

I Loved Africa



S. G. Maxwell

Earlikeen '76

I LOVED AFRICA

A Missionary Recalls His Experiences in Working

for the People of This Great Continent during

Forty Years

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BRITISH ADVENT YOUTH SOCIETY,

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THE SMOKE OF A THOUSAND VILLAGES

The smoke of a thousand villages
Where Christ is little known,
Seeps through the morning sunlight
And drifts towards His throne.

From Heaven's height in sorrow
He bends to touch and bless
Some heart, whose loving service
Can bring them happiness.

'Poems of the African Train'

- Elwood L Haines

DEDICATED
TO THE MEMORY OF
MY BROTHER
UNCLE ARTHUR

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FOREWARD

It is probably still too early to understand the full extent of the great revolution through which much of Africa has passed in the last three or four decades. In retrospect, one sees much for which to condemn the white man, and one might see even more if someone could tell us what fruit alternative policies might have borne. In the course of the revolution, inevitably Christian missionaries have made their mistakes. They have at times reflected attitudes other than truly Christian ones. On the one hand some have failed to move with the times, on the other some have moved when they should have stood firmly by the principles of Christ's gospel. There are things they have understood, things they have not understood and things, more is the pity, they have misunderstood. But Africa's people are gentle folk and in the confusion they at least have understood - perhaps intuitively with their hearts, when it was impossible to understand rationally with their minds.

But Spencer Maxwell was the kind of missionary who did understand. He changed when change was necessary. In fact, by his years of ministry he helped to sow the seeds of change; for though the gospel does, and ever must, restrain violent revolution, when it permeates society it is a tremendous force for change. Of the many fine missionaries who worked in the Trans-Africa Division during the more than thirty years I served there, none I knew did more for practical enlightenment and real education than he. He worked selflessly and with great compassion for the people he loved. He held high standards and he expected that he himself and others by God's grace would reach them - and they did. And how men loved him - for his compassion and his firmness.

Spencer Maxwell saw all men, the poorest and humblest, the most unpromising and benighted, as possessing an

infinite value bestowed on them by the Christ of the Cross. He thought of them, not as they were, but as they might become through redeeming grace. Like his Master, therefore, he worked to lift them from that dust, to restore their dignity, to reshape marred characters and prepare them not for this life only, but for the life that measures with the life of God.

What an example his life of mission service has been - a worthy one to follow, for though times have changed, challenges remain. Whoever you are then, whatever your age, as you look back with him over more than 40 years in Africa, with him also you will love the simple, rugged people he worked for. You will rejoice in their joys, grieve with them in their woes and sorrows, chuckle at their idiosyncrasies, be sobered by what at first you think of as their caricatures of the white man but later come to recognize as terribly true pictures of yourself as they might see you. You will rebel with them at life's injustices, admire deeply their patience and kindly courtesy and feel strong sympathy with them in their struggle toward the light. And most of all, with the author, you will give the only possible answer to the question, 'Has it been worth the cost?' with a resounding, "YES!"

And with Spencer Maxwell and his fellow missionaries and with my fellow-Africans and me, you will pray from your hearts: Nkosi, sikelel' i Afrika! (Lord, bless Africa!)

W. Duncan Eva

Vice-President of the General Conference
of Seventh-day Adventists

Chapter I

WE GO TO AFRICA

"Do you really want to go to Africa?"

The old doctor was asking the question. He had before him our medical questionnaire. Its multiplicity of questions did not seem to interest him. If we had said 'No', he would have found good reasons to support that wish. But when Connie, my wife, and I said "Yes", he quickly completed the form. It was as easy as that. Evidently purpose was to play a dominant part in the life of a missionary.

The desire to serve God in Africa had been born many years before. Missionaries from Africa used to give talks to the students at the old Stanborough Park College in England. I recall the challenging appeal Pastor A. A. Carscallen gave one evening. He told of the great problems facing the work in East Africa. The needs of the people, the paucity of workers, the practical life of the missionary, all were as seeds planted in my heart. But World War I came and I went into the ministry in the home country feeling that a call to Africa was distant indeed.

But in 1920 horizons lifted. I found myself one of a party of ten missionaries and three children who were chosen to go out to East Africa to relieve those workers who had been compelled to remain there long past the time of their furlough.

Our journey ended as we stepped from the railway tug on Lake Victoria to the jetty at Kendu Bay in South Kavirondo. This was the most isolated and backward part of British East Africa, later known as Kenya. It adjoined what had been called German East Africa, and then called Tanganyika. World War I had taken its toll of even this remote part of Africa. Fighting had taken place all along the east side of Lake Victoria. Towns had been burned and mission stations pillaged. The resulting famine and the ravages of

the influenza epidemic had largely destroyed what mission work had been accomplished prior to the war.

At the Shirati station Missionary Palm was surprised at breakfast by a knock on the door. On opening he saw some armed men who, before he could explain his work, shot him down. They then proceeded to eat his breakfast and one took off his boots to wear.

R. Munzig, of Kanadi station, was surprised by a raiding band of the Masai tribe. While trying to parley with them in the valley below the mission he was speared to death. A battle was later fought on the Utimbaru station and the trenches remained visible for many years.

The British missionaries spent several years in internment at Kaimosi.

I was not surprised at what met our eyes. A small group of Africans, very scantily clad, waited to greet the newcomers. They willingly carried our loads on their heads up the hill to the mission, a mile away. Two or three missionaries were at the pier with their motor cycles. They proceeded to initiate the ladies of our party to the joys of African travel by giving them a tandem ride up the so-called road.

Two of us remained the last to see that all the baggage was offloaded. We regretted the decision. No motor cycles came back for us. So we set off to walk up the hill by what seemed to be a short cut. It was now late in the afternoon and we were yet to learn that at certain seasons of the year it rained regularly at this time.

The heavens were soon black with cloud followed by a rushing wind. Lashed by the tropical rain we struggled up an unknown path, our way being illuminated frequently by lightning flashes and punctuated by the terrifying thunder. It was only the flashes which saved us from falling over the many granite rocks which blocked our way. Like two drowning rats we finally reached the Gendia mission.

But where were the permanent buildings? The only evidence of such were some soot-blackened walls of what had once been the missionary's home. Soldiers had occupied the place during the war and by carelessness allowed a fire to destroy it. All the accommodation available for our party was a few huts, with reed walls and earth floors.

I found where my wife and little girl had been located. But the luggage was missing. All I could get in exchange for the wet clothes was a pair of borrowed pyjamas. With these I appeared at the evening meal. We sat on planks each side of a long table. The main item on the menu was mealies. Most of us had never seen such things before. After much deliberation I tried to pry loose the individual seeds with a knife and fork. But my wife, who had seen them eaten in Portugal, whispered, "Do it like this"; picking up the cob with her hands and proceeding to demolish it with her teeth.

Everyone went early to bed that night - a camp bed and a little bedding. We were grateful for the reed sides of the hut which provided ventilation without leaving the door or window open. It was known that leopards and lions at times took a fancy to sampling the occupants of insecure huts. Above our heads some rope supported something which we did not recognize in the dim light of the hurricane lamp. It turned out to be a quantity of biltong, a form of dried venison. Just as well the door was shut.

So this was Africa! This is what I had wanted to come to for many years.

Sleep did not come easily after so exciting a day. My thoughts went back over the call to Africa. England now seemed a long way away. Had I been wise in bringing the family to share what appeared to be a very primitive existence?

But there was no mistaking the call. What I had already seen was enough evidence to prove that workers were needed. Others could continue to preach to the small groups of

believers in the home country. But here was a whole continent awaiting conquest for Christ!

We had tried to come with some sort of preparation. Lists of essential goods for missionaries were not supplied in those days. Some knowledge of medicines was suggested. So some of us spent three months attending a certain hospital in London. But it was not the best place, for they believed in giving the smallest possible dose of a drug, whereas we soon found out that it was the largest dose of Epsom Salts and kindred drugs which was needed.

We had also tried to learn to plough, thinking that art might be needed. Lessons in carpentry were to prove most useful. We also milked cows. But Africans were found to be more conversant with this art as we were soon to learn.

One usually takes the wrong things to a new country. We were no exception. Goods were in short supply following the war. But supplies of a kind were obtained from a well-known London store. A heavy quality rubber helmet adorned the head. Khaki shirt and trousers of poor quality; and for walking, shorts, with leather leggings or puttees (a strip of cloth wound round the leg, but requiring a certain skill to get it to look smart). Heavy boots. A thick pad of cloth, lined with red, buttoned on to the shirt protected the spine. Thus armed we could face the heat of the sun from above and the bites of the snakes from below.

Our first year in the tropics saw us change more than the local inhabitants. The heavy helmet gave place to a terai or double felt hat which did at least remain on one's head after colliding with a lintel, but produced much perspiration and possibly premature loss of hair. Even this went its way in due course and an ordinary felt hat sufficed.

In the end no hat was worn by many, it being discovered that the rays of the sun were not so dangerous to the exposed head as through the eyes. Hence the advent of sun glasses. At the same time the white people discarded their hats the

Africans found their prestige increased the more they covered their heads. The spine pad, leggings and puttees all disappeared.

The cold, sunless days of England were forgotten as we sailed into the bright waters of the Mediterranean Sea. The thick woollen suits were soon laid aside. The men of the party appeared on deck in the new khaki attire. But what was that peculiar smell around? Everyone looked in suspicion at the other. It became impossible to endure. As soon as Port Said was reached we all dived into the first store to obtain some new, non-smelling linen suits.

Only those who have made a first trip abroad know how thrilling the new sights can be. One's camera becomes a cash drain as every sight must be captured. Knowing Africa as we thought, we had come prepared to do our own developing and printing. But the question of water temperature had not been studied.

Having exposed several spools, my friend, Worsley Armstrong, and I decided to do some developing while passing through the Red Sea. The month was June. Obviously the water was too warm. The steward at table, a Goanese, offered to solve the difficulty. If we could provide a receptacle, he would get us ice from the kitchen. But we had no such article in our equipment.

Ah, yes, there was something which would do in the cabin. Armed with the chamber we proceeded to secure the valuable ice. In the cabin every aperture had been closed against light. The heat increased. First one garment, then another, was discarded until we stood as nature made us, but still uncomfortably warm.

The ice did the trick. The pictures appeared in due course. What precious mementoes of our first voyage. We hung them up with the fan at full blast to help keep them cool. An hour later when we returned to see how things were going those wonderful pictures had disappeared. Not

a trace was left on the empty negative. Needless to say we did no more developing on the voyage.

No one is advised to try the Red Sea in June. Hot winds flow off the desert from both sides. The nights are most oppressive. All who could, defied the ship's regulations and brought their mattresses and pillows on deck. Thus the night could be endured until 5 a. m. when the crew commenced to wash the decks. One night I thought to try a life-boat. It hung over the side, and the fleeting water looked a long way down. I wondered what would happen if I turned the wrong way during sleep, and decided it was not the safest place.

There had not been a steamer to East Africa for a number of months. When the S/S Nevassa sailed it had a full complement of passengers. They were crammed in everywhere. Wives could not travel with their husbands. We were four men in one cabin. Next door were our wives with two children. There was no air conditioning in those days. The ladies did not sleep on deck.

It was not surprising that the two children, Myrtle and Doreen, were soon covered with red spots. The doctor was called. The decision was quick - measles! Just where they could have got it no one asked. Only a great groan of disappointment went up from the other passengers and a certain measure of antipathy showed as the ship anchored in the roadstead of Aden with the yellow quarantine flag flying. No one could go ashore. And this after all that had been endured in the Red Sea. A few hours among the shops of this free port would have discovered some wonderful bargains.

But by now the port doctor was aboard. Somehow he was not satisfied with the decision of his colleague on the ship and came to the cabin to see the children. Another quick glance and an entirely different verdict. Prickly heat! Pull down the yellow flag! Into the boats streamed the passengers and not the last were the Beltons and Maxwells with their children.

How good to set foot on 'terra firma' again! There was

more air to breathe. So much to see. So much to buy. But a missionary's salary was quite inadequate to the opportunity. It was better to turn our eyes elsewhere. So we clubbed together for a trip to the gigantic tanks built in the hills to catch the precious rain which falls so infrequently at Aden. Their origin is attributed to King Solomon without any very good reason. When we got there the tanks were empty of water.

Then the last lap of the journey. We headed into the Indian Ocean and the monsoon. It was cooler but that was all. The ship pitched and tossed. Nearly everyone was seasick. The stewards tried to coax us to eat in our bunks without success. Only one of our party could boast he had not missed a meal. The catering department must have shown a handsome profit for those five days. I was reported to have said, though my memory fails to corroborate it, that if I reached land in safety I would never ask for a furlough to return home.

Our misery turned to joy as we entered the protected waters of Kilindini harbour. We had reached Mombasa. The island on which the town is built was known as Mvita, the isle of war. Arabs and Portuguese had struggled for supremacy of this vital port. The old fort, strangely named Jesus, still stands watch over the harbour. What tales those walls could tell of sieges and starvation, garrisons defending to the last man, prisoners rotting in dungeons.

Dhows continued to ply their trade from Arab days, carrying mangrove poles and other produce to Aden, Muscat and India. They make use of the monsoon, that periodic wind which blows in the Indian Ocean from the south-west for six months and the remainder of the year from the north-east.

The harbour at Mombasa was only suitable for the dhows; but at Kilindini, the place of deep water as the name implies, the ocean-going steamers anchored. At that time barges

conveyed passengers and goods ashore. The handling of freight by inexperienced labour produced many a breakage not found till the cases were opened up far inland. Today large wharves and cranes handle the multiple trade of the nineteen-seventies.

The small town of Mombasa, as we first knew it, has now absorbed the whole island, and a truly bustling seaport it is. If it should ever want a town motto it could easily take "Changing Africa" as a title, for here east and west, ancient and modern, meet in delightful confusion.

Our train left late in the afternoon. The old settlers loved the spacious, self-contained passenger compartments. Into them could be pushed luggage far in excess of the authorised weight. Corridor coaches were yet to come. One stayed put until a 'dak' bungalow was reached. This was the signal for a meal and the reward went to the swift. Oil lamps scarcely illuminated the three or four courses. African waiters, resplendent in red fez and white 'kanzu' (gown) with a red sash from the right shoulder to the left hip, tried to satisfy one's hunger. Promptly at the whistle, the meal finished or unfinished, the passengers made a rush for their compartments.

The engine burned wood. As night fell it produced a wonderful pyrotechnic display. One soon found out it did not pay to keep the windows open, for pieces of lighted wood could imperceptibly alight on one's skin or clothes with disastrous effect. The single track line, narrow gauge, led ever upwards from the coastal plain. Soon the coconut belt was passed and the uninhabited uplands entered. Dark stands of planted trees seemed to find all the echoes of creation.

We reached the station of Tsavo and recalled how, when the line was being built, man-eating lions held up the construction for weeks. Indian workmen were dragged from tents, huts and railway carriages as these fearless marauders jumped in and out.

In the morning the open plains came into view where roved countless herds of game. Away to the left, resplendent in the morning sunshine, rose the magnificent snow-covered mountain of Kilimanjaro, over 19,000 feet, the highest peak in Africa. To the right, at an equal distance, could be seen Africa's second highest peak, Mount Kenya (17,000 feet). The former has a great dome, while the latter has two pointed peaks. I made a mental resolution to climb these two challenging heights, but somehow the opportunity never came.

There was a longer halt when we reached Nairobi, the capital of the country. We had now climbed to 6,000 feet above sea level. The climate was pleasant. The country teemed with the Kikuyu people. Gardens of sweet potatoes and peas were everywhere.

But still the climb went on. Our 'gari la moshi' (the local name for our cart of smoke or steam) began crossing high-level steel tressle bridges which left one giddy with the thought of what could happen if the driver forgot to reduce speed. In the afternoon we had crossed the Great Rift Valley and were at 8,000 feet. Then commenced the slide down until we came to rest at the inland port of Kisumu on the shore of Lake Victoria, the second largest body of fresh water in the world. We were still nearly 4,000 feet above sea level.

So I relived my journey to Africa ere sleep closed my eyes on the first eventful night in the heart of that fantastic continent.

Why had I come? What did I expect? Would I have come if I could have known what I know today?

At that time it looked then as if Africa could not change its way of life in a hundred years.

But, in fact, it did change in many respects in the forty and more years I was privileged to live there.

Chapter II

FOLKLORE AND CUSTOMS

"The moon has two wives." I listened incredulously. "Yes," my informant continued, "the moon really does have two wives and their names are Chekechani and Pinkhani." "How do you know this?" I queried. "Why, you can see them! One he has in the evening and the other in the morning." At last it dawned on me as to what he was referring. The planet Venus appears at one season of the year as the bright evening star and at other times as the morning star. So the moon has two wives.

The tribes of Africa living south of the equator are classified as Bantu, though there are several notable exceptions. Bantu languages in construction follow similar rules. If one learns one Bantu tongue it is not too difficult to master others, though often words have an opposite meaning.

The mythology and folklore of these tribes have much in common.

There is a general belief in a high God living above the sky. His nearness or remoteness varies from tribe to tribe. The Chagga thought of him as dwelling on the snow-covered top of Mt. Kilimanjaro. He was not always the supreme god, as others were more useful for ready assistance, as the god of war, etc. But this rather remote God, called Murungu, Mulungi, Mungu, Ngai and other names, had associated with him the attributes of creator.

In Uganda, under the name of Katonda, he made the first man, who was called Kantu. This man lived a very lonely life with few amenities. In the process of time Katonda made Nambi, a girl. She looked down from the sky and took pity on Kantu. Gathering together some plants, including the banana, a chicken or two, she slid down the rainbow to the earth and made him happy.

Various accounts are given for the creation of man.

Some say he came from a seed or out of a tree; others say from a hole or cave. Strange markings on rocks are supposed to be the footprints of the first man.

Death is blamed on the chameleon who delayed in taking the message from God to the effect that man was not to die. He was outstripped by the lizard with the opposite message that man should die.

The snake is prominent in Bantu mythology. Some flood the earth with water while others take it away. Every tribe has snake stories. Mighty snakes (probably pythons) living at the top of a hill, in the depths of a forest or swamp, have to be placated.

There is a common belief all over Africa in the existence of a spirit world. The dead go to a further life underground and there remain for some time. It is necessary to keep on good terms with the departed, particularly one's ancestors. Little grass huts are frequently found in which offerings to the spirits are placed. Some tribes bury the dead in their own huts. After a year or so, the skull is retrieved and placed in a position of honour in the hut. The witch-doctor does a highly remunerative trade by informing the living as to the wishes of the departed and how they can be kept happy.

It is often related that some have unintentionally visited the underworld. Mpombe, the hunter, was following a rabbit when it disappeared down a hole. In trying to catch it he opened up an entrance to the realms of the dead. He was told he could never go back to earth. But finally, as a result of his pleadings, he was allowed to do so. The condition was that he must never reveal what he had seen below. He kept his promise for some time. But his mother kept nagging him to tell her what he had seen. Finally he gave in. The same day death called for him, as he had been warned.

The spirits often are supposed to appear as demi-gods

or heroes. The people of Ruanda believe they live in the volcanoes of central Africa. Sometimes the spirits appear as ogres or monsters. They ravage the country until a hero appears who kills the oppressor and by cutting it open frees those he has swallowed.

Animals change into human beings and human beings into animals. Stories of animal exploits are legion. The rabbit or hare has all the attributes for astuteness and is usually the hero. A few examples will show there is a good variety of Bedtime Stories in Africa.

The hare and the hyena, being in want of food, go to the chief. He sends them to his garden to hoe out the weeds. For wages the chief pays them with beans of which he has many. The two animals proceed to cook the beans in the garden. When the food was ready the hyena says he is going off to the river for a drink. But as soon as he is out of sight he takes off his skin and runs back to the hare. He is so frightened at the apparition that he runs away. The hyena eats all the beans.

When the hare returns he finds the hyena shouting for his beans. The hare says "a frightful beast came and ate them." The hyena insists that the hare must have eaten them and that he is telling a lie to cover up his trick. So the hare says he will make a bow and arrow to kill the beast should he come again. The hyena seeing the bow being made, persuades him to let him make it better. But he cuts it too much in one place.

Next day the hyena goes off to the river again, takes off his skin and a terrible beast comes for the beans. The hare pulls the bow, but it snaps and he flees. Then he makes another bow secretly and hides it in the grass.

When the wild beast appears the following day he shoots and wounds it and it runs away. The hyena quickly puts on his skin and returns but only in time to see the rabbit finishing the dish of beans.

Another story concerns the baboon and the tortoise who were friends. As was customary, the baboon invited the tortoise to dinner. But being of a selfish nature he put the food up in a tree. When the tortoise arrived he could smell the food but could not reach it and had to go home hungry.

Then it was the turn of the tortoise to invite the baboon to have food with him. The time was the end of the dry season. The country was burned black with grass fires. The tortoise placed the meal behind one of those burned patches. When the baboon arrived the tortoise asked him to please wash his dirty hands. As there was no water the baboon had to go back to the river.

Now with clean hands he returned in anticipation of a good meal, which he could smell in the distance. But he had to cross the black patch again, and so arrived with dirty hands, as he could not walk upright. He repeated this so many times that finally he got tired and went home in disgust. The moral is obvious - Do unto others as you would want them to do unto you. African folklore is not all myth.

Another story tells how, as a result of a severe drought, all the animals were dying. The rivers had ceased to run and the pools were dry.

The lion, as king, called a meeting of all animals in the dry river bed. He instructed them to stamp on the ground and produce water. The elephant commenced. The earth trembled and a great cloud of dust was raised. But no water appeared. Then it was the turn of the rhino and buffalo. Then all the animals tried but with no better success. Finally the lowly tortoise took his turn. A damp spot appeared. The rhino was very angry that so humble an animal could succeed when he could not and drove him away. The damp spot disappeared.

Then the tortoise tried again. The damp spot grew until finally a well with water appeared. The animals passed a resolution that only those who helped with the work were to

drink of the water.

But the hare did not work. He lived by his wits. Knowing him as a cunning creature the animals agreed to set a watch each night. The first watchman was the hyena. The hare duly appeared with two calabashes. One was empty and the other had honey in it. He asked the hyena why he was at the well so late at night. He replied that he was guarding the water.

"I don't want your dirty water," said the hare. "I have something nicer here." The hyena wanted to taste what was in the calabash. So the hare gave him a sip on the tip of a stalk of grass. "Ah," said the hyena, "that was so nice. I want some more."

"But," said the hare, "this (honey) is so strong that if you take more it will knock you over. You must first be tied to a tree so you do not fall over." The hyena consented and was tied up. Then the hare filled his second calabash with water, took a swim in the well and departed laughing.

In the morning the lion found the hyena tied to the tree. The hyena explained that a strong man came and tied him up. But the lion said it was the hare. So the lion kept guard next night but was tricked by the hare. In like manner all the animals were overcome by the wisdom of the hare.

At last the tortoise went to hide at the bottom of the well. When the hare came next night he found no one on guard and went in for a swim. Suddenly his legs were grabbed from below. "Let me go," he shrieked. "I do not want your water." The tortoise held on until the animals arrived and the hare was taken for judgment. "Tie me up with green fibre and I will die," he said. This they did. But the sun dried the thongs. The hare burst them and escaped.

Natural phenomena are explained away. Lightning is attributed to a bird flying swiftly. No one will use for fuel a tree struck by lightning. The rainbow is considered an enemy because "it stops the rain." It is supposed to live in

an ant-hill.

I once saw a book written by a German missionary describing the conditions of just one tribe in Africa. The title he gave to his treatise was 'In the Bondage of Fear.' It could have applied to every part of the great continent.

What produced this fear? Superstition. What cultivated superstition? Witchcraft. Witch-doctors often exerted more power than the tribal chief. Long before the 'closed shop' was known these gentlemen formed a compact union for their trade and self-preservation. The cult was mostly handed down from father to son, though others could be initiated after a lengthy probation.

The witch-doctor lived on the ignorance and credulity of the people. There was no education. Practically no contact existed with other people, even the neighbouring tribe. Smelling out the trouble-maker was a profitable business, for thereby the witch-doctor could rid himself of a potential enemy under cover of working for the tribal good.

Failure of the rains could bring considerable wealth to this cult, provided they did not act precipitously. When the stars scintillated it was judged that a change of weather was imminent and the sacrifice was ordered.

Their regular income was derived from the every-day happenings of life. A man could fall down near a sacred tree or outside his house. A sacrifice was required to discover the reason for this. An examination of the entrails of an animal gave the answer. A hyena could enter a hut or leave his droppings nearby. A fire could go out in the herdsman's hut. Someone could touch a corpse. A baby would fall from the supporting cloth on its mother's back. A reason for all these happenings must be found. Sacrifice for the crops, for illness, before a journey was undertaken. The witch-doctor was never unemployed in 'the good old days'.

The witch-doctor would oblige you, for a price, with powerful medicine to get your revenge on an enemy. In

Mashonaland one could purchase a gourd with the correct medicine, provided you had the necessary introduction to this gentleman. Into the dry, hollowed-out gourd are placed various small ingredients. These could include a baby's dried finger, secured from the grave after burial, bits of lion skin, finger-nail parings, hair, etc. These were sealed in with sheep's fat adorned with hyena's hair. The price, well - according to your status. Perhaps a goat, sheep or ox.

What would you do with it? It must be hung in a tree to the windward side of the house of your victim. After a few days he would begin to feel sick and no doubt die in due course. It was supposed to be very efficacious in the case of a troublesome mother-in-law.

Imagination plays a great part in the reputed powers of the witch-doctor. I recall hearing of a man who went outside his house one morning and noticed a black patch at one corner of his wall. On investigation he discovered it had been placed at each corner of his house. He quickly came to the conclusion that an enemy had secured medicine from the witch-doctor in order to bring about his death.

He cried out, "I am going to die. I know this witch-doctor. He makes the most powerful spells. There is no hope for me." He lay down on his bed. When his wife came he told her he felt ill. In a few hours he said he felt worse. "I am going to die," he said again and again. He got worse hourly. Finally he died. He had not touched the black medicine. He had not eaten anything containing poison. No attack had been made upon him. But his imagination was affected. He died of fear. Fear of the witch-doctor.

One of the strongest poisons is the dried gall-bladder of the crocodile. In a village in Nyasaland a woman had placed her maize flour on a mat to dry. An older woman, thinking she knew the destination of the flour and wanting to get her revenge on an enemy, approached unseen and sprinkled this

particular poison.

A little later two young men came to this house and requested some flour for a journey. They spent the evening in a house next to ours in Blantyre and cooked the flour. During the night they became desperately ill with stomach pains. Though rushed to hospital they were dead before morning.

A few days later other visitors were sleeping in the same house. They saw the flour and cooked it for a meal. The same thing happened. Two more died that night. A post-mortem revealed the mystery but the police had no evidence to make an arrest.

Tribal custom often calls for distinguishing marks on the body. Some file their front teeth to a point, others remove several of them. Faces are marked and patterns made by blistering the skin. Lips are made to protrude. Ear lobes are elongated. The lobe is pierced and a small piece of wood inserted. The hole is gradually enlarged until, in some cases, it will extend to the shoulder. A mark of perfection is when the lobe of one ear can be carried over the head and caught on the other ear. One tribe in Tanganyika had a strange custom at the birth of a child. The father, if he acknowledged the babe as his, put the new-born infant through the extended lobe of his ear.

The birth-rate was well controlled by tribal superstition. A baby born feet first was most unlucky and had to be disposed of. Twins were an evidence of ill luck and many of the tribes killed them at birth. I recall the struggle we had with the Pare (pronounce the e as a long a) people to change these superstitions. Even though Christian parents planned to save their twins, heathen relatives sought to follow out the tribal custom.

A child was thought to bring ill luck if the incisor teeth did not appear first. Fond mothers used to pry into the gum in an endeavour to save the child. Others were hid until all

the teeth had come through.

I came across many stories of Africans who predicted the coming of the white man. Nearly every country had someone who foretold the advent of the white faces who would bring many new things and teach the people. It was such a prediction that caused the death of Bishop Hannington in Busoga, Uganda. King Mwangi knew the prophecy that the new ruler would come from the east. When the bishop was reported as coming from that direction an ambush was prepared for him.

Somewhere around the year 1850 an old man of the Kikuyu tribe in East Africa was given a vision by Ngai (God). Mogo wa Kebiro awakened bruised and voiceless. After performing some religious ceremonies he called the people together and told them his dream. "I saw the coming of strangers out of the great water (the Indian Ocean). They resembled a small, light-coloured frog. They had the dress of the wings of a butterfly. They carried a magical stick which would produce fire (guns). They would bring an iron snake, like a caterpillar (train). It would stretch from the big water to the other big water (Lake Victoria). Their coming would be preceded by a great famine. Much suffering would result from the arrival of these strangers, but they must not fight them."

