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BAPTIST MISSIONARY SOCIETY.

RISE AND PROGRESS OF THE WORK

ON THE

CONGO RIVER.

BY

THE TREASURER

PUBLISHED AND SOLD FOR THE BENEFIT OF THE MISSION.

THE BAPTIST MISSIONARY SOCIETY,
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TO THE
COMMITTEE
OF THE
BAPTIST MISSIONARY SOCIETY,
IN GRATEFUL REMEMBRANCE OF THEIR VALUED SYMPATHY
DURING A TIME OF DEEP PERSONAL AFFLICTION,
AND IN WARM APPRECIATION OF THEIR UNFAILING EFFORTS FOR
THE EXTENSION OF THE REDEEMER'S KINGDOM,
THE FOLLOWING PAGES
Are affectionately inscribed
BY THEIR FRIEND AND COLLEAGUE,
JOSEPH TRITTON.

September, 1884.

Baptist Missionary Society.

RISE AND PROGRESS OF THE WORK ON THE CONGO RIVER.

CHAPTER I.

FIRST STEPS.



IT has been suggested that a brief but connected account of the Rise, and Progress thus far, of the Society's Mission in Central Africa, would be useful, especially in connection with our Sunday-schools, in many of which great interest has been awakened in this particular branch of our operations.

Laid aside in the providence of God from active work, it has occurred to me that I might be of some service in preparing a narrative, such as I conceive to be desired. Let me at once say that I make no pretensions to authorship. My work will be that of compilation, rather than of composition; but I feel that a judicious arrangement of facts, a wise compression of details, and, above all, a devout recognition of the true source of evangelical effort, will be

necessary to render such a narrative influential for good. Seeking the aid and direction of the Divine Spirit, I turn with pleasure to my self-imposed task—or rather, “labour of love”; and I ask the prayers of those into whose hands these pages may come, that this, my service, may be “accepted of the saints,” help forward the cause of the Gospel, and promote the glory of the Great Head of the Church.

The Mission to the Congo, which had already been the subject of earnest consideration amongst us, received no slight impetus in its practical and progressive development from the publication of Mr. Stanley’s record of his wonderful journey “across the Dark Continent.” The attention of the Christian Church had been drawn to the spiritual need of other parts of Africa, besides those of its Western and Southern Divisions, where loving hands had unfurled, with no mean success, the banner of the Cross.

In connection with the London Missionary Society, the wanderings, the discoveries, and the sufferings of Dr. Livingstone, the touching circumstances of his death on bended knee in the hut of Ilala, and the subsequent transport of his cold ashes by native-hands, to be laid with the illustrious dead in our ancient Abbey, had greatly influenced the public mind. While the record of the Church Missionary Society’s proceedings at Uganda, the propagation of the Gospel and its ready reception at the court of King Mtesa, further stimulated religious sympathy on the Africans’ behalf.

The fact also of a royal salute having been fired at the name of Jesus, by the king’s command, no doubt worked to the deepening of the desire in many hearts to make known that name “which is above every

name" to the poor, benighted heathen, few if any of whom knew the worth of Him to whom their Ruler thus did outward homage.

As is often the case—notably so in the instance of Dr. Carey, and his cherished desire for missions at large—prayerful thought on the existing need of Central Africa, and the possibility of meeting it, had long been working in one benevolent mind—that of a Christian gentleman, Mr. Robert Arthington, of Leeds, who, in the spring of 1877, thus wrote to the Committee of the Society: "There is a part of Africa, not too far, I think, from places where you have stations, on which I have long had my eye, with very strong desire that the blessing of the Gospel might be given to it—it is the Congo country, an old kingdom, once possessed—indeed, is now—of a measure of civilisation, and to a limited extent instructed in the externals of the Christian religion."

After glancing at the history of the country and its readiness to receive some English ("white men") if they would come to them, Mr. Arthington made the following generous proposal:—

"It is therefore a great satisfaction, and a high and sacred pleasure to me, to offer £1,000 if the Baptist Missionary Society will undertake at once to visit these benighted, interesting people with the blessed light of the Gospel, teach them to read and write, and give them, in imperishable letters, the words of Eternal Truth. By-and-by, possibly, we may be able to extend the Mission eastwards, on the Congo, at a point above the rapids."

In a subsequent communication, Mr. Arthington promised £50 towards the expenses of a pioneer who

should explore the land, preparatory to the despatch of a regular missionary expedition. Mention should here be made of a donation of £500 from Mr. Wathen, of Bristol, who, with other friends, showed his sympathy with the work now about to assume a practical shape.

The Committee recognised Mr. Arthington's proposal as a call in Providence to enter upon the work. The means being provided, the pioneers were at once forthcoming, in the persons of Messrs. Comber and Grenfell, who were labouring at Cameroons in the service of the Society, both longing to press further into the interior, as messengers and heralds of the "Gospel of Peace." In the following terms they notified their cheerful devotion to the work: "We are not our own, nor are we in Africa for our own purposes or ends; and in all our movements, especially in such a deeply important one as we feel this to be, we look up to the gracious Master to fulfil His promise, 'I will guide thee with Mine eye,' and make 'all things work together for good.'"

Like him of old who, while ministering the Gospel at Troas, stood "ready to depart on the morrow," the two brethren, ere yet the full instructions of the Committee reached them, at once took ship to Banana, at the entrance of the river, established friendly relations with the large and influential Dutch trading firm there settled, went up more than seventy miles by the company's steamer to Mboma, proceeded thence to Mbanza-Noki, from which place they sent a letter to the King of Congo, telling him of their projected visit to San Salvador; having done which, and obtained most valuable information, they returned to Cameroons.

In the month of June following, having been furnished

with instructions and necessary stores, they again set forth, and in due time reached San Salvador; having accomplished the long land journey from Mbanza-Noki, some ninety miles, in safety.

The party was large, consisting of the two missionaries, two native preachers, and twelve helpers; the latter, however, were reduced to ten on reaching the river, the hearts of two having failed them, "being discouraged because of the way."

The reception given to our brethren was favourable; they were heartily welcomed by the King of Congo, Dom Pedro V., and had full liberty accorded them "to teach and to preach Jesus Christ."

Thus was the Mission established; with San Salvador for its present and future base of operations, or, at least, till such time as a more eligible spot should be discovered to serve as a resting-place by the way, and a starting-place for the goal.

CHAPTER II.

FORWARD MOVEMENTS.



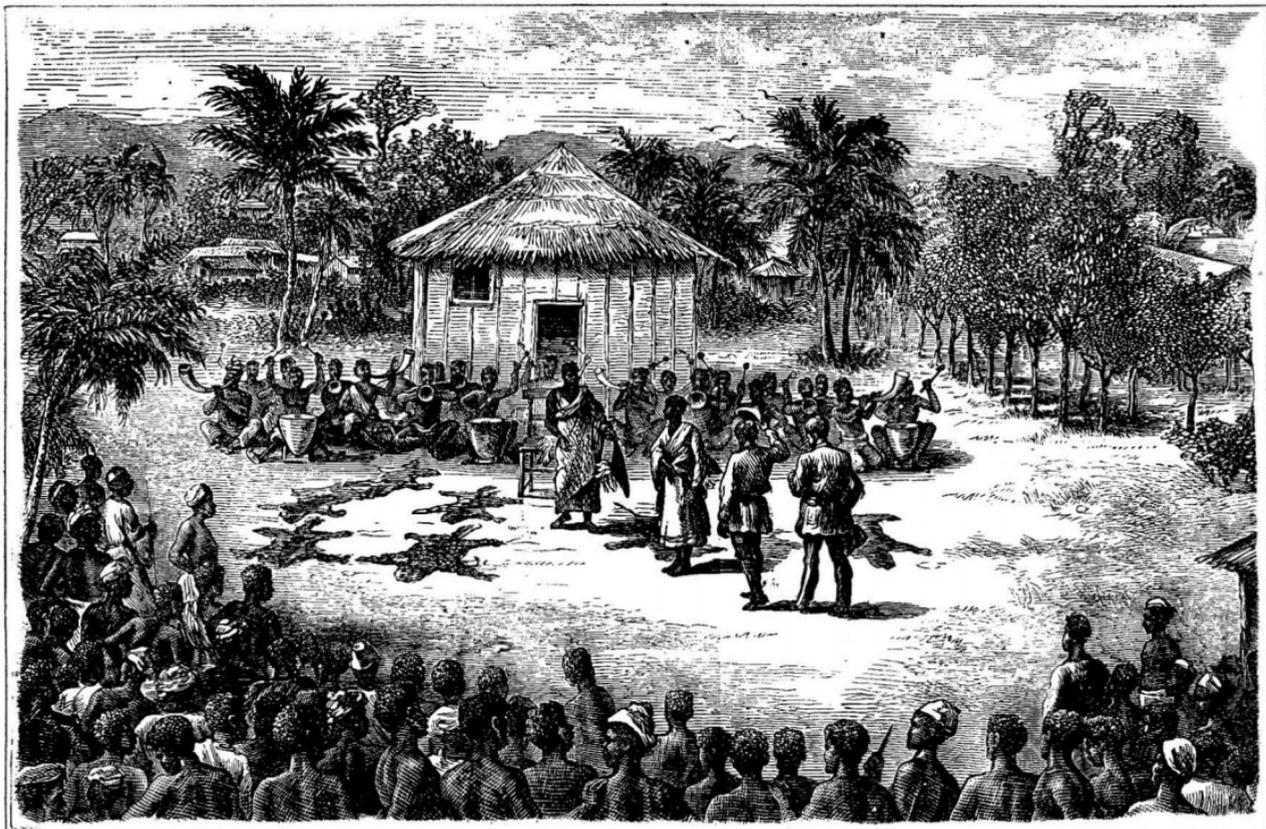
BEFORE noticing the efforts of the brethren to penetrate into the interior of the country, it may be well to glance at the circumstances of Congo and its relation to the kingdom of Portugal, since those circumstances have already injuriously affected the Mission, and may, it is feared, act still more prejudicially to its interests in time to come. There can be no doubt that the country was originally discovered by the Portuguese 400 years ago, that the name of San Salvador was given by them to the chief town, that the King ruled under their auspices, and that a nominal Christianity was forced upon him and his subjects. The monuments of European civilization are still recognised in the material ruins scattered about, and, alas! in the relics of an idolatrous faith, which sought with bell, and bead, and candle—with priestly absolution and church authority, backed by persecution and oppression, determined and prolonged, to make of the people of Congo a nation professedly Christian. Who can tell the woes of the unhappy natives under this so-called Christian rule of Portugal? The sword—the cannon—the slave whip—the various instruments of torture—the strong hand of power and the reigning lust of gain—these were the influences which marked the path of the invader, these the weapons which pierced with a thou-

sand wounds the victims of his iron rule. Though all actual interest in Congo had ceased for years on the part of the power alluded to, no sooner had the news of Protestant missionaries being in the field reached Lisbon than there was the assertion of a right of interference. The spiritual machinery, no doubt in this case in alliance with the political, was set in motion, and the king of Congo was made to feel his dependence by the despatch of a party of Roman Catholic priests, being the forerunners of a more organised expedition, who came, escorted by a military and naval force, to revive the old religion in Dom Pedro's capital and throughout his dominions. Lavish of their gifts, as well as armed with power, a Portuguese gunboat waiting in the river till such time as their Mission should be firmly established, it could not be otherwise than that the king should yield, in appearance at least, to the demands of the priests, and turn his back upon the unauthorised sectaries whose ministry he had encouraged and attended. In spite, however, of gifts and threats, he has remained friendly at heart to our brethren, earnestly desiring that they should remain at San Salvador. To show the sort of feeling with which the Portuguese are regarded, Mr. Crudgington mentions the case of a chief, who once feasted on part of a Portuguese, to indicate his hatred of that nation. And yet it may be stated, as illustrative of the disposition of the people—a disposition borne witness to by our brethren and, alas! as showing also how strongly and how long the influence of superstition prevails—that although the ancient mission was abandoned, as regards San Salvador, more than 100 years ago, the memory of the Roman Catholic missionaries is revered in the country

to this day. Their graves are carefully tended and preserved with every sign of respect, and their missals, books, letters, chalices, and other church furniture of the olden time still exist, and the natives would not part with them on any account.*

After a sojourn of three weeks at San Salvador, Mr. Comber and Mr. Grenfell resolved on an excursion to the north-east, in the direction of the river above the falls. Various difficulties surmounted, they reached the neat, well-built town of Tungwa, the chief town of the King of the Makuta country. Here they had a grand reception, the more remarkable as it was the first visit of a white man to the place. They were not, however, permitted to go forward to the upper reaches of the river, and, yielding to necessity, with great reluctance they retraced their steps to San Salvador. Circumstances having necessitated the return of Mr. Grenfell to Cameroons, and the objects of the expedition having been thus far accomplished, Mr. Comber came home to confer with the Committee on the future course of the Mission, and to secure the co-operation of other brethren like-minded with himself in the action contemplated. In the April of the year of which I am writing (1879), with his wife, to whom he had just been married, and accompanied by Messrs. Crudgington, Hartland, and W. Holman Bentley, he again went forth. At a very enthusiastic meeting (or rather at two meetings, for the spacious room which had been engaged was utterly incapable of accommodating the

* See J. J. Monteiro's "Angola and the River Congo." From what I hear, however, I am led to believe that any such respect, if it exists, is associated with Fetish superstitions and not with reverence for Romish relics, where these may have been discovered.



RECEPTION BY THE KING OF MAKUTA.—(See page 8.)

crowds who assembled, and an auxiliary meeting was rendered necessary), friends at home bade them farewell and commended them to the loving care of Him to whose service they had consecrated their lives—their all! On this occasion the veteran West African missionary, Mr. Saker, delivered one of his last addresses, the weak voice, the attenuated form, and the failing energy of “the earthly house of this tabernacle” too plainly evidencing that “the time of the end” for him was not far distant.

