

# An African Adventure

Isaac Frederick Marcossou

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# AN AFRICAN ADVENTURE

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**KING ALBERT**

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# AN AFRICAN ADVENTURE

BY

ISAAC F. MARCOSSON

AUTHOR OF "ADVENTURES IN INTERVIEWING," ETC.

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*To*  
THOMAS F. RYAN  
WHO FIRST BEHELD THE VISION  
OF AMERICA IN THE CONGO

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## FOREWORD

From earliest boyhood when I read the works of Henry M. Stanley and books about Cecil Rhodes, Africa has called to me. It was not until I met General Smuts during the Great War, however, that I had a definite reason for going there.

After these late years of blood and battle America and Europe seemed tame. Besides, the economic war after the war developed into a struggle as bitter as the actual physical conflict. Discord and discontent became the portion of the civilized world. I wanted to get as far as possible from all this social unrest and financial dislocation.

So much interest was evinced in the magazine articles which first set forth the record of my journey that I was prompted to expand them into this book. It may enable the reader to discover a section of the one-time Dark Continent without the hardships which I experienced.

I. F. M.

NEW YORK, *April, 1921*

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# **AN AFRICAN ADVENTURE**



# **AN AFRICAN ADVENTURE**

# CHAPTER I—SMUTS

## I

Turn the searchlight on the political and economic chaos that has followed the Great War and you find a surprising lack of real leadership. Out of the mists that enshroud the world welter only three commanding personalities emerge. In England Lloyd George survives amid the storm of party clash and Irish discord. Down in Greece Venizelos, despite defeat, remains an impressive figure of high ideals and uncompromising patriotism. Off in South Africa Smuts gives fresh evidence of his vision and authority.

Although he was Britain's principal prop during the years of agony and disaster, Lloyd George is, in the last analysis, merely an eloquent and spectacular politician with the genius of opportunism. One reason why he holds his post is that there is no one to take his place,—another commentary on the paucity of greatness. There is no visible heir to Venizelos. Besides, Greece is a small country without international touch and interest. Smuts, youngest of the trio, looms up as the most brilliant statesman of his day and his career has just entered upon a new phase.

He is the dominating actor in a drama that not only affects the destiny of the whole British Empire, but has significance for every civilized nation. The quality of striking contrast has always been his. The one-time Boer General, who fought Roberts and Kitchener twenty years ago, is battling with equal tenacity for the integrity of the Imperial Union born of that war. Not in all history perhaps, is revealed a more picturesque situation than obtains in South Africa today. You have the whole Nationalist movement crystallized into a single compelling episode. In a word, it is contemporary Ireland duplicated without violence and extremism.

I met General Smuts often during the Great War. He stood out as the most intellectually alert, and in some respects the most distinguished figure among the array of nation-guiders with whom I talked, and I interviewed them all. I saw him as he sat in the British War Cabinet when the German hosts were sweeping

across the Western Front, and when the German submarines were making a shambles of the high seas. I heard him speak with persuasive force on public occasions and he was like a beacon in the gloom. He had come to England in 1917 as the representative of General Botha, the Prime Minister of the Union of South Africa, to attend the Imperial Conference and to remain a comparatively short time. So great was the need of him that he did not go home until after the Peace had been signed. He signed the Treaty under protest because he believed it was uneconomic and it has developed into the irritant that he prophesied it would be.

In those war days when we foregathered, Smuts often talked of "the world that would be." The real Father of the League of Nations idea, he believed that out of the immense travail would develop a larger fraternity, economically sound and without sentimentality. It was a great and yet a practical dream.

More than once he asked me to come to South Africa. I needed little urging. From my boyhood the land of Cecil Rhodes has always held a lure for me. Smuts invested it with fresh interest. So I went.

The Smuts that I found at close range on his native heath, wearing the mantle of the departed Botha, carrying on a Government with a minority, and with the shadow of an internecine war brooding on the horizon, was the same serene, clear-thinking strategist who had raised his voice in the Allied Councils. Then the enemy was the German and the task was to destroy the menace of militarism. Now it was his own unreconstructed Boer—blood of his blood,—and behind that Boer the larger problem of a rent and dissatisfied universe, waging peace as bitterly as it waged war. Smuts the dreamer was again Smuts the fighter, with the fight of his life on his hands.

Thus it came about that I found myself in Capetown. Everybody goes out to South Africa from England on those Union Castle boats so familiar to all readers of English novels. Like the P. & O. vessels that Kipling wrote about in his Indian stories, they are among the favorite first aids to the makers of fiction. Hosts of heroes in books—and some in real life—sail each year to their romantic fate aboard them.

It was the first day of the South African winter when I arrived, but back in America spring was in full bloom. I looked out on the same view that had thrilled the Portuguese adventurers of the fifteenth century when they swept for the first time into Table Bay. Behind the harbor rose Table Mountain and stretching from it downward to the sea was a land with verdure clad and aglare with the African sun that was to scorch my paths for months to come.

Capetown nestles at the foot of a vast flat-topped mass of granite unique among the natural elevations of the world. She is another melting pot. Here mingle Kaffir and Boer, Basuto and Britisher, East Indian and Zulu. The hardy rancher and fortune-hunter from the North Country rub shoulders with the globe-trotter. In the bustling streets modern taxicabs vie for space with antiquated hansoms bearing names like "Never Say Die," "Home Sweet Home," or "Honeysuckle." All the horse-drawn public vehicles have names.

You get a familiar feel of America in this South African country and especially in the Cape Colony, which is a place of fruits, flowers and sunshine resembling California. There is the sense of newness in the atmosphere, and something of the abandon that you encounter among the people of Australia and certain parts of Canada. It comes from life spent in the open and the spirit of pioneering that within a comparatively short time has wrested a huge domain from the savage.

What strikes the observer at once is the sharp conflict of race, first, between black and white, and then, between Briton and Boer. South of the Zambesi River,—and this includes Rhodesia and the Union of South Africa,—the native outnumbers the white more than six to one and he is increasing at a much greater rate than the European. Hence you have an inevitable conflict. Race lies at the root of the South African trouble and the racial reconciliation that Rhodes and Botha set their hopes upon remains an elusive quantity.

I got a hint of what Smuts was up against the moment I arrived. I had cabled him of my coming and he sent an orderly to the steamer with a note of welcome and inviting me to lunch with him at the House of Parliament the next day. In the letter, among other things he said: "You will find this a really interesting country, full of curious problems." How curious they were I was soon to find out.

I called for him at his modest book-lined office in a street behind the Parliament Buildings and we walked together to the House. Heretofore I had only seen him in the uniform of a Lieutenant General in the British Army. Now he wore a loose-fitting lounge suit and a slouch hat was jammed down on his head. In the change from khaki to mufti—and few men can stand up under this transition without losing some of the character of their personal appearance,—he remained a striking figure. There is something wistful in his face—an indescribable look that projects itself not only through you but beyond. It is not exactly preoccupation but a highly developed concentration. This look seemed to be enhanced by the ordeal through which he was then passing. In his springy walk was a suggestion of pugnacity. His whole manner was that of a man in action and who exults in it. Roosevelt had the same characteristic but he displayed it with much more animation and strenuousness.

We sat down in the crowded dining room of the House of Parliament where the Prime Minister had invited a group of Cabinet Ministers and leading business men of Capetown. Around us seethed a noisy swirl which reflected the turmoil of the South African political situation. Parliament had just convened after an historic election in which the Nationalists, the bitter antagonists of Botha and Smuts, had elected a majority of representatives for the first time. Smuts was hanging on to the Premiership by his teeth. A sharp division of vote, likely at any moment, would have overthrown the Government. It meant a régime hostile to Britain that carried with it secession and the remote possibility of civil war.

In that restaurant, as throughout the whole Union, Smuts was at that moment literally the observed of all observers. Far off in London the powers-that-be were praying that this blonde and bearded Boer could successfully man the imperial breach. Yet he sat there smiling and unafraid and the company that he had assembled discussed a variety of subjects that ranged from the fall in exchange to the possibilities of the wheat crop in America.

The luncheon was the first of various meetings with Smuts. Some were amid the tumult of debate or in the shadow of the legislative halls, others out in the country at *Groote Schuur*, the Prime Minister's residence, where we walked amid the gardens that Cecil Rhodes loved, or sat in the rooms where the Colossus



"thought in terms of continents." It was a liberal education.

Before we can go into what Smuts said during these interviews it is important to know briefly the whole approach to the crowded hour that made the fullest test of his resource and statesmanship. Clearly to understand it you must first know something about the Boer and his long stubborn struggle for independence which ended, for a time at least, in the battle and blood of the Boer War.

Capetown, the melting pot, is merely a miniature of the larger boiling cauldron of race which is the Union of South Africa. In America we also have an astonishing mixture of bloods but with the exception of the Bolshevists and other radical uplifters, our population is loyally dedicated to the American flag and the institutions it represents. With us Latin, Slav, Celt, and Saxon have blended the strain that proved its mettle as "Americans All" under the Stars and Stripes in France. We have given succor and sanctuary to the oppressed of many lands and these foreign elements, in the main, have not only been grateful but have proved to be distinct assets in our national expansion. We are a merged people.

With South Africa the situation is somewhat different. The roots of civilization there were planted by the Dutch in the days of the Dutch East India Company when Holland was a world power. The Dutchman is a tenacious and stubborn person. Although the Huguenots emigrated to the Cape in considerable force in the seventeenth century and intermarried with the transplanted Hollanders, the Dutch strain, and with it the Dutch characteristics predominated. They have shaped South African history ever since. This is why the Boer is still referred to in popular parlance as "a Dutchman."

The Dutch have always been a proud and liberty-loving people, as the Duke of Alva and the Spaniard learned to their cost. This inherited desire for freedom has flamed in the hearts of the Boers. In the early African day they preferred to journey on to the wild and unknown places rather than sacrifice their independence. What is known as "The Great Trek" of the thirties, which opened up the Transvaal and subsequently the Orange Free State and Natal, was due entirely to unrest among the Cape Boers. There is something of the epic in the narrative of those doughty, psalm-singing trekkers who, like the Mormons in the American West, went forth in their canvas-covered wagons with a rifle in one

hand and the Bible in the other. They fought the savage, endured untold hardships, and met fate with a grim smile on their lips. It took Britain nearly three costly years to subdue their descendants, an untrained army of farmers.

A revelation of the Boer character, therefore, is an index to the South African tangle. His enemies call the Boer "a combination of cunning and childishness." As a matter of fact the Boer is distinct among individualists. "Oom Paul" Kruger was a type. A fairly familiar story will concretely illustrate what lies within and behind the race. On one occasion his thumb was nearly severed in an accident. With his pocket-knife he cut off the finger, bound up the wound with a rag, and went about his business.

The old Boer—and the type survives—was a Puritan who loved his five-thousand-acre farm where he could neither see nor hear his neighbors, who read the Good Word three times a day, drank prodigious quantities of coffee, spoke "*taal*" the Dutch dialect, and reared a huge family. Botha, for example, was one of thirteen children, and his father lamented to his dying day that he had not done his full duty by his country!

Isolation was the Boer fetich. This instinct for aloofness,—principally racial,—animates the sincere wing of the Nationalist Party today. Men like Botha and Smuts and their followers adapted themselves to assimilation but there remained the "bitter-end" element that rebelled in arms against the constituted authority in 1914 and had to be put down with merciless hand. This element now seeks to achieve through more peaceful ends what it sought to do by force the moment Britain became involved in the Great War. The reason for the revolt of 1914, in a paragraph, was Britain's far-flung call to arms. The unreconstructed Boers refused to fight for the Power that humbled them in 1902. They seized the moment to make a try for what they called "emancipation."

To go back for a moment, when the British conquered the Cape and thousands of Englishmen streamed out to Africa to make their fortunes, the Boer at once bristled with resentment. His isolation was menaced. He regarded the Briton as an "*Uitlander*"—an outsider—and treated him as an undesirable alien. In the Transvaal and the Orange Free State he was denied the rights that are accorded to law-abiding citizens in other countries. Hence the Jameson Raid, which was

an ill-starred protest against the narrow, copper-riveted Boer rule, and later the final and sanguinary show-down in the Boer War, which ended the dream of Boer independence.

In 1910 was established the Union of South Africa, comprising the Transvaal, the Orange Free State, Natal and the Cape Colony which obtained responsible government and which is to all intents and purposes a dominion as free as Australia or Canada. England sends out a Governor-General, usually a high-placed and titled person but he is a be-medalled figure-head,—an ornamental feature of the landscape. His principal labours are to open fairs, attend funerals, preside at harmless gatherings, and bestow decorations upon worthy persons. First Botha, and later Smuts, have been the real rulers of the country.

The Union Constitution decreed that bi-lingualism must prevail. As a result every public notice, document, and time-table is printed in both English and Dutch. The tie of language is a strong one and this eternal and unuttered presence of the "*taal*" has been an asset for the Nationalists to exploit. It is a link with the days of independence.

Following the Boer War came a sharp cleavage among the Boers. That great farm-bred soldier and statesman, Louis Botha, accepted the verdict and became the leader of what might be called a reconciled reconstruction. Firm in the belief that the future of South Africa was greater than the smaller and selfish issue of racial pride and prejudice, he rallied his open-minded and far-seeing countrymen around him. Out of this group developed the South African Party which remains the party of the Dutch loyal to British rule. To quote the program of principles, "Its political object is the development of a South African spirit of national unity and self-reliance through the attainment of the lasting union of the various sections of the people."

Botha was made Premier of the Transvaal as soon as the Colony was granted self-government and with the accomplishment of Union was named Prime Minister of the Federation. The first man that he called to the standard of the new order to become his Colonial Minister, or more technically, Minister of the Interior, was Smuts, who had left his law office in Johannesburg to fight the English in 1900 and who displayed the same consummate strategy in the field

that he has since shown in Cabinet meeting and Legislative forum. With peace he returned to law but not for long. Now began his political career—he has held public office continuously ever since—that is a vital part of the modern history of South Africa.

In the years immediately following Union the genius of Botha had full play. He wrought a miracle of evolution. Under his influence the land which still bore the scars of war was turned to plenty. He was a farmer and he bent his energy and leadership to the rebuilding of the shattered commonwealths. Their hope lay in the soil. His right arm was Smuts, who became successively Minister of Finance and Minister of Public Defense.

The belief that reconciliation had dawned was rudely disturbed when the Great War crashed into civilization. The extreme Nationalists rebelled and it was Botha, aided by Smuts, who crushed them. Beyers, the ringleader, was drowned while trying to escape across the Vaal River, DeWet was defeated in the field, De la Rey was accidentally shot, and Maritz became a fugitive. Botha then conquered the Germans in German South-West Africa and Smuts subsequently took over the command of the Allied Forces in German East Africa. When Botha died in 1919 Smuts not only assumed the Premiership of the Union but he also inherited the bitter enmity that General J. B. M. Hertzog bore towards his lamented Chief.

Now we come to the crux of the whole business, past and present. Who is Hertzog and what does he stand for?

If you look at your history of the Boer War you will see that one of the first Dutch Generals to take the field and one of the last to leave it was Hertzog, an Orange Free State lawyer who had won distinction on the Bench. He helped to frame the Union Constitution and on the day he signed it, declared that it was a distinct epoch in his life. A Boer of the Boers, he seemed to catch for the moment, the contagion that radiated from Botha and spelled a Greater South Africa.

Botha made him Minister of Justice and all was well. But deep down in his heart Hertzog remained unrepentant. When the question of South Africa's contribution

to the Imperial Navy came up in 1912 he fought it tooth and nail. In fiery utterances attacking the Government he denounced Botha as a jingoist and an imperialist. Just about this time he made the famous speech in which he stated his ideal of South Africa. He declared that Briton and Boer were "two separate streams"—two nationalities each flowing in a separate channel. The "two streams" slogan is now the Nationalist battlecry.

Such procedure on the part of Hertzog demanded prompt action on the part of Botha, who called upon his colleague either to suppress his particular brand of anathema or resign. Hertzog not only built a bigger bonfire of denunciation but refused to resign.

Botha thereupon devised a unique method of ridding himself of his uncongenial Minister. He resigned, the Government fell, and the Cabinet dissolved automatically. Hertzog was left out in the cold. The Governor-General immediately re-appointed Botha Prime Minister and he reorganized his Cabinet without the undesirable Hertzog.

Hertzog became the Stormy Petrel of South Africa, vowing vengeance against Botha and Britain. He galvanized the Nationalist Party, which up to this time had been merely a party of opposition, into what was rapidly becoming a flaming secession movement. The South African Party developed into the only really national party, while its opponent, although bearing the name of National, was solely and entirely racial.

The first real test of strength was in the election of 1915. The campaign was bitter and belligerent. The venom of the Nationalist Party was concentrated on Smuts. Many of his meetings became bloody riots. He was the target for rotten fruit and on one occasion an attempt was made on his life. The combination of the Botha personality and the Smuts courage and reason won out and the South African Party remained in power.

Undaunted, Hertzog carried on the fight. He soon had the supreme advantage of having the field to himself because Botha was off fighting the Germans and Smuts had gone to England to help mould the Allied fortunes. The Nationalist leader made hay while the red sun of war shone. Every South African who died

on the battlefield was for him just another argument for separation from England.

When Ireland declared herself a "republic" Hertzog took the cue and counted his cause in with that of the "small nations" that needed self-determination. "Afrika for the Afrikans," the old motto of the *Afrikander Bond*, was unfurled from the masthead and the sedition spread. It not only recruited the Boers who had an ancient grievance against Great Britain, but many others who secretly resented the Botha and Smuts intimacy with "the conquerors." Some were sons and grandsons of the old "*Vortrekkers*," who not only delighted to speak the "*taal*" exclusively but who had never surrendered the ideal of independence.

While the Dutch movement in South Africa strongly resembles the Irish rebellion there are also some marked differences. In South Africa there is no religious barrier and as a result there has been much intermarriage between Briton and Boer. The English in South Africa bear the same relation to the Nationalist movement there that the Ulsterites bear to the Sinn Feiners in Ireland. Instead of being segregated as are the followers of Sir Edward Carson, they are scattered throughout the country.

At the General Election held early in 1920,—general elections are held every five years,—the results were surprising. The Nationalists returned a majority of four over the South African Party in Parliament. It left Smuts to carry on his Government with a minority. To add to his troubles, the Labour Party,—always an uncertain proposition,—increased its representation from a mere handful to twenty-one, while the Unionists, who comprise the straight-out English-speaking Party, whose stronghold is Natal, suffered severe losses. Smuts could not very well count the latter among his open allies because it would have alienated the hard-shell Boers in the South African Party.