A chief of Bapedi predicted, "I see red ants coming. They have baskets on their heads (helmets). Their feet are those of the zebra (an impression produced by boots). They travel with houses, the oxen walk in front. Receive them kindly."

One of the best preserved prophecies is that of Ntsikana of South Africa. After several evidences of supernatural power he told his people that a nation would come from the west whose people would have long, straight hair, like the hair of a horse's mane. These strange people would bring a book. He did not know what a book was like, so he called what he saw in vision "Ncwadi" because the pages reminded

him of the leaves of a root called Ncwadi, belonging to the onion family.

Ntsikana warned his people to take only the strangers' book but not their customs. He said they would come with a button without holes (money). Those holeless buttons would destroy their children and not allow them to bury one another. (Many thousands leave their homes to work in the gold and diamond mines and never return.) He also warned them of a smooth Imvaba or glass bottle which would destroy many (referring to the white man's intoxicating drink which Africans greatly desire). They would see a wagon being pulled without a horse (railway train). Many wars were yet to come. In the midst of the last one 'Great Heart' would come.

Of particular interest was his prophecy that many teachers would arrive urging them to do many things. But they should wait for the true people who would teach them to keep God's holy law with His Holy Book. This would be the distinguishing sign. They must be faithful to this even though a rope was put around their neck or an assegai went through their body. Taking some water and pouring it on the ground, he said, "If you do not accept that message of God's law, you will be lost like this."

Not all prophecies were helpful. Some brought disaster. In 1856 in South Africa, Umhlakaza professed to be the bearer of messages from his niece who had seen a vision. He prophesied that when the people had slaughtered all their cattle and emptied their grain stores, the old dead chiefs would come back, bringing with them splendid beasts. Then the white man would leave the country, never to return. The sign to act would be when the sun rose blood-red. The people slaughtered all their cattle and planted no grain. The result was that about twenty-five thousand lives were lost in the famine that followed.

Of all African customs none has had such an adverse

effect as the position to which man has relegated the woman. I failed to find a word the equivalent of "home." It was always "house." Women always occupied an inferior position. Hers was a life of drudgery, the maid of all work. The garden was her responsibility. Her husband might help if it entailed breaking new ground. But the regular preparation, planting, weeding and harvesting were all hers. With a baby on her back, a woman could be seen hoeing.

She must fetch the water for the household be the journey near or far. Hers the responsibility for securing the firewood in the forest and bringing it home. No man, except a converted Christian, would ever be seen engaged in such duties. She must pound the maize with a heavy pestle in a wooden mortar, an exercise calculated to cure most abdominal complaints.

No husband ever thought of helping in the kitchen. He only appeared, often with his friends, at the time for eating. The sexes usually ate apart. Anciently the husband stood guard over the cattle, armed with a spear. But this arduous work was more often undertaken by the sons of the family.

Women usually had little or no say in the affairs of the tribe. Men only sat in council. Large families were expected for the death rate was high. Women breast-fed their children up to two years to avoid an early pregnancy.

Whenever a journey was undertaken it was the woman who was the burden-bearer. The strongest of the sexes, she would be seen carrying on her head loads far in excess of 100 lb. Her skill in balancing never ceased to excite wonder, for in addition to the load, a baby would be on her back, a child holding one hand and a further load in the other. The husband, meanwhile, would be seen calmly walking ahead carrying nothing heavier than a walking-stick.

In his treatment of his womenfolk the African has directly damaged his own capacity to advance.

But it was a mistake for the missionary to consider

everything he found in Africa wrong. He should not have been led away by the idea that he had the final answer to every problem. Customs would change when the people found the need for them to do so.

This was illustrated when a new arrival had a burden to teach the people to eat with knives, forks and spoons. The African way was to use his hands, having washed before eating. The introduction of modern utensils for meals often led to spoons, forks, plates etc., being put away unwashed!

Volumes would need to be written to give a full picture of the background of African life and culture. Though much may not come up to accepted standards of present-day civilization, yet certain basic loyalties have preserved the African people through the ages, even though isolated from the more progressive races. We are often quick to condemn but slow to appreciate.

The basic problem for the heralds of Christianity was the reaction of tribal Africa to the individualistic appeal of Christ. Jomo Kenyata, in his book, "Facing Mount Kenya," page 309 made the following observations:

"The bases of the tribal system are the family group and the age-grades, which between them shape the character and determine the outlook of every man, woman and child in Gikuru society. According to Gikuru ways of thinking nobody is an isolated individual."

He further says:

"We can see from this that the early teachers of the Christian religion in Africa did not take into account the difference between the individualistic aspect embodied in Christian religion and the communal life of the African regulated by customs and traditions handed down from generation to generation. They failed, too, to realize that the welfare of the tribes depended on the rigid observance of these tribal taboos and rights, through which all the members of the tribe, from kings and chiefs down to the most insignificant individual,

were bound up as one organic whole and controlled by an iron-bound code of duties."

So, in addition to learning the tribal language, there was the more difficult task of understanding the reasons for life as we found them. Only the appeal of a sacrificing Saviour from sin could break through this barrier and produce in an individual a sense of his personal responsibility to an all-loving heavenly Father.

I was not told these things when asked to go to Africa. I had to learn them the hard way.

Chapter III

LIFE IN AFRICA

"Look out! The soldier ants are here."

The cries of our little girl had awakened Connie. I jumped out of bed to find these pests had managed to get under her mosquito net and into her hair. There was nothing we could do but escape from them to the other end of the house and slowly pick them off her.

This was the home we had gone to following our arrival at Gendia. The station was called Kamagambo. It was situated at the end of a range of hills jutting into the Luo plain. The place formed the border and battle ground of the Luo and Kisii tribes. Government, in granting the site, thought the presence of the mission would be beneficial to peace in that part of the country.

Permission to occupy came just before World War I and the resulting troublesome times were not conducive to building. Pioneer Carscallen had managed to erect a large round stone building which did duty for school and church. Verandahs served for an office and workshop, but did not improve the interior lighting.

The only other building on the site was a three-room temporary structure, which served as a house. It had a pleasant approach up a long lawn bordered by eucalyptus trees, hibiscus and rose bushes. The floor of this dwelling rested on three-foot high stakes, so that one could inspect the poles and take precautions against the ravages of the white ants. The floor boards must have been in short supply for there was a generous gap between each. This did have the advantage of doing away with a dustpan, for all the sweepings rapidly disappeared from sight.

A distinct disadvantage was that animals could come underneath. More than once during the night we were awakened by the cry of the hyena, "Whoop, Whoop," right under our bed.

The walls were of long reeds, called elephant grass, which grows eight to ten feet tall. These were certainly not draughtproof, especially when afternoon storms blew up. They provided many a peep hole for an inquisitive person to satisfy himself as to the habits of the inmates. It was necessary to put out the lamp before undressing for bed.

The roof was of grass and not too well laid. A heavy rain would come through in many places. Mackintoshes were kept over the bed and the dining table always had to be moved if a storm came up during meal-time. If one was kept in bed through sickness, the hours could be relieved of monotony by counting the rats and snakes which made their way along the cross-beams overhead. Lizards also tried their stunts. Sometimes one missed its footing and landed in the soup.

The reed walls were adorned with trophies of the chase. Skins of zebra and other animals were in each room. No, the early missionaries were not strict vegetarians. Do not sit in judgment upon them. They had to feed a starving population following the war. Animals were plentiful and easier to obtain than grain. Unfortunately at night sleep was difficult to come by owing to the gnawing of the rats on these skins, as they partook of their evening meal. Needless to say we got rid of these "musical instruments" as soon as a convenient opportunity came.

But those ants! Africa provides many varieties. The least harmful is the sugar ant. He is always in the pantry. He turns up in the most unexpected places. A special pie had been prepared for an important government official due on the morrow. How appetising it looked as it graced the table. But, oh the dismay of the hostess as the crust was cut and the interior revealed only a mass of crawling ants!

The white ants, or termites, being blind, do not seem to mind working inside things. They will leave a facade of paint or lacquer and demolish the woodwork. Their

depredations cost millions of pounds a year. They love to work their way to the grass roof, which is soon rendered useless. Permanent buildings are the only answer.

Then there are the little fellows who woke us up in the night - the soldier ants. They are slightly larger than the sugar ant, and have the capacity to hold on to any part of your anatomy until forcibly removed. They advance to their objective in a narrow line, four abreast, shepherded by their policemen, who are larger and stronger. Their jaws have a most painful nip. It is said that in Somalia the local African doctors, after sterilising the place of incision with boiling fat and performing the operation, proceed to join up the wound by causing a policeman ant to bite on each side of the cut. As he never lets go, his body is just twisted off. So a number of them make excellent sutures.

A new recruit was often enticed to stand on a nest of these ants or in their path. Very soon he would be pulling at his clothes. There was nothing he could do but disappear behind the nearest bush and strip, picking off each individual ant.

In the old tribal wars it was the practice to peg down a naked prisoner in the path of these ants after his body had been smeared with fat. They proceeded to enter his mouth, nose, ears and every body orifice. The agony in which he died beggars description.

No wonder I jumped up in a hurry the night the house was invaded. It was our first experience with these nocturnal visitors. We had been told to be prepared for them. A boy was instructed to take Jeyes Fluid each evening and put it on the posts of the house. But if one was missed, and there were many of them, the attack succeeded and we suffered. We finally discovered that hot embers from the kitchen fire placed directly in the paths of the advancing hordes, would turn them back. Three successive night sorties would give us relief for some time.

There was one benefit from an invasion of these ants. As they entered the house they would swarm everywhere. Rats, snakes, and lizards which lived in the grass roof, fled before them, as we did. The ants would go right through the house and so a good spring clean was effected. We would wait in the last room for their appearance. Then jump over them and get back to bed.

The house was vulnerable to predators. We had to call for the services of our good mission doctor, G. A. S. Madgwick. He slept in the spare bedroom and took out his dentures. Next morning they were nowhere to be found. After a frantic search he had to leave without them and order a replacement. Weeks later a labourer sweeping round the house came on, what seemed to him, a strange object. I recognized the doctor's missing teeth. On them were definite marks of rat teeth. They were returned to him inside many packages with a note marked, "Sorry, found unsuitable."

In the early days the ability of a European to take out his teeth or push forward one on his tongue, was a source of wonderment. I heard of an employer of labour at the turn of the century who had a glass eye. He found that whenever he was absent the workmen downed tools. So he thought of the idea of impressing them with his omniscience. He took out his glass eye and placed it where all could see it. "Now I can see you even though I am away," he said. But one day one of the men who was not deceived put his hat over the glass eye as soon as his back was turned. All promptly rested as before.

A wood-burning kitchen stove in a grass house was always a liability. Trained cooks were almost unknown. Our incumbent in this office was once asked to open a tin of fruit. After what seemed a very long time he appeared at the door with the tin in one hand the handle for lifting the rings of the stove in the other.

"I cannot make it go in," he said.

In lieu of a building, the kitchen steps formed the best place to operate a dispensary, as the hot water was near at hand. Unfortunately every fly in that part of the country hitched a ride on the back of the patients rather than use its own wings. Every ulcerating sore had its quota. Connie strongly protested at having the medical work so near the house but there was no money to build a dispensary.

Our supply of bandages soon gave out, even though we asked the patients to wash their soiled ones. Banana leaves were substituted, but these dried quickly and were not too comfortable.

There was no laid-on water. It was all brought in four-gallon tins which had contained kerosene or petrol. Two could be carried suspended from a pole balanced on the shoulder. But one had to regularly inspect the source of supply. It could be a bubbling spring, or, more often, a stagnant pool, covered with green slime. Access to water was a communal privilege. This often included cows and domestic animals. Local inhabitants bathed in the same pool. To bathe we used a galvanized tub in the bedroom with water strictly rationed. It was an unpleasant experience to be caught in the middle of the operation by one of those violent wind storms howling through the reed wall.

Water for drinking was a problem. We tried putting alum in the tank to settle the matter in suspension. It also helped to pass the water through beds of sand. It had to be boiled and then filtered. It was not safe to trust the cook to bring the water to the boil. The clay filter candles soon needed scraping and boiling themselves. When the finished product was drawn off it often smelt of smoke and had a peculiar taste. Orange, lemon or lime squeezed in helped.

When permanent corrugated iron roofs became available it was possible to catch quantities of rain-water in large tanks. Some workers declared that boiling the water

spoiled it and so took it as it came from the tank. The un-boiled water always gave me a pain in the pit of the stomach. I did not have to search long for the reason. Before the commencement of the rainy season all the tanks were cleaned by having a small boy squeeze himself through the top opening. What he brought out amazed us. A dead cat, lizards, rats, plenty of leaves, etc., convinced me that boiling was a necessary precaution.

When it came to the lavatory there was a nice little walk from the rear of the house. It was a pit covered over with a seat and made private with a small grass hut. One prayed there would be no night call. A deadly snake, the black mamba, had his abode somewhere in the pit. On account of this and the poor light, no one was tempted to make this hut a reading room.

The idea of a hut for the lavatory was something the majority of Africans had not yet thought about. They followed the Old Testament injunction of taking a hoe with them into the bush. This was all right so long as they lived in a small community. But when many came together at a school or mission station it became necessary to insist on a new form of sanitation. Shallow pits were grudgingly dug and huts erected. At first they were not used. Custom died hard. Then light dawned. A question was asked in a school some time later, "If King George should visit this school, what would be the thing he would be most interested in?" Quickly a hand shot up and the answer came. "He would want to see the little house." Such was the result of propaganda.

We really got used to snakes that first year. Besides being in the house and lavatory, we met them outside. One day the cook called my attention to one in a nearby bush. I rushed for the mission shot-gun and getting as near as I could, fired. The snake calmly slithered away. The pellets had passed all around him.

I soon learned that if you did not block up their way of escape, the snakes were gentlemen enough to leave the field to you. One had to recognize the harmless from the poisonous. But beware of the hooded cobra. I once killed one outside the back door and had it suitably disposed of. But next day its mate appeared ready to do battle. Grabbing a broom I ineffectively broke it on the snake as it rose and spat. Fortunately I was wearing sun glasses.

Next a rake was grabbed but it could only hold down the snake. Help was needed to finally kill the intruder.

The question of adequate food supplies troubled our party before we left England. The superintendent drew up what he termed the iron ration. It consisted of kiln-dried beans and peas. On reaching Mombasa he felt he should need more and cabled a duplicate order. When the share-out came each family had a problem how to dispose of these stone-like things. No amount of soaking seemed to make any difference. When the second order arrived some declined to take them. I have a guilty feeling that our beloved leader paid the bill and got indigestion in the process.

We managed to plant a large garden. Being virgin soil it brought forth cabbage bigger than one's head and marrows of an enormous size. There were no local shops. At Kisumu, across the lake, the only provisions were sold by Indians at a suitable profit. Ordering from England was cheaper. It was necessary to stipulate that no case must weigh more than forty pounds, as it had to be carried by porters. These goods could be up to six months en route. Often there was disappointment when they did not come up to order list specifications. But as Africa changed it became more economical to purchase in the country.

There was a wonderful view from our hill over the plains below. Scores of villages could be counted in all directions. Twenty-five miles to the west a small hill marked the site of the Kanyadoto mission. Beyond the hills to the east,

some seventeen miles, was our missionary at Kisii, the local government centre. If one climbed the mountain at the rear of the mission one could see the waters of Lake Victoria. Gendia was some thirty miles away. We seldom saw our fellow-workers for each was busy with his local work.

We began to tire of the wind which swept through the house and the leaky roof. Why not build a permanent home? It would not be hard to make sun-dried bricks, but unfortunately there was no wood to burn them. The country was bare of trees for a considerable distance. So I thought of the soapstone up on Itumbi mountain, back of the mission. What kind of stone was that? I went to investigate. It proved to be a soft stone, but not quite as easy to cut as soap. Once cut it soon dried in the sun. It could make a nice-looking house.

So I purchased a dozen axes and recruited some labourers. They were sent up the mountain to cut the stone in the shape of a brick. "Make sure the sides are square," I told them. But these men had never been to school nor studied geometry. The result was stones of all shapes and sizes. The project was abandoned as the site was too far away for supervision.

Then someone suggested, "Why not try the volcanic outcrops in the plain below the hill?" That was much easier to oversee. But we had not proceeded far when a letter arrived from the government official demanding to know why I was digging up the main road to Karuhgu! No road was visible in the tall grass, but possibly there had been one surveyed at some time. So project number two was abandoned.

However, I went to work on the top of the hill, levelling the site, digging foundations, and moving great stones in preparation for a future home. It fell to my successor to make the bricks and erect the building at the cost of much

worry and sorrow.

It was no trouble for the African to build his round hut. It consisted of one room. The overhanging roof provided a verandah or a small room or two. Light and ventilation were not considered very essential. Any aperture which would let out heat or invite a thief or predator was usually blocked up. When the mission began to provide homes for ministers it took much patience to get the occupants to sleep with open windows. Night air was considered harmful. The plan of Christian villages was tried in one field. An improved type of house with bedrooms was introduced with a kitchen at the rear. This set a new standard, but the village idea was finally abandoned when it became necessary for heads of households to stake out their own plot of ground.

With the introduction of beds it was noticed that only the men were enjoying them. The wives and children continued to sleep on the ground. The reason - the children might wet the mattress. Mosquito nets became popular with the occupier of the bed, but did nothing to help those still on the floor.

The mosquito net came in for another use. A year after our party arrived, the President of the British Union Conference brought out his daughter to be married to our one eligible bachelor. Her bridal veil attracted much attention among the teen-age girls. At the next Christian African wedding a new custom was adopted. The bride wore a veil. It was made of mosquito netting. Quite suitable.

The bride took her wedding vows very seriously. She would arrive at the church looking as if doomsday had come. Not a smile crossed her face. According to custom any look of pleasure would indicate an indecent approach to the occasion. It was hard to get bride and groom to hold hands on exchanging vows. When they left the church the bride dragged pathetically behind her spouse as though going to her funeral. A feast relieved the occasion. This in time

became a very expensive affair. Many got hopelessly in debt in order not to appear behind their friends and relatives in the matter of display.

Sometimes the problem of finding a wife got quite complicated. I recall hearing a story from a pioneer of a young teacher named Sammy. He needed a wife. Being afraid one girl would refuse him, he wrote identical letters of proposal to three girls.

To Maria he wrote: "To Maria, the prodigious girl in the world. With the strength of your fat arms you could hoe a larger garden than any other girl I know. You walk like a queen, even when you carry the heaviest load on your head. Because you are so unique, I am going to do you the unique honour to petition you to be my illustrious wife. I am a teacher in the voluminous school on the mission. I am giving you the privilege of being the wife of the most venerated man in the community. Will you not end the suspense and come over to marry me? In consideration of the dowry . . . I shall send the necessary to your honourable parent as soon as you respond to this letter. P. S. My English may be a little advanced for you, but if you can borrow a dictionary, you will understand it all. If you come to the mission to be my wife, you can use my new dictionary."

All three girls responded to this attractive letter. Dressed in their best they made their various ways to the mission. Along the road they met each other. In course of conversation each discovered that the others were on the same errand. Fury gripped them and on entering the mission they raised their sticks and began looking for the teacher. He got word of what was coming and sought refuge in the home of the missionary. "Please help me, Sir. I have more on my hands than I bargained for." The missionary persuaded two of the girls to go home. Sammy married the first girl, Maria, and no doubt had a good strong wife,

which is very necessary.

It was not just teaching in the mission school that took up the missionary's time. It was essential to visit the homes of the church members. Few swept up the waste food after a meal and flies improved the occasion. I made it a practice to look into the kitchen to examine the cooking pots. Often they were unwashed. To impress the husband of the need for cleanliness I told him the caked food on the pot from several cookings contributed to his repeated stomach-aches.

My visits to the homes were never resented. I would ask to see the state of the bedroom to know whether the beds were ever made or the clothes put tidily on pegs or in a box. These may seem unimportant details for a missionary, but they all played their part in developing a Christian community. Gradually glass windows appeared, to be draped with curtains. A tablecloth would cover the table with a jar of flowers on it. Pictures appeared on the walls. Diplomas or certificates were prominently displayed. Our most responsive pupils were the girls trained in the Girls' School.

As the earning power of the African increased it was noticed that his first effort at improvement was the provision of a corrugated iron roof to his house. This usually meant a change-over to an oblong building containing several rooms. The kitchen was placed outside. Flying sparks from the central open fire, or the dangerous little wick oil lamp were largely negated. The revenge of an enemy to set light to a grass roof was also reduced. Later, as political intimidation increased, those who had taken the precaution to have a permanent roof felt a measure of security.

Making brick was a big problem but often friends would help each other. Most could not afford to burn their brick, but even the sun-dried variety made solid walls. When plastered they were a big improvement on the old stick hut.

However, one had to use caution when building with unburnt brick. I tried this with a dispensary. The wall went up quickly and feeling satisfied I went home to lunch. In a short while there was a great thud. The wall had collapsed. The wet mortar had softened the bricks. One could build the wall plumb and later find it had bowed considerably. Two or three rows in a morning was all it was safe to build with unburned bricks.

"Make haste slowly," was a good motto for Africa.

Chapter IV

HOW WE TRAVELLED

"A letter, sir."

He was a runner of the Cleft Stick Express Personal Delivery Service. A piece of split bamboo held the letter. This service operated between the missions. All that was necessary was to call one of the workmen and tell him to run to a certain place, giving him a few cents for food on the way.

Overseas mail was very infrequent. After reaching Africa we waited six months for letters from home. Then so many came together that we got a headache trying to read them all at once.

I opened this special delivery note to find that our superintendent was informing all workers that a dentist would be available on Monday morning at Kisumu. This one and only practitioner came to this town once a year. If we needed his help we must act quickly.

I sent the cook up to the village to inform the head teacher we would require twelve men to leave with us at dusk. A strange time to travel but in a group it was more pleasant than in the heat of the day. Mama was carried in a chair requiring four men, with a further four to relieve after a mile or so. Two-year old daughter sat on a man's shoulders. I rode a bicycle, as there was a good moon.

Pioneer Carscallen had made a road of his own to reach the Gendia mission which was more direct than the Government one from Kisii. It was well graded but used only as a footpath. Travel was pleasant in those days. The porters would make jokes and sing. In their songs they would mention the good and bad points of the white people they were helping. If you did not know their language you did not appreciate this.

Every white person was quickly given a secret name. Africans are quick to discern salient characteristics. A

rather rotund brother would be designated 'Bwana Tumbo' meaning: "He of the pot belly." One quick of the tongue was called: "The Hornet." Others had the title: "The Fierce One," and so on. You could work alongside them not knowing they were discussing you unless you had got one of them to reveal your secret name.

The police used to keep a register of all the white people in the district under the titles the Africans gave them. This facilitated the sending of messages by those who were entrusted with letters but who could not read the address. "Just take this to the 'Tall European'", would be the instruction.

The night passed pleasantly enough with the porters singing their way along. Whenever we passed near villages dogs would bark, but otherwise there was nothing to disturb the calm of the night. Unfortunately I had not taken any precautions against the change of temperature.

We arrived in time to travel with some other workers in the mission sailing boat. This was called the Kavirondo. It had been built by the first missionaries so they could cross the seventeen miles of water to civilization. She sailed reasonably well with a breeze which unfailingly blew off shore in the morning and from the lake in the afternoon. But there could come calm periods and it could take three days to do this short journey.

It was not rough the day we crossed but I soon became nauseated, and went to lie down on a plank. It was a struggle to get to the dentist and relax in his chair. He took one look at me and said, "You have jaundice. Get home at once." I had a chill on the liver the previous night.

We were fortunate in having our doctor just arrived from England. He had no hospital and no facilities for work. But George Madgwick, learning the hard way, became our most trusted medical adviser. When we got back to Gendia he put me to bed on a diet of arrowroot for six weeks. The

room was next to the kitchen, which made the time harder to endure.

When ready to return to Kamagambo it was felt that I should not try to cycle but travel in an available rickshaw. This two-wheeler was a nine-day wonder in that part of the country. They were freely used at Mombasa and Nairobi and could carry two passengers and a little luggage if there was an experienced man between the shafts. But there was no such person available for our journey.

So four men pushed and pulled this strange machine. Our progress was two miles an hour. That day we managed ten miles and were fortunate in having a mission at Wire Hill into which we could go for the night. On the morrow the road became more hilly and the men less co-operative. I got out to walk. Only at the end of the third day did we reach home, a distance of thirty-five miles. One hour and a half is all that is required on that road today. Africa has changed.

Travelling with carriers soon taught one not to hasten ahead. They might decide to sleep at another place than you intended. But if their loads were the correct size and weight there was not usually any trouble. There was always a rush to secure what appeared to be the lightest load. Once there was a small box which everyone wanted. But when lifted was found to be the heaviest of all. It contained lead type.

Grass was twisted into a pad for the head to make carrying easier. If the load could be reduced, they knew how to do it.

One visitor from the homeland insisted on having a four-gallon tin of boiled water taken along so it would be in readiness as soon as camp was reached. The porter decided this would be a waste of effort and emptied it at the first opportunity. To him it was just plain water. There was plenty of that. He filled up the tin from a dirty pool before

reaching camp, and could not understand why the visitor remonstrated over what he had done.

By walking, one saw much more of the country and people. Not only was it healthy but the people got to know one better. It was not hard to memorize the local greeting and call out to grandfather and grandmother, boy or girl as one passed along. This always produced a smile and made one more welcome next time. Workers in this more mobile age who dash around in cars and planes miss much of interest in mission life.

One lesson everyone had to learn when walking in the tropical sun was - don't drink - no, not even water. Save your drinking until camp is reached. One would perspire for the first few miles in the morning but by then the body had got rid of its excess moisture. Drinking only brought on further perspiration and premature weariness. A pebble or sweet in the mouth kept the desire for water under control. I soon noticed that the carriers liked to have sticks of sugar cane with them. Their strong teeth were able to tear through the tough outer bark. I found it necessary to have it peeled and split. But the juice was a wonderful reviver of energy.

Newcomers found the no drinking rule very hard. Many who disregarded it fell by the way, and reached camp long after the others had enjoyed the evening meal. Once two of us could not make our destination because a bridge was out. It was necessary to camp seven miles away. Early next morning we set out for the day's meetings, armed with a water flask each. The sun was hot and my friend yielded. After the morning meeting I looked for my flask and found it empty. He confessed to finishing both but still had a terrible thirst. We scoured the village for some boiled water and found one woman had a little. He soon finished this, and was very unhappy until we reached camp and boiled and cooled some more.

Foot travel in Africa exposes one to a certain danger. The sight of a river, lake, or pool immediately creates a longing for a bathe. But stop! There is hardly a stream or sheet of water in this vast continent which is not infected with bilharzia. This snail, host to the parasite, burrows through the feet or hands to lay eggs which produce grave trouble in the bladder and liver. No disease in Africa has a more debilitating effect on all races.

Also in these innocent-looking pools lurk the crocodile. More than one traveller can testify to a restraining hand or strong impression not to go into a certain pool and later found the crocodile there.

I often slept in school buildings but these had no privacy, as they were without doors or windows - just openings. A tent was better but it required several carriers or took up a lot of space in a car. With overnight rain it delayed departure until the tent had dried out. Hospitable Africans were always more than willing to have you sleep in their huts. There was a certain measure of risk from being bitten by ticks. This was especially dangerous at rest camps. Once on a visit to Mombasa I got bitten in a good residential hotel and spent six weeks in bed with tick typhus.

Various ways were tried to expedite locomotion. At one committee I recall one member arrived riding an ox, holding an umbrella to keep off the sun, and a boy twisting the tail of the beast to produce adequate propulsion.

Even the motor cycle had its limitations. Soon after settling at Kamagambo, Pastor Carscallen announced he was going over to the neighbouring mission of Kanyadoto. He would take Connie and Myrtle on the back of his Reading Standard if I did not mind cycling. It was the case of the hare and tortoise. He was soon out of sight. But at the first river I regained lost ground as he struggled to get the heavy machine through the sand. So many times did he have to dismount in those twenty-five miles that I cycled

into the mission only just behind him.

But I could not resist the temptation to own a motor cycle. A letter was sent to Mother and my brother at home to secure a second-hand machine costing not more than £75. In due course it arrived, a twin-engine Humber with deluxe side car and a bill for £200. What was worse, there was no instruction book for fitting the various parts together. After much trial and error the machine looked ready. As soon as it sparked I jumped into the saddle and raced off down the road, without having found out how to bring it to a halt.

The provision of passable roads came slowly to the undeveloped parts of the country. The chief passed on orders for road-making to the male population. These in turn sent their wives and children to do the actual work. The grass was scraped off and holes filled in with top soil brought in shallow wicker baskets. Much of the soil was the black cotton variety, which, when wet, became a bottomless pit. Only by laying several inches of murrum could a sure surface be maintained. But that meant transport, which was long in coming. The women did not dig out the roots of trees and bushes nor bother with the protruding rocks. Tyres, of course, had a limited life.