The experience and anticipations of the little band are described by one of their number, who wrote when off Sierra Leone, “We are a very happy party on board the *Congo* — happy in our successful voyage, in our glorious prospects for the future, in our intercourse with one another. We had a very delightful and strengthening service on board last Sunday, when we partook of the Lord’s Supper together; and every day we are able to meet in the ladies’ saloon for prayer. I think all our hearts are light and joyous, and we feel with Anna Waring—

‘My hopes I cannot measure.’

I trust that every report we have to make may be as cheering and as full of thankfulness as this.”

Arrived at Mussuca, the brethren determined to proceed to San Salvador in two detachments, Mr. Crudginton and Mr. Bentley starting first with thirty-six carriers and two caputas (head-men), Mr. and Mrs. Comber with Mr. Hartland following in the course of three or four days. Mr. Comber, however, accompanied the advance party as far as Ayongo, returning thence to Mussuca. Both divisions met with the expression of kindly feelings and hospitality on the

part of the sovereigns and chiefs through whose towns they passed. At Tumbi, the first found an escort awaiting them, and a letter from the secretary of the king, Dom Pedro, was there presented to them, informing them that he had instructions to receive them, and with their own flag in front, followed by the Portuguese, and the new flag of Congo—dark blue silk with gold star in centre—they marched into San Salvador, being favoured with an interview with his Majesty about half-an-hour after their arrival. "Let me say," writes Mr. Crudgington, "how thankful we are to have arrived here in such good health and perfect safety. We have been indeed much blessed in all our journeyings by sea and land, and He 'who never slumbers nor sleeps' has watched over us in all our goings. God's past goodness we take as an earnest of future blessings." "At one place," says Mr. Comber, who was following with "seventy-eight carriers, besides our own special party of Cameroons people—Krooboyes," "at one place (our first night's sleeping place), we were presented by seven kings with seven goats and sheep, and at the other large towns (Olengi and Ayongo) we had sheep given us. We are all very well, only very tired night after night. My wife feels better far while travelling than she did on the coast. 'The Lord of hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our refuge.'" Little did the writer, as he penned the above words, think how soon he would have to betake himself to this Divine refuge for consolation and support. For yet a few days and the wife of his bosom was to be taken from him—an event of which I purpose to make fuller mention hereafter. While realising the terrible force of the blow, he was not moved from the high purpose

which he had set before himself, by God's grace, to accomplish. Rather was he quickened in the path, now, so far as the endeared personal relationship was concerned, to be trodden alone. In his letter to the secretary, dated San Salvador, August 30th, 1879, announcing his sorrowful bereavement, he says: "Tomorrow is Sunday (a week since the Master called her), and on Monday we (Mr. Hartland and I) shall start for Makuta."

The journey in question proved anything but prosperous, and ended in disappointment. After a great deal of trouble, first through the failure of their donkeys, necessitating a march on foot, and then through the timidity of the carriers, who were afraid of treachery on the part of the people, they reached Kola, where Mr. Hartland, being unwell, had to remain, while Mr. Comber went on alone, save that he had with him two of the company. They crossed the Tungwa river, and entered the town of that name without opposition, but without welcome such as Mr. Comber had experienced when he went there as a pioneer. Through a misadventure in respect of a present, about the delivery of which some deception was supposed to have been practised, the chiefs were very angry with Nsabi, one of the attendants, another cause of displeasure being that he had brought the missionary to Tungwa again, the former visit having involved them in unpleasantnesses with their neighbours. The people themselves seemed friendly, yet would not allow Mr. Comber to pass the night in their town; and in weariness and disappointment he and those with him returned to Kola. It was evident that the plan of occupying Makuta by a native evangelist

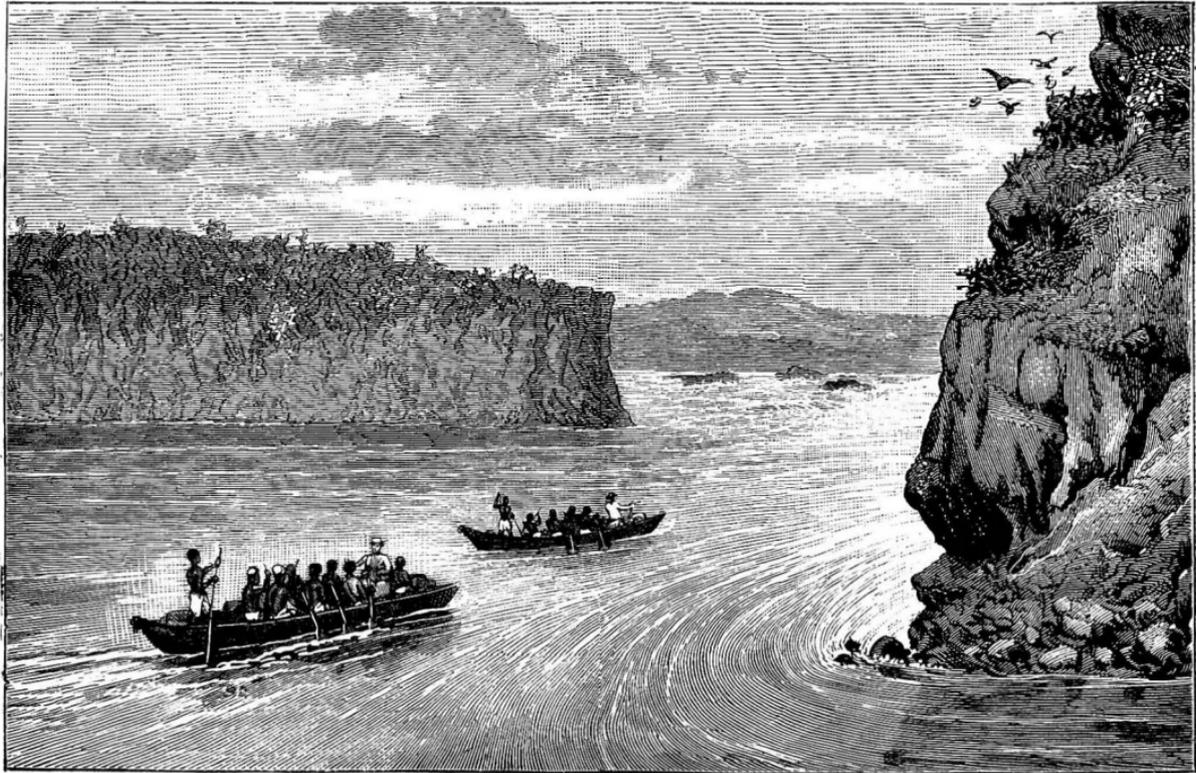
from Cameroons, which had suggested itself, so forming a base for pushing on to Stanley Pool, must be abandoned, and a new effort made to reach the Upper Congo by way of Zombo or Kinsuka. This effort it was deemed advisable to defer till after the rainy season was over, and till the report of the repulse at Tungwa should have died away. For the next three months, therefore, the brethren determined to remain quietly at San Salvador, going on with their building and their teaching.

The endeavour to proceed by this fresh route to the Pool, when attempted, was as unsuccessful as the last. Messrs. Comber and Hartland intended to make for Kintamo on its shores, but arriving at Kinsuka they were neither allowed to remain nor to go forward, the chief sending them a message that he did not want them nor their preaching. After spending a Sunday at Moila, they returned to Congo by Mbanzu, being desirous of reconnoitering a new road and visiting a fine waterfall, which they had often seen from a distance among the Zombo hills. At Congo dia Mbanzu they were received by the great chief of the district in grand state, amidst much shouting and clapping. He insisted on their staying a day or two in his town, on leaving which, after a walk of about half-an-hour through the woods, and down a path, "suited rather for cats and monkeys than men," the road suddenly turned, and the fall, whose roar they had heard for some time, burst upon them in its grandeur and beauty. To this picturesque and magnificent cascade, which can be seen in clear weather from a distance of more than thirty miles, they gave the name of "the Arthington Falls."

A new phase of missionary experience was now awaiting these two intrepid young servants of Christ.

Hitherto, whatever their toils and trials, their sufferings and sorrows, for the Master's sake and in His cause, the hand of violence had not fallen upon them, and if any "weapon" had been "formed against" them in secret, it had not been permitted to "prosper." The time was, however, at hand, when they were to hazard "their lives for the name of the Lord Jesus Christ." Hearing more favourable reports of the disposition of the king and people of Makuta, since last they were in their country, Mr. Comber and Mr. Hartland determined once more to attempt the Makuta road, which is by far the most direct to the Pool. All helpers having failed through fear, they had only Cam (Mr. Comber's boy) with them, one Moila man who carried their blankets refusing to go as far as Tungwa. By the people of Tungwa no opposition was made to their passing, but at other towns they found the inhabitants reluctant to give them any information beyond indicating the road to Mbanza Makuta. At this place the cry was at once raised, "Fetch the guns, kill the white men;" and arming themselves with great sticks, huge pieces of stone, knives, cutlasses, and guns, the townspeople without any word of "palaver," danced and leaped around them, brandishing their weapons. Appeals were in vain, though the missionaries expressed themselves ready to go back. Nothing was left them but to fly, though escape seemed hopeless, stones and blows falling upon them. At length Mr. Comber was shot down, but mercifully the slug did not touch any vital part, and the effusion of blood was not great. He was therefore able after a short time to rise, and overtaking his

comrade and Cam, they continued their flight, casting everything away, followed for five miles by some of the infuriated Mbanza Makuta people, three of whom chased them along the road to Tungwa, armed with knives, sticks and a gun, yelling horribly and throwing stones at the fugitives. Near to Tungwa they gave up the pursuit, and the shades of night descending befriended the worn and weary couple, who passed through several towns on tiptoe for fear of waking the people. A friendly town gained, Mr. Hartland was able to engage a few men to carry a hammock, in which his wounded colleague was laid, he and Cam walking by his side, and having travelled about eighty miles in three days they reached San Salvador, where, thanks to Mr. Crudgington's surgical skill, the slug was extracted; but a severe attack of fever, with which Mr. Comber was subsequently visited, was no doubt due to the shock, the strain, and the anxiety of this sadly memorable time. There seems little doubt that the cause of the Makuta men acting as they did was to be traced to the remembrance of the excesses of the Portuguese many years ago, and to the fear of their losing their ivory trade. Hence, from Mr. Comber's first visit to the present time they have uniformly objected to the presence of white men. It should be added that Mr. Hartland had several bruises from sticks and stones, one particularly on the right temple, caused by a huge piece of stone and a thick stick thrown at him, which at the time almost stunned him. He narrowly also escaped being stabbed in the shoulder. Cam came off the best, with scarcely a bruise. Shortly after, Mr. Hartland, himself conveyed in a hammock, and Mr. Crudgington went to Moila to look after the things



ROCKY POINT, RIVER CONGO. (*From a Photograph.*)

that had been left at that place, and to try and get back those lost at Makuta, said to be at this town. They remained at Moila three days, one of which was a Sunday, when they held "a good service."

On the 8th January, 1881, as the result of a prolonged and prayerful conference, at which Mr. Grenfell, who had rejoined the Mission, was present, two expeditions left San Salvador, the one consisting of Mr. Comber and Mr. Hartland, to make another trial of the old Makuta road; and the other of Messrs. Crudgington and Bentley, to take the route on the north bank of the Congo. The former had to return after a few days' march, being deserted by their Krooboys; but, to the joy of the latter, in twenty-one days' walking from Vivi, where they began their journey on the farther side of the river, the long-desired end was attained. On the 10th of February, all difficulties thus far overcome, they passed through fine woodland country, with many sandy streams, and some beautiful open spaces covered with a short grass. "At one of these open spaces," says Mr. Crudgington, in his notes of the journey, "I sighted a wide stretch of water on the horizon, which appeared to be a long streak of cloud. I exclaimed to Mr. Bentley, 'Look, there's Stanley Pool!' We thought we must be mistaken, but another view a little farther on made it unmistakable." Thus the patient toil and intense desires of many a weary month were at length rewarded.

CHAPTER III.

AT THE POOL.