This was the situation that I found on my arrival in Capetown. On one hand was Smuts, still Prime Minister, taxing his every resource as parliamentarian and pacificator to maintain the Union and prevent a revolt from Britain—all in the face of a bitter and hostile majority. On the other hand was Hertzog, bent on secession and with a solid array of discontents behind him. The two former comrades of the firing line, as the heads of their respective groups, were locked

in a momentous political life-and-death struggle the outcome of which may prove to be the precedent for Ireland, Egypt, and India.

[GROOTE SCHUUR](#)

**GROOTE SCHUUR** — *Photograph Copyright South African Railways*

## II

Yet Smuts continued as Premier which means that he brought the life of Parliament to a close without a sharp division. Moreover, he manœvered his forces into a position that saved the day for Union and himself. How did he do it?

I can demonstrate one way and with a rather personal incident. During the week I spent in Capetown Smuts was an absorbed person as you may imagine. The House was in session day and night and there were endless demands on him. The best opportunities that we had for talk were at meal-time. One evening I dined with him in the House restaurant. When we sat down we thought that we had the place to ourselves. Suddenly Smuts cast his eye over the long room and saw a solitary man just commencing his dinner in the opposite corner. Turning to me he said:

"Do you know Cresswell?"

"I was introduced to him yesterday," I replied.

"Would you mind if I asked him to dine with us?"

When I assured him that I would be delighted, the Prime Minister got up, walked over to Cresswell and asked him to join us, which he did.

The significant part of this apparently simple performance, which had its important outcome, was this. Colonel F. H. P. Cresswell is the leader of the Labour Party in South Africa. By profession a mining engineer, he led the forces of revolt in the historic industrial upheaval in the Rand in what Smuts denounced as a "Syndicalist Conspiracy." Riot, bloodshed, and confusion reigned for a considerable period at Johannesburg and large bodies of troops had to be called out to restore order. At the very moment that we sat down to dine that night no one knew just what Cresswell and the Labourites with their new-won power would do. Smuts, as Minister of Finance, had deported some of Cresswell's men



and Cresswell himself narrowly escaped drastic punishment.

When Smuts brought Cresswell over he said jokingly to me:

"Cresswell is a good fellow but I came near sending him to jail once."

Cresswell beamed and the three of us amiably discussed various topics until the gong sounded for the assembling of the House.

What was the result? Before I left Capetown and when the first of the few occasions which tested the real voting strength of Parliament arose, Cresswell and some of his adherents voted with Smuts. I tell this little story to show that the man who today holds the destiny of South Africa in his hands is as skillful a diplomat as he is soldier and statesman.

It was at one of these quiet dinners with Smuts at the House that he first spoke about Nationalism. He said: "The war gave Nationalism its death blow. But as a matter of fact Nationalism committed suicide in the war."

"But what is Nationalism?" I asked him.

"A water-tight nation in a water-tight compartment," he replied. "It is a process of regimentation like the old Germany that will soon merge into a new Internationalism. What seems to be at this moment an orgy of Nationalism in South Africa or elsewhere is merely its death gasp. The New World will be a world of individualism dominated by Britain and America.

"What about the future?" I asked him. His answer was:

"The safety of the future depends upon Federation, upon a League of Nations that will develop along economic and not purely sentimental lines. The New Internationalism will not stop war but it can regulate exchange, and through this regulation can help to prevent war.

"I believe in an international currency which will be a sort of legal tender among all the nations. Why should the currency of the country depreciate or rise with the fortunes of war or with its industrial or other complications? Misfortune should not be penalized fiscally."

I brought up the question of the lack of accord which then existed between Britain and America and suggested that perhaps the fall in exchange had something to do with it, whereupon he said: "Yes, I think it has. It merely illustrates the point that I have just made about an international currency."

We came back to the subject of individualism, which led Smuts to say:

"The Great War was a striking illustration of the difference between individualism and nationalism. Hindenberg commanded the only army in the war. It was a product of nationalism. The individualism of the Anglo-Saxon is such that it becomes a mob but it is an intelligent mob. Haig and Pershing commanded such mobs."

I tried to probe Smuts about Russia. He was in London when I returned from Petrograd in 1917 and I recall that he displayed the keenest interest in what I told him about Kerensky and the new order that I had seen in the making. I heard him speak at a Russian Fair in London. The whole burden of his utterance was the hope that the Slav would achieve discipline and organization. At that time Russia redeemed from autocracy looked to be a bulwark of Allied victory. The night we talked about Russia at Capetown she had become the prey of red terror and the plaything of organized assassination.

Smuts looked rather wistful when he said:

"You cannot defeat Russia. Napoleon learned this to his cost and so will the rest of the world. I do not know whether Bolshevism is advancing or subsiding. There comes a time when the fiercest fires die down. But the best way to revive or rally all Russia to the Soviet Government is to invade the country and to annex large slices of it."

These utterances were made during those more or less hasty meals at the House of Parliament when the Premier's mind was really in the Legislative Hall nearby where he was fighting for his administrative life. It was far different out at *Groote Schuur*, the home of the Prime Minister, located in Rondebosch, a suburb about nine miles from Capetown. In the open country that he loves, and in an environment that breathed the romance and performance of England's greatest empire-builder, I caught something of the man's kindling vision and realized his

ripe grasp of international events.

*Groote Schuur* is one of the best-known estates in the world. Cecil Rhodes in his will left it to the Union as the permanent residence of the Prime Minister. Ever since I read the various lives of Rhodes I had had an impatient desire to see this shrine of achievement. Here Rhodes came to live upon his accession to the Premiership of the Cape Colony; here he fashioned the British South Africa Company which did for Rhodesia what the East India Company did for India; here came prince and potentate to pay him honour; here he dreamed his dreams of conquest looking out at mountain and sea; here lived Jameson and Kipling; here his remains lay in state when at forty-nine the fires of his restless ambition had ceased.

*Groote Schuur*, which in Dutch means "Great Granary," was originally built as a residence and store-house for one of the early Dutch Governors of the Cape. It is a beautiful example of the Dutch architecture that you will find throughout the Colony and which is not surpassed in grace or comfort anywhere. When Rhodes acquired it in the eighties the grounds were comparatively limited. As his power and fortune increased he bought up all the surrounding country until today you can ride for nine miles across the estate. You find no neat lawns and dainty flower-beds. On the place, as in the house itself, you get the sense of bigness and simplicity which were the keynotes of the Rhodes character.

One reason why Rhodes acquired *Groote Schuur* was that behind it rose the great bulk of Table Mountain. He loved it for its vastness and its solitude. On the back *stoep*, which is the Dutch word for porch, he sat for hours gazing at this mountain which like the man himself was invested with a spirit of immensity.

It was a memorable experience to be at *Groote Schuur* with Smuts, who has lived to see the realization of the hope of Union which thrilled always in the heart of Cecil Rhodes. I remember that on the first night I went out the Prime Minister took me through the house himself. It has been contended by Smuts' enemies that he was a "creature of Rhodes." I discovered that Smuts, with the exception of having made a speech of welcome when Rhodes visited the school that he attended as a boy, had never even met the Englishman who left his impress upon a whole land.

*Groote Schuur* has been described so much that it is not necessary for me to dwell upon its charm and atmosphere here. To see it is to get a fresh and intimate realization of the personality which made the establishment an unofficial Chancellery of the British Empire.

Two details, however, have poignant and dramatic interest. In the simple, massive, bed-room with its huge bay window opening on Table Mountain and a stretch of lovely countryside, hangs the small map of Africa that Rhodes marked with crimson ink and about which he made the famous utterance, "It must be all red." Hanging on the wall in the billiard room is the flag with Crescent and Cape device that he had made to be carried by the first locomotive to travel from Cairo to the Cape. That flag has never been unfurled to the breeze but the vision that beheld it waving in the heart of the jungle is soon to become an accomplished fact.

It was on a night at *Groote Schuur*, as I walked with Smuts through the acres of hydrangeas and bougainvillea (Rhodes' favorite flowers), with a new moon peeping overhead that I got the real mood of the man. Pointing to the faint silvery crescent in the sky I said: "General, there's a new moon over us and I'm sure it means good luck for you."

"No," he replied, "it's the man that makes the luck."

He had had a trying day in the House and was silent in the motor car that brought us out. The moment we reached the country and he sniffed the scent of the gardens the anxiety and preoccupation fell away. He almost became boyish. But when he began to discuss great problems the lightness vanished and he became the serious thinker.

We harked back to the days when I had first seen him in England. I asked him to tell me what he thought of the aftermath of the stupendous struggle. He said:

"The war was just a phase of world convulsion. It made the first rent in the universal structure. For years the trend of civilization was toward a super-Nationalism. It is easy to trace the stages. The Holy Roman Empire was a phase of Nationalism. That was Catholic. Then came the development of Nationalism, beginning with Napoleon. That was Protestant. Now began the building of

water-tight compartments, otherwise known as nations. Germany represented the most complete development.

"But that era of 'my country,' 'my power,'—it is all a form of national ego,—is gone. The four great empires,—Turkey, Germany, Russia and Austria,—have crumbled. The war jolted them from their high estate. It started the universal cataclysm. Centuries in the future some perspective can be had and the results appraised.

"Meanwhile, we can see the beginning. The world is one. Humanity is one and must be one. The war, at terrible cost, brought the peoples together. The League of Nations is a faint and far-away evidence of this solidarity. It merely points the way but it is something. It is not academic formulas that will unite the peoples of the world but intelligence."

Smuts now turned his thought to a subject not without interest for America, for he said:

"The world has been brought together by the press, by wireless, indeed by all communication which represents the last word in scientific development. Yet political institutions cling to old and archaic traditions. Take the Presidency of the United States. A man waits for four months before he is inaugurated. The incumbent may work untold mischief in the meantime. It is all due to the fact that in the days when the American Constitution was framed the stagecoach and the horse were the only means of conveyance. The world now travels by aeroplane and express train, yet the antiquated habits continue.

"So with political parties and peoples, the British Empire included. They need to be brought abreast of the times. The old pre-war British Empire, for example, is gone in the sense of colonies or subordinate nations clustering around one master nation. The British Empire itself is developing into a real League of Nations,—a group of partner peoples."

"What of America and the future?" I asked him.

"America is the leaven of the future," answered Smuts. "She is the life-blood of the League of Nations. Without her the League is stifled. America will give the

League the peace temper. You Americans are a pacific people, slow to war but terrible and irresistible when you once get at it. The American is an individualist and in that new and inevitable internationalism the individual will stand out, the American pre-eminently."

Throughout this particular experience at *Groote Schuur* I could not help marvelling on the contrast that the man and the moment presented. We walked through a place of surpassing beauty. Ahead brooded the black mystery of the mountains and all around was a fragrant stillness broken only by the quick, almost passionate speech of this seer and thinker, animate with an inspiring ideal of public service, whose mind leaped from the high places of poetry and philosophy on to the hiving battlefield of world event. It seemed almost impossible that nine miles away at Capetown raged the storm that almost within the hour would again claim him as its central figure.

The Smuts statements that I have quoted were made long before the Presidential election in America. I do not know just what Smuts thinks of the landslide that overwhelmed the Wilson administration and with it that well-known Article X, but I do know that he genuinely hopes that the United States somehow will have a share in the new international stewardship of the world. He would welcome any order that would enable us to play our part.

No one can have contact with Smuts without feeling at once his intense admiration for America. One of his ambitions is to come to the United States. It is characteristic of him that he has no desire to see skyscrapers and subways. His primary interest is in the great farms of the West. "Your people," he once said to me, "have made farming a science and I wish that South Africa could emulate them. We have farms in vast area but we have not yet attained an adequate development."

I was amazed at his knowledge of American literature. He knows Hamilton backwards, has read diligently about the life and times of Washington, and is familiar with Irving, Poe, Hawthorne and Emerson. One reason why he admires the first American President is because he was a farmer. Smuts knows as much about rotation of crops and successful chicken raising as he does about law and politics. He said:

"I am an eighty per cent farmer and a Boer, and most people think a Boer is a barbarian."

Despite his scholarship he remains what he delights to call himself, "a Boer." He still likes the simple Boer things, as this story will show. During the war, while he was a member of the British War Cabinet and when Lloyd George leaned on him so heavily for a multitude of services, a young South African Major, fresh from the Transvaal, brought him a box of home delicacies. The principal feature of this package was a piece of what the Boers call "biltong," which is dried venison. The Major gave the package to an imposing servant in livery at the Savoy Hotel, where the General lived, to be delivered to him. Smuts was just going out and encountered the man carrying it in. When he learned that it was from home, he grabbed the box, saying: "I'll take it up myself." Before he reached his apartment he was chewing away vigorously on a mouthful of "biltong" and having the time of his life.

The contrast between Smuts and his predecessor Botha is striking. These two men, with the possible exception of Kruger, stand out in the annals of the Boer. Kruger was the dour, stolid, canny, provincial trader. The only time that his interest ever left the confines of the Transvaal was when he sought an alliance with William Hohenzollern, and that person, I might add, failed him at the critical moment.

Botha was the George Washington of South Africa,—the farmer who became Premier. He was big of body and of soul,—big enough to know when he was beaten and to rebuild out of the ruins. Even the Nationalists trusted him and they do not trust Smuts. It is the old story of the prophet in his own country. There are many people in South Africa today who believe that if Botha were alive there would be no secession movement.

The Boers who oppose him politically call Smuts "Slim Jannie." The Dutch word "slim" means tricky and evasive. Not so very long ago Smuts was in a conference with some of his countrymen who were not altogether friendly to him. He had just remarked on the long drought that was prevailing. One of the men present went to the window and looked out. When asked the reason for this action he replied:

"Smuts says that there's a drought. I looked out to see if it was raining."

When you come to Smuts in this analogy you behold the Alexander Hamilton of his nation, the brilliant student, soldier, and advocate. Of all his Boer contemporaries he is the most cosmopolitan. Nor is this due entirely to the fact that he went to Cambridge where he left a record for scholarship, and speaks English with a decided accent. It is because he has what might be called world sense. His career, and more especially his part at the Peace Conference and since, is a dramatization of it.

To the student of human interest Smuts is a fertile subject. His life has been a cinema romance shot through with sharp contrasts. Here is one of them. When leaders of the shattered Boer forces gathered in *Vereeniging* to discuss the Peace Terms with Kitchener in 1902, Smuts, who commanded a flying guerilla column, was besieging the little mining town of O'okiep. He received a summons from Botha to attend. It was accompanied by a safe-conduct pass signed "D. Haig, Colonel." Later Haig and Smuts stood shoulder to shoulder in a common cause and helped to save civilization.

Smuts is more many-sided than any other contemporary Prime Minister and for that matter, those that have gone into retirement, that is, men like Asquith in England and Clemenceau in France. Among world statesmen the only mind comparable to his is that of Woodrow Wilson. They have in common a high intellectuality. But Wilson in his prime lacked the hard sense and the accurate knowledge of men and practical affairs which are among the chief Smuts assets.

Speaking of Premiers brings me to the inevitable comparison between Smuts and Lloyd George. I have seen them both in varying circumstances, both in public and in private and can attempt some appraisal.

Each has been, and remains, a pillar of Empire. Each has emulated the Admirable Crichton in the variety and multiplicity of public posts. Lloyd George has held five Cabinet posts in England and Smuts has duplicated the record in South Africa. Each man is an inspired orator who owes much of his advancement to eloquent tongue. Their platform manner is totally different. Lloyd George is fascinatingly magnetic in and out of the spotlight while Smuts is



more coldly logical. When you hear Lloyd George you are stirred and even exalted by his golden imagery. The sound of his voice falls on the ear like music. You admire the daring of his utterance but you do not always remember everything he says.

With Smuts you listen and you remember. He has no tricks of the spellbinder's trade. He is forceful, convincing, persuasive, and what is more important, has the quality of permanency. Long after you have left his presence the words remain in your memory. If I had a case in court I would like to have Smuts try it. His specialty is pleading.

Lloyd George seldom reads a book. The only volumes I ever heard him say that he had read were Mr. Dooley and a collection of the Speeches of Abraham Lincoln. He has books read for him and with a Roosevelt faculty for assimilation, gives you the impression that he has spent his life in a library.

Smuts is one of the best-read men I have met. He seems to know something about everything. He ranges from Joseph Conrad to Kant, from Booker Washington to Tolstoi. History, fiction, travel, biography, have all come within his ken. I told him I proposed to go from Capetown to the Congo and possibly to Angola. His face lighted up. "Ah, yes," he said, "I have read all about those countries. I can see them before me in my mind's eye."

One night at dinner at *Groote Schuur* we had sweet potatoes. He asked me if they were common in America. I replied that down in Kentucky where I was born one of the favorite negro dishes was "'possum and sweet potatoes." He took me up at once saying:

"Oh, yes, I have read about 'possum pie' in Joel Chandler Harris' books." Then he proceeded to tell me what a great institution "Br'er Rabbit" was.

We touched on German poetry and I quoted two lines that I considered beautiful. When I remarked that I thought Heine was the author he corrected me by proving that they were written by Schiller.

Lloyd George could never carry on a conversation like this for the simple reason that he lacks familiarity with literature. He feels perhaps like the late Charles

Frohman who, on being asked if he read the dramatic papers said: "Why should I read about the theatre. I *make* dramatic history."

I asked Smuts what he was reading at the moment. He looked at me with some astonishment and answered, "Nothing except public documents. It's a good thing that I was able to do some reading before I became Prime Minister. I certainly have no time now."

Take the matter of languages. Lloyd George has always professed that he did not know French, and on all his trips to France both during and since the war he carried a staff of interpreters. He understands a good deal more French than he professes. His widely proclaimed ignorance of the language has stood him in good stead because it has enabled him to hear a great many things that were not intended for his ears. It is part of his political astuteness. Smuts is an accomplished linguist. It has been said of him that he "can be silent in more languages than any man in South Africa."

Lloyd George is a clever politician with occasional inspired moments but he is not exactly a statesman as Disraeli and Gladstone were. Smuts has the unusual combination of statesmanship with a knowledge of every wrinkle in the political game.

Take his experience at the Paris Peace Conference. He was distinguished not so much for what he did, (and that was considerable), but for what he opposed. No man was better qualified to voice the sentiment of the "small nation." Born of proud and liberty-loving people,—an infant among the giants—he was attuned to every aspiration of an hour that realized many a one-time forlorn national hope. Yet his statesmanship tempered sentimental impulse.

In that gallery of treaty-makers Lloyd George, Clemenceau, and Wilson focussed the "fierce light" that beat about the proceedings. But it was Smuts, in the shadow, who contributed largely to the mental power-plant that drove the work. Lloyd George had to consider the chapter he wrote in the great instrument as something in the nature of a campaign document to be employed at home, while Clemenceau guided a steamroller that stooped for nothing but France. The more or less unsophisticated idealism of Woodrow Wilson foundered on these

obstacles.

