MY WORLD STORY BOOK

Africa

A Compilation of Historical
Biographies for the Young Reader

Compiled by Marlene Peterson

Libraries of Hope

My World Story Book
Book Eight: Africa

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Chapter 1

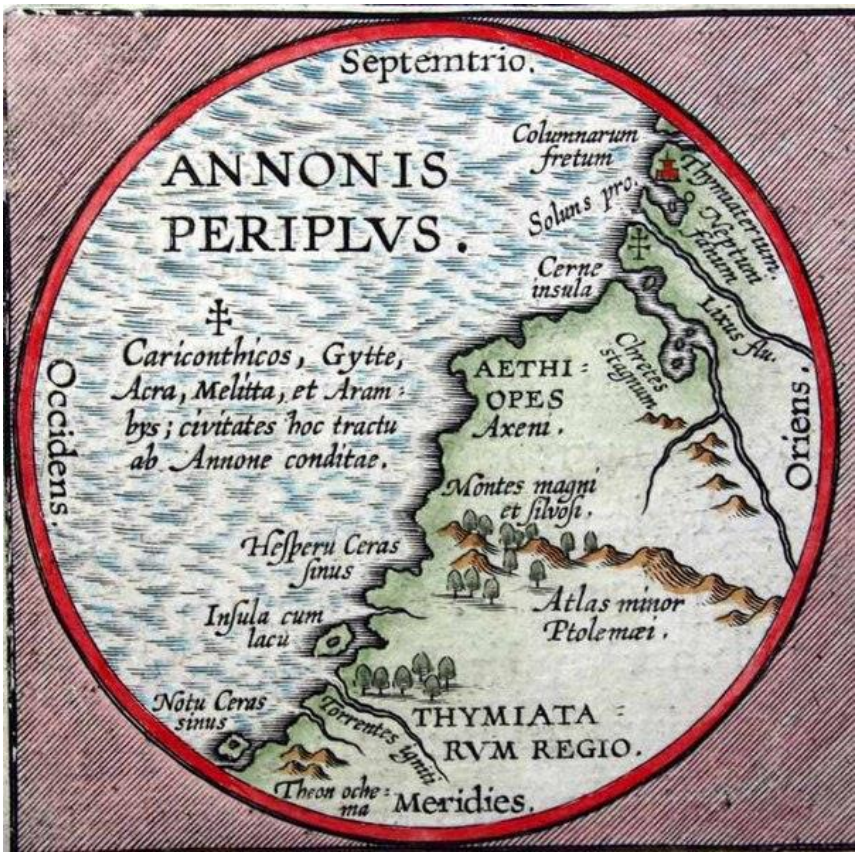
Hanno the Carthaginian

About 500 B.C., Carthage

He has always been one of the most romantic figures of antiquity as the hero of a venture without known parallel or precedent. With the passage of time he grows more real, his feats more authentic, and today we can map his course, place his colonies, and find in the British Museum some of the very idols he carried.

There was a succession of Hannos and Hamilcars in Carthage, and it is impossible to say whether he was the son or the father of the Hamilcar who fell in a famous battle at Himera in Sicily. Carthage had grown great with her commerce, her explorations, and her colonies. Her people had intermarried with tribes along the north coast of Africa, a circumstance resented by the true, exclusive

The Rise of the Carthaginian Empire, J. M. W. Turner



Arrian's World, Abraham Ortelius

Carthaginians, for they were simply Phoenicians in a new land.

The mixed people grew numerous, and there came a time when Carthage deemed it advisable to reduce their numbers by founding distant colonies. This would have the double effect of lightening the pressure of population near home and of establishing new trading stations for this greatest of commercial nations.

Hanno, who must already have been a great sailor, warrior, and administrator, was chosen to lead forth an astonishing expedition. At its conclusion he wrote an account of his work, telling the story in the first person; but unfortunately, in common with the rest of Carthaginian literature, it has perished.

Fortunately for the interests of posterity a Greek scholar copied the whole, or parts of the original, and it is from this source that the narrative has come down to us.

We are told that Hanno was to sail along the north coast of Africa, beyond the Pillars of Hercules (the Strait of Gibraltar), and to found cities of the African-Phoenicians. He sailed with sixty ships, each manned by fifty oars, and carrying thirty thousand men and women, with provisions, equipment, and merchandise.

Obviously this great multitude of people were not all colonists; their ships would be accompanied by war vessels and naval men. They sailed through the Strait and we can follow them on the map on their way down the west coast of Africa. To realise the nature of their undertaking we have to remember that the waters through which they made their way south were not reached again from Europe for the next 19 centuries, that is, assuming that the commonly accepted date of Hanno's voyage, between 530 and 520 B.C., is correct.

As they steered south they were hourly approaching what the world in the Middle Ages believed to be a zone of fire in which life was impossible, but these amazing pioneers pressed on and on into the vast unknown. They were the idolatrous followers of a cruel religion. But they went on undeterred, as no Europeans dared to do until Henry the Navigator began to urge his sailors, ship by ship, and mile by mile, down the same dreaded coast in the 15th century.

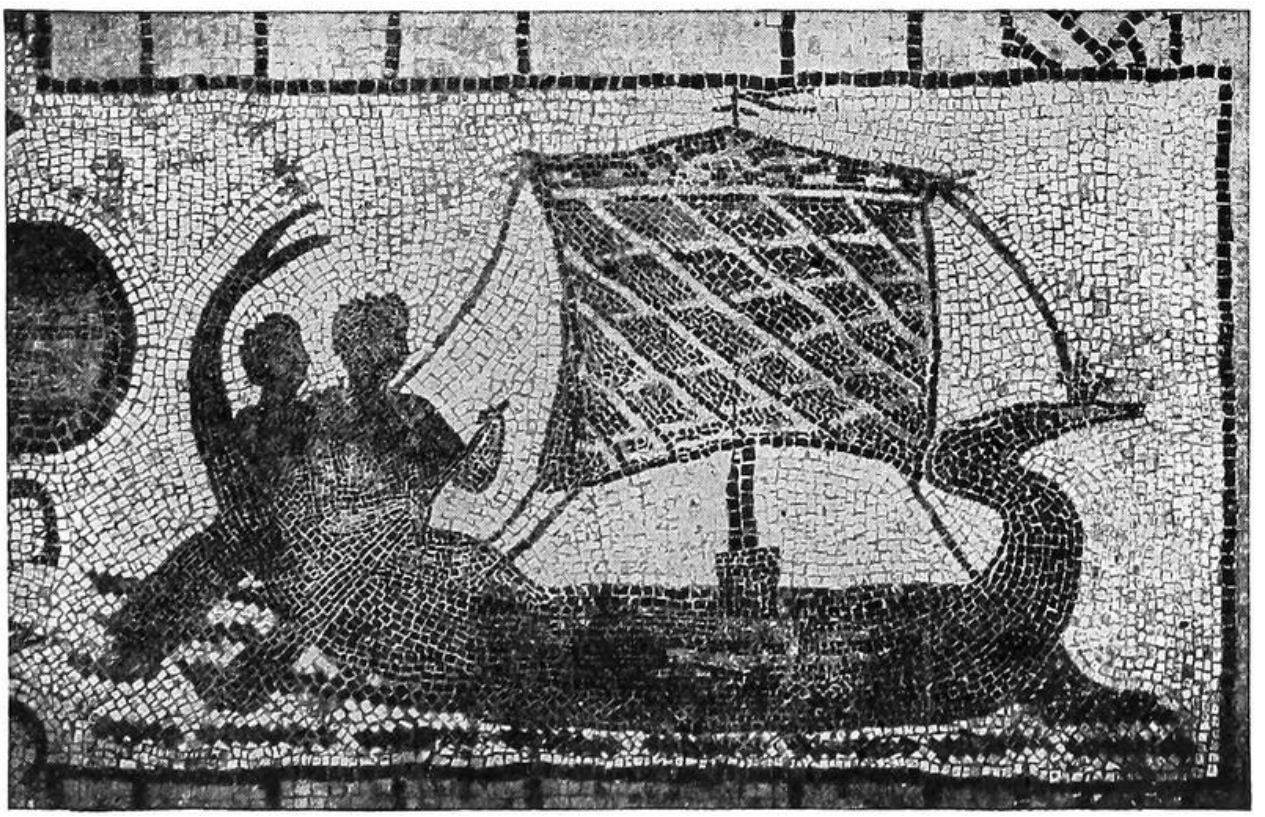
Two days after passing Gibraltar they landed and founded a city. This they called Thymiaterium; and next they reached a promontory that we call Cape Cantin, where they built a temple to their chief god. Continuing south they found an inland lake near the coast thick with reeds and alive with elephants and other wild beasts. All along the coast they founded new cities and gave them names that recent investigation has identified.

The names as they come down to us are Caricon, Gytta, Accra, Melita, and Arambys. These places have been found within recent years. Caricon, meaning the wall of the Sun; Gytta, cattle; Accra, muniment chest; Melita, mortar; and Arambys, the mountain of grapes.

Arambys, or the Mountain of Grapes, remained a puzzle beyond solution until 1929, when a noted traveller discovered a remarkable hill whose sides are covered with small swollen leaves resembling small muscatel grapes full of a salty pulp.

Continuing on his way Hanno sailed day after day down the now familiar coast, witnessing sights that no man not of that part of Africa had ever seen before. He landed, even where he did not need to colonise, to make friends with natives and to learn what they had to tell of their own territories and those beyond. At one stage, amid many wild beasts, he met what he called the Troglodytes, men of strange aspect, who were said to be able to run faster than horses. It is quite possible that these were in reality baboons. Taking interpreters with them the Carthaginians turned into the Gulf of Guinea, and in the Bay of Arguin made their chief colony in what they called Cerne.

Cerne has now been identified as the island of Arguin, lying south of Cape Blanco, opposite the



Mediterranean Sailing Vessel from a Mosaic of Carthage,
Museum of the University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia, PA

modern mainland town from which the caravans start on the long route to Timbuctoo. Sailing up the Senegal River they explored three islands greater than Arguin. They found mountainous country in which dwelled what Hanno calls savage men clothed with the skins of beasts, who pelted them with stones and drove them away.

As men do not clothe themselves with the skins of animals in torrid Africa the inference is strong that here again Hanno was in touch with members of the family of the great apes. During their further sailing they had experience of a volcano in eruption which terrified them extremely, "a lofty fire that seemed to touch the stars." This they called the Chariot of the Gods.

This leads us to the crowning romance of the expedition. On an island off the coast they found what Hanno describes as a savage people, of whom the greater part were women. "Their bodies were covered with hair, and our interpreters called them Gorillas." Here for the first time in literature we have mention of the lords of the great apes. Hanno pursued them.

"But (he says) the men we were not able to catch; for, being able to climb the precipices and defending themselves with stones, these all escaped. But we caught three women. But when these, biting and tearing those that led them, would not follow us, we slew them, and, flaying off their skins, carried these to Carthage."

Those few words have always thrilled naturalists. Hanno thought gorillas were human beings of a particular type, but by taking back the skins to Carthage he proved, against his will, that he had discovered man-like apes of which civilization had never heard. Some twenty centuries passed before a white man saw a gorilla, and Hanno's story was regarded as one of the myths with which the records of antiquity teem. But he was right; he did find gorillas, although how his men dared attempt to grapple full-grown examples of these terrible creatures is still a marvel to modern naturalists.

The narrative ends in ten words: *Farther we did not sail, for food failed us.* Hanno had achieved his task, planted his colonies, and opened his trading stations. Then he sailed back to Carthage by the way he had gone and caused the record of his expedition to be inscribed in the temple of the capital.

Modern research comes to his aid to verify his story. Not only have the sites of his cities been recently traced, the very idols that his colonists took with them from Carthage have come to light in Sierra Leone and other West African territories. The British Museum possesses two of them. They are statuettes recalling the great statue of Moloch that the Carthaginians and nations mentioned in the Bible long worshipped.

The worship of Moloch involved human sacrifice, the victims being the first-born child of a family. It is believed that Hanno's colonists took these images with them to practice afar the terrible rites to which they had been trained at home. The little idols in considerable numbers have been dug up over a long period by the natives, who much revere them, set them up in leafy shrines, and sprinkle them with the blood of fowls at either the Full Moon or the New. The image is then supposed to increase the crops of its worshipper.

So matter-of-fact Science brings the romance of reality into one of the most marvellous stories of the mass movement of a great people of the past, who took their ships and sailed strange seas amid perils and horrors beyond guessing, to found new homes in the appalling wilds at the behest of the men who ruled mighty Carthage.

Chapter 2

The Philaeni Brothers

Fourth Century B.C., Carthage

They lived, endured, and died 23 centuries ago. Just in time their story was caught up by an immortal writer, and their fame lives for ever.

The two Philaeni brother were Carthaginians and lived in the fourth century before Christ. Carthage had not yet attained the wealth or power that enabled her later to challenge Rome for the mastery of the world.

Established on the north coast of Africa where Tunis now stands, she was a daughter colony of the Phoenicians, that extraordinary people who, originating in Palestine (a strip of country only twice the size of Yorkshire), and with Tyre as their chief city, spread along the Mediterranean, the first great traders in the world, and the first commercial nation to visit and trade with Britain.

It was the daughter colony Carthage that soared to such wonderful heights. But the immense coast of Africa was not left to the undisputed possession of Carthage. The Greeks, with an enterprise and imagination rivalling that of Carthage, also colonized far and wide. In the seventh century, about 200 years after Carthage was founded, they created a colony of unmatched fertility called Cyrenaica, the capital of which was called Cyrene.

Cyrene stirs reverent memories in us all, for Simon, who bore our Savior's Cross, and St. Luke were natives of the city, and it was Christian converts from Cyrene who played the leading part in establishing the first Gentile Church at Antioch, as we read in the Acts of the Apostles.

It lay between Alexandria and Carthage, and was to become the seat of Greek learning, the cradle of a school of philosophy, and the most famous centre of medical teaching in the world. In the fourth century, however, Cyrenaica was more concerned with geographical and commercial expansion than with scholarship. She was gradually feeling her way to wider territories.

Carthage, with her great sea-borne trade and her settlements in Spain and the Mediterranean islands, was growing rich and powerful, and she too was extending her dominions in Northern Africa.

The Greek colonists and the Carthaginians met, and a dispute arose as to which State owned the territory where the collision between the two nations occurred.

The result was war. Rome finally overcame Carthage and destroyed not only Carthage itself but all Carthaginian literature, so what we know of Carthage comes only from Roman pens and those bitterly biased and coloured by racial hatred.

The Roman historian Sallust, who died in 34 B.C., was made governor of the great Roman colony of Numidia. The story of the immortal brother still survived, and he wrote it down and incorporated it in his history of his colony. And this was the story.

The war between Carthage and Cyrene was long, costly in life and treasure, and exhausting to both sides. Neither was able to conquer the other and the question of the boundary between the two States remained as far from settlement as on the day that hostilities broke out.

At last representatives from the two cities met and came to an agreement.

They agreed that two Carthaginians should start at a given hour on a certain morning from an acknowledged boundary of the Carthaginian possessions and march as far and as fast as they could in the direction of Cyrene. At the same time two representatives of Cyrene should set out from their frontier, and march as far and as fast as they could through the disputed territory toward the possessions of Carthage.

Apparently the respective starting points were Leptis Magna for the Carthaginians and either Hesperides or Berenice for the Cyrenians, the whole scene of trial being laid on what they called the Great Syrtis, which we know as the Gulf of Sidra. The Carthaginians chosen were the two Philaeni. We are to believe that they left the appointed starting-place at the correct time.

They marched with all their vigour and covered a great distance. Their Cyrenian rivals, starting at the same time, made less progress and achieved a distance that was insignificant in comparison with that covered by the brothers. In the course of the day the two sides met, the Philaeni far from the Carthaginian frontier, the Cyrenians not far from that of Cyrenaica.

Great was the astonishment of the Cyrenians at the progress made by their rivals. They accused them of having broken faith, of having ignored the terms of the agreement, and of having started long before the hour appointed. This the brothers resolutely denied.

They maintained that they had honourably observed the conditions, and had only served their country by making the best use of their time and athletic vigour to traverse as great an amount of ground as possible. The Cyrenians did not believe them, or they affected not to do so. They dared not return to Cyrene and admit that

The destroyed Arch of the Philaeni in Libya in 1937

they had lost their country territory by their sloth in marching.

They insisted that the brothers should either retrace their steps in the direction of Carthage or be put to death. The heroic brothers refused to nullify their efforts. If they returned and sacrificed their gains their beloved Carthage would lose a great tract of territory that she desired to possess. If they stayed and died the gain would be hers and the glory theirs.

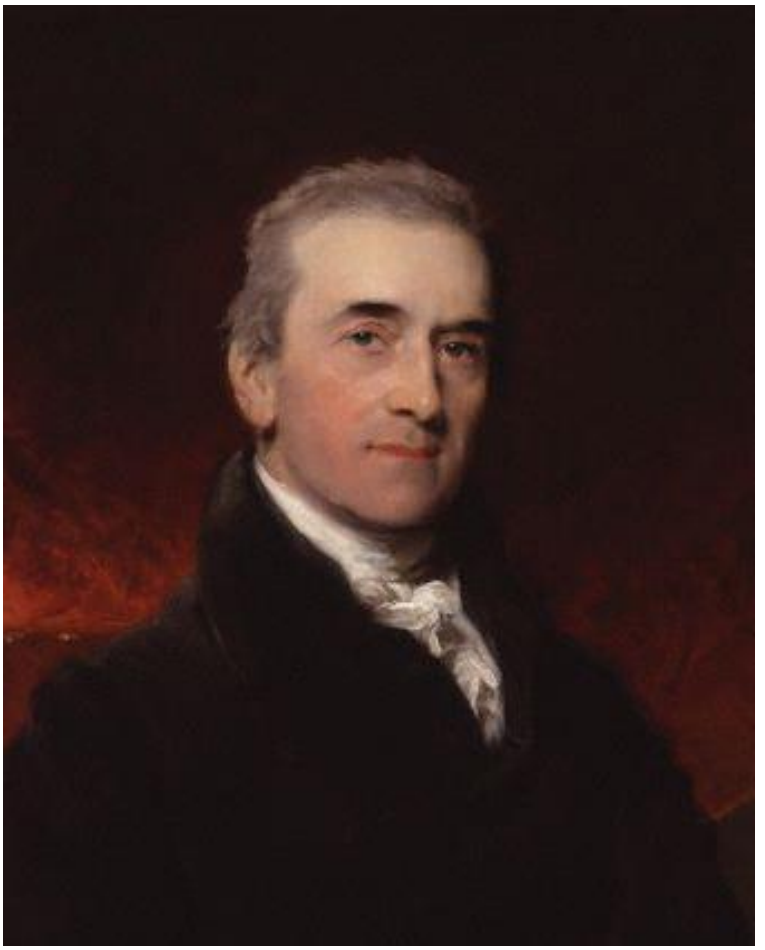
They did stay. They submitted to their enemies and were buried alive in the sands of the desert. It is only fair to add that the Cyrenians offered to do what the brothers did. They said that if they were permitted to advance toward Carthage until the end of the day they would sacrifice *their* lives and be buried alive.

Carthage, benefited by this unparalleled sacrifice, paid high honour to the memory of the two young heroes. They erected altars over the place where they had submitted to burial, and there for ages after the record of the sacrifice in the name that was given to the spot, The Altars of the Philaeni. As we have seen, the story remained a cherished possession in public memory for the next three centuries, and Sallust was in time to embalm it permanently in his undying pages.

Chapter 3

Sir Samuel Romilly

1757–1818 A.D., England (Abolitionist)



Sir Samuel Romilly, Thomas Lawrence

In the bad old days at the beginning of the 19th century, when the slave was not freed, when people could be hanged for stealing five shillings, when a boy of ten could lie in Newgate under sentence of death, this great lawyer and merciful man strove with all the force of his authority to help the helpless and oppressed.

Grandson of a French Protestant refugee who could leave his sons little more than a good name young Samuel Romilly had the good fortune to have a father who, though himself only a working jeweller, had the ambition to make his son a lawyer. The boy, who was clever, ready, industrious, and could speak French nearly as well as English, was made an articled clerk. But the boy had ambitions too, and when a legacy dropped like a miracle into the family's hands he determined to employ his share of it to training himself as a barrister.

Consummate ability joined to the highest resolution carried him to the position of Solicitor-General and Member of Parliament, when the most significant period of his career begins. He had a name for honesty and straightforwardness in speech before he won one for success. A devoted friend once warned him that attorneys could never think well of any man who was troubling his head about reforming abuses when he ought to be profiting by them. But that did not deter him. He was a man born with a wish to set things right.

Flogging in the Army and Navy, the severity of punishments for small offences, the waste and

misery brought about by lotteries, cruelty to animals, the horrors of transportation, the education and destitution of the poor, all came under the scope of his reforming zeal.

When he took his seat in Parliament the abolition of the slave trade had been talked about for fifteen years, with nothing done. He had exerted himself in France, where opposition was strong, to enlist sympathy for a righteous cause. When he held the commanding post of Solicitor-General he was quick to make his influence felt. Wilberforce had asked him to speak on behalf of the Abolition Bill, once rejected by the Lords, when it again came before the Commons. He did, and the speech he made is historic.

He did not attempt to argue the question whether the slave trade ought to be abolished. That he considered as long ago decided. He spoke primarily to the House on the reproach to the country because, though fifteen years before it had had the courage to inquire minutely into the subject, and had ascertained by a great body of evidence that the trade was carried on by robbery, rapine, and murder, yet it had permitted the trade to persist and had in those wasted years dragged from the coasts of Africa another 360,000 human beings.

Romilly records that the words robbery, rapine, and murder gave great offence to some gentlemen. It was no wonder, for though the facts were beyond dispute the slave trade lingered on because so many profited by it. George the Third was most opposed to its abolition, and used his influence in both Houses to oppose it; and Romilly disgustedly notes that nevertheless at the King's Jubilee a Bishop preached a sermon praising him for his efforts to abolish slavery.

Eight years after the Abolition Bill had been passed by Lords and Commons the Peace Treaty with France, concluded just before Waterloo, contained a clause pledging France to take joint action with Great Britain and put down slavery within five years. It was still going on and fugitive slaves were being hunted down and executed in Trinidad and Dominica, both then and thereafter. Indeed, more than a century after Romilly's death slavery was still practised in Africa and China.

Other names besides that of Romilly are conspicuous in the story of England and the slave trade. But he occupies a special place in the annals of philanthropy for his lifelong activity in modifying the horrible severity of the criminal law.

When he began his campaign in Parliament against it there were many dragons in the path, chief of them the bigots who would always leave ill alone. So he modestly opened with an attempt to repeal the most odious of the statutes which, three centuries old, prescribed hanging for pickpockets. He had a tremendous fight before he could secure a repeal of this barbarous law, a great deal of it coming from his Majesty's judges; and he remarked on the stupid dread of innovation encountered by anyone who attempted legislation on humane and liberal principles.

The same opposition was encountered to his Shop Lifting Act. It was a bill to abolish capital punishment for the crime of stealing to the amount of five shillings in a shop. When it came up before the House of Lords it was rejected by a large majority.

Among those who voted against it were the Archbishop of Canterbury, the Bishops of London, Salisbury, Ely, Hereford, and Chester. The Lord Chancellor also spoke against the bill. Romilly said he would rather suppose that the vote of the bishops was a token of their servility to the Government than that, recollecting the mild doctrines of their religion, they could have come down to the House spontaneously to vote that the transportation for life was not sufficiently severe punishment for the offence of pilfering. Lord Ellenborough, the Lord Chancellor, spoke of transportation as a

punishment which had few terrors for those who violated the law, and described it as only a summer airing to a milder climate.

Just before the bill was thrown out three men had been hanged at Maidstone for stealing. As for transportation, of which the Lord Chancellor spoke so frivolously, Romilly had already pointed out in the House of Commons the mischief resulting from that kind of punishment, as well as from the imprisonment on board the hulks and in common gaols where prisoners of every description were collected indiscriminately, and youths imprisoned for their first offences were compelled to associate with, and to be corrupted by, the most desperate and hardened thieves.

Plaque to Samuel Romilly at 21 Russell Square, London, England

In the last year of his life he brought in his Shop Lifting Bill for the last time, and made the point that in this, as in other crimes, like that of forger, the crime was rapidly increasing in spite of frequent executions. A week before he spoke two women had been hanged in London for forgery, and two boys who were to have been executed for it on the day of his speech were only saved by a discovery that they had been employed to commit the offence by a scoundrel who afterwards gave information against them.

Rommilly lived just long enough to see his bill pass into law and barbarous wrong righted. By a singular coincidence he notes in his diary, on almost the same date, that he had met Mrs. Fry, who had been for a year devoting herself to the care and improvement of the female prisoners in Newgate. Among the things she told him was that the prisoners said that the crimes of which they had been guilty were nothing when compared with the crimes of the Government toward themselves. They had only been thieves, but their governors were murderers. All the crimes they had committed were more than expiated by the cruel wrongs they were made to endure.

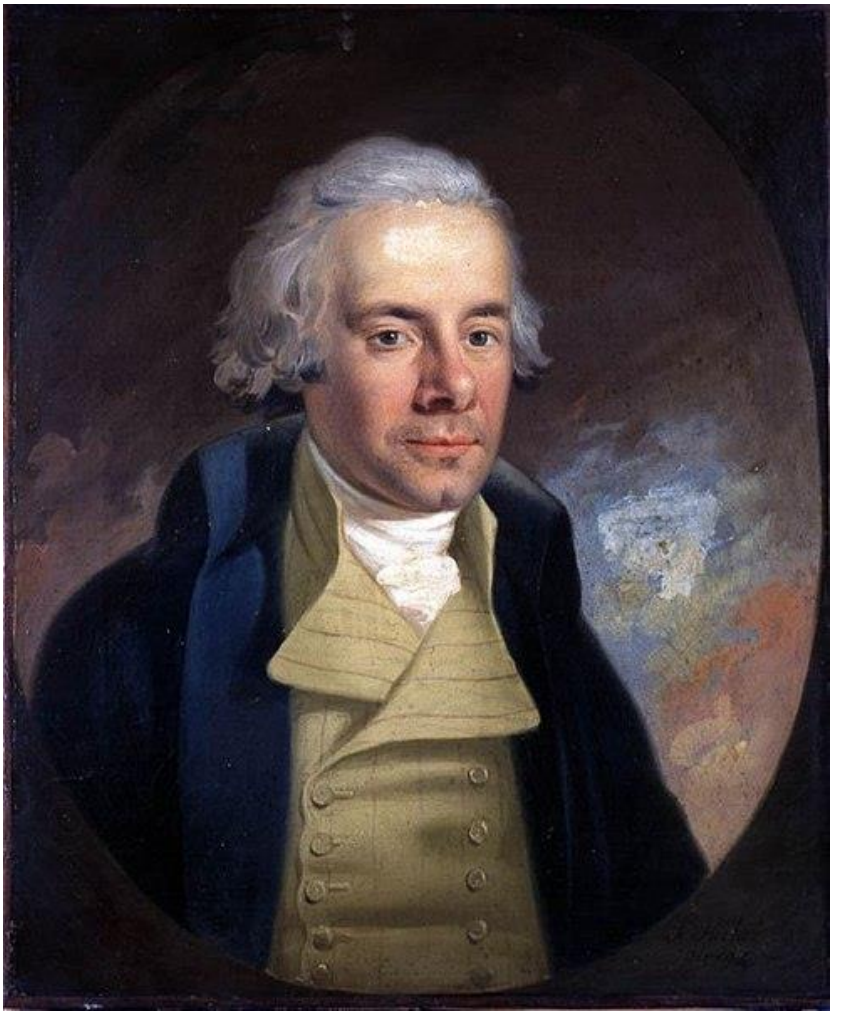
Samuel Romilly and Elizabeth Fry overlap. He was the great advocate who had shown with resistless logic the iniquity of punishments which familiarity had condoned in the public mind and

which lawyers and politicians were most reluctant to discontinue. Elizabeth Fry preached the doctrine she had learned among the sweepings of Newgate prison, that kind treatment and wise regulations could call forth, even in the most depraved, feelings of gratitude and a hope of reform.