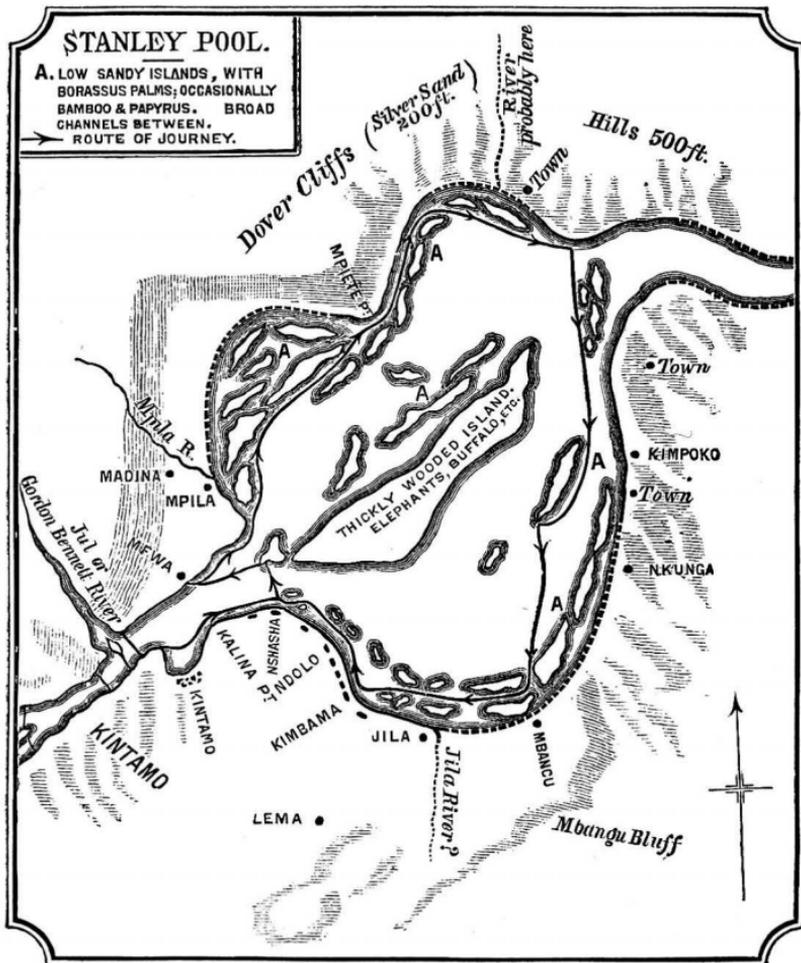


THE importance of Stanley Pool, in connection with the Mission, lies in the fact that it separates the waters of the Upper from those of the Lower river. Had it been our purpose to evangelise only the people on either side of the latter, we might now consider the terminal point reached, and stand still in hope and faith of seeing the salvation of God. But as our aim has been from the first the conversion of the tribes in the interior, we may not linger, but must obey the voice which seems to say, "Arise ye and depart, for *this* is not your rest." We may not linger, "for the night cometh when no man can work." Or the Master's return, "the day and the hour of which knoweth no man," breaking in upon us, may bring to a close both our time and opportunity.

Stanley Pool, in itself, is an extensive sheet of water, "its total length being about twenty-four miles, and its breadth as much in some places." The scenery at Arthington, in the direction of Dover Cliffs (so-called by poor Frank Pocock, who was lost in the rapids in Stanley's first expedition) is said to be very fine; but at the entrance to the Upper Congo, where the Pool narrows to some two-and-a-half miles, the thick woods clothing the sides of the high hills, impart to the scene a dark and sombre aspect, harmonising well with

STANLEY POOL.

A. LOW SANDY ISLANDS, WITH
BORASSUS PALMS, OCCASIONALLY
BAMBOO & PAPYRUS. BROAD
CHANNELS BETWEEN.
ROUTE OF JOURNEY.



the approach to the dark, mysterious land beyond. Animal life abounds in and around these waters—alligators and hippopotami being especially numerous. When Mr. Comber and Mr. Bentley were exploring the Pool last autumn, in company with Dr. Sims, of the Livingstone Inland Mission, a huge crocodile pursued their boat, and was only arrested in its wild career by a well-directed rifle shot. Birds, both of a familiar and an unknown type, are very plentiful, while the lordly elephant roams over shore and island at will.

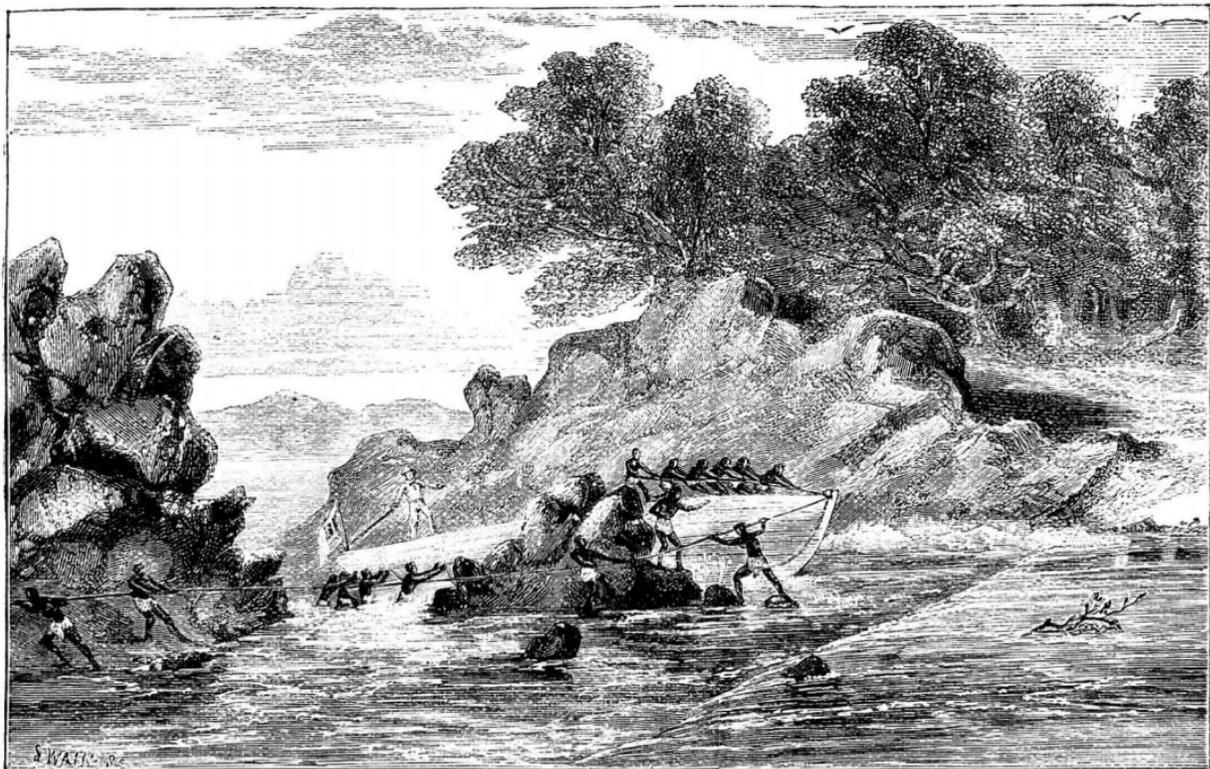
Vegetable life also is very profuse, and large floating islands are formed of the loose vegetation borne on by the current, easily mistakable for such as are real, till their constantly changing position is noted.

“For the most part,” says Mr. Comber, “the shores of the Pool are uninhabited, nearly all the people crowding to its south-eastern bend and its exit. We would pass the whole day, and see but one or two canoes. A town peeped out near Dover Cliffs, an old farm was seen on Mpiete Point, one or two small towns are perched on hills near the entrance (south-east side), and then we come to the big towns of Nkunga, Mbangu, and Nshasha, the latter being seven miles distant from Arthington.”

Resuming the course of my narrative—Messrs. Crudgington and Bentley on their journey were most kindly received at the town of the chief Bwa-bwa-Njali, and were hospitably entertained by him and his people. They were addressed as “Ndugu” (brother), were comfortably lodged, provided with guides, and next morning were ferried over his river, the Zue, the chief forwarding instructions to Dom Joao Makabi, at Ibiu, to send them across to Ntamo. There their reception was not

so friendly as they might have anticipated. The great chief, Nga Liema, "did not want them and their God palaver"; while, on proceeding towards Nshasha, which, like Ntamo, is one of a group of towns built along the shore of the Pool, a furious onslaught was made upon them by the savage inhabitants. At the imminent peril of their lives they made good their retreat, but one of the Krooboys, Dandy, having, in his flight, lost the bale he was carrying, and returning to look for it, in spite of orders to the contrary, he was left behind. Subsequently, however, he reappeared, bringing his bale with him, at Mr. Stanley's depôt at Ntombo Falls, where he was found by Messrs. Bentley and Grenfell in the following August.

On returning, after a variety of thrilling adventures, and resting for two pleasant days at the station of the Livingstone Inland Mission, a little below the Itumzima Falls, with Messrs. Lancely and Clark, the brethren found themselves at a point where they espied the white tents of the Belgian Expedition, and were heartily welcomed and hospitably entertained by Mr. Stanley himself, who offered to take them down to Isangila in his steamer. This he did, accompanying them as far as Ntombi Creek, sending them on thence in his steel sectional whale-boat. From Mr. Stanley they learned that Messrs. Comber and Hartland had visited him, having travelled up as far as the neighbourhood of Virbonda, but had been compelled to return by failure of barter stuff. On Wednesday, March 2nd, the brethren reached Vivi, where they received kind attentions from Mr. Sparhawk, Mr. Stanley's Agent at that depôt, and a passage in the steamship *Belgique* to our station at Mussuca, where they arrived safe and



THE "PLYMOUTH" ASCENDING THE KILOLO RAPIDS, CONGO RIVER.
(From a Drawing by M. L. Amelot, of Mr. Stanley's Expedition.)

sound, having enjoyed excellent health throughout the whole journey, and full of thankfulness to God for His preserving care. It had been arranged that, should the south bank party fail in their endeavour to get forward, they would cross to the north side, and render such aid as they could to Messrs. Crudginton and Bentley. Hence the visit of Messrs. Comber and Hartland mentioned above, who, finding they could be of no service to their friends, proceeded down the river to Banana.

Mr. Stanley's information and advice was of great service to the brethren, and, through them, to the Committee of the Society, to consult with whom as to the future route, intermediate stations, &c., Mr. Crudginton was now unanimously and urgently requested by his colleagues to proceed to England. The route on the north bank of the river was approved, with various stations, and it was resolved to send out a good steel boat, constructed in sections, of which the missionaries could avail themselves above the Isangila Falls to Manyanga, thus saving much time and expense in the transport of goods, and to themselves much exposure and fatigue, relieving them also from the discomforts and risks of passing through the country of a most troublesome tribe—viz., the Basundi. The boat had in fact been put in hand before Mr. Crudginton's arrival, and no sooner had an appeal been made for its cost, than the necessary amount was forwarded by a friend, who would not allow his name to be mentioned. The vessel was, however, called *Plymouth*, after what was understood to be the town of the donor. She proved a great success, and was reported to behave splendidly. The Committee resolved to send out six

more brethren, of whom one, Mr. Herbert Dixon, of Regent's Park College, and a member of the Downs Church, Upper Clapton, accompanied Mr. Crudgington on his return. During their colleague's absence, Messrs. Comber, Bentley, and Hartland paid a visit to San Salvador, the last-named remaining in charge of that station till such time as further aid should come from England, after which visit the two first, in association with Mr. Grenfell, established the north bank stations as previously referred to. It was on the occasion of Mr. Bentley and Mr. Grenfell reaching Mr. Stanley's depôt at Ntombo Falls, in order to commence the work at Manyanga, that, to their great joy, they found the lost Krooboy. Writing on the 24th of July, 1882, after having been detained by very serious illness, Mr. Comber announced his own arrival at Stanley Pool, and that, through the kind offices of Mr. Stanley, and Lieut. Braconnier, his deputy in charge at Leopoldville, a portion of their ground, forming part of a large plot leased from the Bawumbu chiefs, had been allotted to the Baptist Missionary Society. This having been arranged, and Mr. Comber having had an interview with the great Nga Liema at his town, Kintamo, situated within five minutes of Leopoldville, he hastened back to Manyanga, leaving one of the party, a Loango man, behind, to clear the ground, with a view to future building operations. Returning, after an interval of three months, he found that little had been done in the way of clearing, etc., and that the work was all before him, and the four or five boys of his caravan, whom he retained to assist his few men in undertaking it.

Mr. Comber, on the occasion of this last journey,

travelled on the south side of the river from Manyanga, staying three or four days with Mr. Bentley, in Lutete's town, off Makwekwe, and then crossing the Nkishi river (Stanley's Great Cataract river). With growing knowledge and experience, and looking to the fact that a road was being made by Mr. Stanley's directions on the south side, it was felt desirable to make a change in the intermediate stations, which were finally settled as follows:—Tunduwa, or Underhill; Vunda, or Baynesville; Manyanga, or Wathen*—these being on the south; while to that at Leopoldville was given the name of Arthington. Writing from this place, on 28th October, 1882, Mr. Comber says: "Immediately the steamer is ready and afloat at Stanley Pool, the way is open to go forward and form new stations, always provided we have the men." From the first it had been foreseen that a steam vessel would be needed for use on the waters of the Upper Congo, and the rivers flowing into them. In the letter embodying his original proposal, Mr. Arthington expressed the hope that we should soon have a steamer on the Congo, if it should be found requisite, and carry the Gospel eastward, and south, and north of the river, as the way may open, as far as Nyangwe; and, in the exercise of a generosity for which we cannot be too grateful to God, he, at a later date, wrote to the Committee in the following terms:—