Smuts, with his uncanny sense of prophecy, foretold the economic consequences of the peace. Looking ahead he visualized a surly and unrepentant Germany, unwilling to pay the price of folly; a bitter and disappointed Austria gasping for economic breath; an aroused and indignant Italy raging with revolt—all the chaos that spells "peace" today. He saw the Treaty as a new declaration of war instead of an antidote for discord. His judgment, sadly enough, has been confirmed. A deranged universe shot through with reaction and confusion, and with half a dozen wars sputtering on the horizon, is the answer. The sob and surge of tempest-born nations in the making are lost in the din of older ones threatened with decay and disintegration. It is not a pleasing spectacle.

Smuts signed the Treaty but, as most people know, he filed a memorandum of protest and explanation. He believed the terms uneconomic and therefore unsound, but it was worth taking a chance on interpretation, a desperate venture perhaps, but anything to stop the blare and bicker of the council table and start the work of reconstruction.

At Capetown he told me that for days he wrestled with the problem "to sign or not to sign." Finally, on the day before the Day of Days in the Hall of Mirrors at Versailles, he took a long solitary walk in the Champs Elysee, loveliest of Paris parades. Returning to his hotel he said to his secretary, Captain E. F. C. Lane, "I have decided to sign, but I will tell the reason why." He immediately sat down at his desk and in a handwriting noted for its illegibility wrote the famous memorandum.

### III

What of the personal side of Smuts? While he is intensely human it is difficult to connect anecdote with him. I heard one at Capetown, however, that I do not think has seen the light of print. It reveals his methods, too.

When the Germans ran amuck in 1914 Smuts was Minister of Defense of the Union of South Africa. The Nationalists immediately began to make life uncomfortable for him. Balked in their attempt to keep the Union out of the struggle they took another tack. After the Botha campaign in German South-West Africa was well under way, a member of the Opposition asked the Minister of Defense the following question in Parliament: "How much has South Africa paid for horses in the field and the Nationalists sought to make some political capital out of an expenditure that they remounts?" The Union forces employed thousands of called "waste."

Smuts sent over to Army Headquarters to get the figures. He was told that it would take twenty clerks at least four weeks to compile the data.

"Never mind," was his laconic comment. The next day happened to be Question Day in the House. As soon as the query about the remount charge came up Smuts calmly rose in his seat and replied:

"It was exactly eight million one hundred and sixty-nine thousand pounds, ten shillings and sixpence." He then sat down without any further remark.

#### GENERAL J. C. SMUTS

#### **GENERAL J. C. SMUTS —*Photograph Copyright by Harris & Ewing***

When one of his colleagues asked him where he got this information he said:

"I dug it out of my own mind. It will take the Nationalists a month to figure it out and by that time they will have forgotten all about it." And it was forgotten.

Smuts not only has a keen sense of humor but is swift on the retort. While speaking at a party rally in his district not many years after the Boer War he was

continually interrupted by an ex-soldier. He stopped his speech and asked the man to state his grievance. The heckler said:

"General de la Rey guaranteed the men fighting under him a living."

Quick as a flash Smuts replied:

"Nonsense. What he guaranteed you was certain death."

Like many men conspicuous in public life Smuts gets up early and has polished off a good day's work before the average business man has settled down to his job. There is a big difference between his methods of work and those of Lloyd George. The British Prime Minister only goes to the House of Commons when he has to make a speech or when some important question is up for discussion. Smuts attends practically every session of Parliament, at least he did while I was in Capetown.

One reason was that on account of the extraordinary position in which he found himself, any moment might have produced a division carrying with it disastrous results for the Government. The crisis demanded that he remain literally on the job all the time. He left little to his lieutenants. Confident of his ability in debate he was always willing to risk a showdown but he had to be there when it came.

I watched him as he sat in the House. He occupied a front bench directly opposite Hertzog and where he could look his arch enemy squarely in the eyes all the time. I have seen him sit like a Sphinx for an hour without apparently moving a muscle. He has cultivated that rarest of arts which is to be a good listener. He is one of the great concentrators. In this genius, for it is little less, lies one of the secrets of his success. During a lull in legislative proceedings he has a habit of taking a solitary walk out in the lobby. More than once I saw him pacing up and down, always with an ear cocked toward the Assembly Room so he could hear what was going on and rush to the rescue if necessary.

In the afternoon he would sometimes go into the members' smoking room and drink a cup of coffee, the popular drink in South Africa. In the old Boer household the coffee pot is constantly boiling. With a cup of coffee and a piece of "biltong" inside him a Boer could fight or trek all day. Coffee bears the same

relation to the South African that tea does to the Englishman, save that it is consumed in much larger quantities. I might add that Smuts neither drinks liquor of any kind nor smokes, and he eats sparingly. He admits that his one dissipation is farming.

This comes naturally because he was born fifty years ago on a farm in what is known as the Western Province in the Karoo country. He did his share of the chores about the place until it was time for him to go to school. His father and his grandfather were farmers. Inbred in him, as in most Boers, is an ardent love of country life and especially an affection for the mountains. On more than one occasion he has climbed to the top of Table Mountain, which is no inconsiderable feat.

There are two ways of appraising Smuts. One is to see him in action as I did at Capetown, while Parliament was in session. The other is to get him with the background of his farm at Irene, a little way station about ten miles from Pretoria. Here, in a rambling one-story house surrounded by orchards, pastures, and gardens, he lives the simple life. In the western part of the Transvaal he owns a real farm. He showed his shrewdness in the acquisition of this property because he bought it at a time when the region was dubbed a "desert." Now it is a garden spot.

Irene has various distinct advantages. For one thing it is his permanent home. *Groote Schuur* is the property of the Government and he owes his tenancy of it entirely to the fortunes of politics. At Irene is planted his hearthstone and around it is mobilized his considerable family. There are six little Smutses. Smuts married the sweetheart of his youth who is a rarely congenial helpmate. It was once said of her that she "went about the house with a baby under one arm and a Greek dictionary under the other."

Most people do not realize that the Union of South Africa has two capitals. Capetown with the House of Parliament is the center of legislation, while Pretoria, the ancient Kruger stronghold, with its magnificent new Union buildings atop a commanding eminence, is the fountain-head of administration. With Irene only ten miles away it is easy for Smuts to live with his family after the adjournment of Parliament, and go in to his office at Pretoria every day.

I have already given you a hint of the Smuts personal appearance. Let us now take a good look at him. His forehead is lofty, his nose arched, his mouth large. You know that his blonde beard veils a strong jaw. The eyes are reminiscent of those marvelous orbs of Marshal Foch only they are blue, haunting and at times inexorable. Yet they can light up with humor and glow with friendliness.

Smuts is essentially an out-of-doors person and his body is wiry and rangy. He has the stride of a man seasoned to the long march and who is equally at home in the saddle. He speaks with vigour and at times not without emotion. The Boer is not a particularly demonstrative person and Smuts has some of the racial reserve. His personality betokens potential strength,—a suggestion of the unplumbed reserve that keeps people guessing. This applies to his mental as well as his physical capacity. Frankly cordial, he resents familiarity. You would never think of slapping him on the shoulder and saying, "Hello, Jan." More than one blithe and buoyant person has been frozen into respectful silence in such a foolhardy undertaking.

His middle name is Christian and it does not belie a strong phase of his character. Without carrying his religious convictions on his coat-sleeve, he has nevertheless a fine spiritual strain in his make-up. He is an all-round dependable person, with an adaptability to environment that is little short of amazing.

## IV

Now let us turn to another and less conspicuous South African whose point of view, imperial, personal and patriotic, is the exact opposite of that of Smuts. Throughout this chapter has run the strain of Hertzog, first the Boer General fighting gallantly in the field with Smuts as youthful comrade; then the member of the Botha Cabinet; later the bitter insurgent, and now the implacable foe of the order that he helped to establish. What manner of man is he and what has he to say?

I talked to him one afternoon when he left the floor leadership to his chief lieutenant, a son of the late President Steyn of the Orange Free State. Like his father, who called himself "President" to the end of his life although his little republic had slipped away from him, he has never really yielded to English rule.

We adjourned to the smoking room where we had the inevitable cup of South African coffee. I was prepared to find a fanatic and fire-eater. Instead I faced a thin, undersized man who looked anything but a general and statesman. Put him against the background of a small New England town and you would take him for an American country lawyer. He resembles the student more than the soldier and, like many Boers, speaks English with a British accent. Nor is he without force. No man can play the rôle that he has played in South Africa those past twenty-five years without having substance in him.

When I asked him to state his case he said:

"The republican idea is as old as South Africa. There was a republic before the British arrived. The idea came from the American Revolution and the inspiration was Washington. The Great Trek of 1836 was a protest very much like the one we are making today.

"President Wilson articulated the Boer feeling with his gospel of self-determination. He also voiced the aspirations of Ireland, India and Egypt. It is a great world idea—a deep moral conviction of mankind, this right of the



individual state, as of the individual for freedom.

"Never again will Transvaal and Orange Free State history be repeated. No matter how a nation covets another—and I refer to British covetousness,—if the nation coveted is able to govern itself it cannot and must not be assimilated. It is one result of the Great War."

"What is the Nationalist ideal?" I asked.

"It is the right to self-rule," replied Hertzog. "But there must be no conflict if it can be avoided. It must prevail by reason and education. At the present time I admit that the majority of South Africans do not want republicanism. The Nationalist mission today is to keep the torch lighted."

"How does this idea fit into the spirit of the League of Nations?" I queried.

"It fits in perfectly," was the response. "We Nationalists favor the League as outlined by Wilson. But I fear that it will develop into a capitalistic, imperialistic empire dominating the world instead of a league of nations."

I asked Hertzog how he reconciled acquiescence to Union to the present Nationalist revolt. The answer was:

"The Nationalists supported the Government because of their attachment to General Botha. Deep down in his heart Botha wanted to be free and independent."

"How about Ireland?" I demanded.

The General smiled as he responded: "Our position is different. It does not require dynamite, but education. With us it is a simple matter of the will of the people. I do not think that conditions in South Africa will ever reach the state at which they have arrived in Ireland."

Commenting on the Union and its relations to the British Empire Hertzog continued:

"The Union is not a failure but we could be better governed. The thing to which we take exception is that the British Government, through our connection with it,

is in a position by which it gets an undue advantage directly and indirectly to influence legislation. For example, we were not asked to conquer German South-West Africa; it was a command.

"Very much against the feeling of the old population, that is the Dutch element, we were led into participation in the war. Today this old population feels as strongly as ever against South Africa being involved in European politics. It feels that all this Empire movement only leads in that direction and involves us in world conflicts.

"One of the strongest reasons in favor of separation and the setting up of a South African republic is to get solidarity between the English and the Dutch. I cannot help feeling that our interests are being constantly subordinated to those of Great Britain. My firm conviction is that the freer we are, and the more independent of Great Britain we become, the more we shall favor a close co-operation with her. We do not dislike the British as such but we do object to the Britisher coming out as a subject of Great Britain with a superior manner and looking upon the Dutchman as a dependent or a subordinate. There will be a conflict so long as they do not recognize our heroes, traditions and history. In short, we are determined to have a republic of South Africa and England must recognize it. To oppose it is fatal."

"Will you fight for it?" I asked.

"I hardly think that it will come to force," said the General. "It must prevail by reason and education. It may not come in one year but it will come before many years."

Hertzog's feeling is not shared, as he intimated, by the majority of South Africans and this includes many Dutchmen. An illuminating analysis of the Nationalist point of view was made for me by Sir Thomas Smartt, the leader of the Unionist Party and a virile force in South African politics. He brought the situation strikingly home to America when he said:

"The whole Nationalist movement is founded on race. Like the Old Guard, the Boer may die but it is hard for him to surrender. His heart still rankles with the outcome of the Boer War. Would the American South have responded to an

appeal to arms in the common cause made by the North in 1876? Probably not. Before your Civil War the South only had individual states. The Boers, on the other hand, had republics with completely organized and independent governments. This is why it will take a long time before complete assimilation is accomplished. A second Boer War is unthinkable."

We can now return to Smuts and find out just how he achieved the miracle by which he not only retained the Premiership but spiked the guns of the opposition.

When I left Capetown he was in a corner. The Nationalist majority not only made his position precarious but menaced the integrity of Union, and through Union, the whole Empire. For five months,—the whole session of Parliament,—he held his ground. Every night when he went to bed at *Groote Schuur* he did not know what disaster the morrow would bring forth. It was a constant juggle with conflicting interests, ambitions and prejudices. He was like a lion with a pack snapping on all sides.

Now you can see why he sat in that front seat in the House morning, noon and night. He placated the Labourites, harmonized the Unionists, and flung down the gauntlet openly to the Nationalists. Throughout that historic session, and although much legislation was accomplished, he did not permit the consummation of a single decisive division. It was a triumph of parliamentary leadership.

When the session closed in July,—it is then mid-winter in Africa,—he was still up against it. The Nationalist majority was a phantom that dogged his official life and political fortunes. The problem now was to take out sane insurance against a repetition of the trial and uncertainty which he had undergone.

Fate in the shape of the Nationalist Party played into his hands. Under the stimulation of the Nationalists a *Vereeniging* Congress was called at Bloenfontein late last September. The Dutch word *Vereeniging* means "reunion." Hertzog and Tielman Roos, the co-leader of the secessionists, believed that by bringing the leading representatives of the two leading parties together the appeal to racial pride might carry the day. Smuts did not attend but various members of his Cabinet did.

Reunion did anything but reunite. The differences on the republican issues being fundamental were likewise irreconcilable. The Nationalists stood pat on secession while the South African Party remained loyal to its principles of Imperial unity. The meeting ended in a deadlock.

Smuts, a field marshal of politics, at once saw that the hour of deliverance from his dilemma had arrived. The Nationalists had declared themselves unalterably for separation. He converted their battle-cry into coin for himself. He seized the moment to issue a call for a new Moderate Party that would represent a fusion of the South Africanists and the Unionists. In one of his finest documents he made a plea for the consolidation of these constructive elements.

In it he said:

Now that the Nationalist Party is firmly resolved to continue its propaganda of fanning the fires of secession and of driving the European races apart from each other and ultimately into conflict with each other, the moderate elements of our population have no other alternative but to draw closer to one another in order to fight that policy.

A new appeal must, therefore, be made to all right-minded South Africans, irrespective of party or race, to join the new Party, which will be strong enough to safeguard the permanent interests of the Union against the disruptive and destructive policy of the Nationalists. Such a central political party will not only continue our great work of the past, but is destined to play a weighty rôle in the future peaceable development of South Africa.

The end of October witnessed the ratification of this proposal by the Unionists. The action at once consolidated the Premier's position. I doubt if in all political history you can uncover a series of events more paradoxical or perplexing or find a solution arrived at with greater skill and strategy. It was a revelation of Smuts with his ripe statesmanship put to the test, and not found wanting.

At the election held four months later Smuts scored a brilliant triumph. The South African Party increased its representation by eighteen seats, while the Nationalists lost heavily. The Labour Party was almost lost in the wreckage. The net result was that the Premier obtained a working majority of twenty-two,

which guarantees a stable and loyal Government for at least five years.

It only remains to speculate on what the future holds for this remarkable man. South Africa has a tragic habit of prematurely destroying its big men. Rhodes was broken on the wheel at forty-nine, and Botha succumbed in the prime of life. Will Smuts share the same fate?

No one need be told in the face of the Smuts performance that he is a world asset. The question is, how far will he go? A Cabinet Minister at twenty-eight, a General at thirty, a factor in international affairs before he was well into the forties, he unites those rare elements of greatness which seem to be so sparsely apportioned these disturbing days. That he will reconstruct South Africa there is no doubt. What larger responsibilities may devolve upon him can only be guessed.

Just before I sailed from England I talked with a high-placed British official. He is in the councils of Empire and he knows Smuts and South Africa. I asked him to indicate what in his opinion would be the next great milepost of Smuts' progress. He replied:

"The destiny of Smuts is interwoven with the destiny of the whole British Empire. The Great War bound the Colonies together with bonds of blood. Out of this common peril and sacrifice has been knit a closer Imperial kinship. During the war we had an Imperial War Cabinet composed of overseas Premiers, which sat in London. Its logical successor will be a United British Empire, federated in policy but not in administration. Smuts will be the Prime Minister of these United States of Great Britain."

It is the high goal of a high career.

THE HEAVY LINE INDICATES MR. MARCOSSON'S ROUTE IN AFRICA

**THE HEAVY LINE INDICATES MR. MARCOSSON'S ROUTE IN  
AFRICA**



## **CHAPTER II—"CAPE-TO-CAIRO"**

## I

When you take the train for the North at Capetown you start on the first lap of what is in many respects the most picturesque journey in the world. Other railways tunnel mighty mountains, cross seething rivers, traverse scorching deserts, and invade the clouds, but none has so romantic an interest or is bound up with such adventure and imagination as this. The reason is that at Capetown begins the southern end of the famous seven-thousand-mile Cape-to-Cairo Route, one of the greatest dreams of England's prince of practical dreamers, Cecil Rhodes. Today, after thirty years of conflict with grudging Governments, the project is practically an accomplished fact.

Woven into its fabric is the story of a German conspiracy that was as definite a cause of the Great War as the Balkan mess or any other phase of Teutonic international meddling. Along its highway the American mining engineer has registered a little known evidence of his achievement abroad. The route taps civilization and crosses the last frontiers of progress. The South African end discloses an illuminating example of profitable nationalization. Over it still broods the personality of the man who conceived it and who left his impress and his name on an empire. Attention has been directed anew to the enterprise from the fact that shortly before I reached Africa two aviators flew from Cairo to the Cape and their actual flying time was exactly sixty-eight hours.

The unbroken iron spine that was to link North and South Africa and which Rhodes beheld in his vision of the future, will probably not be built for some years. Traffic in Central Africa at the moment does not justify it. Besides, the navigable rivers in the Belgian Congo, Egypt, and the Soudan lend themselves to the rail and water route which, with one short overland gap, now enables you to travel the whole way from Cape to Cairo.

The very inception of the Cape-to-Cairo project gives you a glimpse of the working of the Rhodes mind. He left the carrying out of details to subordinates. When he looked at the map of Africa,—and he was forever studying maps,—and

ran that historic line through it from end to end and said, "It must be all red," he took no cognizance of the extraordinary difficulties that lay in the way. He saw, but he did not heed, the rainbow of many national flags that spanned the continent. A little thing like millions of square miles of jungle, successions of great lakes, or wild and primitive regions peopled with cannibals, meant nothing. Money and energy were to him merely means to an end.

When General "Chinese" Gordon, for example, told him that he had refused a roomful of silver for his services in exterminating the Mongolian bandits Rhodes looked at him in surprise and said: "Why didn't you take it? What is the earthly use of having ideas if you haven't the money with which to carry them out?" Here you have the keynote of the whole Rhodes business policy. A project had to be carried through regardless of expense. It applied to the Cape-to-Cairo dream just as it applied to every other enterprise with which he was associated.