One worker decided to take his holiday, contrary to advice, visiting the wild game in the Masai reserve. The car broke down and he walked many miles for help. When he returned his car was minus its wheels. These were the days of wooden spokes. The Masai had hacked through these and taken the tyres for sandals. For many years one could dispose of old tyres quite profitably to those who made the heavy rubber sandal. They certainly protected the feet from cuts and thorns.

To go back to the old roads. The bridges were the greatest peril. They were constructed by inexperienced people tying trees together. Earth was laid on top so one

could never be sure of the strength of the structure. It was always necessary to stop and test the bridge by jumping on it. Too often there were large unrepaired holes. Much precious time could be spent making it safe to pass over. I could make a long list of bridges which let me down, some quite precipitately.

Travelling one evening we came on a badly cambered surface. The car began slipping on the wrong side. A bridge was ahead. Unable to get the car on the level we hit the bridge with only two wheels on the road and so toppled over into the river. One side of my body was under water. Fortunately there were no rocks but only sword grass. The river water began flowing with my blood.

My friend, Roy Warland, managed to extricate himself and keep dry. When I finally stood on the side of the car the need for dry clothing was apparent. We dragged out a steel trunk and I changed. But we could do nothing with the car without help. Remembering there was a Roman Catholic mission a few miles off, we set out in the dark to find it. The Dutch Father gave us a good welcome and prepared a sumptuous meal at midnight. Then he showed us our sleeping quarters.

In the morning I rubbed my eyes. Where was I? There was a statue of the Virgin Mary gazing benignly on me and round the walls were surplices reminiscent of members of the heavenly host. But it was not heaven. A knock on the door announced that the Father had secured a number of oxen. We proceeded to the river and hitched them to the car and got it on to its four wheels again. Much of the baggage was soaking wet. The lawn was soon spread with books, papers, etc., to dry out. But on the car was not a scratch. Only the acid had gone from the battery. The Public Works Department was left to repair the bridge.

One never knew what to expect with night travel. Once in Tanganyika we came to a river bed. The engine stalled.

In those days we cranked the car for starting. I volunteered to do the job. It seemed there were a lot of cattle around judging by their lowing. When back in the car I asked my companion why cattle would be out at that time of the night. "Cattle," he chuckled, "they were lions which you heard, and not far off."

Canoes provided almost as many adventures as cars. It was sometimes necessary to visit schools and churches on islands in Lake Victoria. The Luo people copied the Baganda, making their canoes by using boards rather than hollowed-out tree trunks. These could carry a dozen or more persons, but they leaked prodigiously.

Once we were out on the main lake when the rotten rope holding the sail split, and we lay precariously tossing on our side, while attempts were made to retrieve it. It was near dark when we returned to our starting point. Then it was necessary to cross to the mainland. I was puzzled at the men putting a large quantity of stones into the canoe. Was it for ballast? I was soon to know.

As we got near to the other side voices were heard giving us directions how to proceed. Strange disturbances were taking place in the water around us. The hippos were resenting our intrusion. Each time a head appeared a stone found its mark. Wollop! The head disappeared. I was scared that one of them might get enraged and bite the canoe in half, as had often happened. But with the help of "unseen watchers" on shore and in the air we finally came safe to land.

A motor launch finally added to the comfort and safety of lake travel. The mission agent in London had thought it would be possible to sail it up from Mombasa, but there were five hundred miles of land between the ocean and the great lake. It was a boat made for placid rivers and not for the storms of a tropical sea. It suffered many misfortunes in the course of its brief but useful history.

Chapter V

HELPING THE SICK

"Stop. You are killing the child."

Before me was a mother holding a small naked baby. The tribe did not consider the mother's milk was sufficient for an infant but must be supplemented. Kaffir corn porridge was the prescribed aid. This was the staple food for adults.

To ensure that the stodgy porridge took effect, the mother was holding the child's nose and trying to push the solid food into its mouth. With more wisdom than its mother, the baby tried to reject it. This custom was the cause of much infant mortality. It took a long time for illiterate mothers to stop this form of nourishment and substitute cows' milk.

Then followed the battle for sterilized bottles and teats. Added to this was the custom in one tribe of mixing the cow's urine with the milk. This proved quite a problem to the missionaries in the early days. I even invested in some cattle to counteract the practice.

Once we nearly lost our second daughter, Ruth, over the milk supply. The milk was delivered each morning in bottles, but the child failed to grow in weight and got steadily weaker. Suspecting the common practice of watering, I bought a lactometer. Then I called the supplier and demonstrated that I could tell if he had deceived me. Duly impressed with my know-all, the quality of the milk immediately improved.

But little Ruth had shrunk to a skeleton. We could not obtain any baby food owing to our isolation. So we took her to the church and called the African believers together. Explaining the situation I told them we were going to call on the Lord for His help. The prayers were answered and Ruth grew to be a missionary in Africa.

Most Africans cannot afford to eat meat every day. One

tribe followed the ingenious custom whereby the eating of chickens and eggs by the women was taboo. So the men had the best of it.

It was a high day whenever an elephant or a hippo was killed. The fortunate ones nearby would find themselves in a hectic race for the best joints, wallowing in blood and fighting each other.

Maize was the favourite cereal but variations in rainfall affected its harvest. In the drier parts recourse was made to the cultivation of manioc - a tuber from which tapioca is prepared. This is too starchy for a balanced diet. Beans of many varieties, peas, sweet potatoes, ground-nuts and sugar-cane are grown where possible. But much of Africa's ill health stems from malnutrition.

Tribes living near rivers and lakes enjoy the fish. I noticed that in many such areas leprosy was endemic. In Bible times the leper had to notify his presence by crying: "Unclean, unclean!" But not so in Africa. A good share of the fifteen million sufferers from this disease live there. Until recently little or no control was exercised. The leprosy sufferer lived with his wife and family. Food utensils were shared and clothes often exchanged. Most sufferers did not seek help until the disease was far advanced.

They can be found anywhere. In one home, employing African servants, it was discovered that the cook or house help had the disease. He had been with them for years.

At the entrance to the colony for leprosy sufferers at Malamulo was a sign reading: "You are entering the Leper Colony. Do not touch." Many visitors, after reading this, remembered they had a pressing appointment and forthwith excused themselves. Others asked if the air was full of germs. Most walked around expecting to catch the disease. Yet the doctor and nurses came down regularly and did not suffer, for they took proper precautions. Leprosy is contracted as the result of close contact over a period of time,

assisted, in many cases, by a deficiency in diet. It seems that the disease is caused by a virus or germ but it has not been isolated. Injections given to animals have not produced it. One doctor thought it was carried by the cockroach. I went many times to preach in the leper church, but used my own Bible. I sat with the leprosy victims and examined them for baptism. I baptized one of them.

The popular idea that the fingers and toes drop off is not true. What happens is that, as a result of interference with the nerves, the bone is absorbed. Then the extremities shrink constantly.

There are two main types of the disease. The nodular kind brings up lumps on the body. When these appear on the face it is much disfigured. The other kind produces patches which break down into sores and are revolting to behold. There is a loss of sensation in the hands and feet. A person may be from two to twenty years contracting the disease. The hereditary factor is considered probable in some cases.

When I was chairman of the Malamulo Hospital Board we used the Chaulmoogra oil from India and Burma. The injections given twice a week were by no means a painless process. But changes have come. A new sulphone drug administered orally produces quicker results.

The first leprosy settlement I was acquainted with was at Kendu Bay hospital in Kenya. Two acres were set aside for the patients adjacent to the main hospital. Their huts consisted of a cement base into which had been fixed lengths of angle iron. To these a framework of sticks was tied and covered with grass. When the patient left, flames sterilized everything, so that the new-comer had a clean foundation on which to build his house.

Later at Malamulo, Mwami and other leprosariums, small brick huts were erected. In most cases the making of the bricks was one of the tasks to which the patient could

contribute. Work commensurate with his physical condition was essential. He would chop up the earth, mix it with water into a clay and throw it into a mould. When set, the brick would be eased out and slowly dried in the sun. After stacking into a kiln, they were fired and completely sterilized. The patient received a remuneration for his labours and a surplus of bricks was available to the general mission work. Patients also produced part of their food supply. A few operated a shop for the colony or did tailoring.

I used to issue each quarter a list of the churches showing how they had supported the Lord's work. The leper church at Malamulo was always near the top with their tithes and offerings. We marvelled at their spirit of sacrifice.

The government at first did nothing to help the patients. But over the years they gradually had a change of heart. Today they assist with the food budget and sometimes make a grant to capital expenditure.

We were fortunate in Nyasaland to hear of a considerable legacy left to help the patients. The government wanted to secure it all for their own colony which they hoped to build. By persistent representation, partly based on the fact that the deceased had contributed to our mission appeal, a part of the income from the invested trust was made available. The Beit Trust also came forward with funds which enabled a hospital to be erected for the leprosy patients at Malamulo.

Victims used to have a part of the main church set apart for their use but later a suitable brick building was erected for them near their huts.

Children stand a better chance of not contracting the disease if separated from their parents. In Basutoland, adjoining Emmanuel Mission, we have operated for many years a hostel for the children of leper parents. The tiny tots grow up under Christian influences until around school age. Then relatives come to claim them.

One had to be in contact with leprosy sufferers really to

sense their need. I recall the case of Wadi Kuyenda of Malamulo. He was preparing to be a teacher when, close to graduation, the doctor made an examination of the students. He called Wadi aside and told him he had signs of leprosy. This was a great blow and he went to the leper colony very discouraged.

But as he looked around he saw that others were without hope in Christ and could not read the Word of God. Forgetting himself, he began to preach the Gospel of hope. His work resulted in the formation of a church and Wadi became the elder. He started a school for the children. His capabilities led to his being appointed supervisor of the colony, portioning out the food and work and settling the daily problems.

At the end of several years the doctor examined him again. With a smile, he said: "Wadi, I am happy to tell you I find no trace of the leprosy. You are free to go home."

But Wadi replied: "Doctor, I have seen for a long time the frustrations and sufferings of these people. I cannot go home and leave them. I will devote the rest of my life to their service." He did stay with them for quite a time until called to do ministerial work in another part of the country.

Leprosy sufferers are grateful for the help they receive. They are usually discharged on condition that they will report annually for a check-up. Space does not permit to tell of the many who, on returning home, preached Christ and raised up companies of believers, sometimes amounting to thirty-five or more.

A leper colony is always full, and in some cases applicants erect temporary huts nearby and wait for the day they can be accommodated. Others get discouraged at non-admittance and make other plans.

Over in Mozambique a stranger passed through a village in the heat of the day. All was quiet. He noticed a woman lying on a mat in the shade of a tree. He greeted her but

received only an inaudible reply. Approaching nearer he saw she had leprosy.

"Mother," he said, "I know where you can be cured." Her eyes brightened and she sat up. "Where can that be?" "Go to the west, past the great mountain and over the broad river. Then ask for the Malamulo mission."

She thanked him, rolled up her mat, put some food together and set off. The way was long and weary for one so emaciated. At last the mountain appeared. Beyond it was the broad river. How could she cross? It was full of crocodiles. But there was no other way. So in she went. "Where is Malamulo where they heal leprosy?" was her inquiry to all she met. "Keep right on, Mother. You will soon get there."

At last she arrived. The doctor was inspecting the patients. She took her turn. "Doctor, I have come a long, long way. Please take me in!" The doctor looked at her with tears in his eyes. "Mother," he said, "I am very sorry, we have no room. The colony is full up." "What," she replied, "you cannot take me in after I have come so far? Then there is no hope. I will go and hang myself." And she did.

The editor of the British Leprosy Review once wrote concerning Malamulo, "It is the largest, best staffed and most popular leper institution in the country, and as far as I can judge, is having the most excellent results in many of the cases being treated."

And why? Because of the devoted doctors, nurses and African assistants who have kept this colony in existence for the past forty years.

Akin to leprosy but not related to it is the disease of elephantiasis. It is caused by the bite of a fly. The outward sign is a swelling of the leg or legs. They get to look like the leg of an elephant. The foot disappears, leaving just the toes protruding. In advanced cases walking becomes impossible.

Tuberculosis is now listed as a more prevalent disease than leprosy. The foundation of this trouble lies in the habit of most Africans preferring to sleep in unventilated rooms. Night air is feared. It is believed that spirits travel at night. A fire burns in the hut all night for the smoke gives relief from the mosquitoes. Nearly everyone loves to sleep with a blanket over the head so if there was any fresh air it would not reach them. The feet are exposed. This is a wonderful opportunity for the rats. I used to wonder why so many folk came to the clinic with sore toes!

Constipation was very common. Many will not drink plain water. Fruit is not obtainable everywhere, largely because many people have a superstition against planting trees. "Please, I have a snake in my stomach," was a common plea. This was usually worms, due to eating insufficiently cooked meat. Often there was just one answer in view of our limited budget and experience - Epsom Salts. The usual dose seldom had any effect. A large tablespoonful was needed. The worse the medicine tasted the better it was appreciated.

Many awoke in the morning with headache due to poor sleeping conditions. They would come asking for a whiff of the medicine which knocked one down. This was ammonia - the stronger the better. One sniff of the triple variety certainly cleared the head.

I was once asked by a chief in Nyasaland for some red medicine which a former missionary had given him. He did not know the name. I had to guess. Red medicine - it must be some form of iron tonic. A local store supplied me with a bottle at 87½p. The chief did not pay for it seeing he had given us permission for a school. So when he requested a second and a third bottle I began to do some serious thinking.

Ah! Why not write to the former missionary for the prescription. Back came the answer. Coloured water and

a dash of Epsom Salts. I became my own dispenser, and added a little quinine to improve the taste. When I later saw the old chief, he greeted me warmly with the word, "That medicine of yours was wonderful. It was the same as I formerly had. I feel much better."

As elsewhere imagination goes a long way in Africa where medical treatment is concerned. I have known some Africans by-pass a government hospital and walk a long distance to a mission institution. Why? The former hospital was better equipped and had a larger staff. Its medicine was free. But many patients believe one gets better value if payment is made. So they prefer the mission hospital where it is necessary to make a token charge for medicines and injections.

But another reason is the treatment given to the patients. In many a government hospital patients reported that though the doctor had prescribed the medicine it was impossible to get it until the dresser had been bribed. This did not happen in Christian hospitals where doctors prayed before commencing surgery, and nurses and hospital assistants were motivated by the example of Christ.

Training courses were in operation at most of our hospitals to prepare young men and women for a larger service. They would often be sent to take charge of a dispensary or clinic; their work being inspected by a monthly visit by the doctor where possible. The girls not only assisted in nursing, but became qualified midwives.

An excellent combination for evangelistic work in the villages was obtained when two young people at the hospital joined their lives together. We nearly established a matrimonial bureau with that end in view.

The pulling of teeth was something expected of every missionary. When we prepared to go to Africa we inquired concerning forceps. The price of a set was beyond our resources. But a single universal forceps was recommended.

It looked rather small. It turned out to be useless for African teeth.

Extractions took place by the roadside, anywhere and everywhere. Sometimes the patient wanted a tooth removed which looked perfectly healthy. At other times they indicated the wrong tooth for removal. It was often a Herculean task to get out the big molars. One twisted and turned and levered for several minutes before it came loose or broke off. One never heard a whimper. A pain-killer was unknown. Africans endure pain stoically.

Some tribes had the custom of filing the incisors to a point. This probably originated when they subsisted on the flesh of wild animals. The Luo tribe used to extract several of the lower front teeth. It was reported that the custom began when there was an epidemic of lockjaw. It certainly handicapped them in speaking English.

This custom gained such a hold on the people that the youth always submitted to the digging out of their teeth with a rusty instrument. It had become a tribal mark. When the young people became Christians this proved a major test. I recall one bright young girl, daughter of a minister, who clearly knew the uselessness of the custom, against the wishes of her parents, secretly had the rite performed rather than endure the taunts of her companions.

We were early warned against the mosquito. When we arrived at our first station we were told there was no malaria because it was 5,000 feet above sea level. But we soon learned that the danger could not be ignored.

I was teaching in school one day and writing on the blackboard. Suddenly my hand began to tremble and the chalk fell to the ground. A splitting headache ensued followed by a high fever.

The accepted treatment was doses of quinine. One took ten grains three times a day for the first ten days. Then a gradual reduction to one tablet a day until the month was

completed. It was a rigorous course. The eyes were often affected and one felt nervy and weak. One old doctor in Nairobi claimed to cure the fever by pouring copious buckets of water over his patients.

I early learned to respect the anopheles and always slept under a mosquito net. But the mosquitoes hid in any dark spot and liked to bite one's ankles under the table. So each evening I pulled on mosquito boots. These had soft leather tops which came up to the knees.

The misuse of quinine sometimes led to blackwater fever. Many missionaries died from this through not exercising sufficient care over the ordinary malarial attack. The old pioneers, when on safari, knowing that an attack of blackwater was coming on, instructed the porters to build a hut over them, as it was fatal to move on at such a time.

Many patients in our hospitals were in a receptive mood to learn of Christ by reason of the kind treatment they received. A chaplain was a part of the staff to gather fruit from the labours of the doctor and nurses.

One of these faithful men comes to mind. He was Captain Muluda. Originally a teacher, he early lost his sight. Not wanting to be pensioned off, he asked if we could find some work for him suitable to his condition. He was appointed a hospital chaplain.

Each day you could see him with his long cane feeling his way to the hospital entrance. He would commence his duties by holding morning worship with the out-patients. His knowledge of the Bible was remarkable. He could quote texts many of us would have to look up.

With worship over, he would find his way to the wards. Having plenty of time he would sit on each patient's bed and proceed to tell him the story of Jesus and His love. Even though the patient was not contemplating becoming a Christian, he had not the heart to send a blind man away. So he went from ward to ward. He even got into the

maternity section. The sisters did not mind. "He cannot see anything, anyway."

His labours were not without results. One time I asked him how many souls he had won for Christ. "Five hundred," he said. He did not complete all the conversions himself. When the patient was about to leave he would secure the home address and notify the minister of the nearest church, and enlist his help to continue the good work already done.

Those called on to minister to the sick often had challenging experiences. Miss Tabea Matter in Rwanda once told me of the time the doctor was away from the hospital and a woman was brought in who had been in labour for four days. Tabea had been born of missionary parents. She loved nursing but did not have the opportunity of obtaining an overseas training. However, she watched the doctor in his operations and assisted when allowed.

The admitted patient could not last long in her present condition. The doctor was beyond recall. Either the patient must be sent home to die or Tabea perform an operation for which she had no qualification or experience. What should she do? Prayer decided the matter. She must help wherever possible. Calling an African assistant to light a pressure lamp, she placed the woman on the operating table and ably performed a Caesarean delivery. In due course mother and child returned home in good health.

On another occasion a lad while out herding had been gored by a bull. He arrived at the hospital with his intestines hanging out. The parents had smeared them with cow dung according to the local custom. Everything pointed to an early death from Septicaemia. What should she do? The intestines were carefully washed and replaced with a liberal dose of iodised powder before being sewed up. In three weeks the boy was out herding again.

I had planned a week-end with a church near the lake shore, and set off on a Friday afternoon to keep the

appointment. There was a strong wind blowing off the lake. It must have been this which deadened the sound of the car as I began to overtake an old man on the road. Unmindful of my approach he decided to cross the road just as I was preparing to pass him. Trying to avoid him I turned the car completely round and ended up with a flat tyre.

When I got out I found the old man had crossed the road and was lying on the ground. I could not get him to speak and feared he was dead. Just then a truck with some Indians came along. They stopped to investigate. "Have you got any water?" they asked. I had only my bottle of boiled water for drinking. I poured it on the old man's face and he revived.

The Indians asked him, "What happened? Did the car hit you?" "No," he replied. "I ran across the road and tripped over the stone." They turned to me and said, "You are all right. We have his witness that you did not hit him." But I was not satisfied. Another African came along and we tried to get the old man to stand up. It was quite evident that his ankle was broken, if nothing worse.

So I said to him, "Let me take you to the government hospital. It will cost you nothing." "No, no," he replied, "I will never go there. The white people do not know how to set bones." With the help of his friend he insisted on making his way slowly to the village, which was nearby.

I drove on to my appointment. While unloading the car I noticed that the left headlamp was broken. So I had hit him.

Next morning just before Sabbath school a man came running into the village shouting, "Where is the person who killed my brother?" My heart sank. Was this the result of yesterday's mishap? I went up to him and asked: "Is he really dead?" "Yes, he is nearly dead." "Does he breathe?" I said. "Yes, a little." "Well, I will come to see him and take him to the hospital."

Not wishing to disappoint the people who had come together from several miles around I preached the sermon in place of the Sabbath school. What I said I cannot remember. My mind kept turning to the old man in his suffering. When the message was finished I told the congregation of the situation and asked them to carry on with the Sabbath school. But they did not do so. They were too worried about me.

I took along the African evangelist and went to the old man's village. A big crowd had gathered. There were unfriendly looks. We went to the main hut and entered. There he was sitting on the ground surrounded by his wives. His chief wife supported him. His right leg was extended and was black with flies. It had been covered with fat. I examined him but could find no broken ribs or other injury except the ankle.

"Now, let me take you to the hospital," I urged. But again he refused. I asked an African policeman in the hut to be witness that I had tried to help him. Then, wishing him a speedy recovery, I went out.

As we were walking away the evangelist explained that the Luo people have more faith in their own bone-setters. Then he mentioned that it would please the relatives if I would make a contribution to the cost of the medicine. "How much will it cost?" "Fifteen pence." This was quickly handed over, and with mutual expressions of gratitude I went on my way.

Some months later I happened to meet the evangelist and inquired after the old man. "Oh, he is quite all right and walking about. He cannot thank you enough for the medicine you bought him. All the relatives look on you as a wonderful person."

Chapter VI

WORK IN THE PARE MOUNTAINS

"Your turn next." We were playing a game of croquet on the grass outside the old house at Kamagambo. Our friends, the Armstrongs, had come over from the Kanyadoto mission. Just how we contrived the croquet set I do not recall, but it made a diversion from the regular duties of mission life.

As the next turn was called, a messenger appeared with a letter from our superintendent at the Gendia mission. Play was delayed as I opened it. The contents were electric. "You are asked to move to the Pare (remember the e is pronounced as a long a) mountains in Tanganyika to take charge of the work there." Just where was Pare, and what kind of work did we have there? The news put an end to the game as we discussed our future.

I started to read the letter again and noticed a postscript. It said: "There are two teachers from the Pare field just arrived at Gendia. Come down and get any information you need." What a coincidence! Just why did they come and why should it be at this particular time? The answer was obvious. God was calling us to move on.

Next day I cycled to Gendia and met one of these teachers. The other had already returned to carry the good news that a missionary was coming, for there had been no missionaries in Tanganyika for several years. Paul Saburi Kilonzo told me how they happened to come to Gendia.

Just before World War I commenced, the Pare churches had been asked to send four teachers to help begin new work in the Usukuma country, south-east of Lake Victoria, in German East Africa. Missionaries from Germany operated both the Pare work and also the work by the great lake. These four Africans, each with their families, had not been long in their new homes when the war came. Their missionaries were conscripted for "service of national importance"

so the new arrivals were left to do the best they could by themselves.

The Pare churches could not forget their brethren in that far-off country. Seven years went by. In 1921 they decided to collect money and sent two teachers to visit them. The only way to travel was by the railway which ran through British East Africa. So they came to Kisumu where they took the lake steamer to reach their destination.

When they came to this town they heard the missionaries from England were at Gendia. So they came across the lake to see them. It was the day they arrived that a letter came from the committee in England saying the way was open for us to resume operations in Tanganyika and that G. A. S. Madgwick should go to the Lake field and Spencer Maxwell to Pare.

W. T. Bartlett, our superintendent, later went to the Usukuma country and found the four Pare teachers. They had remained faithful to their responsibilities, even though they had received no salary for seven years. Their work had prospered and many were waiting for baptism. When I heard that news I knew what a special privilege it was to work among the Pare people.

I left Gendia that afternoon and the sun set long before I reached home. Cycling alone in the dark in Africa is no pleasant experience. No one travels at that time. If one should take the wrong path, the mistake is not easily recognized. A complete isolation seemed to come over me and I confess to crying copiously ere the shelter of the mission was reached.

Our worldly possessions did not take long to pack. Back at Gendia we were joined by our superintendent for the journey into the unknown. We went across the lake and took the train to Nairobi. While staying in a hotel, our little girl began talking the Luo language. "Adwaro pi mudho." (I want some drinking water.) Our waiter

pricked up his ears and sprang to attention. From that moment we had all the service desired. Other waiters of the same tribe found excuses to hover near just to hear a white child speak their language.

Again on the train, we went as far as Voi, only a hundred miles from the coast, and then changed to the military railway. This owed its existence to the British war thrust into Tanganyika. The track was hastily constructed on the principle of the compensating grade, which had no relation to the power of the engine. The driver would get up a head of steam and rush the steep grade. If unsuccessful in reaching the top, the train would run backwards and get as far as possible up the preceding hill. Then a second and sometimes a third attempt would be made. All the while the red dust rose in clouds from the unballasted track. One could never tell when the train would reach its destination.

Another change of train took place at Moshi. If the weather was clear the massive sides of Mount Kilimanjaro would be seen towering above. But usually Africa's great mountain was best seen from a distance.

On account of the heat, trains with passengers went to the port of Tanga at night only. We dared not sleep, not knowing when we would come to Buiko, where we were to alight. In the early hours of the morning we got there. Paul Saburi was obviously disappointed. He expected a large crowd to welcome the new missionaries. But it happened they had come the previous week and found no one. Only one teacher was there, Elisa Manongi. It was necessary to find porters and the only reliable place was the Kihurio mission, twelve miles away. So Elisa climbed on the back of my motor cycle and guided me through the morning light to the mission.

The Germans in their retreat had blown up all the steel bridges on this road. It proved a Herculean task to get the heavy machine over the twisted girders as they lay in the

rivers. But we finally came to the mission house, perched on a small hill overlooking a well-watered oasis in the sandy plain. A group of willing carriers was soon recruited from the Christian village and set off to the railway station. I, meantime, tried to retrace my route to bring in Connie and Myrtle on the motor cycle. By the time this was accomplished, W. T. Bartlett had walked in.

Mechanical transport may help one quicker to one's goal, but it could not bring in our goods that day. The old mission house was opened for our use. It was empty except for one locked room. This had on its door a government seal. Inside was the furniture of the former missionary.

We knew not the condition of the water for drinking, so asked for some green coconuts to be brought. When the outer husk is removed the nut appears. Pierce the "eyes" at one end, and a wonderful refreshing drink is obtained. It is positively germ-proof. Besides a few bananas there was nothing to eat. When night came and no loads had arrived, we asked for some bundles of grass to sleep on. The back rooms of the house had wooden floors. We noticed a number of holes by the wainscoting but paid no attention to them. Next morning we inquired about them and learned they were the places the snakes came up!

As our superintendent could not remain with us for long it was decided to visit the missions up in the mountains without delay. So we set off and after an hour's climb were out of the hot plain and proceeding along the bank of a running stream. The country became more wooded. Soon gardens and huts appeared.

Suddenly the sound of trumpets blowing and voices singing hymns broke on our ears. Turning a corner of the path a long line of white-clad Christians came towards us. Their joy was evident. Shouts and cries were heard everywhere. "Wavuka! Wavuka!" (Are you well?) was asked over and over again. What a welcome it was. The long line

reformed behind us and the singing commenced again. The heathen poured out of their huts to gaze at the new white faces. Surely a general relieving a beleaguered fortress could not have had a more moving welcome.

So we came to Friedenstal, or Mamba, the first mission established by the Germans in these hills in 1903. But time had done its work on the old sun-dried bricks and grass roofs. There was no building which offered accommodation for a missionary family.

Next morning we climbed further into the steep mountains. The main stream rushed down its bed and could be crossed only by precariously balancing on a fallen tree. The forest stretched in all directions, broken only by small clearings in which grew bananas, sugar-cane and sweet potatoes.

After six hours' walk another mission could be seen in the far distance. Climbing to meet us was another long line of those white-robed figures. Again a royal welcome. Suji was reached. Perched on a saddle in the hills, 4,000 feet above the plain, it commanded a remarkable view. A stone house, walls three feet thick, with an iron roof, offered the prospects of a home. But it was in no way central to the field.

Next day we decided to walk on to the last of the four stations. Vunta was reached after eight hours. Here the home had been finished just before war broke out and was in good condition. The water supply was adequate, and one could irrigate a garden. It was also perched high on a mountain. But it was more central. So we settled there and had our goods carried up from the plain. There we lived for a year and no white person came near the place. Our nearest neighbours were the government officials in the Usumbara mountains, fifty miles away. One had to come to terms with one's environment in those days.

The Pare people did not suffer the ravages of the first

world war as did the work around Lake Victoria. The fighting was confined to the plains through which the railway ran. The mountains formed a natural barrier between German and British territory, but when their flank was turned by the British forcing the Taveta gap, the Germans retreated to the central plateau of Tanganyika.