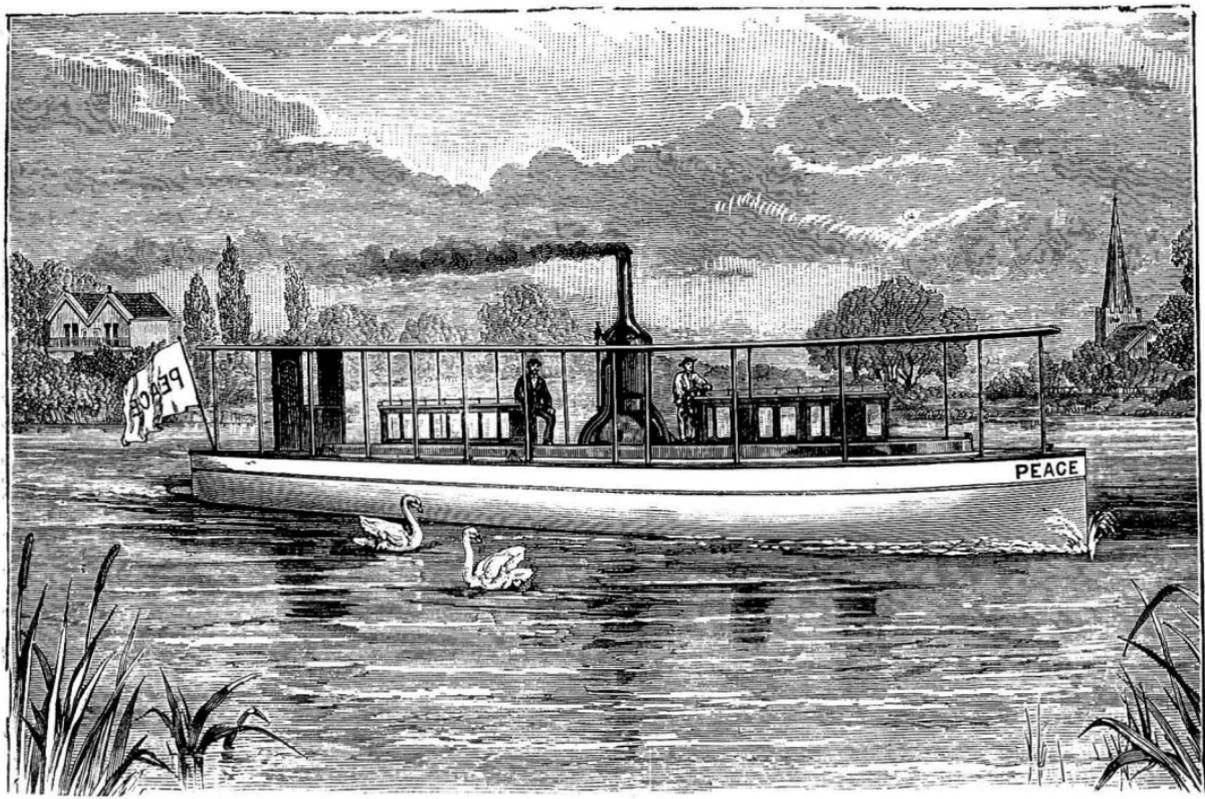
"DEAR SIRS AND CHRISTIAN BRETHERN,

"I believe the time is come when we should make every necessary preparation to carry out the original

* Wathen Station has now been transferred to Ngombe, eighteen miles nearer the Pool, on the south bank of the river.

purpose of the Congo Mission—to *place a steamer on the Congo River*, where we can sail north-eastward into the heart of Africa, for many hundred miles uninterruptedly, and bring the glad tidings of the everlasting Gospel to thousands of human beings who are now ignorant of the way of life and immortality. I have, therefore, now to offer your Society one thousand pounds towards the purchase of a steamer of the best make and capacity, every way suitable for the purpose, and its conveyance and launch on the river at Stanley Pool, and three thousand pounds to be carefully invested, the interest only to be used for the perpetual maintenance of such steamer on the Congo and its affluents, until Christ and His salvation shall be known all along the Congo, from Stanley Pool to the first cataract of the equatorial cataracts of the Congo, beyond the mouths of the Aruwimi and Mbura rivers.”

Mr. Arthington afterwards added a further sum of one thousand pounds to the one above mentioned, thus bringing up the total of his contributions to the Congo Mission, in these large amounts, to £6,000. Such an offer could only be regarded by the Committee as an answer to prayer and a recompense of faith. Only a few months before, Mr. Comber had written: “My earnest prayer is, that God will raise up some generous friend to provide the means for the purchase and maintenance of a small steam launch, to be placed upon the Congo, when we have found a way to Stanley Pool; and *I feel confident He will.*” It could not be otherwise, also, than a great encouragement to go forward; and in order to secure a steamer of the character desired by Mr. Arthington, the Committee requested the return



THE CONGO MISSION STEAMER "PEACE." (From a Photograph.)—See page 23.

of Mr. Grenfell, that they might avail themselves of his practical knowledge of what would be most suitable, and that it might be from the very commencement under his eye, and subject to his suggestions. Mr. Grenfell brought with him plans and drawings, and these furnished the leading idea of the beautiful little vessel, built by Messrs. Thornycroft & Co., of Chiswick, which many of the friends of the Society had the opportunity of inspecting, as she lay moored for a day or two, off Westminster Bridge stairs. The name of the *Peace*—a most appropriate title—was given to her at the special request of Mr. Arthington.

With Mr. Grenfell was associated Mr. W. H. Doke, from Regent's Park College, who had been accepted by the Committee for mission work in Central Africa. After a very memorable farewell gathering, at the beginning of the last month of the year 1882, the two brethren sailed from Liverpool, carrying the various pieces composing the steamer in a number of packages—some seven hundred; and, through the exertions of the missionaries by the way, and greater readiness on the part of the carriers than heretofore, these were conveyed from station to station at a much more rapid rate than had been anticipated, and with the gratifying result that, on arriving at Stanley Pool, nothing was missing, save a few bolts lost on the passage out, which could easily be replaced on the spot. While, however, it fared thus well with the inanimate material, one who had given his mind to its construction, and his heart to the land whither he went, was not permitted to share with his colleague the joy of the successful transport, or the toil of putting together again the various portions of the little vessel which had been confided in part to

his charge. Mr. Doke was prostrated by fever almost immediately on reaching Underhill, and there passed away from the service of earth to the higher service of the skies. In the next chapter I hope to refer to this young servant of Christ, with others who have been taken, and also to some, if not all, who are left to fight the battle, and, as we trust, to win the victory on these high places of the field. Mr. Grenfell has expressed his intention of proceeding as rapidly as possible with his task, but it has under present circumstances been thought advisable to send out one or two practical mechanics to assist him in it. Very soon, doubtless, the work will be achieved, and then for a yet further forward movement, if God permit! The Belgian Expedition has already advanced many hundred miles beyond the Pool, and has been able to establish friendly relations with the swarming tribes on either side of the Upper River. This, in God's Providence, will be helpful to our brethren, when they are in a position to follow and "prepare in the desert a highway for our God." This may *He* soon bring to pass, "Who is wonderful in counsel, and excellent in working.'

CHAPTER IV.

DARK O'ERSHADOWINGS.



THE original little band of brethren referred to in the previous pages, has been strengthened, from time to time, by the following additions to its numbers:—

Mr. Herbert Dixon, who left England with Mr. Crudginton, in the autumn of 1881.

Mr. John H. Weeks, of the Pastors' College.

Mr. Harry W. Butcher, of Bristol College.

Mr. Wm. Hughes, of North Wales (Llangollen) College.

Mr. H. K. Moolenaar, of the Pastors' College.

Mr. W. H. Doke, of Regent's Park College.

Mr. Sidney A. Comber, of the Edinburgh Medical Mission College.

Mr. Wm. Ross, of Bristol College.

Mr. H. G. Whitley, of Enfield.

Mr. J. W. Hartley, of the Pastors' College.

Mr. Frank E. Darling, of Rawdon College, and

Mr. Andrew Cruikshank, of Glasgow, together with Mr. Grenfell, who again, as previously stated, cast in his lot with the Mission. Mr. Crudginton, too, who was at

home on furlough two years later, took back with him a wife, who would be his helper at the important station he occupies at Underhill. Of these "some are fallen asleep," and, while the devotion of the living demands our homage, the dead must not be allowed to be forgotten in the records of His cause "who died for us, that whether we wake or sleep we should live together with Him."

The first to be called away was the young wife of Mr. Comber, who after only about four months' experience of the land and the people, the work and its prospects, succumbed to an attack of fever, and was laid to rest, "asleep in Jesus," in the Mission Garden at San Salvador. The blow was borne by her bereaved husband, as we have already seen, with admirable fortitude. Very touching were his allusions to his dear partner at the time. "We were working hard," he wrote, "at the site and foundation of our stone house, 'preparing a place' for her; but the Saviour's 'place' was ready first, and she, with her brave, tender nature, her simple, trustful faith, her ready obedience to the call of duty, and, I know, trusting alone in the salvation wrought for her by the Saviour—she was ready too." Again he refers to her thus: "Amid all my soreness of heart, I am very proud of my wife: heroic in her brave spirit, ready for anything in her Master's service, come life or death, true and loyal to the core, and with all the winning gentleness of tenderest womanhood, one might well be proud of such a wife. But she is taken to other and nobler service above, and I bow myself under the Master's hand, knowing, 'He doeth all things well.'" And in writing, last year, advocating the coming out of ladies, as it was impossible for the missionaries

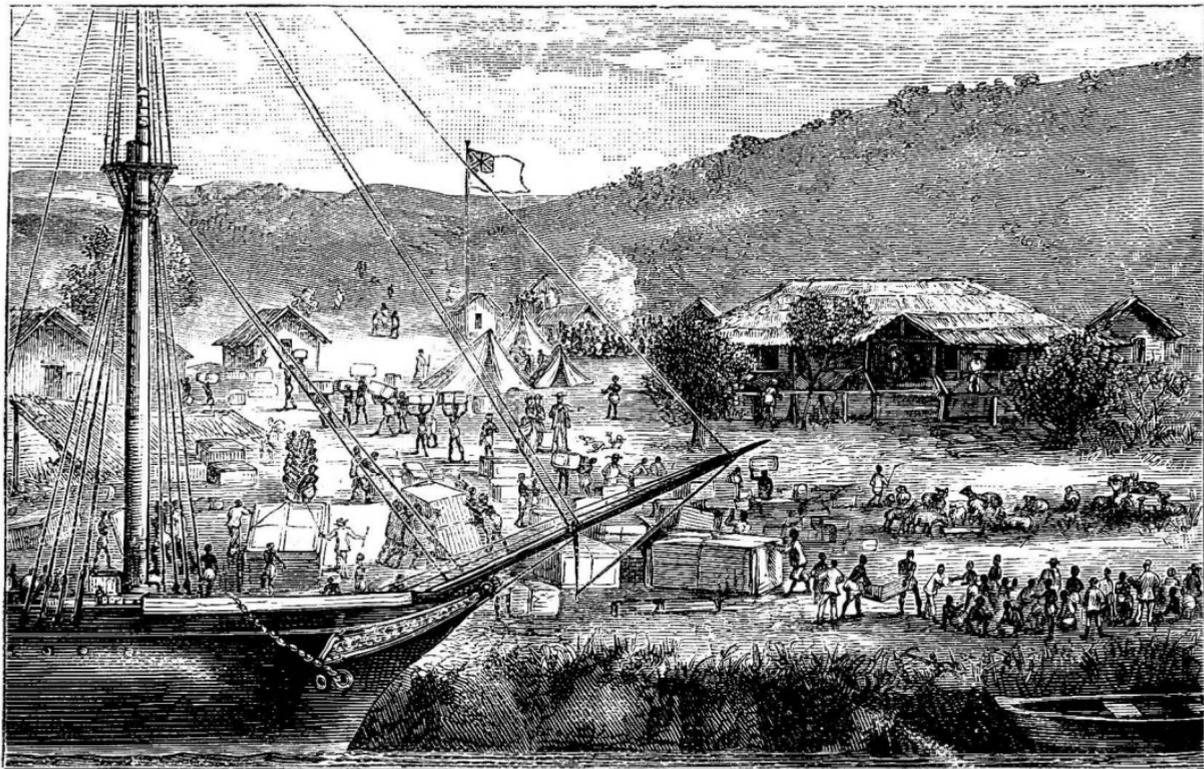
to speak to, or teach, the girls and women, he says: "The Lord be very gracious to those women who, during this 1883 and next year, shall join our Congo Mission, coming, as did my own dear wife, nearly four years since, ready for anything for their Master in heaven and their husbands upon earth."

The next overshadowing occurred in the, to us untimely, death of the Rev. W. H. Doke. The son of a minister long settled at Chudleigh, Devon, and who, had his health permitted, would himself have been the bearer of "the glad tidings" to heathen lands, Mr. Doke had been moved to follow the same sacred calling. While pursuing his studies, the claims of the Missionary Society, and its work in Central Africa, were laid upon his heart, and, offering himself for the service, he was accepted by the Committee. Constrained by "the love of Christ" and of souls, he had laboured on Lord's-day evenings, with other of the students, in one of the worst parts of London, south of the Thames; but his efforts were now to be transferred to a far distant field, where the darkness of genuine heathenism prevailed, unrelieved by a single ray of Gospel light. Becoming practically acquainted with the mechanism of the *Peace* and its management, he was designed, in conjunction with Mr. Grenfell, to reconstruct it at the Pool, and to render such aid thereafter as might be required. His death therefore fell very heavily on the Committee and on all the friends of the Mission. After landing at Wanga Wanga, and superintending the removal of the several cases wherein the parts of the *Peace* had been stowed away, he wrote to the Secretary in the best of spirits, cheerful, hopeful, and expectant, full of thankfulness for mercies already received and of trust for the future.

Accompanying his letter was a sketch of the scene around him, as shown on the opposite page. A fortnight later or exactly three weeks after disembarking, he was taken away. On the news reaching us, we could not but recall his words when in farewell meeting he addressed the assembled brethren, concluding his remarks with what seems now to have been a prophetic utterance. "They perhaps might never meet again. He might come home again; if so, good-bye till then. It might be that death's bright angel might call him to higher work, and perhaps they might never meet till before the throne; if so, good-bye till then." The dark messenger did come as a bright angel, for, when every means had been tried in vain to subdue the fever, and the end drew near, unable to converse, in feeble tones he managed just to say, "All well; oh, so well!" and died. Yes, our brother, "good-bye till then," when the purposes of Divine Providence will be unfolded, and we shall know why thy desires were so utterly quenched, and our bright hopes concerning thee dashed to the ground. "Good-bye till then," when the dark mystery shall be read in the light of the Master's approving smile.

Then all the chosen seed
Shall meet around the Throne,
Shall bless the conduct of His grace,
And make His wonders known.