Chapter 4

William Wilberforce

1759-1833 A.D., England (Abolitionist)



William Wilberforce, Anton Hickel

He was born at Hull, the son of a wealthy shipping family, and the death of his father led to his passing from the home of one relative to another and to his inclining to the views of a dissenting aunt, despite his grandfather's comment, "If Billy turns Methodist he shall not have a sixpence of mine."

His career at Cambridge University tended to anything but religion of any denomination, for the men of his time gloried in reprobate courses, and as the heir to great wealth he was encouraged to idle and shirk study. It was his innate goodness of instinct, not his training, that made him a worthy man. Even so when he left Cambridge he drifted into loose fashionable life in London, where gambling was a matter of course.

He thought nothing of losing £100 a day at faro, but one night when he won £600 from younger sons to whom such a loss was tragic he realised the iniquity of play, and from that moment never again gambled. It was not until he was 25 that he seriously studied and embraced religion, but as a boy of 14 he had already done an extraordinary thing. At that age he wrote a letter to a York newspaper condemning the slave trade.

Entrance to William Wilberforce House, Hull, England

Practically the whole of his manhood was consecrated to the task of emancipation. He was not the first to strike a blow in the cause. In 1772 Lord Mansfield had done a superb thing in declaring from the Bench that slavery could not exist in England; that was about one year before this boy's letter.

Mansfield's declaration was magnificent, but it was not law. Slavery could exist in England; it always had existed, but from that moment any slave who set foot on our soil became free. But hosts of our merchants were engaged in the capture and sale of Africans; our colonies were largely maintained by slave labour; our wealthy families either owned slave-run plantations or had money invested in them.

In constituting himself the champion of the slaves, Wilberforce antagonized one of the most powerful vested interests in the Empire. For 200 years we had been engaged in kidnapping or buying Negroes and selling them across the Atlantic. The Bible was quoted as a warrant for the traffic.

It was a stock argument that the natives of Africa with their cannibalism and dreadful native orgies were beyond the pale of humanity, that they were falling back toward beasts, that they did not possess souls, and therefore to treat them as animals could not be an offence.

Slave-dealing and slave-owning were a national policy, and statesmen thought the finest result of the famous Treaty of Utrecht was the exclusive right it gave England to supply slaves to the New World. Wilberforce, in opposing the traffic, had to throw down the gauntlet to his king, for George the Third had declared that the Governor of Virginia should not "upon pain of the highest displeasure," assent to any law by which the importation of slaves should be in the least altered or even be limited.

Entering Parliament for Hull Wilberforce later became member in 1784 for the county of Yorkshire, which he represented for 25 years against the slave-owning interest. The cost of his elections was enormous, for the rival candidates had to outbid each other in the purchase of votes. One election cost Wilberforce £100,000, of which his friends subscribed three-quarters.

Wilberforce was 28 when he began his serious campaign against the evil. Having mastered all the information on the subject he could obtain he enlisted the sympathy of Pitt and secured a Committee to inquire into the whole traffic.

He thought that with a cause so good the battle would be easily won, but never did a man have to fight harder. He stirred the country, and petitions flowed in from all quarters; but the opposition was organized and obdurate. He did not at first seek the abolition of slavery; he sought only the abolition of the capture, transportation, and sale of slaves.

The first advance was to get members to inspect a slave-ship that was being fitted out in the Thames and to show them the horrors to which the wretched captives were submitted in the foul, overcrowded holds, in which, during our inglorious career as slave-dealers a quarter of a million human beings were said to have perished while they were at sea. The result was a measure modifying the number of slaves to be carried. That was something; but in 1789 Wilberforce attacked the whole traffic in a speech that Burke declared to be unsurpassed by the eloquence of ancient Greece. The Opposition urged delay for, said they, if England abandoned slave-dealing, France would take over the trade and would thereby gain an unfair commercial advantage.

With the coming of the French Revolution and French denunciation of slavery a new weapon was forged against emancipation, for Englishmen who wished to free slaves were declared to be in sympathy with the revolutionaries.

Year after year the liberator strove. He had married, but so immersed was he in his labours for the slaves that he had no time for home life, and his children hardly knew him. Again and again he introduced Bills only to be defeated by the slave-holding interest. He was at once the most loved and most hated man in England.

One murderous captain of a slaver whom he had exposed threatened his life, and Wilberforce, when travelling about the country, had to be accompanied by an armed man. He told his friends he expected to be murdered by his enemies, but still he kept on. It was agreed at his suggestion that some attempt should be made to educate and humanise the slaves with a view to dim and distant possibilities.

Wilberforce was an independent Tory, and for nearly twenty years tried in vain to get his party to adopt his reform. He had managed to prevent the sale of slaves to the new colonies gained in the war with France, but it remained for the Whigs to gladden his heart with the total abolition of the trade in slaves to all our colonies and to forbid the colonies to trade in slaves with any other nation.

Sixteen men voted to the last against it, and a friend proposed to pillory the names of "those

miscreants." "Never mind the sixteen," said Wilberforce; "think of the glorious 283 who voted for us."

In one respect the wheel had come full circle. Up to this point men among the proudest and richest in our land had denounced as an enemy of the Empire the man who sought to stop slave-dealing. Now these men found that they could be hanged for pursuit of their old trade, for slave-dealing was made a capital offence.

And yet, mighty as the victory seemed, only the fringe of the subject had been touched. We could no longer capture free Negroes and sell them into bondage; but not a word had been said about liberating the millions already victims of the system. So, after twenty years of toil for his first reform, Wilberforce had to devote the remainder of his life to the task of securing freedom for those already in bondage. He had now this still greater problem to encounter, the freeing of the slaves in our colonies. Valiantly he toiled, in Parliament and in the country. The task was difficult and dangerous. Planters in the West Indies were so incensed at the suggestion that anyone should dare to infringe their right to keep human beings as captive slaves that they threatened to repeat the action of North American colonies when they broke away and made themselves the United States. The West Indies would have their republics, too!

Memorial to William Wilberforce, Westminster Abbey, London, England

Incessant labour for the slaves as well as for every other reform proposed in Parliament gradually broke down an ailing constitution. Wilberforce had to retire from his Yorkshire seat for a smaller constituency, and to delegate much of his labour to his followers, but he lived to learn of the second reading of the Bill for the total abolition of slavery, and died a victor.

Throughout his life he gave away yearly a quarter of his income in charity. Toward the end he

was impoverished by a loss of nearly £50,000 incurred by one of his sons. He left his beautiful home at Highwood Hill, near Mill Hill, in smiling content without a murmur of reproach. Six rich men, including Lord Fitzwilliam, his old political opponent, and a former enemy in a West Indian planter, asked to be allowed to restore his shattered fortune, but he gratefully refused and was delighted to pass his closing days with his sons.

He was attended to the grave by the most distinguished statesmen in England, and he lies in Westminster Abbey in the company of Pitt, Fox, and Canning.

Chapter 5

Giovanni Battista Belzoni

1778–1823 A.D., Archaeologist of Egypt

He has the second pyramid at Gizeh for lofty memorial; the tomb of a Pharaoh at Thebes is called after his name. Over his own tomb, on the other side of Africa, only a plain board under a sycamore recorded that here was his last resting-place.

The treasures of ancient Egypt that he gathered are scattered in museums from Cairo to London, and London owes him most. He died in poverty. Never was there a man whose career was more strangely interwoven with that of the rediscovery of ancient Egypt. Never was there one whose life and training would have seemed less fitted to the work of such discovery. Yet his services to the task in which all the world was interested were as great as they were undeniable. He disclosed temples and tombs and found a buried city; he visited the great oasis of Baharia, where no modern European had ever set foot before. And all this was in the later part of a life of wandering and of a living earned as a strolling player.

Giovanni Battista Belzoni, William Brockedon

From his boyhood he had been a wanderer. He was the son of a barber at Padua, but when he was a boy of 13, with the prospect of following his father's calling, he was seized with a great distaste for it and, with his brother Antonio, ran away from home with the boyish ambition of going to Rome. The youngsters had little food and less money, but while on their way they got a lift from a farmer who was going to Ferrara. When they reached there he demanded his fare, and as they had nothing to give him this rather less than complete Samaritan took some of their clothes and gave them a few small coins. Nothing daunted by this unpromising start to the adventure, they

persevered and in some strange way arrived at the Eternal City after a journey occupying three years. Arrived there with little beyond their vagrant experience to help them, they were as hard put to it as ever to earn their bread. The elder of them, our hero Giovanni, elected to become a monk. He stopped at the monastery some years, employing his time well in learning hydraulics, but Rome fell under the impact of Napoleon's invasion of Italy, and Giovanni Belzoni left it. From Italy he went to France, but found nothing to do there in that country's disturbed state; and so, always moving on, he sought Holland as a place where his knowledge of hydraulics might be useful. But he found the Dutch knew more about hydraulics than he did, and so he came in the year 1803 to England.

England then, like all European countries involved in the wars with Napoleon, offered but a small field for his abilities as a hydraulic engineer. He exhibited his appliances in various towns, finding neither customers nor profit. But he had another string to his bow.

This son of a barber was an Italian moulded like a Greek statue. He was nearly seven feet high, with a frame magnificently formed in justest symmetry, with the handsomest of heads set on his great shoulders. He found a place at Astley's Circus, where he appeared either as Hercules or Apollo. Later his brother Antonio joined him, neither so beautiful nor yet so tall, but a fine figure of a man well over six feet. The two travelled all over the country exhibiting their splendid physique and practicing feats of strength.

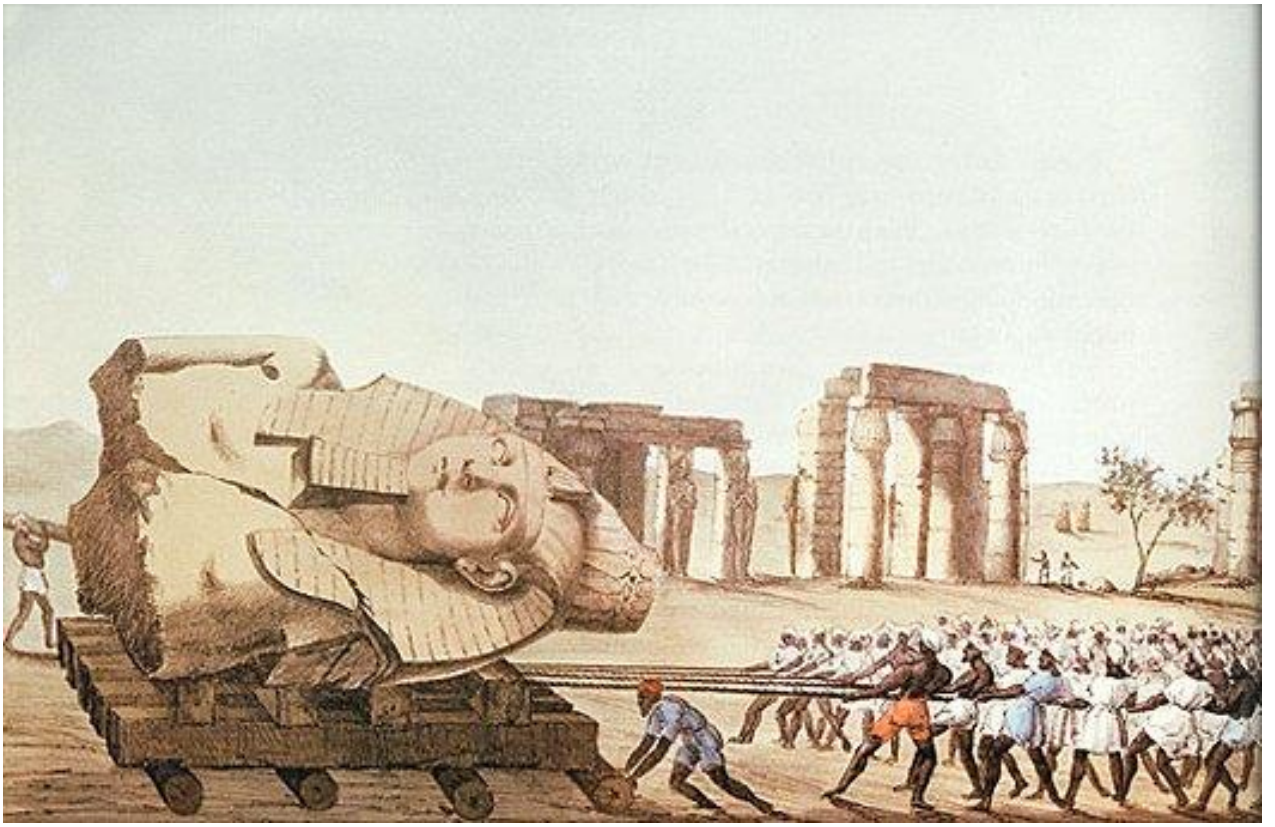
A contemporary who knew Belzoni, and afterwards wrote a short Life of him, describes how he first saw the athlete at a theatre at Plymouth. There he supported eight men on his shoulders and lifted a man in either arm shoulder high. The biographer records that on this occasion Belzoni had a dispute with Foote, the manager, but nothing came of it, for this gentle giant was at heart as good-tempered and sweet-natured as he was handsome. Nine years he stopped in England, where he married an Englishwoman; and then, still wandering as strolling players must, he went with his wife to Spain and Portugal, where he played the part of Samson in a drama written for him in many a theatre.

From Spain they went to Malta, and then in the year of Waterloo the two found themselves in Egypt. Belzoni had some idea that his still-remembered knowledge of hydraulics might prove of value to him there. Quite another destiny awaited him, and in the next four years he accomplished the real work of his life, as unexpected by him as it was of lasting value and importance in the study of ancient history. His new career began in an odd way. He had set up some hydraulic machinery, and he gained the patronage of a pasha who first attracted, we may imagine, by the splendour of the Italian's physique and would have attached him to his household. But fortune again intervened.

Egypt was then humming with the activities of the excavators of her ancient monuments. The new-found study of the hieroglyphs had brought all the learned bees of Europe seeking for honey. Belzoni was commissioned to join in the search, and he began by exploring the second pyramid of Gizeh. He was a good droughtsman, and his drawings of his discovery were a permanent enrichment of knowledge.

From Gizeh he went to Thebes and discovered the magnificent tomb of Seti the First, which is called Belzoni's Tomb after the discoverer, as well as the Throne of Rameses the Second in the mortuary temple of the Pharaohs.

Another feat more astonishing in its way and one for which the English people have to thank him, was that of transporting the great bust of Rameses the Second from Thebes to Alexandria, as



Memnon Towpath, Giovanni Battista Belzoni

well as a superb alabaster sarcophagus. Burckhardt had persuaded him to give the great bust to England. He got it on to a hired boat at Alexandria, and himself rowed to a waiting ship, according to an arrangement made with the British Consul, and so had it conveyed to this country. It now rests in the British Museum.

The alabaster sarcophagus had a different and more singular destination. It was offered to the British Museum for a price and the Museum would not buy it; but Sir John Soane, determined that such a treasure should not leave England, bought it for £2000.

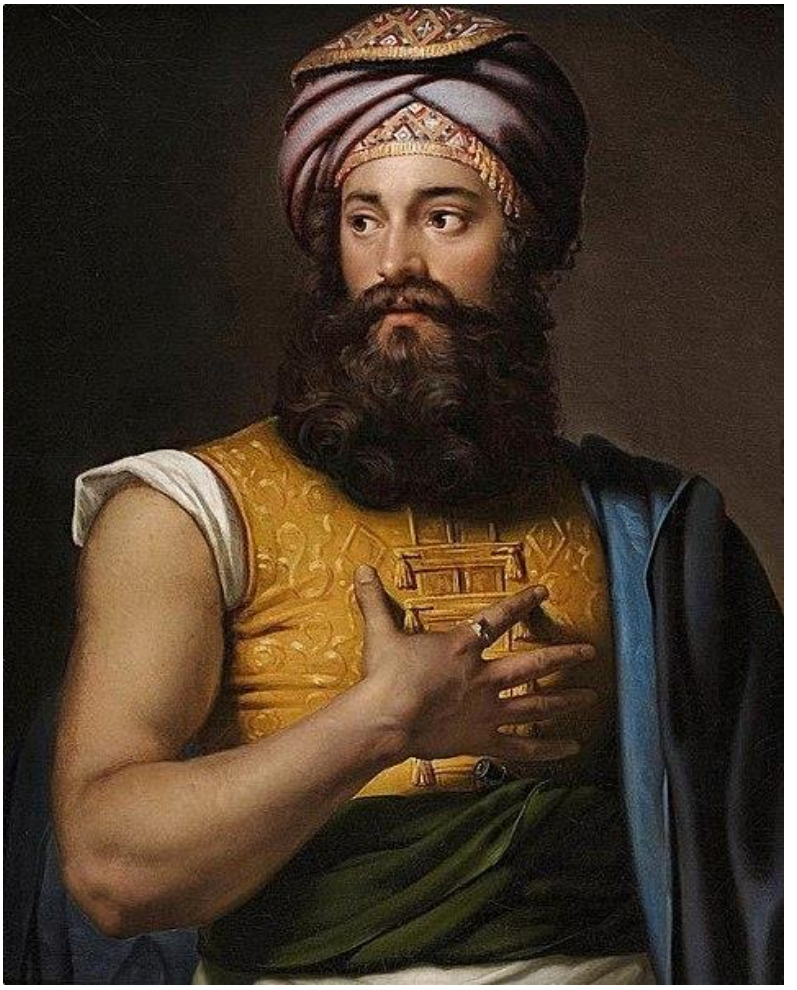
Visitors today to the Soane Museum in Lincoln's Inn Fields will find it among that strange collection of many treasures. Poor Belzoni was usually only too generous. He gave another sarcophagus to the Fitzwilliam Museum at Cambridge and two great lion-headed monoliths of granite to his native town of Padua.

He went back to Egypt, where there was not in those days such solicitude on the part of the Government to keep antiquities in the country, and resumed his exploration on a wider scale. He went up to the Second Cataract, where the Temple of Abu Simbel had been discovered, but the entrance to which had not been found. The determined Belzoni succeeded in getting in and exploring and making drawings of it. More than that, he discovered an underground temple then unknown. Even this was not enough for his adventurous spirit. He set out for the shores of the Red Sea, taking his wife with him.

She was a fit companion, for she was without fear and always carried with her a gun lest they

should suffer interference from wandering Arabs. The object of his journey was the lost city of Berenike, which he reached and of the temple and ruins of which he may claim to be the joint discoverer. The town was named by Ptolemy after his mother in 275 B.C., and was for five centuries the port of a marine commerce with Arabia and India till it became deserted and sunk in the sand.

His last exploit seems almost incredible. He found his way across the Libyan desert to the great oasis of Baharia which he believed to be that of Siwa. Nowadays a journey to this strange place is a matter of considerable difficulty, accomplished generally with the aid of motor-cars. Belzoni, the true traveller, went by camel and had at least the satisfaction of being the first European in modern times to do so.



Giovanni Belzoni, Jan Adam Kruseman

After that journey Belzoni came back once more to England, where he was received with a certain amount of enthusiasm, and Mr. John Murray published for him in 1820 an account of his discoveries illustrated by himself. No great wealth accrued to him. Then as now the discoveries of an explorer were commonly their own reward, and he was reduced, as later travellers have been, to lecturing and showing pictures and drawings of the antiquities of Egypt. He displayed them in Bullock's Museum, Piccadilly, which became the Egyptian Hall, where later Maskelyne and Cook displayed their mysteries. We may note in the history of that curious old place, remembered still by many people living, that the last person exhibited there was Arthur Orton, the Claimant, who appeared in a disappearing trick called the Missing Man.

With the urgent desire for wandering still alive in him Belzoni decided on one more exploration. It was believed at that time by Belzoni himself and many others that the Nile and the Niger were the same river. He proposed to set out from Fez in Morocco, to cross the Atlas Mountains, and take the caravan road to Timbuctoo. When all the arrangements had been made for this journey, which probably would have been more than he could compass, the Moroccan Government withdrew its permission. But he was not to be put off by this set-back: he was determined to go if it were in any way possible.

He went by ship to West Africa and landed in the Bight of Benin. There, in taking leave of the boatman who landed him in the surf, he said, "God bless you; and may you have a happy sight of your country once more."

He never saw his own country again.

He travelled inland as far as Gwato, satisfying himself that the Niger was not the Nile, and there he died of an attack of dysentery. He wrote from his bed of sickness a letter to his old friend Briggs, the consul in Alexandria, who was then in London. It is the simplest of letters. He said that God had been pleased that he should not survive to see his friend again, but all he could say was that he was feeling resigned to his fate and asked pardon of any whom he may have happened to offend in his past life, begging their prayers.

Of Consul Briggs he asked also the favour of giving to his wife a letter, as simple as the other and full of a great tenderness. He says in it sadly that he dies a beggar, and God only can reward her for all her goodness to himself.

So died this great-hearted man, who met all the buffetings of fortune with a smiling face, who without ostentation laid the world in his debt, and who profited himself hardly at all, but died without murmuring at his lot, thinking of others to the end of his long, meritorious, and adventurous career.

Chapter 6

Sir Thomas Fowell Buxton

1786-1845 A.D., England (Abolitionist)

Seldom has a man succeeded to so extraordinary a heritage as that which came to Thomas Fowell Buxton before he had reached the prime of his life. It was neither estates nor treasure, but a solemn charge to lead a people out of bondage. Wilberforce, old and enfeebled by his labours, formally adopted Buxton as his heir in the crusade against slavery in the British Empire. Nobody who was acquainted with Buxton in his youth could have forecast such a role for him.

He was born at Earls Colne in Essex and left fatherless to grow up under the eye of a splendid Quaker mother who believed in him when all others viewed his future with gloom. For Thomas, a big strapping boy, was a sluggard who could not or would not learn. After three years at the school kept by Charles Burney, the immortal Fanny's brother, he returned as ill-informed as he went, caring for nothing but rowing and field sports, and seeking only the company of a burly gamekeeper who could neither read nor write.

A complete change was wrought when he became acquainted with the Gurneys, the famous Quaker family whose home was in the neighbourhood. They had an extraordinary effect on the good-for-nothing youth and, as he said, coloured his whole life. He went to Dublin University and won unique triumphs, gaining prize after prize which, he said, he desired to win only that he might present them to his charming Quaker friends.

Portrait of Sir Thomas Buxton

Declining an invitation to represent the university in Parliament he returned to England and married Hannah Gurney, sister of the saintly Mrs. Fry, the heroine of prison reform. Although married and immersed in business, he continued his studies and made himself master of law and literature. An earnest Christian, he was speedily engaged in public work, first in the relief of the Spitalfields weavers, who were beggared as the result of the Napoleonic Wars.

A speech of his at the Mansion House on their behalf introduced him to public life, and the result of his appeal was a collection of forty thousand pounds at

this one meeting. Mrs. Fry interested him in prison conditions. He visited various gaols and wrote a book on his investigations, asking whether existing prison discipline caused or cured crime. The book had a great circulation at home and on the Continent, and later reached India, where its effects were seen in a reform of the terrible gaols of Madras.

Buxton was busy with labours for the poor, but had no hesitation in entering Parliament in 1818 and taking a greater part in social reform. The energies of the self-willed young man were now harnessed to nobler labours. Although no orator, he was master of the orderly arraying of facts. A voracious reader, he got up his case for reform as a counsel gets up a brief.

He was something of a giant, six feet four high and splendidly proportioned, and his friends laughingly called him Elephant Buxton, not only in relation to his physique but to the forceful manner in which he marched to attack an abuse or a wrongful privilege. His most notable early work in Parliament was directed to the reform of our savage penal laws.

But he was working all this time for the removal of a more frightful wrong. The slave trade was still rampant, as it had been for three hundred years. While Buxton was still a child the voice of protest against it was first heard in Parliament. It had only just been decided, after years of doubt, that slavery was illegal in England. Bristol, Liverpool, and the Port of London were slave marts and the headquarters of the world's most infamous traffic.

Lord Mansfield had been driven, not by law, but by force of public opinion, to declare from the Bench that slavery could not exist in England, that men, white or black, could no longer be seized in England and sent back to slavery, as for centuries they had been. That was something, a principle established, in the face of bitter opposition, but it was only a beginning.

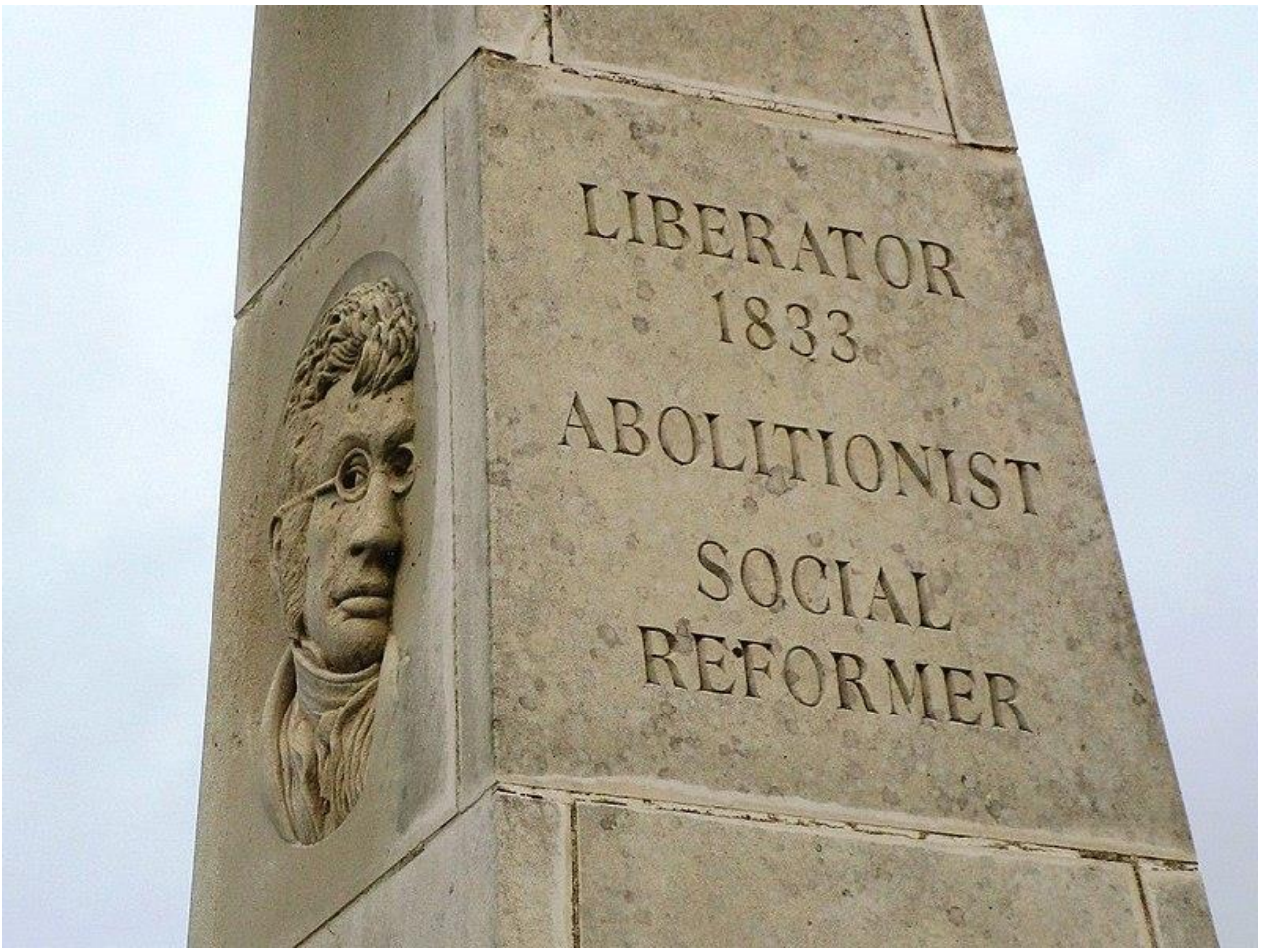
The next thing to be done was to abolish in England capture and selling into slavery, and in this agitation Buxton grew to full stature. So far all that had been attained in the Empire was to make it illegal to export slaves to the colonies gained by England during the wars with Napoleon, leaving the older colonies untouched. From that the next step was to prohibit the selling of additional slaves to all the colonies, but that ignored the fact that there were already hundreds of thousands of slaves in our colonies for whom there seemed no hope of liberation.