The all-rail route would cost billions upon billions, although now that German prestige in Africa is ended it would not be a physical and political impossibility. A modification of the original plan into a combination rail and river scheme permits the consummation of the vision of thirty years ago. The southern end is all-rail mainly because the Union of South Africa and Rhodesia are civilized and prosperous countries. I made the entire journey by train from Capetown to the rail-head at Bukama in the Belgian Congo, a distance of 2,700 miles, the longest continuous link in the whole scheme. This trip can be made, if desirable, in a through car in about nine days.

I then continued northward, down the Lualaba River,—Livingstone thought it was the Nile—then by rail, and again on the Lualaba through the posts of Kongolo, Kindu and Ponthierville to Stanleyville on the Congo River. This is the second stage of the Cape-to-Cairo Route and knocks off an additional 890 miles and another twelve days. Here I left the highway to Egypt and went down the Congo and my actual contact with the famous line ended. I could have gone on, however, and reached Cairo, with luck, in less than eight weeks.

From Stanleyville you go to Mahagi, which is on the border between the Congo and Uganda. This is the only overland gap in the whole route. It covers roughly,—and the name is no misnomer I am told,—680 miles through the jungle and



skirts the principal Congo gold fields. A road has been built and motor cars are available. The railway route from Stanleyville to Mahagi, which will link the Congo and the Nile, is surveyed and would have been finished by this time but for the outbreak of the Great War. The Belgian Minister of the Colonies, with whom I travelled in the Congo assured me that his Government would commence the construction within the next two years, thus enabling the traveller to forego any hiking on the long journey.

Mahagi is on the western side of Lake Albert and is destined to be the lake terminus of the projected Congo-Nile Railway which will be an extension of the Soudan Railways. Here you begin the journey that enlists both railways and steamers and which gives practically a straight ahead itinerary to Cairo. You journey on the Nile by way of Rejaf, Kodok,—(the Fashoda that was)—to Kosti, where you reach the southern rail-head of the Soudan Railways. Thence it is comparatively easy, as most travellers know, to push on through Khartum, Berber, Wady Halfa and Assuan to the Egyptian capital. The distance from Mahagi to Cairo is something like 2,700 miles while the total mileage from Capetown to Cairo, along the line that I have indicated, is 7,000 miles.

This, in brief, is the way you make the trip that Rhodes dreamed about, but not the way he planned it. There are various suggestions for alternate routes after you reach Bukama or, to be more exact, after you start down the first stage of the journey on the Lualaba. At Kabalo, where I stopped, a railroad runs eastward from the river to Albertville, on the shores of Lake Tanganyika. Rhodes wanted to use the 400-mile waterway that this body of water provides to connect the railway that came down from the North with the line that begins at the Cape. The idea was to employ train ferries. King Leopold of Belgium granted Rhodes the right to do this but Germany frustrated the scheme by refusing to recognize the cession of the strip of Congo territory between Lake Tanganyika and Lake Kivu, which was an essential link.

This incident is one evidence of the many attempts that the Germans made to block the Cape-to-Cairo project. Germany knew that if Rhodes, and through Rhodes the British Empire, could establish through communication under the British flag, from one end of Africa to the other, it would put a crimp into the

Teutonic scheme to dominate the whole continent. She went to every extreme to interfere with its advance.

This German opposition provided a reason why the consummation of the project was so long delayed. Another was, that except for the explorer and the big game hunter, there was no particular provocation for moving about in certain portions of Central Africa until recently. But Germany only afforded one obstacle. The British Government, after the fashion of governments, turned a cold shoulder to the enterprise. History was only repeating itself. If Disraeli had consulted his colleagues England would never have acquired the Suez Canal. So it goes.

Most of the Rhodesian links of the Cape-to-Cairo Route were built by Rhodes and the British South Africa Company, while the line from Broken Hill to the Congo border was due entirely to the courage and tenacity of Robert Williams, who is now constructing the so-called Benguella Railway from Lobito Bay in Portuguese Angola to Bukama. It will be a feeder to the Cape-to-Cairo road and constitute a sort of back door to Egypt. It will also provide a shorter outlet to Europe for the copper in the Katanga district of the Congo.

When you see equatorial Africa and more especially that part which lies between the rail-head at Bukama and Mahagi, you understand why the all-rail route is not profitable at the moment. It is for the most part an uncultivated area principally jungle, with scattered white settlements and hordes of untrained natives. The war set back the development of the Congo many years. Now that the world is beginning to understand the possibilities of Central Africa for palm oil, cotton, rubber, and coffee, the traffic to justify the connecting railways will eventually come.

## II

Shortly after my return from Africa I was talking with a well-known American business man who, after making the usual inquiries about lions, cannibals and hair-breadth escapes, asked: "Is it dangerous to go about in South Africa?" When I assured him that both my pocket-book and I were safer there than on Broadway in New York or State Street in Chicago, he was surprised. Yet his question is typical of a widespread ignorance about all Africa and even its most developed area.

What people generally do not understand is that the lower part of that one-time Dark Continent is one of the most prosperous regions in the world, where the home currency is at a premium instead of a discount; where the high cost of living remains a stranger and where you get little suggestion of the commercial rack and ruin that are disturbing the rest of the universe. While the war-ravaged nations and their neighbors are feeling their dubious way towards economic reconstruction, the Union of South Africa is on the wave of a striking expansion. It affords an impressive contrast to the demoralized productivity of Europe and for that matter the United States.

South Africa presents many economic features of distinct and unique interest. A glance at its steam transportation discloses rich material. Fundamentally the railroads of any country are the real measures of its progress. In Africa particularly they are the mileposts of civilization. In 1876 there were only 400 miles on the whole continent. Today there are over 30,000 miles. Of this network of rails exactly 11,478 miles are in the Union of South Africa and they comprise the second largest mileage in the world under one management.

More than this, they are Government owned and operated. Despite this usual handicap they pay. No particular love of Government control,—which is invariably an invitation for political influence to do its worst,—animated the development of these railways. As in Australia, where private capital refused to build, it was a case of necessity. In South Africa there was practically no private

enterprise to sidestep the obligation that the need of adequate transportation imposed. The country was new, hostile savages still swarmed the frontiers, and the white man had to battle with Zulu and Kaffir for every area he opened. In the absence of navigable rivers—there are none in the Union—the steel rail had to do the pioneering. Besides, the Boers had a strong prejudice against the railroads and regarded the iron horse as a menace to their isolation.

The first steam road on the continent of Africa was constructed by private enterprise from the suburb of Durban in Natal into the town. It was a mile and three-quarters in length and was opened for traffic in 1860. Railway construction in the Cape Colony began about the same time. The Government ownership of the lines was inaugurated in 1873 and it has continued without interruption ever since. The real epoch of railway building in South Africa started with the great mineral discoveries. First came the uncovering of diamonds along the Orange River and the opening up of the Kimberley region, which added nearly 2,000 miles of railway. With the finding of gold in the Rand on what became the site of Johannesburg, another 1,500 miles were added.

Since most nationalized railways do not pay it is interesting to take a look at the African balance sheet. Almost without exception the South African railways have been operated at a considerable net profit. These profits some years have been as high as £2,590,917. During the war, when there was a natural slump in traffic and when all soldiers and Government supplies were carried free of cost, they aggregated in 1915, for instance, £749,125.

One fiscal feature of these South African railroads is worth emphasizing. Under the act of Union "all profits, after providing for interest, depreciation and betterment, shall be utilized in the reduction of tariffs, due regard being had to the agricultural and industrial development within the Union and the promotion by means of cheap transport of the settlement of an agricultural population in the inland portions of the Union." The result is that the rates on agricultural products, low-grade ores, and certain raw materials are possibly the lowest in the world. In other countries rates had to be increased during the war but in South Africa no change was made, so as not to interfere with the agricultural, mineral and industrial development of the country.

Nor is the Union behind in up-to-date transportation. A big program for electrification has been blocked out and a section is under conversion. Some of the power generated will be sold to the small manufacturer and thus production will be increased.

Stimulating the railway system of South Africa is a single personality which resembles the self-made American wizard of transportation more than any other Britisher that I have met with the possible exception of Sir Eric Geddes, at present Minister of Transport of Great Britain and who left his impress on England's conduct of the war. He is Sir William W. Hoy, whose official title is General Manager of the South African Railways and Ports. Big, vigorous, and forward-looking, he sits in a small office in the Railway Station at Capetown, with his finger literally on the pulse of nearly 12,000 miles of traffic. During the war Walker D. Hines, as Director General of the American Railways, was steward of a vaster network of rails but his job was an emergency one and terminated when that emergency subsided. Sir William Hoy, on the other hand, is set to a task which is not equalled in extent, scope or responsibility by any other similar official.

Like James J. Hill and Daniel Willard he rose from the ranks. At Capetown he told me of his great admiration for American railways and their influence in the system he dominates. Among other things he said: "We are taking our whole cue for electrification from the railroads of your country and more especially the admirable precedent established by the Chicago, Milwaukee & St. Paul Railway. I believe firmly in wide electrification of present-day steam transport. The great practical advantages are more uniform speed and the elimination of stops to take water. It also affords improved acceleration, greater reliability as to timing, especially on heavy grades, and stricter adherence to schedule. There are enormous advantages to single lines like ours in South Africa. Likewise, crossings and train movements can be arranged with greater accuracy, thereby reducing delays. Perhaps the greatest saving is in haulage, that is, in the employment of the heavy electric locomotive. It all tends toward a denser traffic.

"Behind this whole process of electrification lies the need, created by the Great War, for coal conservation and for a motive power that will speed up production

of all kinds. We have abundant coal in the Union of South Africa and by consuming less of it on our railways we will be in a stronger position to export it and thus strengthen our international position and keep the value of our money up."

Since Sir William has touched upon the coal supply we at once get a link,—and a typical one—with the ramified resource of the Union of South Africa. No product, not even those precious stones that lie in the bosom of Kimberley, or the glittering golden ore imbedded in the Rand, has a larger political or economic significance just now. Nor does any commodity figure quite so prominently in the march of world events.

In peace, as in war, coal spells life and power. It was the cudgel that the one-time proud and arrogant Germany held menacingly over the head of the unhappy neutral, and extorted special privilege. At the moment I write, coal is the storm center of controversy that ranges from the Ruhr Valley of Germany to the Welsh fields of Britain and affects the destinies of statesmen and of countries. We are not without fuel troubles, as our empty bins indicate. The nation, therefore, with cheap and abundant coal has a bargaining asset that insures industrial peace at home and trade prestige abroad.

South Africa not only has a low-priced and ample coal supply but it is in a convenient point for distribution to the whole Southern hemisphere,—in fact Europe and other sections. On past production the Union ranked only eleventh in a list of coal-producing countries, the output being about 8,000,000 tons a year before the war and something over 10,000,000 tons in 1919. This output, however, is no guide to the magnitude of its fields. Until comparatively recent times they have been little exploited, not because of inferiority but because of the restricted output prior to the new movement to develop a bunker and export trade. Without an adequate geological survey the investigations made during the last twelve months indicate a potential supply of over 60,000,000 tons and immense areas have not been touched at all.

The war changed the whole coal situation. Labour conflicts have reduced the British output; a huge part of Germany's supply must go to France as an indemnity, while our own fields are sadly under-worked, for a variety of causes.

All these conditions operate in favor of the South African field, which is becoming increasingly important as a source of supply.

Despite her advantage the prices remain astonishingly low, when you compare them with those prevailing elsewhere. English coal, which in 1912 cost about nine shillings a ton at pithead, costs considerably more than thirty shillings today. The average pithead price of South African coal in 1915 was five shillings twopence a ton and at the time of my visit to South Africa in 1919 was still under seven shillings a ton. Capetown and Durban, the two principal harbours of the Union, are coaling stations of Empire importance. There you can see the flags of a dozen nations flying from ships that have put in for fuel. Thanks to the war these ports are in the center of the world's great trade routes and thus, geographically and economically their position is unique for bunkering and for export.

The price of bunker coal is a key to the increased overhead cost of world trade, as a result of the war. The Belgian boat on which I travelled from the shores of the Congo to Antwerp coaled at Teneriffe, where the price per ton was seven pounds. It is interesting to compare this with the bunker price at Capetown of a little more than two pounds per ton, or at Durban where the rate is one pound ten shillings a ton. In the face of these figures you can readily see what an economic advantage is accruing to the Union of South Africa with reference to the whole vexing question of coal supply.

We can now go into the larger matter of South Africa's business situation in the light of peace and world reconstruction. I have already shown how the war, and the social and industrial upheaval that followed in its wake have enlarged and fortified the coal situation in the Union. Practically all other interests are similarly affected. The outstanding factor in the prosperity of the Union has been the development of war-born self-sufficiency. I used to think during the conflict that shook the world, that this gospel of self-containment would be one of the compensations that Britain would gain for the years of blood and slaughter. So far as Britain is concerned this hope has not been realized. When I was last in England huge quantities of German dyes were being dumped on her shores to the loss and dismay of a new coal-tar industry that had been developed during

the war. German wares like toys and novelties were now pouring in. And yet England wondered why her exchange was down!

In South Africa the situation has been entirely different. She alone of all the British dominions is asserting an almost pugnacious self-sufficiency. Cut off from outside supplies for over four years by the relentless submarine warfare, and the additional fact that nearly all the ships to and from the Cape had to carry war supplies or essential products, she was forced to develop her internal resources. The consequence is an expansion of agriculture, industry and manufactures. Instead of being as she was often called, "a country of samples," she has become a domain of active production, as is attested by an industrial output valued at £62,000,000 in 1918. Before the war the British and American manufacturer,—and there is a considerable market for American goods in the Cape Colony,—could undersell the South African article. That condition is changed and the home-made article produced with much cheaper labour than obtains either in Europe or the United States, has the field.

Let me emphasize another striking fact in connection with this South African prosperity. During the war I had occasion to observe at first-hand the economic conditions in every neutral country in Europe. I was deeply impressed with the prosperity of Sweden, Spain and Switzerland, and to a lesser extent Holland, who made hay while their neighbors reaped the tares of war. Japan did likewise. These nations were largely profiteers who capitalized a colossal misfortune. They got much of the benefit and little of the horror of the upheaval.

Not so with South Africa. She played an active part in the war and at the same time brought about a legitimate expansion of her resources. One point in her favor is that while she sent tens of thousands of her sons to fight, her own territory escaped the scar and ravage of battle. All the fighting in Africa, so far as the Union was concerned, was in German South-West Africa and German East Africa. After my years in tempest-tossed Europe it was a pleasant change to catch the buoyant, confident, unwearied spirit of South Africa.

I have dwelt upon coal because it happens to be a significant economic asset. Coal is merely a phase of the South African resources. In 1919 the Union produced £35,000,000 in gold and £7,200,000 in diamonds. The total mining



production was, roughly, £50,000,000. This mining treasure is surpassed by the agricultural output, of which nearly one-third is exported. Land is the real measure of permanent wealth. The hoard of gold and diamonds in time becomes exhausted but the soil and its fruits go on forever.

The moment you touch South African agriculture you reach a real romance. Nowhere, not even in the winning of the American West by the Mormons, do you get a more dramatic spectacle of the triumph of the pioneer over combative conditions. The Mormons made the Utah desert bloom, and the Boers and their British colleagues wrested riches from the bare veldt. The Mormons fought Indians and wrestled with drought, while the Dutch in Africa and their English comrades battled with Kaffirs, Hottentots and Zulus and endured a no less grilling exposure to sun.

The crops are diversified. One of the staples of South Africa, for example, is the mealie, which is nothing more or less than our own American corn, but not quite so good. It provides the principal food of the natives and is eaten extensively by the European as well. On a dish of mealie porridge the Kaffir can keep the human machine going for twenty-four hours. Its prototype in the Congo is manice flour. In the Union nearly five million acres are under maize cultivation, which is exactly double the area in 1911. The value of the maize crop last year was approximately a million six hundred thousand pounds. Similar expansion has been the order in tobacco, wheat, fruit, sugar and half a dozen other products.

South Africa is a huge cattle country. The Boers have always excelled in the care of live stock and it is particularly due to their efforts that the Union today has more than seven million head of cattle, which represents another hundred per cent increase in less than ten years.

This matter of live stock leads me to one of the really picturesque industries of the Union which is the breeding of ostriches, "the birds with the golden feathers." Ask any man who raises these ungainly birds and he will tell you that with luck they are far better than the proverbial goose who laid the eighteen-karat eggs. The combination of F's—femininity, fashion and feathers—has been productive of many fortunes. The business is inclined to be fickle because it

depends upon the female temperament. The ostrich feather, however, is always more or less in fashion. With the outbreak of the war there was a tremendous slump in feathers, which was keenly felt in South Africa. With peace, the plume again became the thing and the drooping industry expanded with get-rich-quick proportions.

Port Elizabeth in the Cape Colony is the center of the ostrich feather trade. It is the only place in the world, I believe, devoted entirely to plumage. Not long before I arrived in South Africa £85,000 of feathers were disposed of there in three days. It is no uncommon thing for a pound of prime plumes to fetch £100. The demand has become so keen that 350,000 ostriches in the Union can scarcely keep pace with it. Before the war there were more than 800,000 of these birds but the depression in feathers coupled with drought, flood and other causes, thinned out the ranks. It takes three years for an ostrich chick to become a feather producer.

America has a considerable part in shaping the ostrich feather market. As with diamonds, we are the largest consumers. You can go to Port Elizabeth any day and find a group of Yankees industriously bidding against each other. On one occasion two New York buyers started a competition that led to an eleven weeks orgy that registered a total net sale of more than £100,000 of feathers. They are still talking about it down there.

South Africa has not only expanded in output but her area is also enlarged. The Peace Conference gave her the mandate for German South-West Africa, which was the first section of the vanished Teutonic Empire in Africa. It occupies more than a quarter of the whole area of the continent south of the Zambesi River. While the word "mandate" as construed by the peace sharks at Paris is supposed to mean the amiable stewardship of a country, it really amounts to nothing more or less than an actual and benevolent assimilation. This assimilation is very much like the paternal interest that holding companies in the good old Wall Street days felt for small and competitive concerns. In other words, it is safe to assume that henceforth German South-West Africa will be a permanent part of the Union.

The Colony's chief asset is comprised in the so-called German South-West

African Diamond Fields, which, with the Congo Diamond Fields, provide a considerable portion of the small stones now on the market. These two fields are alike in that they are alluvial which means that the diamonds are easily gathered by a washing process. No shafts are sunk. It is precisely like gold washing.

The German South-West mines have an American interest. In the reorganization following the conquest of German South-West Africa by the South African Army under General Botha the control had to become Anglo-Saxon. The Anglo-American Corporation which has extensive interests in South Africa and which is financed by London and New York capitalists, the latter including J. P. Morgan, Charles H. Sabin and W. B. Thompson, acquired these fields. It is an interesting commentary on post-war business readjustment to discover that there is still a German interest in these mines. It makes one wonder if the German will ever be eradicated from his world-wide contact with every point of commercial activity.

