SNAP SHOTS *from* SUNNY AFRICA

HELEN · E · SPRINGER

To Mrs. Liella Hutchins,
A dearly esteemed friend for years.
As from Helen Emily Shrimpton
September
1950.

MRS. JOHN M. SPRINGER

SNAP SHOTS
FROM
SUNNY AFRICA

Helen Emily Springer

By
MRS. JOHN M. SPRINGER

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To
My Mother
who
Gave her only child
to
Africa

INTRODUCTION

GENERAL R. S. S. BADEN-POWELL, of the English army, for years a distinguished soldier and traveller in South Africa, in his Foreword to "Some African Highways," a recent interesting book by Caroline Kirkland, says: —

"How I should like to be a woman! It must be nice to lie back in your cushions and watch the men doing things which they think very clever, knowing all the time that you can do them much better yourself if you only care to try.

"For instance: I am convinced that if women were to take up the art of scouting they would easily beat men at the game.

"They have a greater natural gift of observation and a most uncannily clever knack of 'putting this and that together' and then deducing meaning from the smallest signs.

"Hence it comes that when women travel into the lesser-known countries of the world, as they frequently do nowadays, they bring this power of observation into play with remarkable results. And of all women in the world I would place our American cousins at the top of the list for this particular quality.

"Unfortunately it is only too seldom that they record their impressions, but when they do their

pages ripple with little touches both quaint and human which are the direct result of quick observation and which go to paint the character of the countries and people far more vividly than the more erudite writings of the mere man who plods along basing his remarks very largely on what he has already read or been told of the country now spread out before them."

These short stories by Mrs. Springer are a good illustration of General Baden-Powell's estimate of American women as intelligent travellers, able to put their observations into up-to-date, vigorous English.

The pictures are from actual life during several years of residence and travel in Africa, and have been written with the purpose of aiding those especially interested in the redemption of that continent to understand better the conditions of the people and the missionary labours among them.

Any of these "Snapshots" would be excellent reading in meetings of the Woman's Foreign Missionary Society, of Epworth Leagues, or of Sunday-schools, where Africa is the theme. They could not fail to arrest the attention and fix the thought of those who hear them upon the pagan heathenism which now enthralls more than one hundred million of the people of that great continent.

JOSEPH C. HARTZELL.

PREFACE

IT was about a year ago that we sat at lunch one day with Bishop Hartzell in one of the crowded restaurants of New York when the Bishop suddenly remarked, "Mrs. Springer, I think it would be an excellent thing for you to collect and work over into book form the many stories and articles which have been appearing from your pen during the past five years."

It was not a new thought. On leaving Africa, Mr. Springer has insisted on bringing all my old MSS. along with us to America for this very purpose. But so far I had not felt that I could work them up into readable matter. Nor did the Bishop's suggestion convince me.

But as I travelled about speaking almost constantly, I saw that there was a need of some book of short missionary stories which could be used in meetings of the Woman's Foreign Missionary Society, Epworth Leagues, Christian Endeavours, Sunday-schools and all other missionary meetings for which it is often so difficult to arrange a live and interesting program.

Last fall I seemed to be providentially laid aside from platform work for three months and it also seemed as if that were God's time for me to take up this work of writing.

The title is meant to be a true indication of the character of the book. It is not a history of our work in Rhodesia, but a collation of such a variety of incidents of that work that I trust the whole book will give the reader an insight to the real life and

work of a missionary just as the amateur snap-shot photo album reveals more of the every-day lives of its subjects than the most finished productions of the studio.

The chapters are purposely short and each one is a complete story in itself, and yet there is a line of continuity throughout the whole book. I have given the real names of our native helpers in order that the reader may become acquainted with them as they appear and reappear in the various chapters. These chapters are not arranged in chronological order but are grouped in reference to subjects so that when desired, two or three persons may read a chapter each at a single meeting.

The articles which had been already printed were all rewritten, the incidents being brought down to date, while many entirely new chapters were added on subjects about which I was most frequently questioned.

As Mr. Springer has so fully described our trip across the continent in his book, "The Heart of Central Africa," which was published this spring by Jennings and Graham, I have only touched upon it, enlarging upon some incidents which he was compelled to treat rather briefly and from his viewpoint.

So this little volume goes forth with the writer's prayer that it may not only be helpful to individuals, but that also it may be of especial service in many a missionary meeting where it may make real to the hearers the joys, the successes, the sorrows and the failures and discouragements, but withal the actual conditions of our every-day missionary work.

HELEN E. SPRINGER.

Chicago, Ill.

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I

STRIKING THE TRAIL

PERHAPS it was not such an unpardonable crime after all which my friend committed that blustering May day when he took the snap shot that so nearly ruptured our social relations. Looking back on it with a long perspective and considering the great satisfaction with which on a later day I more than rewarded him for his untiring efforts to secure photographical "studies," I am convinced that his was a venial sin.

In fact I'm almost sorry that no copy of the disputed, hotly disputed, print is in existence. It must have been a grotesque figure, clad in a short skirt, stout, well-worn boots, heavy gloves and a large sixpenny Madeira hat securely tied down over the ears on account of the high winds, which went out of Old Umtali that day to enjoy the new experience of living in a native kraal alone.

Nor were the other three members of the little caravan with her less appealing to the risibles. There was Shakeni, young and beautiful, gracefully balancing a candle box on her head, never touching it with her hands except when the unhappy occupant,

who for the most part crouched in one corner in abject terror, suddenly gave a plunge to the other side emitting at the same time one of his unearthly feline yowls.

There were also two half-grown youths, one of whom carried blankets and clothing, and the other a box in which were a few cooking utensils and some raw material to be used in them. I was indebted to my friend Heinkel for these men,—if such you could call them. Two more dilapidated specimens would have been hard to find. He admitted that they had not been selected by him on account of personal beauty nor muscular strength, but for the reason so many other things are done out there,—they were all he had.

That first year (and ever after for that matter) but particularly in that first year, I had good reason to be thankful that I was a good walker. What with red water killing the oxen, horse sickness the horses and mules, and pyemia wiping out whole spans of donkeys in the country, it was quite the style for all but the very wealthy to walk for the good of their health and the regulation of their livers.

So on this morning, I started out to make my seven mile walk with gratitude that it was not ten. There's nothing truly so bad in this world that it might not be worse. But the last three miles that day, as the sun rose to the zenith, were hot and toilsome ones, though I would not have acknowledged to my fellow missionary who met me at Shikanga's kraal how weary I was, no not for anything.

It was noon and he was expecting me, as he had been engaged for a week in getting a hut built for me

there. So dinner was soon served. I was hungry as well as weary. There was no place for us to eat except out in the open, as the women were just finishing the floor of the hut I was to occupy and he was using a tiny tent. So we sat down on a big rock in the centre of the village and were soon served with bully beef and hot tea.

Bully, or, as it is commercially known, corned beef, I loathed. And as we were soon surrounded by some twenty nearly naked youngsters in indescribable states of filthiness, I began to realize that after all, I did not care for anything to eat, but was merely thirsty. And the tea! The water with which to make it came from a spring where all the natives got their water; and was an opaque, grayish white, so that unless it were labelled, it was hard to tell whether the decoction was tea or coffee.

Standing on decorum, I said nothing of the turmoils going on in the internal regions. Had I done so, I might have been favoured with the advice which in recent years has come to be quite a family motto: "Cheer up, the worst is to come." But we were both on our good behaviour, and neither liked to admit to the other how horribly repulsive everything was. We feared our missionary devotion might be called in question. Bless you! Devotion had nothing to do with it. We were only natural human beings, neither deprived of sight, nor taste, nor smell. We needed stronger stomachs and we got them,—in time.

But the worst *was* to come. Shikanga greeted me most graciously and welcomed me to her kraal most hospitably. And as a token of that hospitality, when she cooked her evening meal, she sent me over a por-

tion. It was a large, brown ball with some questionable looking greens accompanying it.

The new missionary, though he has nothing of this world's goods, is certain to be rich in theories. I was wealthy along that line and that alone. With sugar and flour at twenty-four cents a pound, butter seventy-five cents, cabbages $1.25, eggs at $5 a dozen, I was convinced that unless I could have a more successful experiment on green sawdust than the Irishman's horse, I must get used to "native diet."

It sounded well—at home. But here I was in touch with it. Now, as I had not overloaded my stomach at noon, I was ready for something substantial by night. There could not have been a more opportune time to start in on the native diet. There was the added advantage that it was dark, and the glimmering light of the one flickering candle did not reveal the unpleasant features of the midday. Everything was in the favour of the thick mush known to the natives as *sadsa*.

It would not yield itself to the friendly offices of a knife. The *sadsa*, which for centuries had known only the manipulations of human fingers, gripped and clung to and followed the knife until it won out, and the knife was vanquished. A spoon did a little better. I managed to get off a small portion of mush on the spoon and then tried to chew it only to learn to my sorrow that it was not meant to be chewed. But having started, I had to exceed the Gladstonian count before I had extricated my teeth and cleared my mouth.

However, I tried again and again, on the theory that practice makes perfect; and at last managed

to get enough down to satisfy the cravings of my stomach. My appetite had been satisfied on the first mouthful. The next morning (having been raised on fried corn-meal mush up in Maine) I felt sure that I could overcome my doughty adversary. I had it fried. When it was served, it looked less appetizing than before and proved stickier than ever. It would not go down.

When I sent the dilapidated carriers back to my friend, I wrote, "And if you can manage it, I shall be glad to have a loaf of bread when the carriers come again." And he faithfully supplied me with bread the likes of which it seemed I'd never seen before nor ever since, during all those two months in the kraals, and without it, I could not have stayed and kept in health.

Mr. Springer, who had built the hut, went away and I was for the first time in my life left alone in a heathen kraal. I confess now, what I would not have admitted then for worlds, that I did feel afraid. And had I known of the dance that was on for that night, I should have been still more afraid. Ignorance in that case was bliss. But He that watched over Israel neither slumbered nor slept; and so no harm came to me.

II

ATTENDING A NATIVE DANCE

I'M a good Methodist—don't believe in dancing. It's a heathenish practice brought down from time immemorial and always has been connected with bad habits and worse results.

It was noon on Saturday when Basi came in and said, "There's to be a dance here to-night and mother would like you to go."

I gave her a non-committal answer and decided I would find some excuse for staying away when the evening came.

However, in that case I reckoned without my hostess. I learned very soon my mistake. Whoso goes to live in the kraals to achieve good results must needs take the chief into account and that right often.

At six-thirty, Basi, Shikanga's daughter came in again and said, "Shikanga says for you to come to the dance now."

There was no escape for me.

Basi led the way to a hut only a few yards from my own, inside which could be heard the sounds of revelry. With difficulty, I stooped under the low eaves and entered through the tiny hole in the wall of the hut which can only by courtesy be called a door.

Owing to the fact that the walls of native huts are plastered with mud within and without, the eaves of the roofs extend to within a short distance of the ground all the way round.

Now to enter the door, it was necessary to stoop under this low roof, the stakes of which frequently caught in my dress just between the shoulders, bringing me up with a jerk. The shock was equally trying to my nerves and disposition so that I afterwards remarked to Mr. Springer that I was certain those roofs had so effectually scraped off my wings that they surely never would grow again.

What a sight! On the one side sat the women apart from the men packed in as thick as sardines. On the other side was the big drum and a goodly number of the men. At the rear was Shikanga who was expecting me.

As I entered, she arose gracefully and beckoned me to her side, the seat of honour, on a mat exclusively for her Majesty's use. It is hard to understand how any space could have been reserved in that small hut in which was gathered not only the people of that one kraal but from all the surrounding kraals.

The village blacksmith was exercising his brawny muscles on the drum and the effect was deafening. Just in front of the door was another small space into which a young buck by the name of Shilling suddenly jumped. He had worked at the mission; and being a very graceful dancer, was anxious to show off his skill before me.

I was too new in the language to understand much of his song which he acted out as he went along. Now his motions were rhythmical, then they took a crescendo and the fortissimo was marked by leaps into the air of so vigorous a character as to remind me of David dancing before the ark. I do not doubt but what David's dance was on the same order as

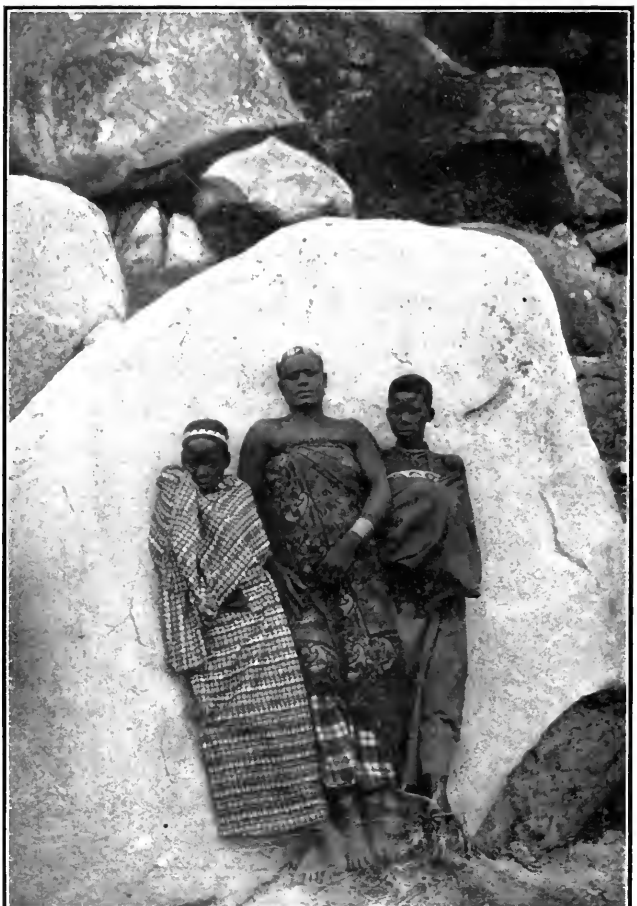
Shilling's. For so long as I remained in the hut, all the singing and dancing were perfectly proper, as far as I could judge.

When Shilling finished with a display of fine acrobatic feats, Shikanga took the floor. I judged that Shilling had recited some thrilling history of the people. Shikanga seemed to be giving a romance or a bit of folk-lore and her acting and dancing were indifferent.

Two or three other men danced with less skill than Shilling. All this time the drum kept a deafening accompaniment while one and another of the women punctuated it with a peculiar shriek made by tremoloing with the hand over the mouth. The whole effect was ear-splitting and after an hour of it, I began to wonder if I would be permitted to escape.

Just then came a lull for refreshments. Several huge jars of native brewed beer stood near Shikanga. (Trust her to be near the beer every time in those days.) As a gourdful of this was being passed around, I asked to leave as the heat had given me a headache, —I did not mention the smell and the sound,—and Shikanga gracefully bowed me out. She had done the duties of a hostess and was evidently decidedly glad to see me go. Basi, Gumba, Shikanga's niece, and Shakeni went with me.

What a night that was! Once I was gone, the restraint was off, the beer flowed freely and every man, woman and child in that kraal except the three girls with me became beastly drunk. It seemed like a night in the infernal regions. Twice Shikanga came to my door and demanded it to be opened. She had then reached the fighting stage and she and an-



THE THREE

Gumba, Shakeni and Basi

other woman had a fight in the doorway. The sounds round about the hut were fairly sickening. Most of the men and women were yelling like demons. It was simply horrible.

With the first gray dawn of the Sabbath, the revellers came again and as the girls opened the door, they swarmed in, drunk but most of them silly, good-humoredly drunk. I managed to get into my bath robe but it was nearly ten before the hut was cleared so that I could dress.

Yet four years later, Shikanga asked us to send her a teacher. She helped build a church, was converted and to-day over forty of her people with herself constitute a native church in her kraal.

But even our most optimistic faith would have staggered at such a hope then. We had to learn thereby the truth that God's hand is not shortened but that He can certainly save to the uttermost.

III

PHYSICIAN TO THE KING

SHIKANGA'S slight form darkened the doorway. She entered, sat down on a soap box which served in place of a chair and took a pinch of snuff. She was not used to soap boxes nor chairs either, and the elevation somewhat embarrassed her. After a vigorous blowing of the nose as an after-effect of the snuff, she wiped her hand on her loin cloth, cleared her throat and began.

As I come to know the oriental better, I marvel more and more at the wonderful simplicity and brevity of the Bible. Circumlocution thrives in eastern soil. On the present occasion Shikanga proceeded to set forth at length a long preamble of which I could only understand a little now and then. But when she got through the preliminaries, she announced to me that her father the king was very ill and she wanted me the Mufundisi (teacher) and Nganga (doctor) to go up and give him medicine.

There were several reasons why I did not want to yield to her request; one being that I felt reasonably safe living alone in her kraal for I was within call of her own hut. I knew the king's kraal to be a wicked place and one in which a white woman might not be safe unless other white people were near. Even Jonas declared that he would not live there.

There were other reasons, none of which I could

explain to her highness so I merely tried to put her off. But no, her father was sick unto death and I could cure him. I told her I would send him some medicine and by and by would go up. She seemed satisfied and left, and I was happy.

Not so Shakeni : she knew Shikanga. So she began to lament about the cold up at Mtasa's kraal. Then she went out and brought in three big logs and built a roaring fire, all the time bemoaning how little wood and how much cold there was at Mtasa's.

There was no outlet for the smoke except at the door and it was soon dense enough to affect the hardest slab of sugar-cured bacon let alone my eyes, and hot enough to roast out a salamander. After supper I tried to write but the wind, which came in under the eaves, blew out the candle so I went to bed on the home-made couch of sticks and poles.

That being alongside of the fire, I was worse off than ever. So when there was a fresh burst of lamentation, I exclaimed, "But roasting me to death down here will not keep you from dying with the cold up there, so pull some of that wood off the fire." Whereat the humorous side of the situation struck Shakeni and she broke into an immoderate fit of laughter.

The wind blew colder and colder and the fire died down ; the rats raced up and down the walls, Bobby chasing after them ; the bed was hard and a shower of borer dust fell continually from the roof, but I slept well in spite of all.

Shakeni arose at daylight and no sooner had she opened the door to go out for kindlings, than the natives began to pour in, some with eggs, peanuts, or

meal to sell and some for medicine. As soon as I could dispose of the lot, the door was securely locked until I had had a chance to dress.

By eight o'clock I had treated fifteen patients of whom many were babies suffering horribly with eczema, their hands and feet being a mass of sores so that they had to be bandaged.

Just as I had sat down to breakfast Shikanga came in again and took her seat on the soap box with great dignity, helped herself to the preliminary pinch of snuff, called Shakeni to come near so that I could surely understand what she was saying and then proceeded in the most matter-of-fact way to tell me that she had engaged two carriers for my loads, and as soon as they had eaten, we would start for Mtasa's kraal, "Ku Guta," she said, which means the capital.

By nine we were on the trail tramping towards the north. The paths were very slippery from the dried grass on them, and it was a very tired white woman who climbed the steep mountain late that afternoon after doing fourteen miles to its foot.

After Shikanga had been to see her father, she told me that I had better not see him that night as her father had had "a *little* too much beer." For which I was glad,—not that he was drunk, but that I did not have to see him *that day*.

So Shakeni and I slept in a little tent which I had made of unbleached muslin for a child's play tent. Early in the evening a heavy mist settled over the mountain and dripped through our thin shelter, trickling down in tiny streams on the inside. The girl's fears of cold were fully realized on that and the succeeding nine weeks of our stay there.

However she snored soundly all night at my side while I dozed fitfully on account of the cold and the wind which howled through the ravine, whistled through the tree tops and among the giant boulders threatening every moment to carry away what little shelter we did have.

About nine the next morning, Shikanga came again and with her the king's chief counsellor, Nsebe, to escort me into the royal presence. Nsebe was the right man in the right place. He possessed all the affability, obsequiousness, blandishments, the easy grace and pleasing manners of a French courtier of the middle ages; and like them, a love of intrigue which was in no wise hampered by a tender conscience.

Through the raw, white fog which enveloped the mountain, and the incredible filth under our feet, we threaded our way in and out among the huge boulders and the little haystack-like huts, under low, arched ways, guarded by sentinels, over slippery rocks, and winding our way upward until we came to a very small hut under the shelter of a huge shelving boulder on the top of which another immense boulder just hung, as it were, by its eyebrows.

Here Nsebe stopped, began to clap his hands softly and chant something in a dull monotone. After a while, there came a gruff, grumbled response from within and then Nsebe put his hand through an aperture at the side of the door, pulled out the heavy wooden pin which barred it on the inside and entered.

Squatting down near the door, he told the king who we were and what we had come for, all the time accompanying all he said by the clapping of hands. And

this preliminary had to be gone through every visit I made even though, as for weeks, I went to the king two or three times a day.

This ceremony ended, he came back to the door and called the rest of us in. Not even Shikanga was permitted to enter the royal hut unceremoniously.

The door was so small, the eaves so low (the inside floor being lower than the outside) that I nearly fell head first into the hut as I entered. Dungeon-like darkness prevailed and at first I could see nothing. Some one took my hand and placed it in the long, bony, outstretched one of the king. Then I saw a gaunt, emaciated figure sitting on a mat and recognized the king of the Manika.

They stirred up the fire into a blaze, and one lighted a piece of candle I had brought along. What a sight that was before me! The whole chin and upper lip were one putrid, sloughing sore over which the scabs had formed a half an inch or more in depth while odd sores were scattered all over his neck and body. The stench was sickening.

Kneeling there in front of him, close to the now sizzling fire, I worked for a half hour dressing that distorted face. Then I gave him some medicine and left, saying that I would be back at noon to give him more medicine and would dress the sores again at night. For I knew that if I left medicine with instructions for it to be taken at noon, it would all be drunk at once. If I wanted the medicine taken regularly, I must go in person and see that it was done.

Then I rose painfully from my cramped position and emerged awkwardly out into the cold, raw, misty day. My head reeled, my stomach heaved and what

with my stiff joints and sore muscles from the previous day's journey, I could hardly walk.

Did it pay? Yes, a hundred per cent., though the compensation came only after many long days.

IV

THE PASSING OF UFAMBASIKU

THERE'S a new Mtasa now and a new Guta. When the old king died, the customs of the Manika led them to first spend one month of mourning, during which they drowned their grief in native brewed beer, thus using up most of the grain so that a famine followed. During this time the body of the dead chief was slowly dried and smoked over a fire. Then he was secretly buried, after which the old kraal was abandoned so that his wandering spirit might never be disturbed.

Four years later, we passed through the site of the old kraal. It was a difficult thing to do for the weeds and grass had grown up into an almost impenetrable jungle. None of the huts were left : there were only a few foundations to mark the once so familiar ground.

There was the huge pile of rocks which we called the Giant's Causeway ; there was where Chimbadzwa's group of huts had stood ; there was the big, ship-like boulder under which Benzi was buried. Was Benzi really murdered ? We will probably never know. But the wild, savage, hopeless frenzy of that funeral is something never to be forgotten.

And here was where the Imp and Terror used to

play. They were bad little girls,—as bad as the nicknames we gave them. The Terror has long since been at the Old Umtali school and become a fine Christian girl. She may be married now. Several of our promising young evangelists had spoken for her hand two years ago.

And there was where I held daily dispensary, treating dozens of patients among whom were Muledzwa, Shikanga's sister, and her daughter Mukonyerwa. She was wild too in those days, wild and boisterous and rough but not especially vicious. What a change came over her at the school! Sorrow matured her and Christ reclaimed her for His very own. She is Stephen's wife now, a teacher to her own people on an out station, a woman refined, dignified and singularly attractive.

Up yonder is the shelving rock and on it the big boulder still hangs by its eyebrows. It always seemed to me as if it needed no more than the slamming of the hut door to bring it crashing down.

And there was that massive face of sheer, solid, unscalable rock at the back of the kraal, the cap stone of the mountain. Only the droves of baboons could get a foothold there. How they would chatter! And I can hear again as I heard it that cold morning, the deep, bass "Ha, ha, ha" of some big brute who broke the stillness with an unmistakable laugh.

We made our way slowly through the masses of blackjacks whose seeds stuck to us until we resembled porcupines. It was only seven years ago that Ufambasiku died and the new Mtasa, Chiobvu, his son, began to reign. But changes are many and rapid in

Rhodesia so that there are probably but few left who remember the old Mtasa and the old Guta.

I heard various versions of his history some of which agreed. Jonas gave me the most realistic recital of the usual version, before ever I went up to treat the king, while still at Hartzell Villa. The wind was wailing around the house and the one tallow candle in my little study flickered unsteadily, throwing long dark shadows into the hall.

Jonas' voice dropped almost to a whisper as he told how the king had been wont to visit the usurper's kraal ever in the night by stealth. At length he succeeded in getting an intrigue with one of the wives. It was the custom of the king to sleep in a different hut every night so that no enemy could find him. This wife agreed to tell Ufambasiku (The-one-who-walks-at-night) when the pseudo king came to her hut.

This hut was in a seemingly inaccessible position but she, at a given signal, let down a rope up which the rightful successor climbed. Jonas' voice dropped into a tragic whisper until it died out altogether as he drew his hand significantly across his throat. And Mtasa had held the power he had so violently secured for about forty or fifty years, a reign of absolute despotism until the advent of the white pioneers in 1890.

I had done my best to redeem the old man's diseased and almost decayed body. He improved rapidly at first. The sores on his face and head were all healed and he got so that he walked out. He went a mile or two one day. Then the witch doctor told him he was well. I told him he was not and that he must

still take great care, live a clean life, stick to his medicine or he would surely die. But on the strength of the witch doctor's statement, he held a council of his head men who passed a resolution affirming his complete recovery and then he had a big dance and a big drunk and in two weeks all the benefits of seven were wiped out and Mtasa's days were surely numbered.