Friends of the slaves outside the House formed a society, of which Buxton was one of the earliest members, to arouse the nation to the crime that was being perpetrated under its flag. It was called the Anti-slavery Society, and, apart from the splendour of its achievements, it is notable as the parent of all the organisations that have since come into existence throughout the world for the betterment of human life. Its committees, its canvasses, its general assemblies, its method of procedure were the model from which all reform has sprung. The League of Nations itself, with nations instead of individuals as members, has that old Anti-Slavery Society as its precedent.

Buxton threw himself heart and soul into this work. After he had toiled for five years in the House he and Wilberforce secured what Parliament thought an immense concession: it was decreed that in the West Indies women slaves should no longer be flogged, and that the whip should not form part of the equipment of the overseers in the fields where the slaves laboured.

It was a mild beginning, but it set the West Indies on fire, for the planters declared it a monstrous trespass on their liberties and threatened to declare themselves independent of the mother country.

Buxton was a level-headed man and realized that an evil so long established could not be instantly cured without a great upheaval, and so he determined to hasten slowly, never to relax his



Monument to Sir Thomas Buxton in Weymouth, MA

efforts, but to gain by consistent pressure, not by violent, spasmodic effort. He was already pledged to the cause. Priscilla Gurney, one of the most beautiful spirits of that noble family, sent for him as she lay on her deathbed and made him promise to make the cause of the slaves the great object of his life. She died while delivering her charge to her brother-in-law. Faithfully he redeemed the pledge made to the dying woman.

Three years later, in 1824, Wilberforce, old and worn and broken with long years of labour, realized that he had reached Pisgah. It was not he, but Buxton, who must lead the slaves into the promised land. He called his follower to him and solemnly made him his heir, with hatred, malice, and obloquy as his reward for the great crusade that he was to lead to Emancipation. Buxton entered upon his heritage with the solemnity of a soldier consecrated to a sacred mission, and the echoes of his leader's voice were barely silent in his ear when he challenged the House with a resolution demanding the gradual abolition of slavery.

It makes an Englishman blush today to read the story of the war that the new crusader had to wage. Our slave dominions were largely owned by wealthy families living at home, and they as bitterly resented the attempt to make free man and women of their black chattels as if their estates

were being taken from them. In Demerara they imprisoned and tried by court-martial John Smith, an English missionary who had dared to civilise the slaves, and, insufferable offence, "to address a promiscuous audience of black or coloured people, bond and free, by the endearing appellation of *my brethren and sisters.*"

John Smith died a martyr in goal; he did not die in vain. Buxton, fortified by the tragedy, redoubled his efforts. He scoured the world for statistics. He showed that in spite of all the West Indian opposition to the gradual freeing of their slaves the number had actually decreased by a hundred thousand. The next step, a trifle but significant, was that a British slave was actually allowed to purchase his freedom!

The full reform had to come. Buxton at last had at his back everyone in the country who had not invested money in black flesh and blood, and, after Parliament's shrinking and shuddering and dreading of consequences, the Emancipation Act was passed in 1833. The Government paid the planters 20 million pounds for the redemption of their slaves, but only children under six were at once freed; field slaves had to serve as apprentices for seven years, and house slaves for five years.

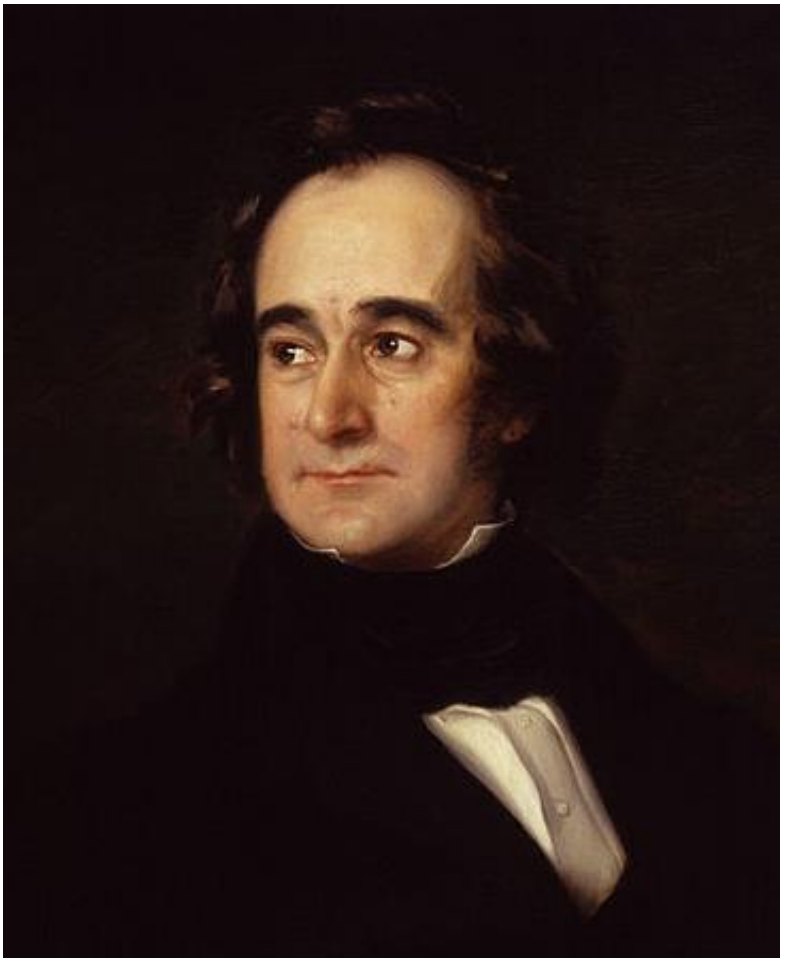
Buxton was blamed for agreeing to this concession, but he saw that without it the West Indies would revolt and retain their slaves in bondage; with it he was assured of the triumph of humanity. That was his crowning work, the most splendid of its kind ever achieved by man. Afterwards he sought to check slavery at its source by colonising the Niger. The effort failed at the outset, but the idea came to fruit after the labours of Livingstone and other explorers, who merely carried on the work that Buxton had begun.

Made a baronet and honoured of all good men, Buxton, a noble philanthropist, lived in happy retirement, a country gentleman, famous for his model farms.

Chapter 7

Robert Moffat

1795–1883 A.D., South Arica



Robert Moffat, William Scott

One day in a boarding house in Aldersgate Street, London, Robert Moffat, home on leave from South Africa, said to a young man: "I have sometimes seen in the morning sun the smoke of a thousand villages where no missionary has ever been."

The young man replied: "What is the use of my waiting for the end of this abominable opium war? (Up to this time he had meant to go to China.) I will go at once to Africa."

That young man was David Livingstone, who afterwards married the daughter of the man who thus spoke to him.

Robert Moffat and his wife Mary were brave and faithful pioneers in South Africa. Robert arrived in 1817 and left in 1870, the year in which Mary Moffat died. Fifty-three years is a long term of service and the Africa which he left was not the Africa he found when he arrived there.

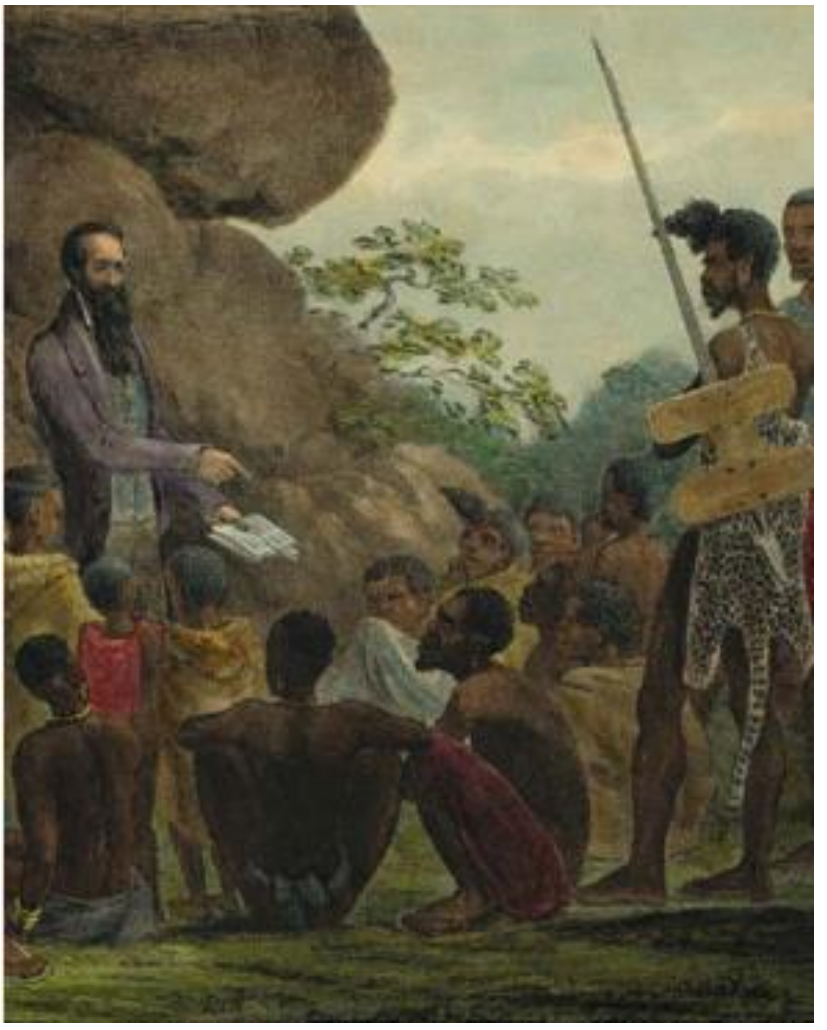
Robert was a Scots boy, born in Carronshore; from the beginning of his life to its end he was a gardener. He was apprenticed to a gardener in Scotland; afterwards he was a gardener in Cheshire, when he offered himself to the Missionary Society. In the dry and thirsty land of the Bechuana people in Africa he made a lovely garden; and when he had finished his work in Africa he made a home in Kent, the Garden of England; on the last day of his life he trimmed with his shears a hawthorn bush in his garden at Leigh.

But the young Scot of 21 who went to Africa had more to do than cultivate a garden.

He had many journeys to make among wild and suspicious Africans. Several tribes he visited and taught before he settled down at Kuruman, the station which was destined to become the centre of his life and work.

But he was never content to teach only the people near him. He took many journeys in ox-wagons through the desert; and in time the wise and kindly preacher won over many of his dark neighbours to a belief in Chrisianity.

In this same service he translated the Bible into the Bechuana language; and he built in Kuruman a church which is still to be found there in strength near the garden which he planted.



The Revd Mr Moffat Preaching to the Bechuana, Charles Davidson Bell

No more striking event happened to him than his visit to the country of Africaner, an outlawed chief on whose head a price was set. This visit happened early in his African life. The people he met on his way told him that Africaner would set him up as a mark for his men to shoot at.

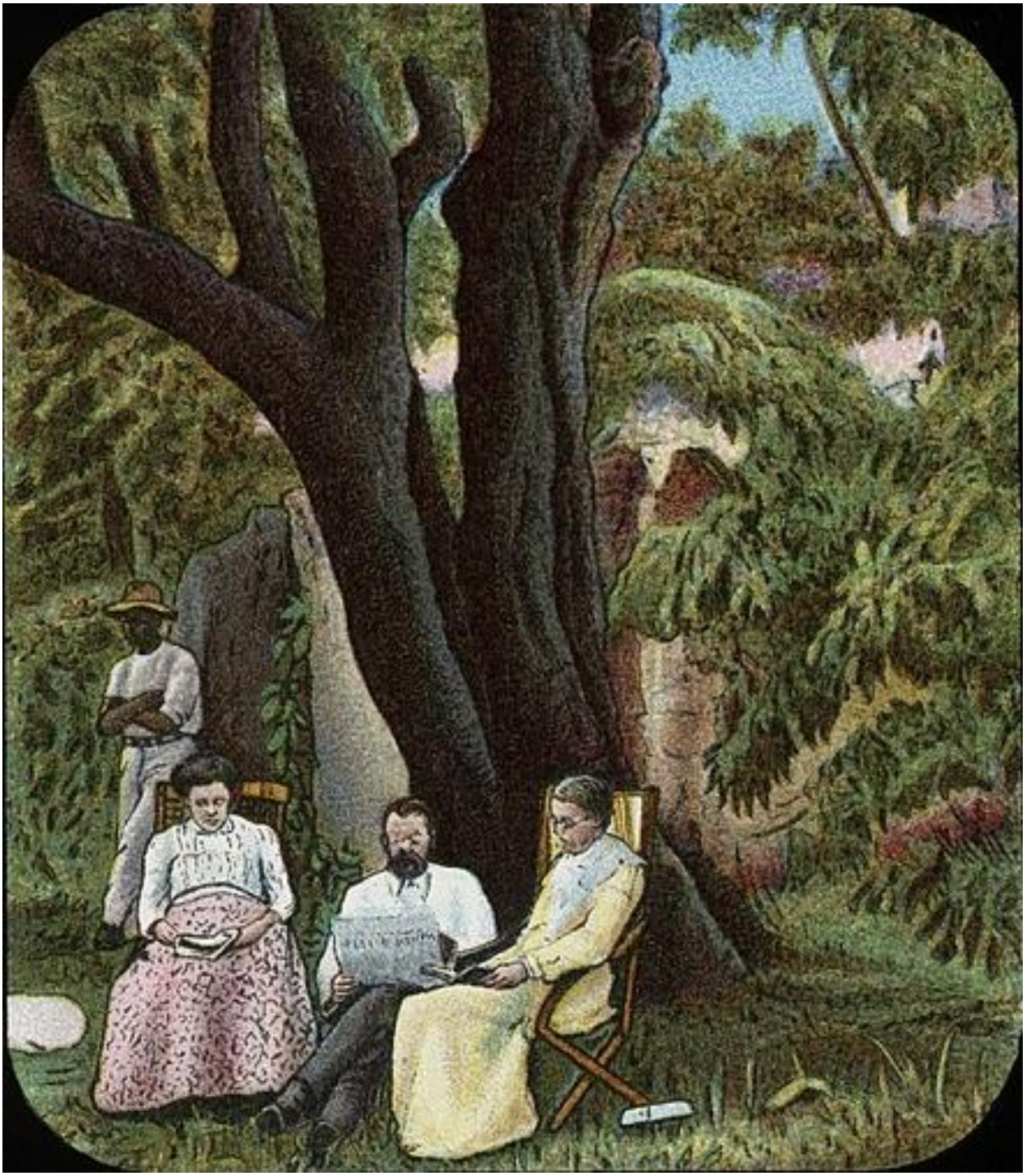
But nothing would stop Moffat; and in the end he found that the outlaw chief was glad to have him as teacher to the members of his tribe.

For six months he lived in a hut, round like a beehive, in the kraal of Africaner; day by day he taught the chief, and talked with him about the stars and the wonders of the Earth, and how much finer life would be if men would cease to fight each other. The chief listened and became a new man. "Then come with me," said Moffat to him, "to Cape Town, and the Government will pardon you."

It was a bold step to take; but it proved a wise one, for when the "new man" arrived at the Cape the Governor not only pardoned him but gave him a wagon as a mark of his goodwill.

Moffat's wife was Mary Smith of Dukinfield; she married Robert in 1819. She is said to have been timid by nature, but she faced many dangers which only a strong and noble woman could have borne. Often she had to live alone with her children while Robert was on his journeys; but she found her dark friends worthy of trust.

When there was no Christian among them so sure was her faith that she sent home to her



Almond Tree at Kuruman with Mary Livingstone, Robert Moffat, Mary Moffat by The London Missionary Society

friends asking them to send her cups to be used at the Holy Communion.

These cups arrived the day on which the first converts were received into the Church, and partook of the Communion. It was in 1840 that Livingstone arrived, and in Kuruman he met with their daughter Mary, who became his wife.

When in 1870 Moffat came home for the last time he was a man of whom all men in Africa were proud. "None greater, none holier than he," General Smuts said of him.

His wife Mary did not live long after her return. At Leigh, near Penshurst in Kent, the old man, now alone, made his home. He lived for 13 years, always welcome wherever he went, and always to the last with a garden to tend.

Robert Moffat Monument, Ormiston, England

Chapter 8

René Caillié

1799-1839 A.D., Explorer of Africa

René Caillié, Louise Amélie Legrand de Saint-Aubin

When he was born Timbuctoo was unknown. He set all the world talking about it. A French baker's son, born at Mauze in Poitou, he was orphaned and went to live with his uncle. One day a company of players would visit the village; another time a circus would come. One very great day history itself flashed through his village with Napoleon on his horse. Where had they all been? Books would tell him, and so he read books in the evenings; he read through the night. He spent his days earning a small wage with a cobbler, but shoemaking was only the mask of his life.

Mysterious Timbuctoo was the subject of something he read one day. Nigeria hid an unknown city, the greatest ever built, the writer said. It stood in a country of gold jealously defended by the Arabs; no white man had ever been back to tell of that glorious place.

Rene left the village for Timbuctoo.

Having walked to Rochefort, the nearest big harbour, he heard that a colonial mission to Africa was being prepared. To get himself engaged as a servant proved easy.

The days unfolded like a fairy tale. The country was green and rich. The Negro kings were delightful fellows. Then came the desert, and indescribable sufferings, and the expedition was

obliged to fall back. The retreat turned into rout and the rout left but a handful of survivors, who trudged heavily from well to well, exhausted, dying. Caillié was picked up by a barge on its way to Saint Louis. Stricken with fever, he spent several months at the hospital there. When he came out, having neither strength nor money, neither relations nor friends, he took up a post as a French cook. But his health was so bad that as soon as he could afford it he sailed to France.

Four years later Caillié was at Saint Louis once more. By what means he could reach Timbuctoo he did not know; he only knew that he would reach it. He had faith in his endeavour.

This time the first thing to do was to get an appointment with the Governor of Senegal. "So, my boy" exclaimed Baron Roger, "you mean to discover Timbuctoo? Timbuctoo," he repeated, smiling; "they all have that name on their lips, imagining that to cross Africa is as easy as crossing a French plain. Listen," he went on, taking his visitor to a huge map with a white blank in the middle, "listen and look: here, there, everywhere you find mystery and death."

"Yet explorers have tried it in all times, from every part of Europe," Rene reminded him. "It was Thompson in 1618."

Yes, assassinated.

It was Major Houghton in 1790.

Yes, disappeared.

Then Winterbottom.

Dead; accident and illness.

"Let me continue the list," the Governor went on. "Horneman left Cairo behind him to die in the desert, and Mungo Park, the greatest of all, passed near the gate of Timbuctoo without entering it. Peddie and Campbell were carried off by yellow fever. Then we had Gray. As to Beaufort—well, I am afraid Beaufort is not getting on at all."

"Will your Highness forgive me," said Caillié quietly, "but Beaufort will not succeed. Too many companions, too many donkeys, too many goods."

Baron Roger remained mute. Who was this young man, so simple-looking, who expressed himself with such cleverness and power? He said to him: "You have no money, no birth, no protectors, no instruction. What do you count on to succeed?"

"On my weakness, sir—on the apprenticeship of misery. Money, escorts, letters of introduction, all these do not mean much when you are 300 miles from towns. Success will be given to a man used to the climate, to fatigue, to privations, a man accustomed to the ways and habits of the natives and able to speak their language, but above all a man invincibly determined to get through. I have planned a story to win their confidence. I shall introduce myself to them as the son of a rich French merchant, pretending to be so enthusiastic about the Koran that I want to embrace their religion."

In the end the Governor was convinced. "Monsieur Caillié," he said, "you are a man; count on me."

Caillié left Saint Louis in August 1824. He wore a smart Moslem dress and carried a bale of goods, presents from Baron Roger. He had decided to stay with a tribe of Moors called the Braknas; it took him five weeks of great trial to get to them, but a generous welcome awaited him there.

The king had him taken to his tent. "Be assured of my highest protection," he promised, when the story was told.

So Caillié began school again with children. But to be a perfect Moor did not only include a

Illustration of René Caillié dressed in Arab clothing from *Travels through Central Africa to Timbuctoo*, by René Caillié

knowledge of Arabic and the wearing of amulets; it also meant being acquainted with Moslem customs in their most secret details. Caillié spent his time observing, a very easy task in the circumstances, for occasions multiplied every day in that tribe ever on the move.

Amid this noisy, stirring life the stranger struggled quietly on, sometimes on burning sands, sometimes on sharp flints. The protection of the king assured him a certain security; after a year he had succeeded in lulling all distrust. But what excuse could he make now that he knew enough and wished to leave?

He evolved a plan, and in the end, dressed as an Arab, he came upon a caravan.

"Who are you? Where do you come from? Where are you going?" they asked him continually.

He replied that he was an Egyptian anxious to return to his native land.

When the caravan started he joined it. The caravan passed through cultivated regions; there were enjoyable meals under beautiful trees; slaves went for the water. A calm repose ended a glorious day.

Later they crossed immense rice plantations. Everything was new to our traveller, and the extreme kindness of the natives enchanted him. One would come, hold up his leg on his lap, and massage it with skilled fingers, singing: "Poor one, you must suffer, you come for the first time." Another would bring leaves to make a bed for him. "Have these," he would say, "you are not used to sleeping with your head on a stone."

Village succeeded village. Caillié took advantage of halts to wander cautiously a little way off and make notes. Did any intruder come into view he would see one more poor Egyptian deep in the Koran!

After some weeks the caravan reached an endless stretch of sand, and one June day gave a great joy to Caillié: the Niger River shone before his eyes, its wide, calm expanse shimmering hot in the sun. He ran like a madman to that object of his dearest dreams, and sat there entranced by the mysterious waters of whose course European scholars were so anxious to know. The discovery was an important one; the river cut into two parts the huge white space of the maps of Africa.

Caillié's companions went no farther; he had to wait for another caravan to continue his journey. The other caravan contained only 14 people.

Presently bad days began. The rain season had come; to wade barefooted on sharp stones, to sleep on damp branches, to feed on a few pistachios, such were the new conditions of life for Caillié. They now moved through a region inhabited by the Fulahs, pagan but gentle Negroes whose existence seemed to be an eternal rejoicing; Caillié's umbrella had a magic effect on them, so anxious were they to know by what spell it opened and shut.

Another region brought new scenes and customs; no more gaiety, the Bambaras were of an indifferent and lazy sort. Caillié was received by their Chief, whose only furniture consisted of a horse, two saddles, a straw hat, and a drum.

It was only after several months of illness that Caillié could think of resuming his journey, but then a new trial befell him. It was scurvy, and it was terrible. Caillié asked God for death; he lay expecting it. For months, miserable, starving, disfigured. But God restored him to life. Spring came around, another caravan passed along, and he followed it.

Two months later they reached Djenne, and here Caillié was given a free passage on a cargo boat bound for Timbuctoo.

Caillié entered Timbuctoo in the dark of the night on April 20, 1828. His black eyes shone with rapture; yet he must have been disappointed with the paradise he had looked forward to in his dreams.

"The view of Timbuctoo," he wrote "does not correspond at all to what I thought of it. I had fancied a wealthy, grand-looking city, and I find myself before a bulk of awkwardly-built houses made of earth. In all directions vast deserts of sand stretched to the horizon."

Every day Caillie loitered about the torpid and sweltering town. He thought of its history. Casting his mind back, he saw it in the Middle Ages, a hive of energy and culture, the Latin quarter of the Sudan, the light of her knowledge shining all over Africa and South Europe. He saw it again when commerce had supplanted theology and shops had become more important than mosques. Then she fell fast into decadence, and with the expulsion of the Moors from Spain in 1492 nothing more was known of Timbuctoo.

After a fortnight of investigating, observing, and resting Caillié decided to go. However perilous, the only way that offered was across the great Sahara, a martyrdom perhaps worse than death.

Again he joined a caravan. This was a real moving city with 400 men, 1400 over-loaded camels, and a host of women and children. They travelled by night and rested by day. The dry season opened. Thirst consumed the travellers. To drink, to drink—they had no other desire but to drink. Yet there was nothing to quench their thirst. One day when the tents had just been pitched a sandstorm arose; the air was filled with yellow dust which burned the eyelids; the tents collapsed under a whirlwind of flying sand, which smothered and choked them so that they fell down like wisps of straw blown before the wind.

Slaves were sent to search for wells, but after two days they returned with the news that the wells were dry. Later, staggering and breathless, they reached other wells only to find them filled with sand.

So these overwhelming days passed by, the caravan moving by inches in a state of frightful exhaustion. Caillié's clothing was in rags. Blackened by the sun, shaken by an incessant cough, his

House inhabited by the French explorer René Caillé, François-Edmond Fortier

aspect was so miserable that nobody could have told his age or the race to which he belonged.

Twenty days later the caravan entered Morocco, and at Fez the strangest part of our traveller's mission took place. The title of Moslem, which had so far been his passport, now shut the gates of Europe to him. Possessing wonderful documents, he could not deliver them. The only thing he could do after his astounding journey was to beg food at the Mosque. To leave Fez for Rabat and see the Consul became his sole determination.

"Rabat, you want to go to Rabat? What a strange way of reaching Egypt," people said, and the over-suspicious Moslem grew more suspicious still.

But Caillié made use of his wits, he got to Rabat, but more a coughing shadow than a man. How could such a miserable-looking native expect to be introduced to the Consul? But Caillié did reach the Consul. He found himself in front of him, worn out to exhaustion, and then he collapsed. He could only say that he was French, had just walked across Africa, and needed protection. They took him for a lunatic and sent him away.

That evening Caillié fell asleep on the road. Dogs barked at him and would have torn him to pieces had not a passer-by interfered. At last he thought of the cemetery as a quiet refuge, and he dragged himself up and spent the night there.

Cost what it might, something must be done. Caillié wrote to Monsieur Delaporte, the Consul in Tangier. No answer. He crawled to Tangier, begging his way.

On September 8 at nightfall the Jewish servant of the French Consul in Tangier ran frightened

to Monsieur Delaporte, shouting that a ragged tramp had crept into the house. Monsieur Delaporte came to look at him. How great a surprise to hear the ragged tramp entreat him in perfect French not to utter a word.

"But who are you?" the Consul whispered. "Caillié! How dangerous!" The Consul was a great friend of explorers. He rushed at Caillié and embraced him. Our hero was saved.