A British patrol, seeing the Suji house on the mountain high above the plain, went up to investigate. There they found Max Pöenig and his wife. They sent him to India and left her alone on the mission. This so affected her that she spent the rest of her life in an institution in Germany.

The rest of the German missionaries were interned at Lushoto, in the Usumbara mountains. To the same place were taken, at a later date, all the African teachers - just in case they favoured the former regime.

One of them told me of a dream he had while there. A being in white appeared to him and announced the day of their release. He told his friends but they did not believe him. When the day arrived he felt he could not join the others at work. Sure enough, a letter arrived that day saying that the restrictions were removed and all were free to go home.

Even though the schools had been closed and the teachers taken away, the early members did not falter in their allegiance to Christ. Before the missionaries left they ordained local elders, so, though no public services could be held, the members continued to meet in their homes. I found on looking into the church records that of the two hundred and seventy members in 1914, two hundred and forty-six were still faithful in 1921. There were also a goodly number ready for baptism. The German missionaries had laid a strong foundation.

Mission work had commenced in 1903 with the establishing of the Friedenstal station. The first baptism was not until 1909. In 1962 I asked an old Christian, Abraham

Sengoka, if he remembered where the baptism had taken place. "Come with me," he said. We went to an overgrown area and there, amid the bamboo, he pointed to a depression in the ground. "It was here I promised to serve my Lord." Over half a century had passed and still he was faithful. He had not followed for the loaves and fishes.

In all our years in the Pare mountains our visitors were few and far between. The steep paths were not easy to climb. Ladies, provided they were not too heavy, were carried in a hammock which was tied to a bamboo pole. Relays of men were used. Children went up on a carrier's shoulders. The male species walked.

They told me that a leader from the German home board posed a problem owing to his rotund proportions. They put a rope round his waist and two men pulled. Two others pushed. They finally got him up the 4,000 ft. climb.

When the union conference president arrived from England during my first year in the hills, I managed to get him up to Suji by easy stages. But when I told him how his predecessor had been helped he wanted to know why I had not done the same for him. As this station was not yet occupied I had sent word earlier that our cook should be there and have some bread ready. He got busy and produced a loaf which we could not eat. It was more like a Babylonian brick. The chief had sent us a cockerel which was equally tough.

So it was with considerable hunger that we set out next morning. Before us was the eight-hour walk over mountain and forest. Some of the views were breath-taking. Before we had gone two-thirds of the way the president sat down on a rock and announced that his heart was giving out. I had better leave him there to die. What a responsibility! I immediately sent one of the porters running to our home to bring the hammock. In due course he came back with hammock and pole but no rope to tie the two together. So

the president walked after all and did not expire.

When we finally got to the plain at Kihurio I thought it best to secure a donkey to take him to the railway station. The Mohammedan chief obligingly sent up his best steed. But when the donkey came face to face with the president he gave one loud he-haw, kicked up his heels, and disappeared down the road.

With no donkey, my mind went to my motor cycle. But would the president deign to ride pillion? Knowing the sandy nature of the road I carefully instructed him not to panic when we began to skid. He was just to hold on and I would balance with my feet. So duly warned, we set off, having sent his luggage by four porters.

We travelled gaily for some miles. I was able to point out various places where we were operating schools. But soon it became evident that no answers were forthcoming. A glance over my shoulder revealed there was no president on the pillion. Oh, where was he? Quickly I turned round to find him. About a mile or so up the road he was found in none too genial mood, thinking I had "ditched" him on purpose.

He was game to try again, and in due course we arrived at the railway station without further incident. The porters had not arrived. The sun had set. Possibly they had mistaken instructions and gone to the next station. But a call to the station master there did not reveal their whereabouts.

The train must soon be due. I put my ear to the rail, and sure enough, the vibrations showed it was coming. Soon the headlight came into sight. What would the president do without his baggage? He was due to catch his boat at Mombasa the next day. He was not slow to call my organizational abilities into question and I was duly humbled. One could only pray that the men would yet turn up.

Just as the train came to a halt three men staggered into the station with four loads. One had fallen out by the way. They had not failed me. Quickly the president got into his

carriage and we pushed in his baggage. As the train pulled away I think I said: "A good job a president does not visit us every day" - or something to that effect.

One never found a tarred road in those days. I sold my motor cycle as a liability. But when A. F. Bull came to occupy the station on the plain he felt the need of transportation. So another machine was purchased. We sometimes travelled together. On one trip to visit the Masai we tried to follow the winding footpaths. But however carefully one would drive, disaster would come sooner or later. We failed to negotiate a sharp turn and landed on our backs in the middle of a thorn bush, with the machine on top of us. Another time the mud was so thick on the road the mudguards jammed tight. It was impossible to push the machine and it was necessary to walk many miles to a rest camp.

Living up in the hills, I decided a donkey would be a better investment. The president had first suggested a bicycle. But after he had returned home I must have been forgiven for treating him so badly, for I was notified that the committee had voted £25 to purchase a donkey.

Enquiry revealed that the common Masai breed would not be suitable to ride, being used only as a pack animal. But there was a mission operated by some French priests in the Usumbara mountains. We could see these towering to the east, but to get there meant going down to the plain, taking a train to Mombo and walking up to their mission.

I duly arrived, very footsore and weary, towards evening. The Father was kind and obliging, but could not speak much English. I was equally inefficient in French. To get an early start in the morning to avoid passing through the tsetse fly belt in the heat of the day, it was necessary to complete the deal that evening. So we went to the paddock and there found a sturdy beast which I could have for £12.50. Saddle and bridle would have to be procured later.

After concluding the purchase I casually asked the Father

what he fed the animal on. The answer came back, as I thought, "Mice." Not wishing to expose my ignorance, I kept silence. But all that evening I was wondering how we could ever find enough rodents to satisfy the animal, still thinking he was a vegetarian.

However, we got off early in the morning and made the railway in good time for the night train. I had taken the precaution to order a wagon for the donkey. The train came in and we opened the door. The donkey would not enter. No amount of pulling or pushing helped. The passengers began to open their carriage windows to find out the cause of the delay. The guard got tired of waiting, told us to desist, raised the green light and blew the whistle. At this the donkey gave a mighty jump and disappeared into the wagon. I promptly slammed the door and raced up the moving train to jump into the first available compartment. It happened to have three elderly ladies in it and it took some time to explain how I came to be invading their privacy at that time of night.

Early the next morning we took to the road again and climbed into the Pare hills. My wife, Connie, met us, and gave the beast an appraising glance. "There is just one thing that is troubling me," I said. "The Father told me we would have to feed him on mice." A twinkle came into her eyes as she said, "You chump! Don't you know that the French word for corn is 'mais'?"

However, the donkey was worth his money. I rode him for six years. Having no saddle we tied a cushion on his back. Going down hill one slid over his neck and, if the up-grade was too steep, the reverse process happened off his tail. The next trip to Nairobi procured a saddle and bridle. But the uneven nature of the terrain over which we travelled made necessary the anchoring of the saddle under his tail and neck by two girths.

Travel was slow but there was no rush in those days. In

only a few places was it possible to get a gallop out of Punda. This was his name, being the Swahili word for Donkey. On one occasion I had inspected a school and prepared to leave. All the children followed me out so as to have the pleasure of seeing a missionary ride a donkey. To show off I put him into top gear. But a few yards down the path his forefeet went through the surface into a hole made by an ant-bear. I sailed gaily over his head to fall, completely winded. Punda did not move, neither did I. Who came to the rescue? Not a soul. The children just disappeared, afraid they might be accused of complicity in the accident. It almost seemed I had broken all my ribs. Each breath was so painful. I got going again, but it was three weeks before the strained and bruised muscles healed.

On another occasion, in the heat of the day, we were proceeding down a path. The donkey boy, as usual, was far behind. I must have dozed, as well as Punda. Suddenly a large bird rose up beside the path. Punda took fright and dashed into the bush, there to pin me to his back under the low branch of a tree. Another Absalom!

One night we were climbing a steep and narrow path to the mission. Punda slipped and fell over the edge. It was 3,000 feet to the bottom. I thought it was the end. But providentially there was a small ledge some twenty feet down and there we came to rest. I do not remember how we ever got the donkey up again.

At another time we came to a wooden bridge in the rainy season. Punda's legs went through the soft earth on top and got jammed in the structure. There was nothing to do but pull the bridge to pieces and trust the chief would not mind repairing it.

Punda served me faithfully up to the time I left Pare for Uganda. A fortnight later he died, - I like to think of a broken heart.

We loved the Pare people. They were easy to live with

For over six years there was never a lock on the house. We never lost anything except a piece of soap which the house girl confessed with tears to have taken to wash her clothes. African custom decreed that a chief was the father of his people. The missionary should not object to his servants helping themselves liberally to his sugar, jam, cookies and other delicacies. We did not mind giving but preferred them to ask. The Biblical custom survived, in that a hungry man passing by a garden could take as much as he could eat, and it was not considered stealing; but he must not carry any to his home.

As one's knowledge of the language grew, one felt closer to the people. I tried teaching the adults to read and write in an afternoon school. It was hard for them to keep up a regular attendance. There were so many things to look after at home. But they did appreciate this help for they could better understand their children's problems at school. It also resulted in a wide-awake church.

Walking and riding in those hills gave one a healthy appetite. I was often invited to an African meal. This usually consisted of 'vugai', a very thick maize porridge, which would stand up in a heap on a plate. The Pare people, after harvesting their maize, tied the cobs to a framework hanging from the branch of a tree. This kept it above the ground and made it more difficult for mice to reach. The cobs were shelled as needed and the grain beaten in a large mortar. The resulting flour was sifted and then stirred into a pot of boiling water. When it could no longer be stirred with a large wooden spoon, it was ready for the table.

With the 'vugai' in front of one, the procedure was to wash hands by someone else pouring water on them. Then reach forward and take a lump of the porridge. Step two was to work it into a ball and press the thumb into it to make a hollow. Step three, dip the lump into the gravy and get it to your mouth without it spilling or breaking. The last phase

is easier written than performed.

The gravy often had a peanut base, flavoured with tomato and onion. At other times the oyster nut was used. This nut grew on a vine which climbed into any suitable tree. The very large pod hung like a jack o'lantern. When opened up, a cluster of nuts would be found. After cracking the outer covering, a white flesh appeared. They were rich in oil. One enterprising missionary's wife roasted them and dipped them in chocolate and sent them to Nairobi, where they had a ready sale. I believe she had to move before establishing a monopoly!

Connie often showed them how to bake bread in a Dutch oven. This consisted of digging a hole in an ant-hill and building a fire therein. When heated, the embers were raked out, the bread inserted and the aperture closed. A real good loaf resulted.

The mountain streams provided good opportunity for the people to irrigate their crops. I do not know who taught them to do this. Everywhere one looked there would be watercourses clinging to the mountain-side with green gardens below. They mostly harvested two crops a year. Even the first missionary at Suji took advantage of this. He brought water into a large settling pit in the back garden and then piped it into the house. As no bathroom was provided in the original plan, a part of the living room was boarded off for the bath.

An earthquake had cracked the wall of the house on the side of the precipice. I built two buttresses against it to save waking up one morning to find we were minus a wall. A steep path led down from the house to the church. During the rainy season one could hardly get back to the house, it was so slippery. It was a case of one step forwards and two backwards. During the monsoon weather the baboons used to sit on the path eating the maize cobs they had stolen, well knowing no one would trouble them.

Morning views were usually enchanting. The clouds hung low in the valleys, allowing the lower hills to push their tops through to look like islands in a white sea. Ninety miles away on a clear day could be seen the mighty dome of Mount Kilimanjaro. At each sunrise, the white dome turned pink, like a great strawberry ice-cream.

Our high altitude kept us above the mosquito menace. But it did tend to isolation. Down in the plain an Italian had a sisal plantation. They never ventured up the mountain to see us. My chief contact with them was to bury his wife after an attack of blackwater fever.

No supermarkets or even a village store existed less than one hundred miles away. We had regularly to consult an overseas catalogue for ordering the groceries we would need for the next half year. Porters found it hard carrying the cases up the mountain, especially when chased by buffalo in the plain. Often the tin of paraffin arrived empty. The porter had dropped it trying to scramble up a tree to save his life.

The story of the growth of the church in Africa would not be complete without some reference to the struggle to obtain order and reverence in the house of God. An African preacher hardly ever made notes for his sermon. But he could talk. Several crying babies and people moving in and out of the building never worried him. I found the goings and comings of the congregation very distracting. A reform was needed.

I selected a strong deacon to take charge at the door of the church. Mothers with crying babies were asked to sit, not under the pulpit, but on seats near the door so they could slip out without carrying the protesting infant through the congregation.

Mothers were known to pinch their offspring to make them cry so they could get outside!

Then no one thought of the needs of nature except in the middle of the sermon. It had to be announced at the end of

the Sabbath School that if anyone was in need they were to go to a certain place before the next meeting commenced. The deacon at the door was posted to see that the man with a pair of army boots did not walk noisily the length of the church to display his new possession.

Often doors were not obtainable for the village church. This meant that without adequate guardians, chickens, dogs and other animals attended the meeting. An energetic deacon would arise and deal the offending intruder a whack. There followed a yelp and soon all had lost the message you were giving in their desire to see the intruder evicted.

On market days everyone got up early so as not to miss selling their goods. But was not the Sabbath day a day of rest? Why should they get up early that day? It was difficult to have a Sabbath school commence anywhere near 10.00 a. m. Of course, they could all tell the time by the sun, their never-failing time-piece; but no one liked to arise before there was sufficient heat in the sun to warm their blood.

At the mission church I found it necessary to take more drastic effort than just request an early attendance. The announcement was made that next Sabbath following the singing of the first hymn, the door of the church would be shut and not opened again for an hour. No one paid any attention to this. Consequently only a few were in attendance when it became necessary to see that the warning was implemented. It was always necessary to keep your promise. So the door was shut. Soon there were repeated knocks and cries to open. But the door did not open. The crowd grew larger. What did the missionary mean by keeping them out? Sabbath school continued. Then at its close the door opened and a sobered group entered. The medicine worked. Next Sabbath every seat was occupied before Sabbath school commenced. It was never necessary to speak of tardiness thereafter.

Some mission societies were eager to have spheres of

influence whereby they controlled the brand of Christianity available to certain districts. We did not believe in such a policy, understanding that the church has a commission to take the Gospel to all the world. We were faced with this problem in Pare where another society claimed part of the mountains as their special reserve. We must not enter their sphere on any account.

Our Christians were eager to preach wherever their language was understood. They volunteered to go into the other territory to scatter tracts, win converts, and establish prayer houses. This aroused one of the other missionaries to go to the government and accuse us of having broken the law in establishing schools. I was called over the mountains to meet the District Commissioner. The other missionary came with a large tin box full of books against Adventists which he hoped to read to this official and so set him against us. But the official was not interested, and politely asked him to close his box and state wherein we had offended. He could not prove his point that we had established schools without permission. He was dismissed. I then had opportunity to thank the officer for the policy of the British government in allowing the free preaching of the Gospel anywhere in their domain.

There was one valley near Suji where every effort was made to stop us preaching. The church thought of a plan to overcome this difficulty. Calling every member together, they divided us into groups. Some were to collect poles, others grass, and still others bark twine. All were to converge on a certain spot at sundown, where a local resident had given permission for an evangelist to reside.

I took along an acetylene burning projector which provided light for work to commence after dark. The site was quickly levelled. Holes were dug and the poles erected. These were tied together and a stout frame was ready for the mud. While this was in process others were on the roof tying on

the grass. By morning light the house was ready. The opposition party in the valley blinked their eyes to discover where this mushroom house had come from.

Forty years later I was happy to attend a large camp meeting in this very valley. God had certainly watered the seed sown.

Chapter VII

ESTABLISHING SCHOOLS

"No, Father. I cannot marry that old polygamist."

The girl was defiant. It was impossible for her to agree. Yet her father was poor. The only means of improving his condition was to accept a sizeable dowry for his daughter. The old polygamist had offered the standard price - twenty head of cattle; and, being rich, had already passed over some of them.

Courtship was unknown. The transaction was arranged without consulting the girl. Hence her surprise and indignation when her father informed her of her marriage partner.

"No. I could not marry him. He is not even a Christian!"
 "But you will have to," replied her father. "I have accepted your dowry and already eaten some of it."

But the daughter was adamant. So the father resorted to the approved means of persuasion - a good beating. Next day he asked her again, "Now, are you going to agree to my plans?" The girl replied, "You know I am a Christian and cannot do this." Another beating. This continued for a month, but the girl's determination was not broken.

Finally the father tried another plan. When all was ready, he asked his daughter to take a message to her aunt in a nearby village. Suspecting nothing, she hastened to obey, hoping to show she was a dutiful child. As she passed along a narrow lane, suddenly a number of young men sprang out on her. She was carried, protesting vigorously, to the village of the old polygamist.

Soon a crowd gathered. "So you have come at last," said one of the other wives. "Think yourself lucky there are five of us here already. Many wives in a family make light work." "No," replied the girl, "I am not going to marry him. I am a Christian." "Well, if that is the case, we will have to teach you." So they brought her to an empty hut, took

away all her clothes and locked her up.

Waiting until all sounds of life in the village had ceased, she began her plan of escape. With only her hands she started picking at the hard mud wall of the hut. It was painful work. Soon her fingers were bleeding. But she persevered. Getting to the framework she enlarged the aperture until she was able to squeeze herself through.

Into the dark night she ran, not knowing where she was going. Strange noises urged her on. She ran until dawn, when, conscious of her nakedness, she knocked on the door of the first hut she found. Who should open the door but a friend. Quickly a blanket was brought. When her story was told she was hidden for several weeks.

Then one day along came a young teacher. When he heard the story of her faithfulness he said, "This is just the kind of wife I am looking for."

A similar story comes from the Congo. The girl was also of marriageable age. Being a Christian she refused to enter into partnership with one who had no appreciation of her faith. The disappointed suitor and her father went to the local witch-doctor and enlisted his help. For the price of a large goat he collaborated with them in seizing the girl. She was taken into the forest and tied to an old tree. The witch-doctor began his incantations while striking the tree many times. Vicious black ants began to appear, annoyed that their peace was being disturbed. Descending the tree they encountered their victim. They were soon all over the girl's naked body, biting fiercely. To the pain of a thousand stings was added the agony of the ants entering her ears, nostrils, eyes and mouth.

Her cries attracted a young student who was passing nearby. He immediately ran to call the teacher. They were just in time to release her before her reason broke. The government official heard of the incident and arrested the witch-doctor and her father. "What is your charge?"

he asked the girl. "I bring no charge," she said. "I am a Christian and we do not settle our problems before the court."

Who were these girls and what gave them such courage and strong convictions? They were the product of the village school, the schools which introduced the Gospel to Africa.

The early schools met several needs. They were easy to establish. You met the chief and told him the advantage of education. If he had not been approached by another society, he was usually keen to have a school established in his village. Adults collected poles and grass. A frame building was constructed and mudded. It was advisable to be present to mark out the size and later see that the window openings were large enough to let in sufficient light. One also had to insist on a well-pitched roof with the poles near enough together to avoid sagging under the weight of the grass. Due to the deprivations of the white ants these buildings lasted only a few years and hardly ever looked smart. A house was usually provided for the teacher at the same time.

At first it was only necessary to inform the government officer that you had a school in such and such a village. But gradually formalities increased. District Education Boards were formed. They decided whether to grant applications for schools. Three miles was the normal distance expected between schools of different societies.

The government finally began to plan the education programme. Missions were offered grants-in-aid. These looked very innocuous at first. But in time it became evident that the government dictated the curriculum and took a hand in the placement of teachers. Church standards and government wishes often clashed. The church would dismiss a teacher for adultery. The government, short of teachers, would override the decision.

Problems multiplied the more the mission became

dependent on the secular arm. Yet without its aid most of the capital improvements could not have been undertaken. It would have been better if the state had introduced compulsory education and run the department itself, leaving to the mission the operation of church schools. But the government was not ready for this. It recognized that schools under mission supervision usually produced students with better characters. So for many years a dual system prevailed. Now, in most African countries the state dominates the education programme, allowing the mission to operate their schools as managers subject to inspection.

To get back to the village school. It originally had no desks or equipment other than a blackboard, which usually lacked enough paint to allow the teacher to set forth his work. A piece of rag served as an eraser.

The children either sat on the floor, on stones or tree trunks. Some progressive teachers made seats by putting forked sticks into the ground to support poles. Two poles to a seat. Not very comfortable.

Adults crowded the early schools. Many wanted to know how to read the Bible. The children learned quicker. It was a problem to have fathers and sons in the same class. But gradually the schools catered only for the children.

But they all needed constant inspection. The teacher hoped you would inform him in advance as to the time of your arrival. It gave him time to sweep the building and compound, get rid of the grass and mark up his neglected register. But I always turned up when least expected and this policy did result in improvements.

Item number one was always inspection of the pupils. One would walk down the lines to see whether they had washed before coming to school. Hands were held out to show if garden dirt had been removed from the nails. Dirty garments often covered dirty bodies. Usually a dozen or more would be sent to the river before starting their class

activities.

Teachers at first were not trained. Many found the small salary more rewarding than leaving the tribal reserve in search of work. The period of instruction only lasted three hours in the morning. The teacher then cultivated his garden, often with the help of the children.

One of the early faults was teaching by repetition. Part of the alphabet would be written on the blackboard or a reading chart used. All the children would intone what the teacher repeated. Sometimes, if he had two classes, he would leave one class in the care of a bright boy, who followed his example. One needed only to reverse the order of reading to quickly discover if the children had imbibed any of the elements of reading. Arithmetic was treated in the same way. A progressive teacher would have the children prepare short sticks, or beads on a string, for counting.

Early attempts at writing were often on the sandy floor. It was hard to persuade any fathers that a proper slate was needed for their children to write on. More broken pieces of slate than whole ones was the rule. The same applied to pencils. Though a slate pencil cost only a farthing, it had to be broken into several pieces. When these were too small to hold, a bamboo handle prolonged their usefulness.

The average school taught only two sub-standards and standard one. More than this required an additional teacher. But the early schools were primarily evangelistic centres. Every day the opening subject was Bible. The story of creation came logically to the African mind. At first the Scriptures were not available. Old and New Testament stories were among the first books printed. These were followed by some of the more important books of the Bible as certain missionaries became better acquainted with the language.

The continuation of the school on the Sabbath for Bible instruction presented little difficulty. This gave opportunity

for the introduction of Missionary Volunteer societies, with Christian help work as their main objective.

In some areas the irregularity of attendance was a major problem. The boys were useful to their fathers in herding cattle, sheep and goats. The advantages of education were not realized by all. Often one child was selected as the favoured one, and allowed to attend regularly. Watching the gardens demanded day and night work. Monkeys and baboons would quickly wreak havoc on the unguarded spot. They knew when a woman was on guard and took no notice of her. Trousers they recognized as their enemy. At night the wild pigs raided the plantations. No wonder half the children were drowsy during their lessons.

It took a long time to persuade the parents that their daughters should go to school. They argued what good would it do them? They would not engage in trade nor work for the government. In fact they would go out of the family on marriage. They did not need to read or write to produce children.

Yet Christian girls were essential for the Gospel programme. Give the boy all the education he could take and let him become a churchmember; yet, if he married a heathen, uneducated girl, his home would be a failure. The children would generally take after the mother and follow her heathen practices.

Some fields solved the problem by establishing special schools for girls. Here they came under constant Christian influence. Selected missionary lady workers, trained in domestic science, would mould the characters of these daughters of Africa. It was not an easy work and often lonely. Tribute is due to them above all missionaries, for they generally forfeited all hopes of marriage for the sake of their African sisters.

Our schools followed the plan of educating the heart, head and hand. This was not always easy to attain for the

African youth thought that head knowledge was the only passport to success. Instead of realizing that a trade could make them independent Christians, they longed for that paper certificate which would secure them the white collar jobs.

Going back to that soap-stone in the hills above Kamagambo mission, which I tried to use for my house. It finally came into its own. Needing a suitable project for manual work, the principal of the school had a class work on that soft stone. It could be cut with a saw. The blocks were then shaped with a tool made out of a flattened six-inch nail attached to a wooden handle. Cups, saucers, bowls, vases, candlesticks, book ends, eggs and egg cups or whatever you wanted could be produced. A relief map of Africa made from the stone was popular. The cups and saucers could be pared down to a very thin finish. A piece of broken glass did duty for sandpaper. The completed product was "ducoed" and was quite attractive. When shown at the Nairobi Agriculture Show it obtained for the school a first prize. Offers to purchase the exhibit were many but, unfortunately, all student work had to be retained until the end of the school year for appraisal by the examiner. A tea set was presented to H. E. the Governor and his wife and graciously accepted.

English was a popular subject. It represented the key to everything that was desirable. To qualify as an English teacher was a great achievement. It brought a higher salary. But in their eagerness to obtain an adequate knowledge of this language many resorted to the dictionary rather than the grammar book. Had I kept all the amusing letters which I found showing the degrees of progress in grasping this desirable language they would fill a volume.

Let a few suffice. They are produced as they were written.

An application for a position in a hospital:

'Sir, I have the honour to beg to inform you that, having

heard no advertisement of a situation vacant; for a Hospital Assistant, in your medical department, I beg, however, to apply for the position.

'Hospital Assistant is a degree, awarded by the British Government to highly qualified Africans in the great science of Medicine and Surgery as well as in all subjects embraced to it. Viz., ANATOMY, PSYCHOLOGY, HISTROLOGY, HYGIENE, SANITATION, DISPENSING, MATERIA MEDICAL, MINOR SURGERY, PATHOLOGICAL LABORATORY WORKS, ANAESTHETICS AND MIDWIFERY.

'I honestly beg to state, I passed successfully in Examinations and awarded by the Government through the Director of Medical Services, with a Diploma, certifying me of the medical knowledge as mentioned above.

'With regard to general school Education, I respectfully beg to state, I completed first to the Code of education, gained first place in my final Examinations and awarded First Class certificate with dux medal.

'I am 25 years old, married having one child, keenful in sport, awarded by Government special football certificates. I am at present finishing with a certain company, where I take charge of a hospital, plus out Patients, medical and Surgical Departments, Pathological, Laboratory inclusive. Simply because, I am under paid. As my present standard hardly permits me to earn less than £15 per month with good promise.

'I shall, therefore, Sir, esteem it a great favour and obliged, if my application shall meet with your favourable consideration and reply. Stating how much you may decide to commence me per month, with promises and regulations inclusive."

The doctor replied as follows:

"Dear Sir,

'I thank you for your application but regret that there is no suitable appointment to offer you, as the post of Director

of Medical Services is already filled and the football season has not yet opened."

A resident in Accra, Gold Coast, advertised for a paraffin-operated refrigerator. He received prompt replies. One read:

'I have the honour most respectfully to submit this my humble application soliciting for an employment as a paraffin refrigerator in your department. I successfully passed the seventh standard in . . . last year and hold a testimonial issued by the school master and documents testifying my character and ability."

Another read:

'Having seen your advertisement for a paraffin refrigerator I beg to tend my application for the post. I was educated at . . . but owing to financial circumstances I am forced to stop. I am 18 years of age. Sir, if you grant me the favour I ask for I hope to give you satisfaction. I am waiting anxiously for your prompt reply."

When one takes time to consider the vagueness of the English language in respect to some of its rules, one can better appreciate the difficulty of an overseas student in discerning between an operator and a refrigerator.

An Indian was unsuccessful in obtaining leave of absence for domestic reasons and wrote the following letter to the head of the railway:

'Most honoured and Respected Sir,

'I have the honour to humbly and urgently require your Honour's permission to relieve me of my onerous duties so as to enable me to visit the land of my nativity, to wit, India, forsooth.

'This is in order that I may take unto wife a damsel of many charms who has long been cherished in the heart beats of my soul. She is of superfluous beauty and enamoured of the thought of becoming my wife. Said beautiful damsel has long been goal of my manly breast and am now fearful of

other miscreant deposing me from her lofty affections. Delay in consummation may be ruination most damnable to romance of both damsel and your humble servant.

"Therefore I pray your Honour, allow me to hasten to India and contract marriage forthwith with said beautiful damsel. This being done happily, I will return to resume my fruitful duties and perform also my maternal matrimonial functions. It is dead loneliness here without this charmer to solace my empty heart.

"If your Honour will so far rejoice my soul to this extent and also as goes equally without saying that of said wife-to-be, I shall pray forever as is duty bound for your Honour's life-long prosperity, everlasting happiness; promotion most startling rapidity and withal the fatherhood of many Godlike children to gamble playfully about your Honour's paternal knees to heart's content.

"If however for reasons of State or other extreme urgency, the Presence cannot suitably comply with terms of this humble petition, then I pray your most excellent Superiority to grant me this benign favour for Jesus Christ's sake, a gentleman whom your Honour very much resembles.