It is not surprising, therefore, that South Africa, in the light of all the facts that I have enumerated, should be prosperous. Take the money, always a test of national economic health. At Capetown I used the first golden sovereign that I had seen since early in 1914. This was not only because the Union happens to be a great gold-producing country but because she has an excess of exports over imports. Her money, despite its intimate relation with that of Great Britain, which has so sadly depreciated, is at a premium.

I got expensive evidence of this when I went to the bank at Capetown to get some cash. I had a letter of credit in terms of English pounds. To my surprise, I only got seventeen shillings and sixpence in African money for every English pound, which is nominally worth twenty shillings. Six months after I left, this penalty had increased to three shillings. To such an extent has the proud English pound sterling declined and in a British dominion too!

South Africa has put an embargo on the export of sovereigns. One reason was that during the first three years of the war a steady stream of these golden coins went surreptitiously to East India, where an unusually high premium for gold rules, especially in the bazaars. The goldsmiths find difficulty in getting material. The inevitable smuggling has resulted. In order to put a check on illicit

removal, all passengers now leaving the Union are searched before they board their ships. Nor is it a half-hearted procedure. It is as drastic as the war-time scrutiny on frontiers.

To sum up the whole business situation in the Union of South Africa is to find that the spirit of production,—the most sorely needed thing in the world today—is that of persistent advance. I dwell on this because it is in such sharp contrast with what is going on throughout the rest of a universe that staggers under sloth, and where the will-to-work has almost become a lost art. That older and more complacent order which is represented for example by France, Italy and England may well seek inspiration from this South African beehive.

### **III**

With this economic setting for the whole South African picture and a visualization of the Cape-to-Cairo Route let us start on the long journey that eventually took me to the heart of equatorial Africa. The immediate objectives, so far as this chapter is concerned, are Kimberley, Johannesburg and Pretoria, names and towns that are synonymous with thrilling chapters in the development of Africa and more especially the Union.

## CECIL RHODES

### **CECIL RHODES — *Photograph Copyright by W. & D. Downey***

You depart from Capetown in the morning and for hours you remain in the friendly company of the mountains. Table Mountain has hovered over you during the whole stay at the capital and you regretfully watch this "Gray Father" fade away in the distance. In the evening you pass through the Hex River country where the canyon is reminiscent of Colorado. Soon there bursts upon you the famous Karoo country, so familiar to all readers of South African novels and more especially those of Olive Schreiner, Richard Dehan and Sir Percy Fitz Patrick. It is an almost treeless plain dotted here and there with Boer homesteads. Their isolation suggests battle with element and soil. The country immediately around Capetown is a paradise of fruit and flowers, but as you travel northward the whole character changes. There is less green and more brown. After the Karoo comes the equally famous veldt, studded with the *kopjes* that became a part of the world vocabulary with the Boer War. Behind these low, long hills,—they suggest flat, rocky hummocks—the South African burghers made many a desperate stand against the English.

When you see the *kopjes* you can readily understand why it took so long to conquer the Boers. The Dutch knew every inch of the land and every man was a crack shot from boyhood. In these hills a handful could hold a small army at bay. All through this region you encounter places that have become part of history. You pass the ruins of Kitchener's blockhouses,—they really ended the Boer War—and almost before you realize it, you cross the Modder River, where British military prestige got a bloody repulse. Instinctively there come to mind the struggles of Cronje, DeWet, Joubert, and the rest of those Boer leaders who made this region a small Valhalla.

Late in the afternoon of the second day you suddenly get a "feel" of industry. The veldt becomes populated and before long huge smokestacks loom against the sky. You are at Kimberly. The average man associates this place with a famous siege in the Boer War and the equally famous diamond mines. But it is much more for it is packed with romance and reality. Here came Cecil Rhodes in his early manhood and pulled off the biggest business deal of his life; here you find the first milepost that the American mining engineer set up in the mineral

development of Africa: here is produced in greater quantities than in any other place in the world the glittering jewel that vanity and avarice set their heart upon.

Kimberley is one of the most unique of all the treasure cities. It is practically built on a diamond mine in the same way that Johannesburg rests upon a gold excavation. When the great diamond rush of the seventies overwhelmed the Vaal and Orange River regions, what is now the Kimberley section was a rocky plain with a few Boer farms. The influx of fortune-hunters dotted the area with tents and diggings. Today a thriving city covers it and the wealth produced—the diamond output is ninety per cent of the world supply—exceeds in value that of a big manufacturing community in the United States.

At Kimberley you touch the intimate life of Rhodes. He arrived in 1872 from Natal, where he had gone to retrieve his health on a farm. The moment he staked out a claim he began a remarkable career. In his early Kimberley days he did a characteristic thing. He left his claims each year to attend lectures at Oxford where he got his degree in 1881, after almost continuous commuting between England and Africa. Hence the Rhodes Scholarship at Oxford created by his remarkable will. History contains no more striking contrast perhaps than the spectacle of this tall curly-haired boy with the Caesar-like face studying a Greek book while he managed a diamond-washing machine with his foot.

Rhodes developed the mines known as the DeBeers group. His great rival was Barney Barnato, who gave African finance the same erratic and picturesque tradition that the Pittsburgh millionaires brought to American finance. His real name was Barnett Isaacs. After kicking about the streets of the East End of London he became a music hall performer under the name by which he is known to business history. The diamond rush lured him to Kimberley, where he displayed the resource and ingenuity that led to his organization of the Central mine interests which grouped around the Kimberley Mine.

A bitter competition developed between the Rhodes and Barnato groups. Kimberley alternated between boom and bankruptcy. The genius of diamond mining lies in tempering output to demand. Rhodes realized that indiscriminate production would ruin the market, so he framed up the deal that made him the

diamond dictator. He made Barnato an offer which was refused. With the aid of the Rothschilds in London Rhodes secretly bought out the French interests in the Barnato holdings for \$6,000,000, which got his foot, so to speak, in the doorway of the opposition. But even this did not give him a working wedge. He was angling with other big stockholders and required some weeks time to consummate the deal. Meanwhile Barnato accumulated an immense stock of diamonds which he threatened to dump on the market and demoralize the price. The release of these stones before the completion of Rhodes' negotiations would have upset his whole scheme and neutralized his work and expense.

He arranged a meeting with Barnato who confronted him with the pile of diamonds that he was about to throw on the market. Rhodes, so the story goes, took him by the arm and said: "Barney, have you ever seen a bucketful of diamonds? I never have. I'll make a proposition to you. If these diamonds will fill a bucket, I'll take them all from you at your own price."

Without giving his rival time to answer, Rhodes swept the glittering fortune into a bucket which happened to be standing nearby. It also happened that the stones did not fill it. This incident shows the extent of the Rhodes resource, for a man at Kimberly told me that Rhodes knew beforehand exactly how many diamonds Barnato had and got the right sized bucket. Rhodes immediately strode from the room, got the time he wanted and consummated the consolidation which made the name DeBeers synonymous with the diamond output of the world. One trifling feature of this deal was the check for \$26,000,000 which Rhodes gave for some of the Barnato interests acquired.

The deal with Barnato illustrated the practical operation of one of the rules which guided Rhodes' business life. He once said, "Never fight with a man if you can deal with him." He lived up to this maxim even with the savage Matabeles from whom he wrested Rhodesia.

Not long after the organization of the diamond trust Rhodes gave another evidence of his business acumen. He saw that the disorganized marketing of the output would lead to instability of price. He therefore formed the Diamond Syndicate in London, composed of a small group of middlemen who distribute the whole Kimberley output. In this way the available supply is measured solely



by the demand.

Rhodes had a peculiar affection for Kimberley. One reason perhaps was that it represented the cornerstone of his fortune. He always referred to the mines as his "bread and cheese." He made and lost vast sums elsewhere and scattered his money about with a lavish hand. The diamond mines did not belie their name and gave him a constant meal-ticket.

In Kimberley he made some of the friendships that influenced his life. First and foremost among them was his association with Doctor, afterwards Sir, Starr Jameson, the hero of the famous Raid and a romantic character in African annals. Jameson came to Kimberley to practice medicine in 1878. No less intimate was Rhodes' life-long attachment for Alfred Beit, who arrived at the diamond fields from Hamburg in 1875 as an obscure buyer. He became a magnate whose operations extended to three continents. Beit was the balance wheel in the Rhodes financial machine.

The diamond mines at Kimberley are familiar to most readers. They differ from the mines in German South-West Africa and the Congo in that they are deep level excavations. The Kimberley mine, for example, goes down 3,000 feet. To see this almost grotesque gash in the earth is to get the impression of a very small Grand Canyon of the Colorado. It is an awesome and terrifying spectacle for it is shot through with green and brown and purple, is more than a thousand feet wide at the top, and converges to a visible point a thousand feet below. You feel that out of this color and depth has emerged something that itself incarnates lure and mystery. Even in its source the diamond is not without its element of elusiveness.

The diamonds at Kimberley are found in a blue earth, technically known as kimberlite and commonly called "blue ground." This is exposed to sun and rain for six months, after which it is shaken down, run over a grease table where the vaseline catches the real diamonds, and allows the other matter to escape. After a boiling process it is the "rough" diamond.

I spent a day in the Dutoitspan Mine where I saw thousands of Kaffirs digging away at the precious blue substance soon to be translated into the gleaming stone

that would dangle on the bosom or shine from the finger of some woman ten thousand miles away. I got an evidence of American cinema enterprise on this occasion for I suddenly debouched on a wide level and under the flickering lights I saw a Yankee operator turning the crank of a motion picture camera. He was part of a movie outfit getting travel pictures. A hundred naked Zulus stared with open-eyed wonder at the performance. When the flashlight was touched off they ran for their lives.

This leads me to the conspicuous part that Americans have played at Kimberley. Rhodes had great confidence in the Americans, and employed them in various capacities that ranged from introducing California fruits into South Africa and Rhodesia to handling his most important mining interests. When someone asked him why he engaged so many he answered, "They are so thorough."

First among the Americans that Rhodes brought to Kimberley was Gardner F. Williams, a Michigander who became General Manager of the DeBeers Company in 1887 and upon the consolidation, assumed the same post with the united interests. He developed the mechanical side of diamond production and for many years held what was perhaps the most conspicuous technical and administrative post in the industry. He retired in favor of his son, Alpheus Williams, who is the present General Manager of all the diamond mines at Kimberley.

A little-known American had a vital part in the siege of Kimberley. Among the American engineers who rallied round Gardner Williams was George Labram. When the Boers invested the town they had the great advantage of superiority in weight of metal. Thanks to Britain's lack of preparedness, Kimberley only had a few seven pounders, while the Boers had "Long Toms" that hurled hundred pounders. At Rhodes' suggestion Labram manufactured a big gun capable of throwing a thirty-pound shell and it gave the besiegers a big and destructive surprise. This gun, which was called "Long Cecil," was built and booming in exactly twenty-eight days. Tragically enough, Labram was killed by a Boer shell while shaving in his room at the Grand Hotel exactly a week after the first discharge of his gun.

## IV

The part that Americans had in the development of Kimberley is slight compared with their participation in the exploitation of the Rand gold mines. Not only were they the real pioneers in opening up this greatest of all gold fields but they loomed large in the drama of the Jameson Raid. One of their number, John Hays Hammond, the best-known of the group, was sentenced to death for his rôle in it. The entire technical fabric of the Rand was devised and established by men born, and who had the greater part of their experience, in the United States.

The capital of the Rand is Johannesburg. When you ride in a taxicab down its broad, well-paved streets or are whirled to the top floor of one of its skyscrapers, it is difficult to believe that thirty years ago this thriving and metropolitan community was a rocky waste. We are accustomed to swift civic transformations in America but Johannesburg surpasses any exhibit that we can offer in this line. Once called "a tin town with a gold cellar," it has the atmosphere of a continuous cabaret with a jazz band going all the time.

No thoroughly acclimated person would ever think of calling Johannesburg by its full and proper name. Just as San Francisco is contracted into "Frisco," so is this animated joytown called "Joburg." I made the mistake of dignifying the place with its geographical title when I innocently remarked, "Johannesburg is a live place." My companion looked at me with pity—it was almost sorrow, and replied,

"We think that 'Joburg' (strong emphasis on 'Joburg') is one of the hottest places in the world."

The word Rand is Dutch for ridge or reef. Toward the middle of the eighties the first mine was discovered on what is the present site of Johannesburg. The original excavation was on the historic place known as *Witwatersrand*, which means White Water Reef. Kimberley history repeated itself for the gold rush to the Transvaal was as noisy and picturesque as the dash on the diamond fields. It exceeded the Klondike movement because for one thing it was more accessible

and in the second place there were no really adverse climatic conditions. Thousands died in the snow and ice of the Yukon trail while only a few hundred succumbed to fever, exposure to rain, and inadequate food on the Rand. It resembled the gold rush to California in 1849 more than any other similar event.

The Rand gold fields, which in 1920 produced half of the world's gold, are embodied in a reef about fifty miles long and twenty miles wide. All the mines immediately in and about Johannesburg are practically exhausted. The large development today is in the eastern section. People do everything but eat gold in Johannesburg. Cooks, maids, waiters, bootblacks—indeed the whole population—are interested, or at some time have had an interest in a gold mine. Some historic shoestrings have become golden cables. J. B. Robinson, for example, one of the well-known magnates, and his associates converted an original interest of £12,000 into £18,000,000. This Rand history sounds like an Aladdin fairy tale.

What concerns us principally, however, is the American end of the whole show. Hardly were the first Rand mines uncovered than they felt the influence of the American technical touch. Among the first of our engineers to go out were three unusual men, Hennen Jennings, H. C. Perkins and Captain Thomas Mein. Together with Hamilton Smith, another noted American engineer who joined them later, they had all worked in the famous El Callao gold mine in Venezuela. Subsequently came John Hays Hammond, Charles Butters, Victor M. Clement, J. S. Curtis, T. H. Leggett, Pope Yeatman, Fred Hellman, George Webber, H. H. Webb, and Louis Seymour. These men were the big fellows. They marshalled hundreds of subordinate engineers, mechanics, electricians, mine managers and others until there were more than a thousand in the field.

This was the group contemporaneous and identified with the Jameson Raid. After the Boer War came what might be called the second generation of American engineers, which included Sidney Jennings, a brother of Hennen, W. L. Honnold, Samuel Thomson, Ruel C. Warriner, W. W. Mein, the son of Capt. Thomas Mein, and H. C. Behr.

Why this American invasion? The reason was simple. The American mining engineer of the eighties and the nineties stood in a class by himself. Through the

gold development of California we were the only people who had produced gold mining engineers of large and varied practical experience. When Rhodes and Barnato (they were both among the early nine mine-owners in the Rand) cast about for capable men they naturally picked out Americans. Hammond, for example, was brought to South America in 1893 by Barnato and after six months with him went over to Rhodes, with whom he was associated both in the Rand and Rhodesia until 1900.

Not only did Americans create the whole technical machine but one of them—Hennen Jennings—really saved the field. The first mines were "outcrop," that is, the ore literally cropped out at the surface. This outcrop is oxidized, and being free, is easily amalgamated with mercury. Deeper down in the earth comes the unoxidized zone which continues indefinitely. The iron pyrites found here are not oxidized. They hold the gold so tenaciously that they are not amalgamable. They must therefore be abstracted by some other process than with mercury. At the time that the outcrop in the Rand become exhausted, what is today known as the "cyanide process" had never been used in that part of the world. The mine-owners became discouraged and a slump followed. Jennings had heard of the cyanide operation, insisted upon its introduction, and it not only retrieved the situation but has become an accepted adjunct of gold mining the world over. In the same way Hammond inaugurated deep-level mining when many of the owners thought the field was exhausted because the outcrop indications had disappeared.

These Americans in the Rand made the mines and they also made history as their part in the Jameson Raid showed. Perhaps a word about the Reform movement which ended in the Raid is permissible here. It grew out of the oppression of the *Uitlander*—the alien—by the Transvaal Government animated by Kruger, the President. Although these outsiders, principally English and Americans, outnumbered the Boers three to one, they were deprived of the rights of citizenship. The Reformers organized an armed campaign to capture Kruger and hold him as a hostage until they could obtain their rights. The guns and ammunition were smuggled in from Kimberley as "hardware" under the supervision of Gardner Williams. It was easy to bring the munitions as far as Kimberley. The Boers set up such a careful watch on the Transvaal border,

however, that every subterfuge had to be employed to get them across.

Dr. Jameson, who at that time was Administrator of Southern Rhodesia, had a force of Rhodesian police on the Transvaal border ready to come to the assistance of the Committee if necessary. The understanding was that Jameson should not invade the Transvaal until he was needed. His impetuosity spoiled the scheme. Instead of waiting until the Committee was properly armed and had seized Kruger, he suddenly crossed the border with his forces. The Raid was a fizzle and the commander and all his men were captured by the Boers. This abortive attempt was the real prelude to the Boer War, which came four years later.

Most Americans who have read about this episode believe that John Hays Hammond was the only countryman of theirs in it. This was because he had a leading and spectacular part and was one of the four ringleaders sentenced to death. He afterwards escaped by the payment of a fine of \$125,000. As a matter of fact, four other prominent American mining engineers were up to their necks in the reform movement and got long terms in prison. They were Capt. Thomas Mein, J. S. Curtis, Victor M. Clement and Charles Butters. They obtained their freedom by the payment of fines of \$10,000 each. This whole enterprise netted Kruger something like \$2,000,000 in cash.

The Jameson Raid did more than enrich old Kruger's coffers and bring the American engineers in the Rand to the fore. Indirectly it blocked a German scheme that might have played havoc in Africa the moment the inevitable Great War broke. If the Boer War had not developed in 1899 it is altogether likely that, judging from her whole campaign of world-wide interference, Germany would have arranged so that it should break out in 1914. In this unhappy event she could have struck a death blow at England in South Africa because in the years between the Boer War and 1914 she created close-knit colonial organizations in South-West and East Africa; built strategic railways; armed and drilled thousands of natives, and could have invaded the Cape Colony and the Transvaal.

In connection with the Jameson Raid is a story not without interest. Jameson and Rudyard Kipling happened to be together when the news of Roosevelt's coup in

Panama was published. The author read it first and handed the paper to his friend with the question: "What do you think of it?"

Jameson glanced at the article and then replied somewhat sadly, "This makes the Raid look like thirty cents."

I cannot leave the Rand section of the Union of South Africa without a word in passing about Pretoria, the administrative capital, which is only an hour's journey from Johannesburg. Here you still see the old house where Kruger lived. It was the throne of a copper-riveted autocracy. No modern head of a country ever wielded such a despotic rule as this psalm-singing old Boer whose favorite hour for receiving visitors was at five o'clock in the morning, when he had his first cup of strong coffee, a beverage which he continued to consume throughout the day.

