand sending the country up in smoke with his raiding parties. But his surprises are only beginning, and now it is they get into grips, good Bible and bad man : " Smoking Firebrand ? " said he, " yes, that's my name, and it's tattooed in The Book, but what else does it say about The Smoking Firebrand ? " Quick as thought, I turned to the good news about brands " plucked from the burning," and gave him the straight Gospel, a " smoking firebrand " soon to be a burning one but for the sharp, snatching intervention of Grace, " brands plucked from the burning." Then he wanted more about this precious plucking process : " What next ? " " Oh, that's very simple," said I. " When you have been plucked out of the fire yourself, then you must obey the command : ' Others save, pulling *them* out of the fire.' " So you see how their very penchant for names turns out to be so much shot and shell for the Gospel guns, and his old name may have been the means of giving him a new nature.

One old lady at once reminds us that the Queen of Sheba came out of Central Africa, by a curious word she uses. It is an hiatus-adjective, most wonderful adjective ever qualifying noun and means " the half has not yet been told." It is spelt *k-u-t-i*, and when she joins this adjective to such great noun phrases as " God's wisdom," " God's love," or " God's power," it means, respectively, " the-half-hath-not-been-told " wisdom or " the-half-hath-not-been-told " love, or power. Produce such a word if you can, and if you dare, from cultured English. Yet this is in a language that never had a book, never had a school. And if you listen a little longer this woman, who is only a child of impulse and sunshine, can teach you deep doctrine. Little does she guess how Oxford would thank her for one flash of light she can shed on an old Greek problem. Again it is

an adjective, none other than "everlasting." This particle is *p-e* and means pure perpetuity for ever and a day. Yet the problem is as inscrutable in Greek as Chivemba because this small word for a big idea comes from the verb "to breathe," i.e. *p-e*, everlasting, from *pe-ma*, "to breathe." I say Greek problem as well as African, for as far back as Aristotle and down the intervening years here you have this smile-provoking philological puzzle; why, oh, why is it that the word for "age" or "eternity" should come from the verb "to breathe" (*aion* = eternity from *aemi* = to breathe)? What so brief as the breath we breathe? What so long as interminable eternity? Then why, a thousand times why, should the long and the short come from the root "to breathe"? No answer comes from Oxford or Harvard, "why?" merely echoes "why?" Then comes the impossible; this absurd Africa steps into the ring, non-academic, non-everything Africa. Yes; Africa has easily got the solution, for here is an old woman who opens the long-shut lock. "Puzzle?" says she, "there is no puzzle at all in 'everlasting' being the same as 'to breathe,' for sleeping or waking this is what we are ever and always doing, breathing, always breathing. Sometimes we eat not, sometimes we drink not, but breathe, we always breathe. Naturally and normally we ceaselessly do this. We rest from working, we rest from walking, but inexorably we never rest from breathing. Why, then, if we are so everlastingly at this breathing business should there be any puzzle in the word 'everlasting' being from the verb 'to breathe'?" Thus spake my friend, Mrs. African, with a charming imperiousness that was quite irresistible.





CHAPTER XXVII  
EPILOGUE; DEAD MEN'S SHOES

*First, last, and all the time, these letters fasten firmly on Livingstone's cardinal postulate that, here in the old Gospel, you have the master project of the Mind of God. Ergo, may that master project master us as it did him.*

*“ I have always found that the art of successful travel consisted in taking as few impedimenta as possible, and not forgetting to carry my wits about me.”*

*Livingstone.*

*“ In the evening we encamped beside a little rill, and made our shelters, but had so little to eat that I dreamed the night long of dinners I had eaten, and might have been eating.”*

*Idem.*

*“ We have neither sugar nor salt : it is hard fare and scanty. In the evening I shot a full-grown male nsevula. I felt very thankful to the Giver of all good for this meat.”*

*Idem.*

## CHAPTER XXVII

### EPILOGUE: DEAD MEN'S SHOES

**T**HE matter ends thus. First down from the north via Kazembe's, since he died, I have cut straight south with my reader, following up Livingstone in his "long last mile."<sup>1</sup> This last mile of the wilderness track is both literally and typically a very tragic kind of thing. The vertical rays get you; the tantalising river for camp is too far off, and finally you feel your tongue too big for your mouth. Brethren all, let us ask God, ask Him often, that ours may be as fine a finish as Livingstone's:

*"Carry me over the long last mile,  
Man of Nazareth, Christ for me."*

It is, I suppose, superfluous to add that he who ended his long last mile literally on his knees in prayer did so symbolically—true type, I mean, of the old Sir George Grey school, the ideal colonial expansion of any Christian land. In Central Africa his native name, I have said, is "Ingeresa," which very obviously means "*The Englishman.*" Means, therefore, that this praying pioneer stands as the stereotyped symbol of our Anglo-Saxon race. Means that the man from England who prays not is no "Englishman" (or Livingstone-like man), for to be "Ingeresa-like" the day begins and ends with prayer. That is to say, this *par excellence* "Englishman" is the first one of the coming many. The generic has become the specific, and all the succeeding goods are supposed to be up to sample, Livingstone the initial specimen of the same.

Even when he lay down for the last time with dysentery

<sup>1</sup> Note this vital matter of direction. First came the American Glave from the east; then Weatherly, astutely avoiding Mieremiere, came from the north-west.

and confessed Anno Domini had conquered, we have seen the flag of faith flying to the very end over his little grass hut. Surely never did Blake's phrase win to its own as in the case of the dying Doctor's hut, "under the thatched roof of rusted gold." Owing to the truculencies of modern literature I am painfully aware this sounds far too "preachy"; Gardiner was right, sympathy with reckless adventure divorced from moral considerations is a too human trait. There is no shorter cut to the idolatry of men than by the path of courage, let the motives be good or bad. Was not Lord Brougham so captivated by the devil of *Paradise Lost* that he said he was sorry he did not win?

An amusing instance of Livingstone's modesty is found in his *Journals* where this name "Ingeresa" occurs. He quotes the natives as saying, "*The English* have come," whereas the noun was in the singular and means the arrival of this man D.L., "The Englishman," not the whole national mob under The Jack. Yet Livingstone adroitly dodges the inferred compliment and repeats his old roguery that day they cheered him on the Clyde. Standing on the deck with the Foreign Ambassador, his fellow Clydesiders saw him and cheered loyally. But turning to him, Livingstone passed on the cheers, remarking that Scotland liked foreigners! Not that the Ambassador would stand for stealing another man's burst of cheering. The more so as this modest Livingstone was not the sort who went round the world looking down on everyone but his conceited self.

People have laughed at Livingstone for stepping out in his old age like a P.B. with no guaranteed salary. "Indeed," said he, "I had flattered myself that I had much prospective comfort in store for me in my old days. And pecuniary matters required looking after for the sake of my family; but since you ask me in that way, I cannot refuse you." In fact, he only went because another very famous man had bluntly demanded a sufficient remuneration for his services: *he* could not think, at his time of life, to undertake anything of the sort unless it was prepaid. Then Sir Roderick turned his back on this "sane man,"

for, says Stanley, "all *sane* men will at once recognise the wisdom which guided him in his reply, as it is scarcely fair to expect a man of advanced years to undertake a mission of this nature without ample compensation for exchanging the conveniences of civilised life for the dangers and privations that constantly menace and surround an explorer in Central Africa." Baffled, but not beaten, Sir Roderick Murchison, President of the R.G.S., makes straight for simple, other-worldly Livingstone, who at once capitulates on the no-cash phase of this his last loyal venture! Choking down regrets that his weary bones will have no rest, yet proud to prove that money is a minor matter, he accepted the commission that was to eventuate in his death down here at Iläla.