"I have the honour to be, Sir, your Honour's most humble and dutiful, but terribly love-sick, mortal withal.

Signed G. C.

B. A. (failed by God's misfortune)
Bombay University."

The request was granted.

Christian education has a great part to play in the future of Africa. Even if most of the present schools are under other control, the Christian teacher still has his place in the class-room. The church must rely more fully on the arm of evangelism, supported by plenty of dynamic Gospel literature to complete its task in Africa.

Chapter VIII

THE CALL TO UGANDA

"All in favour say, Aye."

The motion had been moved and seconded that we would lay plans to open up work in Uganda. The year was 1926. This action appealed to us as Uganda was the most prosperous of the three East African territories. A protectorate under British rule, it comprised a number of tribes and districts, some ruled by kings.

The central and most advanced part was the kingdom of Buganda. The people were called Baganda (singular Mganda) and the language Luganda. The king had the title of Kabaka, and there was a parliament called the Lukiko.

An appropriation was available to commence work in this interesting land. I was to be the pioneer. But first our superintendent would come along and we would search for a suitable property to serve as the first station.

There would be much travelling; so it was decided to obtain a motor car. In Nairobi I collected a number of brochures of available makes and presented them to the committee. They decided on a Willis Overland box body.

I returned to Nairobi to the salesroom and found a car was available. But I had to make one stipulation to the firm in making the purchase - they must teach me to drive it. There were no driving schools available. Nor was there much attention paid to the issuing of driving licences. I just went to the police station to explain that I now had a car. My motor cycle licence was promptly endorsed to include a car. No road test of any kind was needed. What halcyon days!

The salesman took me out on the Athi plains and briefly explained the working of the gears. Then a drive up and down the chief thoroughfare of the town. "You will do fine," he said, and that was all the instruction.

As an afterthought he remarked, "There are two bad escarpments between here and Kisumu. I would advise you to rail the car to the lake. And take this bottle of distilled water for the battery. You will need it."

A railway wagon was fortunately available that afternoon. Alone I had to get the car to the station yard, up a ramp and into the wagon. How I wished my instructor had been somewhat more specific.

"Your car will go by goods train," said the station master. "You will take the passenger train as far as Nakuru (half way), and then join the goods train."

I had brought Daniel, my donkey boy from Pare, thinking he might be useful with a car. So we boarded the train. On reaching Nakuru we had to wait for a while for the goods train. It was near midnight when it came in on a track some distance from the platform. I jumped down, not noticing in the dark a long engine pit in the main track. Crash! I picked myself up with many bruises, and found I was holding only the neck of the bottle containing the precious battery fluid.

Limping to the guard's van I found an Indian in charge. He was willing that I put my camp bed in his cabin, but Daniel must sleep elsewhere. He opened a small door at the other end of the coach and he crawled in. In the dark I had no idea where he had gone.

We climbed to an altitude of 8,000 ft. The night grew very cold. The guard was continually getting off and the engine driver did not mind how he jerked the wagons. It was only a goods train.

Tired of it all I got up at daybreak and went to look for Daniel. "Bwana, please get me out of here," a plaintive voice called. Then I saw. He had been put into the chicken coop, with no room to stand up. It had an open wire mesh door. He was so stiff with cold he could not walk. But the sun was soon up and he revived by sitting in one of the empty

wagons.

In due course we got to Kisumu where I gave the car a trial run on the flat country and gained confidence. Next day the superintendent came with cook, tent and necessary equipment. The car was duly loaded, and with two Africans perched on the top of the goods we set off. Reserve petrol was carried in four gallon tins, two in a case. Cars had running boards in those days, and these were useful to carry the extra petrol. A metal clamp held them in place.

My confidence was short-lived, for at the first bridge I misjudged the width, and the petrol case caught the sidework and fell into the river. Much humiliated we proceeded some thirty miles, when the car refused to go any farther. The old models had two controls on the steering column, one working the throttle and the other the spark. I must have got them mixed up, for it had overheated.

We duly consulted the book of words but no removal of plugs or tinkering produced any results. A missionary of another society came by, but did not know how to help. He would tell the garage back at Kisumu to send someone out. We stayed on the road in the hot sun all day, but no one came until evening.

It was then that a truck load of Indians happened to come by. As soon as they heard our story, they provided the remedy. "Turn your car round and run down the hill." We did so, and she promptly began firing again. I was so overjoyed that I pulled up there and then, facing downhill, proposing that we camp for the night, and be in a favourable position to start next morning.

Next day we made good progress and had crossed the border into Uganda when we again came to a halt. There was no hill to help us and no amount of pushing produced any result.

At last a car! (Cars were few and far between in those days.) It came from Kampala. Inside were a lady and

gentleman. He stepped out and asked what was wrong. I looked at him and gasped. It was the salesman who had sold me the car in Nairobi! He could have been an angel from heaven. It did not take him long to discover the trouble. I had a sneaking feeling he knew all about it beforehand. The magneto lacked a gasket, and oil had worked up onto the carbon points. He simply cleaned them. "Get a gasket when you get to the first garage," he said, and left us with our engine purring encouragingly.

No garage could ever fit that gasket. On the trip it became my daily chore to disconnect the magneto chain and clean the carbon points, praying that the tiny screw on the chain would not disappear into the sump.

In Kampala we found there were not too many properties available, at the price we were prepared to pay, viz., £600. It soon came down to a tract of land, a square mile in area, 118 miles west of that town. It was an abandoned coffee plantation, having a grass roof house, full of white ants. We would have preferred something nearer the centre of the country, but God overruled. By settling at Nchwanga we were able to establish the work before meeting organized opposition. The name of our first station stayed with us and we became known throughout the country as the people or church of Nchwanga.

All this happened some nine months before we actually left the Pare country. It was hard to say "goodbye" to those dear people. They accompanied us to the station and sang a farewell hymn as the train pulled out. But something happened just before.

The station-master had ordered his assistant to place our goods at a certain place to facilitate loading. Now the engine had a cow-catcher which assisted any unwanted animal off the track. As it went past our cases this caught the largest one. There was a shattering noise as it burst open and the contents scattered around. In it was a rocking

chair, our prized possession.

Pots and pans and pieces of the chair were picked up quickly and handed to the churchmembers, asking that they would send them on to us. Three months later they all duly arrived but the chair never did get repaired.

Connie and the girls stayed at our Kendu hospital expecting the arrival of a son and heir. F. Solway joined me for the remainder of the journey to Uganda. He was the mission builder and a very gracious gentleman. He had come to Africa for a limited period to help with the building programme.

We traversed the same hot, dusty road from Kisumu to Jinja. As the tyres were somewhat worn, we took the precaution to carry a puncture repair kit. This was supposed to be the latest on the market. By means of a clamp you vulcanized the patch in place. Excellent in theory. But it had not been tried out in the tropics. Every few miles we heard a hiss and discovered a flat, the patch having come unstuck. Just how many times we jacked up that day I do not recall, but my memory refuses to believe it was less than twenty-five times. Now the journey is done on a tarred surface with no dust or punctures. Only the heat remains.

It was always refreshing to reach the town of Jinja. Hippos regularly visited the lawns of the hotel. The waters of Lake Victoria here fell over the Ripon Falls to commence the mighty river Nile on its winding course of 3,500 miles. These falls were only 17 feet high. Standing below the falls one saw an amazing sight of large fish literally fin to fin attempting to get back to the lake. The Africans would come along with a small netting basket which they dipped into the river and soon had five or six of these Nile perch for sale at ten pence each.

But Africa has changed here. The falls have gone, disappearing under the rising waters of the lake caused by the

construction of the dam for the hydro-electric power station. Uganda is no doubt better off, for power is here generated for all her industries and those of Kenya as well.

But of all this development we knew nothing as we passed by to our first station in this country. The old house at Nchwanga was built on a hill, but the view of the swamp and surrounding country was not inspiring. Grass, ten feet tall, grew right up to the house. The broad verandahs made it very dark inside. One could not read in any room. Only the cement floor seemed permanent. The walls were full of white ants. Back of the fireplace was a large cavity which they had excavated. One night the children's clothes were left on the window sill. Next morning there was a hole through them all - so quickly did the little creatures work.

The ceilings consisted of reeds tied together as mats. We often had earthquakes. Sometimes the tremors would last all day. The reeds creaked. They were useful as an early warning system. But they were no protection from the dust of the grass roof. All kinds of vermin lived up there and their droppings were always on the floor.

I was told that there was a history of Nchwanga in a book called, 'The Sword Points of Love.' After a search a second-hand copy was secured in Kampala. Therein was an interesting account of what happened on the old estate.

It related to a young Englishman who, leaving his fiancée at home, came out to make his fortune in coffee. While at the estate he fell under the spell of Africa and took a dark-skinned wife. Later on, with prospects looking up, he bethought himself of the girl he had left behind. So he returned home and brought her out to his new domain. After he got back he lacked the will-power to send his former companion away. So the two lived in one house. It is not hard to imagine what happened. The title of the book tells the story. It was jealousy and strife until the overseas

wife ran away. I checked with the local inhabitants and found the story was true.

The builder's big problem was to know how to remove the grass roof and substitute one of corrugated iron during the rainy season. It had to be done a piece at a time, otherwise the untempered walls would have disintegrated.

All the roof timbers had to be removed. There was no money to purchase imported sawn timber. We must work with the local material. Only the male fern pole would resist the white ant. But it was so hard that a nail could not be driven in unless each hole had first been bored. Many times I saw the old brother weeping as he contemplated the ups and downs of his roof due to the fact that he could not measure in advance.

We nearly lost the whole building before we had proceeded very far with the alterations. One day there was a shout as thick smoke and flames were seen advancing up the hill side. The tall grass was well alight, and the wind was driving it towards the house. Some of the workmen rushed out with sticks to try to beat it out, while others climbed up on the roof with buckets of water. It was a near thing.

Labour for the rehabilitation of the estate was ready to hand. Or at least it was after I read the riot act. It was a custom that Africans could settle on freehold land provided they agreed to give half their time each year as paid labour for the owner. In return they were given the use of sufficient land for grazing and growing crops. The arrangement was usually a happy one as many could not obtain sufficient land in the reserves set aside for occupancy.

Soon after my arrival I called up the 'bakopi' or squatters. They had enjoyed unlimited freedom since the estate became derelict, and did not see why they should commence work again. We finally came to terms. Under their own supervisor they worked about six hours a day when I was present. What happened at other times was best not inquired into.

Our object in securing so much land was to operate a boarding school, anticipating that students would come from a distance. Land must be cleared. So out with the old coffee plants! I never did like coffee, so there were no regrets in seeing a possible source of income go up in flames.

But what should we plant in their place?

The banana was the staple diet of the Baganda people. They grew everywhere - bananas, bananas, bananas. The rainfall facilitated their exceptional growth. There was a time when one could purchase a large bunch, more than one could carry, for one penny. Now only one hand will cost over five pence. Separate fruit cost almost one pence each.

Some folk living in Uganda have found over fifty different species of the plant. They fall into three classes - memvu, gonja, and mutoki or dessert, pudding and vegetable. The clusters of a single plant sometimes weigh more than 56 lb., and each bunch can have over 200 separate fruit.

The plants grow in clusters and cover a garden without any particular plan. The leaves are easily stripped with a high wind or hail. Only one bunch grows to a plant. It is cut down near the root by a woman with a sharp knife. The fruit sinks slowly into her arms.

She selects the best of the leaves, slices the midrib and after pulling it off, folds up the leaves. Then she strips the plant in sections and spreads them round the garden, pressing them level so that all weeds are kept down and the land fertilized.

The small inner pith of the plant, hard and white, she cuts into sections. These are beaten out on a hard wooden block into thin pancake sponges, which are used for bathing the baby, and for washing the fingers during a meal.

The leaf is used for an umbrella and also a tablecloth. When toasted over a hot fire it becomes airtight and watertight. It is used for bandages. It also serves for tying up

different dishes for stewing in a large pot.

Babies are born on warm banana leaves and sleep on them daily. During a fever a patient is covered with a pile of leaves to induce perspiration.

The outside peel of the plant is used for sewing cotton, twine and rope. The large purple torpedo-shaped flowers serve as dolls for the children.

Some kinds of the fruit provide the local beer. Great masses are pulped and strained through fresh grass with a little water added. It ferments in pots. Sometimes it is boiled before fermentation, and becomes treacle. Continued boiling with a little sugar added, results in a very good toffee.

The mutoki or plantain is the staple food of the country. It must be cooked. It is prepared by peeling with sharp knives, thus removing the outer green skin, and then stewed in a large pot. After mashing, it is served piping hot. Before the advent of bread, it was the general dish of the Baganda. When peeled, split and dried in the sun, it makes an excellent flour.

In the early days of the Christian church in the country two kinds of banana served to provide the wine and bread for the communion service.

Thus it was clear we should make the banana our main crop. But where to get enough plants? I thought of the workmen. Calling them together I asked each one to bring just one root each morning when they came to work. Soon we had several acres laid out in long lines. I felt quite proud of our accomplishment, and was sure we could cope with any influx of students.

But pride goeth before a fall. One day one of the new converts asked me, "You teach us it is wrong to drink beer. Why is it you have planted all these beer bananas?" The workmen had a real laugh on me that time. Every one had to be pulled up and a new crop secured.

The day came when the house was ready and the enlarged family could come over from Kenya. I met them at Entebbe. This was the seat of government, situated in tropical splendour on the shore of Lake Victoria. I hired a car to take me down from Kampala. Soon after we commenced the return journey it began to rain. Naturally we had all dressed in our best. Helmets were still needed. White was favoured for dress occasions. Any dirt on it was covered over with a liberal application of a white paste, called Blanco. Very smart in the sun but - the roof of the car leaked. It had no proper windows. Gradually our faces changed colour! On them, and also down onto the best clothes trickled the accumulated Blanco. What a sight we presented when we reached our hotel!

When the decision was taken to commence work in Uganda, the other areas in East Africa had all promised to supply African workers. I brought with me two teachers from the Pare field, Petero Risase and Anderea Mweta. Another worker followed, but unfortunately he died later from an accident. Several Luo and Kisii teachers came and one from Tanganyika. It was a good plan to have the different tribes interested in the new venture.

Petero and Anderea were early out on bicycles seeking interests. When the other families arrived there was always a new group awaiting them. Petero found the first convert. He was a blind man who owned a little tobacco shop. It was not long before he closed it and, with his son guiding him, he commenced visiting relatives and friends in order to share his new-found faith. Joshua remained a faithful member of the church for thirty years until his death.

As a result of his work we needed to erect a prayer house at Mityana, half-way to Kampala. But no one would give us a piece of land. Two prominent denominations controlled the district. Chiefs and sub-chiefs belong to one or the other church. What could we do?

Why not see the Kabaka? I requested an interview. In the meantime I secured leather-bound copies of the books, 'Great Controversy' and 'Patriarchs and Prophets' from the Stanborough Press, Watford, England. When they knew they were for the Kabaka, they sent them free, with their compliments.

How should I greet him? He had been educated in England. But everyone likes to hear his own language. So I set to memorizing the greeting, 'Wasuzeotiano' for the morning and 'Osibyeotiano' for the afternoon. These meant, respectively, How have you opened the day and How have you closed it? Of course, one added a further title for royalty.

The Kabaka was indeed pleased to hear his own language from one so recently arrived in the country. He graciously received the presentation books and inquired about the kind of work we expected to do. 'Well, it's about time we had another mission society in the country. The Anglicans and Roman Catholics have had things too much to themselves.'

The interview paid off. In a few weeks our request for land at Mityana came to his attention. 'Give the Adventists two acres for a school and church. Let them show us what they can do.' We became established by royal assent.

The arrival of our mission had not passed unnoticed. Some time previously a new sect had arisen called the AbaMalaki. Malaki was a deacon of the Anglican church in Kampala. As he read the Old Testament he became impressed that the seventh day was the Sabbath of the Lord. Not getting any satisfactory answer from his superiors as to why Sunday was now observed as the rest day of the Christian church, he commenced to preach his new-found light.

But it became mixed with error. He also read in the Old Testament concerning witch-doctors, and how the Lord forbade them. Unfortunately, the same word was used for a doctor of medicine. So he came to the conclusion that

one must not go to a doctor, not take medicine, nor be vaccinated, nor suffer cattle to be inoculated. He also felt that polygamy was ordained by God. The movement produced a number of problems for the government. They were zealous propagandists. Meeting a prospective follower on the road, a few words of instruction sufficed and the new convert was sprinkled from a bottle of water carried for that purpose. They even operated a printing press in Kampala.

A group near Nchwanga found that the new missionary also observed the seventh-day Sabbath. They thought he might be useful to them to increase their prestige. Several times a group came to the mission. We tried to interest them in the prophecies. Only one came for further studies. He invited me to preach in his prayer house in a nearby village. It really seemed he would become a member of our church. His baptism was planned. Then it came to light. He was a polygamist. He had three wives.

Nchwanga being so far from Kampala and the stores, a truck for transportation was badly needed. But as we already had a box body car, this could not be granted. Drums of cement and bundles of sheet iron weighed down the springs of our long-suffering vehicle. At last the differential gave out. It did many times. I even got to know how to repair it.

But I could never manage the timing. Stuck this way once, I contacted a Sikh friend who drove a 5-ton Albion truck for the cotton transport. If I could get the car to the main road he would tow me to town. The squatters gallantly pushed the car the two miles to the road and there I waited.

After many hours a truck did come along but it was not driven by my friend. The day was getting late. The driver of the Chevrolet agreed to give me a tow. Darkness came on before we were halfway to town. The narrow road contracted further as it passed through the Wamala swamp,

one of the hundreds in Uganda. We had not gone far when I saw the truck begin to sway and then plunge into the water. I just managed to keep my car on the road. Jumping out I shouted to the Indian passengers to try to push their truck back on the road. But they just ignored me and disappeared into the darkness.

Teacher Petero looked at me in despair. Legions of mosquitoes were gathering for the kill. We pushed our car to a passing place and tried to fix up a mosquito net in the back. By the time we crawled under it to lie on the hard boards, there were more mosquitoes than we could cope with.

But joy came in the morning. An Albion truck appeared and who should be driving it but my friend. Being ravenously hungry, I accepted his offer of a hard, cold pancake. Then he fixed the tow rope and we set off. The red dust swirled around as I struggled to keep a straight course behind the fast-moving truck. When we got to Kampala I wondered why the garage suggested I try elsewhere for repairs. Then I looked in a mirror. Two bloodshot, bleary eyes peered out of a Red Indian tan. Dirty and dishevelled I used the rear door of the hotel.

However, travel was usually pleasant. The climate was mild though humid. It rained every month, and for periods, every day. The country was always green. The innumerable swamps kept the temperature even. The railway had not yet entered from Kenya. Good narrow gravel roads were maintained to expedite the transport of cotton.

One needed to keep a wary eye for the large trucks loaded high with bales. Once rounding a corner I met a huge truck occupying the whole road. I avoided a collision by a hair's breadth. But it was so close that the ropes holding the bales were cut. They began tumbling all around. I waited in suspense for one to flatten the roof of the car. Fortunately they fell elsewhere.

The government maintained rest houses for their

travelling staff. Missionaries were allowed to use them. An African kept the place tidy. Usually there were beds and mosquito nets, furniture, crockery and a water filter. You carried your own bedding and food. Sometimes you found one occupied and had to resign yourself to another fifty miles on the road.

The Baganda people were prosperous. They owned their own land. They employed migrant labour. Every year tens of thousands of less fortunate Africans came in from adjoining Ruanda to find money for their taxes. This labour bonanza enabled the Baganda to have large gardens of bananas, coffee, peanuts, sugar-cane, and sweet potatoes.

Their homes were spacious and clean. Corrugated iron roofs proclaimed their status in society. They always enjoyed a visit from a missionary. Afternoon tea was often served with utensils better than I had at home. Lemon tea was quite fashionable. It was made by pouring boiling water on a grass which had a lemon flavour. Tea cakes would be offered. They were very polite. I thought of them as the Japanese of Africa. In all Protestant homes a Bible would be in evidence.

One should not look behind the front room. Often there was a chief wife, "she of the ring," with lesser wives or concubines in the background. Not many years before, venereal disease had threatened the life of the country.

It was considered a Christian country, though a number of the districts followed the teachings of Islam. Mohammedan influence was established before the first Christian missionary arrived. The kings Mutesa and Mwanga played for time before deciding whether to follow one of the new religions. It was the Christian witness which helped the final decision.

Mwanga had issued orders that none of his subjects should become Christians. Some of the young men were

curious to know why a missionary should leave his country and bring a new teaching with him. They came to his home at night to attend a Bible class. Then someone told the king. Soldiers were sent to arrest them. Ordered to recant, they replied that they had learned of One greater than the Kabaka, who had sent His only Son to die for their sins. They were willing to die for Him.

Taken to a valley near the town, they were told to collect bundles of brushwood. Then the fire was lit. Bound hand and foot, they were cast into the flames. The king expected to hear cries for mercy, but hymns of praise reached his ears. Thus died the first martyrs for Christ in central Africa. A simple stone cross commemorates the sacrifice of the Protestants, while a chapel records the bravery of the Roman Catholics.

It took some time for us to be recognized as a church. We had no schools except the one on the mission. Converts came in one by one. Bible studies in the homes of the many literate people, and preaching to small groups, occupied the time of our evangelists. Our first meetings on the mission were held under a tree. We used the hymn book of another society, but soon found our converts singing about the "immortal soul." So one of the first tasks was to translate our own hymns.

Petero had done this kind of work in his own country and so was a great help. I wrote a book on the main teachings of the Bible. We entitled it "Omusale Wafe," meaning "Our Guide." It was printed by the Stanborough Press and enjoyed a good sale. Unfortunately the brethren at home did not realize the effect of temperature and perspiration on their attractive red cover. The literature evangelists found their hands taking on the appearance of blood, and it was sometimes necessary to explain that they had not been in a fight.

The work grew slowly but steadily. There was no mass

movement as in some other parts of the continent. The new converts did not follow for the advantages of an education. They became solid members, anchored to Christ, hand-picked.

Chapter IX

ACROSS AFRICA

From the verandah of our house in Uganda, after rain had cleared the smoky atmosphere, was seen a beautiful sight. The snow-covered Ruwenzori Mountains appeared like the pointed teeth of a giant saw. These are Ptolemy's fabled Mountains of the Moon. They stand guard over the eastern rim of the Congo basin, protected by impenetrable bamboo forests and swirling mist. I was curious to know what lay beyond.

An initial opportunity came with the arrival of one of our secretaries from Europe. He had instructions to visit the new work in Ruanda. At that time the few workers there were connected with the East African Mission. They used to come over to Gendia once a year for the annual meeting. It was a long and tiresome journey.

To facilitate our trip H. Monnier came through from Ruanda on a motor cycle, and acted as our guide. Following him we set off through the south-western part of Uganda. There we saw many beautiful crater lakes. The Mfumbiro mountains form the boundary. The Africans call them "the cooking pots," for they have been volcanoes. Two are still active. On the top of a precipitous peak is one of the last remaining haunts of the gorilla.

By the time we reached the border our road was hardly worthy of the name. Then it disappeared. We came to a precipice. The car had to be let down by ropes. Then a swamp confronted us. It took some time for our guide to find a way across. No car had ever gone this way before. When we came to a village men, women, and children fell over each other as they sought to get out of the way of this strange beast.

At last we reached the Nyabarongo river. This is often considered the true source of the Nile as it is the largest

river which flows into Lake Victoria. We found Belgian supervisors, with a large force of Africans, preparing embankments to bridge the river. It was necessary to cross on a pontoon. The water was shallow. We stuck in the mud. Many of the workmen had to wade in to push us clear. Finally, we were able to cross the swift-flowing stream by hauling on a pulley attached to a wire cable. I had left the car in gear with the hand brake on.

This was fortunate; for as we reached the farther bank, where the water was deep, for some unknown reason, a number of workmen boarded the platform. The two pontoons were open. With the balance disturbed they began to fill with water. Our car was quickly down by the rear. Everyone scrambled off. "We are lost!" cried Monnier. It certainly looked so. But the gear and brake held, even though the car was at a precarious angle. Someone brought a wire hawser. I managed to secure this to the front axle. A hundred hands heaved and pulled. Up the bank came the car, still in gear. Out of our suit-cases poured the water. Fortunately, the engine had not gone under.

Some days later crocodiles caught several of the men as they were working in the river. The report got around that we had been responsible for their death; but no one was taken on the day we were there. Our regular guardians, the angels, were on duty.

From the government post at Nyanza to our mission at Gitwe was only a few miles but the bridges were not wide enough to take the car and it was several days before we got it there. When it did arrive it needed attention, for all the springs were broken.

The country of Ruanda (since spelled Rwanda) is very mountainous. It is sometimes referred to as the Switzerland of Africa. Extensive cultivation is undertaken from the valleys to the top of the mountains. The soil is held by bunding and terracing. The ruling class was the Tutsi tribe.

These were immigrant Hamites from the north who came to the country some four hundred years ago. Profiting by their height (over six feet), their wealth in cattle, and the nobility of their features, they were soon recognized as the overlords of the more numerous Hutu tribe. These were of smaller stature and lived as serfs under the African feudal system.

But when the winds of change began to blow, and Belgium relinquished her mandate, the Hutu gained the ascendancy in the elections. A reign of terror broke out. The Tutsi put up a brave resistance, but were outnumbered. Thousands were killed and their corpses choked the rivers. Tens of thousands fled to neighbouring countries. All attempts to regain their former predominance have failed.

While in the country we had the opportunity to witness the famous Ntore dancers. An invitation came from the Mwami (king) to come to his palace. A large space in the courtyard was enclosed with a high reed fence. The tall warriors entered and faced us. Their heads were adorned with a diadem of white monkey fur. They wore very short skirts with a flowered design, or a leopard skin wrapped around the legs. They brandished a bow, lance, or stick decorated with long tails of raffia fibres. The dance continued for some time and usually culminated with a grand rush towards the spectators as though they were making an end of them.

We asked the Mwami if we might be introduced to his wives. As a special favour he agreed. But first he checked for any peep-hole in the fence to see that none of the lower order were looking. Then the wives were ushered in. They were fat and well favoured. Their arms and legs were heavily adorned with grass bracelets. So heavy were the ornaments that they could not walk without assistance. The head wife was a gracious lady and more active than the harem. She gave me a closely plaited basket made of

grass which could hold water. I still have it and it has not deteriorated.

Our mission work in Rwanda was then in its early stages. Pioneers always tended to put up rather temporary buildings and get on with the preaching of the Gospel. I had heard of a wonderful twelve-room house which one worker had erected in three weeks. I wondered how this was possible. On this trip I found out. Here it was. Built of sun-dried brick, no door or window set true, and a grass roof which went along like the coils of a snake.

Grass was not easy to obtain. When they erected the dispensary they used the papyrus from the swamp. This had curled up as it dried and the roof looked like the hair of a teen-ager which would not become amenable to brilliantine.

The early missionaries often showed their faith by occupying a site which no one else would live on. A former king had been caught in a fierce storm on a low ridge. He promptly placed his curse upon the place. It became known as the Hill of the Skulls. It was looked on with superstitious dread. D. E. Delhove, the pioneer, bravely commenced the Gitwe mission on this site.

What the early workers sowed in tears, others have reaped with joy. The church in Rwanda has grown beyond their highest expectations. Over 100,000 Sabbath-keepers fill hundreds of churches and schools throughout these green-clad mountains. Probably nowhere in the world are there more Adventists to the square mile.

I was yet to see more of Africa beyond the Mountains of the Moon. Some years later word was received that a general meeting was planned in Nigeria for the West African workers. Some representation was requested from the eastern side of Africa. So three of us were named - V. E. Toppenberg, F. H. Thomas, and myself.

How to go? By ship? This would probably mean going to

England in order to obtain a connection for a West African port. Air travel presented even more difficulties. Could we get across by road? What were the roads like? Could petrol be obtained? Would we have to carry food supplies? These and many more questions remained unanswered for we could contact no one who had made the journey.

So the three of us met in Kampala. It was in 1939, a few months before World War II. To make room for extra petrol, food, etc., we decided to omit the usual cook or African help. We would look after ourselves. Many a time after a long drive, we regretted this decision.

After we had loaded up, the springs of the Chevrolet were bending the wrong way. But the good roads of Uganda presented no trouble. The first problem was at the Congo border where the rule of the road changed. We then had to drive on the right, or to us, the wrong side of the road.

Crossing between Lakes Edward and George we found a very flourishing fishing industry. The resulting smell from the drying fish needs to be experienced rather than described. In this area the dwellers also had access to salt. There was plenty at nearby Katwe. Until recent years in the interior of Africa, workmen preferred to be paid for their labour in salt instead of money. Animals would make long journeys to any available salt lick.