After a brief interval, the solemn voice of summons was again heard; and now, not one just entering on the work, but one who had surveyed, trodden, and helped to till the field, and who had been privileged to see some fruit of his labour, was called to pass within the veil. The Rev. John S. Hartland had "fought the



DISCHARGING THE PACKAGES OF THE S.S. "PEACE" AT UNDERHILL, OR TUNDUWA STATION, CONGO RIVER.
(From a Drawing by the late Mr. Doke.)

good fight," and had "finished his course." On arriving at Baynesville from Manyanga in the boat, he was struck down by a terrible attack of dysentery; and Mr. Comber, having heard of his serious illness, came down the river to the former place, only to find his early friend and faithful colleague "sick unto death." Since the commencement of his illness he had been most tenderly nursed by, and received every medical attention from, Mr. Hughes, joined at an early period by Mr. Butcher, followed by Mr. Grenfell. Of one of these his helpers he pleasantly remarked, "He has the strength of a giant and a hand of velvet." At one time hopes were entertained of his recovery; but these faded away, and on May 10th (1883), he was informed of his condition, and that his work on earth was done. "I sha'n't easily forget his look," wrote Mr. Grenfell, "as he gazed at us and said, 'Well, I am not afraid to die. My trust is in Jesus. "Whosoever believeth in Him hath everlasting life."' A little while later he said, 'After four years' preparation, and just as I am about to enter upon mission work proper, it seems strange for me to realise that my work is done; but He knows best.'" Mr. Comber's arrival, which was unexpected, was most opportune; and, for the next two days, very close and brotherly and cheering was their converse, till, on Saturday evening, the 12th, at about a quarter before seven, he opened his eyes fully; and, feeling the time was at hand, he struggled over to the other side of the bed, and, looking up, cried out, "Christ is all in all. Let me go, friends. Don't hold me back. Let me go. I must go. I want to go to Him. Simply to Thy cross I cling. Let me go." His struggles ceased. He was gone.

The following memorial lines will not be out of place here:—

FAREWELL WORDS FROM A FAR LAND.

“Don't keep me, friends, I want to be
With Him” for whom I crossed the sea ;
Left home beloved, and brethren dear,
His name to speak, His cross to rear,
On these dark shores, outstretched around,
Where none have raised “the joyful sound.”

“Don't keep me,”—I had thought awhile
To serve with His approving smile,
And win some trophies for His crown,
Ere yet I laid the banner down,
And sank beneath the sands to rest—
Strange, “strange it seems, but He knows best.”

“Hold me not back,”—for voices sweet
My listening ear already greet ;
And forms I see, as though they wait
To bear me gladsome through the gate,
Thine first, to whom my soul takes wing,
While “simply to Thy cross I cling.”

“Hold me not back,”—let dying speech
From Congo's shore far homeward reach,
And many a youthful heart beat high,
Like him to live, like him to die ;
True life-work this, on Duty's track,
At God's high call, “hold *me* not back !”

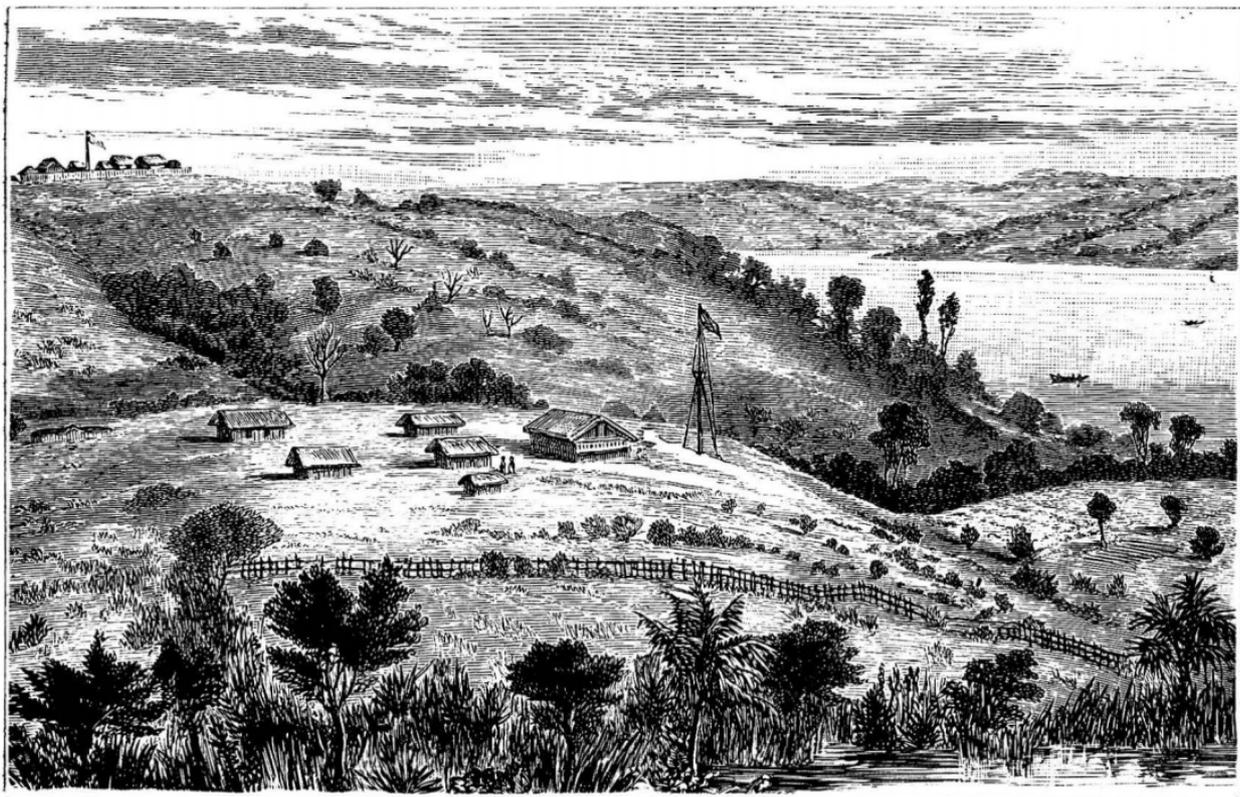
In writing of this sorrowful event, Mr. Butcher thus testified to the spirit which animated himself and the remaining brethren: “Henceforth our work will be more sacred and holy, for now our two Congo missionaries are in ‘the great cloud of witnesses.’ We shall have peculiar help, for they surely are our ministering spirits. Oh! for more consecrating grace, more faith, and a simpler trust in the inexhaustible

resources of our Father's love. Yes, though the breach be wide in our little company, our Father, God, will thrust others into the work, and good and glory will come out of it. May He be near, very near, to those who feel most our brother's departure; and may we all be sanctified and ready for our call to come home, where there is no more death." Just five short months after writing the above, Mr. Butcher received his "call to come home," and "was not, for God took him." Successive and heavy attacks of fever laid him low. Four days before his decease it was decided that he should be moved to Baynesville, but at the last moment he declined to leave Manyanga, saying, "I must stop here, and see to my work." "When I reached the house," says Mr. Hughes, who did not arrive till all was over, "I took a long look at the body of my dear colleague, cold and still, and could not but feel bitterly grieved that I had arrived too late for a word to pass between us. At the appointed hour we buried him, amid tears and sorrow, and there he lies in his grave by the waters of the Congo, awaiting the resurrection of the just. There were present three gentlemen connected with the International Belgian Expedition, four or five native chiefs, with many of their subjects, some ten of his school-boys, and twenty or thirty other native boys; the grand fact of his coming to this far-off land, and dying here, in his efforts for Christ and the benefit of the people, being a touching sermon to the natives assembled round his grave, and it was evident to us all how tenderly he was loved, and how greatly he was mourned." It would indeed have been surprising if one who was so devoted to his work that he would often, amid fever

and weakness, rise from his bed to carry it on, and who could thus write to a ministerial friend in Bristol, had not been loved and lamented:—

“Mr. Comber writes me on hearing of the death of Mr. Doke: ‘This means all the more work for *you* and for *me* and for *all of us*. “Whatsoever thy hands find to do, do it with thy might.”’ From this you can see the spirit of the men out here; for this, I am bold to say, is the spirit of us all: whilst we have life, all our efforts, all our thoughts, all our prayers, will be forward. We have come out to Africa to *do*, and if God so wills it, to *do* and *die*. We have nothing to hold back and, praise, be to God, with His help, *nothing shall hold us back*. Go on praying for us, dear brother; for, whilst holy hands are held up for us in supplication, the cause of truth and heaven *must* prevail.” I must allow myself one more extract from a letter to a cherished college companion: “No one will, I think, credit the amount of work one has to do. Yesterday I could scarcely find time to eat, and now correspondence, accounts, building, teaching, bartering, palavering, carriers, caravans, live all about me, with strong voices calling out ever to one pair of hands, ‘Come, work.’ I cannot read, I cannot study, I really have no time to get sick. When I get fever, I go to bed for an hour, and then up and at it again. Where are my home-dreams now? I thought I should rub up Greek, theology, mathematics, and all sorts of things. My only satisfaction is, *God knows what I do*; and I think more than likely I shall never live to tell to others how I have been occupied during the time of my sojourn in this land. Never mind! *This one thing I do.*”

The Congo death-roll was not yet complete, and



MANYANGA, OR WATHEN STATION, CONGO RIVER.

(Showing the Baptist Mission Station in the foreground, and the Belgian Station on the hill.) From a drawing by M. Van de Velde, of the Belgian International Society.

there remained a threefold entry to be made on its already too-crowded page. On the 13th of December last, Mr. Hartley, of Edinburgh, left Liverpool for his sphere of labour on the River, accompanied by two mechanics from the establishment of Messrs. Thornycroft & Co., to render to Mr. Grenfell the assistance which it was intended Mr. Doke should give him in the reconstruction and navigation of the *Peace*. The voyage was prosperous, and the start on the inland journey was made under circumstances which augured well for its progress. Mr. Bentley saw the party on his way home, and reports that they were well provided, had all necessary instructions, were attended by an experienced guide as head of the carriers, and were in good health and spirits. It would seem that, in their anxiety to reach their destination with the least possible delay, they pushed forward over the toilsome route from Baynesville to Manyanga in undue haste, and at the cost of unnecessary and severe exertion. Neglecting also to avail themselves of comfortable resting-places, of which there were several by the way, they passed the nights in their blankets, which had not been properly secured against the heavy rains of the day.* The consequence was, that when they appeared at Manyanga they were all suffering from severe fever, which refused to yield to the remedies, diligently

*It seems that they did sojourn for a night at Lukunga Station, Appel River, a station of the Livingstone Inland Mission; and one of the mechanics, being then under the influence of fever, was doctored and nursed by Mr. Ingham, the missionary, who offered either the whole party, or the one who had been unwell, to remain. They resolved, however, on proceeding.

administered by Mr. Ross, and one after another the fellow-travellers passed from the land of the living. Of "our warmly-welcomed brother, Mr. Hartley," as Mr. Comber terms him, Mr. Ross reports that he bore up better than either of them, until about four o'clock on the afternoon of March 1st, when he seemed to lose all strength and said, "Let me die in peace." His death, Mr. Ross adds, "was beautiful, a little struggle and then a quiet sleep, and he entered into rest." "Oh! the preciousness of our lives now," says Mr. Comber; "we who are left, how careful shall we be. And oh! with what fervent earnestness must all our dear friends in England commend us to our gracious Father in prayer, and the Congo Mission, for which we would any of us live or die with glad readiness, as our Lord should see best, cheerfully laying down our lives for its and the Master's sake! We all owe Christ a life, and for my part this is as acceptable a sacrifice as we can offer; but, O Lord, we are brought very low, now therefore, O God, strengthen our hands." Mr. Grenfell says: "My heart is full, and my brain seems almost stunned by the greatness of the trial. But neither Comber nor myself are paralysed by the blow. Our faith still holds that our beloved Congo Mission is of God, and that He will bring it safely through the season of difficulty and sorrow which has overtaken it. A contented, trustful heart is an essential in Africa, though even quiet, restful spirits are not always proof against the climate, as evidence the cases of our beloved brethren Doke and Hartley, whose hope and faith were especially bright and clear."

Other dark clouds have gathered over the Mission in the shape of sore and terrible sickness, involving

relinquishment of labour and necessitating return home. To these, however, there has not been wanting the "silver lining" as it has regarded the hope and the preservation of life. Mr. Herbert Dixon, who was thoroughly established at San Salvador, where he settled, on his arrival in Africa with Mr. Crudgington in October, 1881, utterly broke down. He had been for some time at Underhill alone "often obliged," to quote from his own letter, "to be out arranging loads for carriage up country, when I should have been nursing myself in bed; and have had to turn out of bed during fever, to arrange for unloading a steamer, and this, too, under a tropical sun. Of course I knew it was unwise, but there was no help for it; and I consoled myself by hoping that some day help would come, and then I could return to my own station at San Salvador and take a part of the load from Mr. Weeks' shoulders, for he, too, was overdone." The help came on the arrival of Mr. and Mrs. Crudgington, but it was too late. "They found me," he says, "literally on my last legs. Mr. Crudgington at once ordered me home, and though I could scarcely hope to reach England alive, yet I determined to fight for every inch of life, so as if possible to return again to poor, dark Africa. I never knew how much I loved the work, until I found myself torn away from it." We can hardly conceive, nay, we cannot permit ourselves to dwell upon the sufferings of this brave soldier of the Cross during the voyage home.* We in our times of sickness have efficient medical aid

* Mr. Dixon was accompanied on the voyage by a native attendant, and he bears grateful testimony to the kindness of the captain of the vessel (the Dutch steamer, *Afrikaan*) and of all the gentlemen connected with the Dutch house.

always available, we have friends around us, we are tenderly nursed and have every possible alleviation and help; but the missionary, circumstanced as Mr. Dixon was, is alone among strangers, friends and kindred are far away, and in his weariness and pain he is tossed about upon the turbulent waters. Mr. Dixon speaks of those days as seeming "now like some hideous nightmare, the only gleam of light being the loving-kindness of God, who kept me from once doubting His love and faithfulness; earth seemed to be past and I was going home indeed." Dr. F. T. Roberts, the able medical adviser of the Committee, after seeing him reported that it was almost a miracle that Mr. Dixon was alive.