Indeed Rene Caillié had not discovered the ingots of the golden river. Poor he had gone out, miserable he came back. Nor had he seen a glorious city at the end of all his dreams. He had found a mean enough place at the end of a martyr's journey of 3600 miles, lasting 538 days. But, having sought for nothing but the secret happiness of his adventure, he had won his prize. In that mysterious Timbuctoo he had found the joy of the traveller who knows that it is better to travel than to arrive.

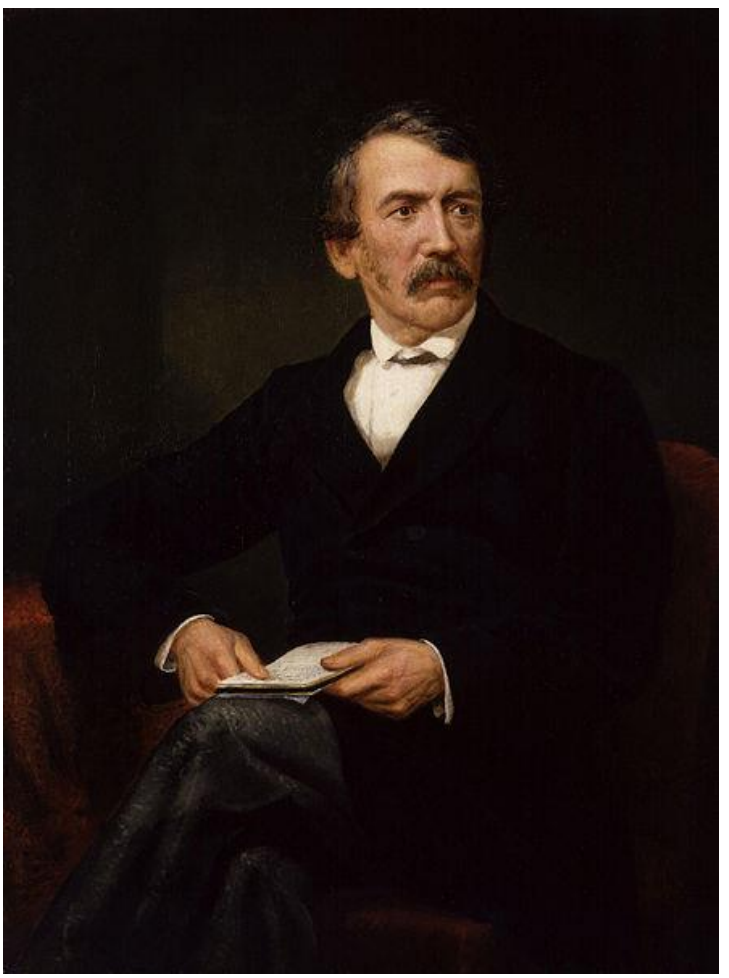
Chapter 9

David Livingstone

1813–1873 A.D., Explorer of Africa

One of the most famous warriors in the story of mankind, he sleeps by the Unknown Warrior in Westminster Abbey.

From a childhood of poverty and toil he rose by his own exertions to worldwide fame. Setting before himself a lofty aim, and preparing in every way for its fulfilment, he accomplished his task with indomitable selflessness, and will ever remain an ideal pioneer on the edge of civilisation, pushing its frontier farther over the chaos of paganism by force of character and not by force of arms.



David Livingstone, Frederick Havill

He was born at Blantyre in Lanarkshire. His family was of Highland origin from the Hebrides, but his was the third generation living in the manufacturing Lowlands, near Glasgow. His father was a small shopkeeper, pious and much respected, with a family of seven children, and David went to work at ten in a cotton factory and worked there fourteen years.

Education has long been the highway by which the sons of Scotland rise in the world, and David bought a Latin grammar with the first money he earned. At six in the morning he began work and in the evening he attended night classes. When he was about 20 and earning good wages as a cotton spinner the reading of Dick's Philosophy of Religion led him to fix on a specific life purpose from which he never swerved. It was to devote himself to the alleviation of human suffering and pain, and he decided he could do that best by becoming a missionary

doctor.

He sailed for Africa at 27, for a period of service that was to last nearly a third of a century. It is typical of his thoroughness that on his voyage out he mastered the use of the scientific instruments by which exact locality is ascertained.

Dr. David Livingstone with his daughter, Courtesy of Wellcome Images

To appreciate Livingstone at his true worth it is necessary to realise the completeness of his equipment for the work he undertook, and which completely absorbed his indomitable energies; also to see that he was a man of broadest outlook. Above all, it is necessary to see what were the problems that confronted him when he landed in South Africa, and what were the features of his character that made him what he became—an ideal pioneer. The missionary who establishes a Christian station in a pagan land, and makes it a centre of the influences that stream naturally from Christianity, does a most noble work; but that was not the type of work Livingstone settled down to do. He did it; he established stations; he built chapels where others ministered; but it was not his essential work. The Africa that confronted him was vastly different from the Africa of today. It was practically an unknown land. From Cape Colony northward nothing was known inside the coastal strip except to Arabs raiding for slaves.

When Moffat's missionary station at Kuruman came to take its place on the map, on the border of British Bechuanaland, the next known inland place was Timbuctoo, 3500 miles away. No one knew where in it the great rivers Nile and Congo began. No one knew the geographical configuration of this immense hinterland, as big as three or four Europes. It contained huge tracts of deserts, forests, grazing grounds, and swamps, and was inhabited by innumerable tribes speaking innumerable tongues, and by myriads of wild animals.

In the South the Boers, inimical to missionaries, and regarding the natives as ordained by God to serve them, were pressing steadily northward over the grazing grounds; and farther northward, on the east and west coasts, the Portuguese held three-quarters of a million square miles and were in trading alliance with the Arab slave-raiders who might at any time break through to the less

warlike tribes and march them to the coast as slaves.

This was the Africa that confronted Livingstone when he arrived at Kuruman with directions from Moffat (who had not yet returned from England) to go forward northward and establish a new missionary station a hundred miles or more away in Bechuanaland.

During his first six months in Africa, Livingstone travelled 700 miles in Bechuanaland, and finally fixed on a site for his new station 250 miles north of Kuruman. Returning to that place he engaged for two years in the ordinary labours of a mission station, interspersed with visits to neighbouring tribes and with the study of a number of tribal dialects.

Then he established his new station. It was there, during a hunt of lions that had become fearless in their depredations, that he was pounced on by a wounded lion which crushed his left arm—an injury which ensured the identification of his body 30 years later. Here he brought his wife, Mary Moffat, who was fully experienced in missionary work; and her school formed part of the station equipment. After three years' work he moved farther afield to the river Koloben, where he founded another station, with Chief Sechele and his tribe.

It had now become obvious that Livingstone's supreme natural gift was his power of winning the confidence and admiration of the African races. Instinctively they saw him as a man of noble mould. The magnetism of his personality was felt strongly by men of a wide range of character and experience.

David Livingstone attacked by a lion in Africa, Courtesy of Wellcome Images

Sir Bartle Frere, who helped in the continuance of his work in the suppression of slavery, said Livingstone would surely be held up in ages to come as one of singular nobleness of design and of unflinching energy and self-sacrifice. "I never met (said he) a man who fulfilled more completely my idea of a perfect Christian gentleman, actuated in what he thought and said and did by the highest and most chivalrous spirit, modelled on the precepts of his great Master and Exemplar."

In him Christianity was sending as its herald to a part of the world that had no knowledge of Christian ideals, and in many places had never seen a white man, one who was supremely fitted to represent it, and the effects were amazing.

Livingstone's only failure was with the Boers, who were perfectly satisfied with a form of Christianity that was not his. Everywhere, except in the Transvaal, he was warmly received. Again and again he encountered warlike tribes who suspiciously resented intrusion, but soon they succumbed to his influence, and when he returned to them later he was joyously welcomed. His usual reception was one of spontaneous gladness, and as time went on his fame had spread before him and his coming was eagerly anticipated.

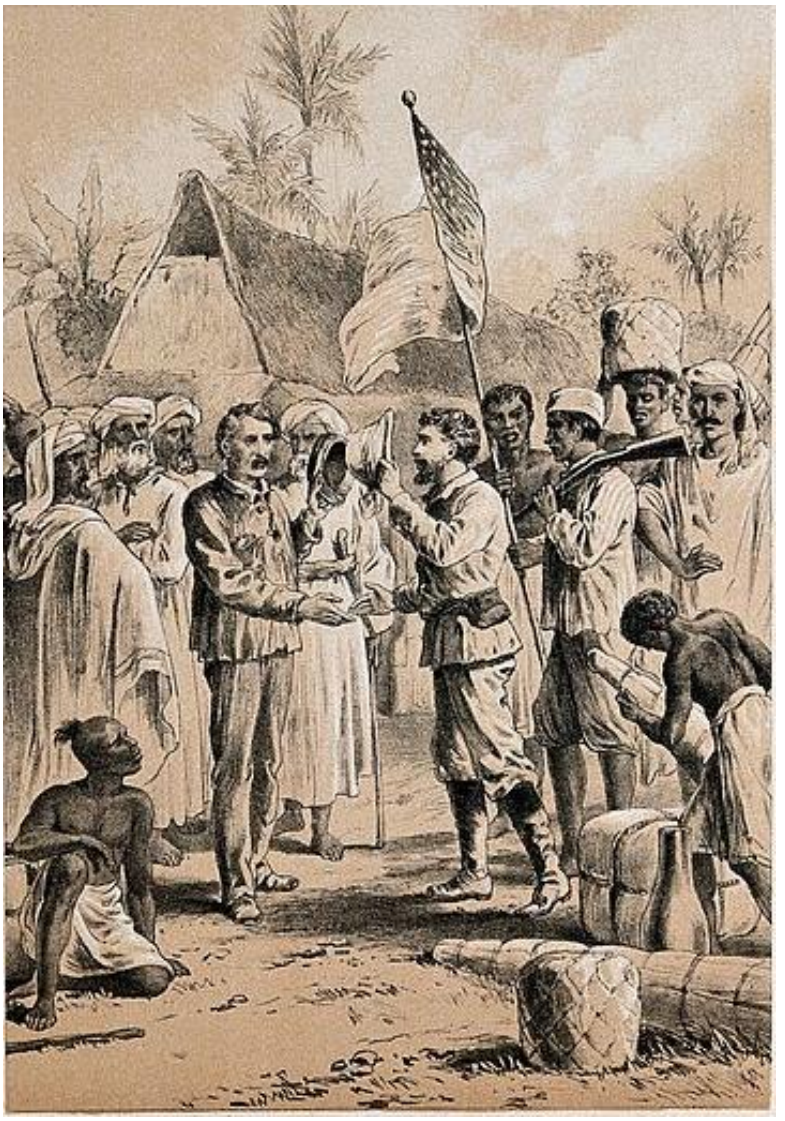
Livingstone believed that the only effective way of spreading Christianity and relieving Africa of its appalling miseries was by pushing on boldly northward. So, leaving Mrs. Livingstone at Koloban, he, with two friendly sportsmen, set out to cross the Kalahari desert and locate Lake Ngami, which was known to be there but had never been seen by a white man. They found it, and many native friends by the way. Next year he made the same journey with his wife and family. The following year, travelling northward with his friend Oswald, they reached the middle course of the Zambesi above the Victoria Falls, at a point that is now in what is known as Northern Rhodesia.

These journeys made Livingstone determine to explore Africa from West to East, and, his wife and family returning to England, he was nearly four years on this great adventure. When he reached Kuruman after bidding his family Good-bye, he heard that the Boers had attacked his mission station at Koloban, dispersed the friendly tribe there under a Christian chief, and had so completely sacked the missionary's house that, as he said, he had no longer any need to make a Will.

That journey northward, on which he discovered the Victoria Falls, shattered Livingstone's health; but when he returned to England, after 16 years, his account of his adventures made him the most popular man in England, and Africa the most talked-of continent. Honours were showered on him, and his book made him a small fortune. In 15 months Livingstone was on his way back to Africa, not this time as a member of the staff of the London Missionary Society but as Consul for Quilimane and commander of an expedition to eastern and central Africa. He studied the Zambesi River, discovered Lake Shirwa, and thoroughly investigated Lake Nyasa laying the foundations of knowledge on which the Nyasaland Protectorate has been built up.

There his wife joined him, and there she died; and he for the first time in his life felt willing to die. In 1864 the expedition was recalled, and it ended by Livingstone navigating his own steamer across the Indian Ocean from Zanzibar to Bombay.

In 18 months after his return to England he was back at his work, now Consul for Central Africa. His objects were the suppression of slavery by the spread of civilising influences and a study of the watershed between Lakes Nyasa and Tanganyika. This expedition proved far more trying than any he had undertaken for two main reasons. First, he was the only white man concerned in it, and his companions were nearly all novices. They were recruited in Bombay and were not of the African



Henry Morton Stanley meeting David Livingstone in central Africa, Courtesy of Wellcome Images

stock with whom Livingstone had lived and whom he had influenced. Second, he found himself in the eastern half of Africa frequently in contact with Arab traders trafficking in slaves and mixed up with tribal wars that fed the slave trade.

The whole region was in a state of confusion, suspicion, and uncertainty, and the slave dealers countered his opposition to their business by spreading panic among his followers. His Indians had not got the physique for the work, and when they were sent back and others deserted they were replaced by released slaves who in mentality and faithfulness were far inferior to the Makololo men on whom he could rely in his earlier travels. Also he was persistently hampered by ill-health.

Notwithstanding these disadvantages Livingstone did fine pioneering work in his last series of journeys. Following the Rovuma River he reached Lake Nyasa and then pushed on northward to Lake Tanganyika. The deserters, who became more afraid the farther they went, took back to Zanzibar a well-concocted but lying story of his death. Meantime he had gone into the unknown, where for two years he had no news of the outside world.

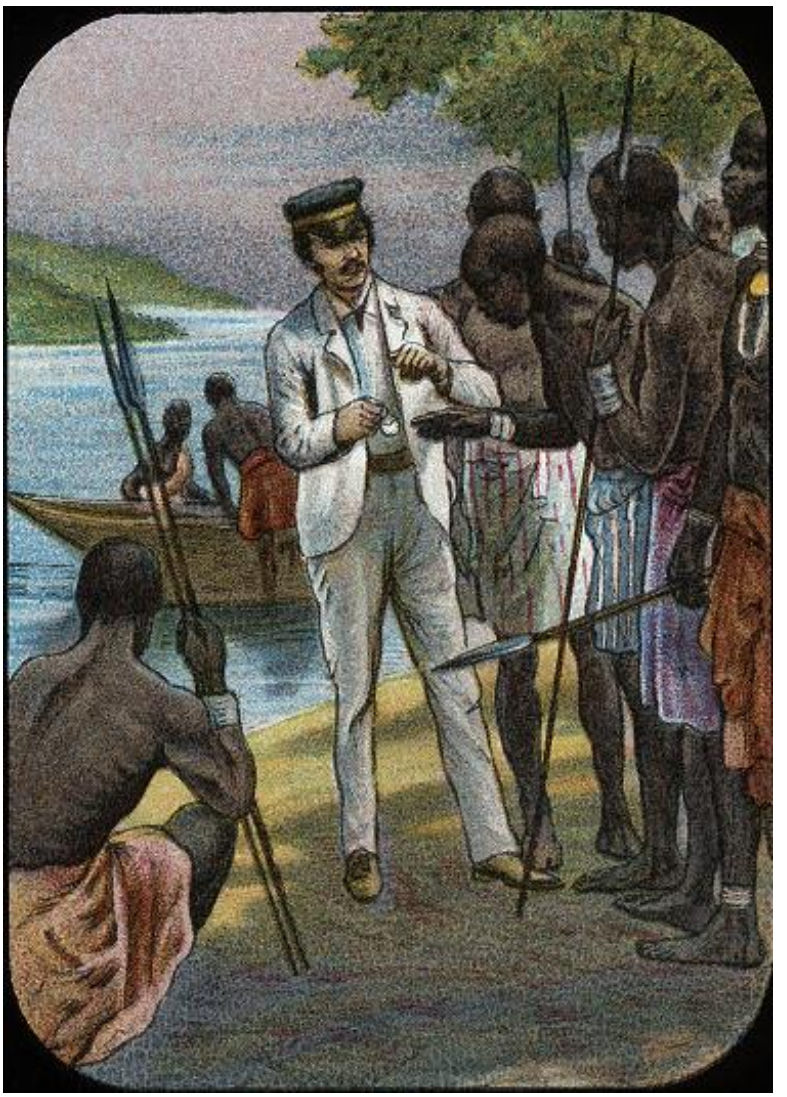
Cut off from the world of men, David Livingstone's name was on all lips at home and in all hearts was a deep anxiety for his fate.

The Geographical Society sent an expedition from the coast that returned in eight months with the assurance that he had not died where and when the deserters' story had reported him dead. He had in fact passed through what is now Northern Rhodesia, had discovered Lakes Mweru and Bangweolo, and entering what is now Belgian Congoland had found there a mighty river without being able to cross it. Was this River Lualaba the upper reach of the Congo or of the Nile? That was the question that perplexed him.

Waiting on this river at the town of Nyangwe he saw a shocking massacre of men, women, and

children by Arab slave-raiders. In horror he moved back eastward toward Tanganyika to approach civilisation and see what could be done. He had a reserve store of goods at Ujiji on the lake, but when he reached that place, in October 1871, he found his things had all been stolen, and he was too poor to travel farther. Five days later Henry Morton Stanley arrived at the same place to find and relieve him.

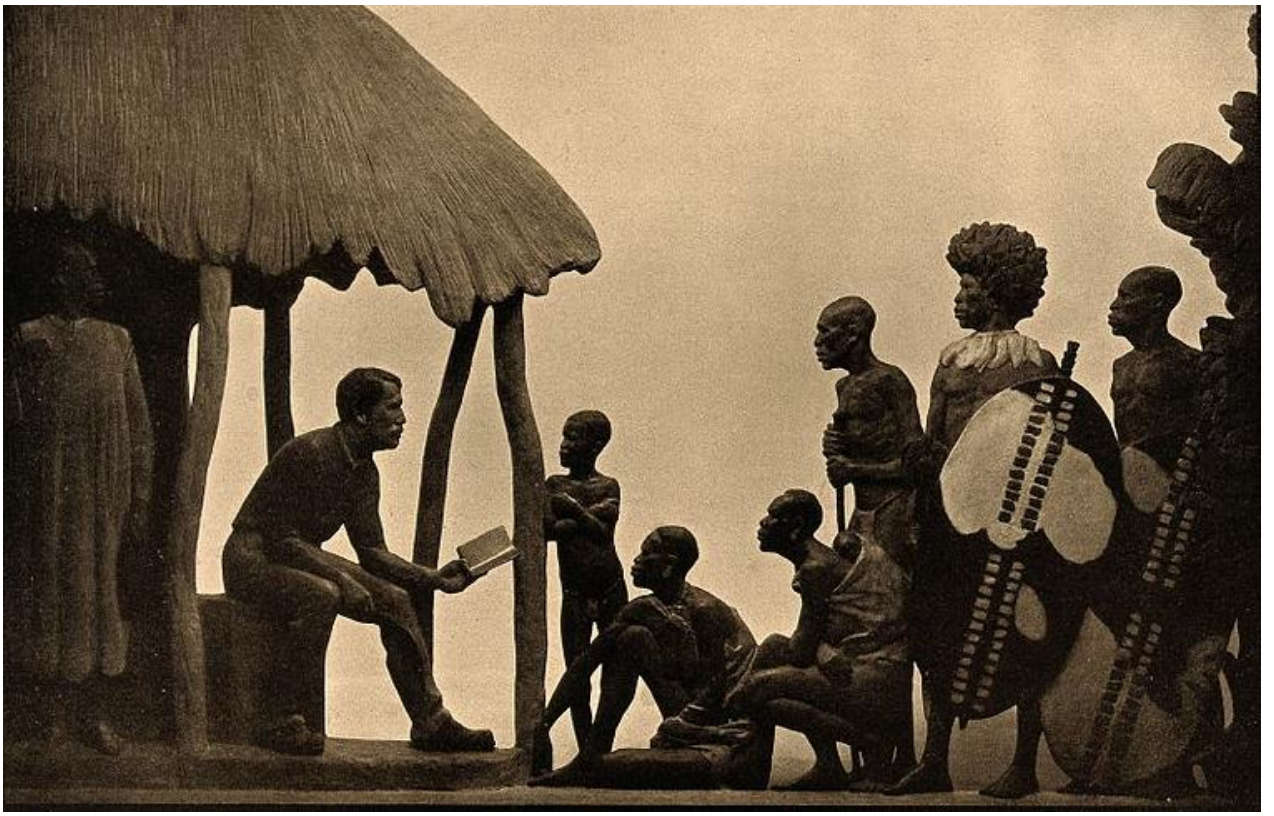
Stanley had been sent out by the New York Herald with a well-equipped expedition to rescue the heroic traveller who had been pioneering alone for five-and-a-half years. The world has no lovelier story than that of Livingstone and Stanley in Central Africa. Stanley had met him with the formal greeting "Dr. Livingstone, I presume?" but a fervent friendship at once sprang up between them, and these two explorers stayed together five months, while Livingstone recovered his health and Stanley suffered much from attacks of fever. Then Livingstone travelled with him part of his return journey to Zanzibar. He had treated Stanley like a son, and Stanley's admiration of him was unbounded. He defied the world to find a single fault in him. On March 15, 1872, they parted. "We wrung each other's hands," wrote Stanley, "and I had to tear myself away before I was unmanned; but before I could quite turn away I betrayed myself." After that Livingstone never saw a white man.



David Livingstone Showing Watch to Natives, The London Missionary Society, Courtesy of National Portrait Gallery, London

Four days later he entered his sixtieth year, and wrote in his diary: "My Jesus, my King, my Life, my All! I again dedicate my whole self to Thee. Accept me. And grant, oh Gracious Father, that ere this year has passed away I may finish my work."

He had resolutely refused to return with Stanley. He felt he had not fulfilled his mission until he had settled the watershed question, and traced the course of the Lualaba. Stanley had promised to send him ample supplies and a number of trusty native carriers from the coast. In five months they arrived. He set out southward with 56 men and two women on his last march in August



David Livingstone memorial in Blantyre, England (his birthplace), Courtesy of Wellcome Images

1872, and by the end of April 1873 had reached the swampy ground around Lake Bangweolo, after long suffering, and it was evident that the end was near.

He was in a friendly region, and his devoted servants gave him anxious service. On the morning of May Day, when they entered his hut, they found him lying dead, kneeling by the side of his bed with his head in his hands. The crowning proof of his greatness came in the actions of his faithful native followers. They agreed that he and everything that was his must be delivered to his countrymen on the coast. They embalmed his body, made a catalogue of his belongings, and delivered them to the British Consul at Zanzibar, though it took them nine-and-a-half months to make the toilsome journey. The remains were brought to England by a man-of-war, and two of Livingstone's African followers stood by his grave when, "borne by faithful hands overland and sea," he was at last laid to rest in Westminster Abbey.

Through all the lands where he travelled alone Christianity has now free course. Their products are sent to all the markets of the world. A railway follows the course of the mysterious River Lualaba which lured him on. Blantyre, in his favourite Nyasaland, named after his birthplace, has 2000 white inhabitants; Blantyre in Scotland, where he first saw the light, has made his birthplace a national memorial. The slavery that tortured his soul is known no more. Africa is opened up to the world. His dreams are more than realised, and he remains a beacon-light to all mankind.

Chapter 10

The Africans Who Brought Livingstone Home

1873 A.D., Zambia

On May Day [many] years ago there died in an unknown village in Central Africa a man who had made some of the greatest journeys that have ever been accomplished by a human being. He was David Livingstone.

His marches through the dark, unknown continent had made men in civilised lands thrill with admiration that he could do so much alone, and after his death he was destined to make the most glorious march of all, when his body was carried by six faithful native servants for 800 miles to the sea.

At the time of his death Livingstone was on his last great quest to find the sources of the Nile. Alone he had traversed Central Africa, proving it possible to march from coast to coast. Long before the end came he had been given up as dead, and when Stanley found him in October 1871 his travels were drawing to a close. One of his last marches fell in the rainy season. Drenched night and day Livingstone suffered agonies of pain and weakness. Soon he could neither wade the rivers nor walk the forest paths, and his men made a kind of hammock and carried him.

Slowly, with many halts, they made

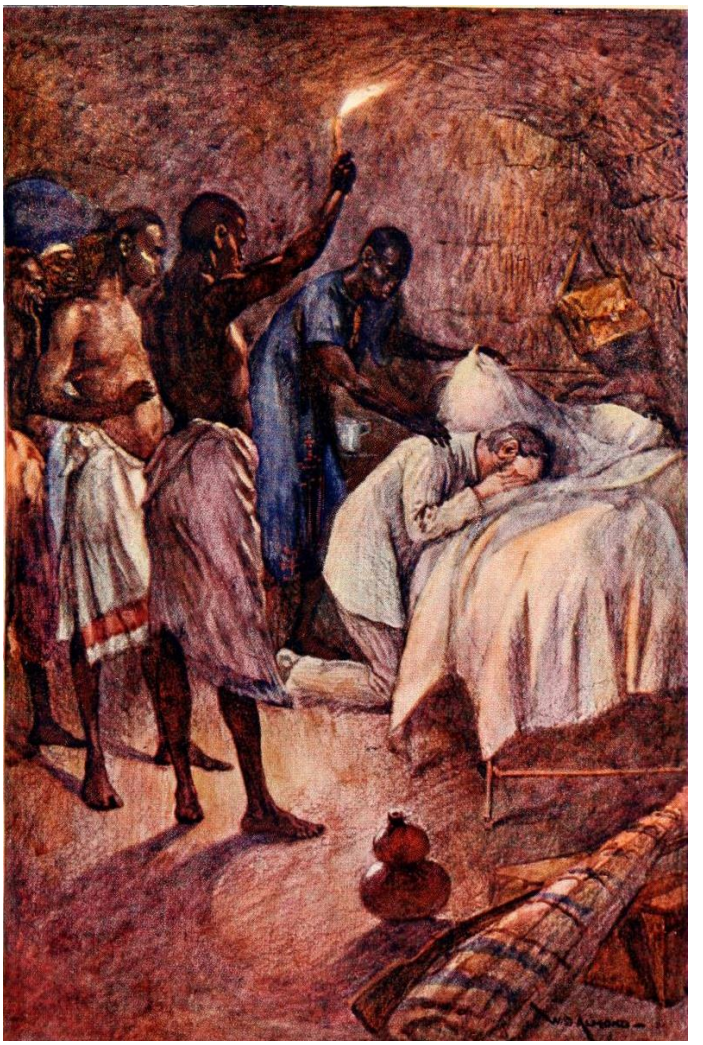


Illustration from *The roll call of honour, a new book of golden deeds* by Sir A. T. Quiller-Couch, 1911

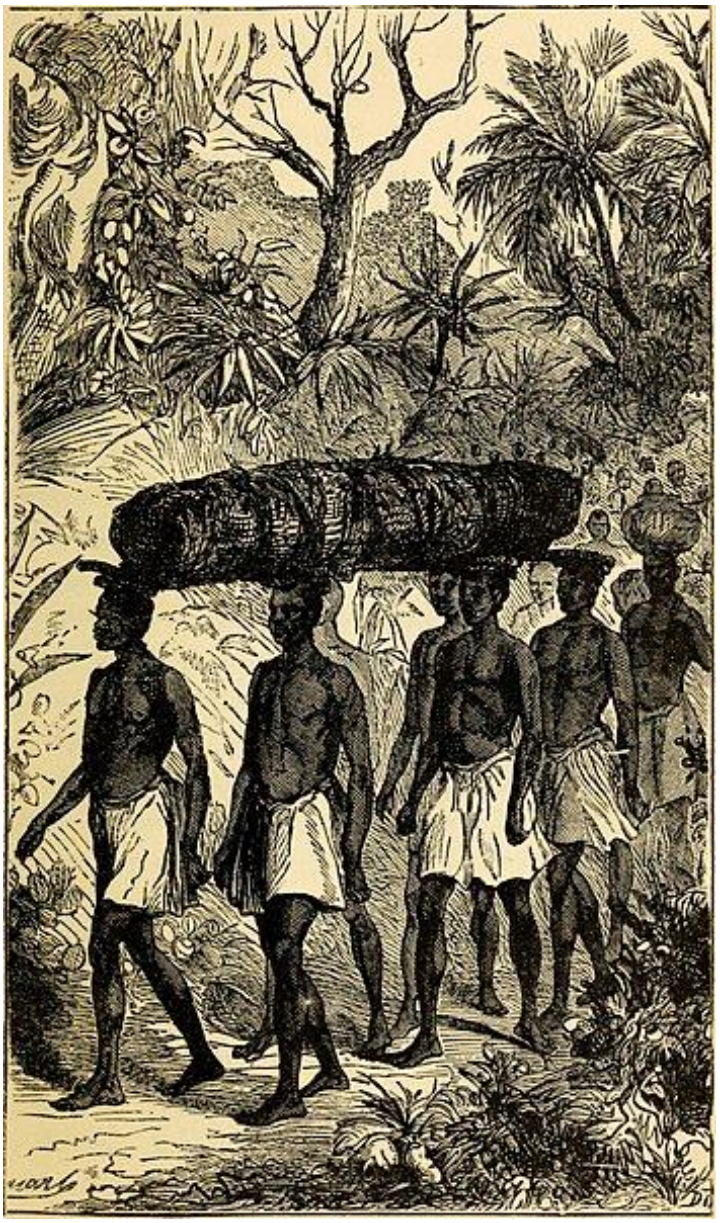


Illustration from *David Livingstone: the story of one who followed Christ,* by Louise Seymour Houghton 1882

their way to the village of Chitambo, near the southern shore of Bangweulu. There they laid him on a rough bed in a hut and the villagers, awe-stricken, peered in to see the fearless white man of whom they had heard so much lying helpless with death in his eyes.