I had had to leave him. I shall never forget the pain it gave me when I paid my farewell visit to him. He could no longer sit up. Shikanga was there, Muledzwa, Nyakwanikwa, his notoriously wicked sister, and Nsebe, of course. Custom forbade that I should speak, or any of his own people for that matter, directly to the king. So Nsebe, as ever, interpreted.

There was an agony in the old king's face, an appealing interrogation which I tried to answer. I said, "Mtasa, you are going to take a long journey into an Unknown Country. When I came up here, I did not know your paths. There is not a single one you do not know. So I asked you for a guide and you always gave me one.

"Now you are going where you will need a Guide and I have come to give you one. Jesus Christ, our Saviour, is the only one who can guide you into the Land Beyond."

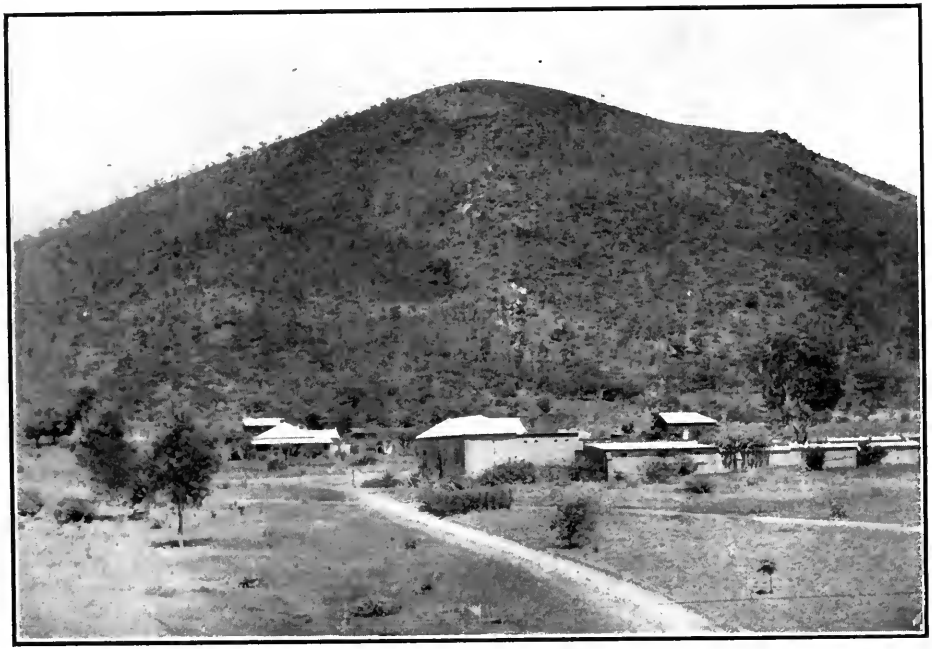
The dying man strained his deafening ears and turning to Nsebe said, "What is that she is saying?"

"She says she is going away," answered Nsebe, blandly. It was no use. Perhaps they told him later; I doubt it. And so he passed away.

There's a new Mtasa now and a new kraal in every

sense of the word. There's a big mission up there now also and many converts. Old things are slowly passing away, and not so very slowly either. Still it takes time for the thorough renewal of a nation.

But God's work is going gloriously on.



MT. HARTZELL AT OLD UMTALI

V

THE MAKING OF A DICTIONARY

"FIRST catch your hare," is a familiar adage. The first thing in a new country is to get the language. With only a small, imperfect dictionary compiled hastily in a district several hundred miles away from us, we had to begin at the very beginning as scores of other missionaries have had to do among the hundreds of dialects of the Bantu people.

So I asked the Lord to send me a boy who would teach me the language and He sent me Jonas. Commend me to a boy for information. If it is to be had, he's got it; and if he's got it, he is willing to impart it. A live boy generally makes it his particular business to know what is going on around him.

So Jonas and I went up to Hartzell Villa to live. It was a beautiful eight-roomed house way up on the side of Mt. Hartzell more than a quarter of a mile from all the other mission buildings. It had been built by a surveyor, Mr. Pickett, at a cost of $20,000. When the town moved and the government compensated the property owners for their houses and then turned the old town and all its buildings over to Bishop Hartzell for an industrial mission, Mrs. Hartzell chose this house for the Woman's Foreign Missionary Society. The bishop deeded it over to

that Society together with a fine plot of thirty acres of land.

So I named it Hartzell Villa by which name the deed is recorded. Jonas and I did "light housekeeping." He was engaged ostensibly to do the housework but as there was so little to do, he spent two-thirds of his time in my study teaching me the language.

There was little cooking to do for it was at the close of the Boer war and prices were high. Eggs were $5.00 a dozen, cabbages $1.25 each, and everything else in proportion. Therefore, we lived very simply, indeed.

As to furniture, I had a bed, a table, couch, two chairs and a baby organ. Everything else was made of packing and provision boxes dressed up in calico caps and petticoats.

I had no stove for the first six months. Mr. DeWitt said he had sent home for one and would give me his when the new one came provided it lasted that long and did not go to pieces on the way up.

In six months' time, the new stove came from America and one day I heard a knock at my back door and there was the old stove on a wheelbarrow with two or three natives to do the pushing and two white men to hold it together.

They set it up on bricks—the legs had disappeared, no one knew where. One cover lid was missing so they brought a teakettle to set on that hole.

Nevertheless we were proud of having a stove even though it did have fits—smoking us nearly out of house and home at such times. Doubtless the same stove is still in use at Hartzell Villa to-day.

But with such limitations, neither Jonas nor I were tied down to house work and my purpose of studying the language was accomplished.

It surely would have been funny to an observer. I did not know any of the Chikaranga nor did Jonas know English. His keen desire to learn the latter was all that kept him useful all those tedious months. We exchanged commodities along the linguistic line.

It was desperately hard at first. Jonas did not know what I wanted and I had not even a few native words at my command with which to make myself clear. If only I could have known the one word "name" or the brief sentence, "What is this?" I could have got on so much better.

As it was, I had to talk English which made me feel idiotic for I knew Jonas could not understand it, and a vigorous use of my hands which were far more intelligible. It was not so bad with nouns. Thank fortune that a noun *is* the name of an object. You can point to an object and even the most stupid savage will soon get to know what you want. But the rest of the parts of speech came very reluctantly onto the platform. It takes long, weary weeks and sharp eyes and ears to get them.

And then there are the abstract words. It took me six months to find out the name for the local dialect of the Manika. I knew that the language prefix throughout the Bantu tongue was *ki* or some adaptation of it. Thus the language of the *Bafiote* is *Kifiote* and the language of the *Waswahili*, *Kiswahili*. But Jonas shook his head at all my efforts.

One day I was in the kitchen where he and

Shakeni, who was paying me a visit, were laughing and joking merrily together. I could follow much of the conversation. Jonas was doing a little bragging of his own and with a glow of pride remarked as he stepped out of doors to hang up the dish wiper, "She understands Chinyika perfectly. She knows everything you say."

He did not, however, have the slightest idea that I *could* understand. I almost jumped with joy. *Nyika* I knew was land or the country: *Chinyika* was the language of the country. Eureka! I'd got it at last!

As I got my list of words from Jonas daily, one or more of the other missionaries would take them and verify them with other natives on the place. Then I entered them in alphabetical order in a small notebook. The spelling was phonetical and often had to be changed later when the small book gave way to a larger and the second to a still larger book.

Then the time came when it all had to be typed, once more gone over with several natives from different parts of the country and then retyped again. That did not mean perfection,—far from it. But it did mean that it was ready for printing. It took four years to collect, classify, verify and prepare 2,000 native and 4,000 English words.

But probably those years of work were worth more to me personally than to any one else. I came to know the natives as only one can who is able to talk with them in their own tongue. I got to know so much of their ways and to see things through their eyes. And knowing them, I learned to love them.

VI

THE BANTU AND THEIR LANGUAGES

THE name of Bantu was first used by Dr. Bleek, the first great philologist to deal with the African languages. He applied it to the vast number of tribes throughout this continent whose language is notable for its prefix-pronominal system, all of which have the word Bantu, or some slightly varying form, used to designate *men, people.*

In its primitive sense, *ntu* means *head. Mu-ntu,* is one head or one person and *ba-ntu* is the plural form.

The Bantu occupy a territory from five degrees north to seventeen degrees south latitude on the west coast and from the equator to thirty-three degrees south on the east coast thus covering the entire centre of the continent from the Atlantic to the Indian Oceans.

The languages arise from a common stem but have become divided into groups which differ from each other like Spanish and Portugese, or Italian and French. Inside these groups, there are numerous dialects not more marked than Scotch and English, or Danish and Norwegian. Such is the case with the Chikaranga which is used in the eastern part of Southern Rhodesia.

The historian Theal voices the opinion of all others who have made special study of the Bantu languages

in various parts of the continent, when he says, "The language spoken by the Bantu is of high order, subject to strict grammatical rules, and adequate for the expression of any ideas whatever. It has no clicks although the Zulus have adopted three from the Bushman-Hottentots and only in certain tribes are there to be found certain sibilating sounds which are difficult for an adult foreigner to acquire."

The construction differs entirely from all European tongues. There is no gender and the nouns are the governing factor in the sentence. These nouns are divided into classes which vary in number among different tribes but which average about twelve, according to Torrend.

These classes are formed by the governing prefix of the noun: thus *muntu, bantu* belong naturally to the *mu-ba* class; *chigaro*, chair, *zwigaro*, chairs, belongs to the *chi-zwi* class. This prefix must be incorporated into all the pronouns, adjectives and verbs connected with it in the sentence, thus: *Chigaro changu chikuru wachiwona here?* Chair mine big, you saw it, did you? Or smoothly, have you seen my big chair?

This is not so difficult to learn. The real difficulties of the language present themselves where the original prefixes have been dropped from usage in the noun itself but are obliged to reappear throughout the sentence. Now *ngombe* is the one form for both an ox and oxen, having in the process of time dropped its *i-dzi* prefixes. In usage, however, *ngombe yangu*, is my ox, *ngombe dzangu*, my oxen.

Closer study of this last named class of nouns shows that originally they had the prefix *ji* or *yi* in the

singular as all Bantu words originally began with a consonant and ended with a vowel. This is still true of some of the older, purer forms of the west coast dialects. And whenever any Bantu word ends in a consonant, it is a corruption with some foreign element.

Nothing is yet known with certainty of the origin of the Bantu. It is quite certain that they have been in Africa at least two thousand years and it seems evident that their migration over the continent was not extensive prior to 2,000 years ago. It is probable that they came to Africa as early as 3,000 years ago. The ruins testify to that. The traces of Semitic blood in the Makaranga give strong colour to the theory that these were the people used by the Sabeans or Phœnicians for the building of these ruins.

Many great writers and explorers are of the opinion that the Bantu are of Semitic rather than Hamitic stock. Dr. Bleek also thought that there could be no doubt but that the Papuan, Polynesian and Malay languages were related to it and that the prefix-prenominal system forms almost one continuous belt of languages on both sides of the equator, from the mouth of the Senegal to the Sandwich Islands.

The Hausa language of the Niger Valley is the only one which was found reduced to writing and with a literature of its own. Sir Harry Johnson says of it, "This most remarkable Hausa speech is a connecting link between the Hamitic and Negro language groups. Even at the present day, there are many links existing which show the original connection—both physical and linguistic—between the Arab and the Negro."

The same writer has also recently brought to light the interesting fact that the little pigmies of the great forests have been found not to have any language of their own but that in all cases they have adopted and adapted the dialect of their nearest Bantu neighbours.

The past history of the Bantu is and always will be dark. But, thank God, a brighter future is before them.

VII

DIFFICULTIES OF AN UNKNOWN TONGUE

WE were over at the Umtali Academy and it was tea time. Americans at home cannot realize the enjoyment of the four o'clock cup o' tea in Africa. It is an oasis in the desert; a half hour in the day when all the cares and burdens are dropped and social relaxation prolongs life and health.

It was a particularly delightful period at the Academy. This afternoon there was a new and a green boy in the kitchen. The tea was too strong for one of the visitors so Miss J—— called the boy and told him to bring up some hot water (*chisa manzi*, she said). He understood that hot water was wanted but all the particulars being left out he was left to his own wits and resources to supply the rest.

Tired of waiting, the tea was drunk and all was over when the guests were highly amused to see the youth staggering into the room with the corrugated iron bath tub in which was a bucket or two of hot water. What else should any one want hot water for? Poor boy! He beat a hasty retreat under the fire of laughter which greeted his appearance.

There was a certain white man in the country who married a new wife right out from England. As he had been in the country some years, he tried to impress on her his excellent knowledge of the native language.

The poor woman had no end of mistakes like the tea party affair and the only consolation she got from her husband was, "Now the fault is not the boy's. If you could only talk to the natives like I can, you would have no difficulty."

There was a well on the farm on which they lived and one day the bucket dropped off and necessitated the lord of the manor going down himself to fish it up and tie it on again. Two natives turned the crank at the top according to his instructions.

The job done, he looked up and shouted, "Panzi, up." They knew what *panzi* meant, which was *down*. The English they had never heard before. So they let out a little more rope. "Panzi, up," shouted the white man angrily as his feet were covered with water. They unwound another turn and the water came up to his waist. Another yell caused another turn and only his chin was above the cold waters. He was now convinced that the rascals intended murder and he shouted with desperate frenzy, "Panzi, up."

One of the natives now looked over the curbing down into the well and said earnestly using the only English word he knew, "Boss, tambo pelale," that is, the rope is finished. That was all that saved him.

Another bride came to the country, a bonny, rosy-cheeked English lassie. She was very much troubled about a hut out in their back yard. It was the most miserable pretense of a shack, patched together with tin from old packing boxes. Beside the house servants three or four natives who were employed in her husband's store had to sleep in it.

Now the majority of the white people talk a kind

of mixed jargon known as Kitchen Kaffir. It's a marvellous jingo in which conjugations and declensions are thrown to the winds and one word is used in at least fifty different senses and the native servants must be clever enough to know what is meant rather than what is said.

The word *suka* then, is used for anything from washing, bathing, sweeping, cleaning, down: *susa*, on the other hand, is used in an infinite variety of senses but its primitive meaning is to tear down, throw away or destroy.

One day the bride decided that she would neglect her own house that day and give her servants a chance to tidy up their own little place. For being new to the country, she supposed the boys had this miserable shanty where they were all huddled together by preference, not knowing anything better.

"Now, Sixpence," she began with a most charming smile, "I no want you work for Missis to-day. Go susa lo house kawena." They were used to white folks so they thought they knew what she meant. The pretty bride wanted that miserable hut torn down. And for once they wasted no time and by the time their master came back at noon, every vestige of the shanty had disappeared.

"It's my fault," pleaded the little woman half in tears. "I meant to have said *suka* and I said *susa*."

"The rascals knew well enough what you meant," he stormed angrily.

"Of course it was all a mistake," she said to me afterwards, "but I am rather glad now I made it. The old shanty did look bad." I was glad too.

It was one of Sweden's natural born linguists who one day overheard an engineer at a mine talking to a raw native whose sole clothing consisted of a five cent piece of calico which had been worn until all trace of the original colour had been lost. The engineer said to this boy, "Go to the engine, *kangala lo* glass and come tell me if there is plenty *manzi* in the boiler." The boy looked at him dazed; for even the native words belonged to a tribe 600 miles away from his. The engineer was in a rage and turning to the Swede exclaimed in a passion, "What's the use of a white man spending twenty years to learn Kaffir? These natives don't know their own language when they hear it!"

It was one of our Umtali missionaries who told a native to *tora*, take, a hand cart to some place. Now *tora* with the native has the meaning of carrying something on the head. So when the missionary went to see why the cart was not forthcoming, he found the native vainly striving to get it up onto his head to carry it that way.

There is an exclamation of astonishment which is common among the Rhodesian natives, "Maiwe!" Mother thou! It is usually pronounced, Ma ee way, very like, My way. One white man, new to the country, heard this without knowing its meaning and supposed the native was talking English. He got fearfully irritated over his inability to make his servant understand all his wants and wishes, believing that it was pure obstinacy and cheek on the boy's part. So one day as the amazed youth exclaimed "Maiwe," he seized him by the neck and shouted to the great amusement of the other white man who

heard him, "I'll show you if it's *your way* or not. I want you to know that you've got to do *my way*."

It was a Congo missionary who glibly told the natives the angels and devils were all the same. Many other equally bad and even worse mistakes are made, but in spite of all the disadvantages, the natives get to hear the Good News in an intelligible form and then they themselves scatter the seed far and wide in their own idioms which the white men seldom fully acquire.

VIII

DOWN THE AGES

THE hut was dark, smoky, cold and draughty within. Outside, the kraal was bathed in a flood of moonlight which lit up the huge boulders, caressed the dingy huts, concealed the litter and rubbish and turned the dirty old kraal into a fairy-land.

Yielding myself to the charm, I crawled through the tiny aperture called a door, wiped my eyes which wept on account of the smoke and gazed about me with a thrill of admiration. I wondered how it would all look from an old fortification high up among the boulders, a favourite, secluded spot of mine by day. There was no one in sight so I hurried down the main path and was soon hidden from view among the big rocks as I climbed upward.

This place was on a great flat rock with a stone parapet all around it. The main path from the lower kraal passed at the foot of its perpendicular side some fifty feet below. Indeed the top leaned a little over the path.

The view from here was magnificent. Within stone's throw was an open space where near a big tree there was a cluster of the little huts which strongly resembled haystacks. I could hear the hum of voices which rose from those huts. Only two nights ago there was a murder in one of them and

yesterday I attended the funeral! What a wild, frenzied, hopeless occasion that was! Some day these people will get to know the Comforter but to-night there are only fearful, aching hearts.

The view is indeed magnificent! Over on the other side of the valley is Chiriwadzumbo which with this mountain, Bingahuru, forms what is known as the Gateway to Inyanga. Majestic gateway of God's own making! I have always felt as though standing in His presence as I have looked upon it. And there in the moonlight I seemed to lose hold on the present as I looked down that deep, dark valley whose sides were wrapped in silver sheen. It seemed to me that I could see as in a vision the countless generations who had passed adown it, see them in a procession 4,000 years long pass by as on review. I could hear the merry laughter of their young men and maidens, the cries of the infants, the songs of the dancers, the wailing of the mourners and the lash of the slave-driver as it fell on an army of bare and bleeding backs, the army of slaves who built up these thousands of ruins all over the country hereabouts. Who were their masters? Were they Sabeans or Phœnicians? And were the slaves Negroes or Asiatics?

We shall never know. They are gone and their secret is buried with them. For them have ceased "the voice of mirth, and the voice of gladness, the voice of the bridegroom and the voice of the bride, the sound of the millstones, and the light of the candle." The luxurious prince with his harem of beautiful women, and the groaning, bleeding slave have these thousands of years become common dust. The

ruins in this beautiful valley tell us that they lived here, but the places once so familiar to them now know them no more forever.

These same heavens declared the glory of God to them, and this same starry firmament showed to them His handiwork. The same rising sun spoke to them of an Almighty Hand; this same silver moon uttered its knowledge of a divine Creator. Some of their sages and prophets read the heavenly Book aright and gave Him the worship their hearts prompted. Some of them made maps of the constellations and we have found them engraved on solid stone.

No doubt they had their true prophets who warned the people against the vile Phallic, Baal and Ashtaroth worship introduced by the gold seekers of that ancient time, priests like Melchisedek without pedigree, and like him also without posterity. Had they listened to the message of the living God in this probable land of Havalah, they would not have wiped themselves out by their own gross excesses as it seems so probable that they did do.

Two men come up the path and their talking arrests my train of thought and brings me back to the present. I recognize one of them as Chimbadzwa, the king's son, and the other an older man. As they walk along deep in conversation, armed with knives and spears as usual, they suddenly halt and turning around look up in my direction. It is then that I realize what an unwise thing I have done in coming out thus alone. But they soon recognize me and go their ways and I am left alone.

But my train of thought is broken. Soon I must leave this mountain where I have spent long weeks.

Over yonder where the trees and boulders throw their long, black shadows, the old king is fighting his last battle and must lose. His has been a cruel, despotic reign for nearly forty years. O what scenes these hillsides have witnessed! The very stones cry out against the bloodshed and murder they have seen!

But the king's warfare is near its end. And when the end comes, they will bury him secretly and then move away and leave his spirit, as they believe, to wander about the old haunts undisturbed by any living man.

The silence of the night will then only be broken by the uncanny hoot of the owl, the mournful wail of the hyena, the startling bark of some huge baboon or the piercing cry of the leopard.

As the old king has lived so will he die and thus will he be buried. But for his people there are better things in store. Aye, for them already "the sun of righteousness has arisen with healing in his wings."

IX

SHAKENI

"GREAT SCOTT!" exclaimed Harriet, sitting bolt upright, "there's a snake as big as your head."

"Where?" I asked sleepily rousing up.

"Why, it glided just over the corner of the rug there," she replied with a grimace of horror.

"Just you keep your eye on it, sister, will you, while I finish my nap," I replied as I sank back. It was a fearfully hot day and my friend, Miss Johnson, and I had walked six miles that morning to reach Shakeni's kraal.

At noon we had had our lunch disturbed by discovering a snake in the tree over our heads so that familiarity was breeding contempt. We were so tired and the day was so drowsy that in spite of snakes and the fact that our rug was spread over nothing softer than a ledge of rock, we soon dosed off for a cat-nap.

And then Shakeni came.

Not long after I had first moved into Hartzell Villa, I saw a ludicrous figure going along the wagon road at the foot of the mountain. She wore a man's sailor hat and a lot of old European clothes which were a decided misfit. She was followed by two little girls who looked like boys.

Some native men were digging near the house and I asked them who the girl was. They only smiled significantly to each other and vouchsafed no reply.

Just then the apparition being embarrassed by the eyes focused on her, broke into a run, and as the hat would not stay on her head, she snatched it off and carried it in her hand. We all laughed heartily.

Two or three days after that she came back and I met her. She wanted to spend the night so I took her and the two little girls into the house. They were all three dreadfully dirty but I was fishing for the Master so I kept them until the next afternoon. I couldn't talk with them so I taught Shakeni to sew a pretty pink pillow, the first sewing she ever did.

Jonas regarded them with undisguised disgust. The two children, Marusinyenyi and Mutisiswa, were particularly dirty and unattractive girls of about ten or eleven years of age.

They came again and stayed two or three days and I showed Shakeni how to sew patchwork. She was so delighted. As she was a girl of nineteen or twenty, I asked, "Where is your husband?" She smiled charmingly and replied, "I have no husband." Another woman said the same thing, you remember.

As she departed on that occasion, Jonas came in an inch taller from conscious superiority.

"O these Manika women!" he exclaimed, "how dirty they are. Look at the difference between Shakeni's hands and mine! These women never wash their hands. Ugh!" With which explosion he turned to the kitchen.

That evening I said to him, "Why isn't Shakeni married?"

Jonas shrugged his shoulders expressively.

"Why *isn't* she married?" I persisted. The question had to be repeated several times before he re-

luctantly answered, "Because she cut her upper teeth first."

I was sure my ears deceived me, but he went on to explain.

"In our country it is very, very bad to cut the upper teeth first. Do your children ever do so?" I had to frankly admit that I did not know which teeth usually came first, and that it made no difference to us.

"Well, it does to *us*," replied Jonas emphatically. "A child that cuts the upper teeth first is bewitched and it is the custom of our people to bury such a child alive."

I asked if some other mode of cutting short the child's earthly career would not do just as well. Jonas was horrified at the suggestion. Any other method would be cruelty.

"But," said Jonas with a sigh, "I suppose her mother loved her baby and did not want to do it,—anyhow she didn't (his gesture expressed his opinion that such was a pity), and now there isn't a man in the country would marry her."

"Why not?" I asked.

"Because he would die," said Jonas emphatically.

"How soon would he die? As soon as they were married?" I asked.

Jonas became cautious. "He might and then he might not."

"Well, would he die in a week?" Jonas was more cautious. We are all bold in setting forth glittering generalities but to get down to a specific case is another thing.

"Would he die in a month then?" Jonas was nettled.

"Don't you see, Missis," he exclaimed in an exasperated tone, "he might die at once, he might die in a week, he might die in a month. Or he might live years and they might have children and the children might grow up but sooner or later he would surely die."

"I'm sure he would," I retorted laughing heartily. "Did you ever know a man who married a woman who didn't die, Jonas?"

But Jonas refused to discuss such a serious question further.

And this was the girl, a remarkable beauty, at large.

Soon Jonas would be leaving me and I had made this visit to the kraal to get this girl to come and live with me. Jonas had previously approached her on the same subject.

I was surprised as I found her in the kraal to see how neat and clean she was. And her two sisters were also cleaner. It was beautiful to see how they adored this big sister of theirs.

Her mother also welcomed us most graciously and the three days spent in the kraal were pleasant ones if the nights were not and I returned to Hartzell Villa with a light step and a lighter heart. At last I was to have a native girl to live with me!

I found Shakeni a treasure, indeed! She had been an outcast from babyhood and responded to the love and attention I gave her as a flower responds to the sun.

She was remarkably quick to learn either books, sewing, or, what was harder yet, me. My grasp of the language was as yet very weak. I managed to

use quite a few words but I had not been able to as yet get hold of the grammatical construction.

Shakeni soon learned what I wanted to say and to repeat it after me to the women and girls of the kraals where we live.

For nine months she was with me day and night whether I was at home or in the kraals, except one night when her mother sent for her to go to Penhalanga to see a sick uncle. Afterwards, I bitterly regretted allowing her to go there. I did not know as much of native ways as I did later.