The most striking feature of the country around Pretoria is the Premier diamond mine, twenty-five miles east of the town and the world's greatest single treasure-trove. The mines at Kimberley together constitute the largest of all diamond fields but the Premier Mine is the biggest single mine anywhere. It produces as much as the four largest Kimberley mines combined, and contributes eighteen per cent of the yearly output allotted to the Diamond Syndicate.

It was discovered by Thomas M. Cullinan, who bought the site from a Boer farmer for \$250,000. The land originally cost this farmer \$2,500. The mine has already produced more than five hundred times what Cullinan paid for it and the surface has scarcely been scraped. You can see the natives working in its two huge holes which are not more than six hundred feet deep. It is still an open mine. In the Premier Mine was found the Cullinan diamond, the largest ever discovered and which made the Koh-i-noor and all other fabled gems look like small pebbles. It weighed 3,200 karats and was insured for \$2,500,000 when it was sent to England to be presented to King Edward. The Koh-i-noor, by the way, which was found in India only weighs 186 karats.

### [THE PREMIER DIAMOND MINE](#)

**THE PREMIER DIAMOND MINE** — *Photograph Copyright by South African Railways*

## V

No attempt at an analysis of South Africa would be complete without some reference to the native problem, the one discordant note in the economic and productive scheme. The race question, as the Smuts dilemma showed, lies at the root of all South African trouble. But the racial conflict between Briton and Boer is almost entirely political and in no way threatens the commercial integrity. Both the Dutchman and the Englishman agree on the whole larger proposition and the necessity of settling once and for all a trouble that carries with it the danger of sporadic outbreak or worse. Now we come to the whole irritating labor trouble which has neither color, caste, nor creed, or geographical line.

First let me bring the South African color problem home to America. In the United States the whites outnumber the blacks roughly ten to one. Our coloured population represents the evolution of the one-time African slave through various generations into a peaceful, law-abiding, and useful social unit. The Southern "outrage" is the rare exception. We have produced a Frederick Douglass and a Booker Washington. Our Negro is a Christian, fills high posts, and invades the professions.

In South Africa the reverse is true. To begin with, the natives outnumber the whites four and one-half to one—in Rhodesia they are twenty to one—and they are increasing at a much greater rate than the Europeans. Moreover, the native population draws on half a dozen races, including the Zulus, Kaffirs, Hottentots and Basutos. These Negroes represent an almost primitive stage of development. They are mainly heathens and a prey to savagery and superstition. The Cape Colony is the only one that permits the black man to go to school or become a skilled artisan. Elsewhere the white retains his monopoly on the crafts and at the same time refuses to do any labour that a Negro can perform. Hence the great need of white immigration into the Union. The big task, therefore, is to secure adequate work for the Negro without permitting him to gain an advantage through it.



It follows that the moment the Kaffir becomes efficient and picks up a smattering of education he begins to think about his position and unrest is fomented. It makes him unstable as an employee, as the constant desertions from work show. The only way that the gold and diamond mines keep their thousands of recruited native workers is to confine them in compounds. The ordinary labourer has no such restrictions and he is here today and gone tomorrow.

It is not surprising to discover that in a country teeming with blacks there are really no good servants, a condition with which the American housewife can heartily sympathize. Before I went to Africa nearly every woman I knew asked me to bring her back a diamond and a cook. They were much more concerned about the cook than the diamond. Had I kept every promise that I made affecting this human jewel, I would have had to charter a ship to convey them. The only decent servant I had in Africa was a near-savage in the Congo, a sad commentary on domestic service conditions.

The one class of stable servants in the Colony are the "Cape Boys," as they are called. They are the coloured offspring of a European and a Hottentot or a Malay and are of all shades, from a darkish brown to a mere tinge. They dislike being called "niggers." The first time I saw these Cape Boys was in France during the war. South Africa sent over thousands of them to recruit the labour battalions and they did excellent work as teamsters and in other capacities. The Cape Boy, however, is the exception to the native rule throughout the Union, which means that most native labour is unstable and discontented.

Not only is the South African native a menace to economic expansion but he is likewise something of a physical danger. In towns like Pretoria and Johannesburg there is a considerable feeling of insecurity. Women shrink from being left alone with their servants and are filled with apprehension while their little ones are out under black custodianship. The one native servant, aside from some of the Cape Boys, who has demonstrated absolute fidelity, is the Zulu whom you see in largest numbers in Natal. He is still a proud and kingly-looking person and he carried with him a hint of the vanished greatness of his race. Perhaps one reason why he is safe and sane reposes in his recollection of the repeated bitter and bloody defeats at the hands of the white men. Yet the Zulu

was in armed insurrection in Natal in the nineties.

South Africa enjoys no guarantee of immunity from black uprising even now in the twentieth century when the world uses the aeroplane and the wireless. During the past thirty years there have been outbreaks throughout the African continent. As recently as 1915 a fanatical form of Ethiopianism broke out in Nyassaland which lies north-east of Rhodesia, under the sponsorship of John Chilembwe, a negro preacher who had been educated in the United States. The natives rose, killed a number of white men and carried off the women. Of course, it was summarily put down and the leaders executed. But the incident was significant.

Prester John, whose story is familiar to readers of John Buchan's fine romance of the same name, still has disciples. Like Chilembwe he was a preacher who had acquired so-called European civilization. He dreamed of an Africa for the blacks and took his inspiration from the old kings of Abyssinia. He too met the fate of all his kind but his spirit goes marching on. In 1919 a Pan-African Congress was held in Paris to discuss some plan for what might be called Pan-Ethiopianism. The following year a negro convention in New York City advocated that all Africa should be converted into a black republic.

One example of African native unrest was brought strikingly to my personal attention. At Capetown I met one of the heads of a large Cape Colony school for Negroes which is conducted under religious auspices. The occasion was a dinner given by J. X. Merriman, the Grand Old Man of the Cape Colony. This particular educator spoke with glowing enthusiasm about this institution and dwelt particularly upon the evolution that was being accomplished. He gave me a pressing invitation to visit it. He happened to be on the train that I took to Kimberley, which was also the first stage of his journey home and he talked some more about the great work the school was doing.

When I reached Kimberley the first item of news that I read in the local paper was an account of an uprising in the school. Hundreds of native students rebelled at the quality of food they were getting and went on the rampage. They destroyed the power-plant and wrecked several of the buildings. The constabulary had to be called out to restore order.

In many respects most Central and South African Negroes never really lose the primitive in them despite the claims of uplifters and sentimentalists. Actual contact is a disillusioning thing. I heard of a concrete case when I was in the Belgian Congo. A Belgian judge at a post up the Kasai River acquired an intelligent Baluba boy. All personal servants in Africa are called "boys." This particular native learned French, acquired European clothes and became a model servant. When the judge went home to Belgium on leave he took the boy along. He decided to stay longer than he expected and sent the negro back to the Congo. No sooner did the boy get back to his native heath than he sold his European clothes, put on a loin cloth, and squatted on the ground when he ate, precisely like his savage brethren. It is a typical case, and merely shows that a great deal of so-called black-acquired civilization in Africa falls away with the garb of civilization.

The only African blacks who have really assimilated the civilizing influence so far as my personal observation goes are those of the West Coast. Some of the inhabitants of Sierra Leone will illustrate what I mean. Scores have gone to Oxford and Cambridge and have become doctors, lawyers and competent civil servants. They resemble the American Negro more than any others in Africa. This parallel even goes to their fondness for using big words. I saw hundreds of them holding down important clerical positions in the Belgian Congo where they are known as "Coast-men," because they come from the West Coast.

I had an amusing experience with one when I was on my way out of the Congo jungle. I sent a message by him to the captain of the little steamboat that took me up and down the Kasai River. In this message I asked that the vessel be made ready for immediate departure. The Coast-man, whose name was Wilson—they all have English names and speak English fluently—came back and said:

"I have conveyed your expressed desire to leave immediately to the captain of your boat. He only returns a verbal acquiescence but I assure you that he will leave nothing undone to facilitate your speedy departure."

He said all this with such a solemn and sober face that you would have thought the whole destiny of the British Empire depended upon the elaborateness of his utterance.

To return to the matter of unrest, all the concrete happenings that I have related show that the authority of the white man in Africa is still resented by the natives. It serves to emphasize what Mr. Lothrop Stoddard, an eminent authority on this subject, so aptly calls "the rising tide of colour." We white people seldom stop to realize how overwhelmingly we are outnumbered. Out of the world population of approximately 1,700,000,000 persons (I am using Mr. Stoddard's figures), only 550,000,000 are white.

A colour conflict is improbable but by no means impossible. We have only to look at our own troubles with the Japanese to get an intimate glimpse of what might lurk in a yellow tidal wave. The yellow man humbled Russia in the Russo-Japanese War and he smashed the Germans at Kiao Chow in the Great War. The fact that he was permitted to fight shoulder to shoulder with the white man has only added to his cockiness as we have discovered in California.

Remember too that the Germans stirred up all Islam in their mad attempt to conquer the world. The Mohammedan has not forgotten what the Teutonic propagandists told him when they laid the cunning train of bad feeling that precipitated Turkey into the Great War. These seeds of discord are bearing fruit in many Near Eastern quarters. One result is that a British army is fighting in Mesopotamia now. A Holy War is merely the full brother of the possible War of Colour. In East Africa the Germans used thousands of native troops against the British and Belgians. The blacks got a taste, figuratively, of the white man's blood and it did his system no good.

Throughout the globe there are 150,000,000 blacks and all but 30,000,000 of them are south of the Sahara Desert in Africa. They lack the high mental development of the yellow man as expressed in the Japanese, but even brute force is not to be despised, especially where it outnumbers the whites to the extent that they do in South Africa. I am no alarmist and I do not presume to say that there will be serious trouble. I merely present these facts to show that certainly so far as affecting production and economic security in general is concerned, the native still provides a vexing and irritating problem, not without danger.

The Union of South Africa is keenly alive to this perplexing native situation. Its

policy is what might be called the Direct Rule, in which the whole administration of the country is in the hands of the Europeans and which is the opposite of the Indirect Rule of India, for example, which recognizes Rajahs and other potentates and which permits the brown man to hold a variety of public posts.

The Government of the Cape Colony is becoming convinced that Booker Washington's idea is the sole salvation of the race. That great leader maintained that the hope for the Negro in the United States and elsewhere lay in the training of his hands. Once those hands were skilled they could be kept out of mischief. I recall having discussed this theory one night with General Smuts at Capetown and he expressed his hearty approval of it.

The lamented Botha died before he could put into operation a plan which held out the promise of still another kind of solution. It lay in the soil. He contended that an area of forty million acres should be set aside for the natives, where many could work out their destinies themselves. While this plan offered the opportunity for the establishment of a compact and perhaps dangerous black entity, his feeling was that by the avoidance of friction with the whites the possibility of trouble would be minimized. This scheme is likely to be carried out by Smuts.

Since the Union of South Africa profited by the whirligig of war to the extent of acquiring German South-West Africa it only remains to speak of the new map of Africa, made possible by the Great Conflict. Despite the return of Alsace-Lorraine to France one fails to see concrete evidence of Germany's defeat in Europe. Her people are still cocky and defiant. There is no mistake about her altered condition in Africa. Her flag there has gone into the discard along with the wreck of militarism. The immense territory that she acquired principally by browbeating is lost, down to the last square mile.

Up to 1884 Germany did not own an inch of African soil. Within two years she was mistress of more than a million square miles. Analyze her whole performance on the continent and a definite cause of the World War is discovered. It is part of an international conspiracy studded with astonishing details.

Africa was a definite means to world conquest. Germany knew of her vast undeveloped wealth. It is now no secret that her plan was to annex the greater part of French, Belgian, Italian and Portuguese Africa in the event that she won. The Berlin-to-Bagdad Railway would have hitched up the late Teutonic Empire with the Near East and made it easy to link the African domain with this intermediary through the Turkish dominions. Here was an imposing program with many advantages. For one thing it would have given Germany an untold store of raw materials and it would also have put her into a position to dictate to Southern Asia and even South America.

The methods that Germany adopted to acquire her African possessions were peculiarly typical. Like the madness that plunged her into a struggle with civilization they were her own undoing. Into a continent whose middle name, so far as colonization goes, is intrigue she fitted perfectly. Practically every German colony in Africa represented the triumph of "butting in" or intimidation. The Kaiser That Was regarded himself as the mentor, and sought to recast continents in the same grand way that he lectured his minions.

The first German colony in Africa was German South-West, as it was called for short, and grew out of a deal made between a Bremen merchant and a native chief. On the strength of this Bismarck pinched out an area almost as big as British East Africa. Before twelve months had passed the German flag flew over what came to be known as German East Africa, and also over Togoland and the The Cameroons on the West Coast.

Germany really had no right to invade any of this country but she was developing into a strong military power and rather than have trouble, the other nations acquiesced. Once intrenched, she started her usual interference. The prize mischief-maker of the universe, she began to stir up trouble in every quarter. She embroiled the French at Agadir and got into a snarl with Portugal over Angola.

The Kaiser's experience with Kruger is typical. When the Jameson Raid petered out William Hohenzollern sent the dictator of the Transvaal a telegram of congratulation. The old Boer immediately regarded him as an ally and counted on his aid when the Boer War started. Instead, he got the double-cross after he

had sent his ultimatum to England. At that time the Kaiser warily side-stepped an entanglement with Britain for the reason that she was too useful.

It is now evident that a large part of the Congo atrocity was a German scheme. The head and front of the exposé movement was Sir Roger Casement of London. He sought to foment a German-financed revolution in Ireland and was hanged as a traitor in the Tower.

Behind this atrocity crusade was just another evidence of the German desire to control Africa. By rousing the world against Belgium, Germany expected to bring another Berlin Congress, which would be expected to give her the stewardship of the Belgian Congo. The result would have been a German belt across Africa from the Indian to the Atlantic Oceans. She could thus have had England and France at a disadvantage on the north, and England and Portugal where she wanted them, to the south. Hence the Great War was not so much a matter of German meddling in the Balkans as it was her persistent manipulation of other nations' affairs in Africa. She was playing "freeze-out" on a stupendous scale. You can see why Germany was so much opposed to the Cape-to-Cairo Route. It interfered with her ambitions and provided a constant irritant to her "benevolent" plans.

So much for the war end. Turn to the peace aspect. With Germany eliminated from the African scheme the whole region can enter upon a harmonious development. More than this, the fact that she is now deprived of colonies prevents her from recovering the world-wide economic authority she commanded before the war. A congested population allows her no more elbow room at home. Before she went mad her whole hope of the future lay in a colonization where her flag could fly in public, and in a penetration which cunningly masked the German hand. The world is now wise to the latter procedure.

The new colour scheme of the African map may now be disclosed. The Union of South Africa, as you have seen, has taken over German South-West Africa; Great Britain has assumed the control of all German East Africa with the exception of Ruanda and Urundu, which have become part of the Belgian Congo. Togoland is divided between France and Britain, while the greater part of

The Cameroons is merged into the Lower French West African possessions of which the French Congo is the principal one. Britain gets the Cameroon Mountains.

The one-time Dark Continent remains dark only for Germany.

VICTORIA FALL

**VICTORIA FALLS — *Photograph Copyright British South Africa Co.***





# **CHAPTER III—RHODES AND RHODESIA**

## I

For fifty-eight hours the train from Johannesburg had travelled steadily northward, past Mafeking and on through the apparently endless stretches of Bechuanaland. Alternately frozen and baked, I had swallowed enough dust to stock a small-sized desert. Dawn of the third day broke and with it came a sharp rap on my compartment door. I had been dreaming of a warm bath and a joltless life when I was rudely restored to reality. The car was stationary and a blanketed Matabele, his teeth chattering with the cold, peered in at the window.

"What is it?" I asked.

"You are in Rhodesia and I want to know who you are," boomed a voice out in the corridor.

I opened the door and a tall, rangy, bronzed man—the immigration inspector—stepped inside. He looked like a cross between an Arizona cowboy and an Australian overseas soldier. When I proved to his satisfaction that I was neither Bolshevik nor Boche he departed with the remark: "We've got to keep a watch on the people who come into this country."

Such was my introduction to Rhodesia, where the limousine and the ox-team compete for right of way on the veldt and the 'rickshaw yields to the motor-cycle in the town streets. Nowhere in the world can you find a region that combines to such vivid and picturesque extent the romance and hardship of the pioneer age with the push and practicality of today. Here existed the "King Solomon's Mines" of Rider Haggard's fancy: here the modern gold-seekers of fact sought the treasures of Ophir; here Nature gives an awesome manifestation of her power in the Victoria Falls.

It is the only country where a great business corporation rules, not by might of money but by chartered authority. Linked with that rule is the story of a conflict between share-holder and settler that is unique in the history of colonization. It is the now-familiar and well-nigh universal struggle for self-determination waged

in this instance between all-British elements and without violence.

All the way from Capetown I had followed the trail of Cecil Rhodes, which like the man himself, is distinct. It is not the succession of useless and conventional monuments reared by a grateful posterity. Rather it is expressed in terms of cities and a permanent industrial and agricultural advance. "Living he was the land," and dead, his imperious and constructive spirit goes marching on. The Rhodes impress is everywhere. Now I had arrived at the cap-stone of it all, the domain that bears his name and which he added to the British Empire.

Less than two hours after the immigration inspector had given me the once-over on the frontier I was in Bulawayo, metropolis of Rhodesia, which sprawls over the veldt just like a bustling Kansas community spreads out over the prairie. It is definitely American in energy and atmosphere. Save for the near-naked blacks you could almost imagine yourself in Idaho or Montana back in the days when our West was young.

Before that first day ended I had lunched and dined in a club that would do credit to Capetown or Johannesburg; had met women who wore French frocks, and had heard the possibilities of the section acclaimed by a dozen enthusiasts. Everyone in Rhodesia is a born booster. Again you get the parallel with our own kind.

To the average American reader Rhodesia is merely a name, associated with the midnight raid of stealthy savage and all the terror and tragedy of the white man's burden amid the wild confines. All this happened, to be sure, but it is part of the past. While South Africa still wrestles with a serious native problem, Rhodesia has settled it once and for all. It would be impossible to find a milder lot than the survivors and sons of the cruel and war-like Lobengula who once ruled here like a despot of old. His tribesmen—the Matabeles—were put in their place by a strong hand and they remain put.

Bulawayo was the capital of Lobengula's kingdom. The word means "Place of Slaughter," and it did not belie the name. You can still see the tree under which the portly potentate sat and daily dispensed sanguinary judgment. His method was quite simple. If anyone irritated or displeased him he was haled up "under the greenwood" and sentenced to death. If gout or rheumatism racked the royal

frame the chief executed the first passerby and then considered the source of the trouble removed. The only thing that really departed was the head of the innocent victim. Lobengula had sixty-eight wives, which may account for some of his eccentricities. Chaka, the famous king of the Zulus, whose favourite sport was murdering his sons (he feared a rival to the throne), was an amateur in crime alongside the dusky monarch whom the British suppressed, and thereby gained what is now the most prosperous part of Southern Rhodesia.