"He is good," they had heard said of him, the highest praise possible in the mind of an African native. "He is good; he does not beat his bearers; he has no slaves."

In the middle of the night one of the faithful few summoned the rest of Livingstone's servant-friends. There was something in the silence of the hut he could not understand. The beloved master was kneeling by the bed, strangely still, the candlelight playing on his head. They thought he prayed, perhaps, and for a time forbore to disturb him. Then they found all was over.

The brown men stood and stared, and then their grief-stricken sobs broke on the still air. Five of them had been with him for eight years – Susi, Chumah, Amoda, Abram, and Mabruki; Jacob made the last of the personal guard of six men who had clung to the Pathfinder in sickness and in health. Now they were to be his faithful bodyguard in death.

They laid the body tenderly on the bed and, stealing out, crouched by the waning watch-fire and whispered together as to what should be done. The rest of the master's servants would, they knew, follow their lead. The greatest honour imaginable must be paid this glorious dead.

"He must go home to the land of the White Queen, so that his own people may honour him," said the faithful Susi.

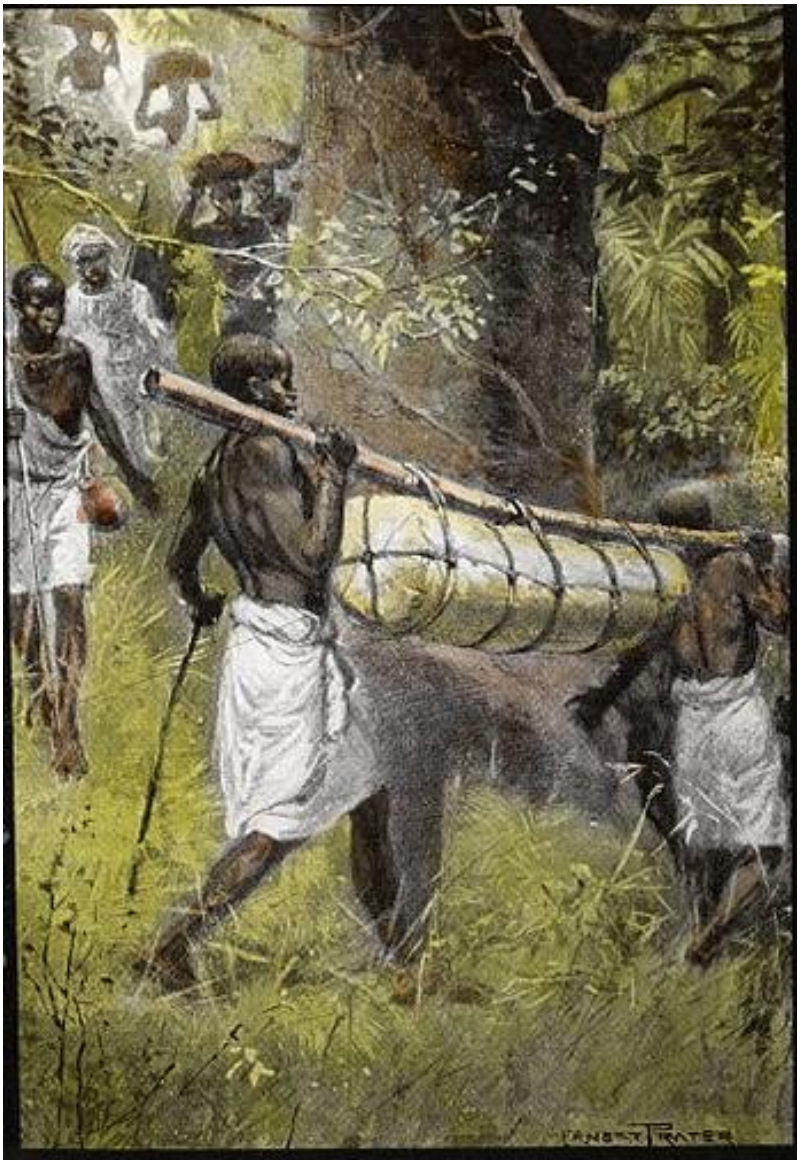
As the dawn broke over the African village they planned the last great stage of the Pathfinder's journeys. They were 800 miles from the coast; and the journey would take many months.

According to their own knowledge they prepared and embalmed the body. The heart of their

beloved master they buried secretly under a tree near the village, realizing perhaps that Livingston's heart always had been and now always would be in Darkest Africa.

When all their rites were finished they wrapped the embalmed body in numberless swathes of linen and bound it to a pole. Susi and Chumah slung the pole across their shoulders, and thus they set out. They traversed high ranges. They crossed the great River Luapula at a spot where it was four miles from shore to shore. They had the stores with which Livingston had equipped himself, with Stanley's generous help, for his last journey. From him they had learned how to barter with the natives; they had nothing to learn from anyone about crossing the wild land.

There were two chief dangers – wild beasts and enemy tribes. The first tried them sorely; lions roared round their campfire at night, and often enough broke on their march by day. Pythons lurked in the undergrowth. Crocodiles and hippopotamuses made the marshes and rivers a terror. When about a third of their journey was performed the faithful band found themselves on entirely new ground. But the leaders, the brave six, had not been years with Livingstone for nothing. They knew how to use a compass (magic, they had called it), and they made their way steadily eastward. There were several forced halts while the chiefs of the villages they passed through held council as to whether these unknown strange men should be allowed to go on, or speared as they stood. Susi and Chumah were willing to do battle with anybody, but they treated strangers with patience and fearlessness, as their master had, and succeeded in going on their way.



The Last Journey of David Livingstone, Africa, 1873,
Courtesy of University of Southern California

The months passed. Summer gave way to winter, and still this string of brave men went faithfully, wearily plodding on toward the coast through the mountainous eastern territories. They lost count

of the peaks they climbed, the gorges they crossed; they learned to live on what Livingstone had called "two tiny meals daily." Hunger and appalling thirst were often their portion. Men now and again fell out of the trail, would go no further. Then a new and terrible obstacle brought them to a halt. They were nearing the east coast and beginning to count the weeks to Zanzibar when one day they arrived at a village where the head man flatly refused to allow the body to be carried through his territory and threatened to send scouts ahead to warn his comrades along the track to Zanzibar.

The friends of Livingstone retreated to an outlying secret place and held a swift conference. Their quick native wit came to their aid. While some kept watch lest any prying eyes might be there, the leaders of the band made a hasty change. They took the body from its pole and wrapped it round and round with new linen from their store, so that it looked for all the world like a bale of cotton. With some faggots of wood and the old, travel-soiled wrappings they made a dummy package the shape of the original one, and slung it to a pole. The next day, in full sight of the village, the party split in half. A number of men marched back into the interior with their faggot burden. The others, carrying the bale of cotton anyhow, were allowed to pass on.

In February of 1874 they arrived at Zanzibar. They made themselves known to the authorities there. A cruiser about to start for Europe took the precious burden, and in April 1874 Livingstone was buried among the great in Westminster Abbey. The ten-months march was over. A group of travel-worn, weary men stood on the shore and watched the cruiser get ready for sea and speed away to the home of the white people. That part of their life was over. Nothing so wonderful as the friendship of their beloved master could ever happen to them again.

But though they were left forlorn their hearts were full of gracious memories of goodness and kindness, and they knew something about that Greater Love which exceeds all other love. To their last day they never thought they had done anything heroic. They had done just what their master would have done – they had paid the last possible service to the glorious dead.

Chapter 11

Charles-Martial Lavigerie

1825-1892 A.D., Missionary to Africa

Abbot Charles-Martial Lavigerie, Léon Bonnat

If we go to the Luxembourg Gallery in Paris one of the first portraits we observe is that of an imposing old man from whom we are hardly able to move our eyes. If we go to Rome the statue of the same man will hold our gaze. If we go to Tunis again he has a place of honour; if we go to Algiers we find him standing majestically on one of the highest hills. But it is perhaps at Biskra, at the very gate of the desert, that his noble white statue, venerated even by the natives, impresses the traveller most.

This man to whose memory there are monuments in so many places is called the Lincoln of Africa; his real name was Charles-Martial Lavigerie.

He was 22 when for the first time he heard a missionary preach and resolved to become a missionary himself. In the meantime he must still work. He did work, and while yet very young obtained his degree of professor at the Sorbonne. His activity was wonderful, his eloquence all-conquering, his prestige enormous.

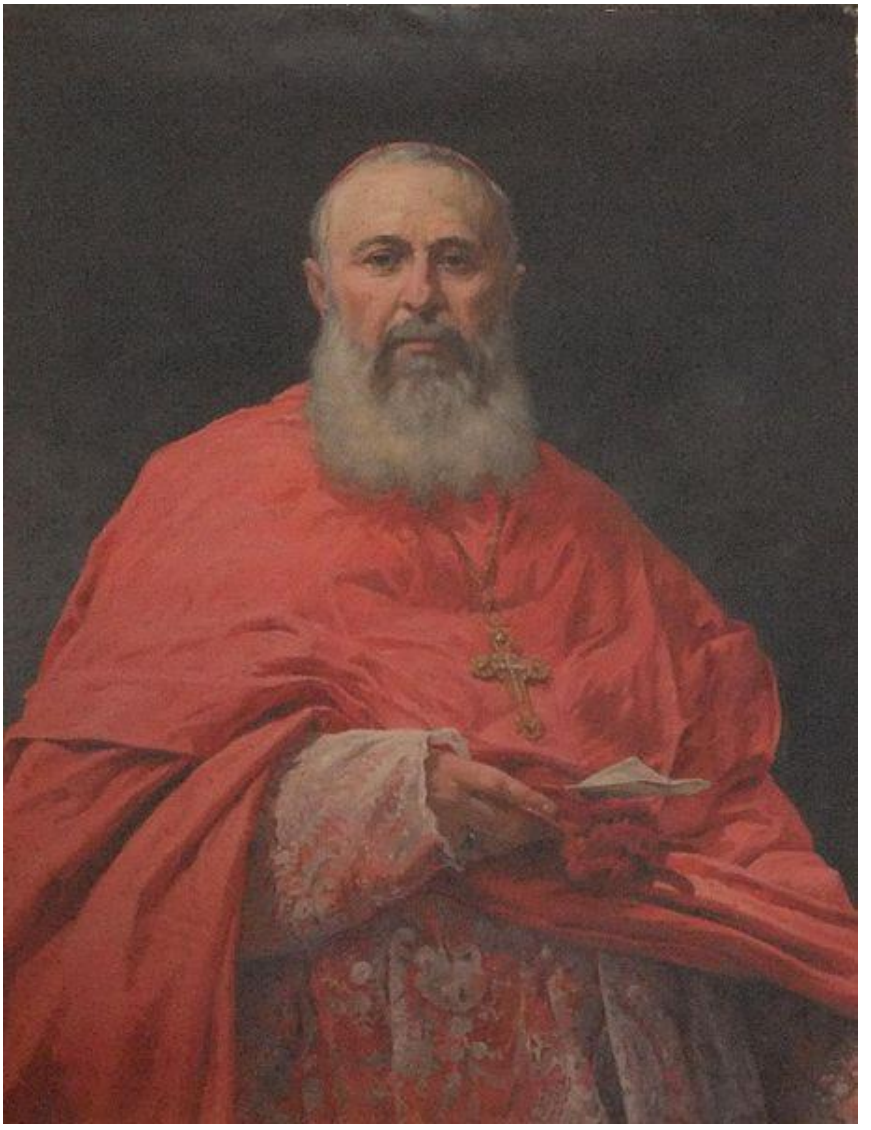
In 1830, when France found Algeria in the heritage of the dethroned dynasty of Charles the Tenth, two curious things happened. The first was that France was extremely embarrassed with it; the second was that it had been announced that the Mohammedan religion would be respected throughout the land.

Natural as this would be in England, it was considered remarkable in Algeria. For eight years Algeria was in contact with French political and military life, yet no attempt was made to establish

the Church there. The result of this was most unexpected. Instead of considering it as a mark of delicacy the Arabs interpreted it rather as a sign of impiety; men of deep faith, they were convinced that it is better to have a bad religion than none at all, and they said to one another: "It is a pity that these French people are not even Christians! Where are their churches?"

The French came at last to see that where they set up a cross they would remain longer than where they merely planted a flag, and a bishopric was established in Algiers. It was Lavigerie who was sent there.

He had everything to do. He was simple and kind, and he put his simplicity and kindness into practice.



Cardinal Lavigerie, unknown artist

Abandoned children were wandering in the streets: he established refuges. Orphans had no homes: he founded schools for them. Cholera raged: he had hospitals organised. Showers of locusts destroyed the harvest: he sent new seed to the unfortunate people. Where did he find the money? Some of it in his own pocket, for he was rich; some from the colonists who worshipped him; some from agricultural enterprises fostered by him. Land could then be obtained in Algeria for a mere song, and it was extremely fertile. Lavigerie had fields and flocks, and sellers in the market, and resources flowed in.

Then came the day when Lavigerie wrote home: "I have had a visit from a great man. He spoke to me of Jesus, Abraham, David, and Moses, and when he saw that I knew them all he was enchanted."

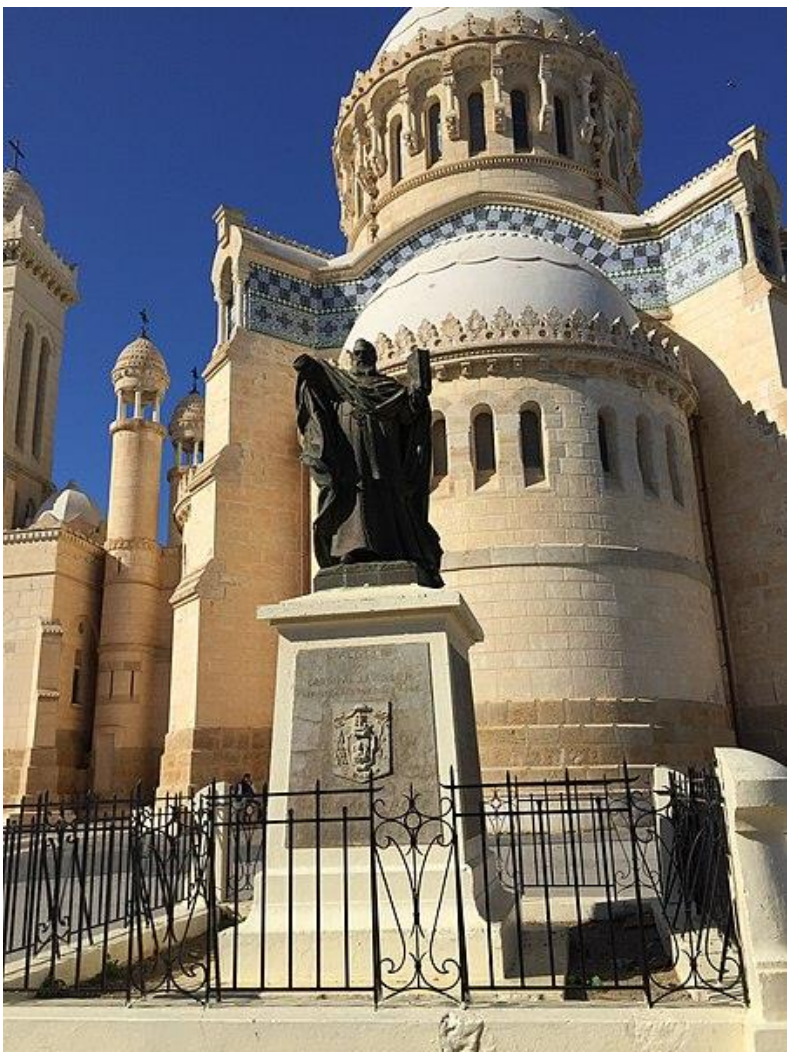
The union of the two peoples was consecrated by that discovery of the Mohammedans.

But to continue the accomplishment of a work did not suffice for the almost super-human activity of such a man as Lavigerie. Vaster plans were germinating in his fertile mind. He determined

that he would wipe out the horrible name of the Slave Coast, by which Algeria was known. An ungrateful task among the most ungrateful it was, for the slave trade was highly profitable for the country, at least 400,000 Arabs and Negroes being sold in a year.

Suddenly Lavigerie left Algeria. He travelled in England, Belgium, Germany, Switzerland, Italy, Spain, and Portugal. He spoke in all these countries, and the people listened to him, admired him, and joined in his efforts. A campaign was now begun against slavery, reaching from the Congo to Zanzibar, and the first result was that in 1890 a decree of the Bay of Tunis suppressed slavery in his States.

Lavigerie rests in Carthage, and he is remembered there as one of the greatest figures in the development of Africa, a man whose work was great because it was built on reason, justice, and charity.



Statue of Cardinal Lavigerie at Notre Dame d'Afrique
in Algiers, Algeria

Chapter 12

John Hanning Speke

1827–1864 A.D., Explorer of Africa

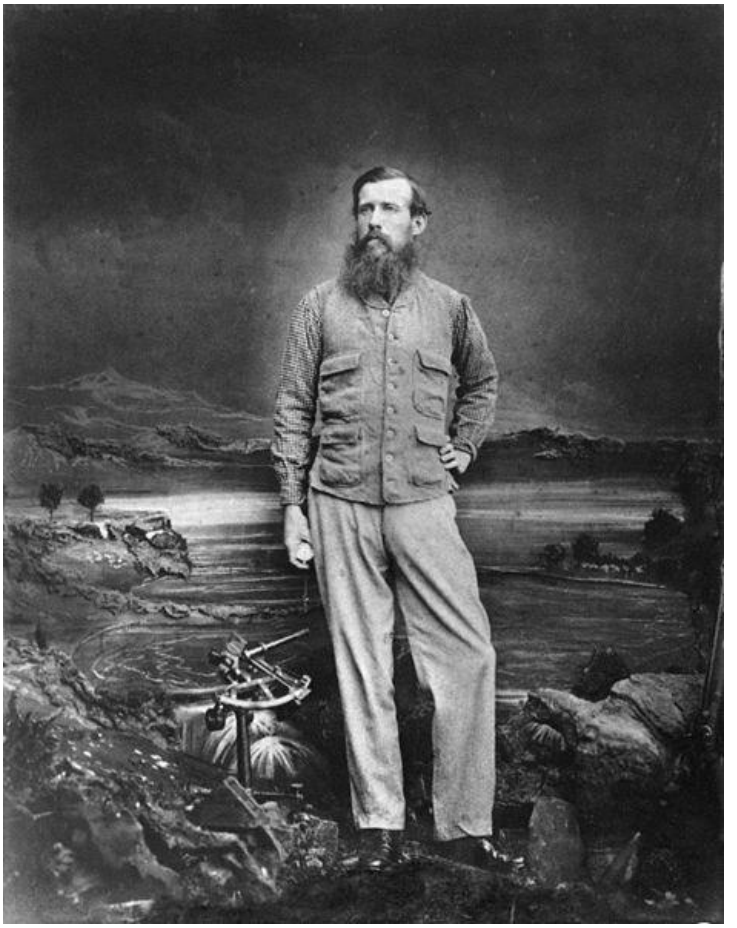
Of all the world's great rivers the Nile is perhaps the most mysterious. Flowing through a vast desert, reflecting some of the oldest buildings in the world, worshipped by the proud Pharaohs of Bible times, believed to water one of the first centres of civilisation, it has fascinated men for countless centuries.

But the most baffling secret of this mysterious river has been its source. Age after age its waters have come to the Mediterranean, and no man knew the beginning of their long journey. It was left to an Englishman to find the source, and to clear up a mystery perhaps as old as the oldest civilisation.

He was Captain John Hanning Speke. Born at Jordans, Ilminister, in Somerset, he came of a family of soldiers, and even as a boy he had a thorough training in military service, a training which made him singularly independent.

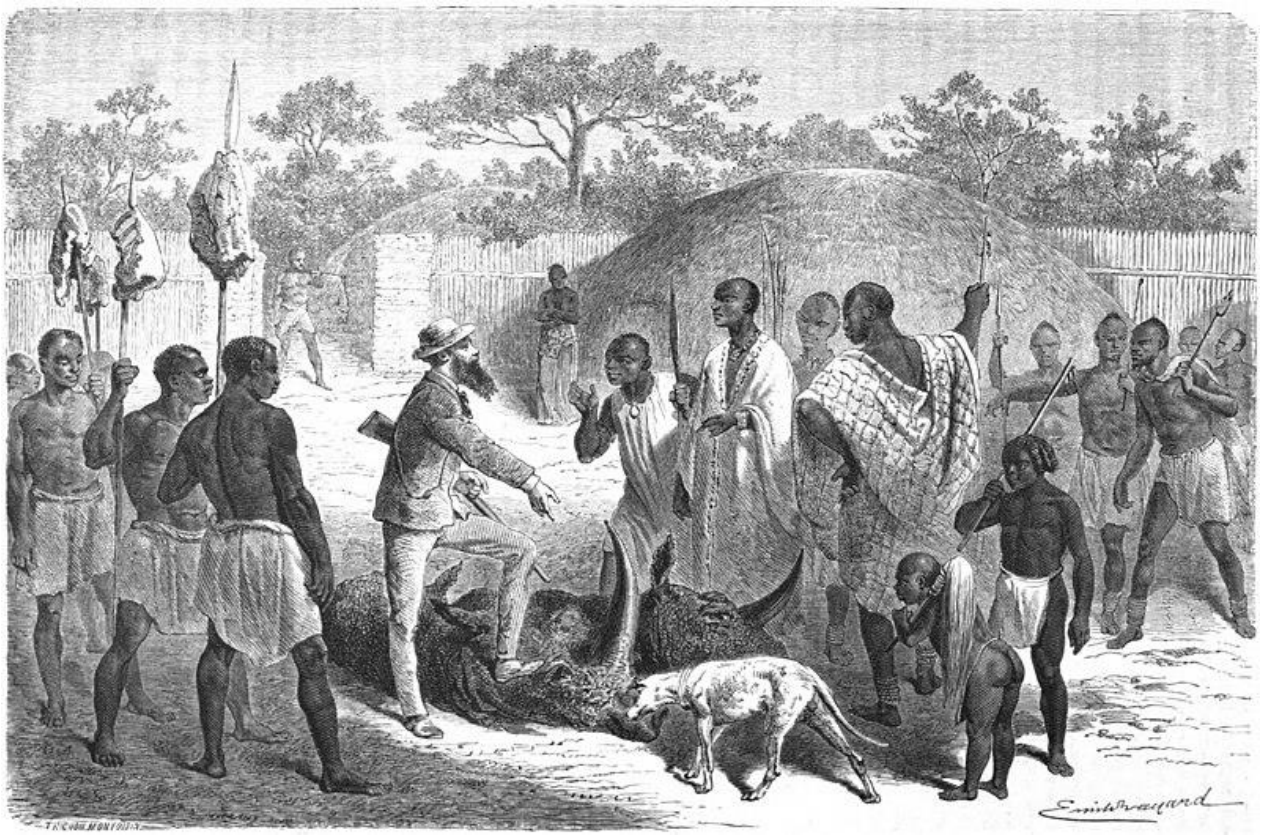
He entered the Indian Army when he was 17, and shortly afterwards his skill and courage in the Sikh War earned him promotion to the rank of lieutenant.

A daring sportsman, he and his friend Captain Grant were noted big-game hunters; and at the end of the war Speke did good work exploring part of the Himalayas and Tibet. But his life's work was to be done in Africa. India with its big game enthralled him less than the stories of African exploration; and in 1854 after 10 years in India, he arrived at Aden intending to organise an expedition into the interior of what was then known as the Dark Continent.



Carbon print of John Hanning Speke, Southwell Brothers

An expedition was already being



Speke presenting his hunting trophies to Rumanika, Émile Bayard

prepared by Burton, and Speke willingly joined it. Burton took command of half the company, wetting out for the mysterious capital of Somaliland. Speke took command of the other half and set off to explore the north-east of the country. His attempt was a failure. Tribal wars in the interior made it impossible to push on. He was betrayed by his guides. Returning to Aden he prepared another expedition, but his camels were stolen by the Somalis.

Another attempt with Burton in command almost cost Speke his life, for the little company was attacked, and Speke was wounded and captured. The natives began to torture him, but with amazing strength he burst his bonds, made a desperate bid for life, and escaped.

A man might well have been forgiven for turning from his purpose after such harsh treatment, but Speke was undaunted. He had a dream of reaching the very heart of Africa, and, in spite of misfortunes and wounds, he was ready in 1857 to start out with Burton for Central Africa.