Shakeni learned to do what house work there was to do and did it well. She learned, as I said, to read quickly and had gone through the Primer in nine months' time—and a Chikaranga Primer is of necessity much harder than the English one.

She learned to sew, to make her own clothes, although she did not do the fine sewing Marita, Gumba and the other girls did later on.

Had the shadow of the curse not been on her, Shakeni would have been undoubtedly our first Bible woman. That was what I hoped but it was not to be. That honour was Marita's who certainly deserved some honour after walking six hundred miles to come to our school.

But Shakeni was my first love among the Manika girls and women. She was the most beautiful of them all and the most affectionate as well, though this may have been because I was the first person who did not consider her possessed of an evil spirit.

And as I look back, I feel that the work of the five years would not have been in vain had I reached no other girl than Shakeni.

X

HER FIRST VACATION

SHAKENI sat on the front door-step under the heavily laden passion-vine which formed into an arch over her head and then trailed gracefully along the front veranda of Hartzell Villa. She had finished her morning's lesson, a chapter of Matthew in the vernacular, but it was evident her mind was not on her books. Still her listlessness might have been because it was a very hot morning.

Now she sat in the full blaze of the sun twirling a corner of her robe nervously and watching her teacher's darning-needle pass in and out of a garment which was almost hopelessly worn out.

It was Jim, so Jonas said, who had one day been washing with the other boys at the river, and who held up a garment of Mr. Springer's and said in disgust, "Look at that! Is that fit for a white man to wear? Why doesn't he give that to a boy?"

"This is a sample of the luxuries we missionaries live in," thought the teacher, and she smiled involuntarily at the thought.

Shakeni saw the smile and gathered up courage, and with an attempt to speak off-handed said, "When this moon is finished, I am going to the kraal."

The teacher was not at all surprised. She had

read it in the girl for the past month so she merely said, "You are going home to dig your field?"

"Yes," she answered with a sigh of relief. And now that the dreaded ordeal of telling the news was over, she hastened into the house to find some work.

The missionary leaned back in her chair and the work fell into her lap as she unconsciously watched the sunlight gleaming among the trellised vines. Her mind was on her one girl pupil in the land where girls are so hard to get. It seemed as if her heart would break to have this beautiful girl go back to her old life. She had been more than a pupil; she had been a constant companion day and night for eight months.

However, a change had recently come over the girl and the teacher knew that it was of no use to try and force her to stay. She must go. But the seed had been sown and it surely would bring forth fruit in time.

The crickets in the tall grass chirped merrily and the birds whistled a lively tune. "Yes," she said to herself softly, "it is best that she should go. She is in His care. Our times are in His hands." And with that comfort, the load was lifted from her heart and she took up her darning.

That evening, the frugal supper ended and the dishes washed, Shakeni went into the study for the usual evening chat. As she set the lamp down on the little home-made table, her heart smote her. How she would miss these daily talks during which there had been so much mutual instruction! She had learned a little English and a great deal about the wide, wide world whose horizon had heretofore

not extended beyond Mashonaland. And she had taught her teacher much about her own language and her people.

What a difference between the neat, clean, cozy study and the dark, dirty, cheerless hut which she would occupy a week hence. She loathed the life of the kraal. Why then was she going back? Alas! The curse of a heathen superstition was upon her and she must go back and bear its blight.

Shakeni was no ordinary girl and she loved the bright and the beautiful passionately. She was keenly sensitive to the coloured walls of Hartzell Villa, and the bright calicos which converted old packing and provision boxes into useful furniture. She loved the pretty cards which decorated the walls; she had liked the quiet and had enjoyed the learning. However, the curse was upon her: she must go.

"Now," said her teacher, "when you get back to the kraal, I want you to gather the little children around you and teach them the things you have learned here, especially your two sisters, Marusinyenyi and Mutisiswa. I want you to teach them to sing these hymns, teach them to pray, read to them out of this little book of Matthew. If you don't you will soon forget all you ever knew. Will you do it?"

"Yes, Missis," she replied softly.

Monday morning came and she was up at 4:30. It had been arranged that Charley Potter should take her place so Charley came up early to get breakfast but she insisted in setting the table for her teacher herself for the last time and to cook that last meal. Just before it was ready, she went into the study and

said, "Can't we have prayers before breakfast to-day? I want to sing once more before I go." For she wanted to get on the trail before the sun was hot.

Family prayers that morning were more like a funeral service.

Then she was ready to go. Her bundle of clothes was wrapped in a gayly coloured blanket. In this bundle were many garments which she had made with her own hands and among other treasures was a patchwork quilt she had sewed herself.

Skillfully balancing her bundle on her head, gracefully pulling the loose, gayly coloured cloth over her shoulders, she slowly descended the steps and down the front yard to where the path joined the road.

Here she stopped and looked back at the white woman standing under the passion-vine. It was only for an instant; then she turned her head and walked rapidly northward while the lone white woman stood in the doorway until the girl disappeared from view.

Some day she would come back but it would not be for long years in which everything, most of all herself, should be changed.

XI

FOR CHRISTIAN BURIAL

"MISSIS, there is a mukadzi (woman) who wishes to see you."

"What does she want?" I asked.

"I do not know," Samuel replied. So I got up from the typewriter where I was copying sheets of dictionary and went down-stairs. There in the front yard sat a dejected, untidy figure of a woman whom at first I did not recognize until she got up and came towards me when I exclaimed, "Shakeni! Why did you not come right up to my study? Come now."

What a change in my beautiful girl! Who would have dreamed that this fat, sloppy, dirty, ragged, bedraggled woman was the bright, bonny, graceful girl who had gone down the walk and away to her kraal from Hartzell Villa three years before! I groaned inwardly at the change as I led the way back to my study where I seldom received native women from the kraals, one reason being that the most of them were deathly afraid to climb the stairs.

Shakeni dropped down on the floor with the exclamation, "Ndizwo is dead." I had forgotten the child's name and did not at first understand who was meant so she repeated, "Ndizwo is dead." Ndizwo was her child and the cause of her absence from the mission all these years. Ndizwo was part white.

We did not know his father but Metapudzwa told me he was a half-breed transport rider at Penhalanga.

I was glad, frankly, that the little fellow was dead. He had ever been an Ishmael. From the first that I saw him, he seemed to wear an inveterate scowl and have an aversion for every one except his grandmother. Did the bitterness of his mother's soul as she rebelled against the curse which had denied her legal wifehood like other women and had made her an outcast of whom her hard stepfather made gain, enter into the child and poison his unborn nature? It certainly looked like it. I never saw a child who seemed so solitary and so impregnated with hatred as that child. We had often spoken of what a hard, fierce fight he would have in life. And now he was gone. Truly I was glad.

And I told Shakeni so. I told her I was glad the little fellow had been taken by a merciful heavenly Father where he would not have to bear and suffer all that he would have had to meet had he lived.

Then she told me why she had come. She could not bear to think of him buried after the heathen fashion so she had come to beg a box and to know if he might not be buried up in the churchyard by her sister, Marusinyenyi, whose death and burial had affected Shakeni greatly.

Some eighteen months previously, the two little girls who used to run about the country with Shakeni had come to me and said they wanted to stay and go to school. They had developed into quite young ladies. Philip told us afterwards that he had fallen in love with Mutisiswa at the kraal and had told her he wanted to marry her. She admitted that she was

very willing. He then informed her that she must come to school and study. She dropped her head, twisted her robe and said she did not want to go to school. He thereupon informed her that she could do as she liked but that he did not propose to have any heathen girl for *his* wife. So she came. She was only a foster-sister of Shakeni and Marusinyenyi, but the two girls were inseparable, so they both came.

Marusinyenyi died a year later of dropsy but her death was a beautiful one. She knew she was dying and told Mutisiswa that she could see the angels in the room so she was not afraid to die. She was buried beside Kaduku in the native churchyard at Old Umtali, and we planted flowers as an emblem of the resurrection on their graves.

And now Shakeni wanted this son of her sorrow to be laid beside the little sister whom she had loved so dearly. So I gave her a box, asked Mr. Spears to line it with white cloth which he did gladly and they took it back to the kraal for the body.

They did not get back until sundown so we had to wait till morning for the service, for Mr. Springer was away that day and did not return until late Saturday night.

Sunday morning dawned a perfect Easter day. The bell rang and we gathered in the chapel with all the boys and girls for the funeral of the poor baby. There was the grandmother with dry eyes and breaking heart. But for the love of Christ which had sent Dr. Gurney out there, she herself would have died in awful, lingering agony long ago. There was Mutisiswa sobbing not only for the child but more for the memory of the dear girl for whose death she

had been almost unconsolable. There were likewise all the others of the family and every heart was stirred as we sang softly a Christian hymn. It was the same hymn we had sung at Keduku's funeral when we had all wept together. How we had loved that boy!

As the baby had died the day before, we did not open the box but it was covered with white cloth and strewed with flowers. The service was brief for there was little to say and soon we stood around the open grave and again heard the solemn words, "Ashes to ashes; dust to dust."

Then bowing his head, the preacher prayed aloud that the mother and other relatives and all there assembled might come to know the Saviour of men who alone is Life and the Resurrection, that believing on Him they might never die.

Another year went by and Shakeni came to me again. This time she had another baby on her back and a smile on her face. She came to tell me that she was really married now to a native of Cape Colony and that as her husband was away from her on the road most of the time, he had given his consent to her coming back to the mission to the Girls' School.

Later on while at Broken Hill, I got a letter from her telling me of her entire change of life and how happy she was.

"Sow your rice upon the waters," said the oriental sage. "It will disappear from sight and lodge in the black mud below. But it isn't lost; it will not rot. Leave it in God's hands and after many days thou shalt find it again and reap a rich harvest."

XII

OUR LAST NIGHT—TREKKING BY OX WAGON

AS long as we live, we will not cease to bless the DeWitts for that trip when we were only two weeks new to the country. We were gone a month and no one can estimate the benefit of such a trip to a new missionary.

And when, so soon after that, the cattle sickness broke out and destroyed our herd, we thanked God more than ever that we had had that never-to-be-forgotten evangelistic tour in an ox wagon, an American make, by the way. But it was an experience we never wished to have repeated. It came in its own time and had its own place. For of all the tedious modes of travel we have in Africa, the ox wagon is the worst. How many times on that trip I walked after the wagon expecting it every minute to be overturned!

For nearly a month now, we had journeyed up and down the rugged mountainous country of Southern Rhodesia. We had left the wagon at outspans and visited kraals just off the road whenever they were not more than two or three miles away. Here we had held services in English for want of something better. To be sure the natives could not understand us. But it roused their curiosity and led many of them to find out later more about us. It was four years later when Benjamin told me that he was in his

father's kraal when we visited it and that that one visit gave him a sense of knowing us.

Owing to the fact that the road was bad, the oxen slow, the driver very inefficient and the covered wagon springless, we rode very little, as our browned faces and blistered noses testified.

We had also wept briny tears over the smoking little camp-fires and had eaten with relish the badly cooked food which was liberally seasoned with sand and dirt by the incessant winds.

By night we had climbed into the wagon whose big, canvass-covered top afforded protection from the wild beasts and from the biting cold, and the high winds which increased in violence with the setting of the sun and which howled around the tent flaps. Sometimes the wind would die down near morning and then as we emerged from our cramped quarters, we found every leaf and blade covered with a silver filigree of hoarfrost beautiful to behold.

That last day we had all tramped many miles in dust several inches deep under a burning sun, the men far in advance of the wagon and Mrs. DeWitt and myself in the rear. What a relief when we came to the roaring, rushing Oodzani River where we bathed our dusty faces and lay down under the shadow of a large tree while our last meal was being prepared, and gazed unseeingly at the tall, cool, green, lush reeds and rushes growing rank and tall in the shallow pools near the shore and on a small island.

Our minds were occupied with the thought that the trip was now over and on the morrow, we would all of us settle down to regular work. We discussed, but with languor, the two bridal couples who were

also outspanned near us. They were going back to the Dutch Settlement in the north from which we had just come. Their double wedding was still the talk of Inyanga.

At five o'clock the oxen have had their feed and so have we. So we inspan the sixteen oxen and then get into the wagon with dread for we have to cross at the Slippery Drift where many an ox, a horse or a mule has been drowned. The wagon, a springless one, you remember, jolts down over the rocks into the eddying, foaming, swirling river where the oxen flounder desperately in striving to find firm foothold on the slippery rock bottom.

The men assure us women that there isn't the slightest danger but even as they speak, big, black Blessman slips, staggers and goes under. The driver yells frantically, cracking his long whip in the air over the backs of the others and soon Blessman is on his feet again.

Almost immediately Rupee, a big, ugly black brute but one of our strongest and best, goes down while his yoke-mate struggles and splashes in his efforts lest he too be dragged under by the swift current, but they also right themselves amid the fierce yells of the driver and leader.

The crossing takes but a few minutes but it is dangerous and exciting. As we pull up the bank, we see the two Boer couples on the other side, standing under a tree. The brides are mere lassies of sixteen, short, plump with fair round faces framed in pink calico sunbonnets. The lads, scarcely in their twenties, are large, stalwart fellows in gray flannel shirts, stout breeches, high boots, "Boss-of-the-

plains" hats and the inevitable ammunition belts around their waists.

They make an ideal pastoral picture as they stand there close to the rushing, swirling waters, each little bride with one hand in a large brown one. As we turn the bend in the road, we see the fingers intertwine more closely and the pink sunbonnets rest lightly against the gray-flanneled shoulders.

Our hearts soften into tender, hearty blessings on this "Love's young dream." A few years more and these blooming, rosy-cheeked girls will be weary, haggard, prematurely old women from hard, outdoor toil, poverty, loneliness and a big family.

A ripping, creaking, crashing, tearing sound interrupts our thoughts and causes us to start up in fright and dismay as an overhanging limb catches the wagon tent and leaves it almost demolished. We then learn that our driver got hold of some beer at Mtasa's and is now half drunk. This impresses the men that they must now walk near the span and we women are too nervous to stay in the wagon, so we get out also.

A walk of a mile or two in the moonlight calms our nerves and raises our spirits, though we are somewhat annoyed at first by a fantastically dressed native, the latest addition to our party, who persists in barely keeping off our heels until we stop and make him pass by. His is a grotesque figure often pictured but seldom seen, a wandering minstrel. As he walks along in the moonlight carrying a native organ and tambourine on which he plays as he walks, the one long feather in his hair, his appearance is almost uncanny.

The last donga, or ravine, is reached and we see the lights of home but we cannot reach there till tomorrow. On the other side of the valley, five miles away we see a single light at Old Umtali. We set the freak to work getting wood for a fire.

At ten o'clock the wagon comes up and as there is no wind, we wrap ourselves in rugs and blankets and draw around the glowing fire on the other side of which are the native boys. We are glad and sorry it is our last of so many pleasant evenings together.

The boys put on a big pot of beans to cook for themselves and we give them tinned beef to put into it. They crouch down warming their hands and relating to each other the incidents of the trip while we drink tea and munch roasted peanuts hot from the ashes.

Big Jim, the cook, now gets his *mbila*, or native piano, and begins to play the national dancing tune. The freak joins him and they begin to sing. At first they croon softly in a weird, minor strain. Now they start singing responsively to the perfect accord of their instruments. The song waxes faster and louder and their bodies sway rhythmically as they crouch there on their haunches.

We are now lost to their world as memory takes them back to the far-away scenes of their childhood and as they sing the same song which their ancestors have sung these hundreds, perhaps thousands, of years.

The singing increases in speed and volume until Big Jim, no longer able to control himself, springs to his feet and executes a vigorous dance.

As he ceases, we all applaud and the hungry boys

make an equally vigorous attack on the underdone beans and bully beef.

We get up, unwind our rugs and blankets and crawl up into our bed on wheels where little Vivian lies in her hammock long since asleep.

It is just the hour of midnight when at last we get our weary bodies under the warm blankets while the frogs in the neighbouring donga hoarsely croak us to sleep. And in the brilliantly lighted tropical sky, over our heads, there gleams and sparkles the beautiful Southern Cross.

XIII

IN THE HUNDI VALLEY

ALL that morning we made our way along the bleak Inyanga Heights in the teeth of a biting wind which nipped us to the bone. As we passed the old sheep kraal, we were reminded of that night five years ago when Mrs. DeWitt and I walked along that dark road where we had to feel our way with our feet, carrying the baby.

The wagon had got stuck at the bottom of the hill and we had been sent on ahead. The brief twilight had faded and black night had set in. Being over 7,000 feet above the sea, the night was cutting cold. We had some matches so we gathered a few ferns and started a fire. There was no wood on all that vast plain but we knew there were plenty of lions and leopards. So we had kept up the fire until we had cleared a large space beyond which we dare not venture. It was already nine o'clock so we decided that all we could do was to walk back to meet the wagon which we did.

Now the sun was shining but even so our hands and faces ached with the cold. As we rode along the old wagon road side by side, many other reminiscences came up before our minds. Here was where we turned off to see the Pungwe Falls. Mrs. DeWitt and I were appointed to view them from the top

while the men got a nearer and better view from a rather perillous position.

And just over that deep gully yonder was where the monstrous big baboon appeared, and seating himself on a great ledge of rock, shook his fist at us two women.

We were now bound for the Hundi Valley of which we had never heard until the day before. We were anxious to reach it by night lest our native boys die of the cold as so many others had done up there on those bleak, unprotected plains. Moreover we wanted to visit the valley in order to carry the Gospel to yet another part where it had not gone before.

But in turning aside to once more view the falls, we missed our trail and went astray. For a mile or two, we followed a narrow ridge of land some 1,500 feet above the surrounding country. On the one side of it was the magnificent Pungwe Gorge through which the river roared and seethed and boiled so furiously as to have invested itself with all sorts of wild superstitious tales among the natives. On the other side was a view that was awesome in its grandeur. There stretching away to the southeast was a vast expanse towards the sea where on clear days could be seen Gorongoza mountain nearly 200 miles away.

We had to continue to follow this ridge or turn back, for both sides were too precipitous to descend. The trail and the ridge narrowed until we came to an abrupt and dizzy descent among huge boulders. So high was it that the donkeys balked stoutly as they looked down the almost sheer trail and it took

a good half hour to get them started for we had to deal gently with them lest they break their precious necks. Maybe you can reason with a mule but you can't with a donkey.

Once started, we all went like goats from boulder to boulder. But when we got to the foot of the ridge, we found that the trail we were following only led up again onto another ridge and there was no trail to the kraal which we could see about five miles away over in the Hundi Valley. So we left the path and determined to cut across the unbroken veld in order to get off the Heights, so that our boys would not suffer with the cold.

We now plunged into grass from four to eight feet high through which we made our weary way up and down almost precipitous ravines so slippery from the tall grass that we were constantly losing our footing. Riding was long since out of the question and we had trouble to even drive the donkeys down the steep mountainsides. They did not mind going up but they were afraid going down.

There were swift mountain streams to be crossed, thick jungle to be penetrated but at last at eight o'clock that evening, we reached a kraal whose chief we learned was named Bowu. Here we rejoiced to find a lion-proof stockade empty in which we could put our weary donkeys with safety. A roaring fire was soon built at the village loafing place, the *dali*, a place like the "gate" of olden times, where all the elders congregate.

The next morning, assured of our peaceful intentions, a large crowd gathered to hear the Gospel message for the first time. Many of the women laughed

and giggled, the young bucks nudged each other, some asked questions, some mocked and a few listened with interest.

No missionary had ever been through here before and we had good audiences at the nine or ten kraals where we held services during the day which was a hard one. It was still impossible to ride, for though the kraals were not far apart they were all separated from each other by steep ravines from 500 to 800 feet deep.

Near sundown, we came to a very small collection of huts and asked if it were far to the big chief Sangama's kraal. A smart young buck, with a long feather in his hair, came out and assured us most plausibly that Sangama was close at hand and we would reach his kraal before the sun went down.

Were there any more dongas (ravines) to cross? O no, there was only one little one and we would get there before the sun set. The raw heathen take naturally to lying so we rarely believe what they say but this story seemed quite truthful.

A mile farther we came to one of the worst cañons in the whole of Rhodesia. Had we seen at once how bad it was we would have turned back. But having got into it we had to go through.

The trail was so steep that it was very difficult to get our donkeys to go down. We dare not force them or they would fall head first and be either maimed or killed.

So I had to lead the way taking care to be far enough ahead so that Jack would not drop on me if he did stumble and fall.

Jack was used to following me like a dog and so, with many a halt, he came on. Nig was more frightened but he could not bear to lose sight of his little white chum. And besides behind him came Mr. Springer with his sjambok (whip) in hand. Take it all in all, he considered it best to make his way carefully down the dizzy trail.

It was dark when we reached the bottom and plunged into thick jungle close to a roaring mountain stream which made a sheer plunge of about 500 feet a mile farther up-stream. Had there not been so many lions in the vicinity, we would have camped there until morning, for the stream was full of big boulders and deep pools and we knew it would be hard to get the donkeys across.

The moon came out bright and clear as we got the unwilling quadrupeds into the cold, rushing stream. They slipped into a pool and no effort they could make enabled them to get a footing on the slippery rock ahead. The boys crossed over, laid down their loads and came back to the rescue of the discouraged, exhausted little beasts who seemed in imminent danger of drowning. Eight boys and Mr. Springer succeeded in fairly lifting each one out bodily and getting them safely on land.

Then my turn came to cross. In midstream, I came to a boulder which I could not climb unless I took off my boots. So balancing myself on two rocks, I managed to get to my bare feet and, with a good deal of help, climb up one side and slide down the other without dropping into the water.

Once more we had thick jungle and a steep climb in pitchy darkness so that it was nine o'clock before

we reached the first kraal, Chijara's. Sangama's was three miles further, but we were ready to camp for the night. In a few minutes it began to rain.

The next morning the mountains were enveloped in a cold, white fog and mist. Our tent was wringing wet and all our clothes damp. We could not get an early start, so we asked Chijara if we could not hold a service in one of his huts. He was quite willing and soon nearly every one in the kraal was crowded into the hut. I sat on one side of the hut and the women and girls gathered by me. The men and boys took their places over by Mr. Springer. I mention this for it is a characteristic custom,—observed rigidly within doors and generally in the open air services.

Whenever we have held services in huts, even where no Christian service has ever been held before, we have always noted that the women shyly take their places by the white woman's side.

This congregation listened intently as they heard the Old, Old Story, and the men asked several intelligent, interested questions.

At ten o'clock the mists lifted and the sun came out so we started on the trail, but we had not gone more than two miles when it began raining again and soon our feet and legs were soaking wet. What a day that was! Drenched and chilled to the bone we had to climb and descend, climb and descend and then climb again for about 4,000 feet until once more we reached the wind-swept heights. And after that, we had to travel nearly ten miles to reach a white trader's store so that our boys could sleep in a hut. Here we changed our own wet garments, but as there was no

fire we put in another night of keen suffering with the cold.

Such is one of the experiences of itinerating in vacation time.

But it pays. We have had not a few boys from that Hundi Valley come to the school at Old Umtali and some of those chiefs have been asking us to send them teachers. Each boy who comes to the school is himself a witness. He goes back at vacation times and tells what he has himself learned and experienced, as he sits around the fires and the people listen and freely ask him whatsoever they will. Thus the seed is sown and later the missionary follows to reap a glorious harvest.

XIV

WHAT'S IN A NAME?

THE African changes his name like his garment,—when it is worn out. He gets tired of one name and gets another. He feels that his baby name is worn out by the time he reaches puberty. If he joins one of the many secret societies which exist among the various tribes, he changes his name again. I remember one time on the Congo when I met a man and asked him how his little son Mwanga, who had worked for me, was. He replied, "He is dead," which being interpreted meant that having joined the Nkimba, the secret society of that region, he had changed his name and the old name was dead. He also wished me to believe that his son had really died and that a new being had come to live in his body. That same man has since learned to say, "I am dead unto sin and alive through Christ," and become one of the most energetic and earnest of Christian workers there.

We find the kraal natives who go to the towns to work almost always return to their people bearing such names as Sixpence, Shilling, Jumbo, Tickie, etc., to which names they hold tenaciously and which are recognized in all seriousness by their friends.

We missionaries are usually sticklers for native names as these hotchpotch combinations grate on our ears. In the school I always insisted on learning

a boy's kraal name and calling him by it. So when Benjamin gave his name as Fifteen, I turned it down at once and always called him Mashoma. When he came to be baptized, he chose the name of Benjamin, but to this day writes his name Benjamin F. Madziro, the F. standing for Fifteen. His last letter is signed F. B. Madziro. Others have read F. Benjamin and all other imaginable combinations.

For although the African is exceedingly imitative and determined to have the full complement of names like a white man, he can never seem (in the Rhodesian district, at least) to understand the proper relation and order of the names, his variations being not only confusing but disastrous to a satisfactory mail service. And the boys are very keen on writing and getting letters.

When our natives are baptized, they invariably want a new name, nor is this a custom peculiar to the African. Pagan names in all pagan countries have had their heathenish significance so that converts have turned from them to the names of the Bible which they have adopted.

We allow our people to choose, and yet it often needs a bit of the missionary's guidance to keep them out of the ridiculous. There was James: long before he came to us, he had taken the name of the master for whom he worked, James Caplan, so that we never knew him by a native name. When he was baptized, he had his heart set on the name Revelation, and it was with considerable reluctance that he gave it up for Daniel, which name was well suited to his character. Daniel's preaching was after the pattern of the early Methodist preaching of which we read. He

certainly reminded us of Peter Cartwright, who, it is said, "fairly shook his congregation over the mouth of hell."