True, Sir Roderick promised this and that, but Sir Roderick's arm of flesh was soon dead in the dust. Yet God has a host of helpers who are knights in deed if not in name. "Doctor Livingstone doing it all without a salary?" said the incredulous American millionaire Bennett, "a Lord-will-provide expedition? Of course, the Lord *will* provide and *I* am going to help *Him*." General Gordon had given the challenge to Sir Richard Burton in the words: "You know the hopelessness of such a task as African Missions till you find a St. Paul or a St. John. Their representatives nowadays want so much per year and a contract." Livingstone it was who met their challenge and, *s'embarquer sans biscuits*, marched off in faith with little songs singing in his soul. Gordon himself was "mad" enough to do it; Livingstone, likewise, had a dash of this divine madness in him, St. Paul beating both of them with his "we are fools for Christ's sake"! "Honour not honours" was such a favourite motto of Gordon that he wrote it on all his letters. Livingstone liked and lived this motto too. When Earl Russell sent to probe him as to what "honour" he coveted for himself, then it was the-ever-unmindful-of-himself Livingstone threw away a knighthood that had come abegging and said, "If you stop the Portuguese slave trade you will gratify me beyond measure!"

I have mentioned Gordon's moral affinity with Living-

stone because both were singular men out for the singular, not the plural, out for "honour not honours." Simple-hearted Gordon thought that Burton, the man who had coined this honour-not-honours jingle, would despise the money phase of this noble venture. So he offered "the Burtons" (plural, please) the Governor-Generalship of Darfur with £3,000 a year and a couple of secretaries at £300 each. Came the sweet, smirking reply from the lady, that it would "hardly be enough to buy gloves"! "Gloves?" rapped back Gordon. "Do you wear those skin coverings to your paws? No, £1,600 or indeed £16,000 would never compensate a man for a year spent actively in Darfur. But I considered you, from your independence, one of Nature's nobility, who did not serve for money. Excuse the mistake—if such it is. I suppose you know that old creature Grant who for seventeen or eighteen years has *traded on his wonderful African walk?*"

"These be thy gods, O Israel!" In or out of Missions this "trading on his African walk" is the blackest phase of all the "quitters" who run in and out of this poor old continent of ours. Not so did Livingstone. Not so did Gordon. Yet nearly all the runaways got their title, got their rewards, while men, majestic men like Dr. Robert Laws of Livingstonia, "our Sir Robert," the true successor of David Livingstone, goes on unflinchingly with "honour not honours."

1873, 1874, 1875—ah! these early seventies were the great years for a very special sort of explorer in the land. Stretching in a straight line from north to south see what you have got: Gordon up at Khartoum preaching salvation by grace alone; Stanley giving Mtesa ten deliberate days of Christian teaching; then, here in the south, you have Livingstone in full flood all the time. Not a parson in the lot; no professional preaching this, *therefore* all the more genuine and heart-melting. Does not a message from the heart generally contrive to reach the heart? These men of backbone were not such long-eared donkeys as to imagine that "virtue" has a meek, mild, and motherly sort of meaning. Where does that godlike word "virtue" come from if not from this manly word, *vir*, a man,



THE THREE STAGES OF MAKING LIVINGSTONE'S LAST HUT  
IN THE RAIN, THE LAST BEING THE ACTUAL STRUCTURE  
AS RECONSTRUCTED BY THE VERY MEN WHO MADE THE  
ORIGINAL ONE.





yea, I say, and more than a man? Therefore the supremely virtuous *man*, and there is no hint that virtue is a meek, milk-and-water sort of thing.

When Josh Billings with a merry twinkle said that “*next tew being virtewous, I would like tew be tuff,*” he won the laugh but lost the logic of the thing. Missed, I mean, the point that the toughest thing on the planet is virtue. Take it logically or philologically, “virtue” is only spelling “virility” in six letters instead of eight: and what is true and trusty toughness if not *that* or nothing? Too long the blessed backbone of this word, virtue, has been ignored by the manhood of the land. But as surely as God, The All-Virtuous, is also the All-Strong, so sure is it that man made in His image should have a nature akin to his name, should be *vir*, the virile man with *virtue*, the virile nature. This explains and almost extenuates the molten-lava language of many a young man who has revolted against this emasculation of manhood. The impeccable *patois de Canan* of the pietist is just as pernicious as the baser brag of the Sons of Belial.

Listen to Gordon Pasha:

“It is precisely because we are despicable and worthless that we are accepted. Till we throw over that idea that we are better than others, we can never have that assurance.”