At Katwe, as at certain places on the east coast, the brine was exposed to the sun in shallow pools. When these dried out the residue was swept up into piles. From the local shops salt was sold in small paper packages as well as in sacks for transport. The chief who had salt in his district was a fortunate man.

Two National Parks for the protection of wild game adjoin the border. On the Uganda side the Queen Elizabeth Park and, in the Congo, the Parc National Albert. These both team with wild life. Elephants recognize no international boundary. At different seasons they are found in

large numbers in one or the other park. One comes across the unique notice, "Elephants have the right of way." You are advised to obey this rule.

It is possible to approach quite close to them. But keep your eye open for the flapping of the ears or twisting of the trunk. One usually finds them unexpectedly when rounding a corner. Put on the brake and wait their pleasure. They will probably ignore you. Should one lean on your car, get out quickly, for they can flatten it as effectively as a modern metal-crusher.

Hippos abound in the rivers. They are one of nature's ugliest creatures. They do not appear too bad when only the eyes and ears are protruding from the water. But when seen on land they look like a gigantic pig. In spite of their weight they can move fast. Again the rule applies, do not get between them and the water.

These game reserves were created by Europeans and poachers were severely punished. To the ever hungry African, big game is greatly relished. Few of the larger species now exist except in the reserved areas. With recent changes in governments it is reported that the poaching laws are not now strictly enforced and that the herds are decreasing. With them go the great attraction for tourists. A collection of photographs of wild game is much more rewarding than trophies of tusks and skins.

To cross Africa by car it is necessary to go through the great Ituri forest, west of the Mountains of the Moon. On our way we came to a small town called Mambasa. It was spelled so like the great port of Mombasa on the east coast that we asked where it got the name. Sure enough, they told us that some porters had been left behind when an Arab expedition moved on, and coming from Mombasa, they called their new home by a similar name. As we picked up "essence" (petrol or gas) a trader asked if we would deliver a letter to a certain camp which was near our route.

We turned off the main road to find the home of Major and Mrs. Putnam. Deep in the forest and flanked by two rivers, they provided accommodation for tourists. The main room had a great fireplace in the middle of the floor with an appropriate opening in the roof. The tourists usually came to see the pygmies. For a reward some of these little people would be induced to come in from their abode among the trees. We mentioned to the major our desire to meet these little people. He gave us the services of his headman to take us to their nearest camp.

Having no room in the car, the headman stood on the running board, the tails of his frock coat streaming out in the wind. He had donned it in our honour. Who originally gave it to him we did not find out. Some way down the road he called, "Stop here!" Leaving the car we proceeded in single file into the forest. Massive fallen trees made passage difficult. It grew darker as the foliage thickened. Then our guide commenced to shout. Not knowing the reason for this we suggested we could get along without that noise. But he insisted it was necessary. "Don't you see them in the trees," he asked. "There they are. Many! Many! Dimly we could make out little forms, holding what seemed like bows with arrows pointed at us. It was the pygmy defending their domain.

"Friends are coming," he called. "Do not shoot." Had they shot, and the arrow found its mark, this story would not have been written. The pygmy bow is only two feet long. The arrows are sharp, being tipped with metal having a number of barbs. On them is rubbed a deadly poison, made from the roots of forest plants.

We emerged into a clearing. Little huts were seen. They consisted of a framework of saplings covered with the leaves of the plantain or wild banana. A fully grown pygmy stands no higher than one's shoulder or about four feet six inches. Their skin is mostly a light brown. The dim

light of the forest may have something to do with this. The hut is no taller than its occupant. You crawl in. No furniture is found. They remain in one place for about a month. It is necessary to follow the game for their food supply. In this they are exceptionally skilful. Even elephants are brought down by poisoned arrows.

But even the pygmies can tire of a meat diet. So at times, after a successful hunt, they may come at night to the nearest village of a neighbouring tribe. Without making any noise they deposit a present of freshly killed meat and disappear. "Ah, our friends the pygmies have been to see us." That day they will hold a feast. The following evening they will put a reciprocal present of maize, sweet potatoes or whatever they have, on the same spot as their present was found. Then the pygmies would come silently from the forest and retrieve it and have their feast.

We gazed at the pot-bellied, sallow-faced children and wondered when their uncertain existence would change. Timid and frightened, they remain away from all strangers. They will not go to any dispensary, hospital, or school. Someone will have to carry the message of God's great love to them. But it will have to be a super missionary, one who can forget his home and family, to live with these children of nature in their dark forest. We left them with much heart-searching.

As we travelled, the great trees hemmed us in on every side. We could see no hills. Only trees, trees, trees. The rivers to be crossed were wide. When one arrived it was to find the pontoon on the other side. It was necessary to blow the horn. This had to be repeated at intervals until one wondered if there would be any strength left in the battery. It was especially difficult to arouse anyone during the mid-day siesta, which lasted up to three hours. Only when patience was exhausted did some sign of life appear on the opposite bank.

The pontoons were just a number of hollowed-out tree canoes held together by means of a platform fixed on top. Getting the car on and off was a work of art. In the more primitive places the platform would barely take the car. The fore and rear bumper bars hung over the silent flowing river, with the crocodiles lurking in its depths. Needless to say, each successful crossing evoked a silent prayer of gratitude. Today these pontoons have disappeared. Permanent bridges span each river which caused so much delay and palpitation.

In the dark forest lived one of nature's rare animals, the Okapi. Graceful and harmless, their striped bodies were a delight to behold. It took the Belgians many years to breed them in captivity.

We finally reached Stanleyville. It was pleasantly situated on the banks of the great Congo river. At this spot the river is over a mile wide. Steamers with sleeping accommodation come there from Leopoldville a thousand miles to the west. Our longsuffering springs needed help so we took them to a garage to have two extra leaves added. Everything was peaceful then in the heart of Africa. No one thought of the Simbas and the terrible atrocities which would later be perpetrated in this pleasant town.

On the way to Buta the fan belt broke. Only some old Boy Scout knowledge helped us splice a rope and get to a garage for a new part.

Since leaving home we had been using the Swahili language. This lingua franca of eastern Africa is the traveller's aid. The Arabs had introduced it on their slaving expeditions. Most of the male population understood it sufficiently to give directions. But after we crossed into French territory at the Ubangui river we found we needed French or the local language. Our schoolboy French was very rusty. Even the villagers got things badly mixed up. For "many thanks" they would say "Merci mengi," the first word being French

and the second Swahili.

The Belgians had been most friendly to us, but as we entered the new territory we noticed a cooling of welcome. Perhaps it was because we were tongue-tied. A Sabbath rest at Bangassu was spent in a hot and humid atmosphere. The stink of decaying vegetation filled the air.

From now on it was travelling by faith rather than by sight. Signposts were conspicuous by their absence. Often we took the wrong road and had to retrace our route. We were now in the very heart of the dark continent. Civilization had barely penetrated. To facilitate the collection of taxes the authorities had required the people to leave their forest homes and build by the main road. It became truly built-up, ribbon development for miles at a time.

This development plan was not without peril for through transport. Cars were few. As we approached a village, every hut would empty its occupants to gaze with wonder. In addition sheep, goats, dogs, and other live-stock tried to dispute our passage. Whoever was driving at the time, and however careful he was, a casualty often resulted. One got the Swahili name for the killer of a dog, another subscribed to a sheep, while the third had several chickens to his credit.

It was interesting to notice that where the teachings of Islam prevailed, a road casualty instantly brought forth someone with a sharp knife, who dextrously cut the throat of the animal fit for food so its blood would drain away in the prescribed manner.

Simple accommodation had been made for travellers. Nearly every village had a hut set apart for them. No furniture was provided but the headman slowly made an appearance with wood and water for their comfort. After travelling from early morning to evening in the heat and dust, we did not enjoy erecting camp beds, fixing mosquito nets, boiling water and preparing a meal. The hut had no door and just an open space for a window. But there were no

thieves in those days. We were safer than under police protection in a large town.

Eventually we came to the "duck-bill" women. This custom is found in several places in Africa. When a girl is still young the upper and lower lips are pierced. The hole is gradually enlarged by inserting a disc of wood. Finally it is possible to have a slab an inch or two in diameter. The lips now protrude like the bill of a duck.

I was interested in this custom, and wanted to know what caused them to practise such a deformity. One man volunteered the information that formerly their women were extremely beautiful. This led to their being coveted by the males of surrounding tribes, who carried them off. But another retorted: "Not so. The truth is our wives talked too much. So, to get some peace we introduced this custom in self-protection." One can judge which was the true explanation.

We now noticed that the people were jet black in colour. On the eastern side of the continent many of the people are quite light-skinned. The mixture of Arab blood no doubt accounted for the change, just as in South Africa, the light-skinned people point to a mixture of white and black.

At last, after ten days of travel, tired and thirsty, we came to our first outpost in West Africa, the Dogba mission in the North Cameroons. The Hamatan had been blowing all day. This is the hot wind from the Sahara Desert. The atmosphere became very hazy, with visibility at times only a few hundred yards.

How nice the iced water tasted from the Bergstroms' 'fridge. It was like the elixir of life. We asked for more and more until the supply was exhausted. Next morning we learned the truth. This precious liquid was obtained by digging in the sandy river bed and waiting until it seeped into a hole. Then it was carefully collected and brought to the house for settling and filtering. As we thought of the

living conditions at this isolated station we felt we, in the generally cooler climate of East Africa, had nothing to complain of.

Islam had penetrated to these parts and the more developed areas followed the teachings of the prophet of Arabia. But in the hills the tribes were still pagan. I talked to one of our evangelists to find out how they conducted their work. He said he had been asked to go to these hill people. But they did not respond to the Gospel. The chief and witch-doctor had too much influence. In fact, he himself had been charged with trying to subvert the people. So he was put on trial.

When the day of the trial came, the chief assembled all his people. Arrayed in his robes of authority and accompanied by the chief witch-doctor, he caused the people to form a large circle. The evangelist was stationed on the far side of the circle, opposite the chief. After telling the people that their gods were displeased because they had been listening to one who brought false teachings, the chief said he would have the old-time ceremony performed which would indicate, beyond doubt, who was the troubler of the tribe.

For this ceremony the witch-doctor produced a chicken. Now a chicken usually runs some distance if put on the ground after its head has been cut off. So, after decapitating the bird, the witch-doctor placed it so that it would run directly to the evangelist. But, almost incredibly, the bird turned towards the chief and expired at his feet. Great was the cry of surprise from the people. The test was repeated a second time, but the result was the same. So everyone went home satisfied that the chief was the one who was troubling the people.

Thus the Lord opened the way for the preaching of the Gospel among a pagan tribe in central Africa.

As we crossed into Nigeria, evidences of prosperity and development began to appear. Permanent roads were met.

Pontoons were no longer needed to cross rivers. Railway bridges were constructed so cars could also cross. This was very helpful provided a train was not coming from the other side. In this way we passed over the Benue and Niger rivers, visiting our missions in the Ibo country.

We finally came to Ibadan where the conference was to be held. But fearing we would lack an excuse for going on to the coast, we did not report to the brethren, but slipped through the town and got to Lagos. There we washed our hands in the Atlantic Ocean, truly feeling we had indeed crossed Africa.

Ibadan is the largest African town on the continent south of Cairo. There, for over a week, we shared the problems of the Lord's work with the brethren of the West Coast, both black and white. There we learned of the climatic conditions under which they worked. The temperature never seemed to vary. Always humid. No need for bed clothes. Their riced yams did not quite compare with English potatoes. The need of fresh vegetables was felt. The palm oil was too rich for delicate digestions. We saluted W. McClements and his fellow workers who had accommodated themselves to these uncomfortable conditions.

As the time came to leave, we decided to take another way home. Heading north we came to the ancient city of Kano, on the edge of the Sahara Desert. All Northern Nigeria is strongly Moslem. The old city, made of sun-dried bricks, for it seldom rains, was ringed with a wall. The gate we entered just provided passage for the car. Camels were the order of the day. The turbaned, white-robed inhabitants, squatted at their market stalls. Trade was brisk, for the town served an extensive hinterland. Nothing green was seen.

Back in the northern Congo we came on the only school for training elephants. At Ganga-no-Bodio the Belgians were preparing elephants for work on farms. After

enjoying the hospitality of the head of the station for the night, we saw the mustering of the great beasts for their daily bathe. Flanked by two keepers on well-trained beasts, the rest were shepherded to the river.

It was quite an art to capture one of these huge monsters in the bush. The procedure was to find a herd not too far away from the camp and choose one for capture. Shots were fired to stampede the rest. Then well-trained Africans would follow the selected one. With considerable skill one of them would pass a rope round one of the elephant's legs and quickly anchor him to a tree. Then the other legs would be secured.

Of course, there was loud trumpeting and lack of co-operation. A tame elephant would be brought from the camp. He would rub noses with the wild student and probably say to him, "Old chap, not so much fuss. It is not too bad up at the school." They would rope the two beasts together, and, with a trainer on the docile beast, would get to camp.

Daily training consisted of the tame and wild elephants being roped together and taken for exercise. After six months the new recruit would be harnessed to a plough and assist in cultivation. When the year was finished he was available for purchase to farmers in the district. It was stated that the elephant was preferred above a tractor, as he did not require spare parts and his petrol was obtained after work hours without cost!

Near Paulis we saw members of the Mangbetu tribe. They practised the custom of tightly binding the head of the child so that it became elongated by the time of adolescence.

Passing the Kilo gold mine we dropped down the escarpment to the shores of Lake Albert, where a well-equipped steamer took us over to Uganda. From the other side it was a short run to Kampala to complete this unique journey across Africa.

Chapter X

IN THE FOOTSTEPS OF LIVINGSTONE

The year 1942 was the darkest I can remember. The previous year I had attended the General Conference at San Francisco. While on the other side of the world, Connie had a serious operation. Anxious to get back quickly, I cut short my time with my brother, and hastened to New York, there to wait many days for a boat.

The war had brought much perplexity to the missions in East Africa, chiefly because no one from the European base could visit us. The General Conference tried to remedy the difficulty by transferring us to the care of the Southern African Division.

No furlough had been possible for several years. Workers were tired, and also tired of their president. I requested a change from the new organization and was appointed to Nyasaland.

Proper care had not been exercised at Connie's operation and she passed to her rest three days before the end of 1942. She had been a true missionary's wife, always sharing in the moves and loneliness without complaining. For many years the burden of the children's education fell on her. That they have all remained faithful to the Message is to her everlasting credit. We laid her to rest in the Forest Gate cemetery in Nairobi to await the call of the Life-giver.

The children were really scattered. Myrtle was in England. Stanley and Enid were at school two thousand miles away in South Africa. Only Ruth was with me and soon to be married. It was easy to consider giving up and returning home. Others had done so. I had completed twenty years in Africa. Was this not enough?

But the Lord did not think so. He wanted another twenty years of service. So I went to Nyasaland. There I found plenty of friends. Eugene and Amy Jewell (he was secretary-

treasurer) took me into their home and saw I lacked nothing until the time came when I again had a home of my own.

The workers in the union were puzzled, and at first somewhat shocked, to find their new president not only without a wife, but also wearing khaki shorts. Now shorts were the approved attire for men in East Africa. They were cool and facilitated movement and were especially useful in walking. It happened that my predecessor in office was of short stature. He wore trousers to add to his dignity. Thus trousers became the official dress for ministers. Of course, I wore trousers for church and in the evenings. They helped keep the mosquitoes at bay. It was some time before I succeeded in showing that the wearing of shorts not only kept the price of clothing down, but also allowed the worker to cycle and walk more efficiently.

Our chief station was at Malamulo. This place had quite an interesting history. Dr. David Livingstone was reported to have pitched his camp under the tall trees in the centre of the 2000 acres which were later acquired by the Seventh Day Baptists as their first mission station in the country. While they secured many adherents, they never consolidated their work. After some years they agreed to sell the Malamulo estate to our General Conference, who sent T. Bunch, a North American Negro, to take charge. But the time was too early for any colonial government to look favourably on missionaries other than white especially in view of the Ethiopian movement.

In due course white missionaries did arrive. The name of the station had originally been the Plainfield Mission. It was felt that the Africans would understand it better if the name meant something in their language. So it was changed to Malamulo. This is the plural form of 'lamulo' meaning commandment. The Seventh-day Adventist Church throughout the country became known under this new name, Malamulo. Even when collecting Ingathering funds among the Indians, I

would simply announce that I was from Malamulo and they would open the till and produce their gifts without demur.

The medical work done on this station has largely contributed to its popularity. The hospital has been continually enlarged, and a growing leprosarium established. Two doctors and four sisters made up the staff. Many Europeans came for treatment until finally consulting rooms were provided in Blantyre. The Indians gave liberally for the provision of wards for both Hindu and Mohammedan patients.

On the educational side students could proceed to junior college level. A large school for girls was maintained. A printing press not only supplied the needs of our work but helped the commercial community also. A dairy herd sent its supplies of butter and cream into town.

The second station to be established was at Matandani, 75 miles west of Blantyre. No road led there in the early days, so it was necessary to walk or go by a monowheel chair which had a puller in front and a pusher behind. The swift-flowing, dangerous Shire (e as long a) river had to be crossed.

One of the early workers was W. L. Davy. Mrs. Davy became ill with malaria. A teacher named Kalulu (rabbit) was asked if he could go to Malamulo for medicine. He set off, running all the way. But on arrival he found no missionary available, and came back without any quinine. Nearly two hundred miles non-stop. But it was too late. Mrs. Davy had passed to her rest. But Kalulu had done his best.

Under the leadership of O. I. Fields, this station in later years offered industrial training. Young men could take courses in brick-laying, carpentry, tailoring, tin-smithing, etc. It was not easy to persuade them that manual training had as much dignity as the academic side. But it was finally realized that a man with a trade could be independent in business and thus have no trouble in keeping the Sabbath.

It was to this station at Matandani that my first itinerary took me. Car spares of all kinds were very scarce in Africa during the war years. I needed a new battery, but one was not obtainable. A second-hand one - yes. But it would not start the car, and had to be returned. Another one was not much better. But the trip was necessary. Our visiting speaker had arrived.

So we set off in the late afternoon. Leaving the main road, one found that the last twenty miles to the mission had many steep hills to negotiate. Not knowing the road, it was not wise to try speeding on them in the dark.

On reaching the station I was informed by the local pastor that we were late, that some sixty candidates were awaiting examination, and the first meeting commenced in half an hour. Our visitor, who started the trip feeling sick, developed a severe chill. He was not able to help at any of the meetings. I anticipated a heavy programme, but it proved to be much lighter than expected.

In between meetings I examined the candidates. It quickly became evident that they had received little instruction or else had not attended the Bible classes. They had no knowledge of the plan of salvation, did not know the Ten Commandments, nor could they answer the simplest Bible questions. I decided that none of them was ready for the rite of baptism.

The pastor was amazed at my decision. "What," he exclaimed, "you are not going to baptize them! They will all become discouraged. It will be the end of our work here."

My reply was that we could not honestly receive them into the church if they did not know what its teachings were. If they were sincere, they would not leave, provided we instituted a proper plan of instruction. The pastor was not convinced; nor did my popularity increase.

On Friday evening the wife of a deacon died. Lamentation cries were heard through the night. Next morning I

was informed there could be no meetings because of the funeral. Apparently this was an accepted custom. I had to point out that many people would be coming to the meeting for spiritual food and would not be interested in a funeral. Finally I had to insist that the meetings be maintained. We had Sabbath school. Then we buried the dead, and followed the committal by a sermon on the glorious hope of the resurrection.

The custom of abstaining from services on account of a funeral died hard. For some time I would arrive unannounced at a church or prayer house only to find no one around. They had all gone to another village with no thought for the visitor who might come to worship at their church. I added to my prayer list the petition, "O Lord, grant that this Sabbath there may be no funeral."

I soon discovered throughout the field that the instruction of the Bible class members left much to be desired. It was necessary to translate and print a manual of Bible doctrines and also have a more faithful register kept of their class attendances. When this plan was perfected it was seen that the number of apostasies markedly declined.

The pastors at first did not take kindly to my close inspection of their activities; but finally came to see that a solid foundation was essential if the church was to accomplish its task. I kept the following letter as indicative of this change of attitude.

12th April, 1946

"Sir,

"I have for a long time longed to write you a personal letter. I hope you arrived back in Blantyre, and perhaps you are now resting after your long visit to Cinyama section.

"I wish to confess, Sir, that we have many times wrongly spoken of you, especially when you first came to Nyasaland. We said your going about was only a matter of telling us how to work, and thought you would then sit in your chair and

watch for what natives can do.

"It is, Sir, quite a long time since we saw a missionary running to and fro as you do. So we began to think that it was because of stones in some of our places and unpleasant homes of our poor people that made it impossible for the missionaries. It was in the days of Elders Pond, Ellingworth and some few others that worked wonderfully as you do in this country.

"At your last visit here, Sir, I found you like the old Paul. I especially think of your car in the mud near the Naikawanjala market as Paul's journey to Rome at Melita when the ship was wrecked. I think of you being heavily confined with rain at Mbiza, just the same as Paul at the island gathered bundles of sticks for the fire when the viper bit him. I think of your long and tiresome journey from the Khonjeni Siding to Sandama and on to Mlonda village school. And last of all think of you suffering hunger when the Tucila river was full so that I tried in vain to go over it for your food at Sandama; the very same thing that happened to Paul in his long trips, and for the same purpose of finishing the proclamation of this Message.

"We are indeed so ignorant of what is our work. Our gratitude for how much you think of us we fail to show, but we realise how much you love our country and people.

"Sir, may the Lord wonderfully bless your work and remember us in your prayers.

"I am, Sir,

Yours truly,

A. Birstone Kalonga."

The checking of the church records of membership was a permanent task. In a country where many of the male members went away to Rhodesia for work it was hard to keep tally of them. If they wrote home to say they were keeping the Sabbath we knew all was well with them. But silence usually meant they were working on that day. No five-day

working week existed. Each man had to fight the battle of the Sabbath with his employer. Too frequently the attitude was: "God will judge the European because he did not grant my request for the Sabbath. It is not my fault I have to work on that day."

I wish I had kept an account of all the miles I travelled in checking the records in that one union. Business meetings were necessary when warnings were given on unbecoming conduct, and actions taken on those who refused counsel. No one liked doing that work. Many missionaries found they had other pressing problems to attend to. The Africans were reticent to sit in judgment on their brethren, even though they had apostatised. They were still "our brother."

In fact, once elected to an office, they imagined they always retained the title. People would be addressed as deacons long after they had vacated that office. It was hard to change an elder. A chief or headman who had given land for a church always referred to it as his church, even though he was still a polygamist.

I made it my goal to visit every church, school, or company, however small. This entailed a lot of walking. But walking develops muscles. I could walk most Africans to a standstill. But this did not help matters when my wife asked me to accompany her for a walk. I developed the African habit of walking several yards ahead, which was not appreciated.

Extensive visitation gave one the chance to see the kind of buildings used in the mission programme. Some were good, solid structures, others the reverse. In many cases it was easy to generate enthusiasm for a brick structure. Some of the practical pastors did very good work in this line, and it was always a pleasure to dedicate a new church. Whenever government money went into a school they always insisted on a representative building.

I recall one place where the people took no notice of the

order to close the school which had become a hazard to the children meeting there. Next time I arrived it was still being used, but it could have fallen at any time. So I took an axe and chopped through the centre pole holding up the roof. When I heard the timbers straining I rushed for the door just in time to see the structure fall to the ground. It was not long before a new and safer building appeared.

Mozambique or Portuguese East Africa was included in our union. It was a hot, trying journey of 250 miles on dusty roads; not to be attempted in the rainy season. Customs at the border could produce many questions about visas and permits, but these generally disappeared when a pound of Malamulo butter was "forgotten" on the counter.

We often saw lines of prisoners chained together proceeding along the road with their loads. A similar practice pertained in the Congo. But it has long since ceased.

The establishment of the Munguluni mission required much patience and tact. M. M. Webster and his wife lived in a native hut for many years before permission was obtained to operate a school. The Roman Catholic Church claimed the territory, and Protestant missions were not welcomed.

The local government official was always needing educated Africans for his work or the army quota. Many times, just before the close of the school year, his messenger would appear at the school and remove the brightest boys. It became hard for the mission to develop indigenous workers, and for many years dependence was on teachers brought over from Nyasaland.

Persecution of our believers often took place. They would be faced with spurious charges. Punishment was often by paddling. This was a flat wooden board with holes drilled in it. The delinquent was required to hold out his hands, which were then beaten to a pulp. Their feet were often bastinadoed. Many would run away to hide in the forest.

On one occasion when the Websters had declined to take

the children of the local official to be privately taught at the mission, because they had no time for such work, their house servants were brought out and put through the above punishment outside their house.

Mission work in this area took a long time to find its roots. But in recent years a remarkable growth has taken place. Latest reports show over 15,000 believers in this territory.

The Africans were much interested in the marital state of their president. Many prognostications were made as to who would be his future companion. There were several eligible nurses and lady workers in the union. But I disappointed them all. God had other plans. A lady born on lonely St. Helena Island had come to South Africa and accepted the Message. Three of her sisters lived in Nyasaland. She would sometimes pay them a visit. On the last occasion she delayed returning home. That was fatal. Our friendship commenced.

We decided to have the wedding before a full African congregation in the large Malamulo church. When it was over and we were on our way to a cottage on Zomba mountain we met one of the pastors. He took one look into the car and gasped, "It is not her." He was thinking of another eligible lady.

Laura and I became permanently tied together, for her son Arthur married my daughter Enid. They became missionaries in Ruanda.

Soon after our marriage we set off on a camp meeting trip with J. M. Hnatyshyn. One night, with a full moon, we came on the approach to a bridge. The road had been made up with white sand. It all looked safe until we went into a skid and over the bank. Though our brother heaved mightily, we could not get any traction on the slope and had to wait two hours before a solitary African came along. On seeing our plight, he went in search of help. Several men appeared with hoes and cut the bank down sufficiently for us to get

back on the road.

We congratulated ourselves that there was no damage to the car; but our troubles had just begun. Later in the safari a noise developed in the front wheel. On removing it I found the ball race in a bad state. What to do? The nearest garage was 250 miles away. Our last camp 90 miles ahead. They were expecting us. We decided to go on. The noise grew worse. The twists and turns down the escarpment to Luwazi mission was all the wheel would take. It was quite evident we could never return home without a new part.

There was a post office at the lake, 17 miles away. We sent a telegram to the office at Blantyre asking for a replacement. But it was still war time. There was no such part in the country. They wired Rhodesia. No success. Then word to Cape Town to catch the returning missionary in the hope he might secure one and bring it along.

A trader near the mission said, "There is an abandoned Chevrolet truck in the bush near here. Why not borrow your part there?" We did find one and fitted it. But after a few miles it chewed up. We were truly stranded 500 miles from home.

Our visitor had appointments to meet in far-away Angola. The trader friend said he was going up the escarpment on Sabbath morning and would be glad to give him a lift so he could catch a truck going south. It was most unfortunate he would miss taking the main service. The trader was late owing to an attack of fever, and a hectic rush up the escarpment took place. It was not long before our brother had lost his breakfast. But he made the connection just in time.

A missionary of another church had already found the most comfortable seat and our brother had to climb in the back. He was in no condition to endure the aromas, and stood all day poking his head out of the canvas awning for fresh air. After 400 miles of rough travel in three different

trucks, he reached the railway at Lusaka, dirty, bruised, and weary.

In the meantime we had finished the camp meeting and tried to decide how we could get back home without a car. There being no further offer of help, we decided to climb the Vipya escarpment on foot. Laura might get some assistance from a bush chair we found on the station. She tried it but nearly fell out twice and decided feet were safer.

A number of boys from the school were called and early in the morning we set off. It was pleasant walking through the forest even though the climb was steep. A missionary of the Church of Scotland, who knew of our coming, graciously came to meet us in his car at the top of the climb. A bath and comfortable bed at his home were most welcome.

Next day we took the same truck to the south as had J. M. Hnatyshyn, and after two and a half days reached the railway at Salima. From there it was easy going to Blantyre.

In the meantime W. L. Davy came back from furlough to go to Luwazi. A spare ball race was finally obtained. We asked him to detach the front axle and send it by lake steamer so it could be checked. When this was done the garage could not understand why we had had so much trouble as everything was in alignment.

So with renewed hope I proceeded to take the assembly back to Luwazi, using the steamer on Lake Nyasa. The boat was a small one. It had hit rocks and stranded several times so that its bottom was reinforced with much cement.

Navigation on Lake Nyasa is not easy. The narrow lake gets more contracted towards the north as mountains on the east and west cause a funnel for violent winds. The government replaced the old Mpsa with a new ship called the Vipya. It had not been in commission long before it foundered in the northern part of the lake with the loss of the

captain, all white passengers, and most of the Africans.