When Mali and Useni came up for baptism, they modestly asked for suggestions from their pastor. Mali said he had thought of Stephen and wished to know if that seemed proper. Nothing could have been more suitable to his general character, while the impulsive but ardent, tender-hearted, affectionate Useni had always been suggestive of the name of Philip. So they were thus named.

These two boys had come to us in the famine year when our crop had failed and we were heavily in debt. The edict had gone forth that while no one should be sent away, no more boys should be received. The next week these two came and applied for admission. Mr. Springer hesitated for a few seconds and then said to himself as he looked into their bright, eager faces, "The Lord will surely provide," and took them in. They are married to Mukonyerwa and Mutisiswa, two of our best girls, and are doing excellent work as evangelists and teachers.

Jone Nsingo and his wife, Suiwara, walked six hundred miles to come to our mission. Jone chose a no less high sounding name than that of Solomon. He is a good man but as yet has not been prëeminently noted for his learning. Suiwara decided on Marita, a Bantuized version of Martha though in disposition she is more of a Mary. She usually signs herself to me, Mrs. N. Solomon. When she had her first little girl baptized Janet Heren (the natives often have difficulty in pronouncing the letter *l*), I was wholly unconscious of the honour done me

for months. I often heard the younger girls calling "Helen" but it was a long time before I knew that Janet was my namesake.

Dr. Gurney strongly disapproved of giving English names to the wee black babies who came under his professional care. But one day while showing Mrs. Ferris the latest addition to our mission family he jokingly said, "We will have to call her Mabel, hey?" And from that on the name Mabéli was irrevocably fixed on the small miss by her parents and friends.

We had our Isaiah, Ezra, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. From the day they were baptized and solemnly congratulated with hand-shaking by their fellow Christians, they were always religiously called by their Christian names. Perhaps that was the right way to do but it was hard for us to bear in mind who was Isaiah and which was Ezekiel and we often lapsed into using the native names again. The thing that is of vital importance to us is that these boys and girls, these young men and young women have the New Name given them and are, indeed, sealed by the Holy Spirit.

XV

AN AFRICAN VANITY FAIR

WHOSO wends his way to the Celestial City must needs pass through Vanity Fair. It may be in the gay Champs-Élysées of gayest Paris, in London's poverty-pinched Whitechapel, the fierce Wall Street battle-ground of New York or in some obscure corner of a country town. But there is no evading it. So long as this world stands we shall have to pass through the inevitable Vanity Fair.

We had been three weeks on the trail. By foot and by donkey we had averaged twenty miles a day. All this day we had travelled over the veld which was carpeted with a thistle an inch or two high so that our band of carriers were footsore and tired out.

These were not ordinary carriers whom we had with us this time. They were eight of our senior boys who were in training for evangelists whom we had out on a 400 mile trip for practical instruction.

We were also in unknown country full of big game and abounding in lions so we were anxious to get a guide. So when we came to a certain kraal at sundown and the people told us that there was not another kraal near, we settled down for the night gladly. It was a large kraal but when we held a service in the evening, very few people came out. This was unusual and we wondered much at it.

However, we hired a guide who told us that with one exception we would not pass another kraal for three days and that we would need to supply ourselves with food beforehand.

We had not gone more than four miles the next morning when we heard the booming of a big drum and the shrill, "Yaii, yaii-yaii" of the women, which warned us that a native dance was in progress. We were not keen on taking our little Christian band through a drunken kraal in this remote and wild section but there was no escape; for almost as soon as we heard the singing, the news of our coming had reached the people and they came dashing out to see the white woman, the first who had ever been there.

This was a dilemma. We were depending on these natives to sell us food for the empty country ahead. We had been unable to get much at the last kraal as the people were all going to this dance and did not want to bother with us.

Our guide truly wanted to go along with us to seek work but he also wanted the benefit of this beer en route. So he began telling us that we could not reach water again that day. We decided to stop long enough to eat and to buy. We had been eating only two meals a day so if we ate then, we could go until night.

Used as I am to natives (and on that trip in particular I had been an attraction unrivalled by Barnum's white elephant), I was considerably disconcerted by the howling mob which surrounded us as soon as we dismounted and unsaddled our donkeys.

I sat down on a log and began to write in my

journal while one of our boys, Long Jake, began to barter. Some of the women came and looked over my shoulder to see me write and shouted their opinions as to my cleverness close to my ears. Some were selling millet meal to Jake; some came with gourds of corn for the donkeys; some were screaming for beads, some were shouting for salt. One woman suddenly shrieked out that the white man was taking a picture; some were yelping one thing, and some another, and unutterable confusion reigned.

A decrepit old hag comes and asks me to do the trading. She can't cheat Jake and she knows she can me. I tell her I do not know how to trade, and she turns and shouts this to the others. A little woman bends down close to my ear and begs for a needle. I have none. A poor wretch staggers up and asks me if I will buy a goat for money. I tell him that is my husband's business, not mine. A woman thrusts her face into mine, her breath reeking and her form reeling, and asks if I do not want to buy some beer. I assure her I do not, and she proclaims this loudly.

Yonder, in his few filthy rags, lies the chief of the kraal, dead drunk. Over there lies another man, stretched out, sleeping off his dissipation. A younger debauchee makes himself odious to me by following me around, with persistent begging and flattery. There goes a woman trying to lead her staggering husband to his hut where he will be out of sight. He resists and she has to give up the task.

At last the trading is over and we try to have a little service with them though it does seem like cast-

ing pearls before swine. Still it is our work to scatter the seed broadcast. They are all too drunk to take in much that we say, if anything, or even to keep quiet. The young rake drops off to sleep. Near him an old man, in indecent array, sits in the centre of the group and alternately dozes and shouts to the others to keep quiet. It would be humorous if it were not so pathetic. There they are, boys and girls, youths and maidens, old men and old women, all insufficiently clothed and all more or less drunk. Even the babes at the breast have been affected by the intoxication of their mothers.

Poor souls! Far removed from civilization, in one of the most remote and unfrequented parts of Rhodesia, they live the same lives their fathers have lived and no one has told them of a better way.

This is heathenism at home as it really is, divested of all its romance,—vile, sensual, devilish. We shudder at the repulsiveness of those never-washed bodies and the indescribable filth of the whole kraal. We shrink with disgust from the sight and sounds of this sin-polluted place.

There is often an idea at home that missionaries do not mind these offensive features so much. On the contrary, the missionary gets to loathe them more and more as he comes to know more of the real life of the people and the first rosy-coloured romance of novelty wears away.

What's the use then of staying? Because we have seen rich jewels for the Master gathered out of just such communities as this. Two men went out of that kraal and accompanied us to Old Umtali where they worked for months at the mission. One was not

promising but the other was a very decent, earnest sort of fellow who attended our meetings regularly.

We cannot say what became of them. Sometimes we are privileged to trace direct results. Sometimes we cannot. But this we do know that many such young men have been found in after years to have accepted Christ and to have lived a new life which has been the means of bringing about an entire revolution in their old kraals.

"Now I saw in my dream, that Christian went not forth alone, for there was one whose name was Hopeful who joined himself to him. This Hopeful also told Christian that there were many more of the men in the fair that would take their time and follow after."

TRAVELLING BY OX WAGON

ON THE TRAIL TO TETE

XVI

ON THE TRAIL TO TETE

MISSIONARIES are often credited with most extraordinary statements which would surprise them even more than their readers. I have before me a copy of one of my letters home in which the copyist made me say that the Zambesi "was swarming with *frogs* who were used to human flesh." This may be a judgment on me for using the rather slangy term *crocs* instead of spelling crocodile in full.

For a week we had travelled through the dry, desert-like forest where we could only get water for cooking and baths were out of the question. Accordingly we had looked and longed for the Big River.

The Zambesi was a disappointment to us as far as utility was concerned on account of its saurian inhabitants; now although on the banks of the great river, we were able to get water enough for cooking only by tying our buckets to a long pole and carefully dipping them into the river.

At Cachoa the country became very mountainous and the trail led away from the river over one of the roughest mountain ranges I have ever seen. The donkeys had all they could do to look after themselves which they did very willingly with much kick-

ing of heels whenever they got onto a place sufficiently level to admit of such capering.

That night at Cachoa we had slept in the same house where Livingstone had been entertained a half a century before. The house was a large, roomy, massive affair, its thick walls and heavy shutters and doors having been made to stand against an attack of the enemy whether Portuguese or native. That was in the high day of slavery and the half-caste owner of this house was a nabob and a prince.

The house was all falling in when we were there in 1906, and had been abandoned as unsafe. As Mr. Springer was taken with a very heavy fever, we were put in one room that was considered reasonably safe, in order that I might be better able to care for him than in a tent. So the boys brought in grass and piled it on the floor in one corner, arranged our blankets and he went to bed about 2 P. M.

The house, to repeat, was in a state of decay like the government whose slave trade had been its own undoing. The heavy rafters had been tunnelled by borers and the white ants until they bent, and in some places had already fallen in under the weight of the red tiles on the roof. Most of the rooms were littered with dirt and rubbish and the only occupants were the rats or a chance snake which came to hunt them down.

I was glad when the morning dawned for my husband had been more or less delirious all night and I felt none too comfortable in the gloomy old ruin all alone. As he felt better, we got onto the trail as early as possible for we had learned in the sultry Zambesi valley to travel early and late (usually whether sick

or well) and keep in the shade through the heat of the day from ten till four.

We were now to go around the Kabrabasa Rapids by an inland route. We had been told that water was scarce and so took two of our canvass buckets full when we left Cachoa. After ten miles, we had our breakfast and rested in the shade of some fine, big trees. At three, we went on about four miles when we came to a camping place for caravans. Here we found a hole in the ground into which water slowly seeped. But in order to dip it out, each carrier had to step into the hole with one foot. That day some 200 carriers had possibly stepped into the hole. We had met them on the trail and so decided that we would do without water and food until we could find something better. For it is hard to find a native who is not affected directly or indirectly with some loathsome disease. Leprosy is very common, ulcers abound, a horrible eczema prevails and other things unmentionable. So our refusal to use that water was not on purely fastidious grounds.

However, our boys cooked their food and drank the water, though they laughed and made wry faces and admitted the water wasn't exactly up to the mark. It was five o'clock when we started out again and the short tropical twilight soon gave way to the light of the moon. We began to climb wearily and made poor time, but mile after mile passed and we reached what seemed the top of a range of high hills and yet no sign of water.

After nine miles, I announced that I could not go another rod, and as we were in quite a woods where the boys could have a fire to protect them from the

wild beasts, leopards were especially thick in that section and lions quite numerous, we camped and spent a restless night dreaming about streams and fountains, ever trying to get a drink.

With the first gray of the dawn, we were on the trail again descending to the plain where we knew we must reach water. Soon our eyes were gladdened with the sight of fields of Kaffir corn. Now there *must* be water. After another mile, which seemed like two, we met a couple of men.

"Where is the water?" we asked.

"It isn't very near," they replied, "and it isn't very good. There are snakes in it."

Now the word for snake is *nyoka*, and it is used also for a pain in the stomach, so we were in doubt as to what was meant. None of our boys could talk fluently with the men, being of another tribe. But we all wanted to find water and were willing to take, as we thought, most anything.

Two miles further, we came to an opening where there were twenty or more men and women gathered around a bare spot. There were as many large black clay water jars, some of which were filled with an opaque, slimy fluid. The other jars were empty.

"Here," said the man who had guided us to the place for a box of matches, "here is the water," and he took us over to a hole in the side of a black clay bank. The hole might have been four feet deep, but ran diagonally into the bank. At the bottom, the water was slowly oozing through, but before there could be enough for the waiting women to dip it out, it had to cover one tangled, slimy, crawling mass of glazy, black frogs which bore little resemblance to

the pretty, bright green, cheery, bass-toned playfellows of our childhood days. These frogs appeared to be sightless and half dead.

"Why in the world don't they take them out?" I exclaimed shuddering.

"Because they are afraid they would displease the water spirits (bad spirits) and the water would cease to come at all."

"Do you want to stop here and eat?" was asked the boys. Daniel, the spokesman, was quick to give an emphatic negative. Jake shook his head with a comical grin. Not a boy would consent to stay. So we had to retrace our way a half mile back to the main trail and then trek four miles more until we came to another of the numerous sand rivers in that region. Here the natives had several holes from two to twelve feet deep where we could get a clean though whitish water. Here too the natives crowded curiously about us bringing food for sale while we were able to tell them who we were and somewhat about that water of Life which Christ has promised so freely and which the Church deals out so sparingly that these poor souls had never heard of it before nor will they for a long time again.

XVII

A TALE OF TWO DONKEYS

THE first big thing I ever prayed for in my life was a donkey, and it took considerable coaxing of my faith to do that. I was so afraid I might be presumptuous and be asking too much: for donkeys were costing then about $200 each. The Master says, "Ask largely: herein is My Father glorified," and then we resort to all sorts of dodges, lest if we do ask we may embarrass Him.

So I did a lot of quibbling before I asked for the donkey. It wasn't exactly an absolute necessity, as I have ever been a fairly good pedestrian. I could not even claim it on the ground of health, for I was nearly five years in Rhodesia before I had a fever and I was not able to foresee what a blessing a donkey would be to me then. But I did know that I could do more effective work if I had a quadruped, and so at last I very tremblingly stepped out on His promises and prayed for the donkey, all the while telling myself that if my prayer wasn't answered, I should know it was because I did not really *need* the donkey.

No wonder that we find so oft repeated by the Master, "O ye of little faith!" How our meanness must pain Him! Now as nearly as I can figure out, all the time I was metaphorically standing first on one foot and then on the other trying to decide which way to

go, the money was on the way, sent by a woman of God in Vineland, New Jersey.

Jack's master died and he was put in the hands of an auctioneer for sale. One day when Mr. Springer was over to Umtali, this man said that he heard I wanted a donkey, and here was one for only $150, and he would throw off his own commission and that would make him $140. So Jack became my property. He worked for his board down at the mission stables the while I was under the Woman's Board, and many a trip to the kraals he carried me between times.

However, as an unmarried woman I could not make extensive journeys, but after my marriage I was able to accompany my husband on the wider circles of the district of which he was presiding elder. Altogether little Jackie must have carried me more than 2,000 miles by native trail.

As a rule Jack was a gentle, sociable, friendly little beast, an ideal lady's riding donkey. His one weakness was his unwillingness to tolerate a rival. He was ready to fight to the finish any donkey who made pretense of braying louder than he did.

So when two new donkeys were added to the mission equipment and one of them was chosen to go on a 400 mile trip with Jack, he was quite willing to make friends. The newcomer couldn't bray. Jack was quite willing to do all the braying for them both. The new donkey was as black as Jack was white so we called him Nig.

Nig had never been broken to the saddle before and did not receive his burden on his back with good grace. For the first week, he was continually bolt-

ing from the path to wipe off that load under the low limbs of the trees. This not only proved annoying to the rider but as Jack always insisted in following suit to see what was going on, it was difficult for me to keep my own neck safe.

After a week's time, the two were inseparable. It was impossible to hold one if the other was out of sight. And yet when they were together they quarrelled. Many a night we were kept awake with Nig's kicking and squealing until Mr. Springer would have to get up and give them both a thrashing. That seemed to satisfy them and they would keep tolerably quiet the rest of the night.

When we dismounted and walked along the trail to rest our backs and theirs, we always tied their reins to the saddles and sent them ahead. Off they would trot with a frisky kick of the heels, Jack frequently stopping to look around as much as to say, "Are you coming?" But when he heard the loud "Anno" for him to wait, he would slyly wink an ear, kick up his heels, give Nig a nip in the thigh and the two would scamper off like two naughty boys.

One night we were down in the Sena district and came to a kraal at about sundown. As usual we asked the chief where we could pitch our tent for the night. He replied that he would not consent to our putting up our tent at all. That the lions were so thick and so bold in that section that he would not risk having any white man's blood on his head. It was a small kraal so he said he could not let us have a hut either but if we wished, we might sleep over the goat pen. Now this particular goat pen was the strongest one I ever saw or smelled. It was built of

large poles so to be lion proof. On the top of it was a small grainery which was reached by a ladder. I objected to the grainery on account of the odour. Moreover, we could not leave the donkeys out to be eaten. The boys could all find shelter and protection,—if not comfort,—in a dilapidated hut used for the kraal boys and single men.

What should we do? Darkness was already upon us so we could not go on nor go back. At last the chief very unwillingly consented to let us have one hut for the night. There seemed no other way but to take the donkeys in with us, giving them one-half of the hut and we taking the other.

We ate our humble meal by the light of a slim bonfire and then began to hold service as it was getting late and the native retires early. I noticed a group of women some distance away and calling to Daniel to come with me and bring the baby organ, I went over to them. They at once came around me and I talked to them in Chikaranga while one of their young men acted as interpreter into Chikunda. I shall never forget the earnest faces and earnest questions of those women as I told again the Old, Old Story, ever new. There was one woman whose face was lined with sorrow who drank in my words with an eagerness which showed the hunger and thirst of her soul. I had our only lantern in which was a candle with me and it seemed to me that my coming to these women was like that tiny flame in the midst of the dense darkness. We sent Daniel and Jim back over that route to preach again and I hope that that one woman at least found the soul rest for which she was longing.

The services over, we had the task of stowing ourselves away for the night. At the very outset there was trouble with the donkeys who objected to being crowded through that narrow door. Jack, being the smaller and more amenable to *reason*, was pulled in first when Nig crowded after him in haste.

We had partitioned the hut off with poles and made a partition between the two donkeys so we thought they would be quiet. They seemed peaceable enough when we crept in between our blankets with our clothes on as usual.

For a half hour there was nothing to disturb us but the incessant buzzing of mosquitoes and biting of fleas. The fleas were also stirring up the donkeys who began to get restless and move around. Mr. Springer shouted to them to keep quiet and there was a lull. Soon they began prancing around again so he got up and tied them more securely. He had hardly laid down again when there was a scrimmage between the two donkeys and we jumped up just in time to save ourselves as Jack fell over the poles and rolled onto the bed speeded by Nig's heels.

It was then eleven o'clock and we were dead tired from daily marches and much fever. So the decree went forth and one donkey with it, Nig. He was tied out under the eaves where he and Jack could smell noses through the cracks but not touch each other. The tent was tied around the back of him so to give all possible protection. And then we went to sleep while Jack behaved himself until morning.

It was a week later on a Monday morning that we found ourselves at the foothills of the high plateau on which Old Umtali is situated. There was a climb

of some 3,000 feet ahead of us and we were both weakened by fever. For weeks we had had fever nearly every day and as our rations had been unvaried rice and salmon, we had not been able to eat, either. How we ever made it, I hardly know. But the last half mile was less steep than the rest, as there were no boulders but only a steady ascent. I had dragged my aching body as far as it seemed I could. Mr. Springer put his saddle on Jack and placed me in the saddle. It was a stiff climb but I determined to stay on as long as Jack would carry me for if it got to the impossible, I knew he would stop.

Jack started off bravely. The path grew steeper but he only dug his little hoofs into the ground and kept on climbing. At last it was so steep that I leaned over, put my arms around his neck and flattened myself on his back and in that way, with much hard panting, he got me to the top.

And what a magnificent panorama of mountain, valley and plain was spread out before us as we stood there at the head of that Hundi Valley into which we had gone for the first time the year before. During this time we had had several boys come to our school from that vicinity. And the time will soon come when that region will ring with the songs of the children in school and when on Sabbath days the sweet toned bell on some native chapel will summons the Valley to praise and to prayer.

XVIII

THE GLORIOUS FOURTH IN AFRICA

IT was on Monday, July 3, 1905, that we broke camp anew after a rather unsatisfactory Sunday at M'Rewa's, one of the largest kraals in Southern Rhodesia. A large crowd had gathered around us on our arrival and all the rest of Saturday afternoon we were besieged with visitors. But the word had gone out that we were there to steal the children to cut up and make them up into medicine for witchcraft and at once there was a marked change in their attitude. Instead of running after us in a perfect mob, they ran away as hard as they could. Sunday morning most of the mothers bundled their babies onto their backs and left for their gardens. So Sunday we could not get an audience anywhere.

Monday morning we once more got onto the trail. There were Charley, Vega, Philip, Samuel, Tom, Stephen, Mukanganwa and Nyasha, all of whom were in training for the ministry and who are now engaged as Christian workers in the mission. They with one other boy, the two donkeys and ourselves formed our little caravan.

Leaving the M'Rewa police camp at eleven o'clock we took as our next objective point the M'Toko police camp forty miles away. We had been told that there was water all along the trail and we could camp anywhere. So there was if one but

knew where to find it. We did not and as there were no cross trails leading to it, darkness fell and we had found no place where we could camp.

Two natives passed us just at dusk and we asked them where there was water. They replied it was at the river and they were hurrying towards it for the night. As they had no loads, they went on and soon disappeared in the rapidly deepening twilight.

We were going down a mountain range to the Nyandiri River. I walked as fast as I could in the darkness fearing to ride, but my strength gave out so I had to mount. Mr. Springer walked behind Nig switching his legs now and then so that he trotted on almost out of Jack's sight. This made Jack hurry on after him, forgetting his own tired little legs.

After four miles in the darkness, the sound of rushing waters warned us that the river was close at hand. The boys put down their loads and begged to camp where they were. They said they did not know the river and did not like to cross in the dark. Besides they were too tired to go further. But there were too many lions in this vicinity for us to think of camping in the open. It was here that Mr. Nell had been killed by lions two years previously. It was so dangerous that the government had built a lion proof caravansary for travellers, mostly native police.

So the boys lighted the candle in the lantern and Vega started with it down the steep embankment towards the river and carefully made his way across, the others following. But we could not cross where they did on our donkeys and we did not feel like wading unless it was necessary.

So with many a plunge into some deep pool, a stumble over a rock and the danger of being any moment precipitated into the stream, we finally got safely over and climbed the bank on the other side.

But there was not a sign of the caravansary. Where could it be? At last after much searching along the trail with the lantern for a path leading off from it, we spied a light about a quarter of a mile away and started for it stumbling along over rough native gardens, shivering with the cold.

The caravansary was a yard enclosed by a high circular fence of strong poles placed close together so no lion could break through nor jump over. There were also two huts, one in which the native guard and his family lived and the other for strangers. The latter was already full of natives.

There was no place for us to pitch our tents, and only a little wood for a fire so we drank some hot coffee, wrapped up in our blankets and tried to sleep but could not for the bitter cold. When the morning dawned, the ground was all white with hoar-frost.

Our boys cooked the supper they did not get the night before for breakfast, and it was late when we started. The frosty ground chaps their bare feet badly if they are forced to go out on it in the early morning. So we do not compel them to start early on such mornings.

Then began an ascent on the other side. About three miles on, we met a native police, or black watch, and asked him how far it was to M'Toko's. "Just at hand," he exclaimed encouragingly; "I just left there this morning." The heathen African is perhaps the most cheerful liar in the world.

Noon found us still toiling along in heavy white sand while the sun shone blisteringly over our heads. We came to an almost stagnant stream of milky water and decided to stop for lunch. About one o'clock we started on thinking we surely were almost there. Soon we met a native man and woman. "Where is M'Toko's?" we asked. "Ah!" he exclaimed his face lighting up with pleasurable anticipation of a reward for his information, "you are there already. When will you get there? *Zwinozwino*, just now, this minute." "*Zwinozwino*," snorted the boys, "it's all *zwinozwino* with these natives here. They're awful liars." Which was beyond dispute true.

At three o'clock we came to the only sign-board we have ever seen in over 3,000 miles trekking. In weather-washed lettering we read, "To M'Toko Police Camp." Our courage revived. Surely we must be near there now. But the old wagon road was so overgrown that it soon was obliterated and several times we lost it in the long grass as we crossed some swampy place or old abandoned native gardens.

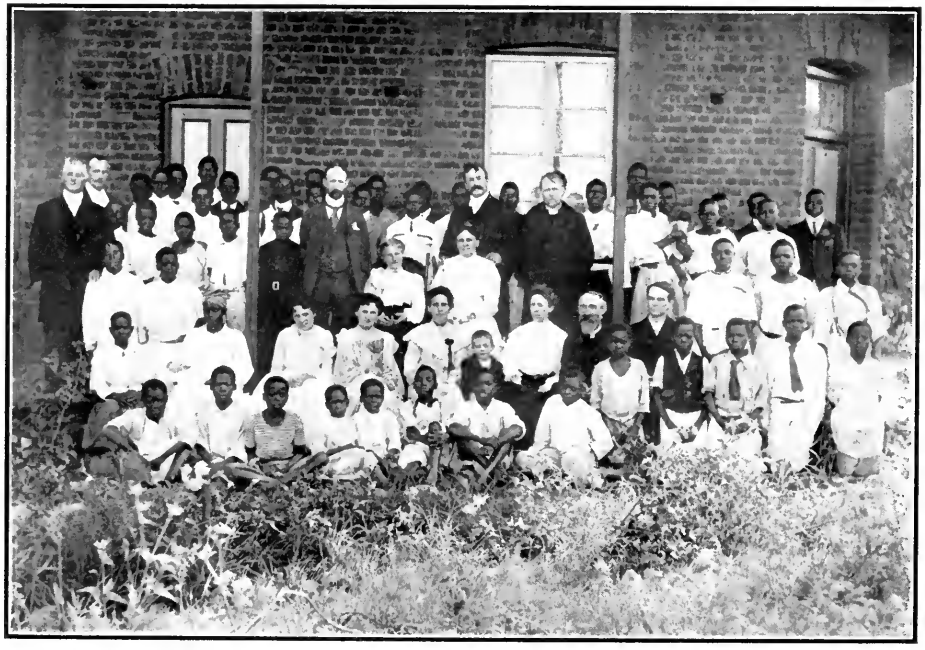
At four o'clock we came to a kraal and asked a young man the way to M'Toko's. "You are in the most direct path now," he answered. "You will get there when the sun goes down." This was, I believe, the only truthful and direct answer from a native on all that trip of nearly 400 miles and therefore deserves special mention.