“We must give up keeping credit lists with God, which are not true ones; all are debtor lists. Do you know that verse, Eph. ii. 10, which says that ye are ordained to bring forth good works? If certain good works are ordained to be brought forth by you, why should you glory in them?”

“When one knows the little one does of oneself, and anyone praise you, I, at any rate, have a rising in the gorge, which is a suppressed, You lie.”

Then listen to Stanley, warm-hearted convert of Livingstone:

“The drums sounded. Mtesa had seated himself on

the throne, and we hastened to take our seats. Since the 5th of April, I had enjoyed ten interviews with Mtesa, and during all I had taken occasion to introduce topics which would lead up to the subject of Christianity. *Nothing occurred in my presence but I contrived to turn it towards effecting that which had become an object to me, viz. his conversion.*"

"There was no attempt made to confuse him with the details of any particular doctrine. I simply drew for him the image of the Son of God humbling Himself for the good of all mankind, white and black, and told him how, while He was in man's disguise, He was seized and crucified by wicked people who scorned His divinity, and yet out of His great love for them, while yet suffering on the Cross, He asked His great Father to forgive them."

Another case: the same sort of helpful affinity between a senior and his junior, Gordon and the splendid Colonel Linant de Bellefondes, one of the best Belgians who ever came into Central Africa. We who are not worthy to stand in these "dead men's shoes," let us listen to the tale (utterly inexcusable this in art or probability!), the true dead-men's-shoes-tale, of a *dead* man's boot. It is an Anglo-Belgian chronicle, and told in ten interlocutors the story constellates round Stanley's famous letter to *The Daily Telegraph*, a call to sleeping England to advance and evangelise Uganda.

1. But who will take this flaming letter home; who if not a timely Belgian colonel going north to Gordon Pasha *via* the Nile?

2. Then what if this good fellow, Linant de Bellefondes, has to fight his way through, sustaining for fourteen hours the attack of several thousand Wanyoro at one point?

3. Then what if, at last, the wild Baris kill this brave Belgian with thirty-six of his Soudanese soldiers, Colonel and all, letter and all? Killed by two spear stabs on the banks of a brawling stream by the aborigines?

4. Further, what if the dead Colonel is wearing long Wellington boots and secreted in one of these long knee-

boots is the sacred letter, so sacred that there it lies untouched, untampered with ?

5. This because these Baris not being cannibals—why touch the body ?

6. Then what if the avenging column comes along ?

7. And punishes the murderers ?

8. Then rescues the body ?

9. Rescues, likewise, that Wellington boot on the dead man's leg ?

10. And, finally, rescues also (hurrah !) the burning call in the Stanley letter ?

But who is this brave Belgian, and why is he in these latitudes ? That boot belonged to a man sent on a special mission by Gordon Pasha to spy out the land in Uganda with possible annexation by the Egyptian Government, Moslem Government. Arrived at Uganda he found he was too late for Islam, too late because of the prior arrival of the Christian Stanley. Is he, therefore, nonplussed ? Read Stanley's record of their fraternising, and you soon see how the matter was no mere formal fiction, Christ was king that day. Certainly, the claims of Christ were never compromised for the paltry annexation propaganda of any monarch of Islam. Thus it is you reach this double picture of earthly failure, Heavenly success. The devil is defeated once again : all hell hurried out to the death of this brave letter-carrier, for graven in that letter were lines of heart-throb, a call for the Church to advance with the Gospel of Life. They killed him, yet this seeming success is hell's own failure, actual and awful failure. The God who rescued Paul's Epistles for posterity, can He not do the same with Stanley's letter ? Yes, the good God is on guard by the Nile. Same God, same Nile, where angel bands watched over Moses in his bulrush ark.