On the old Mpsa there were a few first class cabins. The Africans all travelled on deck. There was a set number of passengers allowed, but the African who supervised the embarkation got mixed in his counting, and everyone who could get on board. Being naturally of a cheerful disposition they would talk all day and night. Only when the wind arose and the ship pitched did the hubbub cease. But then mal de mer became so general that the stench came aft, and one was forced to keep them company.

The front wheels were duly attached to the car and I drove back home without further trouble, except that I was some £35 poorer, but much enriched in experience.

North Nyasaland was different from the southern part of the country, which had its towns and tea estates. For 400 miles north of Lilongwe there were no towns, garages, or shops, other than a few Indian stores for the African trade. Luwazi mission was situated in the heart of a forest. Baboons were plentiful. Just how many W. L. Davy killed we never knew. The number changed each time we saw him. They were bold creatures and knew instinctively when he was at home. They would approach the house when only a woman was there, and stalk the chickens to kill them.

The Tonga people near the mission did not respond readily to the Gospel. Schools and churches were spread over a very wide area. This did not daunt a pioneer of the calibre of W. L. Davy who established the work for a hundred miles to the north.

There is a unique hill near the great north road called Mt. Hora. The story is told that a local chief was attacked because he had accumulated a large store of ivory. Being desperate in his retreat, he went up this mountain and cast his treasure into a deep crevasse. It has never been found. I often wished for time to try my luck.

In the early days many schools were off the road. Some-

times the teacher and children would scratch a track but it was perilous to take a car through for fear of stumps, sharp sticks and rocks.

One such trip was to the Nthalile school. We had arranged for porters to meet us at a certain place where an old track left the main road. But, as so often happened, no one was there. To save time we decided to try the track. Before long a deep gully appeared. There were logs in the river bed. These rotated under the wheels so we could not get out again.

The teacher and his men arrived as we were struggling with the situation. Much precious time was lost jacking up the car to pack the river bed solid so there would be traction to get the car out. After all the struggle we had not gained much, for it soon became necessary to proceed on foot for the rest of the day. A twenty-mile hike does not soon fade from the memory. As Laura and I climbed into the hills we kept asking when we would reach the school. "Oh, just over the next hill," would be the reply. Not until three hours after sunset did the elusive building appear. The whole village turned out to see the first white woman to penetrate to those parts.

On another safari we went to our northernmost school in Nyasaland. As the car could not reach there, we obtained bicycles. The country was flat. Laura could not ride, so she sat on the carrier behind one of the two evangelists. Porters would see that our food and bedding arrived safely.

On the other side of the first river was a truck with a European who was going to shoot crocodiles. This was quite a profitable business as long as the crocodiles lasted, for their skin made useful handbags. He invited us to take a ride in his truck, seeing it was going our way. The porters gladly accepted a lift. For some reason the two evangelists failed to get on.

When our ride came to an end there was only the cycle I

rode to continue the journey. I suggested Laura try the carrier once more. But I had never done this kind of transportation and before long we found ourselves on our backs beside the road. We tried again with no better success. What a sight - the president of the field on a cycle with a woman on the back. Fortunately no one was around with a camera. We walked the rest of the way.

What kind of a place had they prepared for us? As often happened, the work had been delayed. The walls of the hut had only been mudded that morning. The place was so damp it was impossible to sleep in. We decided to try the school. But there was no privacy there. Swarms of minute black flies tormented us. The porters did not turn up till dusk. And the evangelists? They arrived even later. They sheepishly said they had had trouble with the chain of one cycle. I suspected a conspiracy to avoid the extra passenger.

Along the eastern side of Lake Nyasa and at its southern end live the Yao people. They had early come in contact with the slave traders. Many embraced the teachings of Islam. They understood the Swahili language.

Chief Nyambi sent word he would like to see me. It was a long journey from Blantyre, but I was glad I went. His request was that we commence a school in his village. "Why do you, a Moslem chief, ask for a Christian school?" I said. He replied, "I have watched the lives of the students who go to the Malamulo mission. They are different from the students of other schools. I want my children to be like them." "But," I said, "there will be trouble in this village as soon as the teacher comes." "I am chief here. There will be no trouble." He kept his word.

We put up a permanent building. Soon we had a minister in addition to the teacher. The time came when the first-fruits were ready for baptism. I arrived to examine them. The pastor said, "There is one boy we are not sure about. His father is the head Moslem teacher in the village. There

will be trouble if we baptize this young man." He was called, and we set before him the possibility of an angry father. He was determined to be baptized.

The service was set for Sabbath afternoon. The candidates assembled in the school. I counted them. There were only six. One was missing. It was the son of the Moslem teacher. Where was he? One of the candidates volunteered the information. "I was passing by his house just now when I heard angry voices. The father was shouting, 'If you get baptized, I will disown you. I will not be disgraced by a son of mine becoming a dirty Christian dog. I will slit your throat from ear to ear.' That was all I heard."

I suggested we have a prayer service first. All remembered this young man that his faith fail not. Then we proceeded down the hill to the river. The pastor and the six candidates entered the water and the onlookers assembled up on the bank. Just as he was preparing to immerse the first candidate we were aware of someone running towards us. The people parted and in rushed the missing boy. He had made it. Entering the water, he made his promise to be faithful to the Lord Jesus.

But that evening, what a scene there was at his father's house! The pastor laboured throughout the night trying to persuade him not to carry out his threat to kill his son. In the teachings of Islam any apostate from that religion should be put to death. The young man lived to participate in the first Christian marriage in that village.

Chapter XI

PREACHING THE GOSPEL

Listen to a union committee in session. The subject under discussion is the annual evangelistic efforts. The president is speaking.

"I have planned my time so that I can take part in an evangelistic effort. The office work can take care of itself for a little while. We must make these meetings worthwhile. Two weeks just visiting the people is not enough. They must be encouraged to attend a meeting each day. Plan to present the whole (Bible) truth to them as you remain there five weeks.

"I am sure that each of the station directors will be joining in this programme. We know all the ordained ministers will respond. Though it is the three months' school holiday we feel sure the teachers will volunteer to take part. Qualified laymen will be welcome also. The principal of the training school has promised his services and the doctor at our hospital will be available for health talks. He will find time for his nurses to do village visitation and hold outdoor clinics."

So the yearly evangelistic programme was planned. Each effort constituted either a move into new territory, or the revival of the work where the original membership had moved away. Teachers would be allocated to each minister so that a team of six to ten would be available.

My group had seven teachers and a lay brother. Laura accompanied me. We spent five weeks in a grass hut some ten miles from Blantyre in Nyasaland. The only evidence of any former evangelistic work in the place we went to, was a circle of "Christ thorn" which had been planted round the former school. But all evidence of the building or its influence had long disappeared.

Before commencing the meetings we visited the neighbourhood, announcing our plan. No handbills were used as many

could not read. We chose a suitable tree and erected an enclosure of reeds. This was essential to ensure attention. The audience brought their own chairs, stools, or sat on a mat. A simple platform, roughly constructed, ensured the speaker did not walk too far during his sermon. A powerful pressure lamp was essential, as charts and diagrams would be used, the meetings being held in the evening.

A blackboard placed outside the enclosure or in a strategic position to catch the eye of passers-by announced the different subjects. It was necessary to think in terms of the African mind. Some titles appealed more than others. You were sure of a good audience in response to the following:

WHEN WILL SATAN TAKE HIS HOLIDAY?

(The Millennium)

FREE HOMES FOR ALL

EXCHANGE YOUR OLD HUT FOR A NEW ONE

(New Earth)

One big draw was the still picture. Africans did not always recognize the image quickly on the moving screen. It was better to take time to explain it. I did not find the overseas film strips of much appeal, for all the texts were in English. The audience were not interested in New York skyscrapers or the capitol at Washington. But they did enjoy nature scenes with wild animals. Pictures of the primitives in New Guinea made them feel thankful for their own way of life. Some would come just to see the pictures and timed their arrival accordingly. To meet this we often changed the time of picture showing.

One of the most important parts of the effort was the daily visitation. The morning would be occupied with a workers' meeting, when reports of the previous day's activities would be considered. Clothes were washed and food prepared. Picture rolls were helpful, even if they were not on the actual subject of the meetings.

It was an asset to have one's wife able to take part in the

visitation. White women did not often go to African villages. Drinking parties would sometimes be encountered. Once Laura was threatened by a man with a knife. At such times it was necessary to put on a bold front, and give no evidence of being afraid.

It was no use holding an effort unless there were plans to have a place for the new converts to meet in. Gathering the people under a tree sufficed only for a time. We always tried to get a building commenced before the meetings closed. This was possible with the help of the teachers.

Where we were camped, no trees were available except by purchase. So I thought of making a pressed mud structure. The procedure was to use boards held together at a specified width and ram earth into the cavity. When this dried, the boards were raised and the process repeated. But we had no boards. To compensate for this we made the walls two feet wide. The first day we put a layer of mud two feet deep all round the foundations. Two days later it was dry enough to take the second layer. Thus the walls grew, guided by the eye alone.

The mud was puddled to the correct consistency in a nearby hole. We formed a hand chain to get it to the building. Laura and I stood with the others passing handfuls of mud along the line. Everyone sang to keep up the spirits. When the interested ones saw that even the missionaries were helping with their building, they also came to assist.

By the time the meetings closed, there was a prayer house ready for the new converts. It was solidly built and has stood over twenty years. The only cost was the purchase of the roof poles.

A card was given to each one who made the decision to follow Christ. I recall one man who so requested. But next evening he came to the meeting the worse for drink. I asked him to give me back the card until he had thought things over more fully. This had the desired result. He

later became a strong deacon and had charge of the tithe barn.

A Bible class was always started before the meetings closed, and one of the team selected to be the leader of the new converts. In this case it was the lay brother who remained with them. He worked hard.

Eighty decisions were received and several baptisms followed. After a year a church was organized. Being centrally located it became camp-meeting rendezvous for the district.

This in brief gives one an idea of the thousands of evangelistic efforts held all over Africa each year. Sometimes they are in well-equipped halls in towns, but by far the greater number are conducted under primitive conditions in the bush.

The camp-meetings were usually planned to follow the efforts and so give the new converts their first taste of Christian fellowship. The annual camp was the great event of the year for all members. Except on large stations, it was necessary for everyone to build temporary huts in the bush. This brought a spirit of unity with the missionary sharing in the camp life. Where the meetings were on a mission station the people found their home duties oftentimes more important than regular attendance at the services.

To commence a round of camp-meetings one needed to make careful preparation, for there might not be opportunity to return home for many weeks. Camp beds and mosquito nets, pots and pans, a canvas wash basin, a pressure lamp, a primus stove if you did not want to cook with wood on stones, changes of clothing for hot or cold climate, (for temperatures in Africa can vary considerably); some rope on which to hang towels and clothes, and a large piece of tenting to ensure a measure of privacy if you should be in a hut with no door or window shutter.

As to the food, you tried to obtain milk, vegetables, and

fruit locally, but it all depended where you were. A reserve of dried or condensed milk was useful. Ants would penetrate any package. Putting the food box on stones helped but screwed, stoppered bottles were best. One had to look out for the butter for dogs had a great liking for it.

When settling into a hut it was necessary to watch out for the kind which had a starlight brand of roof. Many times one could not tell just where to put the bed until a heavy storm revealed the leaks. One dare not walk around barefoot, especially at night, for fear of scorpions and snakes. Old buildings had to be avoided for therein hid the ticks. These came out at night and fed on your blood and left one with tick fever.

Privacy was not easy to come by, especially when ablutions were concerned. I recall hearing of one lady worker who was of much interest to the villagers. Curious folk surrounded her hut and penetrated inside. She badly needed a bath. Retiring to a clump of long grass, which seemed to offer adequate protection, she commenced to wash. When halfway through, a voice called out in the tree above her, "She is white all over."

A very useful asset was a collapsible chair. Without this small means of comfort one was condemned to a local contraption which had no support for the back. Sitting on chairs made in Africa for twelve hours a day was a real trial of patience.

A three- or four-legged stool was preferable. Some tribes specialised in these. The Kisii used to cut out the stool from the wild fig tree while it was still full of sap. As the seat of the stool was formed they would tap into the soft wood, coloured beads which formed an ingenious pattern.

The camp ground was usually under a large tree. Some progressive station directors encouraged the planting of groves. The meetings had to be held during the dry season as there was no protection against rain. Only once do I

recall an attempt to provide a complete cover for a camp and that was in Mashonaland.

It was necessary to surround the site with a fence. When left to local supervision I found they always left many openings so the audience could come and go as they pleased. I was not very popular when I insisted on only one opening and had it guarded with a strong deacon. Sometimes I found it necessary to plant my chair in this particular spot in order to allow a late afternoon meeting to be completed.

Any shade was at a premium and was quickly occupied by the men. Depending on the position of the sun, one often found there was no one sitting directly in front of the platform. One needed the eyes of a chameleon to focus on those sitting in the shade of the fence.

I have often marvelled at the enthusiasm of the members in undertaking the journey to camp. It could be as much as twenty-five miles on foot. Blankets, cooking pots, chairs, food, etc., were all carried on the head. Later, parties would combine and hire a truck. Prosperous farmers would load their goods on an ox cart. No one seemed to worry as to how they slept during the meetings. Some groups delighted in singing all night. Often thorn bush was cut and dragged into a circle. Around a central fire the group slept on the ground. In other parts an advance party would appear to erect the huts required. G. A. Lewis, of the Kisii field, tried hard to get his people to make permanent camps and had an annual prize for the church which had the best huts.

Interruptions to meetings were frequent and seemed more so just at the time an appeal was being made. A hut would catch fire and the meeting would empty before you could complete your sentence; for no one was sure it was not his hut which was burning. Sometimes there would be a shout of "snake" at a critical juncture, and the audience would melt away. At one camp the visiting minister was

just making his appeal on Sabbath morning when a car passed carrying a corpse. He never finished his appeal for there was no one left to talk to. All wanted to know who had died. A swarm of bees was also very effective in emptying a meeting. Once we conducted an ordination service, and when the mats were later rolled up we found we had been kneeling on a puff adder. Satan was truly under our feet at that service.

The camp meeting was usually a joyous occasion. Groups prepared songs, so there was no lack of special music. It was often difficult to find time for all to voice their talent. Some tribes excelled in part singing, and could blend their voices as well as many an overseas choir.

Many Africans have an amazing memory. While I was still in Kenya, in addition to being president, I took on the duties of Missionary Volunteer secretary. We had no budget for these valuable brethren. To help the youth I would plan a tour of a month or so, with a meeting each day at a different church.

Each church was divided into three age groups. These were designated "armies." The children constituted the first army. Then followed the youth; while the third was composed of the married members. No young person wanted to be transferred to the last army, for they termed it "the army of the dead." This was not really true. We had to extent the age limit to accommodate them.

One condition when applying for membership in the second army was to be able to memorize a chapter of the Bible having at least twenty verses. This proved no difficulty. Many would stand up and repeat several chapters. Some would take the longest chapters in the gospels, up to eighty verses, the Sermon on the Mount, and Psalm 119.

They would search out all the Gospel songs they could find in the hymn books of other societies, and later commenced to compose their own songs. Some dramatized

Biblical events. We had to draw the line when it came to the crucifixion.

Their understanding of the Scriptures increased considerably. They loved to have an evening at the district camp meeting when the different societies could pit their knowledge against each other. When midnight came we had perforce to close the proceedings.

There was no difficulty in attracting the youth into the church in those days.

In early times baptisms always took place at the camp-meeting. Converts from heathenism would usually spend at least one year in a preparatory class and another year in a baptismal class. All literate ones were expected to study the doctrines of the church with the help of a Baptismal Manual, and to attend the weekly instruction class.

Prior to the camp the mission director would have the evangelists bring in their candidates for examination. As the work grew this became impracticable, and the African ministers took over this responsibility in their churches.

As many as two or three hundred would be baptized at one meeting. The heathen enjoyed the spectacle and crowds of undisciplined people gathered round the place of baptism. It was not always easy to preserve a state of solemnity when these folk saw some cause for levity in any little incident.

Often a river flowed swiftly and it was hard to keep one's feet firm on the ground. At other times the mud in the pool was so deep that one sank into it a foot or more. In their excitement candidates often forgot the instructions to shut the mouth and hold the breath. As they came up gasping and spluttering, a ripple of laughter would go round the crowd. Worse still was when an oversize candidate would appear and the small stature missionary would lose his footing and disappear under the water or down stream.

G. A. Lewis tried to correct this by building a brick baptistery on the top of the hill where the camp was held.

The candidates had to bring up the required water from the river far below. No easy task, except that there were several hundred of them. In this way three or four baptismal services took place during the camp without any interruptions. But the Africans felt that as Jesus was baptized in a river, they should follow His example.

Of hazards there were many. One could easily contract the disease of bilharzia. I always wore tennis shoes, socks and long trousers. Once I tried an imported ministerial suit. It blew up like a balloon and I could not keep my feet on the bottom. One was always waiting to be bitten by a water snake, or seized by a crocodile. Africans often put stakes at the place of baptism to keep these predators at bay.

I once had a small baptism in Lake Nakuru, in Kenya. This lake is beautifully situated amidst the mountains and its shores are lined with millions of the pink flamingo. But it is very shallow. I must have waded out a quarter of a mile before finding sufficient water. After I immersed the black candidates they came up white. The water was alkaline.

One Sabbath in the Kisii hills the baptism had been planned for the afternoon. There were several hundred candidates. In that part it was customary for each one to be dressed in white. What an impressive sight it was to see this long line of white figures coming down the mountain-side to the river. This Kuja river was very cold when one had to stand in it for an hour or more. There was a natural amphitheatre in which to seat the crowd. After a short address three of us entered the water. Before long, dark clouds gathered and a severe hailstorm broke. The water was lashed and we were soaked. I called to the others, "Stick it out," and we did. Normally the crowd would have bolted for cover but when they saw us carrying on, they stood their ground, and the full baptism was conducted successfully.

The invasion of an unruly element into a camp could upset the best prepared plans. Once in Nyasaland I became aware of a large group of noisy youth. In an endeavour to meet the situation I changed the procedure. Instead of saying, "We will now go to the river," I called on the children to go first. If they did not have precedence, they would be pushing their way through the crowd until they fell into the water. Then I asked the mothers to arise and go to their place. By this time the noisy youth discerned my plan and saw they were to be relegated to the rear. With a great whoop they rushed out, trampling down the fence, and raced to the river to obtain the best position.

I told the pastor to take the candidates to his house. There we waited quietly. After an hour, stragglers began to come up from the river. "When is the baptism to take place?" they asked. We replied, "There is not going to be a baptism today after such a show of rowdiness." They did not believe it and hung around. But at last they tired and went home. At sunset we proceeded to the river and had a very quiet service.

In the Ruanda area there were two places where the camp-meeting attendance could amount to ten thousand. Early Sabbath morning one could watch the long lines of white-clad figures appearing on the mountain slopes above the mission. When all were seated together it was a great sea of faces. Teachers with light canes, as a symbol of authority, would keep watch over their charges. Before the day of the public address system it was necessary for the words of the speaker to be relayed by men stationed in the crowd. I often wondered how much of the original message reached those in the last row. At the close of the sermon hundreds would come forward in response to the appeal. Billy Graham had not yet been heard of.

Many interesting characters came to camp-meetings. In the Luo country in the early days, the male population wore

no clothes. The women had a small piece of cloth behind but nothing in front. Yet these were their healthiest days, both physically and morally. With the arrival of clothes came pneumonia, for they did not know what wet garments could do.

One man appeared in church wearing a lady's discarded undergarment. Another had only a safety-pin to boast of, which he wore attached to the lobe of his ear.

An early missionary began to teach the women to cover their heads in church. In no time the fashion took on and soon every self-respecting sister appeared with a coloured scarf.

The Indian traders discovered that the women liked bright coloured lengths of cloth with various patterns printed thereon. Slogans in Swahili were added. The simple women of the hills, not knowing that language, failed to recognize that the wording on their dress constituted an invitation to immoral conduct.

Over in Uganda the bark-cloth was the dress of the Baganda women. This was prepared by beating to a thin texture the bark of a certain tree. It was not waterproof and could not be washed. The number of skirts worn indicated one's status in society. The skirt was lifted up at the back by means of cardboard so as to give the garment a swaying motion which, when occasion required, the women used with devastating effect.

Thus, one could expect almost anything at the camp-meeting in the way of dress. Men with army trench coats would sit sweating through the mid-day heat. When asked why they did not take them off and feel comfortable they would reply, "Someone might steal them."

At the Luwazi camp in north Nyasaland, some men had returned home from the mines in South Africa. Each brought his best suit on a coat hanger. After stroking it lovingly with a brush, they hung it up on the camp fence for

all to see and admire.

While the camp-meeting sometimes brought the undesirable element, it also revealed a number of folk with physical infirmities who made great effort to attend. The lame and the blind were often seen. I was amazed at Eneres Kobit, a cripple in Nyasaland. She had no legs to support her and could pull herself along only with the aid of two sticks operated by her strong arm muscles. Yet she dragged herself four miles to the camp and brought five pence in tithe.

The camp offering was the great offering of the year. It would be promoted for weeks in advance. Villages and churches set their goals. They usually knew in advance of the camp whether they had reached it or not. After the consecration service the offering was taken. Before the afternoon closed the results had to be placed on a blackboard for all to see. Further funds would then flow in, especially if some weaker company had not reached its goal. Stronger groups would then assist them. Only when the offering had reached a satisfactory state did the congregation feel it was time to go home. In the early days in Pare the workers used to give three months' salary towards this offering.

Except in the townships, the keeping of the Sabbath was not a problem with the rural membership. But the matter of returning to the Lord His tenth challenged everyone's faithfulness. Often at the camp one would hear incidents of the Lord's blessing and protection.

The members of a certain church were going to service on a Sabbath morning in the Kisii hills, when they noticed a strange-looking cloud in the sky. It soon became apparent that a large swarm of locusts was approaching. Already the heathen were hastening to their gardens, beating pieces of iron or anything which would make a noise. They rushed to their pastor to inquire what they should do.

He replied, "Whoever of you has been faithful in his

tithe-paying need not fear today. Assemble in the church." They went inside and there spent the whole of the Sabbath day in Bible study, singing and prayer. The noise from the heathen reached their ears but they continued to claim the promise of the Lord.

When the sun was setting the pastor said, "Let us now go forth to see the works of the Lord." They went to the valley where the crops grew. Everywhere was desolation. The locusts had stripped the green maize and there was no prospect of a harvest.

But when they reached their own gardens at the end of the valley what a change was seen. Not a stalk had been touched! All was green and promising. The heathen who followed them said, "We have worked all day to keep the enemy at bay and have not succeeded. You have just stayed at your church. What kind of medicine do you Christians have which protects your crops so wonderfully? We would like to buy it." The members opened their Bibles and read the promise of Malachi, where the Lord says if you will bring all the tithe into the storehouse He will rebuke the devourer.

The lions had been troublesome round our Mombera mission. The pastor told me he was sorely tempted to move his cattle to a place of safety. But then he considered his example to his members. So he called his family together and they had special prayer, reminding the Lord of His promised protection. In the morning the kraals of nearby families had been raided and losses sustained. He went round his cattle enclosures, and could see unmistakable evidence that the lions had been there also; but not one had attempted to jump inside.

Near the town of Zomba a young man, who was a follower of Islam, decided to accept Christ as his Saviour, and to keep the true Sabbath. By trade he was a repairer of bicycles. Now where he built his home there were already

three shops plying that trade. Everyone told him not to waste his time there, but go to another place. But he had faith that God would prosper him if he returned to Him His own - the Lord's tithe. First one, then another, and finally the third rival shop, closed down for lack of custom. Our new brother found his business increasing. The last time I saw him he had enlarged his workshop twice and bought the latest tools to do a better job.

Camp-meetings are an integral part of the evangelistic programme of the church in Africa and help bring its fruits to perfection.

Chapter XII

LIGHT-BEARERS OF AFRICA

"When is the BOOK coming? We have waited so long for it!"

The question was continually put to me as we expected the arrival of the Asu New Testament. Making this part of the Bible available to the Pare people had been undertaken by H. Kotz before World War I. Petero Risase had been associated with him in the work.

Translation of the Scriptures can be done only by one who knows the vernacular, and can put colloquial expressions in a way understood by Africans. It is always necessary for a missionary and an African to work together when the Word of God is concerned.

I heard of one missionary who did not know the language but was anxious to make the Bible available to the people. He just took a copy of the Swahili Old Testament, divided it into parts, and handed them to his teachers to translate. The result left much to be desired.

Owing to the war and its aftermath, the British and Foreign Bible Society could not print the New Testament in Asu. The suggestion was made, and accepted, that our publishing house in Hamburg undertake the work. One of the rules of the Bible Society is that no comments are to be made on the text. Being for a primitive people, the translators wanted to emphasize the Gospel texts which spoke of salvation. So, in the printing, an extra space was made between each letter of such texts. This tended to capitalize them.

When the New Testament at last arrived, the other mission society working for the Pare people charged us with breaking the rule of the Bible Society and said we had emphasized Adventist doctrines. This was not so. They would not use any of the Testaments. The result was we had

sufficient to supply all our people.

We have not had many translators of the Word in Africa. Grace Clarke early made many of the Old Testament books available in the Luo language. E. A. Beavon provided the book of Matthew for the Kisii tribe. Later G. A. Lewis gave them all the New Testament in Gusii. Over in Ruanda H. Monnier began work on the Bible in Kinyaruanda. This was finished by A. L. Hands in conjunction with the Church Missionary Society.

Translation is an exacting and time-consuming work. No missionary can leave a greater gift to Africa than putting the Word of God in the language of the people.

When one tries to preach in the vernacular, care must be taken to use the correct words. I am not sure whether I or another missionary preached a sermon on the theme that eternal life is the reward for accepting Christ as one's personal Saviour. After the address the question was asked, "Why does God give such a small reward as a lead pencil?" The word for eternal life was 'nkalamo' and that for a lead pencil, 'kalamu'. The preacher had got them mixed up.

A bishop was reported to have given a sermon on the parable of the Ten Virgins. It all seemed clear to him until someone wanted to know what was the purpose of the ten water pots. A virgin in the Swahili language is 'bikira', and a water pot 'birika'. So easy to go astray.

The circulation of the Word, either by the preacher or the printed page has always involved sacrifice and danger. Too much prominence is given to the names of white missionaries in comparison with those of black Africans. There are far more black missionaries than white in Africa. Hundreds have been willing to leave their own tribe to go to other parts with the Gospel message. Tribal jealousies still exist, and often their lives have been in danger among strange people. They have been willing to meet new customs,

eat unfamiliar food, and learn another tongue.

No white missionary can succeed without the help of his black brother. Most white missionaries in their travels need a dark-skinned companion as guide and interpreter. Very few white workers really get to understand their people. They may be very efficient in "directing" the work. But the basic needs of the people are met through their own pastors. Too often reports in home papers refer to the white missionaries by name and dismiss the others as "nationals." The white worker is always in the centre of the photograph, as though everything depended on him. The true story of our African missionaries remains to be written. But here are a few of them.

Harun Owuor and his wife, Ada, were sent from the Luo country to open up work in Utende, on the borders of Tanganyika. The witch-doctor saw danger in the arrival of a Christian teacher and proceeded to take steps to nullify his influence. Harun had taken pity on an albino child. These children lacked the correct pigment in their skin. Though white, they are born of black parents. Their skin is delicate, and the hot sun soon causes sores to break out. Their eyes are weak, and cannot bear the strong light. Most of them die young. The mother of an albino child feels ashamed.

The witch-doctor decided to use the albino in Harun's home for his own purpose. One day he called the lad and commanded him to collect the parings of the teacher's finger nails. He was also to bring him a piece of soap which had come in contact with his body and a few other items. Afraid of the witch-doctor the lad obeyed and delivered the goods.

Some days later, after eating his maize porridge, Harun had sharp stomach pains. Ada felt the same symptoms soon after. The witch-doctor had resorted to poisoning, and had used the albino child to put it in their food when

unobserved. For days the teacher and his wife lay between life and death. But God wanted their witness in the darkness, and they finally recovered.

Word got to the government official and he had the witch-doctor arrested. Harun was called to court but refused to lay a case against the man. This was something so new that everyone began talking about him. How was it possible to love one's enemies like this? Thus the foundation of a good work was laid by following the teachings of the Master.

Jeremiah Oigo went to open up work among the Kamba people in Kenya. Upon my first visit to see how he was getting along, I asked him where he found his first home. He replied, "The people would not receive me. I cooked my own food, and searched for a place to sleep. Most nights I waited until all was quiet in the village, and then crept into the large grain basket or store, and curled up on the cobs of maize."

Petero Risase, who went with me to Uganda, was later asked to take the Gospel Message to Mombasa. When I finally found him there, he was living in the midst of a fanatical Mohammedan community. His faithfulness under many hardships brought many to a knowledge of the Truth. He was only one of many of the Pare people who pioneered the work throughout East Africa.