The occupation and development of Rhodesia are so comparatively recent—(Rhodes and Dr. Jameson were fighting the Matabeles at Bulawayo in 1896)—that any account of the country must at the outset include a brief historical approach to the time of my visit last May. Probe into the beginnings of any African colony and you immediately uncover intrigue and militant imperialism. Rhodesia is no exception.

For ages the huge continent of which it is part was veiled behind mystery and darkness. The northern and southern extremes early came into the ken of the explorer and after him the builder. So too with most of the coast. But the vast central belt, skirted by the arid reaches of Sahara on one side and unknown territory on the other, defied civilization until Livingstone, Stanley, Speke, and Grant blazed the way. Then began the scramble for colonies.

Early in the eighties more than one European power cast covetous glances at what might be called the South Central area. Thanks to the economic foresight of King Leopold, Belgium had secured the Congo. Between this region which was then a Free State, and the Transvaal, was an immense and unappropriated country,—a sort of no man's land, rich with minerals, teeming with forests and peopled by savages. Two territories, Matabeleland, ruled by Lobengula, and Mashonaland, inhabited by the Mashonas, who were to all intents and purposes vassals to Lobengula, were the prize portions. Another immense area—the present British protectorate of Bechuanaland—was immediately south and touched the Cape Colony and the Transvaal. Portuguese East Africa lay to the east but the backbone of Africa south of the Congo line lay ready to be plucked by venturesome hands.

Nor were the hands lacking for the enterprise. Germany started to strengthen the

network of conspiracy that had already yielded her a million square miles of African soil and she was reaching out for more. Control of Africa meant for her a big step toward world conquest. Paul Kruger, President of the Transvaal Republic, which touched the southern edge of this unclaimed domain, saw in it the logical extension of his dominions.

Down at Capetown was Rhodes, dreaming of a Greater Britain and determined to block the Kaiser and Kruger. It was largely due to his efforts while a member of the Cape Parliament that Britain was persuaded to annex Bechuanaland as a Crown Colony. Forestalled here, Kruger was determined to get the rest of the country beyond Bechuanaland and reaching to the southern border of the Congo. His emissaries began to dicker with chiefs and he organized an expedition to invade the territory. Once more Rhodes beat him to it, this time in history-making fashion.

Following his theory that it is better to deal with a man than fight him, he sent C. D. Rudd, Rochfort Maguire, and F. R. ("Matabele") Thompson up to deal directly with Lobengula. They were ideal envoys for Thompson in particular knew every inch of the country and spoke the native languages. From the crafty chieftain they obtained a blanket concession for all the mineral and trading rights in Matabeleland for £1,200 a year and one thousand rifles. Rhodes now converted this concession into a commercial and colonizing achievement without precedent or parallel. It became the Magna Charta of the great British South Africa Company, which did for Africa what the East India Company did for India. Counting in Bechuanaland, it added more than 700,000 square miles to the British Empire.

Like the historic document so inseparably associated with the glories of Clive and Hastings, its Charter shaped the destiny of the empire and is associated with battle, blood, and the eventual triumph of the Anglo-Saxon over the man of colour. Other chartered companies have wielded autocratic power over millions of natives but the royal right to exist and operate, bestowed by Queen Victoria upon the British South Africa Company—the Chartered Company as it is commonly known—was the first that ever gave a corporation the administrative authority over a politically active country with a white population. The record of

its rule is therefore distinct in the annals of Big Business.

It was in 1899 that Rhodes got the Charter. In his conception of the Rhodesia that was to be—(it was first called Zambesia)—he had two distinct purposes in view. One was the larger political motive which was to widen the Empire and keep the Germans and Boers from annexing territory that he believed should be British. This was Rhodes the imperialist at work. The other aspect was the purely commercial side and revealed the same shrewdness that had registered so successfully in the creation of the Diamond Trust at Kimberley. This was Rhodes the business man on the job.

The Charter itself was a visualization of the Rhodes mind and it matched the Cape-to-Cairo project in bigness of vision. It gave the Company the right to acquire and develop land everywhere, to engage in shipping, to build railway, telegraph and telephone lines, to establish banks, to operate mines and irrigation undertakings and to promote commerce and manufacture of all kinds. Nothing was overlooked. It meant the union of business and statesmanship.

Under the Charter the Company was given administrative control of an area larger than that of Great Britain, France and Prussia. It divided up into Northern and Southern Rhodesia with the Zambesi River as the separating line. Northern Rhodesia remains a sparsely settled country—there are only 2,000 white inhabitants to 850,000 natives—and the only industry of importance is the lead and zinc development at Broken Hill. Southern Rhodesia, where there are 35,000 white persons and 800,000 natives, has been the stronghold of Chartered interests and the battleground of the struggle to throw off corporate control. It is the Rhodesia to be referred to henceforth in this chapter without prefix.

The Charter is perpetual but it contained a provision that at the end of twenty-five years, (1914) and at the end of each succeeding ten years, the Imperial Government has the power to alter, amend or rescind the instrument so far as the administration of Rhodesia is concerned. No vital change in the original document has been made so far, but by the time the next cycle expires in 1924 it is certain that the Company control will have ended and Rhodesia will either be a part of the Union of South Africa or a self-determining Colony.

The Company is directed by a Board of Directors in London, but no director resides in the country itself. Thus at the beginning the fundamental mistake was made in attempting to run an immense area at long range. With the approval of the Foreign Office the Company names an Administrator,—the present one is Sir Drummond Chaplin,—who, like the average Governor-General, has little to say. The Company has exercised a copper-riveted control and this rigid rule led to its undoing, as you will see later on.

The original capitalization was £1,000,000,—it was afterwards increased to £9,000,000,—but it is only a part of the stream of pounds sterling that has been poured into the country. In all the years of its existence the company has never paid a dividend. It is only since 1914 that the revenue has balanced expenditures. More than 40,000 shareholders have invested in the enterprise. Today the fate of the country rests practically on the issue between the interests of these shareholders on one hand and the 35,000 inhabitants on the other. Once more you get the spectacle, so common to American financial history, of a strongly entrenched vested interest with the real exploiter or the consumer arrayed against it. The Company rule has not been harsh but it has been animated by a desire to make a profit. The homesteaders want liberty of movement without handicap or restraint. An irreconcilable conflict ensued.

CULTIVATING CITRUS LAND IN RHODESIA

**CULTIVATING CITRUS LAND IN RHODESIA — *Photograph Copyright*  
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## II

We can now go into the story of the occupation of Rhodesia, which not only unfolds a stirring drama of development but discloses something of an epic of adventure. With most corporations it is an easy matter to get down to business once a charter is granted. It is only necessary to subscribe stock and then enter upon active operations, whether they produce soap, razors or automobiles. The market is established for the product.

With the British South Africa Company it was a far different and infinitely more difficult performance, to translate the license to operate into action. Matabeleland and Mashonaland were wild regions where war-like tribes roamed or fought at will. There were no roads. The only white men who had ventured there were hunters, traders, and concession seekers. Occupation preceded exploitation. A white man's civilization had to be set up first. The rifle and the hoe went in together.

In June, 1890, the Pioneer Column entered. Heading it were two men who left an impress upon African romance. One was Dr. Jameson, hero of the Raid and Rhodes' most intimate friend. The first time I met him I marvelled that this slight, bald, mild little man should have been the central figure in so many heroic exploits. The other was the famous hunter, F. C. Selous, who was Roosevelt's companion in British East Africa. Under them were less than two hundred white men, including Captain Heany, an American, who now invaded a country where Lobengula had an army of 20,000 trained fighters, organized into *impis*—(regiments)—after the Zulu fashion and in every respect a formidable force. Although the old chief had granted the concession, no one trusted him and Jameson and Selous had to feel their way, sleep under arms every night, and build highways as they went.

Upon Lobengula's suggestion it was decided to occupy Mashonaland first. This was achieved without any trouble and the British flag was raised on what is now the site of Salisbury, the capital of Southern Rhodesia. Most of the members of

the expedition remained as settlers, and farms sprang up on the veldt. The Company had to organize a police force to patrol the land and keep off predatory natives. But this was purely incidental to the larger troubles that now crowded thick and fast. In the South the Boers launched an expedition to occupy Matabeleland by force and it had to be headed off. To the east rose friction with the Portuguese and a Rhodesian contingent was compelled to occupy part of Portuguese East Africa until the boundary line was adjusted.

In 1893 came the first of the events that made Rhodesia a storm center. A Matabele regiment raided the new town of Victoria and killed some of the Company's native servants. The Matabeles then went on the warpath and Dr. Jameson took the field against them. For five weeks a bitter struggle raged. It ended with the defeat and disappearance of Lobengula and the occupation of Bulawayo by the Company forces. This brought the whole of Matabeleland under the direct authority of the British South Africa Company. The campaign cost the Company \$500,000.

Three years of peace and progress followed. Railway construction started in two directions. One line was headed from the south through Bechuanaland toward Bulawayo and another from Beira, the Indian Ocean port in Portuguese East Africa, westward toward Salisbury. Gold mines were opened and farms extended. At the end of 1895 came the Jameson Raid. Practically the entire force under the many-sided Doctor was recruited from the Rhodesian police and they were all captured by the Boers. Rhodesia was left defenceless.

The Matabeles seized this moment to strike again. Ever since the defeat of 1893 they had been restless and discontented. Various other causes contributed to the uprising. One is peculiarly typical of the African savage. An outbreak of rinderpest, a disease hitherto unknown in Southern Africa, came down from the North and ravaged the cattle herds. In order to check the advance of the pest the Government established a clear belt by shooting all the cattle in a certain area. It was impossible for the Matabeles to understand the wisdom of this procedure. They only saw it as an outrage committed by the white men on their property for they were extensive cattle owners. In addition many died after eating infected meat and they also held the settlers responsible. The net result of it all was a

sudden descent upon the white settlements and scores of white men, women and children were slaughtered.

This time the operations against them were on a large scale. The present Lord Plumer, who commanded the Fourth British Army in France against the Germans,—he was then a Lieutenant Colonel—came up with eight hundred soldiers and drove the Matabeles into the fastnesses of the Matopos,—a range of hills fifty miles long and more than twenty wide. Here the savages took refuge in caves and could not be driven out.

You now reach one of the remarkable feats in the life of Cecil Rhodes. The moment that the second Matabele war began he hastened northward to the country that bore his name. As soon as the Matabeles took refuge in the Matopos he boldly went out to parley with them. With three unarmed companions, one of them an interpreter, he set up a camp in the wilds and sent emissaries to the syndicate of the chiefs who had succeeded Lobengula. He had become Premier of the Cape Colony, was head of the great DeBeers Diamond Syndicate, and had other immense interests. He was also Managing Director of the British South Africa Company and the biggest stockholder. He was determined to protect his interests and at the same time preserve the integrity of the country that he loved so well.

He exposed himself every night to raids by the most blood-thirsty savages in all Africa. Plumer's command was camped nearly five miles away but Rhodes refused a guard.

Rhodes waited patiently and his perseverance was eventually rewarded. One by one the chiefs came down from the hills and succumbed to the persuasiveness and personality of this remarkable man who could deal with wild and naked warriors as successfully as he could dictate to a group of hard-headed business men. After two months of negotiating the Matabeles were appeased and permanent peace, so far as the natives were concerned, dawned in Rhodesia. After his feat in the Matopos the Matabeles called Rhodes "The Man Who Separated the Fighting Bulls." It was during this period in Rhodesia that Rhodes discovered the place which he called "The View of the World," and where his remains now lie in lonely grandeur.

At Groote Schuur, the Rhodes house near Capetown, which he left as the permanent residence of the Prime Minister of the Union of South Africa, I saw a prized souvenir of the Matopos conferences with the Matabeles. On the wall in Rhodes' bedroom hangs the faded picture of an old and shriveled Matabele woman. When I asked General Smuts to tell me who she was he replied: "That is the woman who acted as the chief negotiator between Rhodes and the rebels." I afterwards found out that she was one of the wives of Umziligazi, father of Lobengula, and a noted Zulu chieftain. Rhodes never forgot the service she rendered him and caused the photograph of her to be taken.

Following the last Matabele insurrection the Imperial Government which is represented in Rhodesia by a Resident Commissioner assumed control of the natives. The Crown was possibly guided by the precedent of Natal, where a premature Responsible Government was followed by two Zulu wars which well-nigh wrecked the province. It has become the policy of the Home Government not to permit a relatively small white population to rule the natives. Whatever the influence, Rhodesia has had no trouble with the natives since Rhodes made the peace up in the hills of the Matopos.

The moment that the war of force ended, another and bloodless war of words began and it has continued ever since. I mean the fight for self-government that the settlers have waged against the Chartered Company. This brings us to a contest that contributes a significant and little-known chapter to the whole narrative of self-determination among the small peoples.

Through its Charter the British South Africa Company was able to fasten a copper-riveted rule on Rhodesia. Most of the Directors in London, with the exception of men like Dr. Jameson, knew very little about the country. There was no resident Director in Africa and the members of the Board only came out just before the elections. The Administrator was always a Company man and until 1899 his administrative associates in the field were the members of an Executive Council nominated by the Company. Meanwhile thousands of men had invested their fortunes in the land and the inevitable time came when they believed that they should have a voice in the conduct of its affairs.

This sentiment became so widespread that in 1899 the country was given a

Legislative Council which for the first time enabled the Rhodesians to elect some of their own people to office. At first they were only allowed three members, while the Company nominated six others. This always gave the Chartered interests a majority. Subsequently, as the clamour for popular representation grew, the number of elected representatives was increased to thirteen, while those nominated by Charter remained the same. To get a majority under the new deal it was only necessary for the Company to get the support of four elected members and on account of its relatively vast commercial interest it was usually easy to do this.

It would be difficult to find an exact parallel to this situation. In America we have had many conflicts with what our campaign orators call "Special Privilege," an institution which thrived before the searchlight of publicity was turned on corporate control and prior to the time when fangs were put into the stewardship of railways. These contestants were sometimes decided at the polls with varying degrees of success. Perhaps the nearest approach to the Rhodesian line-up was the struggle of the California wheat growers against the Southern Pacific Railway, which Frank Norris dramatized in his book, "The Octopus."

All the while the feeling for Responsible Government in Rhodesia grew. A strong group which opposed the Chartered régime sprang up. At the beginning of the struggle the line was sharply drawn between the Charter adherents on one side and unorganized opponents on the other. By 1914 the issue was sharply defined. The first twenty-five years of the Charter were about to end and the insurgents realized that it was an opportune moment for a show of strength. The opposition had three plans. Some advocated the conversion of Rhodesia into a Crown Colony, others strongly urged admission to the Union of South Africa, while still another wing stood for Responsible Government. It was decided to unite on a common platform of Responsible Government.

For the first time the Company realized that it had a fight on its hands and Dr. Jameson, who had become president of the corporation, went out to Rhodesia and made speeches urging loyalty to the Charter. His appearance stirred memories of the pioneer days and almost without exception the old guard rallied round him. A red-hot campaign ensued with the result that the whole pro-Charter

ticket, with one exception, was elected, although the antis polled 45 per cent of the total vote.

Out of this defeat came a partial victory for the Progressives. The Imperial Government saw the handwriting on the wall and acting within its powers, which permitted an administrative change in the Charter at the end of every ten years, granted a Supplemental Charter which provided that the Legislative Council could by an absolute majority of all its members pass a resolution "praying the Crown to establish in Southern Rhodesia the form of Government known as Responsible Government," provided that it could financially support this procedure. It gave the insurgents fresh hope and it made the Company realize that sooner or later its authority must end.

Then the Great War broke. Every available man that could possibly be spared went to the Front and the life of the Council was extended until 1920, when a conclusive election was to be held. Meanwhile the Company, realizing that it must sooner or later bow to the people's will, got busy with an attempt to realize on its assets. Chief among them were the millions of acres of so-called "unalienated" or Crown land in Southern Rhodesia. The Chartered Company claimed this land as a private asset. The settlers alleged that it belonged to them. The Government said it was an imperial possession. The Privy Council in London upheld the latter contention. Thereupon the Company filed a claim for \$35,000,000.00 against the Government to cover the value of this land and its losses throughout the years of administration.

Yielding to pressure the Legislative Council in 1919 asked the British Government to declare itself on the question of replacing the Charter with some form of Government suited to the needs of the country. Lord Milner, the Colonial Secretary, answered in what came to be known as the "Milner Despatch." In it he said that he did not believe the territory "in its present stage of development was equal to the financial burden of Responsible Government." He mildly suggested representative government under the Crown.

The general expectation throughout Rhodesia was that no election would be held until a Government Commission then sitting, had inquired into the validity of the Company's immense claim for damages. Early in March 1920, however, the

Legislative Council gave notice that the election was set for April 30th. It proved to be the most exciting ever held in Rhodesia. The Chartered Company made no fight. The contest was really waged between the two wings of the anti-Charter crowd. One favored Responsible Government and the other, admission to the Union of South Africa.

The arguments for Responsible Government briefly were these: That under the Supplemental Charter it was the only constitutional change possible; that the financial burden was not too heavy; that the native question was no bar; that the Imperial Government would never saddle the country with the huge debt of the Company; that under the Union a hateful bi-lingualism would be introduced; that taxation would not be excessive, and that finally, the right of self-determination as to Government was the birthright of the British people.

The adherents of Union contended that the original idea of Cecil Rhodes was to make Rhodesia a part of the Union of South Africa; that by this procedure the vexing problem of customs with the Union would be solved; that the system of self-government in South Africa meets every requirement of self-determination. Moreover, the point was made that by becoming a part of the Union the whole railway question would be settled. At present the Rhodesian railways have three ends, one in South Africa at Vryburg, another on the Belgian border, and a third at the sea at Beira. It was claimed that through the Union, Rhodesia would benefit by becoming a part of the nationalized railway system there and get the advantage of a British port at the Cape instead of Beira, which is Portuguese. In other words, Union meant stability of credit, politics, finance and industry.

The outcome of the election was that twelve Responsible Government candidates, one of them a woman, were elected. Women voted for the first time in Rhodesia and they solidly opposed the union with South Africa. The thirteenth member elected stood for the conversion of the country into a Crown Colony under representative government. Throughout the campaign the Chartered Company remained neutral, although it was obviously opposed to Responsible Government. The feeling throughout Rhodesia is that it favors Union because it could dispose of its assets to better advantage.

I arrived in Rhodesia immediately after the election. The country still sizzled

with excitement. Curiously enough, the head, brains and front of the fight for union with South Africa was a former American, now a British subject and who has been a ranchman in Rhodesia for some years. He prefers to be nameless.