I am not labouring the point, not the least bit. This post-mortem letter gathered all its momentum from Gordon Pasha's telling the tragic tale of its chequered history *en route*. When the Christian portion of England heard of the blood-stained missive it thrilled to the call for help. As a mere letter sent by normal post arriving in normal manner it might have fallen flat, only to be pigeonholed

by the nation. The blood-marks did the deed : blood is thicker than—ink. Gordon said that but for the blood of Christ, nor Paul nor ink had ever combined to record His deathless message. And so He maketh the wrath of men to praise Him, He who rules by overruling. The returning Belgian failed on the up-journey to Uganda, but the home trip down-stream was crowned with blessing for untold thousands. The blazing red shirt he wore, no doubt, made him a target for the Bari lances, but God was above it all, a God whose many and minute means can never be thwarted. Why did not the Baris finish their deed of blood in the old tribal manner, stripping the body to the skin for the last inch of loot ? Then the wild animals ? I have seen dead bodies torn to a hundred shreds by ignoble hyenas and jackals ; even a lion does not disdain old bones, old boots, old clothes ! Yet here God warned them off His choice bit of correspondence. White ants could easily have eaten up that select epistle in an hour or two but for Heaven's ban and interdict warning off all such enemies.

Told at length, the results of this would fill many chapters, but I have no space to elaborate them all. Nevertheless to prove that here we have no mere fantastic playing with words let us come to close quarters with our brave Belgian Colonel. It is delightful to find from Stanley's side of the story how this letter was as much hidden away in Linant's heart as in his long boot. In his ninth chapter Stanley tells with what pleasure he found the Belgian arrival endorsing all he said to Mtesa :

“ The religious conversations which I had begun with Mtesa were maintained in the presence of M. Linant de Bellefondes, who, fortunately for the cause I had in view, was a Protestant. For when questioned by Mtesa about the facts which I had uttered, and which had been faithfully transcribed, M. Linant, to Mtesa's astonishment, employed nearly the same words, and delivered the same responses. The remarkable fact that two white men, who had never met before, one having arrived from the south-east, the other having emerged from the north, should nevertheless both know the same things, and respond in the same words,

charmed the popular mind without the burzah as a wonder, and was *treasured in Mtesa's memory as being miraculous.*"

The Belgian Colonel's side of the story is even more zealous than this, incorporated in an official report too. In the original manuscript, which was in the possession of General C. P. Stone, Chief of the Staff in his Highness the Khedive's service. M. Linant puts some Gordonese gush in the dry old report as he alludes to these hours devoted to religious instruction. A voice from another world it seemed to those Cairo officials down-stream! What a charming picture of unity and its outcome! Is there nothing prophetic in it all, nothing presaging the fact that it was in these very latitudes the first Kikuyu Conference took place? Here are two *laymen* setting the whole union movement in motion, calling on Missionaries to leave England, a dark place of divided ways and divided counsels, and push on to second what they had begun. Linant had caught the fire from his chief, Gordon Pasha: Stanley has let all the world know what the impact of Livingstone's character did to his soul; and here you have these two men heart to heart, planning this great clarion call for Missionaries to advance in God's name, for God's sake.

Spare me your indulgent shrug of the shoulder at all this "dead men's shoes" fantasia. There is more than that if you press me to tell it. I personally have a very intimate link with many such shoes. "Dead letter office?" nay, the living God rescued that living letter unto the ultimate founding of a living testimony in Uganda—a long knee-boot God's pillar box in the desert!

"Dead men's shoes" is an old phrase with all conceivable implications: I have often stood in them both metaphorically and actually when cut off from supplies. But one pair I shall never forget, and the Bihean I bartered them from told me their history in seven points:

1. A Portuguese Baron, poisoner in Lisboa, is exiled to Bihe.
2. This imprisonment of his is a free-and-easy kind of thing, not close confinement but limited to a locality.
3. Then roaming enters the Baron's blood, and off he

runs across the Kwanza, over among the "Ovingangela" or barbarians, as they call them.

4. Then comes the obvious end, wild beasts finish the wild man except (oh! my masters!) the boots. The very boots, reserved in the chancery of Heaven for a needy Missionary far further in the heart of Africa.