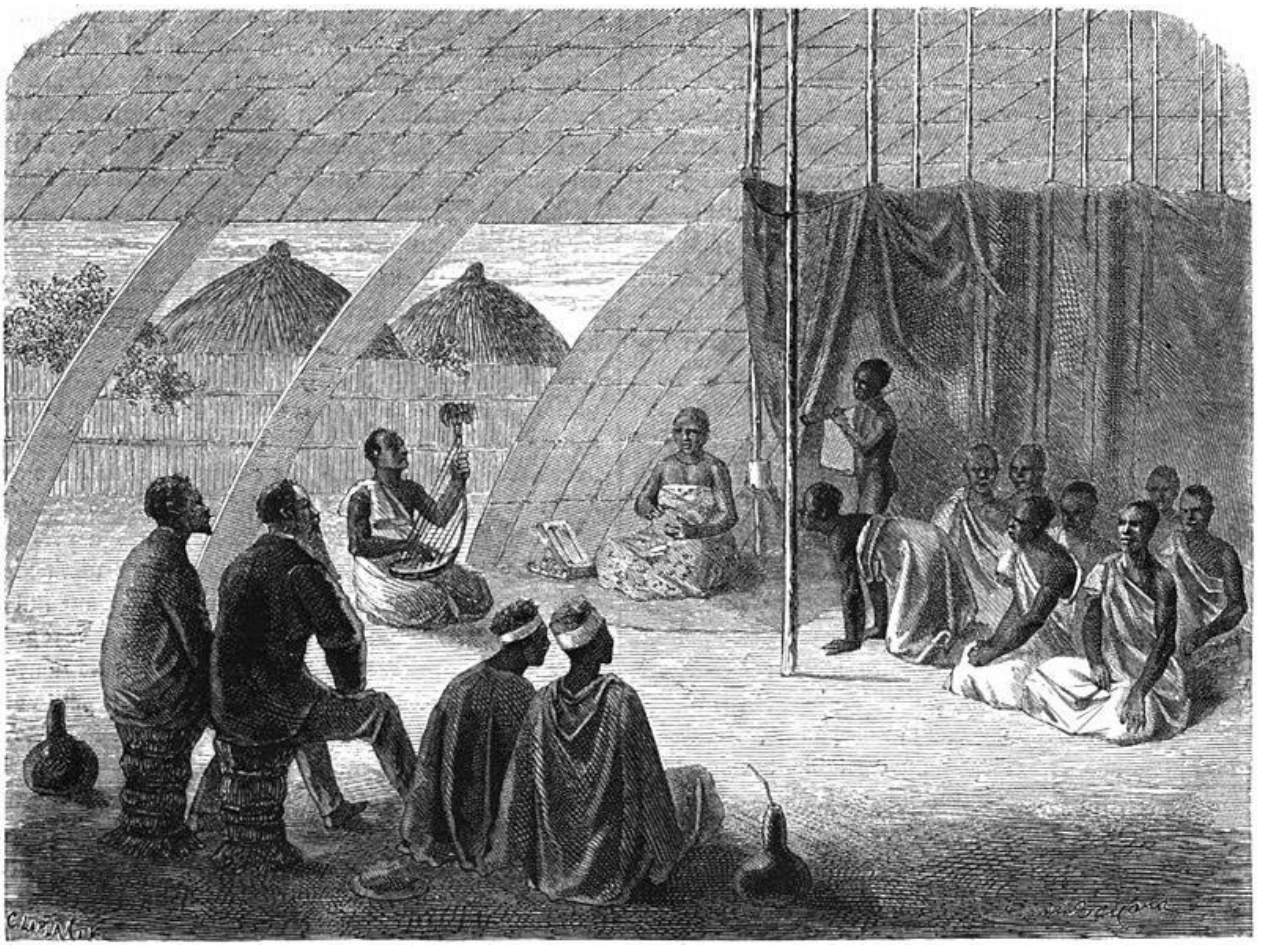
Fever struck down both explorers before they had gone far. They were so ill with malaria that they had to be carried by their servants, and the deadly tsetse-fly attacked men and cattle, both suffering terribly. At last they reached Kazeh, a slave-trading centre, and here they mapped out part of Lake Tanganyika. While here Speke heard a rumour of a great lake to the north, and, feeling sure it must be one of the sources of the Nile, he went on without Burton. With a small company he marched north for 25 days, and on August 3, 1858, looked down on what came to be known as the Victoria Nyanza. It was the supreme hour of his life. He was the first white man to gaze on that

vast sheet of water, the first European to set eyes on this great source of the Nile.

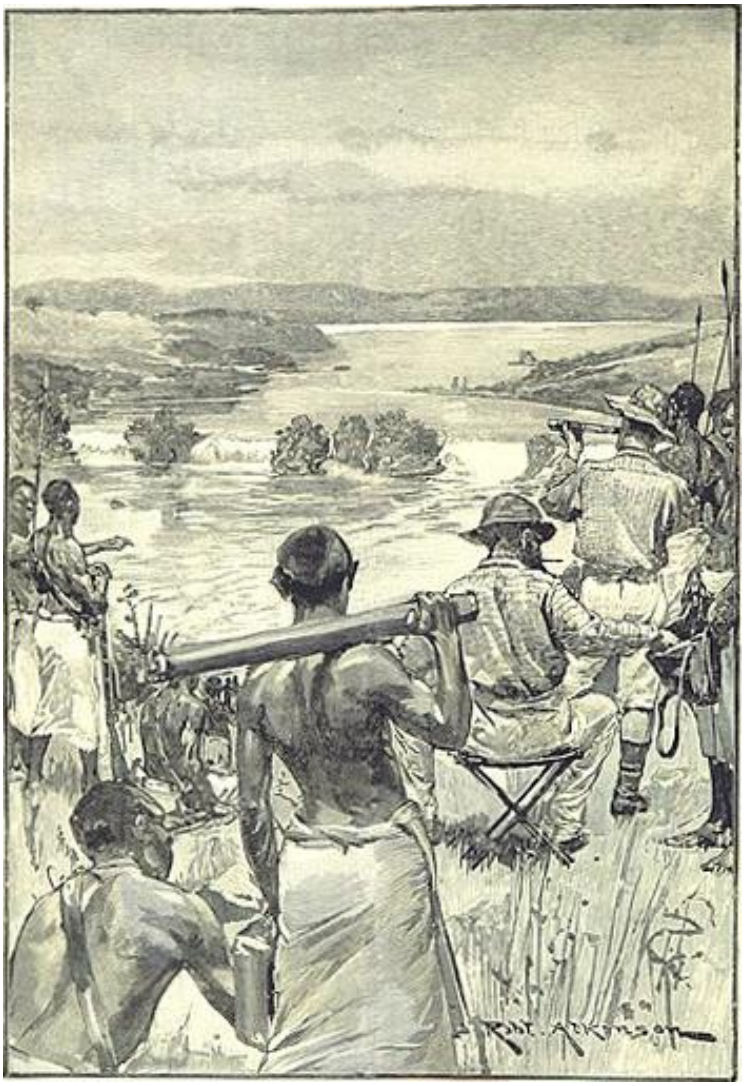
But he was ill, and after three days he started on the return journey. Though he had triumphed gloriously the story of it all reads like the story of a failure, for he had been unable to do more than take a few compass bearings, and when he joined Burton there was no rejoicing. His companion disbelieved him, and something like jealousy destroyed the friendship between them. Burton held that Lake Tanganyika was the source of the Nile, and that he himself had been the first to see it. Speke believed the source was the Victoria Nyanza. The quarrel between them continued when at last they returned to England.

Speke had a good friend in Sir Robert Murchison, and Sir Robert decided to settle the matter by sending out another expedition. Ill-will between Speke and Burton made it impossible for them to go together, so Speke and his old friend Grant gathered a company of gallant friends and set out from England in 1860.

Speke was now a veteran explorer, and having learned many things from his previous experience he was able to organize his expedition with remarkable foresight. He determined to have a force big enough to overcome hostile tribes, but he won his way through the interior more by force of character than by force of arms. Usually he succeeded in establishing friendly relations with the



Speke and Grant in audience with the Queen Mother, Émile Bayard



Speke and Grant at Ripon Falls, illustration from *The Story of Africa and its Explorers*, Robert Brown, 1892

chiefs, and by 1861 he had worked his way to his old base at Kazeh.

Only men of indomitable will could have succeeded. They were robbed; their men suffered from disease; the native chiefs were often suspicious. Sometimes there was open warfare. Illness held up their plans. Often they were delayed for months at a time; their stores ran low. In order to cover more ground Speke and Grant divided forces, Grant taking the overland route beyond Lake Tanganyika, Speke reaching the Victoria Nyanza again and exploring it. To his great joy he found the place where the Nile leaves the lake, and it must have thrilled him to see the actual point at which the river began its journey to the sea. He and Grant met lower down the river, and on their way to Gondokoro they met another famous explorer, Sir Samuel Baker, to whom Speke generously gave one of his maps, and much information which enabled Sir Samuel to discover the Albert Nyanza, the second great source of the Nile.

Speke had now been unheard of for so long that a relief party had been dispatched to find him; but their help was unnecessary. He reached Khartoum and telegraphed back that all was well. He was back in England in the spring of 1863. A public welcome was given him at Southampton, and in June a special meeting of the Royal Geographical Society was called in his honour. Before the year was out his book, Journal of the Discovery of the Nile, was published.

But still his claims were criticized, and it is sad that Burton should have been among the most formidable of his opponents. At last the British Association arranged for a meeting to be held at Bath in September 1864 at which Speke was to meet his opponents. He never met them. On the morning of the day appointed for the meeting he was out shooting with a friend when his gun went off accidentally and he was fatally wounded.

His claims were later vindicated by other explorers, and Speke was shown to be the true discoverer of the source of the Nile.

Chapter 13

King Khama

1828–1923 A.D., Bechuanaland

There have been many African chiefs, but none like Khama. The son of the African sorcerer Sekhome, he ruled for more than fifty years over his tribe as a wise and Christian Chief.

He fought superstition and built up civilisation. He defied the medicine men and drove witchcraft out of power. He stood up against Drink and kept it from his people. He made the flag respected and our Government obeyed throughout his kingdom.

His country lies between the Orange River on the South and the Zambezi on the North, the

Evening in a Bagirmi Village, E.M. Heims

Bechuana Protectorate. Bechuanaland is a narrow strip of country about a thousand miles long and 300 from East to West, and the northern part is the Protectorate. Through Sekhome's territory Livingstone went on his way to Lake Ngami; Khama was then a boy and heard the words of the great doctor.

The chief event of his youth was his baptism as long ago as 1862; from that time till his death he was loyal to his faith. His first teacher was a German missionary, but very early in his life he became attached to the London Missionary Society, to which he gave his strong support all his life. To its missionaries he owed a very great debt.

Khama had many fights with foes within his tribe and without. He showed his prowess early against the warlike tribe of the Matabele, which lived by the sword and perished by the sword. In battle with them single-handed he won renown. His men were defeated, but he fought his way out when surrounded. The Matabele said the Bechuana were but dogs but Khama was a man; and to his dying day Lobengula, Chief of the Matabele, carried the mark of a wound he received from Khama.

His fame in hunting and in battle helped him in his life among his people. None could say that he was not a strong and brave man. Within his tribe he had other foes to meet. He could not accept those tribal customs which were false to his faith.

Sekhome the sorcerer meant to solve the difficulty made by his son's religion by destroying him and his brother Khamane, who had been baptised along with him. Taking a force to their huts, he ordered his men to fire, but they would not obey and the Chief, seeing that his authority was ended, fled. But Khama forgave his father. He showed great generosity towards his enemies within the tribe, though this was contrary to all the customs of African tribes. His kindness was abused and Khama had many conflicts with his kindred before he became paramount chief of the Bamangwato one winter's day in 1875.

He had other fights. There were against him many of the old men of his tribe who clung to the ancient ways. Khama wisely sought to provide Christian customs to take the place of the heathen ceremonies. Before the tribesmen went out to dig their gardens they had been accustomed to a ritual. Khama did not stop this, but it was no longer to be the ancient and corrupting ritual of the tribe. He invited the Christian missionary John Mackenzie to hold a Christian service before the people went out to dig.

Khama saw how terrible was the evil of alcohol in the life of the tribe, and early he made up his mind to prohibit it. Certain white traders in Drink defied his authority and he called them together one day at the Khotla, his court.

"You think you can despise my laws because I am a black man (he said to them). Well, I am black, but I am Chief of my own country. Take everything you have, strip the iron off the roofs, gather all your possessions, and go.

"More—if there is any other white man here who does not like my laws let him go too. I am trying to lead my people according to the Word of God, which we have received from you white people, and you show us an example of wickedness. Go—and never come back."

So the canteen-keepers and the brandy smugglers had to go. In this way, not once nor twice but many times, Khama stood up in the court of his tribe seeking to save his people from their own superstitions and from the temptations brought to them by white men.

He lived to see his country come under the protection of the Flag, and to that bond he was loyal. He came to London in the closing years of the nineteenth century and asked that his country, which was now a part of the British Commonwealth, should be saved from alcohol and its destructive influence. He did not ask in vain. He had his way.

In Serowe, the last of the capitals in which he reigned (he had three capitals), a splendid church was opened in the year the war broke out. Khama lived to see it; he lived through the war and shared in the sacrifices of those years. The Bamangwato celebrated the Jubilee of their great Chief in July 1922. White and black speakers told of all that he had done, and then the old man spoke these words to the young men:

"Let these words enter your hearts. The work that has been done here is a work of God. Depart from disputes; think like men; seek to know the Way; let your hearts depart from drink and from heathen ceremonies. May God bless you, white people and my people."

Soon after that, in the early weeks of 1923, the old chief died in Serowe, and a letter from his widow told the world something of the closing day of his long life. He was nearing a hundred. On the day before his death, when asked if he had any message he would like to send to his people, the answer returned by his devoted wife Semane was: "The chief has no words to say, but to prepare to surrender his noble spirit to his Great Master." She went outside Khama's room, Semane said, and then "I heard a low, sweet voice calling me gently from the inside. That was Khama's last voice."

Perhaps we can hardly imagine what he had done—how hard his task had been, but it is possible to form some idea from the short reign of his son Sekgoma. He was not satisfactory as a ruler, and when the end came he was unable to resist the whisperings of the medicine men still practising in secret their ancient rites. They told him that the English doctor was no good, that the God of the Christians could not save him, and in the mind of this poor chieftain was sown a doubt whether, after all, he might not have made a mistake in his defiance of his native gods.

He had set at defiance the old traditions of his tribe, and now, working at the back of his fevered thoughts was the recollection of all that thousands of years of barbarism had instilled into the soul of the African, and the fear that perhaps he might have offended the vindictive gods of his race. He dismissed the English doctor and allowed the medicine men to practise their magic on him. It was a pitiful thing after the long reign of Khama with its civilising influence, yet the power of superstition in Africa is something we in our islands can hardly be expected to understand.

But in vain was poor Sekgoma's remorse. The poor king grew worse, and when at last he was on the point of death the witch doctors themselves became afraid. Fearful of the vengeance of the tribe if he succumbed they sent for the English doctor to come back, but it was too late; the chieftain died in dirt and misery. His surrender had been in vain.

It is a truly sad story, this poor African king doubting the truth to the last, but who will think harshly of Sekgoma? Rather, it is one more witness to the noble achievement of King Khama, one of the greatest Africans of our time and the oldest king in the world when he passed away.

Chapter 14

Heinrich Shulenburg

1835–1914 A.D., Teacher in Africa

There is a monument in Serowe to Khama, the African Chief who has already had his place among our Heroes.

The German Heinrich Shulenburg was Khama's first Christian teacher. He came from Hermannsburg in Hanover, a pretty village with one long street divided into two by a little river.

Above it rose the wooden spire of the little village church. The people of the district were sturdy countryfolk; they were not many in number, and they lived very much apart from the great world. A train moved slowly now and then to the port of Hamburg.

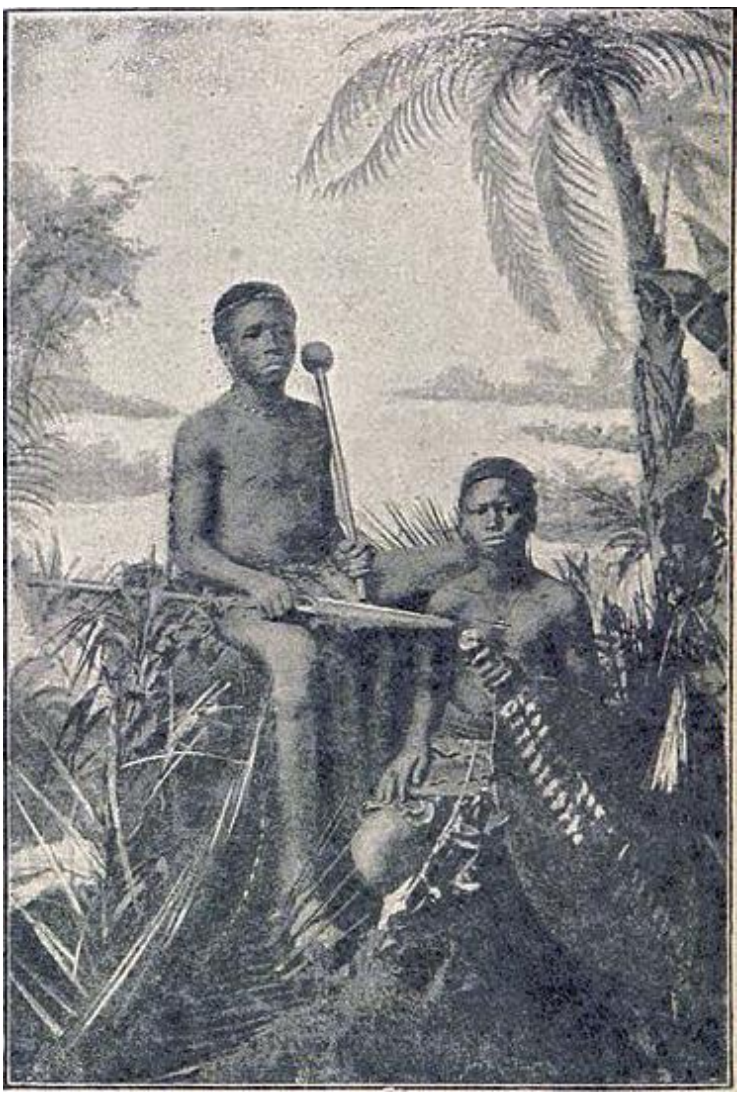
It was 1849, a year in which many nations in Europe were troubled by revolutions. But the villagers of Hermannsburg were not disturbed; their minds were full of a great plan. There had come to them, as their minister, a fine scholar and preacher named Louis Harms. He was a hard, cheerful worker with a strong faith. Under his leadership the

Service in a German Village Church, Oscar Wergeland

villagers had become like one large family. They were good farmers, and as they ploughed and reaped they sang the noble old German hymns. Nowhere in all Hanover was there a happier village.

But they could not think only of themselves; across the seas they remembered that there were tribes which did not know what they knew. They had heard preachers speak of Africa, and of a wild tribe, the Gallas, who were the terror of the coast near Zanzibar. These people were robbers and murderers, and proud of the fact. Why should not these villagers from Hanover share with them, and seek to make in Africa villages like their own?

Twelve of them at once offered to go. Later eight more joined them. A house was taken in which they could be trained, and for four years they studied, all the time working to earn their bread. But when they were ready how were they to get to Africa? Ships cost money. The cheerful minister had no money of his own, but he believed that the means would come; and he was right. Money came from many givers, and a little ship was built. The quiet village with one long street built that ship to carry the good news to the Ethiopians. They called it the Candace, after the queen of the Ethiopians.



Zulu Boys, illustration from *The Lands of Gold, Diamonds and Ivory*, Joseph Forsyth Ingram, 1891

They all had their share in it. The farmers brought their buck-wheat and rye. The orchards were stripped. Even the heaths were useful, for from the broom besoms were made. They took a Christmas tree with them, for they would spend Christmas at sea.

Schulenburg belonged to that village. He was a teacher, and he volunteered to go with the rest. He had watched the ship being built, and the day it sailed he joined with the others in singing the great German hymn "A safe stronghold our God is still." In October 1853 he and his friends in the Candace floated down to Cuxhaven, and thence on their long voyage to East Africa.

It was almost a little village that sailed. There were children on board, going to a new home with their parents. School began for them. One of the preachers was trying to find a quiet place where he could read over his sermon; but he found all parts of the ship occupied by busy people. At least

the stern would be empty, he said to himself. But there he found, on one side the tailor, and on the other Schulenburg teaching the elder children English. Schulenburg seems to have been one of those quiet, useful members of a society who get to work without any fuss.

The children he taught had a disappointment. Their Christmas tree was a failure. They made something to take its place, and hung up wax lights, apples, nuts, gingerbread, toys; and on the Atlantic these Germans sang their hymns and blew their trumpets.

It took them eighty days to reach Cape Town; and that was far from Zanzibar. They did not have their wish to preach among the Gallas. They were not allowed to land on the African shore. There was nothing for it but to return to Natal.

Natal in 1854 was very different from what it is today. There were a very few white people; within its borders were the Zulus, and northward warriors like the Matabele. There was plenty of room for Schulenburg and his friends. They called their new home after their old village, the New Hermannsburg.

But Schulenburg did not remain there long, he had some of the mind of Livingstone, who said, "Anywhere if it be forward."

One day he set out northward till he came to Bechuanaland, at that time a land in which the Bechuana tribe lived their old life, a tribe much troubled by their more warlike neighbours, the Matabele. Schulenburg made his home there in 1858 on the invitation of the Chief, who did not want to be inferior to other chiefs who had missionaries. Once more he became a teacher.

Little more can be told of him, except that the Chief, a cruel sorcerer named Sekhome, had two sons. One was a brave fellow named Khama, already famed for his skill in the hunt; and there came a day when this youth, taught by Schulenburg, made up his mind to become a Christian and was baptised.

Chapter 15

Christina Forsyth

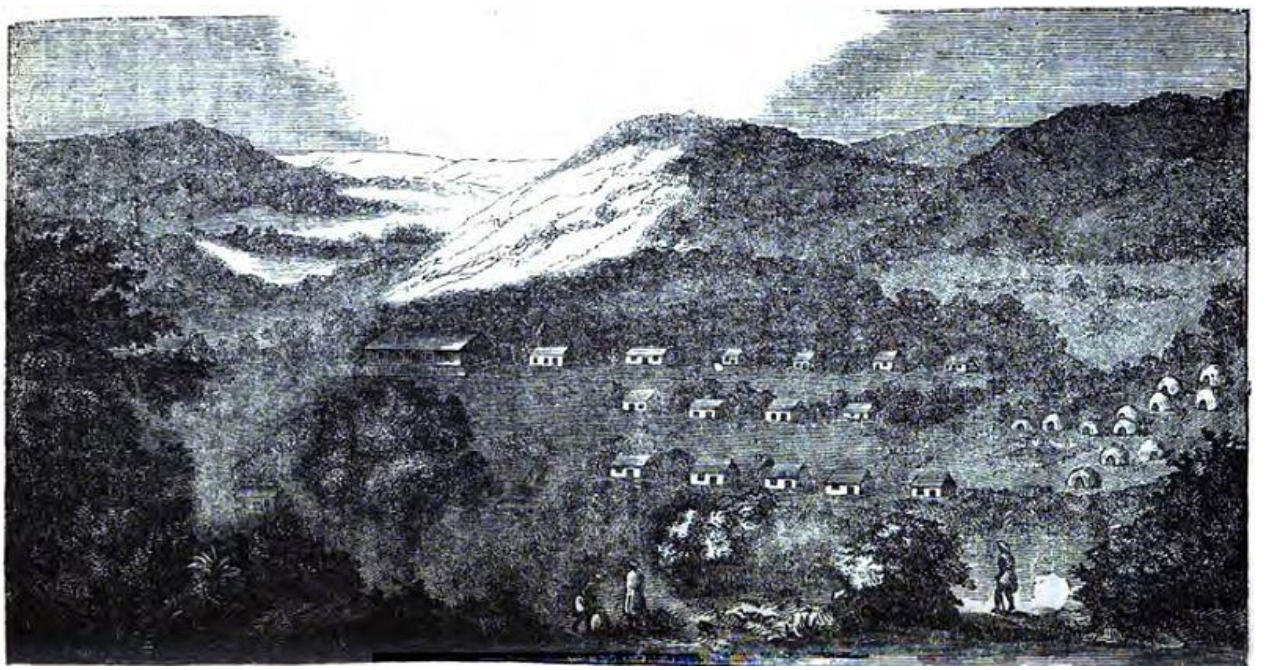
1844-1920 A.D., South Africa

She lived a lonely life among simple African folk and made their world a happier place.

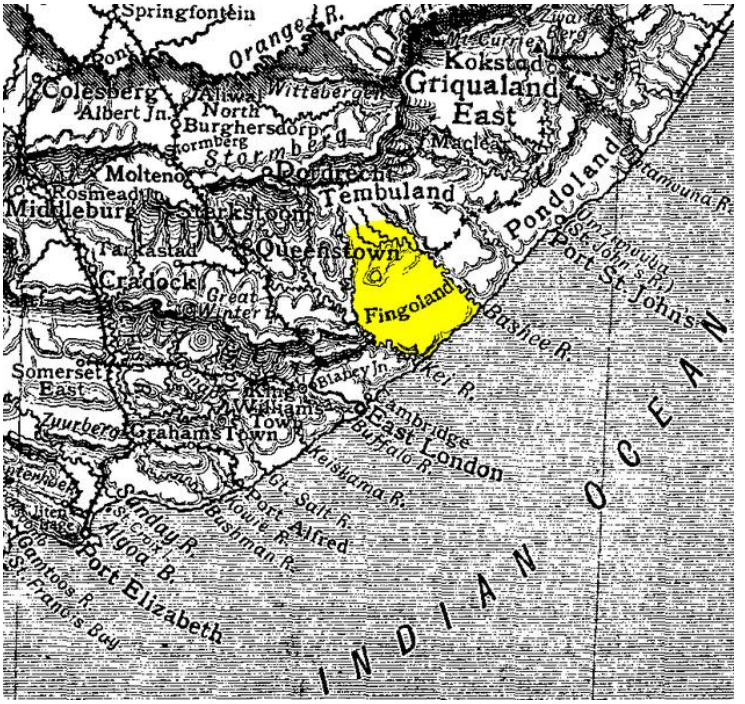
After a brief married life Christina Forsyth was left alone in the new township of Lydenburg in the Transvaal. Her husband, a mining prospector, fording a river on horseback, was swept away by the floods and drowned.

Christina was a Scottish woman who in her youth had desired to be a missionary and for some years before her marriage had taught at Paterson in South Africa. Now she was a woman of 41 with a small income of £40. She might have returned to her friends in Scotland. She chose to live out her life in Africa. For thirty years she lived alone, supporting herself, in a mission station of the United Church of Scotland, in Kafraria. Her biographer (Mr. W. P. Livingstone) calls her the loneliest woman in Africa.

There are travellers and missionaries who have the excitement of constant changes; the service of Christina was given in one village and among only a few Africans; most of those who serve abroad have fellow-workers near at hand with whom they can share their undertakings; she lived with only



Mission Premises, Wesleyville, Kaffraria, Wesleyan Missionary Society



Map of Transkei-Kaffraria area in 1911

occasional visitors. She made her Fingo neighbours her people.

When she made her offer of service the head of the Mission said, half as a joke, "Well, there is Xolobe." She would go there, she said. He told her that it was a wild region in which certain Fingoes lived who were chiefly famous among their own people for their evil ways. It would never do, the senior missionary thought, for her to go there alone.

But she went; Xolobe (the X is pronounced with a click) was a very beautiful place in a remote corner of Fingoland, between the Xolobe and the Kei rivers. The mission was on "a lip of land surrounded by majestic precipices and steep hillsides, covered here and there with patches of woodland or bush. Down the valley her eyes rested upon high hills faced with rugged rock, clustering kraals, fertile fields, and herds of cattle and flocks of sheep and goats tended by native boys."

It was a lovely land, but Christina soon found that the people needed the help that she had to bring. They were a wild and in many ways a degraded people. There was among them the witch-doctor, who found in this backward people a happy hunting-ground. There were many evil customs, especially the drinking-feasts. Christina moved among this wild people without fear; she did not simply teach them in the mass; she made them her friends, and in time Smoyana (that was the name the Kaffirs gave her) won their confidence. She visited them in their huts. She had worship in the little church, which soon proved too small and had to be enlarged. She had 60 children in her school, and very many young people in her charge, of whom many became Christian.