By the blessing of God on the means which Dr. Roberts has employed, the very serious and threatening symptoms have been overcome, to the weak frame strength has been restored, the constitution of the sufferer has not, it is believed, been impaired, and there is now every hope of his being able to resume, after a sufficiently extended period of rest, his most valuable labour in the Saviour's cause and Kingdom in Africa.* Mr. Ross and Mr. Whitley have also been compelled to come home, but one, if not both of them will, it is confidently expected, be permitted to rejoin their companions on the field.

* Since the above was written, Mr. Herbert Dixon, under medical advice, has relinquished all hope of returning to Africa. The Society, however, will not lose the benefit of his dearly-bought experience and earnest devotion to the missionary cause he having applied to be sent to North China, and having been accepted for that field, the climate of which, it is thought, will suit his health.

Thus we have to "sing of mercy and judgment," "cast down but not destroyed," "faint yet pursuing." Behind the overshadowing clouds, "the Sun of Righteousness" shines on and ever. May He "cause His face to shine *upon us*," and fulfil *towards us* His gracious word, "God shall bless us, and all the ends of the earth shall fear Him." In our bereavements and sorrows we have not stood alone. Proportionably great, if not greater, have been the losses of the Livingstone Inland Mission, to the directors and friends of which we offer our fraternal sympathy, weeping with them that weep, and trusting that we may be sharers of each other's joy, as the extension of our Saviour's Kingdom crowns our separate labours; separate, yet "one in Him" for whose name's sake we are united in a holy fellowship, whether of suffering or success.

CHAPTER V.

HELPFUL TOKENS.

“HEW me a token for good” was the prayer of an inspired Psalmist in the days of old. Hence we are justified in regarding “tokens for good” as legitimate objects of pious desire.

And, after the melancholy record of the last chapter, it may be well to show that various sources of encouragement have been graciously vouchsafed to us. The work accomplished at San Salvador may first be noticed in this connection. Mindful of the object for which they had been sent forth, as “ambassadors for Christ” and “messengers of the churches,” “put in trust with the Gospel,” our brethren at once declared the nature and design of their embassy, while, acting in the spirit of their mission, they soon gained the confidence of the people. Reviewing the work of the first six months, Mr. Comber wrote: “Although far less is accomplished than we should like, and we ourselves often feel impatient, yet we, and all the friends of the Congo Mission, need to remember that six months is a very short period in the history of any mission. To have settled down (we think in firm and undisturbed possession); to have built extensive, fairly comfortable, though but temporary premises, and half finished the work of building a large stone house; to have attached to ourselves many warm friends, in-

cluding the King of Congo; to have commenced a school, and taken some of our scholars to p. 14 of Mavor's Spelling-book; to have had a well-attended service (average attendance 150) for the last four months, and been able to explain clearly God's Truth, besides every evening having Bible-reading and prayers in Portuguese for those who understand that language, with good opportunities of pressing home the truth to the hearts of those who attend; to have collected about a thousand words of a hitherto unwritten language; to have made a journey to Makuta in the face of very great difficulties; two journeys to Mussuca—all this means work done, and the blessing of a gracious and faithful God upon the work of the Congo Mission."

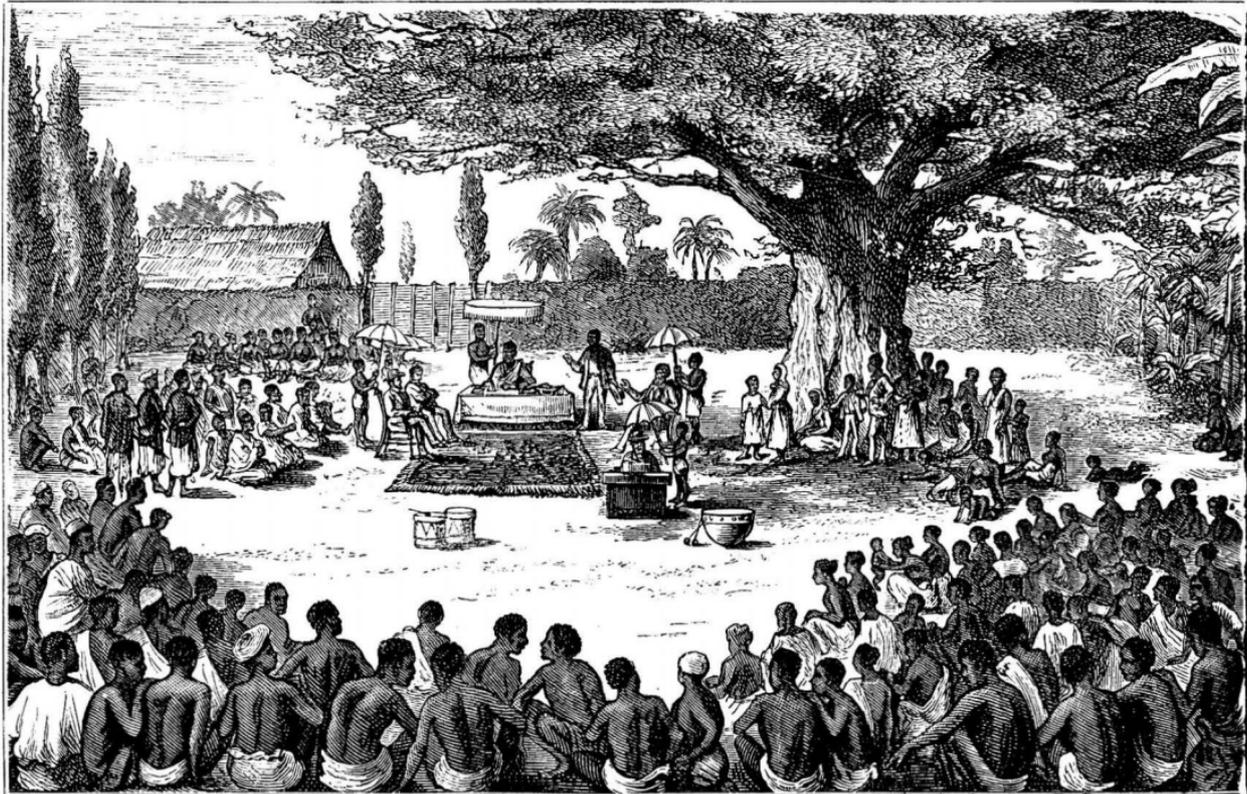
Writing about the same time, Mr. Bentley says: "The King's attitude is still as friendly and hopeful as ever. We have had some very interesting chats with him on Sunday afternoons. . . . He always seems most ready and glad whenever we speak to him on religious subjects, and very carefully and strongly expresses his gratitude." Of the people Mr. Bentley had previously written: "At first the people were cautious and suspicious of us in little things. There are one or two among those with whom we can converse (and but very few have a practical knowledge of Portuguese), concerning whom we cannot but feel that their hearts have been prepared to receive the seed of the Kingdom. God grant that they may receive the message of His love! It is very encouraging to meet so soon with those concerning whom we may entertain reasonable hopes. I do not know why we should be surprised to find that the Holy Spirit has been influencing these people not only to receive us, but also our message. . . . We have many

and daily instances of the kindness of the people towards us. . . . The children were at first a little shy, but now we are great friends. They, and many grown-up children too, are most anxious for us to commence school. Sunday is the day when there is the best opportunity, and they make good use of our spare time. If I go over into the tent to read, in five minutes there is quite a swarm of boys around me—'Senhor, twala livros tanga' (Bring the books, Sir, to learn). There is no standing that, so I shut my book, and take out the Portuguese Testaments, and give them a lesson." The letter from which the above are extracts contains a very striking account of a Sunday service held, at the King's invitation, in the royal court-yard, the drums calling the people together. It came to the knowledge of the brethren afterwards that the King had, of his own accord, sent a messenger round the town the previous day, announcing that the next day would be Sunday, and that no one was to go far away, that so all might be present at the service. It may be well to note, in passing, that the King spoke of himself as a Christian, and it appears that he signs himself *Rei Catholico*. "The King," writes Mr. Comber, "professes himself a Christian, as do some others here; but we need to see evidences of changed heart before we can call them so. He has been in great trouble about his wives, and anxious to know what he ought to do. We could not advise him to put them away, as this would only be productive of greater evil. He likes to hear God's Word, is very much interested in it, and we are very hopeful about Dom Pedro." "We are filled," he continues, "with wonder at the blessing our God is giving to His unworthy servants in such a short time—

the love and confidence of the people, the earnest heed given to God's Word, the desire, as vigorous as it was at first, to learn; and (shall we not make you sharers to the full in our joy?) the conviction that two here, the King of Congo and Matoka, have believed God's Word, love their Father and their Saviour, and are trying to do God's will. . . . Every Sunday afternoon one of us has a special audience with the King, and an hour's conversation on exclusively religious subjects. His earnestly expressed thanks to us, and to the God who sent us to lighten his darkness, and the earnest, fixed attention he pays to our words, makes our hearts very glad and thankful; and the tenor of his life leads us to the conviction I have expressed. . . . He is doing all he can to help us forward, and doing it greatly for God's work's sake."

Mr. Crudginton, in his report for 1880, says: "Respecting our general work of teaching, preaching, and visiting the people around, our hopes have perhaps been more than realised; and, if we have met disappointment in our endeavours to get farther inland, we must take courage and work on, believing it is part of our Master's training for the great work which lies before us. . . . We regard the school as very successful, besides being very helpful to us in acquiring the language. The boys are very sharp, and I do not think fall below the average of such boys in an English school. Some of the King's wives are very anxious to learn to read, but as yet we cannot admit them into the school, as we have so very little room, and we do not think it would answer to have a mixed school. . . . Our Sunday service, I think, is more interesting than ever. We have, first, the difficulties of teaching them

their relationship to God—the love which the Father has for them—that Christ died to save them. And these truths, though far from being understood by the mass, are understood by a great many; and, in talking with them quietly, they are led to see how contrary their life is to the teaching of Christ. One is reminded of Nicodemus' inquiry how such a change of heart and life as is necessary can be effected. . . . Oh, how feeble we are in the face of so great a work! The Spirit alone can teach them. We are ready to say, 'Ah, Lord God, behold I cannot speak, for I am a child.' But we have the promise of our Saviour's presence, and this promise has been more than redeemed to us in time past. Often in our Sunday afternoon conversations, the King shows great intelligence in religious truths, and his questions show his interest, and the attention he has paid to the morning's service. Of course, our great hope is in the children of the town, that they may be gradually broken from their old customs. Our own boys of the house are at a greater advantage in this respect, as they are not only not subjected to outside influences, but have the benefit of our influence over them. We have now three or four good Congo boys in our house, who give promise of becoming useful and good men, if their lives can only be directed in the right course. For some time Mr. Bentley has held a Sunday-school with the young ones, speaking to them in Kikshi-Congo; and during his absence at Moila, the last two Sundays, Mr. Comber has taken the class, and questioned them on the previous Sunday's teaching. Their retentive memories and ready answers show the interest they have taken and the hope we may have in them for the future."



SUNDAY MORNING SERVICE AT SAN SALVADOR. (From a Drawing by Mr. Hartland.)—See page 43.