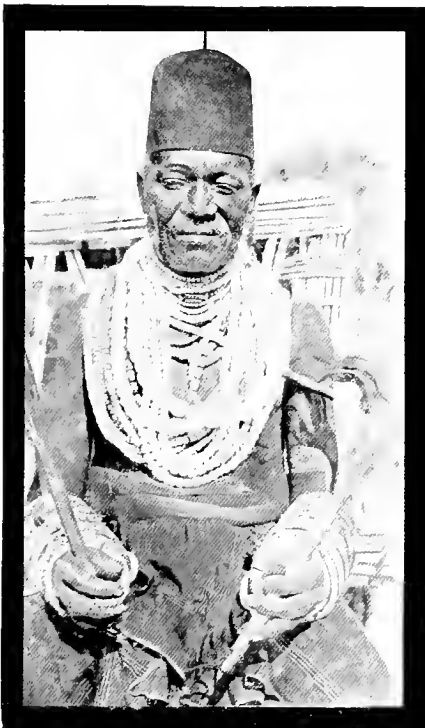
5. For wild beasts roam, but *so do natives*, and the latter found the leavings of the former.

6. Then now they are on the move getting 200 miles nearer me, for they hawk them in a slaver's camp who is off inland with his horde of misanthropes, and get calico in exchange.

7. Finally, here comes the heavenly parcels post for me, and (long later!) the boots disdained by these bare-footed blacks come as solace to my ten weary toes.

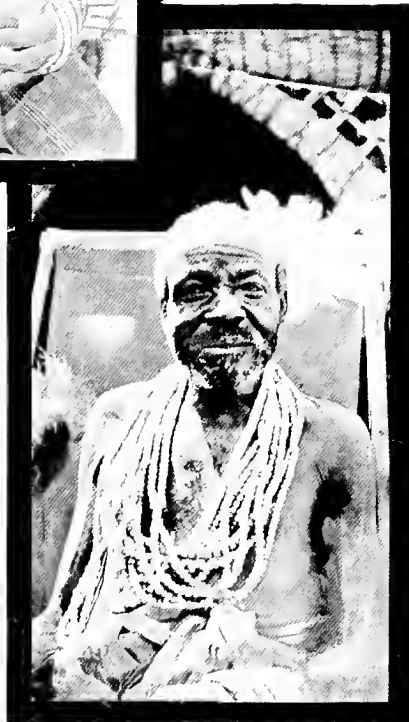
Then it was I got the whole weird tale of the wanderings of these two boots. Yes, and squirmed sentimentally for a day or two. But at last I was forced, by pinch of circumstances and pinched toes, to thank God for boots of any kind from any direction. So it was I stood up and faced my African tramp in a dead man's shoes. Murderer and poisoner though he was, we both measured for No. 8's. Had not Heaven measured us both? The same Heaven that knew my need, and met it neatly and nicely with a No. 8 boot for a No. 8 foot.

And now to conclude, for I have no more space and my reader no more patience. Be it dead men's shoes or a man's own pair received by last parcels post, these shoes most surely symbolise the coming of the white man to a land that never wore such foot-gear. We have seen that when Dr. Livingstone first came in here they spotted his boots and seemed to see in this expedient of toe-constricting much more restricting ahead. So they called him Mr. He-hath-no-toes (*Atadinefikondo*). Ten good toes means ten good digit-grips on crossing a one-pole bridge thrown over a stream. Thus there is restriction in this constriction of boot-leather, they think the whites came along to make many enactments that are exactions. His ten wives, ten houses, ten jars of beer, are all lost as well as his "lost" ten toes in boots! That is to say, this



" GOD MAKES A MAN'S  
FACE, BUT A MAN  
MAKES HIS OWN COUN-  
TENANCE."

This is a contrast between  
a Christian and a heathen  
king: which is which?  
Need one ask?







parable-mad negro thinks that the gains of civilisation are offset by their pains and every *pro* we innovate has its corresponding *con*. For do not the retarding boots that save his shins also imprison his ten toes? In other and more withering words, the black man thinks that we have gobbled up his land without either fair right or fair fight. We wipe out things in such a sweeping manner that his phrasing of it is, "You whites are so greedy that having swallowed up the barn-yard fowl you then follow up the fowl with its own feathers, eating both fowl and feathers!"

When Livingstone said that we are out here in Africa "to change not so much the face of Africa as the face of the African," what did he mean? This, that be it male or female, "God makes a man's face, but a man makes his own countenance." And it is this tell-tale latter that gives away the human being. In Africa the face can be as ugly as a conspiracy of dead ancestors could combine to bequeath it, and yet it lies with the man or woman to make or mar that elusive coat-of-arms of the soul called the countenance.