Fingo boy, illustration from *Seven Years in South Africa,* Liebscher, 1881

The secret of those thirty years of loneliness can be found in her faith, which never wavered,

and in her love, which was not blind but was always quick to see the best in her black friends. They said to her, when at last her health failed and she had to leave them, "You are not white; you are black. Your heart is black, you are just one of us"; and no words of praise could mean more than that. She was 41 when she made her home at Xolobe; she was 72 when she returned to Scotland.

There is a heroism in the long journeys of the explorers and in the work of missionaries who open many stations and touch the lives of thousands; but there is heroism in the patient service of a lonely woman in an African village. "Smoyana," said Mr. W. P. Livingstone to her, "if you had the chance, would you go back and live these thirty years over again at heathen Xolobe?" and she answered, "Yes, I should like to do better than I have done." She took no part in big affairs of State, or even in the Council of the Mission; she made the way of life happier for a little host of backward human folk.

Chapter 16

Mary Slessor

1848-1915 A.D., Missionary to Africa

Photo of Mary Slessor

When the sad news came to Scotland that Livingstone had died, there were several of his people who wanted to take up the task he had laid down. Among them was a girl of 26, Mary Slessor, a weaver in Dundee. She had had a Sunday School class of wild boys, whom she had won by her courage and good temper. For twelve years she had worked and studied in her few hours of leisure hoping always that she might go to Africa as a Missionary. In 1876 her dream became true and she sailed to Calabar.

For a time she lived at Duke Town on the coast, but up the river in Okoyong there were people among whom she wished to live and to teach the Christian religion. They were not attractive people when she first saw them, fierce, cruel, quarrelsome. At first when she settled down alone in her mud hut in one of their villages her friends thought that little would come of her brave action. Nothing but a gunboat, they thought, would subdue such people. But Mary had no need of such weapons. She saw many fearful things, the capture of slaves and the neglect of the sick, and always

Photo of Mary Slessor's House at Ekenge, Calabar

fierce fighting. But she took the chances of doing kindnesses as they came; she did some doctoring; she taught old and young how to read; she led them little by little to the knowledge of the Bible, and they learned to sing hymns.

It is not a safe thing to live among such tribes when a Chief is sick or dies. The custom is always to look for a scapegoat. A turning-point in Mary's life came when from a distant village there came a call to the white Ma to heal a Chief who was ill.

The head of her own village said that she must not go; but she went. The rains were near, the rivers were in flood. Wet through, after eight hours of hard travelling she came to the village where the Chief was lying sick.

The men were ready for the signal to slay the victims who were to perish if the sick Chief died. All the villagers were trembling with fear. But Mary nursed him back to health again; and they besought her to stay and be their mother. That she could not do; and when the Chief was well again she returned to Okoyong.

News travels quick in Africa; and far and wide Mary became known. She had brought peace where there had been fear.

Among her people Mary became very much like a Chief; she could be firm and strict but the Africans, who have a quick eye for character, saw that she was their fearless friend. She would go far if she heard that there was risk of war.

One day, hearing of trouble afoot, she found two tribes waving their spears and shouting their battle cries. She went through the lines of one tribe and marched up to the other. Then a warrior came forward and knelt at her feet. It was the Chief whom some time ago she had nursed back to health. "We beg you to make peace," he said; and all that day there was a long palaver. When evening came she asked if it was war or peace, and the answer came, "It is peace."

All through the years in which Mary lived among her African friends she trained them in the Christian faith; 15 years after she first came she could see a number of them true disciples of her Lord.

In time she became famous in Calabar. The British Consul-General, hearing of her work, invited her to be British Agent in Okoyong. Afterwards she became a real magistrate. The Order of St. John sent her its Silver Cross; the Government launch came to fetch her, and Mary in her funny, shabby clothes, was welcomed like a princess.

Back she went to her people after this visit. Hers would seem to be a hard life for a lonely woman, but she could not thank God enough for sending her into the Dark Continent.

She died in a little mud-walled room in her village, with her African friends watching by her. At Duke Town, when they heard she was dead, they set the flag half mast, and when Mr. W. P. Livingstone told her story everyone wondered at the romance of these present days in which the weaver-girl from Scotland came to be a White Queen in Africa.

Mary Slessor and Four Children, Old Calabar

Chapter 17

Alexander Mackay

1849-1890 A.D., Missionary to Africa

His story is one of the adventures and perils and difficulties of the pioneer-missionary in Darkest Africa and of a hard life that was lived heroically. At the time of his birth the map of Africa was an all but featureless blank.

True, Mungo Park had in 1776 explored Niger and confirmed the statement of Herodotus that the great river flows from West to East before it turns in a south-easterly direction toward the Bight of Benin.

As early as 1770 James Bruce had traced the Blue Nile to its source, and was ridiculed for his pains as a romancer. The origin of the White Nile was shrouded in mystery. The great travellers Burton, Speke, Grant, Cameron, and Stanley had not even dreamed of the fame awaiting them; and Livingstone, who had been quietly pursuing his missionary labours at Kuruman, only in August 1849 sighted Lake Ngami, the first of a long chain of discoveries which led to the opening up of the Dark Continent.

Alexander Mackay, unknown artist

Alexander Mackay was born in Rhynie, in Aberdeenshire, son of a minister. He was a lovable child; gentle, sensitive, impressionable, quick to learn; a lover of books and machinery. From his earliest years he showed an enthralled interest in machines and tools of any kind, and he had a wonderful gift for learning details of handiwork.

The boy gained much from the cultured atmosphere of his home. His father gave him a good classical and mathematical grounding and early trained him to use his reasoning powers. Always the practical side of life, the making of things, had a tremendous fascination for the lad. Once he surprised his father by asking for a printing press. He was nine at the time; and he enforced his plea by quoting Luther's argument that "printing is the latest and greatest gift by which God enables us to advance the things of the Gospel."

But little did anyone dream at that time that this printing-press should indeed "advance the things of the Gospel" on the shores of the sunlit Nyanza. As he grew older he felt a growing distaste for the ministry, on which his father had set his heart. His passion for machinery absorbed him, and he was sure a way would be opened out for him to follow up his heart's desire.

And so it was. In 1867 the family moved to Edinburgh, where for six years he worked with increasing industry. For two years he trained as a teacher, so that by teaching he could earn enough money to study engineering.

In 1873 he sailed to Hamburg to learn German and to qualify fully as an engineer. Here, though it was a time of commercial depression following the Franco-Prussian War, he found employment in a great engineering firm in Berlin and made many friends by his kindness and humour. And, strangely enough, it was while in Germany that he decided to become an engineer-missionary. He sailed with a party for Zanzibar in April 1876.

Little did he dream of the difficulties to be overcome, the trials to be endured, before even a small beginning could be made in planting a centre of moral and intellectual influence in this portion of Darkest Africa.

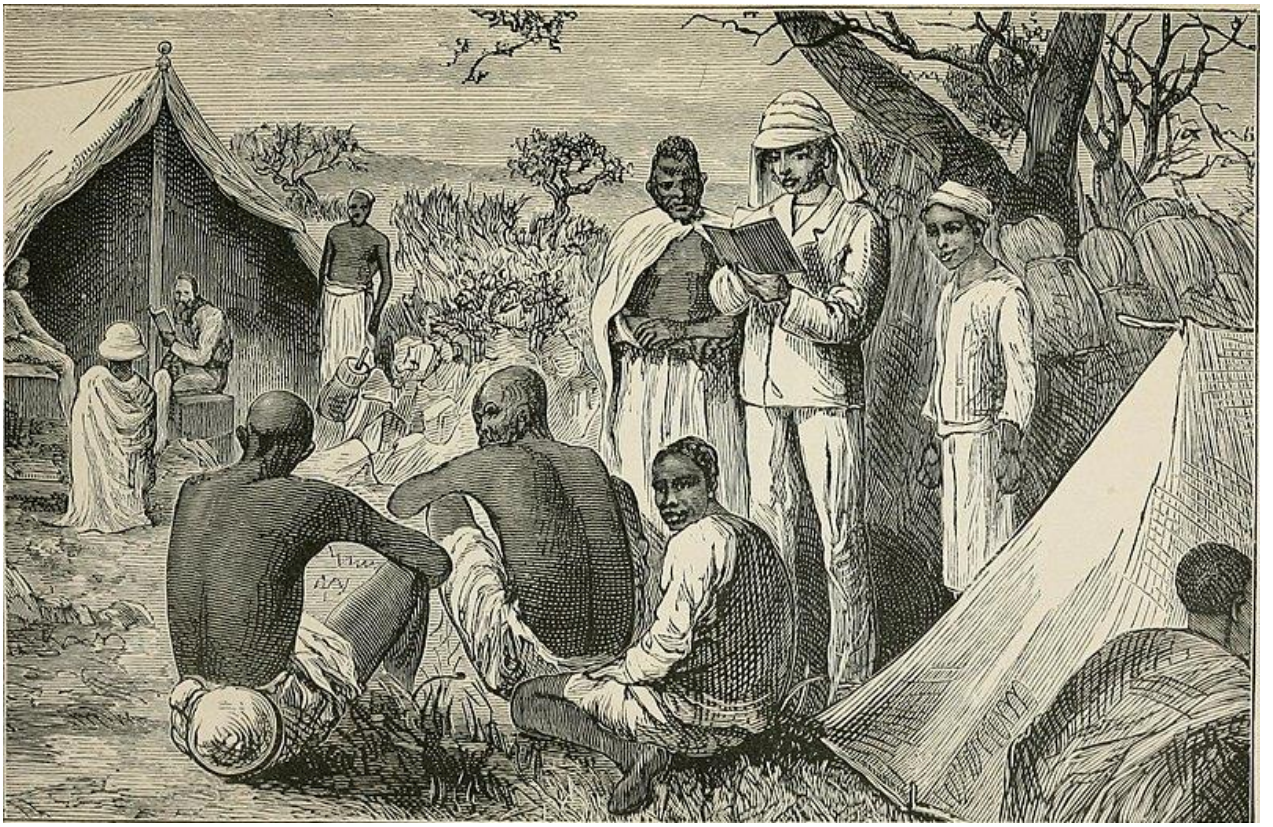
Very slowly, through great dangers and perils, with great loss of life and of property, they did their best to reach Uganda. It took years of incessant toil to learn the language, and all the time they were fighting indifference and active opposition. The Arabs, seeing in Mackay's teaching and presence danger to their profitable slave traffic, were ever stirring up dissensions; and the fact that both French Roman Catholic padres and Protestant missionaries were there bewildered the king and rejoiced the malicious hearts of the fanatical Arabs.

And though their reception was on the surface cordial the missionaries were really at the mercy of a wilful and capricious king, who, while professing Christianity, was a dangerous mixture of savage intelligence and low cunning. Mackay no doubt owed his safety chiefly to the fact that his cleverness as a craftsman made him useful to the king.

Yet, through sickness which scarcely ever left him, through Herculean labours and heart-breaking disappointments, Mackay never lost heart. He loved his black friends and never lost hope for them. Never was there instance of travail more gaily borne, or of hard life lived more heroically.

Zanzibar was sighted in May. The expedition to the interior was fraught with hazard and pain. Mackay, worn out with anxiety and fatigue, was prostrated almost at once by fever and ague. Small-pox was raging ahead and the rough track was strewn with the skeletons of victims the hyenas had picked clean. Once at Mpwapwa, an oasis in a great salt desert, most of their boys bolted from the camp; and strangely enough, the natives of Mpwapwa, seeing the white man's boys desert, turned out of their village in great numbers and drove them back again!

But they were not always so fortunate. Often on that terrible journey Mackay was on the point of death, but he always struggled up again with indomitable courage and a gaiety no misfortune



First Mission Camp beyond Uyui, illustration from *The story of the life of MacKay of Uganda told for boys by his sister* by Alexina Mackay Harrison 1891

could crush. For hundreds of miles he walked along that unhealthy coast, sometimes near the sea, sometimes over pleasant grass lands or through poisonous mangrove swamps, wading for hours waist-deep in mud and water, swimming unfordable rivers, sleeping in the open or in filthy coy-byres and filthier huts, eating anything that was to be had.

Often they spent three weeks hacking a way through the jungle, making a small piece of road which they could walk over in three hours, and this under a blazing Sun. He tried to teach the natives to use bullock-wagons for transport with little success: the lightly built carts would go toppling over a river-bank and the precious goods were lost. Ants attacked them in thousands. Always there was danger from scorpions and serpents below, and above and about mosquitoes and the dread tsetse fly.

And, the worst blow of all, one by one the white men were killed either by fever or treachery; and when, in November 1878, Mackay reached the Court of Uganda's King, he was the only white man left.

At this time Mtesa was king. Mtesa was intelligent, but self-important, capricious, self-indulgent. Mackay was convinced that the only way to keep healthy, morally and physically in Africa was to work without ceasing. This he tried to instil into the lazy natives: it was a great part of his preaching. So the hard years passed. Always the white man was held a little in contempt because he worked so hard with his hands and went about unaccompanied by a shrieking band of idle

parasites, as the chiefs did; and indeed the popular impression was that "there was no place in Europe for white men, and they settled in Uganda because it was the most delightful spot in the world."

Mackay was indefatigable in his efforts to open up new light, intellectual and spiritual, to these poor savages. He tried to make them realise that the plagues which wiped them out in hundreds were largely caused by the appallingly insanitary conditions and the filth of their huts. He drew up health rules for Mtesa to enforce on his subjects. New, airy, isolated huts were to be made for the sufferers. Every house infected was to be burned immediately, and all dead persons were to be buried instead of being thrown into the swamps. And all the time his life was frequently in danger owing to the malicious lies of the Arabs, who conceived a fanatical hatred toward him because of his activities against the slave trade.

Mackay's days were fully occupied in teaching the natives to read and write (he had first to reduce the language to writing); in teaching artisan work, building, designing, planning, and doctoring. Years passed, and though often ailing he refused to go home to recruit. "I cannot forsake my work," he said. "I have no right to leave while I have strength to go on.

"I do not feel my work here is yet finished; but it cannot be long before I must leave, for health cannot endure very long in this region. Seven years have told sadly on me. A fellow with a long beard, a face brown like an Arab, a careworn look and head turned grey, is all you must look for when you overhaul a Southampton boat for me."

And he was not yet 33.

Two years later Mtesa died and was succeeded by his son Mwanga, a weak, vacillating stripling.

During Mtesa's reign there had been internal peace, but the Baganda were still at heart greedy, plundering, murderous knaves. Only the strong arm of law kept them subordinate. The accession of the new king gave the usual opportunities for uprising and plunder. The treacherous Arabs strove their utmost to stir up enmity against Mackay, and a veritable Reign of Terror ensued.

Mwanga, as Nero before him, ordered all Christians to be burned.

Mackay was heart-broken at this seeming destruction of his long years of toil. It was like seeing his own children tortured to hear these poor black children singing their pitiful little hymns while they were sent to their death. Mackay told the king fearlessly that he had committed a great sin in murdering innocent boys. As is often the case in times of persecution many more people became Christians. The tide turned in favour of Mackay. He drew up ten wise rules for the boy king, protecting the life and liberty of his subjects and their property from arbitrary spoilation.

But terrible deeds of blood were yet to come. The Baganda army went on a raiding expedition and killed Bishop Hannington and his party. Mackay and his friends were in hourly expectation of death.

"We have no hope now (he wrote). The worst seems over. Our dear brethren are happy, while we remain in the midst of death. Lord, Thy will be done!

"For me the bitterness of death is past. I have become at times almost unconscious to the most terrible realities."

Another persecution of the Christians broke out, and Mackay decided that the only way to bring about more peaceful times was for him to leave the district. He felt, quite rightly, that the hostility of the Arabs was due to his personal influence with the chiefs, and at last he resigned his trust into

other hands.

For a time he worked at Usambiro, a station north of that wide country Msalala. Some of his own black Christians managed to escape from Uganda and joined him here. By his own example he taught the naturally lazy Baganda the importance and dignity of labour.

While in Usambiro he was visited by Stanley and other white men. They left for England in September, but though they urged him to return with them he refused to quit his post. Stanley and his party came home to European platforms and royal receptions. Mackay remained behind to die a lonely death. He died in his early forties, an old, worn-out man.

Chapter 18

Lloyd Mathews

1850-1901 A.D., Zanzibar

Into the life of Zanzibar, the big island off the East African coast, Lieutenant Lloyd William Mathews slipped almost by chance. He remained there twenty-five years, just half his life, coming home to England only twice.

In that quarter of a century he had served his country and his appointed master, the Sultan of Zanzibar, faithfully and well. He was one of that band of servants of the flag whose work takes them to forgotten corners of the world where they themselves are all but forgotten and where they live and die with small recognition and with the sole reward of duty done. Of such men it has been written:

> He dies content that in some pigeon-hole
> A rather dusty minute of My Lords
> His character and services records
> In words at which hearts beat and pulses stir
> "A diligent and zealous officer."

Lloyd Mathews, from *Banani - The Transition from Slavery to Freedom in Zanzibar and Pemba* by Henry Stanley Newman, 1898.

This island of Zanzibar, over which we assumed a Protectorate at a time when European nations were land-grabbing in Africa, was a place with little to recommend it. Its kindliest critic called it a land of gleam and gloom; its climate is deplorable, equatorial heat alternating with equatorial rain, malaria rampant. When Mathews first encountered it the slave trade was almost as rampant as mosquitoes, and H.M.S. London, the ship on which he served, had been sent to repress it. It was a task which in some of its aspects occupied Mathews for the rest of his life, but his immediate duty was to assist the Sultan in instructing native troops in the European manner. The Sultan made the sailor a General, and General Mathews conducted more than one expedition for the subjugation of savage and bloodthirsty tribes on the mainland. Officially he was British Consul-General, actually he was the Sultan's Grand

Vizier, or Prime Minister.

But sailor, soldier, Grand Vizier, are but titles, and Mathews was something more.

He was of the fibre of those simple, just, firm, and kindly men whom we have sent to the Seven Seas, not to bring back wealth or glory, but to establish a standard of justice and fair dealing and to win approval of it from those who had seldom encountered it before. He was a man, said his great friend Lord Rennell, of singular greatness of heart. His patience and kindness were inexhaustible. There was something in him, not to be described as talent or even insight, which enabled him to enter completely into the mind of the native and win his confidence and affection. So great was his reputation for equity and wisdom that the Africans would come from afar, in journeys taking them months, to submit a dispute to Mathews.

Sitting in the shade outside his house, he would listen with infinite patience to the long and contradictory stories of the disputants who squatted on the ground beside him. He would reason with them till the shadows lengthened, and when all had been said and he had pronounced judgment the disputants would rise and utter no word more. What Mathews had said he had said; it was finished.

No poor man in Zanzibar ever appealed to his generosity in vain. No traveller in East Africa came away without remembering Mathews. Those whose duty and privilege it was to work with him could never speak of him without even deeper feelings. Lord Rennell said he was the most lovable man he had ever met.

If he was a revered judge, an upright administrator, he was a man of action as well, in a land where action swift and decisive was often called for. One occasion arose when the Sultan Seyyid Ali died suddenly. The report of his death had run through the city, the rival pretenders were moving in haste on the palace. The High Commissioner sent for Mathews, signals were flashed to British gunboats with orders to send marines ashore. All the white women of the town collected in the British Residency and the High Commissioner buckled on his revolver and with the marines set out to the palace.

Mathews was there.

He was moving among the adherents of the pretenders massed in the square with all the arms they could muster and was exhorting them to remain calm. He was calmness incarnate, though his life was at the mercy of any murderous fanatic, and one of the pretenders, Seyyid Khaled, was already in possession of the palace. He had been admitted by the dead Sultan's sister and had moved the Sultan's Persian Guard to the left side of the square. There their guns were pointing toward the avenue along which the British were marching, and the gunners were standing by their pieces ready to fire.

In that moment of tension a gun went off in the crowd. It seemed that anything might happen, but Mathews was the coolest man there. The fateful moment passed almost as suddenly as it had appeared. The shouting crowd fell back before the marines, and as Mathews came out from among the insurgents the Captain of the Persian Guard came up to the salute and said he would take his orders from him.

But the palace doors remained closed, and in answer to a summons to open them a voice replied that Seyyid Khaled had given orders that no one was to be admitted. Mathews, speaking with all the authority of the High Commissioner, declared that if the doors were not opened in five minutes

they would be blown in.

Something like silence fell while all waited, but when the five minutes were nearly up the door was opened a few inches, and a voice from behind it said that the British Agent could enter, but must come alone.

The British rejoinder was to thrust open the door wide, and Mathews, with Rennell Rodd, Captain Chapman, the naval officer, and a dozen marines rushed in. For a moment it looked as if the staircase would be held against them; but it was only for a moment, and Mathews and his handful took possession of the palace. Rennell Rodd put the Pretender Khaled under arrest and the crisis was over. Robbery and violence were traditional in Zanzibar on the death of a Sultan; this time there was none, thanks to Mathews.

The new Sultan was firmly established on his throne, due notice having been given to him how to behave, and there was peace in the capital, though from his wide dominions warfare with aggressive tribes was seldom absent. There was plenty, therefore, for Mathews to do in the remaining years of his life. He accompanied a little-advertised but extremely dangerous Expedition against the Witu tribe, one of those small wars that are hardly heard of except in pigeon-holed despatches, though this one cost brave lives and helped to sow the seeds of illness in the constitution of our hero.

He died a few years later from pernicious malaria, and his end was like the life he had lived. The son of the Sultan watched by his bed all through the last night, and devoted friends ministered to his last moments. In a long period of delirium he seemed to live again the events of his stirring life. He gave orders to the crew of his cutter as he used to do in the days of cruising after slave-raiders. He fought his battles once again. He recalled his old friends by name and dealt in dreams with claims and appeals for justice for Arab and slave.

Once he murmured, "Call the children; give them all they want; let everything be bright and joyous." At the very last a clear consciousness returned to him, and with a calm voice he said Goodbye to his friends in these words:

"God grant that we may all meet some day in the next world and renew our friendship and part no more. I am sorry to leave you. I may have been a bit rough sometimes, but I have loved you all."

Then he whispered "the Spirit of God," and passed into the realm where heroes are.

Only a few of his own countrymen had ever the opportunity of knowing this man who spent nearly all his active life far from his native land; but no one was ever more deeply mourned by those of the alien race among whom his lot was cast. He strove not for himself, not even for the power and dominion of his country; he strove for our good name. In a race of slaves and tyrants he established truthful dealing among rulers, freedom for slaves, and justice for the poor.

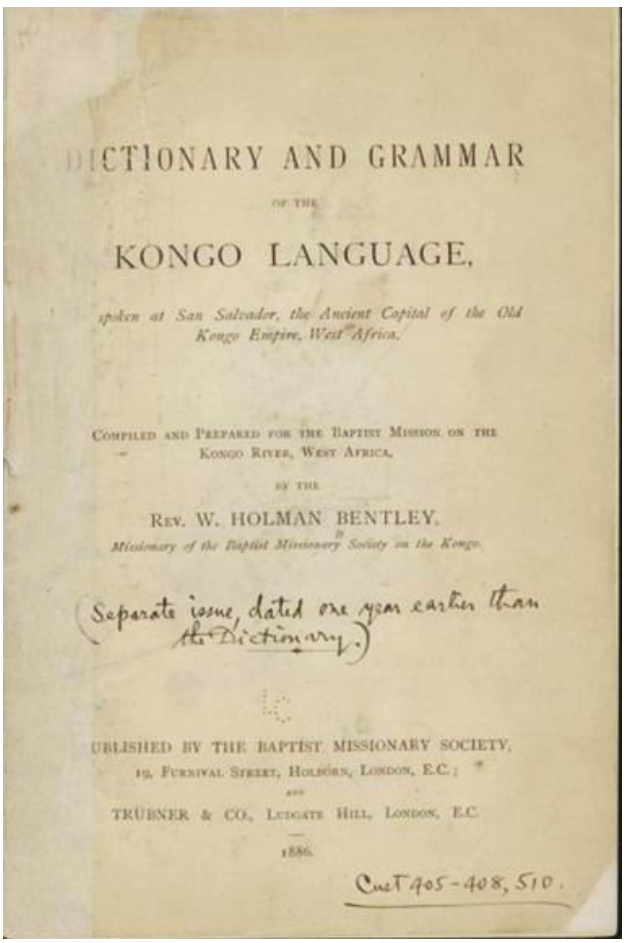
Chapter 19

Holman Bentley

1855-1905 A.D., Congo

He was a clerk who gave himself to the Congo; he helped to found a nation and to give its people a written language.

It was in August 1877 that Sir H. M. Stanley, coming out of the heart of Africa, arrived at Boma on the Congo, forty miles from the coast. So began the story of the opening-up of that vast country through which the swiftly-running Congo makes its way to the west coast of Africa.


DICTIONARY AND GRAMMAR
OF THE
KONGO LANGUAGE,
spoken at San Salvador, the Ancient Capital of the Old Kongo Empire, West Africa.
COMPILED AND PREPARED FOR THE BAPTIST MISSION ON THE KONGO RIVER, WEST AFRICA,
BY THE
REV. W. HOLMAN BENTLEY,
Missionary of the Baptist Missionary Society on the Kongo.
(Separate issue, dated one year earlier than the Dictionary.)
PUBLISHED BY THE BAPTIST MISSIONARY SOCIETY,
19, FURNIVAL STREET, HOLBORN, LONDON, E.C.;
AND
TRÜBNER & CO., LUDGATE HILL, LONDON, E.C.
1886.
CueT 405-408, 510.

Dictionary and Grammar of the Kongo Language
by Holman Bentley, 1886

One year passed, and Comber and Grenfell, sent by the Baptist Missionary Society, arrived at San Salvador. They called for volunteers to teach the Congo tribes Christianity. Another year passed, and among those who answered this call was Holman Bentley, a young clerk in a London bank. Life changed its course for him quickly. One June day in 1879 he and his three companions were landed at Banana, at the mouth of the river, near to which for the rest of his life his home was to be.

In the story of the Congo there is a place of honour for this London clerk; he lives among the founders of that new nation to which he went not to get but to give. In giving himself to a great task he became great himself.

It was still largely an unknown land to which he went; and only a man of courage, resource, and cheerfulness could be equal to the tasks which fell to him. He and his friends were at first like generals seeking to establish a chain of stations from the coast to the vast stretch of water known as Stanley Pool. They had to deal with wild and superstitious tribes whose confidence it was hard sometimes to win; but they found the tribesmen capable of deep affection and loyalty. Manyanga was one of the stations;

Bentley built it in three months, his biographer says. It meant first of all a palaver with the chiefs who could sell them the land, and the land was bought for £2 worth of cloth and trinkets, eight coats, and forty yards of white calico, which Bentley threw in as an extra. Then there were the buildings to put up, the boys and girls to be taught, the language to be learned—and there were as yet no grammars and dictionaries.

All this time this clerk from London had to prove himself a Jack-of-all-trades. Nor could he ever feel secure in the midst of a people who were suspicious, under the spell of witch-doctors, and liable to misunderstand these strange whites.

Journeys on the river; building of canoes; medical aid—all these came in the day's work to this man who a short time before had been travelling up to town each morning, diligently studying in the train. It was one of those sudden changes which are not uncommon in the lives of Englishmen.

Came the wisdom, came the whisper. Came the power with the need.