Sure enough, five miles further, we came to the camp where two white troopers and a corporal might be said to be buried alive. No white woman had ever

visited that camp before and very few men. There was little work to be done, and almost nothing to read. They were practically cut off from all the outside world in which they had grown up, buried alive in the midst of a savage people and untouched heathenism.

Said one white man to us, "Take the Gospel to these Africans for our sakes if not for theirs. They will surely drag us down if we, as a superior race, do not lift them up."

We spent the evening with the three lonely white men who had not seen a white woman for so long that they hardly knew how to act. They felt like schoolboys of the awkward age again. One brought in his mascot, a queer, beautifully marked wild animal that he had caught and tamed. This broke the ice and conversation flowed freely. Before they left, we had evening prayers, a fitting close for that long-to-be-remembered Fourth.



THE FIRST WHITE WEDDING AT OLD UMTALI

Mr. and Mrs. John M. Springer, New Year's, 1905

XIX

CHRISTMAS AT OLD UMTALI

WHENEVER I think of that first big celebration of Christmas at the mission, there comes up before me the picture of Philip (he was only Useni then) as I saw him coming back from the kraals with the Christmas dinner.

Mr. Springer had given him and Vurungu (Jacob) five dollars and had sent them away to do their best in buying meat for the feast. Philip was a senior: Jacob was still classed among the "picanines," as the boys called them. Jacob was the old king's grandson and he knew it well. So did the natives and that was why he was sent with Philip to help drive a bargain.

The next morning I heard a noise, and looking out my back door saw Philip in the wake of two lively goats which were trying to pull him along at a pace that was incompatible with his dignity. He was dressed in a long, black rubber rain coat which came down to his bare feet and was buttoned up tight to the chin. On his head was a black derby hat while his usually sunny face was as grave as a deacon's. Was he not the important bearer of the Christmas dinner? Behind him was Jacob with a rooster under each arm. (He had bought and paid for them though.) Once the two goats were safely tethered

out in the side yard, Philip relaxed and entered into the prevailing air of festivity.

Daniel had been told off to decorate the church so he marshalled his band of youthful assistants, had them form in military line and march for the veld like young soldiers. Daniel had a real passion for drilling all the small boys, himself being the commanding officer, of course. And the small boys enjoyed it too. Daniel's band would have put to shame the native soldiers whom we saw drilling in a go-as-you-please manner near Malange. That kind of thing would not have done for Daniel. In person he was so straight that he almost bent backward: in character he was the same and his religious doctrine measured up to his character. So he marched the small fry away and later on they came marching back with palm leaves for guns, lustily singing, "Onward Christian Soldiers."

Daniel trimmed the church handsomely and in the afternoon I found him in the compound presiding over the kitchen where a dozen or so boys had clubbed together to make cakes, pies and other indigestible pasties out of flour, sugar, etc., that they had bought with their saved-up money. One pie was made with two thick, unshortened crusts, the filling consisting of native honey. However, the boys were all blessed with good appetites and equally good digestions.

Christmas eve the suppressed enthusiasm of the day gave way to a burst of song. They sang the hymn-book through and back again and our little valley was a flood of melody until nearly midnight.

Although it was our midsummer, the morning

dawned rather chill and misty. Heavy white clouds hung over the top of Mt. Hartzell and a thick fog hovered over the spruit. But nothing daunted by the late hour of the previous evening or the cold of the morning, every student was out by the first gray of the dawn to march in line around to the three houses of the white missionaries, singing Christmas carols. The Boer farm overseer's wife told me with tears in her eyes that when she first awakened and heard the singing in the distance, she thought she must be in heaven.

At nine o'clock the call for church was sounded on a broken crowbar which had been hung up in place of the bell which came three years later. Our boys arrived promptly with faces duly solemnized for the occasion. Whatever other apparel the native African may lack, he is always able to clothe himself with dignity as with a garment. With the boys were a few native guests who had been invited by their friends and brothers,—enough to spread the word about the country so that the next year there were four times as many others from the kraals. Among the guests was Mukonyerwa, Jacob's sister, soon to be Kaduku's fiancée.

The two little Boer girls had been made glad with white dresses and new dolls and their mother by means of hard work and fine calculations had managed to buy them *shoes* and *white parasols.* Even the fifty carved ebony faces lighted up with admiration and pleasure as the two flaxen-haired lassies, arrayed like little angels, softly tiptoed up the aisle and took their usual places on the front seat.

After the singing, the praying and the short

Christmas sermon, the gifts were distributed. The mission could not afford luxuries but the new hymn-books for the older boys and enamel plates and tin spoons for the younger ones were thoroughly appreciated.

Then came the dinner, and two goats did not go very far when they had to be distributed among sixty persons. But there was plenty of rice and the cooks saw to it that there was plenty of gravy. On account of the extra and unexpected visitors, we added to the menu a few tins of salmon, a slice of bread for each person and some peanuts.

One of the amusing features was the setting of the tables. All the new plates and spoons had to be turned over to Stephen and Philip. Some of the boys were the wealthy owners of agate cups. Carefully opened milk tins had to serve for the rest. But there were not enough of them, so there was a hurried search made in all the houses and every possible place where a milk tin might be found to eke out enough. The table-cloths were of unbleached muslin and Daniel came to the front to lay flowers on the cloths and arrange bouquets of flowers of which there were plenty.

The early morning mist had soon disappeared and the rest of the day was cloudless and exceedingly hot.

The goats and rice dispatched, the boys took to playing the graceful and musical native game of ball. At four o'clock the school bell rang vigorously and I hurried over to the compound to see whether it was a fire or what. To my surprise the boys were about to serve afternoon tea, on which occasion the pastries of the previous day played an important part. One

table was set for the girls and women and another for the boys. Mutisiswa looked up with a shy smile (she and Philip were not engaged then), Marita beamed with satisfaction and a happy tea party was soon in session.

At six o'clock the wash-boiler was put on the stove in my kitchen. When the water boiled, I put in a half a pound of tea, three or four tins of milk and sugar enough to make it real sweet. In the meantime, Stephen was getting the tables set again in the schoolroom, and one extra table near the door was set —unknown to me but with Benjamin's supervision— with my table-cloth and dishes, and when I went over to see if everything was all right Daniel politely bowed me to a seat at that table where I was soon joined by Mr. Springer and the Lawrence family.

Stephen was head waiter and master of ceremonies. Years of experience working for whites had made both him and Samuel expert table waiters. These two were also able to manage the small boys. We all laughed most heartily to hear Stephen as he passed the biscuits, say, "Take one," in English, nor would they have dared take more at each passing.

They ate a little and sang much that evening. Reaching over to one of the bouquets, Benjamin took some sprigs of bright purple boganvilliar and put it in his hair and over his ears. Others followed his example until nearly every woolly head was brilliantly and sometimes grotesquely ornamented with flowers. Daniel usually led the singing as he was best able to pitch a tune and carry it through, which is quite an achievement when there are at least twenty lusty singers who know neither the tune nor the words.

Jim got up and recited eighteen verses of the tenth of John, in English, to the great admiration of the boys while Gumba, his "friend," dropped her eyes on the table as if blinded by his brilliancy. Charley Potter, being our best reader, gave us the poem, "Hark what mean those holy voices," in English, and then the whole crowd sang it lustily in the vernacular. Others read and recited both English and Chikaranga. And thus with fresh relays of tea three hours passed merrily away. Then they rose, sang the doxology and asked for the benediction, which was no sooner given than Daniel, without the least irreverence on his part, called for three cheers and a tiger.

We had all had one of the merriest of Merry Christmases.

XX

WHEN GREEK MEETS GREEK

MISSIONARIES are quite as human as other people,—in fact a little more so owing to the narrow circle of social life in which they are placed. Moreover, they do not (as is so often supposed) spend all their time in teaching the poor heathen the way to heaven,—that is not directly.

Usually there isn't anything the missionary has ever learned to do in his life that he doesn't have to do again on the foreign field, particularly in a primitive field like Africa. And in addition to these, he has to turn his hand to half a hundred things of which he never dreamt.

One of the first things this missionary of whom I write had to do on the field was to drive a span of oxen, eight yoke to the span. Then the oxen all died of Red Water Fever and donkeys took their place. Not a few of them shuffled off their leather reims with pyemia and the rest still remain in the service. This story has to do with the ones which survived.

There were two white men, both Yankees, hailing from the Middle West: they both had the unmistakable Yankee twang and Yankee drawl: moreover they were both endowed by nature with the enjoyment of driving a sharp bargain: and they had both been bred on the prairies where they had known the joy of swapping horses: and they met in Africa.

The one was a road-maker for the Chartered Company and the other a clerical looking missionary. The road-builder had two span of donkeys, eighteen in each span, while the missionary was at the head of a mission which owned one span. In the course of his going and coming, the missionary often passed the other on the road, and as is the custom of Western men, usually stopped his mule for a few words of friendly chat.

"I say," drawled the road-builder as they met one hot day, "don't want to trade a donkey, do you?"

Inwardly the instincts and training of twenty years ago made the missionary prick up his ears and answer cautiously, even indifferently as he flicked an imaginary fly off the mule's back, "O I don't know. Hadn't thought of it."

The road-builder squirted out a mouthful of tobacco juice, pushed back his hat, took a sight with one eye on the distant range of mountains, cleared his throat and said, "Wa-al, yer see it's this way: I've only one white donkey in my lot and I noticed the other day 's your team wus goin' by that you'd only one white donkey in your span. I hate to see donkeys odd mated an' I thought I'd just speak to you 'n' mebbe we could trade if it's all the same to you."

"Well," said the other, still with true Yankee caution, "I'll be back this way to-morrow and I'll take a look at the one you want to trade and then we'll see about it."

"All right," said the road-builder as he turned back to his work and the other drove on with an inward chuckle. He knew only too well that his white donkey was the biggest, finest looking donkey in his

span. And he knew that that was what had struck his compatriot's eye and not the æsthetic desire to have a well-mated team. He also knew that the white donkey was the laziest one in the lot. More than once it had been suggested that the white donkey be hitched with his head to the wagon in which case the rest of the span at least would be saved the trouble of pulling him along. Anything with four legs which could hold up the reims in Whitey's place was sure to be a bargain.

He had not spent years on the Dakota prairies for nothing. When he came back and saw the poor, shabby little brown donkey to be swapped for the big white, he knew his conclusions were correct. However, he leisurely concluded the bargain and the shabby little mare held up the reims in Whitey's place, did twice the work and in the course of six months presented the mission a nice little foal.

Some time later as the missionary was passing by, he said, "Haven't got another donkey you want to trade, have you?"

"Dunno's I have," replied the road-builder meditatively, "unless," he added again, putting his foot up onto the hub of the wheel and spitting sidewise into the middle of the road, "unless it's that white one."

"He is kinder lazy, isn't he?" replied the missionary in a confirmatory tone.

"Yes," shortly added the other, "but," as if speaking out his mental vindication of his own case, "the other was a kinder lazy critter too."

Five years have passed and there's another road-builder on that job now, but the last time the mis-

sionary passed that way there was a white donkey with a big cow-bell on his neck out at grass by the side of the road. He had never been seen in the span. And so long as the Yankee stayed on the road-building job, he had one big, white donkey which he was willing to trade for anything of the long-eared species.

XXI

BUYING A TROUSSEAU

KADUKU'S bare feet made only a slight swishing sound as he swiftly descended the three steps which led from the mission home kitchen down into the room where he had his bed. It was a crude sort of bed made of old provision box boards nailed onto two poles while four sticks nailed onto the corners acted as posts. It was a very rude production but the pride of Kaduku's heart. He had made it himself. To be sure the legs were a bit unsteady and every now and then they collapsed entirely, when they had to be reset with much ostentation and vigorous hammering. So much the better. It only the better demonstrated to his fellows that he, Kaduku, the Little One, *could* hammer.

Kaduku's bed was neatly spread with three blankets and the crowning feature was a straw pillow on which was a gaily coloured pillow-case. Around the room were various pictures tacked up on the wall. Some were Sunday-school roll pictures which Charley had given him, some were those he had taken out of old magazines; they were of infinite variety, ranging from Abraham on the Plains of Mamre to the latest races taken from "The Graphic," while the highly-coloured print of King Edward and Queen Alexandria stood out in bold relief against the ultra marine wall.

Kaduku sat down on the bed and drew out a little tin trunk in which his Sunday clothes and his hoarded wealth were kept, but not always secure. He had once taken in a passing friend to sleep with him and the friend had got away with six of Kaduku's precious gold sovereigns. It was a heavy blow for the generous-hearted youth to be repaid with such treachery, so he had kept the trunk securely locked and wore the key about his neck thereafter.

He had been saving ever since and now had ten of these bright pieces for a special purpose. He also took out his Sunday clothes, a rusty black and a most unbecoming suit, but the pride of his heart. Did not the *Mufundises* wear black on Sunday? And had he not risen to the dignity of *Interpreter?* If then his teachers wore black as a fitting apparel for the Sabbath day, he must wear it also.

Dressed in his Sunday clothes, his leather shoes *and* socks, he put the precious gold coins in a purse and hurried out into the white, hot sunlight for a ten mile walk to town.

I can see him now as he went down the road swinging his stocky little figure from side to side with a most self-important swagger.

There are two kind of stores to be found in all European towns in Africa,—the so-called Kaffir Store where only the natives and Indians trade and the White Stores where the Europeans deal and where large profits are also gathered from a native trade. Many of the white men will curse the Kaffir roundly and the mission which "pampers him so that he gets above his place." But if he comes into the same man's store with a handful of yellow sovereigns in

his pocket,—why *that's* only business. This same man will spend a whole morning waiting on such a native, taking down everything he has on his shelves and showing him, for the time being, all the deference that he would to the mayor or the president of the local bank.

Kaduku knew a man who kept one of the best stores for whites and straight to him he went.

"Good-morning, Kaduku," exclaimed the young man genially. He knew the short, stubby little fellow well from frequent visits to the mission.

"Good-morning, sir," was the polite reply.

"Well, what can I do for you this morning?" he asked.

"I wish to make purchase of some lady's dress," said Kaduku.

"Right you are," was the retort. "Well, I've got just what you want. Do you want a suit or a skirt?"

"I think I should like to see some blouse and some skirts, sir," was the reply.

Kaduku was no raw Kaffir to have anything palmed off on him. He had spent weeks thinking over this thing and knew pretty well what he wanted. But fortunately for him with his rather limited vocabulary relating to ladies' garments, the manager of the store also knew about what would suit Kaduku. He was willing to spend three or even four hours with him if need be. But owing to the mutual intelligence of both parties, it only took about an hour for the transfer of the most of the golden sovereigns to the till and the wrapping of an immense bundle which looked half the size of Kaduku himself.

Kaduku made one more purchase, a brass ring gilt-

washed which he put in his vest pocket ; then shouldering his bundle he started back over the mountain range for Old Umtali, the happiest boy in all that section.

The sun was just setting as he arrived at the mission home. Jim Gigita had the fire built and the kettle merrily boiling towards the master's supper in the large roomy kitchen.

Kaduku hastily divested himself of the sweltering rusty black clothes and the shoes which pinched his unaccustomed feet *and* the socks which were the sure mark of his being a well dressed gentleman and then he spread out his purchases before the admiring gaze of his most intimate friend Jim whom he had known since the days when Jim herded Mr. Ehnes' cow near Umtali.

Jim's eyes fairly bulged with astonishment as he gazed at the marvellous array of finery while he rattled off a stream of ejaculations and favourable comments which would have led any hearer to think that there was the worst kind of a row going on. I used to step to the door frequently to see if there were a fight in the kitchen until I got used to Jim's way of talking. Brown's bulldog at Broken Hill used to growl most viciously at me every time I saw him and at first filled me with terror for he was a most savage looking brute. "Don't be afraid of him, that's only his way of talking," his master said. So it was : he'd trot along with me down to the house growling all the way. He was perfectly harmless and good-natured. And so was Jim.

Then Kaduku called in the master and lastly the missis who marvelled most of all as she compared

the fine array with her own simple wardrobe. That black broadcloth skirt in the latest style made her four-year-old flannel sink into insignificance. That handsome red blouse she had priced herself on her last trip to town but her purse-strings were two short. Then there were a pink petticoat and a blue petticoat, a tailored wash blouse and other articles of finery.

The next Sunday the black skirt and red blouse appeared at morning service. I was playing the opening hymn at the time and so only noted out of the corner of my eye that something was not quite right. As I sat facing the audience, I saw later that the blouse was worn hind side fore. Being made to hook up behind, it was found more convenient to hook it in front. Such details do not matter. The petticoats were worn as dress skirts. The next time I saw the rich broadcloth, the owner had it on while washing out a cooking pot in the back yard. She wore no apron and my New England conscience shrank from the desecration. But Mukonyerwa and Kaduku were perfectly happy. So long as Mukonyerwa was dressed in the best clothes of any girl on the station, it mattered not to them what was the manner in which they were put on.

XXII

MUKONYERWA

THE first time I saw Mukonyerwa was at her grandfather's kraal. Jacob, her brother, had been in attendance upon the old man from the first of his illness. Now his mother, Muledzwa and his Aunt Shikanga had arrived on the scene to cook the old man's food so that he would not be unduly hurried out of this world by any of his forty more or less devoted wives. So Mukonyerwa and her little sister, Nenu, came with the mother.

Shikanga's daughter, Basi, her niece, Gumba, another one of the cousins, Shakedi (whom I was continually confounding with Shakeni so I called her by her second name of Metapudzwa) and other girls spent the half of their time with me. So when the new cousin arrived, they rushed her off and the whole crowd came around the corner of the big boulder with loud shouts and boisterous laughing to introduce her to the Missisi Mufundisi.

Of the group of girls, all of whom were granddaughters of the old king, Mukonyerwa was the least prepossessing. She was then at the awkward age, large of frame, coarse featured, bold and brazen. Whenever the girls were around, her voice could always be heard above all the others. She was as wild as an unbroken colt, running and racing hither and thither about the kraal, in marked contrast to

THE BELLES OF THE CAPITOL

her younger brother who carried himself with the quiet dignity of a prince, indeed.

Her clothing consisted of a single piece of cotton cloth so dirty that I do not know if it had originally been white or coloured. Her whole person was dirty and unkempt.

After I went back to the mission, she used to come and visit me from time to time as did the other girls. Once when she had an ulcer under the eyelid she had to come down for Dr. Gurney to treat her. She stayed with me two or more weeks at that time. She had on two kinds of cloth then, a piece of dark blue which was tied around her body just under the arms and another most fantastically designed red one which tied around her neck and hung down in the back. The sister was dressed the same way. The two girls happened to be present at Watapa's wedding and were in a photograph taken at the time, the large designs being the most prominent thing in the picture.

By this time the girls had cleaned up considerably and I enjoyed their company and missed them when they were gone. Evening after evening they would come into my study as soon as their supper was eaten, sit down on the floor near my feet and say, "Missisi, won't you show us some pictures?" And then I would get out some Sunday-school cards or the like and tell them stories until I was completely talked out.

I shall never forget the keen, intense interest of these two girls as they listened night after night to this same story.

But it was four years before Mukonyerwa came to

us and said she wanted to stay and attend the school. I was very ill in bed but when they told me that she had come, I rejoiced greatly. She had another girl with her.

The next day two of Mtasa's men came to the mission and asked if the girls were there. We told them they were and called the girls out. They tried to persuade the girls to return when, with a dash of the old roughness, they told the men to "voetsak" (footsak) a term of indignity used properly only to dogs. It has been rightly said that there are few white men or natives in South Africa and not a single dog who do not know this word.

Sweating under the indignity, the two men went away and a couple of days later Gumba's stepfather, Chimbadzwa, Nsebe, who was the king's counseller, and another man came down to try and persuade the girls to go back with them. It is a rather odd thing that Chimbadzwa did not make any protest against Gumba's staying. He was bitterly opposed to mission work but I never knew of his trying to get Gumba away from us.

However, they argued and threatened Mukonyerwa and her friend until the girl who came with Mukonyerwa went along with them. But Mukonyerwa was obdurate. She said she had made up her mind that she wanted to learn and nothing could induce her to go back.

A few days more and Mtasa himself with Muledzwa and some thirty of the king's retainers armed with spears appeared on the scene. It began to look serious. Mtasa asked that all the missionaries on the place be assembled and that there be an open

hearing. Doubtless he thought that his display of arms would make an impression.

The court was called and the girl came fearlessly before them and stoutly reiterated her determination to remain where she was. She told them frankly that she had not taken the step hastily but had been meditating coming to the mission for a long time.

Muledzwa in hot temper charged the mission with having sent Kaduku to preach in the kraal and then secretly induce the girl to come to the mission. This Mukonyerwa denied. "I love Kaduku," she said candidly, "and I mean to marry him. But I did not come here because he was here. I had made up my mind to come in any case before he spoke to me about marriage. And I should stay here just the same even if something should prevent my marrying him." A statement which she afterwards proved.

Finding she could not move her daughter either by appeal or by threat, Muledzwa turned and went off up the road raging in true heathenish fashion. She filled the air with her imprecations and threatenings.

The king, on the other hand, while he was angry and chagrined, saw a row of lemon trees which aroused his cupidity. He was an inveterate beggar whenever any opportunity presented itself. So now he pocketed his wrath in his smart riding suit which was his favourite attire and humbly asked for a lemon. Of course he got several as did all of his men.

In the meantime, Kaduku had come to Mr. Springer and asked permission to consider Mukonyerwa as his financée. The consent being given, he

took the famous trip to Umtali to buy her some clothes worthy of civilization.

I used to regret the tendency of the girls to get at once into European clothes. Clothed they surely needed to be but it seemed to me this could better be accomplished by some oriental style of dress more hygienic than our occidental one.

I think now that the existing circumstances and the contact the Africans have with white women, not only justify but commend a European style of clothing. One bright, highly educated young woman of another part of Africa said that she had never known a mission girl to go back to heathenism as long as she wore her foreign clothing. But if she lapsed, the first sign of it was a return to the native garment or loin cloth.

Six months later Mr. Springer was passing through Muledzwa's kraal. She was in her gardens and when she saw him, called out. She told him she was very glad, indeed, that her daughter was in the school. She was proud of the girl's sewing (and it was something any mother might be proud of). Was he going back to Old Umtali now? She would show him a better ford than the one he came by and she went in person a mile or so to do it. Later on she asked that a native teacher might be sent to her kraal and she wanted Mukonyerwa. However, her wish was not granted. Her son Jacob was sent there instead.

The path of true love did not run smooth for Mukonyerwa and the end of her first romance came at Kaduku's death. But she kept her word and remained in the mission, refusing all of the many other

offers of marriage made to her during the next year. She also continued to wear the red blouse sometimes hooked up in front and sometimes in the back until her cousin Benjamin, who had a better knowledge of how white people dressed, invested in a black satine blouse, a black skirt and black petticoat which he gave her, a costume as unbecoming to the dark-skinned maiden as it was gloomy.

Finally she settled on one of her many lovers and spoke the comforting word to Stephen who at once hastened to tell Mr. Springer who had also been besieged by the disappointed suitors to intercede for them until he was weary of them.

Two years ago she and Stephen were married and have since been in charge of an out station. In one of his last letters, Solomon, in giving the general news, wrote, "Mukonyerwa he got son."

XXIII

KADUKU, THE LITTLE ONE

KADUKU, as we called him, had the distinction of being the first boy in the school. Small beginnings must not be despised by a missionary. Mr. Greeley started the school at Old Umtali in 1900 with the one pupil, a youth who was working as second boy in his kitchen. Long Jake soon doubled the enrollment. The next year there were six or more. Then came a lot of piccaninnies from Mtasa's and so on until the last report in 1908 showed about one hundred and twenty-five boys and seventy-five girls.

Kaduku was not the first convert: that blessing was Charley Potter's. But he was *one* of the first converts and certainly one of the noblest Christian characters we had.

He came to the mission straight from the kraal and wanted to work. He knew nothing about school, but he did know about money and wanted it. So he was engaged and set to scrubbing floors, which he did with the same energy which was manifested in everything through his short life. Soon he got to be the cook in the house and the interpreter in the mission, the first one we had. He was wonderfully clever in his studies. No boy could come near him in his knowledge of English. He was hopeless in mathematics, and Daniel, who only knew half as much and taught by main strength, was worth two of him as a teacher.

He was a funny shaped little fellow. In a nice shirt and snowy loin cloth, he passed as a fine looking boy. But the rusty black suit and not too well fitting pants exaggerated his peculiar build and made him almost grotesque in appearance.

His was one of the sunniest dispositions I ever knew. He was always cheerful and laughing up to the time he became formally engaged to Mukonyerwa whose tall, well built figure accentuated his own shortness.

The trouble was that her mother and uncle being of the royal family, did not consider Kaduku, who was the son of a common man, as her equal. Moreover there had been some difficulty in years gone by due to an intermarriage of the two families, and the feud had been handed down. Kaduku's own people were the first to raise their voices against the match. His father and mother and uncle came down to the mission to see him about it for they feared the king would make trouble for them. Then they wanted Kaduka to come up to his kraal where the matter could be talked out. He went up with them, a distance of twenty-five miles, and he was not very used to walking on the trail. That night when he ought to have slept, they all gathered round him, and the whole family history was rehearsed over and over again. They told him that if he married Mukonyerwa they must give his sister to Mtasa for one of his wives. They told of threats of the king which had reached their ears. They related most horrible stories of blood-curdling witchcrafts which had been known to be visited on those who committed a similar offense to that of Kaduku marrying Mukonyerwa.