Further on, Mr. Dixon was able to report, "God is wonderfully blessing our labours in Congo;" and in reference to school teaching, he made the following interesting remarks at one of the recent anniversary meetings of the Society: "The boys will sing such a hymn as—

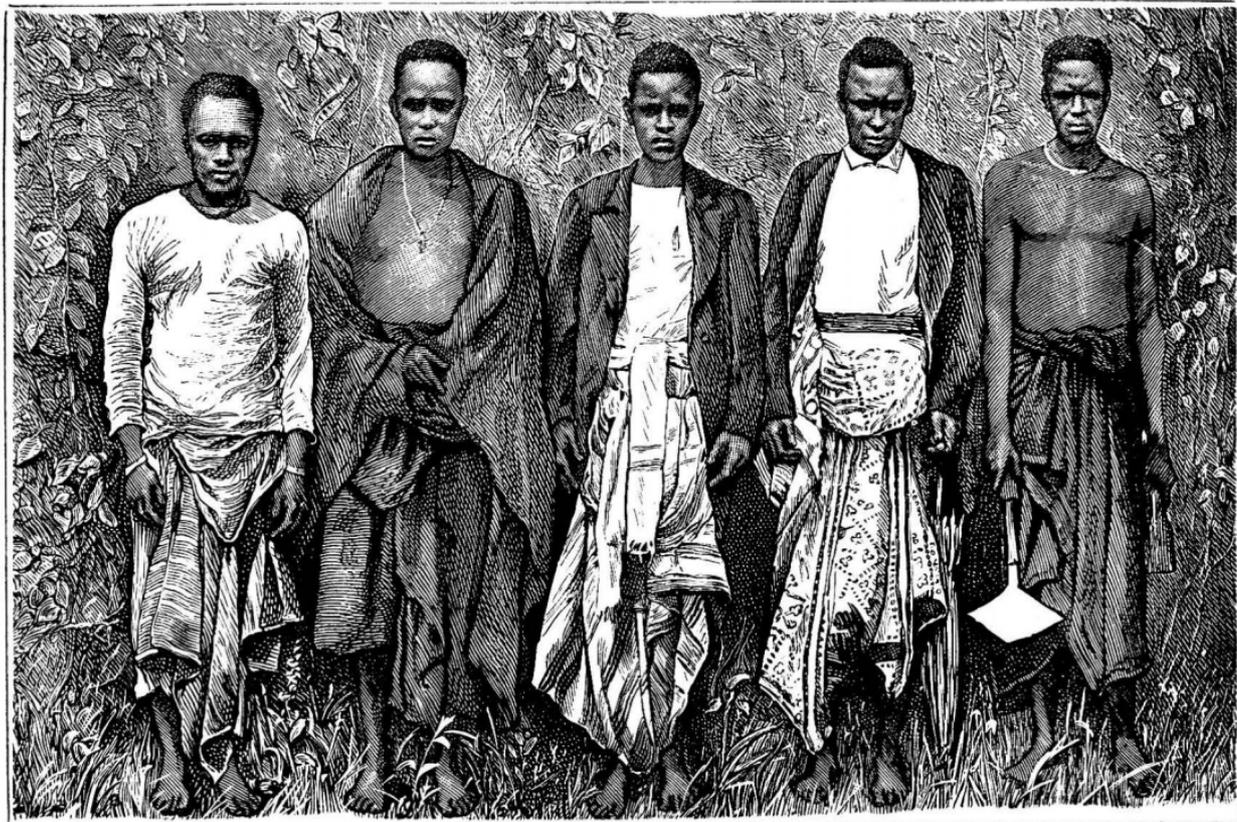
‘Jesus loves me, this I know,
For the Bible tells me so,’

in the Congo language. Then they will pray for a blessing on the school and themselves during the day, always concluding with the Lord's Prayer. The boys are very reverent, too. And then you would see the boys at the rickety desks, with tongues out, forming their letters, and writing small words; and some of their writing was beautiful too. I have a letter with me written by one of the boys since I have been in England, so that you see they don't forget us, and we have some hold upon them yet. They have some geography, and the grammar of their own tongue, just as in an English school—what many would call real drudgery. But we look at that drudgery, so called, in this light—that when they grow up they will carry with them, wherever they go, the light of God; and if it were drudgery to teach them, we know that nothing is too small to do when it brings on the Kingdom of God." Mr. Dixon also spoke of the helpfulness of the *medical* treatment, practised by himself, as by others, which has proved here, as in all heathen countries, a most valuable auxiliary to missionary work.

The late Mr. Hartland, forwarding a sketch of a Sunday morning service at San Salvador, in the explanatory statement which accompanies it, refers to the propriety of the people's behaviour at public worship in

the following terms: "The people, of whom we usually have about 200, always behave very well, and listen very attentively to what is said. At prayer they always take off their hats (if they are happy enough to possess such things), and kneel down very quietly." Afterwards, when left alone at this station, he wrote thus to Mr. Comber of his first Lord's day: "Had a capital Sunday yesterday. A good meeting; Matoka translated, and *the King came himself*. He said he had promised to come, and I should not be happy if he did not do so, so he would come. Had a good school with the boys, and a nice talk in the palace in the evening. So, for the first Sunday, I have reason to thank God, and take courage for others to come." Nevertheless, in furnishing a report of the work of the year 1881, Mr. Hartland had to tell of disappointment and trial, owing mainly to the arrival and influence of the Portuguese "Padres," which led to the King's withdrawal from the services for a time. At its close, however, things looked brighter. "After a while, things began to mend in Congo. The King became more friendly, returned to the meeting, and the people followed. The chief of a town near by sent six boys to my school, and several more joined from the town. Although trying symptoms have shown themselves occasionally, the general tone of events has been much more favourable since the dark time."

This latter fact Mr. Dixon fully confirmed, and when, after an absence of two years, Mr. Comber again visited San Salvador, he was able to bear a very gratifying testimony to the progress that had been made. He writes:—"During Hartland's time at San Salvador alone, and with our new brethren, with the exception of one or two times of darkness and difficulty, the work



A SAN SALVADOR GROUP. (*From a Photograph.*)—See page 45.

there flourished. Then, and since, there has been *steady and strongly-marked progress*. Not only do we hold our own, but we have gained considerable ground there."

Mr. Comber found Mr. Weeks alone, Mr. Dixon being at the time at Underhill, and he represents him as having "his hands full." "The school," he says, "our best work, was flourishing splendidly, and there were *forty boys* (of whom twenty were boarders) under training, besides the number—nearly ten—who are with us on the river. Sunday services had an average attendance of seventy or eighty adults, besides perhaps sixty children. The King was much the same as usual in his relations with us, and without doubt is at heart our great friend and helper. But, best of all was to find the pick of Congo, the *élite*, the finest boys and men, all on our side—not passively, but with much *esprit* and earnestness. Not one of these, whose support is the great test of the feelings of San Salvador people, had swerved. Our staunch friends, Alvaro, Matoko, Henrique, Miguel, Mantengo, Corneta, Kavungu, Malevu, &c., who had so strongly supported us at the first, were still staunch and true. They love us all, and especially is our dear brother Weeks beloved by them all, particularly by the boys. Several (some half-a-dozen) are in the position of catechumens, or members of inquirers' class. The Lord being gracious to our work, I hope that soon—perhaps this year (1883)—some of our dear boys may put on the Lord by baptism, and be actually upon church roll. But of this we are very careful. If trusting in Jesus as our Saviour, and trying to keep His commandments, is to be a *Christian*, some in San Salvador, and two or three

of our boys on the river here, are, I think, Christians. Let us thank God and take courage."

Some of these lads have shown strong personal attachment to their teachers, as well as true fidelity of service. One, Nlemvo, has been with Mr. Bentley for three years, and has accompanied him to England to assist him in preparing for the press a dictionary and grammar of the Kikshi-Congo language. Many, like myself, can testify to Nlemvo's gentleness and the propriety of his conduct, while visiting amongst us.

On this review of the work in San Salvador, am I not justified in considering it a source of encouragement ?

CHAPTER VI.

HELPFUL TOKENS.—(Continued.)



WHILE rejoicing over the work accomplished at San Salvador, wherein has been hopefully laid what we trust will prove a firm foundation for the future upbuilding of the Church of God, with all its holy sympathies, and far-reaching activities of love and devotion, we may gratefully recall the fact of "the good seed of the Kingdom" having been scattered *around and by the way*, a fact which we would connect with the promise, "My Word shall not return unto Me void."

At Tuka, a town some twenty miles to the southeast of San Salvador, a "wide and effectual door" was opened to Mr. Bentley. In the first instance, there came a request from two leading men to be furnished with the name of the gentleman who sent the brethren out, as they had made up their minds to write to the same person, asking him to send missionaries to Tuka. Afterwards, the King requested Mr. Bentley to go and prescribe for Dom Alvaro, the Sova, or Chief of Tuka, who was very ill. Mr. Bentley stayed over the Sunday, and on that day Dom Alvaro was much better, and called his people that they might have a service. The people (about eighty present) listened very attentively, and seemed much interested. "Dom Manuel, the second Sova of the town, asked me many

questions," says Mr. Bentley, "and told me it was his custom to teach Portuguese to some of the children of the house once a week; *now* he would teach them the things of which I spoke." Dom Garcia, the Secretary of the King of Congo, pointed out to Mr. Bentley the town of Mbangu, on the range of the Zombo mountains, as being his birthplace, and expressed his anxiety that his people should hear the "glad tidings." Mr. Bentley also visited Nkunga, about five miles south-west of San Salvador, of which Kiambo is the Chief; where Mr. Comber had been, about a month before, holding a very interesting service. He writes: "Nkunga lies just across the Lueji river, and from a lofty hill, flanking the beautiful valley, I had a fine view of Kiambu's district. Many towns among the trees speak of large numbers of people waiting in the darkness for the dawning of the day. How great a privilege is ours to be the bearers to them of glad tidings—and such tidings!"

Of San Salvador the late Mr. Butcher wrote to a friend in England: "Itinerant evangelistic work has been done for many miles round the district." And Mr. Dixon says: "God is opening up the surrounding districts far and near to our influence." Mr. Weeks also reports that in the spring of 1882 he began to visit the towns in the immediate neighbourhood of San Salvador, on Sunday afternoons. He says: "I have six towns on the list, and have paid in all twenty visits to them for the purpose of holding services. The audiences in these towns range between thirty and ninety, according to their size. In all these meetings there has been great attention paid to the addresses, and at the close of each a unanimous desire has been

expressed that I should tell them more another Sunday." Mr. Weeks also visited a large district south of San Salvador, called Madimba, and speaks of "hundreds of towns in which the Gospel has yet to be preached, even for the first time; . . . sufficient work to entirely occupy the energies of many men." Nor must the journey of Mr. Crudginton and the late Mr. Hartland to Moila, "with its good service on Sunday," be overlooked in its relation to evangelistic movements around San Salvador; nor that of Mr. Crudginton and Mr. Comber to Zombo. Of the other stations, Mr. Grenfell remarks: "These will serve as depôts for barter goods and stores, and also as resting-places for those who are journeying. They are also centres for Christian work, and places from which the kindly influences of the missionary can be brought to bear upon the prejudices that exist in the hearts of the natives against the white man—prejudices which so effectually close their hearts against the messages of love and mercy sent by Christ." So it has proved, and as these have become established, the good work has been commenced and carried on.

Of Underhill Station, Mr. Crudginton wrote: "I anticipate much good and real mission work at this station. The people are much better than those about Matuka, and this station will, therefore, in the future, when perhaps at first a school may be formed, give the pleasure of combining mission work with the more business needs of the station." "Our dear brother, Hughes," wrote Mr. Comber, "is working away well at Bayneston (or Baynesville), where he has a very good influence among the people all round, and has a most promising school, some ten boys boarding with him in the house." From

this station Mr. Moolenaar wrote, in May of the present year (1884): "A short time ago, I made a few visits in the vicinity for the purpose of getting more thoroughly acquainted with my neighbours, and also to increase my school. My usual mode of procedure was to take my portable harmonium, a tin box containing a few articles to be given away as presents, and a number of my boys to assist in singing. The first town I went to lies in a N.N.E. direction, close to the shore of the Congo, so that we were able to proceed on our way in a canoe. . . . As soon as I reached the town, I seated myself under a large spreading tree, which protected me from the intense heat of the sun (the thermometer standing as high as 110°), and commenced to play my instrument, accompanied by the singing of those familiar hymns, 'Come to the Saviour,' 'Stand up, stand up for Jesus.' Very soon it attracted a crowd of women, who quietly seated themselves in a ring around me and my boys, and listened with the greatest attention. As I looked upon my small congregation, I could not but lift up my heart to God, and pray that the light of His Divine truth would penetrate into the hearts and minds of these people, which are at present filled with darkness and superstition. The men, too, arrived from their fighting" (in which Mr. Moolenaar had found them engaged) "and seated themselves in like manner as the women. They were evidently anxious to know what my mission at this time was. . . . After talking with them about the good things, I earnestly begged of them to give me boys for the school. This, I am sorry to say, is not an easy thing to obtain. After a long talk, they promised me two boys, who are now doing well at school. I thought,

after the liberality on their part, it was now my time to give something in return, and so, turning out my olive beads, I gave each of the women one string of the same, making some consideration for the wives of the chiefs, to whom I gave, besides the beads, a pair of scissors and a brooch. When the giving and receiving was ended, it would have done you good to have witnessed their joy. There they were, giggling and chuckling in a most artistic manner, every now and then making some quaint remarks about the good white man. And so, after a final good-bye, I parted from them as the best of friends." Of Manyanga, or Wathen, Mr. Bentley wrote: "The patient, changeless kindness that has won its way hitherto has served us here, and in this we have encouragement, that we be not weary in well-doing." Mr. Comber, reporting on the same station, says: "In the afternoon, Mantu," his Congo-boy, to whom he has become very much attached, "teaches the people, and in the evening as many as are willing come in to singing and a little talk." I cannot forbear quoting Mr. Comber's further testimony to the San Salvador boys: "We have earnest and great hopes of our San Salvador boys, who develop splendidly. Bentley has one with him; Crudginton, one at Mussuca; Hartland has two; Dixon and Weeks, of course, have several. I have the one I have mentioned—Mantu. To us, who know all the circumstances, it is a very great thing, and shows great confidence and attachment for these, our dear San Salvador boys, to follow us to far-away countries, known only by name to San Salvador, and to which 80 per cent. of Congo men would fear to go."

An instance of the seed being scattered *by the*

way will be found in what occurred to Mr. Comber when on his way to Stanley Pool, at a small town or village, called Ngoma, fifteen miles short of the Pool. On the afternoon of his arrival, the Chief of the place "came into the tent and made himself quite at home, examining everything with great interest, but begging for nothing. Later on in the evening, he came again with his wife and two children. For nearly two hours they were there, while we talked to them about England, about our object in coming to their country, our station at San Salvador, our message to them from the great Nzambi (God) for whom we were ambassadors."

If Stanley Pool has not hitherto been recognised as a *way-side* station (if I may be permitted such an expression) it must now, and henceforward, be so regarded. A reference, therefore, to Mr. Comber's school, at Arthington, as illustrated by the annexed photographic sketch, will be appropriate in this connection."