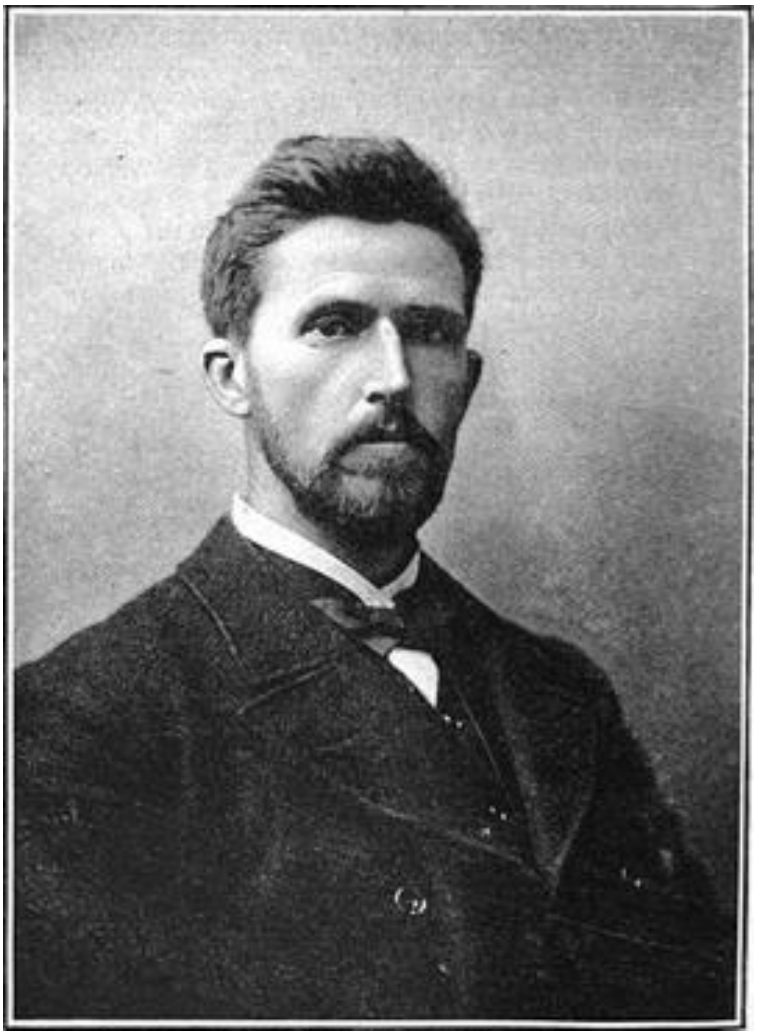
In more stations than this, especially at the place formerly called Wathen, now Ngombe, Bentley, during his years of service, filled the part of friend and teacher to strange tribes. At first he had to recruit his school by gathering together boys who were useless to the tribes because they were sick; he had to tend them and bring them back to health before he could lead them, as he did, into a new world of knowledge and faith and hope. Nothing was too much for him to give to the boys; he shared in their games, he won their trust, and in the early days he even learned to play the harmonium so that with the help of this "box of sounds," as it was called, he might teach the boys to sing.

All through the years of pioneering he was, as so many missionaries have been, a keen observer; there are two fishes named after him, and many rare treasures were collected by him. But if there was one gift more than another he gave to this new nation it was his work as a dictionary-maker and translator. The clerk who had studied Hebrew and Greek in the morning train to London became one of the makers of the language spoken and written in the Lower Congo. He and his friends became for the tribesmen what Wycliffe and Tyndale are to us. He gave to his new people the Bible in their own tongue. He had many honours both in Belgium and in his own country, and when he died at Bristol his African friends mourned for him as for one of their own people who had died far away among strangers.

Chapter 20

Frederick Stanley Arnot

1858–1914 A.D., Explorer of Africa



Frederick Stanley Arnot, illustration from *The new world of Central Africa* by Mrs. H. Grattan Guinness, 1890

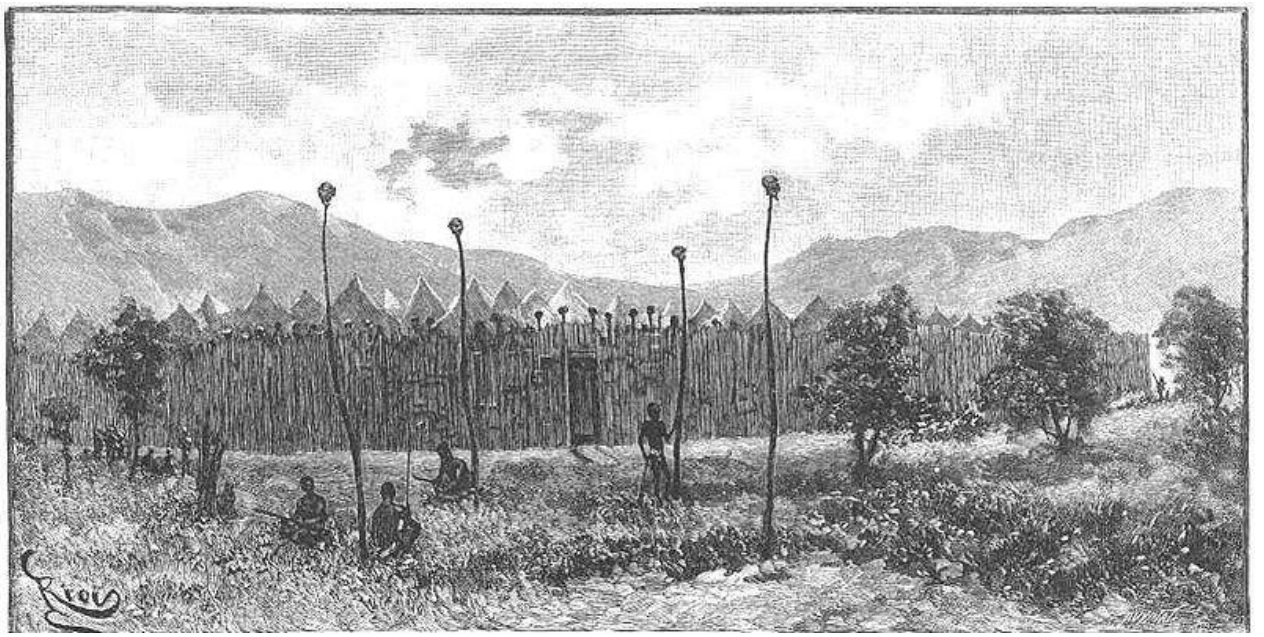
When Livingstone was away on his travels his children used to live at Hamilton in Scotland. Once when the great traveller was at home he gave out the prizes at Hamilton Academy. There was a boy present who, when he heard the story that Livingstone had to tell, said to himself, "I should like to help that great man." In time he did follow in the track of Livingstone, and no traveller in Africa ever covered more miles than this brave Scot, Frederick Stanley Arnot.

He was always a poor man, but he said it was no bad thing in Africa to travel light, for he had very little worth stealing.

There were thrilling moments in his life. On one of his journeys the party was kept awake by three lions who serenaded them, but the blazing fire that had been lighted kept them away.

The next morning as they passed through a clump of long, reedy grass, Arnot heard the low growl of a lion.

He urged his boys to push on; but instead of hurrying as he wished them to do they loitered until it was too late. The beast made straight at the hindmost lad, who was carrying the missionary's mat and blanket. Swiftly Arnot ran back and flung himself between them. The lion's spring was a little short: he stood before the face of Arnot, so near that he could not use his rifle.



Msiris Compound, illustration by Edouard Riou in *Tour du Monde Magazine* by Charton, 1892-3

The three lads promptly dropped their loads and were off like deer, leaving the man and the lion face to face. The lion was raging fiercely, and would have sprung, but he seemed to lack the nerve.

"Holding him hard with my eyes," says Arnot, "and slowly cocking my rifle, I lifted it to my shoulder for a steady aim, when suddenly he gave in, his huge tail dropped, and, drawing his teeth under his lips, he made off."

Arnot found it impossible to get a shot at him, for the grass was too dense, so the lion escaped, and we hear no more of him. Arnot overtook his boys, but not one of them would return with him for his load; so he had to wait till some men came back from fishing grounds near and were willing to return.

The boy whose life was saved belonged to Bihé. The story became known there. One of his tribe, who had not been friendly, said to another, "I would go anywhere with such a white man who would throw his own body between a lion and a black lad of no account."

Arnot was a man who had to depend very largely on his own resources, for he had no society behind him. For years he travelled alone into forests and rivers of Africa; in many places his was the first white face seen by the African tribesmen. He is said to have travelled 29,000 miles on foot, or in hammocks, or on the backs of donkeys or oxen, or in canoes.

He was content to give his good news wherever he went, and the Africans knew him to be a true man. At the last he took comfort in the thought that he had fought in "the good fight."

Chapter 21

Mary Kingsley

1862-1900 A.D., Pioneer of Africa

Portrait of Mary Kingsley, courtesy of Wellcome Images

She stepped out of a Victorian home to make herself a place among the pioneers of Africa. On the perilous west coast of the Dark Continent she found high adventure, though in her own words she would only have said she was doing her job. She embarked on it not for any hope of personal gain or advertisement or fame, but out of her thirst for knowledge and her love of mankind. All she lived through and wrote, all the influence she brought to bear on West African problems, went toward removing the ignorance, prejudice, and misconceptions of the British Government concerning the West African peoples. She went alone on her task, unaided except by her determination and her matchless personal courage, and her monument is the welfare and well-being of this most successful and satisfied of native African communities today.

Her life was divided between complete domesticity in England and solitary travel in West Africa, with her life in her hands, her wits for her best weapon. She was the daughter of George, the second of the three brilliant Kingsley brothers. Her girlhood was spent in a little house in Highgate with her mother, while her father roamed abroad whenever there was

Kingsley traveled the length of the coast of West Africa., c. 1898

an opportunity for exploration. She inherited her father's tastes in literature, shared his companionship when he moved to Cambridge, and later, when that was ended by his death, resolved to continue the most intimate of his pursuits. He had left unfinished a book on native religion and law; his daughter decided to complete it.

In more than one way she was her father's child. She had his passion for adventure with a perfect indifference to fear, and so in the words of her friend Stephen Gwynn:

"She followed her quest not merely into that region of Africa where the climate itself is a deadly danger, but into districts of which no white man or woman had traversed before her, and where she journeyed alone without protection, among cannibals and with cannibals."

The information acquired in her first journey was found by anthropologists and other scientific men to be so valuable that she embarked on a second journey, and published an account of it in her solitary book of travels. But this second journey had caused her to look on her self-appointed task in a new light. She had come to understand and love the Native, and the call of this tropical land with its strange charm, malignant yet compelling, was always present with her. None has expressed it better than this lonely woman who went pioneering in a bonnet and long black skirt, dressed in Africa as she had dressed in Cambridge.

Her life, she once said, could be written in a few lines, and she wrote it like this:

"I have never had an individual human life, I have always been the doer of odd jobs and lived in the joys, sorrows, and worries of other people. It is the non-human world I myself belong to. My people are the mangrove swamps, rivers, and the sea, and so on—we understand each other. When my father and mother died within six weeks of each other I went down to West Africa to die. West Africa amused me and was kind to me and was scientifically interesting and did not want to kill me just then."

So she went back to it because she could not help herself.

A candid reader of her travels might believe that West Africa more than once did its best to kill her. She went up-river toward the country of the Fans with six Igalwas who reluctantly consented to accompany her when others had refused on the ground that they would be killed and eaten by the up-river tribes. When she got to her first destination, a village on an island in a lake not then shown on any map, the Fans came down to meet her, every man among them armed with a gun.

They loosened their shovel-shaped knives in their sheaves as they came, evidently regarding a fight as quite as imminent as the intruders did. While Mary Kingsley's canoe-men shouted out the name of one of the Fans whom they thought they knew and the Fans talked angrily among themselves, she got up from her seat in the bottom of the canoe and leisurely strolled ashore, greeting the line of angry faces in an unconcerned way.

Never, she said afterwards, had she seen such a set of wicked-looking savages as those, with whom it was touch-and-go for twenty of the longest minutes she ever lived. But she carried on, and carried through with that adventure as with many others like it, apparently because she refused to fear cannibals any more than she feared malaria or yellow fever or wild beasts.

But no one who knew Mary Kingsley ever found in her any profession of her courage; it had to be guessed at. She had a narrow escape from being killed by a gorilla when she was up in the bush with some of her cannibal Fans. But this is all she had to say about it:

"I have no hesitation in saying that the gorilla is the most horrible wild animal I have seen. I have seen at close quarters specimens of the most important big game of Central Africa, and, with the exception of snakes, I have run away from all of them; but although elephants, leopards, and pythons give you a feeling of alarm, they do not give that feeling of horrible disgust that an old gorilla gives on account of the hideousness of his appearance."

For a true understanding and appreciation of her the accounts of her adventures must be read in her own words, as when she speaks of the charm of West Africa:

"When you are back home it gives you pain by calling you, it sends up before your eyes a vision of white surf playing on a shore of yellow sand before an audience of stately cocoa palms, or of a great mangrove-walled bronze river, or of a vast forest cathedral. And you hear nearer than the roar of the city traffic the sound of the surf and the sound of the wind talking in the hard palm leaves and the thump of the Native's tom-toms, and you want to go back to the coast that is calling you and saying as the African says to the departing soul of his dying friend, 'Come back, this is your home.'"

Best of all, perhaps, is the story of the leopard she freed from the trap at the risk of her own life. Once in the bush she and her party came into a village and found a leopard caught in a game trap by some kind of snare, struggling and roaring, as one can well imagine. The African method was to leave it till it wore itself to death, but when night came and Mary Kingsley shut herself up in her

allotted hut the cries of the magnificent creature became more than she could bear.

So she went out into the dark, terrified most because she had not stayed to put on boots and the chance of walking on a snake was formidable; but she found her way to the trap and set about the business of pulling out the stakes. She kept away as best she could from her captive, though in one of his frantic dashes he ripped her skirt from top to bottom.

But she accomplished her object of pulling away all but the last, which the leopard did for himself, and then, to her dismay, instead of bolting into the bush as she had expected, he began to walk round her, sniffing at her. She admits she was frightened, but fear had its usual effect on her. Instead of bolting she said firmly, "Go home, you fool!" and the leopard went.

Portrait of Mary Kingsley,
from *Memories* by Edward Clodd, 1916

A moment after she heard a violent rustling in a tree behind her; something dropped with a thud. It was one of the Fan hunters who had followed her, and when he saw her go to the trap he thought the best place for himself was a tree. When he heard her speak to the leopard and saw it obey her he concluded she was some kind of divinity and came down and made obeisance.

What is most important to remember in the relations between this gallant woman and those West Africans with whom she voluntarily lived is that she never fired a shot in Africa nor ever raised her hand nor caused a hand to be raised against a Native; neither did she think that she lowered herself in their eyes by sharing their way of life—indeed, quite the contrary. Her authority depended first on the prestige of her race and secondly on her willingness to face any danger. Her own account of it is that she was afraid to be afraid.

Far more important in her mind than herself or her travels or her dangers were the knowledge and opportunity they gave to her of

taking the Native's side. When she went home she fought the battle of the West African Black by speaking and writing. Armed with her love and understanding of him and her knowledge of his point of view, she employed all the resources of her brilliant abilities to enlighten the ignorance and combat the stupidity in Government circles.

The especial occasion was the proposal to impose the hut tax in West Africa in the face of united remonstrance of Native chiefs on the spot and from the Liverpool and Manchester Chambers of Commerce at home. The imposition of the hut tax produced a rising which assumed proportions amounting to a general attempt to get rid of the White Man. The British public took little interest in what was happening. When measures were taken against the Natives in West Africa they thought it was an ordinary punitive expedition to put down slavery, and were generally unaware that it was primarily provoked by the routine justice of a tax of 5s per hut on Africans whose average wealth was no more than £1 a year.

She entered the lists on their behalf to explain, further, that the tax was alien to all the African's ideas of justice and law. She made out an incontrovertible case for them; but her conclusion may be read as a most powerful statement of Great Britain's duty to these her Native children:

"All that Africa requires for her advance at a healthy rate is a rule of merciless justice, tiger justice; but it must be justice, that true and complete justice that in itself contains mercy. This thing incorruptible England can give her if England will only think."

With all her courage and her fun and her vigorous unconventionality she was a very great power. She influenced high officials and men of affairs, and her work was nowhere more highly valued than by men who themselves were in touch with the coast.

It had been her purpose to go for yet another journey to the coast when the Boer War broke out. In 1900 she went out to the Cape to a hospital for Boer prisoners, and that again was like her. While nursing them she contracted typhoid from which she died. So, after all, it was South Africa and not West Africa which chose that she should stay there.

Chapter 22

Albert Schweitzer

1875-1965 A.D., Gabon

Portrait of Albert Schweitzer, courtesy of Wellcome Images

He dropped into a letter-box in Paris one day letters announcing his decision to devote his life to medicine, to take up work in some far spot on earth most needing a doctor's services. Perhaps only those to whom he wrote realised that his renunciation meant his greatly loved academic teaching, his research work, his financial independence, and above all his music, but these had to be abandoned with unhesitating sacrifice.

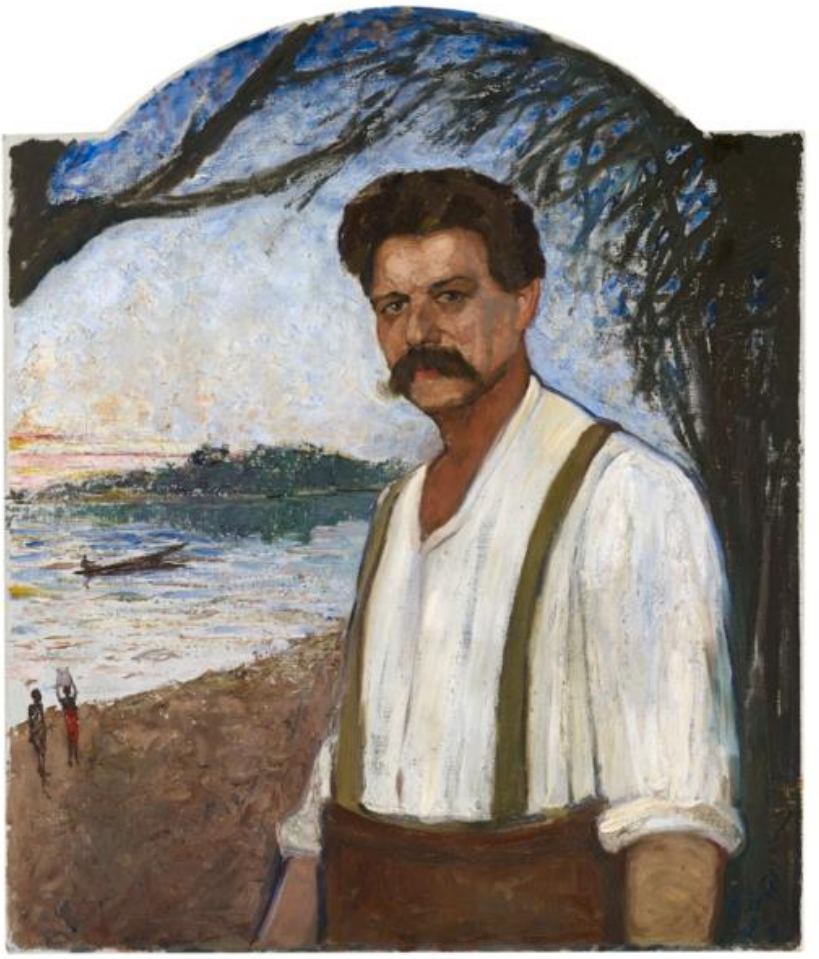
Born in Upper Alsace, of German-Alsatian parents, he was only five when he began music, his dearest love, and at nine he took the place of an organist at a service. When he was eighteen he went to Strasbourg University, and took Theology and Philosophy as his two chief objects, winning a scholarship which enabled him to take his degree. A few months later he obtained a post as deacon, and then became curate at the Church of St. Nicolaus in that town. Meanwhile he found time which to devote himself to writing and to his music, and more than one interesting friendship he made at this period of his life with men and women of distinction.

One of his early books was a study on Bach, and a little later appeared

The Quest of the Historical Jesus. Music and religion were his chief subjects.

Another dearly loved hobby and work of his was reform in organ building and the building of old organs; many a night, he tells us, he spent over organ designs, and many a journey he took to save some lovely, doomed instrument.

So we see that it was not to a man of unrealised and unfulfilled existence, but to one whose days were replete with work he already joyed in doing, that the resolution to change his life came suddenly. Yet, unexpected and irrational as this decision seemed to his friends, to Schweitzer the resolve had indeed come as no surprise.



Albert Schweitzer, Clara Ewald

"While at the University, and enjoying the happiness of being able to study and even to produce some results in science and art (he says) I could not help thinking continually of others who were denied that happiness by their material circumstances or their health.

"Then one brilliant summer morning there came to me as I awoke the thought that I must not accept this happiness as a matter of course, but must give something in return for it. Proceeding to think the matter out at once with calm deliberation, while the birds were singing outside, I settled with myself before I got up that I would consider myself justified in living till I was thirty for science and art in order to devote myself from that time forward to the direct service of humanity."

And so one foggy day in October 1905, Albert Schweitzer set out to attend his first lecture on anatomy, passing his State medical examination in 1911, after six years of hard and unabated study. The cost of his study he had obtained mainly through his concert playing and his book on Bach. He spent the following year as a volunteer in the hospitals, and in the spring of 1913 seventy packing cases, containing all things necessary for a tropical hospital equipment, were shipped ahead of Schweitzer and his wife (for he was now married) to Africa.

With regard to the selection of the place in which he was to work Schweitzer tells us an interesting little story. He had chosen to plan nothing, but to leave the choice of a destination to the

guidance of circumstances. One day after his resolve to become a medical student he found on his writing-table in the college a magazine containing reports of the Paris Missionary Society, a magazine which a friend sometimes left with him.

"That evening (Schweitzer says), in the very act of putting it aside that I might go on with my work, I mechanically opened this magazine. As I did so my eye caught the title of an article, 'The Needs of the Congo Mission.'

"The article contained a complaint that the Mission had not enough workers to carry on its work in the Gabun, the northern province of the Congo Colony. The writer expressed his hope that his appeal would bring some of those 'on whom the Master's eyes already rested' to a decision to offer themselves for this urgent work. The conclusion ran: 'Men and women who can reply simply to the Master's call, Lord, I am coming—those are the people whom the Church needs.' The article finished, I quietly began my work. My search was over."

It is twenty years since Schweitzer first arrived at the little jungle spot of Lambarene, where, before he had time even to unpack the drugs, he was besieged by sick people, his consulting-room being an old fowlhouse, and the hospital quarters most primitive and inadequate.

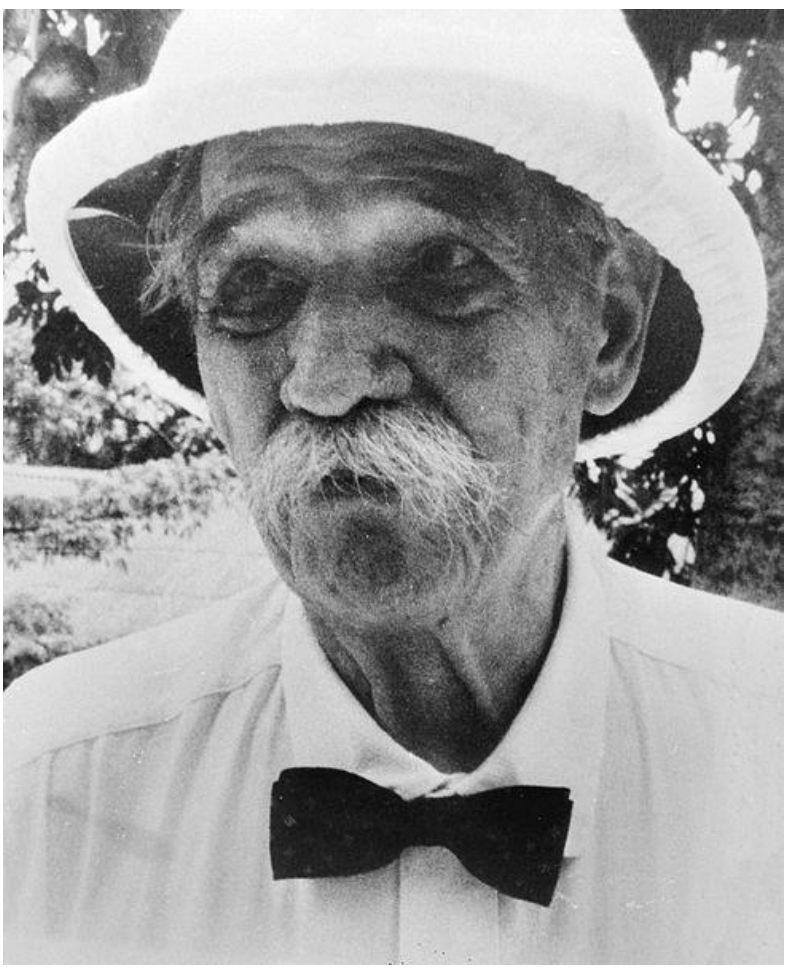


Photo of Albert Scheitzer, 1965

The site he had been given, however, was an excellent one, as his patients could arrive by canoe up or down stream for 200 miles either way.

There or thereabouts through the passing years has this beloved doctor worked, curing both bodies and souls of the myriads of undoctored Africans who came and still come to him for help and healing.

It is a happy thought to remember that he was able to keep up a little of his loved music. The Paris Bach Society, in recognition of his years of service as their organist, had presented him with a piano and pedal attachment; and though he had renounced his life as an artist, deciding that the loss would be easier if he allowed his fingers to become stiff with disuse, he finally gave up one half-hour, the utmost he could spare in each of his days, for practice.

When war broke out he and his wife were interned, and eventually

Gunsbach House, where Albert Schweitzer's father moved after being appointed pastor in Gunsbach in 1875

both went back to Strasbourg. Before he returned once more to Africa (this time alone) he had made enough money by his playing and his books to rebuild his hospital. His patients had steadily increased, and he sent for two doctors and nurses from Europe.

"I became a modern Prehistoric man," he says, speaking of his new hospital, "and erected it as a village on piles." He himself became overseer of the labourers. Then around this village hospital he planted a Garden of Eden in which hundreds of fruit trees gave more than sufficient fruit for the patients.

But successful as Schweitzer's life-work has been, the greatness of his character stands even higher than his achievements.

Here is a man of exalted intellect and talents who, late into the nights, made heart-deep searchings for the truth. Many days of his youth he gave to research work in theology, philosophy, and music, becoming a master thinker and a master player. Here is a man who kept a look-out at every railway station to help those heavily-laden because once a poor cripple had come to his own aid and carried baggage for him. No combat is too big for Greatheart to contest, no gentleness too small for him to pass by.

Yet he has no thought of personal heroism—merely a deep thankfulness that he has "been

allowed to work in the service of mercy." Those who are so favoured as to be able to embark on a course of free personal activity must accept this good fortune in a spirit of humility he says. They must often think of those who, though willing and capable, were never in a position to do the same.

"Only one who feels his preference to be matter of course, not something out of the ordinary, and who has no thought of heroism but just recognises a duty undertaken with sober enthusiasm, is capable of becoming a spiritual adventurer such as the world needs. There are no heroes of action; only heroes of renunciation and suffering."

These are Albert Schweitzer's own idea: on heroism, impersonal words yet with something almost excusing about them perhaps an unconscious defence against our interpretation of his own life as heroic.

With calmness and humility he look forward to the future, he says, so that he may not be unprepared for renunciation if it be required of him. Perhaps in all our roll of heroes we shall find no man more simple, more selfless, and more beloved than Albert Schweitzer.

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