Another was Paulo Kilonzo, who became the first leader of the literature-evangelists in Tanganyika. His travels took him to Zanzibar, Pemba and Dar-es-Salaam. At Morogoro he met a young man from Nyasaland. He convinced him of the Sabbath and he came to the Suji mission to study. After Jim had a full knowledge of the message and was baptised, he wanted to return to his people in Nyasaland.

Now his home was near Zomba, the seat of government. It had been found impossible to get the work started in that area. We could not just send in a teacher. Someone in that district must invite us. The door was closed.

But one day, as the committee was in session, Jim arrived back. He told them he was a resident of the forbidden place, and would volunteer, not only to invite us to establish a school, but would help in its construction. Thus the Lord converted a man in another country to return at the right time, with the right solution.

There were many light-bearers in the Kikuyu country during the terrible Mau Mau rising. This upsurge of heathenism was not directed only against the white settlers. Many more blacks than whites were killed. It was a diabolical terror. It would not be seemly to print the required oath in full, but the initiate was terrorised into undertaking ghastly murders and atrocities through fear and intimidation. The eyes of a dead goat would often be pinned up before him, and he would have to drink blood from a human skull.

A sister in the church had a husband who joined this society. He naturally expected her to follow him. But when she refused on the basis that a Christian could not carry out such evil practices, he grew angry and beat her. The demands and beatings continued for some time until he despaired, and went to seek advice from the Mau Mau leaders. They told him to bring his wife to them.

Saying that he had firewood in the forest to carry home, he got her to follow him. In the gathering dusk she finally found herself at a small hut. On going inside she saw three of these leaders. "So you have come to join us at last," they said. "No," she replied, "it is impossible for me, as a Christian, to commit the atrocities you do." "Then we will teach you," they replied.

Stripping her naked, they tied her hands and feet, and proceeded to suspend her from the main cross beam of the hut. Underneath her legs they kindled a fire. As the heat scorched her limbs, and the smoke entered her lungs, they demanded again that she join them. Her reply was, "I am a Christian and an Adventist. I cannot join you."

This only angered them the more. They added to the fire, and then, drawing their sharp knives, they proceeded to jab her naked body. "Join the Mau Mau," they shouted. "Join the Mau Mau!" Nearly suffocated, she gasped, "I cannot. I am a Christian." Frustrated by her heroism, they finally cut the rope, and let her down, saying to the husband, "Take her home. We can do nothing with her."

A girl worker was needed for the descendants of the Zulus in Rhodesia. Not finding one locally, a request was made to South Africa. A young girl named Mbeka was located. She had the necessary qualifications but thought it too far to go. But when her mother heard of the call, she praised the Lord and said she prayed for twenty years that one of her children might be a missionary, even to Lobengula's country. So Mbeka went and worked for several years. Finally she became discouraged and moved to Salisbury. There she found the message for today. The desire for service revived.

She thought of the neglected leprosy sufferers in the government colony at Mtoko. Nearby was a jail for long-term prisoners. She went to the superintendent to request permission to do missionary work among them, but he refused on the grounds that it would not be advisable for a woman to be there alone.

She did not take "No" for an answer, and made repeated requests for permission. Finally this was granted. Her witness led to a Sabbath school being started and the building of a prayer house. To the surprise of many a Bible class of nineteen resulted. Mbeka finally contracted leprosy and died, mourned by many.

Arthur Shumba was the leader of another church in Mashonaland. When he accepted the message he brought three-quarters of his church with him. He was in the process of acquiring his own farm, for the government had the policy of allowing successful farmers to secure the freehold

on their land and obtain loans for machinery. He was invited to become an agricultural demonstrator.

Not long after this, the government wanted to introduce pig-breeding and tobacco-growing for the Africans. He took a firm stand, saying that his religion forbade such practices. So strong was his witness that the proposed plan had to be abandoned in his area.

The district was later visited by the Queen Mother and Arthur Shumba was presented to her as the most successful farmer. She asked him which church he belonged to and he replied proudly, "I am a Seventh-day Adventist." He pays a faithful tithe and has many evidences of the blessing of the Lord.

The story of Alice Msumba need not be repeated here. She has written her own account in her book, "Alice Princess." I knew her as a young girl, and could appreciate the test which came to her when she met the requirement of the mission director that all progressive students should show their loyalty to Christ by spending their holidays doing missionary work. This was not too hard for the young boys but for a lone girl it required real courage.

I made the trip up the lake to the spot where she held her meetings. One had to go by dugout canoe. A canoe - at least the African variety - is a most uncomfortable thing to travel in. There were no seats. One sat and balanced on the side. As the afternoon breeze increased, the waves began to break into the boat. Fearing the rolling would land me in the lake, I tried squatting in the canoe. But the increasing bilge soon had me well soaked.

The people on the lake shore in Nyasaland do not do much work, but wait for money from their relatives who have gone to find employment outside the country, chiefly in the mines of South Africa. They were not the most promising candidates for the Gospel.

I can picture Alice hanging up her picture roll in one of

these villages and commencing to sing all alone. There must have been much curiosity, for young girls did not do that kind of work. God blessed her faith and a good interest developed. Even elderly mothers sent for her to pray in their homes. When she announced it was time for her to return to the mission to further her education, there was general disappointment. But one of the converts volunteered to continue reading the Bible lessons; so she left the Manual of Instruction and her hymn book with them.

Teacher Kennedy brought me back after I had dried out. The wind had gone down. As a token of appreciation for a safe return I tried slipping a small coin into his hand. It was promptly returned with the reminder that what he had done was for love and not reward. May his tribe live long and increase!

Timothy set out with his books. It was not long before he was in a wild part of the country. After a successful visit to one village, he inquired the way to the next one. "Up the path," they said, "but we advise you not to go." He knew the rule that no house must be missed. So off he went. The grass was many feet tall.

Suddenly the path opened and there before him was a pride of lions! What could he do? To run would only excite them. To climb a tree might prove perilous, for lions also climb; and it might turn out to be a thorn tree.

He thought of Daniel and his experience. Dropping to his knees in front of the lions, he closed his eyes and prayed, "God of Daniel, Thou who didst deliver thy servant from the fierce lions, deliver me also." He kept repeating this prayer for some time. Then opening his eyes he looked for the enemy. All he could see were their tails disappearing in the bush.

He went on rejoicing, and came to his destination. But the village entrance through the hedge was all barred up. Heavy posts had been placed there. He began calling. After

a while someone appeared to ask where he had come from. He replied, "Along the road." "Did you not meet the lions? They have troubled us all day."

"Yes," he said, "I met them all right, but my God delivered me when I prayed to Him."

The heathen village was all agog with excitement to see a man who had been delivered from the marauders. They crowded round him. They listened to his story. Some bought his books. He stayed some days and started a Sabbath school.

Over in Angola a man and his wife were in constant disagreement. Often as they quarrelled, knives would be used. Finally, the wife killed her husband. At the trial there were found to be extenuating circumstances. She was sentenced to be imprisoned for sixteen years.

Prison life soon unhinged her mind. She began to attack the warders. No one had the courage to enter her cell. Food was pushed in under the raised door.

It was at this time that the wife of one of our missionaries began to visit this prison. As her efforts to help the inmates became known, she was referred to as the "woman padre."

It was not long before she heard about the mad woman. She went in search of her, and stood at the bars of her cell. Whenever anyone approached, the poor soul would cry out and attempt physical violence. Our sister showed no fear, and began to talk to the wild woman, singing softly some Gospel songs. The woman relaxed and was quiet.

After a while she asked a warder to please open the door of the cell. "No. I could not do that. You would be attacked. We are responsible for your safety while you are in this building." It was necessary to make the request several times before the key was turned and the bolts withdrawn. "You go in entirely at your own risk."

She went in. She sat with the poor creature. She held

her hands. She prayed with her. After a few weeks the woman gave her heart to Jesus. The wild eyes were calm. No more shrieks echoed through the corridors. The warders were amazed.

Then the converted one showed an interest in the other prisoners. Her Bible was her constant companion. Finally she requested, and was given, the key of her cell, so she could go into the town and hold Bible studies with her old friends. Everyone talked about the miracle that had taken place. Even the judge, who tried her case, remarked that he had never seen anything like it before. Finally the people of the town got up a petition requesting a reduction of her sentence or its cancellation.

In Northern Nyasaland a young man, brought up in the teachings of Islam, began wondering how he could improve his prospects. His religion only taught him the Koran and the Arabic language. He could see that a knowledge of English was necessary if he should seek for remunerative work. He decided to find a mission station which would accept him, a Moslem.

At the first place where he directed his inquiries and explained his faith he received a welcome. "Why, yes, by all means. Come in." "But I have one other question. Do you here eat the flesh of the pig?" "Oh yes. There is no harm in that." He replied, "I am sorry, I will not be able to join you for, as a follower of Mohammed, I do not eat swine's flesh."

He tried a number of mission stations operated by several societies. They were all ready to welcome him. But he could not accept their hospitality for they were all eating the food forbidden by the Koran.

After many days his search led him to our Adventist Malamulo mission. When he again asked the question about eating pig's flesh, he was surprised and delighted when the reply came, "No, we do not eat pig's meat, for the Bible

declares it to be unclean." He replied, "Then this is where Allah wants me to be."

His name was Billiat Sapa. He not only started to learn English but took the teacher training course. He became very interested in the Christians who were known as "the clean church" for they neither used tobacco nor took intoxicating liquor, which also he was forbidden to do. It was not surprising that he soon joined the Bible class and was baptized.

On becoming a qualified teacher he was sent into the lower Shire valley to look after a school. This valley is subjected to periodic flooding, and has a large area of swamp. I used to dislike visiting the schools of that area on account of the mosquitoes which attacked one day and night. If one stayed for several days it was useful to take along such a large mosquito net that it could serve as a dining room. Each morning, so many mosquitoes would be waiting for your blood that the cook would have to sweep them off the net before you dressed.

All mission committees continually have their eyes on the unentered parts of the field. It was not surprising when the decision was made that it was time to send a worker to the very north of the country near the Tanganyika border. Whom to send? "Why, Billiat Sapa is a Yao and has come from those parts. Let's ask him to be the pioneer." So the call was sent to him and he responded.

But the devil often listens in to committee plans. He sent word to the north in advance of Billiat's arrival. The report was circulated that a heretical teacher was coming. No one was to welcome him nor provide him with food or shelter.

Africans always welcome strangers, offer them food and a place to sleep. But when Billiat reached his destination, there was no such welcome. Religious prejudice played its part. Another society feared the coming of the Seventh-day

Adventist Church. They duly briefed their members.

Billiat had a wife and two children. Where could he house them? The country was flat. The crops grown were maize and rice. Platforms were placed in trees to serve as watch-towers to give warning against the raids of the baboons. All he could do was to place his family on one of these tree platforms.

As food was unobtainable, he had to ask his mission director to ship him maize flour from the Luwazi station, far to the south. He collected it from the lake steamer and carried it to his tree-top home. Soon the dry season came to an end. The rains commenced. The flat country became a lake. The mosquitoes multiplied. Then malaria struck. One of the children died.

In Africa a death is the opportunity for everyone to show their sympathy. To fail to attend a funeral lays one open to the suspicion of having caused the death of the deceased. This custom was a greater nuisance in the commercial world than the proverbial office boy wanting the afternoon off to attend his grandmother's funeral, but was seen at the popular sporting event.

In Billiat's case no one came to help. He dug the little grave and offered the prayers of committal. There were no sympathisers.

Then malaria struck again. The second child died. No one came to help. Was not this the teacher of false doctrines? The father performed the last rites.

A few weeks later Billiat's wife took ill. Though he managed to get her to hospital, she did not live long. His cup of sorrow overflowed. He was now quite alone, and unwanted in a strange land.

"See how God has judged the false teacher," said the local people.

When word finally got to the director of the Luwazi mission, he wrote a letter of sympathy and told him he was

free to come back. But his reply stands out in the history of our mission work.

Billiat wrote, "If I give up now and leave, all that has been attempted will be lost. By the help of God, I am determined to bury my personal sorrow for the sake of His work. I will remain at my post of duty." He did. How many white missionaries have returned home for troubles far less than this.

But the people were watching. Why did he not go home? He came again to their doors with greetings. He spoke again of the love of God. "Surely this man loves us. He must have a message for us." Gradually their homes opened and he was welcomed everywhere. A school was commenced and soon he had more children than he could teach. His work grew until there were several schools and an organized church to bear tribute to his faithfulness.

Billiat was one of those princes in Israel whom one counted it a privilege to work with. He never complained of sacrifice. He had learned of it the hard way. He was later asked to open up work at his home village. Old chief Kalembo requested a teacher for the village. But he also wanted him for a councillor. Though he was a Moslem, and all his people followed that religion, he was convinced that a Christian teacher would be a great asset. I had to tell him we could not pay a man to be a member of his council. The best I could do would be to allow him to attend one meeting a week so he could teach them the Christian principles of health and hygiene.

With the backing of the chief I felt it safe to proceed with the erection of a brick school. When opening day came, the chief attended, decked in his robes of office, and wearing the king's medal, which he had recently received for meritorious service. He was present at Sabbath school and the preaching service. At the close he gave the following message to his people:

"My fellow Ayaos, first I want to tell you that I am very thankful to God for sending us these European missionaries from overseas passing through many dangers because of us poor people. As you have heard of the blessings which come to those who keep the commandments of God, I beg and urge you to be examples to your children in keeping these things which you have heard today. When God says that you will receive blessings He means that you will find all those things you wish you had now. Therefore I ask you all who are present to go and tell others those things which we have learned today, and share these blessings with them also."

Turning to the children he said:

"When I was a boy in a Mohammedan school, I used to do three things at the same time. I went to school to learn, I went to dance, and I went to play with the girls. I thought my friends who were at school with me were lazy as they did not go about doing the things I did. When school was finished they would sit on their verandahs studying and reciting their lessons from the Koran, saying, hala! hala! hala!

"The time came for the final examinations. It was then found that I had wasted my time when I should have been studying. These friends of mine, who had worked hard, are now in responsible positions. If I have managed to be in a government place it is because I was born in a chief's family. If you will fail in your final examinations it will be because you have played when you should have worked. How then will you succeed in life?

"Although I am a chief, it is a pity that I have to ask some people to write and read my letters. Children, watch out! If you follow the instructions of the Bible you will be clothed in whiter clothes than those of the Europeans."

The same day I walked down the road to visit the homes of Billiat's relatives. After the usual greetings I retraced my steps to the school. I became aware that someone was

following me. It was Billiat's elder brother. "May I speak to you privately?" he said. "I have watched my brother for the past twenty years. He has been a Christian and I have been a Moslem. I am now satisfied that he has the true religion. I also want to be a Christian. May I please join the Bible class?"

What a testimony to a life lived in harmony with God.

Many more pages could I write on the light-bearers of Africa. Laymen and sisters, lepers, cripples, orphans, teachers and pastors have all carried the light from north to south, and east to west. The white missionary has not done it. It is the people of Africa. White missionaries are continually coming and going. Few stay long enough to know the people among whom they live, much less their language. Africa will be evangelized by her own people.

Chapter XIII

WAITING FOR THE GOSPEL MESSAGE

Unique among the tribes of Africa are the stately Masai. They rove the plains of central Kenya and northern Tanzania. Mission influence among them has been, and still is, small. They have clung to their approved way of life, and show no interest in civilization.

Inches beyond six feet tall, they stride after the moving herds of cattle, seeking pasture. Their habit of smearing rancid fat over their bodies enables one to smell their coming from afar. A blanket is often their only covering.

They have always been known as a warlike tribe. It was the practice of their young men to blood their spears by a surprise attack on a neighbouring tribe. No youth could be accepted into manhood until this was accomplished. Nor could he expect a girl to marry him.

The British government, who had much respect for this tribe, forbade the tribal raids. They suggested that, in their place, the young men prove their prowess by blooding their spears on the lions. It takes no small amount of courage to meet a charging lion when armed only with a long spear and a shield of buffalo hide. When the lion is slain, his mane is worn as a head-dress by the slayer.

The Masai hut is a low structure, without light or ventilation except what can come in through the door. Often there is a ceiling which prevents standing. Chickens, calves, sheep or other small animals occupy the hut at night with the family. To go inside in the early morning is a supreme feat of endurance.

The roof is mostly flat, and is rainproofed with cattle manure. It is the work of the women to see that it is regularly smeared to keep out the rain. Hospitality is generously dispensed, even to providing a temporary wife for the visitor.

Not being inclined to cultivate the land, they have devised a mode of diet peculiar to themselves. The returning herdsman, sensing hunger, does not call out to his wife to inquire if food is ready. He simply provides himself with a bow and arrow and a bowl. Proceeding to the cattle kraal, he shoots the blocked arrow into the jugular vein of a large ox. Then he catches the blood in the bowl and forthwith drinks it. Blood and milk form their main diet. No wonder the tribe is riddled with arteriosclerosis.

Neighbouring tribes still fear their night raids for the purpose of stealing cattle, and take precautions accordingly. I remember visiting a village in the Kisii hills bordering the Masai country. There was a break in the meetings for lunch in which I strolled through the huts. Suddenly a dog's teeth gripped my leg. I was immediately concerned, for the area was in quarantine for rabies. I must get to the doctor at once.

Arriving at the nearest hospital, some thirty miles away, I did not find the doctor. The sister put on a pad of picric acid and said, "Come again in the morning."

The doctor wanted to examine the dog. I did not have him. Yet it was most important to know if he was infected with rabies or not. Until this was established the discomfort of a series of injections hung over me. The doctor said, "The injections will cause your waist to swell so that you will need neither belt nor braces to keep up your trousers. You must bring the dog."

I set off for the village next morning. They were holding the regular Sabbath meetings. When I announced that I must have their dog, there were indignant protests. "He is our watchman," they cried. "Without him we would never know when the Masai are stealing our cattle." It took a long time to persuade them to allow the dog to go to hospital. I had to solemnly promise he would not be killed.

But the doctor wanted to do this very thing immediately.

Only by examining the brain can it be determined if the animal is infected. But I could not agree, even if it meant painful injections.

A compromise was finally effected whereby the dog was quarantined for three weeks. In the meantime I could go home and wait for a telegram. In three weeks I was due to sail for the General Conference in San Francisco. If I went without a clearance I might die a painful death of rabies on the high seas. It was a most distracting time. I booked passage by faith, and left the issue with the Lord. The day before I was due to sail the telegram arrived. It read, "No trace of rabies found." The dog got back safely to his nightly duties, and no more cattle were stolen by the Masai.

The Kisii Christians have shown commendable missionary endeavour in sending preachers to evangelize these stealers of their property. But, owing to the nomadic habits of these pastoral people, only one small group were baptized in thirty years. Other missions had a similar experience.

The Masai country teams with wild life. Overseas visitors used to enjoy a short respite from their duties in fancying themselves big game hunters. But the game knew they were amateurs. We once camped near a herd of elephants. The tent was small. We crawled over each other to get in and out. At night it was essential to keep three large fires going to persuade these denizens of the forest to keep away. We took it in turn to go out to stoke the fires.

Then the elephants came. We could hear them getting closer and closer. They were trampling the earth, and tearing down the branches of trees, and uprooting the saplings in a nearby ravine. One of them could have flattened our tent. But they passed on, leaving us to emerge bleary eyed to greet the coming dawn.

The Masai country merges with the large game reserve of the Athi plains to the southeast of Nairobi. Lions are regularly seen there. They have even been known to

penetrate into the city. We thought it would be nice to have a closer view of them. So R. A. Carey guided us to a known place. Many cars were already there, grouped in a semi-circle round a hillock. Two lionesses with cubs could be seen by the fortunate ones in the front row.

We decided to get round to the other side. The going was rough through long grass in which were hidden large lumps of earth. Just as we thought we were in the right position we stuck on a particularly large lump. Ron volunteered to get out to see how we were stuck. The door was hardly open when a stentorian voice was heard, "Get back in your car. Don't you know the rule?" No one was allowed to get out of a car in a game reserve.

I explained we were stuck, and to prove it put the gears in forward and reverse. "All right," he said, "wait until I come back." We waited until the sun went down and the other cars had departed. Was this to be where we would spend the night? Then the warden returned. He had a young man with him. Their car drew up and hid us from the view of the lionesses. Carefully he got out and inspected our position. Then both came and pushed us free. "Now get!" he shouted. We did, without wasting time.

The evangelization of the Masai will not be an easy task.

Out in the wastes of the Kalahari desert live the bushmen. Long ago these bushmen were able to rove all over southern Africa. But the influx of Bantu tribes from the north, and the coming of white men from the south, caused the remnants of their race to seek refuge in the desert. Their rock paintings of men and animals in the chase are found in many places, proving they once covered much of the country. Now, enveloped by the desert, the bushmen are seldom seen except by traders who penetrate their domain.

No one had really given thought as to how these simple children of the wilderness could be evangelized. They have no permanent home, often sleeping under bushes or in a

depression in the ground. When food is secured they gorge themselves full, well knowing that many days may elapse before another meal will come their way. The skin of their bellies, thus distended and contracted, becomes full of wrinkles.

One of them was dozing in the heat of the day when he saw a man in white standing before him. Said the stranger, "The great God wants to help you. Go and look for the true church and you will be taught what to do to serve Him. And this is the sign that will help you to know when you have found the true church." The man in white departed.

After the bushman had thought over the matter a few days he told his wife. Then he decided to visit some of the mission stations which were located near the railway in Bechuanaland. At each place he asked the question, "Are you the true church?" "Why, yes, of course, we are the true church. What can we do for you?" But no sign appeared. He turned sorrowfully away. Thus it went day after day until, discouraged, he returned home.

Some time later the man in white appeared again. "Why have you not found the true church?" he asked. "Go again. It is necessary that you find it." So the bushman decided to go to the golden city, the city where gold is mined and where the paving stones have gold in them.

This time he sold some goats he possessed and obtained enough cash to buy a ticket for the train. Upon arrival in Johannesburg he continued his inquiries for the true church. But while every group he approached claimed to be the elect of God, no sign appeared.

Again discouraged, he returned to the desert.

One day, meditating on his failure, he became aware of a cloud above him, but low in the sky. It seemed to be going to the east. Instinctively he began to follow it. The cloud kept moving at his pace all day. By evening, being far from home, he decided to sleep in the bush. Looking round, he

found the signs of stored water, and in a few minutes had an ostrich egg full of the precious liquid, which had been placed by other bushmen for such an emergency.

The desert can be bitterly cold at night, when the temperature often drops twenty to thirty degrees from that of the day. But the bushmen have inured themselves to hardship. Without blanket or covering he passed the night.

Next morning the cloud was there above him and moving to the east. He followed it all day, and again slept in the desert. This continued for five days.

Then he saw a village and approached it. A man came out and seeing the tired and hungry stranger, invited him to his hut. The bushman was overjoyed and was quickly refreshed with the food and drink set before him.

His host began to talk to him, mentioning the great God in heaven. As the conversation proceeded and the plan of salvation was unfolded, the man of the house got up and took down two books from a shelf. One was a Bible and the other a book from the Spirit of Prophecy. Immediately the bushman jumped up in great excitement. "This was the sign," he shouted. "I have found the true church!"

The householder was a deacon of the Seventh-day Adventist church. He patiently taught the bushman the love of God in the gift of His Son, and all that God required of those who desired to serve Him.

Finally the bushman said, "I must take this good news to my wife and people." As they arranged a time for him to come back, the deacon gave him a Bible. He returned it, saying, "I cannot read." But the deacon insisted. "Take it, and show it to your people. This will be your authority for what you will teach them."

He got home and began to teach his people. One day he noticed the Bible, picked it up, and opened it. Immediately he could read it. With this further evidence of God's power he pressed on with his teaching.

The time came to return to the deacon's village. It was the season for the annual camp meeting. He brought a number of followers those five days through the desert. When he arrived, the pastor was examining candidates for baptism. "Please examine mine," said the bushman. "Yours," replied the pastor, "what can they know?" But he complied and found them better prepared than those who had been instructed in the nearby villages. What is more, they had brought their tithes with them. Just where they found any increase out in the Kalahari desert is hard to imagine.

Each year the bushman brought new candidates, until he finally fell asleep in Jesus.

No missionary has yet gone to live with them to teach them the love of God and the soon return of His Son in glory. How long must they wait?

Like the bushmen, many more of Africa's people wait for the true light. I have mentioned the pygmies. Near them a large area of Central Africa remains in darkness. The Somali people, scattered from the northern part of Kenya to Eritrea, have few who profess loyalty to Christ. They wander through their desert country with their camels and cattle, much as do the Masai. The Sudan is beset with restrictions against the preaching of the Gospel.

The upsurge of Islam is a vital factor in the conversion of Africa. For years we thought of this religion as just holding what it had gained years ago. But it has suddenly become aggressive. The Ahmadiyyah sect, in particular, is strongly militant. They propagate the faith after the manner of Christian missions, making use of the press to produce tracts, magazines, and books which present Islam in very favourable terms.

Every Moslem trader is a missionary. He is never ashamed to be seen kneeling in prayer, facing towards Mecca. No colour bar is known among Mohammedans. Any Moslem is welcomed for his faith wherever he may be.

Areas which were once Christian are now Moslem. The latest figures indicate that for every one convert obtained by all Christian missions combined, Islam obtains ten. What can turn back such a mighty tide?

The teachings of the Seventh-day Adventist Church make a real appeal to the followers of the prophet of Arabia. Accepting without reservation all the Scriptures, we are able to show that much of the Koran is in substantial agreement. Old Testament prophets are recorded in their sacred book. Comparatively few statements of the Koran are found to be out of harmony with the Scriptures.

Believing as they do in the prophets, they include Jesus. He is considered as one of the greatest, though not equal to Mohammed. But He is in heaven, and will return to the earth before the day of Judgment. They believe in creation. They accept the ministrations of angels. Swine's flesh is an abomination to them. They are taught the principles of temperance. The day of Judgment is strongly stressed, while Paradise awaits the overcomer.

In the command of the Saviour of mankind, "Go ye therefore and teach all nations," are included the tribes and peoples of Africa. The message of God is not new to the people of this continent. The Bible records that it was to Egypt that Abraham and his descendants came. Moses was born there. Jesus, as a child, found refuge in Africa. An African carried Christ's cross to Calvary. One of the leading converts of the early church was the Ethiopian treasurer. Christianity was early introduced into his country and has borne witness there for nearly two thousand years.

Today the predictions of the ancient prophets are being fulfilled: "Ethiopia shall soon stretch out her hands unto God" (Psalm 68:32); and "From beyond the rivers of Ethiopia my suppliants . . . shall bring my offering" (Zephaniah 3:10).

Africa has played a large part in the programme of

modern missions and, in particular, that of the remnant church. Its cost to the home bases will never be known. Besides the millions of dollars and pounds which have been poured out for the mission homes, schools, churches, hospitals, and dispensaries, must be added the hundreds of lives crippled by tropical diseases. And further, we must not forget those silent witnesses to sacrifice, the graves of missionaries who were willing to pay the supreme sacrifice for the salvation of Africa. Nearly every mission guards the memorial to one or more faithful servant of God who passed to rest rather than desert his post of duty.

Has it been worth the cost?

There is only one answer.

EPILOGUE

I paid a visit to the Pare mountains twenty-five years after I had left them. We had not been long at the old Kihurio mission when they informed me that a reception committee would like to meet us. The old workers duly appeared. Hymns were sung and prayer offered. Then one stood up and read out the stanzas of a poem he had written in Swahili. In it he described my first coming, the joy they had at receiving a missionary; what he was like; how he behaved; the journeys he took; the homes he visited. It was a true biography. He ended with profuse thanks for all I had done. It was so unexpected that I was barely able to make a reply. I just stood before them with a great lump in my throat and tears in my eyes. So they did love me, in spite of the high standards I had required of them.

But it was not only fair speeches. Suddenly round the corner of the building appeared a large fat-tailed sheep. It was garlanded with flowers round its neck and along its back. It was presented to Laura. Then came one for me. Beside these were placed before us baskets of sweet potatoes, sugar-cane, eggs, chickens, rice, bananas, etc.

We visited all the stations in that field. At the end of the trip we counted ten fat-tailed sheep, 25 chickens, 750 eggs (not one bad), countless bananas, and all the other things they had lavished on us.

Fifteen years later, when I knew I would be leaving Africa, I paid a farewell visit to these same dear people. The old workers were now fewer in number, but many had surprising vitality. There was one last meal together and speeches. Into my hand was placed an ebony walking-stick with an iron ferrule to assure a firm grip for, they said, "Our father is now old. He needs help to get around our steep mountains."

At another church I was presented with the new edition of the Swahili Bible in leather for, they said, "Our father must not forget our language."

At still another place three elders came into my tent. After the usual approach they said, "Our father has worn out his shoes tramping over these mountains for us. Here is £3. 25 with which to buy a new pair." I did this, and still remember what it cost these members to express their love and gratitude.