*Her face was wan and pinched and thin,  
But splendour struck it from within.*

Cain got his brand, but it was not the brand-new thing a humble fellow gets when God puts a shine in his face. The facial handicap is not a mere matter of a squint eye or marks reminiscent of small-pox, for in these lands they used to lop hands and crop ears. But the saved soul can be so soundly converted that be the body as bad-looking as it happens to be, out streams that "shine of the soul" both bringing and giving sunshine. Few would pay him a higher compliment than that the man is inherently ugly. Yet here is the contradictory countenance lodging a counterclaim for the fellow, telling how Heaven has begun a work that will have no end until the ugly old body is changed into St. Paul's "without-spot-or-wrinkle-or-any-such-thing one. At any rate this saved soul-mark of the shining countenance is spiritual, not physical, for is it not of God the Spirit we read, "the light of His countenance"? Therefore, the more spiritual we are the more emphatic

our emphasis on this Godlike thing called the countenance. It defeats and defies facial mutilations and malformations.

I press this point for the average native is a clever rogue with his changing countenance. Knowing its tell-tale tendency, his rule is to lead-off with arranging it for indifference to or, if possible, ignorance of the prevailing topic. How different in 2 Cor. i. 11, where Paul picks out the very faces of the saints as being the real praisers of God, not their big mouths: "that by the means of many faces [*Greek*] thanks may be given by many on our behalf." And that this is not twaddle let me quote the very latest from the highest judicial authority in the land: it is the Lord Chief Justice of England who speaks in September 1920:

"As Lord Chief Justice of England and the head of the judicial administration of the criminal law of England, I have good reason to speak well of the Salvation Army. As I speak to you now I can conjure up the face of a man who stood in the dock before me. It was transfigured by faith. He had been a criminal all his life, and, arrested for a grave crime, he was tried, convicted and sentenced to a long term of imprisonment. That man stood in the dock before me when I presided in the Court of Criminal Appeal. In the interval he had been reached by the Salvation Army. The man's face was no longer that of a criminal. It was the face of one who had found his God, and by reason of that reformation my brother judges and I set aside the sentence of long years, believing in our hearts that the man would go forth and help other men."

At the risk of repeating myself here comes a culminating instance dovetailing into our surroundings here. I mean in this case of "as others see us" you get not a carnal fake, but a thrilling certainty. Two of our folks are returning after a month's voyage round the Lake and the Government Administrator is sitting in our verandah with his wife. Cold outsiders and critical as cold, two make-believe "untouchables." Then the burst of welcoming praise begins down the long street and—yes, this does it. Growing in volume as they draw nearer with this choral welcome; heart-warming hymns to thrice welcome folks.

They are now coming up the Palm Avenue. Then it is the dramatic thing happens : what do you think ? The cold-as-ice French Madam *s'il vous plaît* bursts into tears and weeps with a will. So affected is she at the sweet-faced singers praising His Name. The surprise was ours more than hers ; who knows what goes on under the skin of stand-offish folks ? “ Oh,” she cried, “ it is the happy faces I am weeping about.”

“ *For the Colonel's lady and Judith O'Grady  
Are sisters under their skin.*”



L'ENVOI

TO

THE GLORIOUS MEMORY

OF

THAT LONG LINE OF *AFRICANI*

SIMON OF CYRENE, THE FIRST AFRICAN BAPTIZED FOR  
AFRICA ; APOLLO OF ALEXANDRIA, THE FIRST AFRICAN  
MIGHTY IN THE SCRIPTURES ; KATHARINA, FELICITAS AND  
PERPETUA, THE FIRST WOMEN WHO DIED FOR CHRIST IN  
AFRICA ; FRUMENTIUS, THE FIRST TRANSLATOR OF GOD'S  
WORD INTO A LANGUAGE OF AFRICA ;

AND

THAT GREAT ARMY OF MARTYRS, EVANGELISTS, EXPLORERS  
AND OTHERS

WHO

FOUGHT FOR THEIR DREAM

THOUGH

IT FILLED NOT THEIR POCKETS.

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