Could he but have laid down and snatched even an hour's sleep, his sunny spirit and faith in God would have risen above it all. Perhaps they knew that, so they kept tormenting him until he promised that he would go back to Old Umtali the next morning and cancel the engagement.

It was almost dusk when he arrived, his whole body shaking with nervousness, his eyes bloodshot and his talk almost incoherent. It was impossible to follow what he said. He knew no English to express the situation and even tripped and stumbled over his mother tongue.

We did our best to help him and get affairs straightened out but it was useless, as we knew afterwards. That fifty mile walk and that horrible night had got in their work. He complained continually of being tired and often showed signs of being very dull. We could not think what was the matter with him. To all outward appearances, he and Mukonyerwa were on as good terms as ever. With her usual strength of character, she had refused to pay any attention to the objections of her mother or uncle, and after a while both families withdrew all objections to the marriage.

But Kaduku began to decline rapidily in health until Mr. Springer finally sent him to the best physician in Umtali, who gave him a thorough examination but could find nothing serious the matter with him. Still he continued to droop. He no longer was able to take any pleasure even in his old bicycle which had been his most boyish delight.

It is more than probable that the curses which his people kept hanging like Damocles' sword over his head began to affect his brain which in a few months

gave way entirely. We gave him the best treatment we could at the mission but without avail.

Then his father and mother arrived and said that once he had had a similar attack before ever he came to the mission and they could cure him. Muledzwa came also and urged that he be allowed to go home with his parents. She seemed most solicitous for him. So we let him go.

A week or so later a messenger came in with a note from Benjamin who had been sent up to see how Kaduku was getting along. "We got here just in time to see Kaduku die. We want you to come quick. We do not want Kaduku to have heathen burial. We want him taken to Old Umtali."

A half hour later, Mr. Springer sprang into the saddle and pushed the mule with all possible haste to the kraal where the loyal mission boys were staying with Kaduku's body. The next morning they bore his corpse onto the mission grounds amid a great hush of sorrow which swelled every heart.

That afternoon we gathered in the little chapel where Kaduku had so often acted as interpreter. There were not only our own mission boys and girls but a large number of visitors from Kaduku's neighbourhood, natives who were attending a Christian burial for the first time.

The coffin was covered with plain white muslin and heaped with beautiful flowers gathered and placed there by the pupils themselves. The hymn was announced and the congregation solemnly rose to its feet and began singing in an exquisite minor, "Thou O God art Saviour," but the tune wavered and at times almost broke as one after another voice failed.

Emotion nearly overcame the preacher as he started to give a short talk at this his first native Christian funeral. Mukonyerwa's head was bent and she was weeping silently.

As I sat there in that crowded church, my mind went back to the first native funeral I had seen at Mtasa's, four years previously. I had been living for weeks in Mtasa's kraal in the midst of the drunken, fighting, wrangling crowd, so that when the first shrieks pierced the air that morning, I paid very little attention. Screaming women were no novelty.

Soon, however, the screams were taken up by scores of women and girls, who were hurrying past my hut, and I hastened out to see what could be the matter. Every one in the upper end of the kraal seemed to be rushing in one direction and the air was pierced with the peculiar scream of the women.

I put on my hat and joined the procession, which soon took me to the hut of a young man by the name of Benzi, a son of the old king. Here were rapidly congregating men, women and children—the men and boys silent and solemn ; the females were all shrieking in an ear-splitting chorus with the tears rolling down their cheeks.

I sat there in their midst and looked in wonder. This was a new phase of kraal life to me. There was Miss Impudence, one of the boldest, cheekiest, most shameless girls in the whole community, with streams of tears running down both cheeks. Was it sorrow? Her love for her cousin could hardly be as deep as all that. The Bantu are a very tender-hearted people and easily moved to sympathy along certain lines, so there was doubtless much genuine feeling in the girl's

violent demonstration of grief. But it wasn't all grief. There was something else.

Now came the Imp and the Terror; they were little girls, and at times almost little fiends. But the presence of death had subdued them and they joined in the frantic howling of their friends and relatives. And just here another fact was impressed upon me; the crowd was mostly made up of relatives. Why, of course. The old king had forty wives then living and no one knows how many he had had in his long reign, so of children and grandchildren, their wives and husbands and their relations there were so many, that as a matter of fact they were all related to each other.

On they came in fresh relays by tens and twenties and thirties, each new set of arrivals being the signal for a fresh outburst of tears and screams. It *was* more than grief; it was the superstitious scream of primitive man trying to frighten off the evil spirits which had at last seized upon poor Benzi, lest they, too, his hapless relatives, be carried off with him.

After a while I went into the hut with the mourners, not out of curiosity, but from pure sympathy and sadness. I had liked the bright young fellow who had made himself acquainted with us the first day of our arrival. And I could hardly realize that he who but two days before had attended the Sunday service and had asked several interested, intelligent questions was thus snuffed out like the flame of a candle.

So I went in, expecting to see the body. Imagine my horror to see only a large roll of cloth. For no sooner had the breath left the dead man's body than they had brought his knees up to his chin and tightly

bound the whole body in yards and yards of unbleached cotton cloth.

I got out quickly into the air and sunshine. Ah! there was no mistaking this for anything else but heathenism. Oh, how I did wish I could talk to the people and comfort them! Alas! At that time there were no words which could have conveyed the sentiments I wanted so much to express, for no words were to be found in their language for them. These words all had to be coined outright or else thoroughly remodelled by the missionaries.

So I could only sit in silence, showing my sympathy by my presence, while the morning hours rolled away and the men were digging a grave. At last, about high noon, the grave was ready and so was the hastily improvised litter on which to carry the body. For an hour or so there had been comparative quiet except for the wife, mother and sister of the dead man. These three had sat disconsolately just outside the hut wailing softly most of the time.

But as the litter approached, once more the women lifted their voices and the air was again rent with their screams. And when the body was brought out of the door there was one frantic, agonized outburst of woe which would have moved the hardest heart.

Benzi was to be buried under the shadow of a big rock not far away. Half-way up there, the frenzy of the women reached its height. They threw themselves on the ground before the corpse and then jumping up, leaped into the air beating themselves in a very paroxysm of grief and terror.

Then the procession moved on amidst the wild cries and gesticulations until they came to the rock.

Here it was found that the grave was not big enough, so we all sat and waited about an hour for the work to be finished. As the natives had no shovels and the digging had to be done with native hoes, it was a slow process.

The wild cries ceased almost suddenly and the women sat down in hopeless stolidity. At last the body would go in, and so it was placed in the hole made for it and the hole was well walled up with solid stone so that the prowling leopard or scavenger hyena could not dig it out. And then they all quietly dispersed, cheerless, comfortless, apathy written on the faces of the chief mourners.

Just one month would be allowed the wife and mother in which to bemoan Benzi's death. Then they became the property of the next of kin.

Three weeks later I passed the hut where Benzi died (Charley Potter said he had been murdered in a drunken dance at his hut the night before the funeral) and it was being torn down. No one would live in the same hut in which he died. The hut destroyed, the poor mother and wife treated as human chattels without souls or feelings, no hope for the world to come,—this was indeed the rule and reign of evil spirits!

Kaduku's funeral was a touching scene. And yet how different from that heathen funeral we had witnessed at Mtasa's where frantic hopelessness had held sway. As we turned back from the newly made grave, there was still ringing in our ears, "I am the resurrection and the life: he that believeth on Me, though he were dead, yet shall he live."

We planted a scarlet hybiscus on his grave in

token of our hope. Nearly every week Mukonyerwa placed a bouquet of flowers there. He being dead yet speaketh and his testimony in his death may have been more forcible than any sermon he might have preached had he lived.

XXIV

SUNDAY AT GANDANZARA'S

THEY have a splendid native out-station at Gandanzara's now and Daniel is in charge. He has had great success. Daniel was sure to have success. As I said once before, he literally taught by the sweat of his brow and preached hell-fire and brimstone. But he was thoroughly good as well as desperately in earnest. He was no ranter.

He was not with us that first time we came to Gandanzara's kraal. Although only thirty-two miles from Old Umtali, we had never heard of the kraal before as it lay in a most out-of-the-way place tucked in among the mountains. We were looking for M'koni's kraal and found Gandanzara's.

As we approached the fields of grain near the kraal, a well-dressed young man came to meet us and learning who we were, volunteered at once to show us a good camping place. He had attended a mission night school once himself for a few months at Salisbury and was unfeignedly glad to see us.

He led us more than a mile beyond the kraal up a very steep mountain where there was a fine stream of beautiful cold water. His choice of a camp site for us showed that he knew missionaries liked clean grass and plenty of pure water. Having had to camp the night previously on a waterless plain, we appreciated our blessings the more.

As the boys began cutting the grass to clear a place for our tent, one of them suddenly gave a cry of alarm. He had almost stepped on a spotted puff adder, a painting of which Sir Harry Johnson has rightly named, "Death." The boys soon killed it, but after that they worked a little more carefully in the tall grass.

The people were very friendly from the first. They said that we were the first white missionaries who had ever come to their kraal. As it was Saturday night, Mr. Springer got the young guide to tell them that we wanted food and would not buy on the morrow. So in only about an hour's time after our arrival, there came a stream of sellers and soon we had more food than we could use and had to turn some of them away. The young man remained with us till late that evening and acted as spokesman to the people. Through him, Mr. Springer announced that he would hold a public service at the kraal the next morning.

The chief was away when we arrived on Saturday but Mr. Springer met him the next morning. He was a fine appearing young man of about forty. He called his people to the service and fully two hundred, mostly men and boys, seated themselves in a large, open space to hear for the first time the Gospel message. They listened with marked interest and respect.

After the service, Gandanzara expressed his pleasure that we had paid him a visit. He said that no other missionary had ever come to his kraal before and asked if we could not send him a native teacher to come and live there among his people all the time.

Before starting out on this evangelistic trip, the

question of presents to the native chiefs had been discussed. We had no money to put into blankets, loin cloths, etc., and we decided that we would try another plan. We had some new Gospels of John, a translation by Mr. White, a Wesleyan of the Salisbury District. These were in large print and gayly bound in scarlet. So we decided to present each of the chiefs with one of these (if they would take it) telling them what it was, who we were, to see if we might not thereby arouse curiosity if not interest.

Our boys laughed at the idea and insisted that the chiefs would only use the books to light their pipes with if they accepted them at all. So it was purely an experiment and this was the first opportunity to put it in operation.

But for some reason, Gandanzara refused to take the unusual gift. He might have thought it would bewitch him or he more likely wanted something more useful. At any rate he refused to accept it and the boys looked as much as to say, "We told you so." However, that afternoon he sent up one of his head men and said he should be very glad to accept the Book if we would send it down to him.

While Mr. Springer and all the eight boys were down at the kraal, a crowd of women came up and routed me out of the tent before I was dressed. They had peanuts, potatoes, meal, pumpkins and all sorts of things for sale. I told them I could not buy from them as it was Sunday but I would sing for them and teach them to sing. Perhaps they couldn't be blamed if their savage breasts were not soothed with my singing: I don't pose as a soloist but I did the best I could. No they wouldn't sing nor would they listen

to me. They were disappointed because I would not buy from them and so after about an hour's time during which they sat chatting (whether I was talking or not) about me and the camp and sundry items of kraal gossip while the babies alternately howled and drew on the maternal supplies, they took themselves off.

I hastened then to finish my toilet rather crestfallen at my failure. But when the women got back to the kraal and heard all the *men* talking about this new teaching they had heard that morning and even the chief discussing the sermon seriously, I fancy their curiosity led them to wish they themselves had kept quiet and heard what the Mufundisi had to say.

Mr. Springer returned at nine o'clock with a troop of boys and young men at his heels. We hardly had opportunity to eat our breakfast when they began to ask for more singing. By ten the women were all back again begging the Missis to sing for them. They atoned for their earlier conduct by trying to learn a hymn themselves. We always calculate that more good can be done by teaching the natives to sing one verse themselves than by singing the hymn-book through from cover to cover for them. One of the women said to me apologetically, "Teach our daughters here the hymn; they are young and can learn it; we are too old." There was quite an element of truth in what she said.

This reminds me of Bishop William Taylor's famous story he used to tell to illustrate the need of boarding-schools for the training of the native leaders of both sexes.

He said that at one time the fishes came to the con-

clusion that it was their duty to teach the lobsters how to swim straight ahead instead of backwards. So they had a meeting and subsequently invited all the lobsters to come to swimming school.

After a week they had another meeting and were unanimous in their opinion that they must change their methods. The old lobsters were not good pupils. They were set in their ways and stiff in their joints and didn't want to learn the right way of swimming anyhow.

So they said, "We won't bother much with these old lobsters. If they want to come in, all right, but we will devote most of our time to the little lobsters."

So they started a primary school and the little lobsters turned out in full force, and as they were limber, nimble and quick to learn, by the close of the first day their teachers dismissed them proudly as they started off for home swimming straight ahead.

But alas! When they came back the next morning from their caves and nooks, every last little lobster was swimming backwards. And so it was every day for another week until at the end of it the fishes had another conference, when there was another unanimous motion carried that if ever they were to train up these young lobsters as they ought to be trained, they must establish a boarding-school where the little lobsters couldn't go home every night.

We have learned in Africa, as well as elsewhere, that there is no limit to God's saving power. He can save the oldest or the vilest sinner and many of them have been saved. Moreover, we find that the day-schools do an immense amount of good. Not only are there thousands of children saved by means of the day-

schools, but they in turn often lead their parents to Christ.

But it is true that in order to train up young men and women to be soul winners and leaders among their own people, we must have the boarding-schools where they will not be continually in the atmosphere and influence of heathenish practices and superstitions during the time of their training.

By eleven o'clock there were nearly a hundred natives seated around all anxious to sing. I sung myself hoarse and talked myself out and then called Mr. Springer. He held forth for another hour and then called Charley. Philip then led the singing and the other boys took turns in preaching until after four o'clock when the most of the crowd departed, only a few of the young men staying until late in the evening again.

A few weeks later three little boys from that kraal came to the mission school, but only one stayed. The next term a few of his little kraal friends joined him. Each vacation the boys were sent back to sow the seed they had gotten at the mission: each term there were new reinforcements.

Two years later Daniel took his bride up there to live. They have had a great revival and a strong native church will be the result. The women are learning to make decent dresses for themselves after the pattern of the clothes worn by the preacher's wife. A work of grace begun in the heart never fails to manifest itself in the outward appearance.

XXV

WATAPA'S WEDDING

WATAPA'S only distinction was that he was the homeliest, best-natured boy in the school and that he was the first one to have a wedding, and a church wedding at that.

He took his wedding in a most matter-of-fact way, as if it were an every-day occurrence. The ceremony was to be at five o'clock, but he did not let that interfere with his attending the afternoon session of school.

We gathered promptly at the hour named in the little chapel. Every boy was there, all the married women and a few girl visitors. Among the very first to arrive was Watapa and his bride Mulefu, who took their places on the front seat with great solemnity. The audience, likewise, appeared to have come to attend a funeral. There was not the shadow of a smile, not the faintest trace of mirth on a single countenance.

Watapa had been helping me translate the marriage ceremony for a week, so if the translation was far from perfect as to the letter, he thoroughly understood the spirit of it.

He had purchased a new white piqué dress for the bride consisting of a skirt and jacket which was closely buttoned over a dirty gauze undervest covered at the neck by an old white silk handkerchief. Watapa was arrayed in a new white duck suit and

wore a large bunch of pink and white cosmos in his coat lapel.

The contracting parties having been thoroughly drilled previously, the ceremony passed off nicely without any breaks. After the ceremony, it was necessary for papers to be filled out to send in to the government.

While this was being done, the boys filed out quietly and stood in two solemn rows on either side of the church door. As Watapa and his wife came out of the church, the solemn lines broke and showers of rice fell on the newly wedded pair amidst yells which fairly rent the air.

Watapa tried to maintain his decorum for a few seconds only to give way at last, take to his heels and bolt ignominiously for the boys' dormitory leaving his bride to wend her way alone. This, however, did not seem to strike her as being any reflection on him or breach of courtesy to herself.

She and her two girl friends went back to my kitchen where she had put herself in bridal array, stayed there perhaps half an hour and then went over to where her husband had fled for refuge.

I had given them some tins of biscuits, tea, milk and sugar and told them to have a jolly time. Soon I went over to see how they were getting on. A table was covered with a white cloth in the small room Watapa had shared with a half dozen other boys, and Daniel was making tea. But they stoutly refused to open either the milk or the biscuits. They informed me that they wanted them for the feast.

So they drank their tea and sang hymns until after nine o'clock when Mulefu and her two friends re-

turned and said they wanted to sleep in my kitchen, though there was a hut all fitted up for the bridal couple. No, they wanted to stay with me, so the three girls slept in my kitchen and Watapa remained at the dormitory as usual.

Imagine my dismay, however, when I found the girls performing their ablutions in my dish pan the next morning!

That was in the middle of the week. For three days there was a little brown goat tied out in front of the boys' dormitory by day and inside by night, bleating out to the passers-by that he was to be the main feature of the wedding feast.

On Saturday, the tables were spread in the school-room, covered with unbleached muslin and gayly decorated with flowers. All the biscuits were opened and the wash-boiler was impressed into service for tea. Between the two front windows a small table was again laid with linen and china furnished by Philip from my dining-room, for the Wafundisi (teachers) for whom a special pot of tea and plate of biscuits were served. Another table was set at one side for the girls and women. The bride sat at this and the bridegroom got as far away as he could. Indeed, after every one else had arrived they had to send out and hunt him up and bring him in.

Whether he was overcome with a sudden fit of bashfulness, whether he was afraid of the boys' merry rallying or whether it were possible that he had actually forgotten the event, is hard to say. It could hardly have been the latter, as every other native on the place had remembered and was promptly on hand.

But like some other bridegrooms, he had to be hunted up and escorted to the feast. However, when he got there, nothing could induce him to sit at all near his bride. Neither would he take a seat at the head of the table. He insisted on sitting among the other boys at the side of one of the long tables in as inconspicuous a place as possible.

For the first half hour, the wedding party were all busy over plates of piled up rice, small chunks of goat and swimming gravy. But when it came to the biscuits and tea, they prolonged their pleasure by singing hymns. It is one of the marks of the transition period from the old to the new that the boys and girls sing hymns when they do not know what else to do.

Under the old régime, festal occasions consist chiefly of dancing and drinking intoxicants. The dancing is to the accompaniment of the big drum and heathen songs.

So when we eliminate the dancing and beer, the first things to take their place are the Christian hymns. This accounts for many an otherwise ludicrous incongruity. To see Daniel marching his little band out to the field, their hoes on their shoulders in military style, lustily singing "Onward Christian Soldiers," might provoke a smile at first. But what else could they sing? And when that troop of girls came flying out to welcome us home after our two months' absence on an evangelistic tour north to the Zambesi River, they at once broke into a familiar hymn which had nothing to do with the occasion whatever. The boys heard it from afar and joined, finished that hymn and were well launched into the "Christian Soldiers,"

by the time they too gathered around us to the bewilderment of poor Jacky who thus feeling himself called upon to make some reply opened his mouth and brayed so lustily that the singing was completely broken up in laughter.

So at the wedding, there was nothing else to do but to sing. Toasts were beyond them as yet so they sung the hymn-book through from cover to cover interspersing their songs with fresh cups of tea and a fresh biscuit. It was a clean, merry, happy celebration.

Unfortunately, Watapa had to interrupt his course and leave school and the mission for a time to earn money with which to pay for his wife or, in other words, to purchase peace from his wife's relatives who were vexing his soul daily for the usual "lobolo" which the natives insist is only a proper gift which the son-in-law tenders as a mark of respect to his wife's father.

Two years later I received a letter. Watapa had written it at Mulefu's dictation. It is packed away in my goods in Africa. I wish I could quote it verbatim, but I can't. It was such a pathetic little note. She wanted the Missis to know that the little baby had died and she wanted the Missis to pray for her! And would the Missis send her a book to comfort her. She would try to learn to read a primer (she had been hopelessly thick-headed) now the baby was dead. I sent her the Gospel of John and a primer containing the Twenty-third Psalm.

Just as our carriage was crossing the mountain range for the last time on our way to Umtali with our faces turned homeward, we passed a transport wagon at Christmas Pass. Some one called, and as we stopped

the mule a woman came running towards us. It was Mulefu with Watapa close behind her. She wanted to tell me how glad she was for the Book. We were deeply touched by their sincere regrets at our departure and the gratitude they expressed for our having come. Missionary work has, I think, the richest compensation in the world.

FEMALE ADORNMENTS IN NATIVE STYLES

XXVI

SWEET SIXTEEN

MY Black Lassie arrives at the mission clothed in a single garment of uncertain age, guiltless of an acquaintance with soap and water. She announces that she "has arrived and wants to learn." In nine out of ten cases she has run away from her kraal. This means that she will be followed by irate parents and other relatives who will keep her and the powers that be in the mission interested for a week or so. In the end they usually depart and time works reconciliation.

If she has any friends in the school, they will immediately lend her their clothes and the next day she comes out rigged up in the most absurd style but feeling very proud of herself and of her new book and slate and eager for instruction.

Everything is so new,—so delightfully new and fascinating! She has stepped from the grimy, smoky, filthy darkness of the kraal life into a fairy-land where the people live in amazing houses *and the men eat with their wives.* It all seems so odd! Her whole being thrills with girlish happiness and she is a transformed girl. Her laugh rings out merrily in chorus with the others,—and the laugh of Sweet Sixteen in any land defies imitation.

She joins heartily in the singing, not at all hampered by the fact that she knows neither the tune nor

the words. She will learn them both in half the time it took her brother, who is in the boys' school, to do so.

When she hears the other girls pray, she wants to pray too; for she has the intuitive feeling which she could not define that it is prayer which makes the school what it is and the girls what they are. So it will be but a few weeks before she will be praying in public herself. Happily, to her, prayer is prayer and she has not come to the point of making excuses for not seizing all opportunities for it as they come.

In short, she is ready to learn to do anything the other girls do. She is even willing to do her share of the hoeing and digging: though having had little else to do before in her life, she likes that least of all.

But oh! how much there is for her to learn! To be prompt, and quick and clean and truthful! To learn the value of time! Ah! Her teacher needs infinite patience on that score! It will take years for her to learn some of these lessons. She is not built that way, nor were her mothers before her for countless generations.

She learns to read and write with remarkable rapidity. A few months' lessons with the needle will enable her to excel many an American girl of her age. For Sweet Sixteen's sewing lessons are practical—dressmaking, darning, mending and fine needle-work.

Sweet Sixteen also likes the boys after the most approved fashion. She wants to marry one of these handsome young schoolfellows. And who can blame her? They are far to be preferred to the dirty old heathen in the kraal, to whom she has likely already

been sold by her parents. Most likely she fled to the mission as to a city of refuge to escape being forced into such a marriage. But she is very discreet in her conduct before these young men. When the young men are around she is the soul of demureness and often appears quite unaware that there is such a thing as a boy in the whole universe, let alone in her vicinity.

Nevertheless, when she gets on her best Sunday-go-to-meeting clothes, I fear her mind is not always on the sermon,—as ours used to be, you know. A sly little Puss is Sweet Sixteen whether she be black or white.

So the brief term of her school-days flits by as a dream. There are at least a half-dozen suitors for her hand. No dirty, heathen wife for our Christian boys, thanks! So in two or three years at the most, she has a Christian wedding and goes out with her husband to win other girls and women to the Master whom she has come to know and serve.

Sweet Sixteen at school! May her numbers increase!

XXVII

TO BE OR NOT TO BE

HAMATOTE tightened his belt to lessen the consciousness of his lack of a morning meal or any other meal for forty-eight hours. At least the tightened belt would stop that awful gnawing. He seized his walking stick, grasped his stout knobkerrie and spear and walked out of the tumble-down little kraal with a look of determination on his face.

The sun was just rising when he started on his journey: the eastern sky was all alight with the glorious afterglow of the setting sun when he reached his destination, the chief's kraal where he knew there was food.

His look of determination had given way to an air of indifference which ill fitted his lean frame and the natural haggardness which comes with starvation. The native African is an adept at playing a part but there was hunger in the land and all men knew it only too well to be deceived.

Hamatote joined the usual group of men at the *dali*, or general loafing place, a place also where court is held and where many a life has hung in the balance either to be acquitted or convicted of witchcraft. He now came forward, squatted on his heels and went through lengthy greetings, all the while softly clapping his hands. The other men knew at once his errand and so, one by one, they got up and went away

until he was left with the Shylock with whom he had to deal.

The fact that the chief was dirty and clad only in a couple of filthy old goatskins did not impress Hamatote. He had been used to such all his life. But his courage almost failed as he looked into the hard, merciless, grasping, hideous face before him. But his stomach was empty and hunger is bold.

Softly clapping his hands in obeisance, he asked, "Might the Ishi have any more grain?" The Ishi shrugged his shoulders. "Where should *he* see grain when there was no rain and only hunger covered the land?"

Hamatote laughed as if appreciating the Ishi's humour. The old man felt that he had really made a witticism and laughed himself. It put him in quite a pleasant frame of mind,—for him.

Seeing the advantage of the chief's self-satisfaction, Hamatote began, "I will tell the Ishi all that is in my heart. The Ishi knows I have only two wives, my son and one daughter left. The cattle are gone, the sheep are gone, the goats are gone, the fowls are gone and even the girl has been sold for food. We have nothing more to sell and death waits at our door. We are already dead. Give me grain and it may be that the gods will give me another daughter and then shall that daughter be yours. But if the child be another son, then shall he give you his daughter when he is grown. We are as dead men before the Ishi: will he not hear his slave's prayer?"