The following is Mr. Comber's description of it:—
"The enclosed picture represents our fourteen boys and three girls actually under training here. A motley group of Bakongo, Balonde, Bantandu, Bawumbu, Bateke, Bambali, and Bangoyo. . . . All of them are residents, or boarders, at Arthington, and are under the training of Mr. and Mrs. Grenfell and myself. It is interesting to have to tell you that almost the first fruits of our persevering efforts here were three boys from Nshasha, where, in 1881, Messrs. Crudginton and Bentley were repulsed by painted, dancing savages, with spear and knife—from the very same town, and one of them the son of the old Chief, Ntiulu. . . . All the girls, are, of course, under Mrs. Grenfell's special charge, who already knows a good bit of their language.



OUR SCHOOL AT STANLEY POOL. (*From a Photograph.*)—See page 52.

With little Pattie Grenfell as their playmate, they have a happy and merry time of it. Several more girls are promised her, and she will, doubtless, in time get a nice school, and so be able to supply the boys with good wives when the time comes.

“Mantu has been with me nearly three years, and is loved by all the rest. He is now schoolmaster. Other of our boys have been with us for eight, ten, and eighteen months. The Bawumbu, Nshasha, and other boys and girls have come during the last two months, except one who has been already seven months, and says he wishes to stay until he is like Mantu. . . . Most of the other stations are getting on well in respect of boys to train, San Salvador, of course, taking a good lead.”

Another encouraging feature in the prosecution of their work has been the continual responses which the Committee have had the pleasure of receiving to their applications for men willing to devote themselves to this Mission.

Undeterred by the sufferings and deaths of their brethren, other helpers have been raised up, baptized in the place of the dead, and consecrated to the needs of the living.

So again, in respect of appeals for necessary funds. With praiseworthy generosity, and in many cases at great personal sacrifice, gifts and offerings have flowed into the Society's treasury for the Congo Mission. It would appear that £21,000 (the last year's amount being upwards of £8,000) has been expended on this Mission, all of which has been provided for, with the exception of a small deficit at the present time remaining on the general funds of the Society.

It will not be out of place here to remind those who have shown, and are showing, their deep interest in this Mission, that the future will draw quite as heavily as did the past year, probably more so; for as we go forward from Stanley Pool, planting additional stations, it is estimated that £9,000 or £10,000 per annum will be needed to carry on the enterprise.

From the indications and interpositions of Divine Providence, of which these pages supply ample proof, we may well derive further and most effective encouragement.

“Can He have taught *us* to trust in His name,
And thus far have brought *us* to put us to shame?”

Who but the God of His people inspired the thought in Mr. Arthington's mind to make our Society the channel for the fulfilment of his benevolent desires, and the administration of his munificent gifts? Who but He could have moved the Belgian strangers to show our brethren such uniform consideration, and to give them in times of difficulty such practical counsel and aid? Of the kindness of Mr. Stanley, and all those associated with him, our brethren have been unable to express themselves in terms sufficiently strong.

And I cannot bring my review to a close without laying at the feet of His Majesty the King of the Belgians the expression of our respectful homage, and sincere gratitude for the courtesy he has manifested towards us. Placed in a position of great delicacy, as the Roman Catholic sovereign of a Roman Catholic State, he could not have been expected to favour a Protestant Mission such as ours. Whenever, however, he has had the opportunity of showing us attention in respect of business matters, he has graciously listened

to our suggestions, and placed the seal of his approbation on the arrangements made with us and for us by the representatives of the International Association, and has even, more than once, altered them greatly to our advantage.

Nor can I hesitate to ascribe to direct Divine interposition the deliverance of our brethren in "perils oft." And where the Lord has seen fit to remove one and another, He has caused their closing hours to be peaceful, yea, even triumphant, and has made their dying beds in the rough places far off to

"Feel soft as downy pillows are."

And now what remains but to "gird up the loins of our mind," and press on to the vast effort yet before us, still following the Divine indications?

As the result of an adventurous voyage in the steel boat Mr. Grenfell has reached the Equator, and finds not only the way open for us to proceed far beyond Stanley Pool, but the conditions, *en route*, all in our favour. Mr. Stanley's *peaceful* progress has again served the cause of our Master, and of us, His servants. Mr. Grenfell has penetrated 400 miles into the interior (700 miles from the sea), and resting at the stations of the International Association at Mswata, the Kwango Junction, Bolobo, and Lukolela, having been most hospitably entertained at each, he has had ample opportunities of gathering all needful information as to climate, food, &c., and ascertaining (a point of first importance) that the natives would welcome our coming.

Mr. Grenfell has selected a site for our proposed "Liverpool" station at Lukolela, where we have been fortunate enough to obtain from the International

Association a grant of land in perpetuity, apparently in every way adapted to our requirements.

And now the cry is, as it has been all along, for *more men*, to strengthen all our posts, and to carry forward the Mission to its appointed end—namely, the meeting with our brethren of the London Missionary Society in their advance from the eastern side of the great Continent. The following extracts from Mr. Grenfell's most interesting letter of discovery, addressed to our Secretary, speak for themselves:—

“Though I am accustomed to look upon a very sad state of affairs as being normally the state of the African, yet again and again all my sympathies were evoked, as yours would have been, my dear Mr. Baynes, by the multiplied sorrows which have fallen to the lot of these poor people, for whom there is no hope save in God's great mercy, and in His message that we are trying to declare. The work undertaken by the King of the Belgians and the Brussels Congo Committee, beset as it is with a thousand difficulties, is yet greatly prospering under Mr. Stanley's wise leadership, and, humanly speaking, were it not that the powerful expedition had gone before, guided by a pacific spirit, and convinced the people that white men were friends, not enemies, it would have been impossible for me to have made the journey to the Equator. All praise, then, to those who are so nobly opening up this great land, and may God make all things work together for good for poor Africa.

“‘Brethren, come over and help us!’

“How much this part of Africa stands in need of help I cannot tell you; words seem utterly inadequate. I cannot tell you a tithe of the woes that have come

under my notice, and have made my heart bleed as I journeyed along; cruelty, sin, and slavery seem to be as mill-stones round the necks of these poor people, dragging them down into a sea of sorrows. Never have I felt more sympathy than now I feel for these poor brethren of ours, and never have I prayed more earnestly than now I pray, that God will speedily make manifest to them that light which is the light of life, even Jesus Christ, our living Lord."

The perusal of Mr. Grenfell's letter has drawn from Mr. Arthington the offer of an additional sum of £2,000, as mentioned in a communication with which he has recently favoured the Committee, and which, from the great interest shown by the writer in the cause of African evangelization, and his close study of the best methods by which it may be accomplished, together with such repeated proofs of a sanctified generosity, should, I feel, be given *in extenso*. The map will assist the reader in tracing the route suggested for the Mission.

The letter is as follows:—

"Thou reliest on thy sword and on thy spear."

"My trust is in the Lord God Omnipotent."

"Thine is an arm of flesh."

"I find my strength made perfect in weakness, by the spirit of the Lord."

To the Committee of the Baptist Missionary Society of London, England.

"DEAR SIRS AND BRETHREN,

"In the work of the Congo and other missions, the great object placed before me is to effect the moral

conquest of Africa in such wise that the Christian Church can command the entire continent, so as to proclaim the Gospel over its whole area, and gather out the saved in the Lord with great diligence, and without delay. I rejoice that Mr. Grenfell has proceeded to the Equator, but there is further work to do. We were to advance toward the Albert Nyanza by the Mbura River, and meet the London Missionary Society coming northwards. It may turn out that the Muta Nzige is a distinct lake from the Albert, and that the Aruwimi River affords a direct water-way to the Albert Lake, the Mbura River being the proper approach to the Muta Nzige. I do not think it will be difficult to effect every necessary communication between the Muta Nzige, the Albert Lake, and the Tanganyika.

“Perhaps Captain Foote, or some other explorer, shortly, may go by the *Good News*, with Captain Hore, from the north end of Tanganyika, past the first lake, to the south end of the Albert. But let us lose no time in opening up the routes to the Albert and to the Muta Nzige, respectively by the Aruwimi and the Mbura Rivers, very carefully selecting the best sites for a few stations. Perhaps one at the mouth of the Aruwimi, and one or two in line, extending to the Albert, notwithstanding ‘rapids;’ one at the mouth, or highest navigable point or populated place eligible, on the Mbura River, and one or two, if possible and available, between that point and the western shore of the Muta Nzige, would be the best.

“I am also desirous to reach the Shari River and Lake Tsad from the Congo. This may be done, perhaps, in connection with some other society; and if you place your second station on the Aruwimi line, on the

western shore of the lake, situated on or about the twenty-fifth meridian, it will be a helpful measure every way. Especially I want us to use these stations on the Aruwimi, somewhat as the Rosetta Stone was used—that is, as places where, by a meeting of peoples or persons of various nationalities, and of languages of Northern Africa, north of the Congo, which do not belong to the Bantu family, the Church of Christ can the more readily communicate the all-precious Gospel widely in the southern parts of Northern Africa. And yet, again, with longing heart and hope, I desire to reach the Albert Lake, that we may not only gather out the elect of God, but that we may meet the members of the Freedmen's Aid Society on the lake, they having their regular course to its northern shore, by the Nile; and so, for our part, effectually check, and gradually destroy, the terribly cruel slave trade.

“The region embracing the tributary rivers debouching to the south or left bank of the Congo, to their highest navigable points, I think you will remember, was to be your principal field; but I should not advise expending much in or for stations, as the s.s. *Peace*, together with the coming, ever-increasing means of communication and intercourse, shortly will, in all probability, afford facilities and enable the missionaries to visit a great number of settlements of populations, where they will be welcomed, with but little outlay on each occasion. The region of the rivers coming from the south, above referred to, may extend, in respect of some of the longer rivers, to the twelfth parallel of south latitude, where, let us hope, we may some day welcome those devoted, foremost men—Coillard and Arnott—of the Barotse Mission.

“ If, on prayerfully considering this plan, you should heartily adopt it with determined purpose, the Lord willing, to carry it out forthwith, I propose at once to forward to you two thousand pounds towards its execution; and as this sum is for an especial object, to be of very judicious organising, I should like a detailed account to be fraternally presented to the Christian Church, how it is expended. It is, of course, understood that if geographical discovery should affect some of the possibilities of this plan, yet the evident purpose herewith, in all the particular parts, shall be kept steadily and perseveringly in view. Strong faith, high hope in God, caution, courage, and love, can enable the workers on the scene of action to do wondrously.

“ The Lord keep us ever to the glory of God, and of our Lord Jesus Christ.

“ ROBERT ARTHINGTON.”

The Committee, gratefully appreciating Mr. Arthington's generous proposal, have expressed themselves quite prepared to accept the conditions laid down in his letter, and to use their utmost endeavours to comply with them, by putting them into practical operation as soon as circumstances will render such action possible. With this view they have passed the following resolutions on the subject:—

“ First—That the sanction of the Committee be given to the proposed occupation of the Upper Congo by missionaries of the Society, with, at the same time, a devout and thankful recognition of the ‘ striking way in which the road had been made ready and the path made straight.’

“ Second—That the proposed establishment of ten stations, with two missionaries at each, between Stanley

Pool and Stanley Falls, as suggested by the Congo Mission brethren, be generally approved.

“Third—That in view of the great importance of immediate action in this matter, the proposal to occupy Lukolela at once be cordially approved, and leave given for the establishment of at least two additional up-river stations during the current year, or as early as practicable.

“Fourth—That further reinforcements, to the extent of at least six additional brethren, be sanctioned, such brethren to be sent out as funds permit, should suitable candidates for the work be found.”

It will be seen that the Committee approve of the suggestion that ten new stations should be planted between Stanley Pool and Stanley Falls, the two being one thousand miles apart, and that the station at Lukolela be the first occupied. As they recognise and abide by the important principle of having two agents at every post, twenty additional labourers will be needed, and it is earnestly hoped that those who are suitable will not be backward in presenting themselves, and that the Churches will supply the indispensable increase in the funds of the Society. May He, who alone can call out and qualify such as it is His good pleasure to choose, put forth His power to this end, and may there be speedily added to the brethren—still, alas! how few—“a band of men, whose hearts God has touched,” fully equipped for His service, and worthily sustained by His people.

That the smile of our Heavenly Father may be upon us, and upon the members of the Livingstone Inland Mission, who are treading the same path and seeking the same results as ourselves, will be, I venture to hope,

the devout desire of those who may have the opportunity of perusing this little sketch of the rise and progress of the work on the Congo River. As I think of the vast sphere of Gospel effort opened before us, the prayer of the missionary hymn, with which our youthful ears were familiar, comes up in remembrance,

“ Let the Indian, let the Negro,
Let the rude barbarian see
That Divine and glorious conquest,
Once obtained on Calvary.
Let the Gospel
Loud resound from pole to pole.”

For “the healing of the nations” there are but “the leaves” of one “Tree of Life;” for the woes and wounds of the enslaved in body and soul, but one sovereign “balm in Gilead,” but one “physician there”! Civilization has, as we have seen, its legitimate triumphs, and in them we have good reason to rejoice, but the remedy for the widespread sorrow of a sin-stricken world lies beyond its reach.

Civilization has no “good tidings of great joy” to proclaim—civilization may renew the face of nature, but cannot renovate spiritually the heart of man. Its aim and its tendency may be to cause men to “beat the sword into the plough-share” and the “spear into the pruning-hook”; but the only power effectually to do this is that of the “glorious Gospel of the blessed God,” applied by “the Spirit of Life in Christ Jesus.” Where this is published and embraced, *there* is light, liberty, love and peace.

Though I write in the service of one branch of the Church, I write in the spirit and in the interests of the whole. And I appeal to those whose daily prayer is,

“Thy Kingdom come,” to aid us in giving this Gospel to the perishing millions of Equatorial Africa.

Then shall the prodigal be won back to his Father’s house, and the wanderer to the “Shepherd and Bishop of souls;” while the land that has for ages been buried in night and in darkness shall rise to the dawning of a joyous day.