The old wretch chuckled. He had made many such bargains. Fully a score of girls of all sizes had already been bought up by him: he would risk one

other even though it were unborn. His sensual old soul already gloated over another fair, fresh, young victim and the deal was closed.

They called the child Amundibayi (he-will-not-slay-me). Hamatote did not long survive the famine. When pneumonia attacked his gaunt frame, there was no resistive power left and he died leaving his eldest son to see that the chief's debt was paid.

Sixteen years passed swiftly away and then the old man sent word that he wanted to claim his bride. He was sixteen years uglier and more wicked and sensual, —that was all the change in him.

Poor Amundibayi! She loathed the very sight of him and vowed she never would marry him: she'd commit suicide first as many another girl had done. But the older brother was merciless. If she did not marry the chief, he must go to work and pay the debt himself. Such a thing was not to be considered. Of course she must marry the chief. So he alternately argued and stormed while the mother scolded and pleaded and threatened.

Just then a bright thought struck the girl: Why not go to the mission? Her half-sister was there. One of the young men had redeemed her from the bondage into which she was sold and had married her. Why couldn't she go there too? The more she thought of it, the more favourable the plan seemed to her and she grew so cheerful that the mother and brother thought she was yielding.

But one day they missed her and then they knew the cause of her change of countenance and hastened after her with all possible speed but were too late to overtake her on the road.

When they came to the mission, they made a proper row. The mother threw herself at my feet and told me how she was dying of starvation because she had no daughter to cook her food for her. The brother stormed and threatened, all to no avail.

Then they went over to the native commissioner where the young man said that his wife had run away from him and that the mission authorities refused to let her come back to him. So he returned and triumphantly handed me a note which ran, "This man says that his wife is at the mission and this is to authorize his taking her away with him," or something to that effect.

"Where is your wife?" I asked the young man. He looked startled. "This letter says that you want your wife: where is she? I do not know any woman who is your wife here." He was completely taken aback. He was not versed in the powers of pen and ink and never dreamed that his lie would be so quickly unearthed.

Amundibayi was there with us but still refused to go with her brother. The mother and brother went away and came back a week later. They wanted Amundibayi to go with them to the native commissioner. Certainly: I had not the least objection. But I called her brother-in-law and told him to go along too to see that no foul play took place. When the commissioner heard the case, he only said, "That's the law: she cannot be compelled to marry that old man and I cannot drive her away from the mission. She has the right to make her own choice."

And so at last, after two or three weeks of trouble, they left her in peace.

One day Charley Potter had a long talk with Mr. Springer. Subsequently he had an interview with Amundibayi. He sat down on a soap box and awkwardly fingered his hat. She sat on an another soap box on the other side of the kitchen table and folded and unfolded a tea towel.

"What are you going to do when you get through school?" asked Charley.

"I don't know," she answered shyly, her eyes glued on the tea towel.

"Will you go back to your kraal?" he continued.

"*Kwete*," was the emphatic negative.

"What will you do? If you will not marry the man your folks want you to marry, they will not find you another husband."

Her head bent over the tea towel and her voice was barely audible as she replied, "I suppose I shall have to get one myself."

"Do you think I would do?" he asked a bit nervously.

Evidently she did, for the engagement was announced forthwith. The course of their true love had a rather crooked course and I do not know if it is straightened out yet or not. But she will surely marry some Christian boy in our school.

So the question of her marriage as to whether she shall be sold or free is settled. Not so with thousands of her kraal sisters.

"To be or not to be" free, *that* is the question which *we* must decide for the most of them. They are ready for freedom if we will only place it within their reach.

XXVIII

PERPETUAL BLISTERS

THERE are four principal means of trekking in Africa—by foot, by ox wagon, by donkey or mule back and by hammock which last named conveyance is also known as a machilla or tipoa, two Portuguese words which have come into current use.

In Southern Rhodesia, the hammock or machilla is seldom seen. But in Northwestern Rhodesia where the tsetse fly is death to the domestic fowl and brute, the machilla is in great demand especially for ladies of whom there are hardly more than a dozen north of the Kafue River.

We studied the pros and cons of travel long and well. At first I decided to take Jackie with me, shipping him by freight to Broken Hill, but learning of the tsetse fly, I saw that I should only lose my donkey in so doing. He might have gone through the whole trip and he might have died in a week, so there was no use to risk it.

I have always been a good pedestrian and had already walked some hundreds of miles on the trail but I could not contemplate a trip of at least 1,500 and possibly 2,000 miles with forced marches, on foot. So at last we decided on a compromise: we got a machilla and a half of a team (eight men) so that I could ride at least half the way if I needed to.

And but for Terrible Tim, I should not have had that. Mr. Springer had engaged a machilla at the Africa Lakes Store but when he went to get it, they told him they had just received a telegram of a large hunting party on the way up from the Cape and so they couldn't let him have it.

Tim had been a sailor for years and when he learned of our dilemma, came to the front and offered to make the machilla for me. So we got the stoutest canvas to be had and in two days the hammock part was done and hung on a palm leaf stem sixteen feet long. Over this was another piece of green, waterproof canvas which closely covered the hammock to protect the occupant from the bushes, thorns, grass and other jungle as well as a shade from the burning sun.

Possibly a hammock sounds like a comfortable thing in which to ride. In some sections of Africa where they have cleared roads, it isn't so bad. But on native paths, it gets to be almost unendurable. Two men start off with it on the dog-trot for they cannot walk with so heavy a load. It seems almost impossible for them to turn every corner of the tortuous path in the great forest carefully. So the unfortunate victim in the machilla is jolted along at a back-breaking pace as the carriers merrily sing

Gongo, gongo,
Wanu wa mayi walila ho,
Gongo, gongo,

while the hammock bangs against the trees, thumps on stumps and ant-hills. All the while the occupant is sweltering under the blaze of the sun on the canvas

or shivering from the cold wind if the sun doesn't shine. There's no happy medium: it is either uncomfortably hot or cold.

It was my plan, therefore, to start out in the early morning on foot and walk as many miles as possible before I got into the machilla, seldom under seven miles and more often nine or ten. Four miles of being carried was about the most I could endure at one time. Then I would get out and walk again to rest my back.

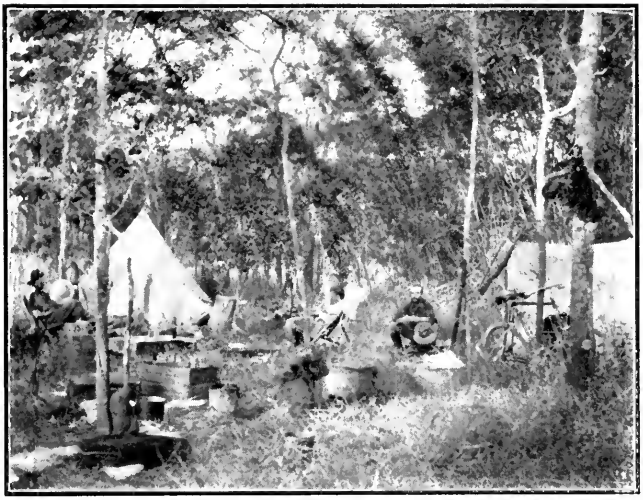
I took three pairs of boots with me and it was a lucky thing I did. I took them so that if one pair wore out, I would have another. But I soon found that I needed all three for rotative wear. Each pair made a distinct lot of blisters on my feet. So when I had worn one pair until I was quite crippled, I changed and put on another pair. These gave the first set of blisters time to recuperate while the second set were forming. Then when I could no longer walk in either of those pairs, the third lot came into service.

I had hoped that the more I walked, the easier it would be and that my feet would get hardened. Not so: I kept up the regular round of blisters from start to finish and at the last, not only was the surface of my feet sore, but every joint in my feet and body.

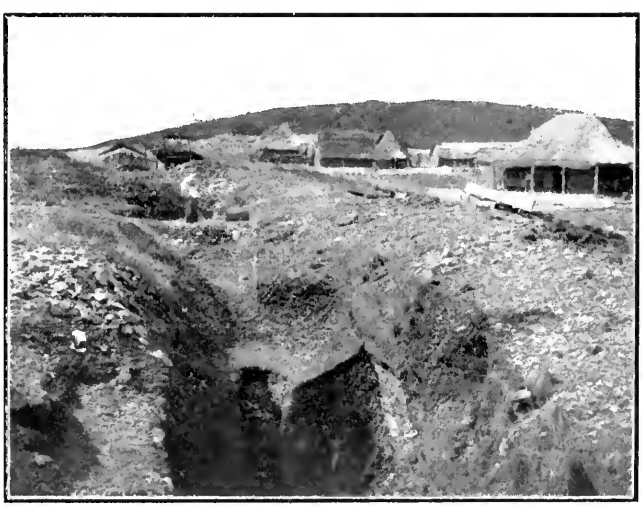
The last ten days were particularly hard ones. We were almost out of food and even the sour mush was hard to obtain. Moreover the water was indescribably bad. We frequently had to use a most nauseating, opaque, liquid mud from stagnant pools in which, frequently, the cattle had waded. It was undoubtedly the lack of good water which affected

us the most. In addition to this we had to make at least twenty-five miles a day. My machilla men were so weakened by hunger, so footsore and worn that they could only carry me ten miles a day at most. We were in one of the most desolate countries ever cursed by the rum and slave trade. Slaves in their chains and heavy yokes were seen in the villages through which we passed, ready to be sent to the market or shipped off quietly. The trader and rum were everywhere in evidence. Graveyards were the most prominent feature of the landscape while here and there a trader's whitewashed house or a flourishing rum mill stood out like grim tombstones in this depopulated region. It seemed, indeed, a country full of dead men's bones.

What wonder that the splendidly built Bachokwe tribe stoutly refuse the white man residence in their country. According to their version, the European represents rum, slavery, death. And so they will in Portuguese territory until the missionary comes in to dwell among them and show to them the better way.



THE CAMP NEAR THE "5012th" ANT HILL



KANSHANSHI COPPER MINE IN
N. W. RHODESIA, AFRICA

The ditch in the foreground shows ancient copper workings

XXIX

BICYCLING IN CENTRAL AFRICA

GIFFORD had got his notice that the mine was closing down and in one month's time his valuable services would no longer be required. At first he thought of going south of the Zambesi, but as the hard times were at their worst there, he decided he'd "chance it" and go north with us. Perhaps there would be an opening for him in the Tanganyika Concessions.

It was then the discussion arose over his bicycle. One said, take it; another said, leave it; no two agreed as to the practicability of taking a wheel onto a native trail. He tried to sell it, but since the mine was closing and all the white men were leaving, there was no one to buy. At the eleventh hour, in a fit of desperation, he concluded to take it along.

Then the trouble began. A new cone was needed to make it usable so he wrote at once to Bulawayo for it. After the letter had been gone a couple of days, he sent a telegram to make sure. But on the morning of our departure, said cone had not appeared and the fate of the wheel hung in the balance.

At the fifty-ninth second, Terrible Tim came to the rescue and offered a whole front wheel. So while the caravan was being formed in line and loaded, Gifford, Terrible Tim and a newly arrived missionary who

had once kept a bicycle shop, whisked around the corner to repair the lame machine. The caravan started off and an hour later, Gifford caught up to us with the coneless wheel hanging over the handle bars.

Henry Drummond once wrote, "For straightness in general and crookedness in particular, commend me to an African trail." Let it be added that the trail is usually from nine to twelve inches wide, often worn down six or more inches below the rest of the country, bordered with small ant-hills, circumscribing big ones, thickly bestrewn with stones, stumps, fallen branches, obtruding roots and other obstacles.

However, the country from Broken Hill was, for the most part, flat and heavily wooded, which was an advantage over tall grass. Gifford and Mr. Springer both suffered from badly blistered feet at the outset so they took turns riding the wheel and for a few days were rather glad they had it along. Each would ride until his eyes ached and his nerves were all awry and then he would walk on leaving the wheel standing against a tree by the side of the path for the other fellow.

It was on the afternoon of the third day out, that Gifford was delighted to see his wheel waiting for him. The sun was very hot and his feet very sore. He mounted and rode along, mentally composing an argument in favour of his machine, but he had hardly ridden five minutes when he came to an open, swampy vlej (pronounced *flay*) where the grass grew to six or eight feet in height on either side of the path and interlocked in the centre of it.

He dismounted and tried to push through the tangle. The sun shone down blisteringly and the

thick jungle permitted not so much as a breath of air. The wheel balked, turned, twisted and got snarled up in the grass. The insult to the injury came when swarms of tsetse flies were stirred up by the commotion and settled themselves on Gifford's bare neck and arms, puncturing him as with red hot needles, raising great itching welts which were almost maddening.

However, while the enthusiasm over the bicycle waned daily, in consideration of the blistered feet it was agreed that on the whole the wheel was a rather good thing. At any rate it made good time. Therefore on Saturday it was settled that Gifford should ride ahead, cover the twenty miles in two or three hours at the most and let the brethren of a certain mission know that we were on the way.

He started off in high feather to make the trip in the cool of the morning. But he had hardly got out of our sight when he struck soft sand through which he had to walk and push the wheel for about two miles. Reëntering the forest where the path was solid, he mounted and hurried forward. But his rest was short-lived for he soon came to a clearing where there were more stumps than trees. Here he jumped on and off the wheel until familiarity bred contempt, for the dangers and leg-weariness made him reckless. The next thing he knew, he picked himself up, looked to see if there were any broken bones, nursed his bleeding knee which protruded through the torn pantaloons and lastly examined the buckled wheel to see if it had come to a violent end.

He found it bent beyond repair at that time, so setting it in the path he ran it on its hind wheel,

limping painfully behind it for at least fifteen miles, only reaching the mission a half hour ahead of the caravan.

It took two men all of Monday to get the thing into working order again and even then the front wheel rubbed the fork badly. Moreover, the machine was very wabbly and had to be pushed so much that a boy was taken from my machilla team to attend solely to it.

The path got worse and the fork badly worn, so when we reached the mining camp of Kanshanshi it took several other hours and two men working on it with the result that the old wheel was removed entirely and replaced by another hind wheel so that the bicycle reminded one of the small boy in the home-made trousers,—you couldn't tell which way he was going.

Between the two mines of Kanshanshi and Kambove there is a bicycle path one hundred and ten miles long. It was on this path one day that Gifford came abruptly around a large ant-hill and nearly ran onto a leopard which was about to lie down in the path. He had just time to dismount when the huge beast bounded off into the forest without even looking up to see what the click it heard was: and Gifford sat down to meditate and wait for the rest of the caravan.

By the time we reached Kambove, the saddle was worn out and several other small items needed attention and once more and for the last time, the wheel was pronounced fit for the trail and did good service part of the way to Ruwi. The trouble now was that the trail was not fit for the wheel. Rough, rocky,

steep hills, large rivers and big swamps left little room for bicycling.

The end came just beyond Ruwi, when Mr. Springer took a double-header over a root on a vlej where there wasn't a tree in sight, nearly broke his own neck and completely finished the bicycle.

But in that fly-infested country the bicycle is already playing an important part among the mining men. It will also play an important part in the evangelization of that wild country. The missionary must use it wherever he can to save time and to spread himself out over as great a district as possible in an immense area where to-day the harvest is great and the reapers are none.

XXX

THE BUFFALO AT THE 5012th ANT-HILL

NORTHWESTERN RHODESIA might be called the land of ant-hills. Not that they do not exist elsewhere but that here they particularly predominate. For at least 500 miles of our journey, we enjoyed a continual panorama of ant-hills and always sought to pitch our tent close to one at night. In certain sections, the ant-hills were heavily timbered with big trees, the ants which built up the symmetrical little hill having gone elsewhere. Then we struck a region where all the big, round ant-hills were overgrown with delicate green, graceful, lacy bamboo. After that, their character changed again. This time they were covered with a short, coarse grass which resembled nothing else so much as a thatched hut roof. Then for two or three days, we found most peculiar and fantastically shaped products of the termite. Some were tall like the chimneys which stand after fire has destroyed the rest of the house.

Together with these big ant-hills, there were always a multitude of little ones which had been formed about some bit of dead wood. Often on treeless plains, we found thousands of lesser ant-hills, which looked like giant toadstools, two or three feet in height.

The 5012th ant-hill (the number is taken at random; I never was good at figures) was one of the big, round kind, fifteen or twenty feet high and covered

with bamboo. We were going along in the early morning ahead of the caravan looking for meat.

Suddenly Mr. Springer halted until I came up to him when he pointed down to the other side of the vlej where a large bull buffalo stood in the short grass. Now the African buffalo has the worst reputation for fierceness of all the animals of the veld. They are considered without exception the most dangerous beast in all Africa. And the lone rover bull which has been turned out of the herd because of its bad disposition is the worst of the lot.

"Isn't it a pity?" whispered my husband.

"What's a pity?" I asked.

"That I can't have a whack at him," he replied.

"Why can't you?" came back in the same tragic whisper.

"Because I couldn't endanger you," he retorted in surprise that I should ask. By this time my remote Indian blood was fired and though naturally one of the most cowardly of mortals, always deathly afraid of a gun or even a firecracker, the sight of that splendid beast and the knowledge that our men needed food thrilled me with an excitement I had never known before.

"You *must* shoot," I whispered excitedly. "You go over to that ant-hill where you will be hidden in the bamboo. I'll go over here and hide behind this old skerm. The buffalo will charge the ant-hill, if he charges at all and you can always climb a tree. So I'll be safe enough." I gave him an impatient push as he further hesitated, doubting the wisdom of my sage counsel. "Go on: hurry," I repeated and skulked off for the skerm.

He made his way cautiously towards the ant-hill and I watched from my hiding-place but in my excitement not doing much better in concealing myself than the fable of the ostrich and the sand, quite forgetting until afterwards that I had on a bright blue blouse. Had Mr. Springer lost his head as completely as I lost mine, I should probably not have been here now to write this story.

Bang! And the immense beast instead of charging started to go back on his own tracks. It is more than likely he was blind and went by instinct and smell. Another shot would probably have finished him, but alas! he was making in the direction of the skerm and another shot might have brought him upon me, so on he galloped undisturbed.

We remained in hiding some minutes, for the buffalo is treacherous. Then the native who was with us and who had climbed a tree where he could watch proceedings in safety, gave the signal and we came out. We found that the animal had been badly wounded, so Mr. Springer followed him for four miles but in vain.

I think I was the more disappointed over the loss. It was the first time I had ever felt the spirit of the chase, that primitive nature which lies so near the surface in all of us, which centuries of culture and learning cannot drown. In fact, I could not be reconciled until one day Mr. Springer bagged a couple of fine wart hogs which were much better eating, and the tushes of which were much easier to take along with us than the enormous horns of the buffalo would have been,—the buffalo at the 5012th ant-hill.

XXXI

THE LAND OF SOUR MUSH

IT was not the land of corn and wine neither was it the land of milk and honey. Honey there was no doubt but the only evidence of it was in the abundance of native beer made from it. The man who drinks honey beer will walk miles hunting for trouble till he finds it. The tribe that imbibes, makes it exceedingly dangerous for the passing traveller.

When we heard the dull booming of the distant drums, we knew we were nearing a village where a native dance was in progress and most of the people would be drunk. One night we had a camp close to such a kraal. When Mr. Springer went to buy food, he found the people very surly. They were all hideously painted up for one of their devil dances.

When we went to bed the dance was in full swing as the wild yells of the people evidenced. Every now and then through the night the wind would veer and bring the frenzied yells nearer and we would think for an instant that possibly the natives were making an attack. Surely had not that unseen Guard been about us, I fear that we should all have been deported before morning to that land from whence none may return. Conscious of the fact that the Guard *was* actually there, we slept the sleep of the weary only rousing when the terrible din became too loud to admit of sleep.

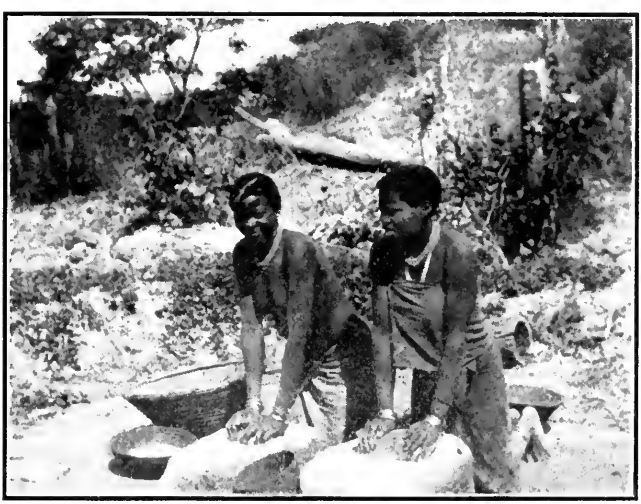
It was the land of sour mush, a few beans and honey beer,—the Bachokwe country or the hinterland of Africa's rich Province of Angola. Nor could we get plenty of the sour mush. The natives sold us at an exorbitant price very small quantities of the cassava meal of which we made the mush. Their whole attitude was sullen, defiant and suspicious.

The meal is made from the cassava, or manioca, tuber. There are two kinds of cassava, the bitter and the sweet. The bitter has in it more or less Prussic acid and serious cases of poisoning have come from eating it raw. The natives cultivate the bitter almost exclusively in that interior region. Possibly they hope some of their slave-raiding enemies will eat thereof and die.

In order to use the bitter cassava, the women first soak it for eight or ten days, which seems to take out all the poison. And though there are plenty of clear, running streams of water in that country, the natives rigidly eschew them for the soaking process and select some miry place or stagnant pool from which there is emitted a never-to-be-forgotten pig-sty odour which proclaims a cassava patch long before it can be seen. Drawing near, one may see the surface covered with a green slime and large bubbles which tell of the fermentation going on below.

Often as we marched along, we could see the almost naked women wading in these pools, sometimes standing to their thighs in the mud, taking out the buried roots, peeling off the outer bark and placing them in large baskets skillfully poised on their heads. At such times the stirring up of the waters

POUNDING GRAIN



A HAND GRIST MILL

makes the smell more pronounced and lessens the appetite for the supper which will have undergone the same preparatory treatment.

Coming to a kraal, we may see the cassava in the next process of drying as it lays spread out on the roofs of the squalid huts where all the dust of an exceedingly unsanitary village blows upon it the while rats, lizards and chickens race over it at will.

And somewhere in that same kraal, standing near a hut or rolling around in the dirt among the dogs, pigs, goats, fowls and children, is the village mortar in which the dried root will be pounded into flour.

There was one scientific straw to which we desperately clung,—that boiling kills all germs, thus saving us from the ravages of the bacilli, schizomycetes, bacteria, or other rampant microbes which undoubtedly lodged in our dirty food and ofttimes equally dirty water.

But though encouraging from a scientific standpoint, the method of cooking did not increase its gastronomic properties. First the water was brought to a boil in the large pot and then the flour was sifted in and stirred vigorously with a big stick until the mass was so thick that it could hardly be stirred. Surely the last germs could not be boiled but we hoped that they were steamed into a state of inoffensiveness. If, however, any did have enough vitality to revive, we prayed that they might be peaceably disposed.

Hunger is a specific remedy for Epicureanism. And we were hungry. We were none of us Epicureans either. But when that big, grayish ball with a consistency of African rubber and smelling like a mass

of decayed vegetables in the garbage can came before us, it took more than an ordinary appetite to get it down.

It took skill too. A reasonably-sized chunk was dipped into half-cooked bean soup, then popped into the mouth and swallowed without chewing. To hesitate was to be lost, verily. Once the teeth got into the sticky ball, there was trouble.

Any kind of soup or gravy would have served the same lubricating purpose. It was not a matter of choice on our part that we had only bean soup night and morning for weeks. Necessity gave birth to no inventions that time. The game of the country had been practically exterminated by the natives who were armed to a man with flint-lock guns bought from the Portuguese. There were but few domestic animals in the kraals and the exorbitant prices asked for them were simply prohibitive for us.

So we sat down to our sour mush every morning and struggled with a big slice of the sticky stuff, dipped it into the chocolate-coloured bean purée and gulped it down with the satisfaction that it was wonderfully nutritious and strengthening and that we would surely need all we could possibly eat in order to walk ten or twelve, perhaps fourteen, miles before we ate our frugal, cold lunch.

Every evening we sat down to our soap box table and gave thanks in sincerity for that which was to us life and health. True, our stomachs fairly flopped over at the sight and smell of it, but it kept us from starving and we were thankful to have it.

But no one can imagine how thankful we were, when we reached Angola, to get bread and butter,

even rancid, tinned butter again. And yet,—we shall eat the sour mush again. Not with jam,—heaven forbid! But we would rather, if necessary, go back and live on the sour mush than remain in America living on the fat of this fattest land in the world, knowing that out yonder tens of thousands of souls are starving, dying in heathen darkness, unreached by any Christian voice or hand.

XXXII

SOUR MUSH AND SWEET JAM

WE had had a surfeit of swamps. We had waded swamps, cold, frosty, deep swamps in the morning; slimy, boggy, sluggish, fetid swamps at the noonday; often more swamps in the afternoon; and again slumpy, humpy, noisome, stagnant, miry swamps just at the close of the day's trek.

Such was the case on the ever-to-be-remembered day of sour mush and sweet jam. After twenty-two miles we had decided to camp at the first water and accordingly picked out a nice sheltered spot under some large trees only to find it was a native graveyard. That wouldn't do. So we looked about for a better place and found another swamp just ahead of us and boldly determined to cross it then and there rather than in the cold of the morning.

But on the other side there seemed not a tree in sight for fire-wood or shelter and we spent a good half hour hunting for that necessary commodity wherewith we might cook our frugal sour mush supper. In the search we left the main trail without cutting it off with a mark or a bunch of fresh leaves to let our carriers who were far behind know where we had stopped. When we did think of it, it was too late. Already more than half our men had missed us and gone by on the trail we had left.

Then we took account of stock for no amount of search and halooing brought any response from the missing carriers. We had fifty pounds of cassava meal, a box in which were some jam and cheese, two jack-knives, two teaspoons, a wash-basin, one small tent and a few blankets. Our eight Angoni carriers had the only cooking pot of any description. It was their own and to my certain knowledge had not been washed for two months.

Travel on the veld discourages æstheticism as well as Epicureanism. We were thankful that there was even the sour mush, the jam and the kaffir pot. If the pot still bore the remnants of two months' cookings, why the water from the swamp drained one graveyard as we knew and perhaps dozens of others where ignorance was bliss. It isn't practical to dwell upon such matters. After all, we can die but once and as Livingstone said, "We seem to be immortal until our work is done."

So when the Angoni had finished cooking their supper, Benjamin did his best to wash out the pot with the limited supply of dirty water on hand and in due season brought us the big grayish, sour-smelling ball, with which we had grown familiar, in the wash-basin. We ate it with the use of the two jack-knives and the two teaspoons.

Shades of sauerkraut and sweet preserves! Only sauerkraut is accommodating enough to slip down one's throat without sticking and the sour mush won't. It had to be lubricated with the jam.

We ate it and ate heartily for we were hungry and we encouraged each other that it wasn't half bad. Indeed, it might have been much worse. If we had

had no jam how could we have ever eaten the mush? And that would have been lots worse.

We ate close by the fire of the one log we had found and then wrapped ourselves in all the cloaks and rugs and blankets we could find to keep us warm through the half-wakeful night wherein we were conscious of a mixture of sour mush and jam in the epigastric region.

With the morning, came another large ball of sour mush and the remnant of a tin of jam. We looked at it and then at each other. There was a tramp of twenty miles or more ahead of us and we could not afford to start out on empty stomachs. But we were all unitedly and individually agreed that our stomachs were not empty. Surely the sour mush and sweet jam of the night before was all there and nature rebelled against insult being added to injury.

Just then we heard a wild whoop and looking around saw one of the lost carriers. Those who had gone on, went three miles ahead, and then finding that they had missed us, turned back and the irony of it was that they had slept not more than a five minute walk ahead of us.

It is, indeed, a blessed thing that a man's life consisteth not in the abundance or the lack of the things which he has to eat. It is even better to have a diet of sour mush and sweet jam in the path of duty than the table of the Epicure and not know the joy of taking the Bread of Life to famishing souls.

XXXIII

THE SOUL OF A CHICKEN

WE had had a twenty-two mile trek on the 7th of August. Our course had led over and along three high ridges of land with the necessary going up and down between, so that we were a tired caravan when we reached Kapungu's kraal about four that afternoon.

The people were still Bachokwe though we were getting near the borders of the Songo country where we were hoping to get better treatment than among the surly and sullen Bachokwe. To our surprise here, Kapungu came out to our camp in person to give us a hearty welcome and a present of a fowl and some meal while the people were effusively warm in their greetings. It was hard to say which was the most embarrassing, the defiance of the rest of the tribe or the suspicious effusiveness of these.

They assured us they were *delighted* to see us and would show us the only place thereabouts that we could possibly camp where we could be handy to the water. Was there not a place beyond their kraal where we could get water? Nay, they were sorry to assure us there was none for a long, long distance.

We had made it an unbroken rule up to the present to always camp on the farther side of a kraal. There are several advantages in so doing, one being that if trouble should arise with the natives during

the night, escape would be much easier. This time the plausibility of the lies and the fact that we were all so weary that further investigation seemed impossible made us the more easily taken in.

For a while all went well. The women brought out more food than we had seen for a long time and it really seemed as if our men would get a full supper, even though back of all the protestations of friendship there was a disposition to extort outrageous prices. Moreover, we soon discovered that many of the men were partly intoxicated, a fact that made us not a little uneasy at once.

In the midst of the buying, a man came rushing up saying that one of our carriers had killed his chicken. Mr. Springer asked the offender how it happened.

"It was this way," he went on to explain. "I was cutting down some fire-wood, and just as I was bringing my axe down, the chicken popped its head out from under the log but I couldn't stop quick enough to save it."

It was a lame tale and might have been humorous at another time. It was serious now and the man received a severe reprimand while the owner of the half-grown bantam was offered two yards of cloth, worth in that district at least fifty cents. He rejected the cloth at once: that could not begin to pay his loss. His dead brother's spirit was in that fowl and he could not be compensated by such a small amount of cloth for the insult done to his brother's ghost.

Mr. Springer appealed to the chief. "Isn't this the right amount for me to pay your man?" he asked. The chief said it was all right. After that of course he would pay no more. Still the native kept up his

complaint until Mr. Springer asked the chief, "Is *your* brother's spirit in the cock you gave me?" and there was a general laugh. Every one knew that the talk about his brother's spirit was all nonsense, merely an excuse for extortion.

The wrangling broke up the buying. Finally all the men took themselves off to their kraal and darkness fell. A little later we heard women's voices among our carriers whom we had instructed to camp close to our tent that night as we feared foul play. Mr. Springer went to them at once and ordered the women away. They said that they had merely come down to sell a little more food. He replied it made no difference and gave orders that if any women were seen thereabouts, the carriers were to let him know at once. For this is a trap too often set for unwary caravans.

The situation that night was the most serious of any night on the trail, so far as we knew. The natives were drunk, they were treacherous, they were manifestly trying to find an excuse to plunder us of what little trading goods we did have and they had led us to camp where we should have to go through their kraal in order to pursue our journey. Every male in the kraal was armed with a gun, so if we were to pass through with our lives, it must be by some other force than our three rifles. So we prayed.

About midnight, I heard a stealthy step near the tent and wakened my husband. We listened with bated breath as the steps softly approached the front of the tent and then moved away. Looking out, he saw one of our carriers going off with a steamer chair while on the other side of the path, the camp-fires

were burning brightly and the natives were all astir. Going out to find the cause of the disturbance (we had slept in our clothes that night in case of an attack) he found the foes were none other than an army of red ants which had turned half of the caravan out of their quarters. These red soldier ants are much smaller and more vicious than their large black brothers. Burying their mandibles in the flesh, they will not let go even though their heads are torn from their bodies and the torture of their bites is maddening.

Fortunately the army did not cross the path that night and those of us on the upper side were left in peace.

The next morning at four o'clock our camp was quietly awakened and silently made ready for the trail. Just as the first gray streaks of dawn showed in the sky, our caravan glided silently through the kraal, leaving the disputed chicken lying under a tree with the two yards of cloth. Some of the villagers were awaking but no opposition was made to our departure and we took a long breath of relief as we got away.

We had no guide so had to follow the compass to the next kraal seven miles away over a very rough, mountainous trail. As we entered the kraal, my husband exclaimed in an undertone to me as I came up to him, "There's the man and his chicken!" Sure enough! There on a stone in the centre of the kraal were the fowl and the two yards of cloth. Near by sat the owner and around him were a half dozen men whom he had called for counsel. This looked even more serious than ever.

Mr. Springer at that point became hopelessly stupid. He utterly failed to understand anything that the complainant said to him. Apparently he thought the man had had some scruples against taking the cloth and keeping the fowl. He would set his tender, conscientious heart at rest on that point. So in the most benignant way, he answered all that was said with the words, "That's all right; you can keep the fowl and the cloth too. I'm perfectly willing that you should eat the fowl if you wish."

Again and again the old rascal would try and state the serious side of his case to win the superstitious sympathy of his tribesmen only to be interrupted with the irrelevant assurance that he was welcome to eat the fowl. At last the apparent idiocy of the white man appealed to the risibles of a graceless young buck who knew the old man's pretended piety was all a humbug, and he laughed outright. This broke the spell and we felt the danger was over. By this time all of our carriers were at hand and had laid down their loads to hear the end of the matter.

Mr. Springer now arose and gave the order for them to pick up their loads and march which they did with amazing alacrity and we got out of that kraal as fast as we could without showing the fear that we felt.

A shouting soon halted us. The owner of the fowl was running after us calling us to stop. At first we paid no attention but he kept shouting, "You're on the wrong trail, you're on the wrong trail." He then showed us the right one which we followed, fearful that he might be leading us into some new trap. But he wasn't. Having found himself com-

pletely outwitted in his little game of blackmail, he showed the African's good-natured acknowledgment of his defeat and was ready to do us a good turn at once; an excellent illustration of, "half-devil and half-child."

XXXIV

JOHN WEBBA

IT might have been twenty years ago, for the natives of Africa have no way of keeping track of the passing years, that there was a great commotion in a little village far up on the Congo River. A trial for theft had been held and the theft proved. Now the law of that tribe required that the thief should restore fourfold.

A caravan passing down the river loaded with ivory and rubber had seen a pig which had strayed farther from the native village than was safe for a black, razor-backed porker. It is safe to say that the said razor-back was eaten bristles and all, no part of him being wasted nor undue time spent in the cooking.

But retribution followed swiftly and now the guilty men were condemned and payment demanded of their chief. He was not a cannibal—not in the accepted sense of the word though he would not have hesitated to eat an enemy who had fallen in battle, and, very likely, had done so. But not to the extent that he would deliberately kill and eat a slave. In settlement for the stolen pig he decided to give one slave instead of the four pigs. For charity's sake, we will believe that he hadn't the pigs.

The name of the little slave was Vweba, a name which few Europeans could pronounce and so in time they

called him Webba, just as our good friend Spears called Tsaranamayi Sammie Myers, because it was easier.

Vweba was but a lad of perhaps ten years of age that morning when his fate was sealed and they took him away from his mother and his brothers and sisters. He wept loudly and clung to his mother until they dragged him away from her, while she followed after him along the path with bitter wailing until the men turned around and drove her back. It was the last time they ever saw each other and the heart-rending scene burned itself into the child's brain, never to be forgotten.

All day they walked until the tender-footed child who had only played about the kraal was hardly able to proceed further. But in that country a man had no mercy on his own son, much less on a slave, and so the poor little creature was driven forward in spite of his swollen, blistered feet. The result was that one foot subsequently ulcerated and for weeks it looked as if the child would lose his leg, if not his life. But after many months, the sore gradually healed though it left a slight lameness that would go with him through life.

This misfortune did not, be assured, endear the slave to his master who was a most calloused brute. He hated the boy for his affliction. It looked to him like a dead loss.

Three or four years passed and then a missionary went to live at Isangila, some ten miles away from this man's kraal. Now the missionaries were considered at that time a fool lot, though the time came when the suffering tribe came to regard these same

missionaries as their only friends. So this man took his slave to the mission and left him to work for the missionary who paid the chief about two dollars' worth of cloth a year for his services.

There were fourteen other boys at the mission, but Vweba outshone them all in his studies. It did not take much effort to do that either. But he was really a very bright boy, and what was stranger still, honest and reliable. None of these things were characteristic features of the Bafiote.

Vweba had been three years at the mission when I first saw him. He was my cook and native teacher. Every day he spent one or two hours with me teaching me the Kifiote. All went well for months and then there came on an epidemic of stealing which spread throughout the boys' school like the measles or whooping-cough. Vweba withstood the temptations set before him by the other boys for a long time, but at last yielded to their sneers, and *ate one stolen egg.*

From that time on, he was perfectly miserable. He knew the other boys were stealing, for not seldom they came into his cook-house to fry their stolen eggs. He grew careless and stupid in the schoolroom and his cooking was utterly degenerate. We could not imagine what was the matter. He never smiled any more and always looked sullen and angry.

At last it all came out and Vweba confessed with a glad heart. He was greatly relieved when the teacher knew everything. But while this was undoubtedly a relief, it did not take away the moral burden which had been laid upon him. He continued to wallow in the Slough of Despond.

One bright moonlight evening, as we sat out on the veranda of the tiny grass house which we called home, viewing the majestic sweep of the river as it roared past and down over the Isangila Falls, we called Vweba to us and his teacher gave him a tender, loving heart-to-heart talk after which we had a season of prayer. Then Vweba prayed. Such a simple, childlike prayer, which I shall never forget!

"Oh, Lord," he prayed, "I'm so sorry I stole and lied. I want you to forgive me. But I can't stop lying and stealing of myself. Won't you take all the lie and the steal out of my heart for the sake of Jesus who is our Saviour?"

The next morning I caught sight of a figure running past the house early in the morning. It was Vweba, whom I had not seen run for weeks. He was running now with a firebrand in his hand towards the kitchen. On his face was the radiance which comes only from within.

"How is it with you, Vweba?" I asked as soon as an opportunity was afforded for asking.

"Oh, I'm so happy!" he exclaimed. "I felt so badly when I left you and the master last night. I went to the boys' hut and laid down and tried to sleep but I couldn't, for I was so wretched. Then after all the other boys fell asleep, I got up and prayed. I just opened my heart and the happy came in. I know Jesus has forgiven me."

He had opened his heart to Jesus and the happy came in! And the happy shone out through his face which glowed with his new-found joy. He wanted to be baptized at once and arrangements were made for this when there came an unexpected setback.

XXXV

TRIED AS BY FIRE

AS soon as Vweba "received the happy back into his heart," he began to tell his experience and try and persuade others to enter into the same joy. This effort was met by some of his schoolmates with ridicule, others said they would think about it, while a few were openly hostile. In some way the word soon reached the chief's ears.

It was about a week later when the chief appeared, having two or three men with him all armed with their guns. They demanded an interview with the missionary at once, even though he were sick with fever. They were in a most unreasonable and unreasoning rage. The missionary tried to bring them to calmness and talk sense with them, but they were too excited for anything but fierce denunciations and angry threats. Then his Norse blood was aroused and, sick as he was, he rose up and gave them to understand that they could not frighten him by any of their threats of, personal violence. Moreover, he wanted them to clearly understand another thing, and that was that they were not to do Vweba any harm. He would not yield to their demand that the boy leave the station. He was under contract to stay a year and they should not drag him off now. If they did any mischief whatever to the boy, he would —as an extreme measure—inform Bula Matadi.

Then he sank back exhausted and the cowardly Bafiote, seeing that he could not be intimidated, calmed down at once.

Their next effort was to work on Vweba, which was more easily done. He did not fear for himself, but when his chief told him that unless he left the mission and came back to the kraal, he would come in the night and burn the grass house down over the missionary's head, the boy began to weaken. He dared not tell us what the chief had threatened and so gave us no little concern about himself when he began to beg that we would let him leave and go back to his master's kraal.

It was only a few days, however, before his beloved teacher took the long last journey and through those dark days Vweba forgot all else than his devotion to the teacher's wife and baby who also went down close to those same gates of death, but did not enter. Subsequently they were taken down to Vivi and two other missionaries came to Isangila.

Then the chief began to intimidate Vweba again insisting that the only thing that would prevent his burning the missionaries up alive in their house was for Vweba to return with him to the kraal. Had the missionaries known all this they would probably have done the unwise thing of interfering. They did not and were pained exceedingly when Vweba pleaded so hard to go that they could not refuse.

The chief was triumphant. "Now," he said to his slave, "now, I'll show you to live as a heathen should live."

It makes one shudder to think of the temptations which were set in that boy's way during the next

nine months. There was the palm wine, the awful, indescribable, sensual devil dances, not to mention all the indecencies of daily kraal life. The three Hebrews of old had no hotter fire through which to pass.

But God cares for His own. One day the chief decided that Vweba was strong enough now to carry loads on the trail and so sent him over to the government station with some other men to carry rubber and ivory down to Matadi. This caravan, for some reason, came to Vivi first, to the station where I had in the meantime been transferred, and I was surprised one day while sick with fever to see Vweba walk in. It was on this trip that he learned that the Vivi Mission House was made of stone and so his chief could not burn it and during the next few weeks he made up his mind as to his course of action.

The next time his chief sent him down with loads, the caravan went to their usual camping place three miles from Vivi down the river. Vweba turned over his load but did not wait for another. Seizing his opportunity, he slipped away and made for the mission. There was no path he could follow and the jungle was almost impenetrable in places. Moreover he had to follow high precipices at a dizzy height above the roaring, rushing, seething, mighty Congo into which he would surely fall if he made a single misstep, to be eaten by the greedy crocodiles which swarmed its banks.

He also had to force his way through ravines where tall trees, thick underbrush and great rocks made the place the haunt of the leopard and boa-constrictors. Three white men have told me at different

times that this three miles was more to be dreaded than a sixty-mile trip to Isangila.

But at last he succeeded in gaining his refuge though torn and scratched, bruised and bleeding.

There were also at Vivi a brother and sister, Malafine and Sala, the latter a girl about twelve or thirteen years of age.

A year passed by during which there was a change of leaders in our mission work for Africa. That heroic man of God, Bishop William Taylor, so frequently called a second Paul, had reached the end of his active service. The Church and the world will need the perspective of a few decades to see that grand old man in his true light. How true it is that if a man have a hundred successes and one failure, as a rule the world sees but the one failure and forgets the many successes, just as a copper coin held close to the eye entirely obscures the most magnificent landscape.

William Taylor had a vision of the great principle underlying God's plan for the extension and establishment of the Gospel among all nations, the development in every land of a self-supporting, self-propagating church. He was not always able to work out the details of such a plan since his was the type of a seer, a prophet and an evangelist rather than that of a twentieth century business man. So his demonstration of that plan, as far as his work in Africa was concerned, was perhaps faulty, and he failed to realize his great hopes.

But he did accomplish the feat of drawing the attention of the whole civilized world to the principles and problems of self-support. He set men and

churches thinking and many of these have solved the problem for themselves in local fields. It is as yet too early a date to say which of these methods is applicable everywhere, but the indications are that of necessity some tried and proved methods embodying these principles are being more and more generally adopted.

Bishop Taylor's scheme for establishing large industrial centres is becoming more and more popular. But his plan for his missionaries to have all things in common was not a success, though there are not a few Roman Catholic and Anglican missions which are run on that plan. These, however, consist of celebate orders, and not of groups of families, which latter Bishop Taylor especially approved of in his missions. But even in these celebate orders, there are serious handicaps thereby. Moreover, his hope that the missionaries would soon be able to support themselves as well as their boarding pupils was not realized. But the large industrial centres, which were so strongly advocated by David Livingstone, and later by William Taylor, have been proved a great success in Africa. There is also a marked advance in the development of self-support among the converts in all foreign lands. And if the Christian people at home could only be persuaded to give their money for the sending of double and treble the number of missionaries to the foreign field, instead of insisting on paying for the support of orphans, pastor-teachers and Bible-women, that desirable end would be hastened considerably.

It is a remarkable thing that though William Taylor made the great stir that has almost revo-

lutionized missionary methods, yet it was left to other denominations to approach most closely to the ideal of self-support, the work in Korea under the Presbyterians and of the Anglicans in Uganda being notable illustrations of the practical working out of a self-supporting plan.

But this is a digression. It was about the time that Vweba made his last heroic break for liberty of conscience that Bishop Taylor was retired and Bishop Hartzell was elected in his place. And when the new Bishop made his first episcopal visitation to the Congo, he found Vweba and the girl Sala waiting for his coming in order to receive Christian baptism.

They were baptized in the Congo, whose waters had been music to their ears from earliest childhood. That was a simple, picturesque and impressive scene on that 25th day of April, 1897. There were the little group of children, with Miss Hilda Larson, their devoted teacher, whose days of earthly service were already nearly numbered. Behind them rose the high, north bank of the river, almost sheer for about two hundred feet. In front of them was a mile of swift, swirling, eddying, yellowish river, mighty and dangerous, its opposite shore, also high and mountainous, veiled with a soft blue haze. Above the sky was overcast and dull, as was usual in the dry season, making it safe for the Bishop to stand there, his snowy head uncovered as an outward recognition of the Divine Presence. This was the first Christian baptism he had been privileged to perform in his new field of labour and it had for him more than the usual significance. It seemed to him a token that during his administration, the Great Father would

give him thousands of other souls for his hire, thousands of other black diamonds for the Master's crown, —a token which has already come to pass.

When the Bishop had completed his first tour of Africa and faced the fact that only $7,000 was allowed for the work in the entire continent, he consulted with the missionaries and with the powers that be, with the result that the Congo work and property were turned over to the Swedish Missionary Society, whose field was adjacent to ours.

So Miss Larsen took the four children who were living at Vivi and went to Angola and took up her work at Quessua. Here they joined the church and it was only a day's march from here that I found them again.

XXXVI

AFTER MANY DAYS

THE long 1,500 mile trek across Africa from Broken Hill was near its end and we were now enjoying the fellowship of Christian workers. After so long a period travelling through unrelieved heathenism, we were the better able to appreciate the work done by those heroic men and women in Angola.

It was near the close of the day as we drew near Nenzele and the sky was alight with all the splendour of a tropical sunset when my men carried me over the last miry stream and I saw coming towards me on the other side a beautiful young native woman.

Could that lovely creature be Sala, the scrawny, homely little girl I left behind at Vivi twelve years before? I couldn't credit it. And yet who else should be coming out to meet my machilla? Calling to my men to stop, I got out and this girl ran to me, threw herself into my arms exclaiming, in English, "My mother! Oh, my mother!"

We walked up the hill together chatting in English over the wonderful experiences we had had, her neatly clad two-year-old boy running along at our side. At the top of the hill I saw a neat cluster of buildings and soon Vweba, a splendid, tall, manly fellow, came striding towards me with, "Well, bless the Lord! If He hasn't given us to see our mother again! I never thought we would have had this pleasure!"

His English was almost perfect and his wife's only a little less so. He spoke Portuguese quite as well. It was rather an amusing fact to all of us that we had all three forgotten the Kifiote in which we had conversed altogether on the Congo and which was their native tongue.

We went into their little mud and pole house like the one we ourselves had occupied at Broken Hill and the natives crowded around us to greet their teacher's white friends from afar. What a contrast these two were to the dirty crowd of half-clothed heathen to whom they had just come as "foreign missionaries"! The hut was so clean and so tidy. John Webba (for such he had been baptized) had built the house and furnished it by his own supervision and helped with his own hands. There were two little beds he had made covered over with quilts of Miriam's handiwork. There was a small table covered with a clean, cheap cloth. As soon as we arrived, Miriam made lemonade for us in a clean glass pitcher and served it in spotless glasses of which they only had two. The three children stood or sat quietly around with bright eager faces, but too well-behaved to interrupt the conversation. It was simply wonderful to me to see how the inward change had wrought the outward.

But what astonished me the most was the keen, intelligent interest manifested by Webba in our trip across the continent. With true missionary spirit and zeal, his own heart had been burning for those untouched tribes in the interior. Now and then he had met Lunda, Songo or Bachokwe carriers who had come to Malange with their wax and rubber for sale.

He had discovered that their language was not so different from the Kimbundu but that he could soon have made himself understood by them. He had been enquiring of them and the Wambundu concerning that interior country and moreover had been making that a subject of earnest prayer.

He was now opening up new work among a new tribe, the Jingas, I think, who wore their hair in long curls down their backs. These curls were heavily laden with black clay and palm oil with which their scanty garments also seemed saturated. There was no mistaking them for anything else than dirty heathens.

And here was this boy who had been a dirty little heathen himself only valued by his people as worth four pigs, as their missionary and teacher!

Yet it is thus the Gospel leaven works and must work. It is idle for us to talk about the necessity of thoroughly manning all the old fields before we open new ones. It can never be done. The Gospel seed must be scattered broadcast and a few of the natives trained to be leaders but the great work of evangelization must be done through the natives themselves. Moreover, it must be done by self-supporting churches.

We must care for the infant churches and not only teach them to walk but train them to work. But there is a danger sometimes that we hold them in the leading strings too long. Like our own offspring, the time must come for them to set up housekeeping for themselves and to assume their own responsibilities while we turn our efforts and money to the untouched fields which remain.

Bishop Taylor failed to find self-support for his white missionaries on the Congo and the experience of nearly all missions has been to prove that with rare exceptions the foreign missionary cannot maintain himself and at the same time effectively carry on his work for Christ in heathen lands. But the withdrawing more and more of foreign funds and the leading of native churches and primary schools to support their own pastors and teachers is steadily increasing in favour among missionaries although there is still a large minority which is in favour of raising all the support for native work in America and England.

To our minds, this does not seem wise. In Africa the natives have great resources. They can always earn money and in most places they can make large wages working in the towns or in the mines. There are hundreds of cases of self-supporting native churches among all denominations in South Africa.

Let us then no longer cry out that we must not open any more new fields until the old ones are thoroughly evangelized but let us enter the open doors and in every tribe and nation spend the most of our energies in training up a band of Christian workers who in twenty or twenty-five years will be able to do far more than we can in propagating the Gospel.

As we sat there looking at Webba and his wife, miracles of God's power to save and to use the native, our minds ran back to that dark interior through which we had been passing. There among those savage, sullen peoples are hundreds of boys and girls who are ready to become shining witnesses of Jesus' love in even five years' time can they but

have the chance. They would not be the polished products, nor the exceedingly able and competent workers that Webba and his wife are, but they would be quite ready for the work at their hands.

"Lift up your eyes, and look on the fields; for they are white already to harvest. . . . The harvest truly is plenteous, but the labourers are few; pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that He will send forth labourers into His harvest."

"And Jesus came and spake unto them saying, All power is given unto Me in heaven and in earth.

"*Go ye therefore* and *teach all nations*, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world."