In the light of the landslide at the polls it naturally followed that the new Legislative Council at its first meeting passed a resolution declaring for Responsible Government. The vote was twelve to five. Since this was not an absolute majority, as required by the Supplementary Charter, it is expected that the Imperial Government will decide against granting this form of government just now. The next procedure will probably be a request for representative government under the Crown or some modification of the Charter, and for an Imperial loan. Rhodesia has no borrowing power and the country needs money just as much as its needs men. The adherents of Union claim that on a straight show-down between Crown Colony or Union at the next election, Union will win. From what I gathered in conversation with the leaders of both factions, there would have been a bigger vote, possibly victory for Union, but for the Nationalist movement in South Africa, which I described in a previous chapter. The Rhodesians want no racial entanglements.

Northern Rhodesia has no part in the fight against the Charter. It is only a question of time, however, when she will be merged into Southern Rhodesia for, with the passing of the Company, her destiny becomes identical with that of her sister territory. Northern Rhodesia's chief complaint against the Company was that it did not spend any money within her borders. After reading the story of the crusade for Responsible Government you can understand the reason why.

Whatever happens, Charter rule in Rhodesia is doomed and the great Company, born of the vision and imperialism of Cecil Rhodes, and which battled with the wild man in the wilderness, will eventually vanish from the category of corporations. But Rhodesia remains a thriving part of the British Empire and the dream of the founder is realized.



### III

Rhodesia produces much more than trouble for the Chartered Company. She is pre-eminently a land of ranches and farms. Here you get still another parallel with the United States because it is no uncommon thing to find a farm of 50,000 acres or more.

I doubt if any other new region in the world contains a finer or sturdier manhood than Rhodesia. Like the land itself it is a stronghold of youth. Likewise, no other colony, and for that matter, no other matured country exercises such a rigid censorship upon settlers. Until the high cost of living disorganized all economic standards, no one could establish himself in Rhodesia without a minimum capital of £1,000. So far as farming is concerned, this is now increased to £2,000. Therefore, you do not see the signs of failure which so often dot the semi-virgin landscape. Knowing this, you can understand why the immigration inspector gives the incoming travellers a rigid cross-examination at the frontier.

Also it is simon-pure British, and more like Natal in this respect than any other territory under the Union-jack. I had a convincing demonstration in a personal experience. I made a speech at the Bulawayo Club. The notice was short but I was surprised to find more than a hundred men assembled after dinner, many in evening clothes. Some had travelled all day on horseback or in buckboards to get there, others had come hundreds of miles by motor car.

I never addressed a more responsive audience. What impressed me was the kindling spirit of affection they manifested for the Mother Country. In conversation with many of them afterwards it was interesting to hear the sons of settlers referring to the England that they had never seen, as "home." That night I realized as never before,—not even amid the agony and sacrifice of the Somme or the Ancre in France,—one reason why the British Empire is great and why, despite all muddling, it carries on. It lies in the feeling of imperial kinship far out at the frontiers of civilization. The colonial is in many respects a more devoted loyalist than the man at home.

Wherever I went I found the Rhodesian agriculturist—and he constitutes the bulk of the white population,—essentially modern in his methods. He reminds me more of the Kansas farmer than any other alien agriculturists that I have met. He uses tractors and does things in a big way. There is a trail of gasoline all over the country. Motorcycles have become an ordinary means of transport for district officials and engineers, who fly about over the native paths that are often the merest tracks. You find these machines in the remotest regions. The light motor car is also beginning to be looked upon as a necessary part of the outfit of the farmer.

There was a time when the average Rhodesian believed that gold was the salvation of the country. Repeated "booms" and the inevitable losses have brought the people to agree with the opinion of one of the pioneers, that "the true wealth of the country lies in the top twelve inches of the soil." Agriculture is surpassing mining as the principal industry.

The staple agricultural product is maize, which is corn in the American phraseology. Until a few years ago the bulk of it was consumed at home. Recently, however, on account of the farm expansion, there is an increasing surplus for export to the Union of South Africa, the Belgian Congo, and even to Europe.

The facts about maize are worth considering. Every year 200,000,000 bags, each weighing 200 pounds, are consumed throughout the world. Heretofore the principal sources of supply have been the Argentine and the United States. We have come to the time, however, when we absorb practically our whole crop. Formerly we exported about 10,000,000 bags. There is no decrease in corn consumption despite prohibition. Hence Rhodesia is bound to loom large in the situation. Last year she produced more than a million bags. Maize is a crop that revels in sunshine and in Rhodesia the sun shines brilliantly throughout the year practically without variation. This enables the product to be sun-dried.

Other important crops are tobacco, beans, peanuts (which are invariably called monkey nuts in that part of the universe), wheat and oranges. Under irrigation, citrus fruits, oats and barley do well.

Cattle are a bulwark of Rhodesian prosperity. The immense pasturage areas are reminiscent of Texas and Montana. For a hundred years before the white settlers came, the Matabeles and the Mashonas raised live stock. The natives still own about 700,000 head, nearly as many as the whites. I was interested to find that the British South Africa Company has imported a number of Texas ranchmen to act as cattle experts and advise the ranchers generally. This is due to a desire to begin a competition with the Argentine and the United States in chilled and frozen meats. One of the greatest British manufactures of beef extracts owns half a dozen ranches in Rhodesia and it is not unlikely that American meat men will follow. Mr. J. Ogden Armour is said to be keenly interested in the country with the view of expanding the resources of the Chicago packers. This is one result of the World War, which has caused the producer of food everywhere to bestir himself and insure future supplies.

In connection with Rhodesian farming and cattle-raising is a situation well worthy of emphasis. There is no labour problem. You find, for example, that miracle of miracles which is embodied in a native at work. It is in sharp contrast with South Africa and the Congo, where, with millions of coloured people it is almost impossible to get help. The Rhodesian black still remains outside the leisure class. Whether it is due to his fear of the whites or otherwise, he is an active member of the productive order.

The native will work for the white man but, save to raise enough maize for himself, he will not become an agriculturist. I heard a typical story about Lewaniki, Chief of the Barotses, who once ruled a large part of what is now Northern Rhodesia. Someone asked him to get his people to raise cotton. His answer was:

"What is the use? They cannot eat it."

In Africa the native's world never extends beyond his stomach. I was soon to find costly evidence of this in the Congo.

The African native is quite a character. He is not only a born actor but has a quaint humor. In the center of the main street at Bulawayo is a bronze statue of Cecil Rhodes, bareheaded, and with his face turned toward the North. Just as

soon as it was unveiled the Matabeles expressed considerable astonishment over it. They could not understand why the figure never moved. Shortly afterwards a great drought came. A native chief went to see the Resident Commissioner and solemnly told him that he was quite certain that there would be no rain "until they put a hat on Mr. Rhodes' head."

The Lewaniki anecdote reminds me of an admirable epigram that was produced in Rhodesia. Out there food is commonly known as "skoff," just as "chop" is the equivalent in the Congo. A former Resident Commissioner, noted for the keenness of his wit, once asked a travelling missionary to dine with him. After the meal the guest insisted upon holding a religious service at the table. In speaking of the performance the Commissioner said: "My guest came to 'skoff' and remained to pray."

Whenever you visit a new land you almost invariably discover mental alertness and progressiveness that often put the older civilizations to shame. Let me illustrate. Go to England or France today and you touch the really tragic aftermath of the war. You see thousands of demobilized officers and men vainly searching for work. Many are reduced to the extremity of begging. It has become an acute and poignant problem, that is not without its echo over here.

Rhodesia, through the British South Africa Company, is doing its bit toward solution. It has set aside 500,000 acres which are being allotted free of charge to approved soldier and sailor settlers from overseas. Not only are they being given the land but they are provided with expert advice and supervision. The former service men who are unable to borrow capital with which to exploit the land, are merged into a scheme by which they serve an apprenticeship for pay on the established farms and ranches until they are able to shift for themselves.

The Chartered Company, despite its political machine, has developed Rhodesia "on its own," and in rather striking fashion. It operates dairies, gold mines, citrus estates, nurseries, ranches, tobacco warehouses, abattoirs, cold storage plants and dams, which insures adequate water supply in various sections. It is a profitable example of constructive paternalism whose results will be increasingly evident long after the famous Charter has passed into history.

No phase of the Company's activities is more important than its construction of the Rhodesian railways. They represent a double-barrelled private ownership in that they were built and are operated by the Company. There are nearly 2,600 miles of track. One section of the system begins down at Vryburg in Bechuanaland, where it connects with the South African Railways, and extends straight northward through Bulawayo and Victoria Falls to the Congo border. The other starts at Beira on the Indian Ocean and runs west through Salisbury, the capital, to Bulawayo.

These railways have a remarkable statistical distinction in that there is one mile of track for every thirteen white inhabitants. No other system in the world can duplicate it. The Union of South Africa comes nearest with 143 white inhabitants per mile or just eleven times as many. Canada has 27, Australia 247, the United States and New Zealand 400 each, while the United Kingdom has over 200 inhabitants for every mile of line.

Rhodesia is highly mineralized. Coal occurs in three areas and one of them, Wankie,—a vast field,—is extensively operated. Gold is found over the greater part of the country. Here you not only touch an American interest but you enter upon the region that Rider Haggard introduced to readers as the setting of some of his most famous romances. We will deal with the practical side first.

Rhodes had great hopes of Rhodesia as a gold-producing country. He wanted the economic value of the country to rank with the political. Thousands of years ago the natives dug mines and many of these ancient workings are still to be seen. They never exceed forty or fifty feet in depth. Many leading authorities claimed that the South Arabians of the Kingdom of Saba often referred to in the Bible were the pioneers in the Rhodesian gold fields and sold the output to the Phoenicians. Others contended that the Phoenicians themselves delved here. Until recently it was also maintained by some scientists and Biblical scholars that modern Southern Rhodesia was the famed land of Ophir, whence came the gold and precious stones that decked the persons and palaces of Solomon and David. This, however, has been disproved, and Ophir is still the butt of archaeological dispute. It has been "located" in Arabia, Spain, Peru, India and South-East Africa.

Rhodes knew all about the old diggings so he engaged John Hays Hammond, the American engineer, to accompany him on a trip through Rhodesia in 1894 and make an investigation of the workings. His report stated that the rock mines were undoubtedly ancient, that the greatest skill in mining had been displayed and that scores of millions of pounds worth of the precious metal had been extracted. It also proved that practically all this treasure had been exported from the country for no visible traces remain. This substantiates the theory that perhaps it did go to the Phoenicians or to a potentate like King Solomon. Hammond wrote the mining laws of Rhodesia which are an adaptation of the American code.

The Rhodesian gold mines, which are operated by the Chartered Company and by individuals, have never fully realized their promise. One reason, so men like Hammond tell me, is that they are over-capitalized and are small and scattered. Despite this handicap the country has produced £45,227,791 of gold since 1890. The output in 1919 was worth £2,500,000. In 1915 it was nearly £4,000,000.

Small diamonds in varying quantities have also been found in Rhodesia. In exchange for having subscribed heavily to the first issue of British South Africa Company stock, the DeBeers which Rhodes formed received a monopoly on the diamond output and with it the assurance of a rigid enforcement of the so-called Illicit Diamond Buying Act. This law, more commonly known as "I. D. B." and which has figured in many South African novels, provided drastic punishment for dishonest dealing in the stones. More than one South African millionaire owed the beginnings of his fortune to evasion of this law.

Just about the time that Rhodes made the Rhodesian diamond deal a prospector came to him and said: "If I bring you a handful of rough diamonds what will I get?"

"Fifteen years," was the ready retort. He was never at a loss for an answer.

We can now turn to the really romantic side of the Rhodesian mineral deposits. One of the favorite pilgrimages of the tourist is to the Zimbabwe ruins, located about seventeen miles from Victoria in Southern Rhodesia. They are the remains of an ancient city and must at various times have been the home of large populations. There seems little doubt that Zimbabwe was the work of a

prehistoric and long-forgotten people.

Over it hangs a mantle of mystery which the fictionist has employed to full, and at times thrilling advantage. In this vicinity were the "King Solomon's Mines," that Rider Haggard wrote about in what is perhaps his most popular book. Here came "Allan Quartermain" in pursuit of love and treasure. The big hill at Zimbabwe provided the residence of "She," the lovely and disappearing lady who had to be obeyed. The ruins in the valley are supposed to be those of "the Dead City" in the same romance. The interesting feature of all this is that "She" and "King Solomon's Mines" were written in the early eighties when comparatively nothing was known of the country. Yet Rider Haggard, with that instinct which sometimes guides the romancer, wrote fairly accurate descriptions of the country long before he had ever heard of its actual existence. Thus imagination preceded reality.

The imagination miracles disclose in the Haggard books are surpassed by the actual wonder represented by Victoria Falls. Everybody has heard of this stupendous spectacle in Rhodesia but few people see it because it is so far away. I beheld it on my way from Bulawayo to the Congo. Like the Grand Canyon of the Colorado, it baffles description.

The first white man to visit the cataract was Dr. Livingstone, who named it in honor of his Queen. This was in 1855. For untold years the natives of the region had trembled at its fury. They called it *Mois-oa-tunga*, which means "Smoke That Sounds." When you see the falls you can readily understand why they got this name. The mist is visible ten miles away and the terrific roar of the falling waters can be heard even farther.

The fact that the casual traveller can see Victoria Falls from the train is due entirely to the foresight and the imagination of Cecil Rhodes. He knew the publicity value that the cataract would have for Rhodesia and he combined the utilitarian with his love of the romantic. In planning the Rhodesian railroad, therefore, he insisted that the bridge across the gorge of the Zambesi into which the mighty waters flow after their fall, must be sufficiently near to enable the spray to wet the railway carriages. The experts said it was impossible but Rhodes had his way, just as Harriman's will prevailed over that of trained engineers in

the construction of the bridge across Great Salt Lake.

The bridge across the Zambesi is a fit mate in audacity to the falls themselves. It is the highest in the world for it rises 400 feet above the low water level. Its main parabolic arch is a 500 foot span while the total length is 650 feet. Although its construction was fraught with contrast hazard it only cost two lives, despite the fact that seven hundred white men and two thousand natives were employed on it. In the building of the Firth of Forth bridge which was much less dangerous, more than fifty men were killed.

I first saw the Falls in the early morning when the brilliant African sun was turned full on this sight of sights. It was at the end of the wet season and the flow was at maximum strength. The mist was so great that at first I could scarcely see the Falls. Slowly but defiantly the foaming face broke through the veil. Niagara gives you a thrill but this toppling avalanche awes you into absolute silence.

The Victoria Falls are exactly twice as broad and two and one-half times as high as Niagara Falls. This means that they are over a mile in breadth and four hundred and twenty feet high. The tremendous flow has only one small outlet about 100 yards wide. The roar and turmoil of this world of water as it crashes into the chasm sets up what is well called "The Boiling Pot." From this swirling melee the Zambesi rushes with unbridled fury through a narrow and deep gorge, extending with many windings for forty miles.

In the presence of this marvel, wars, elections, economic upheavals, the high cost of living, prohibition,—all "that unrest which men miscall delight"—fade into insignificance. Life itself seems a small and pitiful thing. You are face to face with a force of Nature that is titanic, terrifying, and irresistible.

[THE GRAVE OF CECIL RHODES](#)  
**THE GRAVE OF CECIL RHODES**



## IV

Since we bid farewell to Cecil Rhodes in this chapter after having almost continuously touched his career from the moment we reached Capetown, let us make a final measure of his human side,—and he was intensely human—particularly with reference to Rhodesia, which is so inseparably associated with him. His passion for the country that bore his name exceeded his interest in any of his other undertakings. He liked the open life of the veldt where he travelled in a sort of gypsy wagon and camped for the night wherever the mood dictated. It enabled him to gratify his fondness for riding and shooting.

He was always accompanied by a remarkable servant named Tony, a half-breed in whom the Portuguese strain predominated. Tony bought his master's clothes, paid his bills, and was a court of last resort "below stairs." Rhodes declared that his man could produce a satisfactory meal almost out of thin air.

Rhodes and Tony were inseparable. Upon one occasion Tony accompanied him when he was commanded by Queen Victoria to lodge at Sandringham. While there Rhodes asked Tony what time he could get breakfast, whereupon the servant replied:

"Royalty does not breakfast, sir, but you can have it in the dining-room at half past nine." Tony seemed to know everything.

Throughout Rhodesia I found many of Rhodes' old associates who affectionately referred to him as "The Old Man." I was able to collect what seemed to be some new Rhodes stories. A few have already been related. Here is another which shows his quickness in capitalizing a situation.

In the days immediately following the first Matabele war Rhodes had more trouble with concession-hunters than with the savages, the Boers, or the Portuguese. Nearly every free-lance in the territory produced some fake document to which Lobengula's alleged mark was affixed and offered it to Rhodes at an excessive price.

One of these gentry framed a plan by which one of the many sons of Lobengula was to return to Matabeleland, claim his royal rights, and create trouble generally. The whole idea was to start an uprising and derange the machinery of the British South Africa Company. The name of the son was N'jube and at the time the plan was devised he held a place as messenger in the diamond fields at Kimberley. By the system of intelligence that he maintained, Rhodes learned of the frame-up, the whereabouts of the boy, and furthermore, that he was in love with a Fingo girl. These Fingoes were a sort of bastard slave people. Marriage into the tribe was a despised thing, and by a native of royal blood, meant the abrogation of all his claims to the succession.

Rhodes sent for N'jube and asked him if he wanted to marry the Fingo girl. When he replied that he did, the great man said: "Go down to the DeBeers office, get £50 and marry the girl. I will then give you a job for life and build you a house."

N'jube took the hint and the money and married the girl. Rhodes now sent the following telegram to the conspirator at Bulawayo:

"Your friend N'jube was divided between love and empire, but he has decided to marry the Fingo girl. It is better that he should settle down in Kimberley and be occupied in creating a family than to plot at Bulawayo to stab you in the stomach."

This ended the conspiracy, and N'jube lived happily and peacefully ever afterwards.

Rhodes was an incorrigible imperialist as this story shows. Upon one occasion at Bulawayo he was discussing the Carnegie Library idea with his friend and associate, Sir Abe Bailey, a leading financial and political figure in the Cape Colony.

"What would you do if you had Carnegie's money?" asked Bailey.

"I wouldn't waste it on libraries," he replied. "I would seize a South American Republic and annex it to the United States."

Rhodes had great admiration for America. He once said to Bailey: "The greatest

thing in the world would be the union of the English-speaking people. I wouldn't mind if Washington were the capital." He believed implicitly in the invincibility of the Anglo-Saxon race, and he gave his life and his fortune to advance the British part of it.

For the last I have reserved the experience that will always rank first in my remembrance of Rhodesia. It was my visit to the grave of Rhodes. Most people who go to Rhodesia make this pilgrimage, for in the well-known tourist language of Mr. Cook, like Victoria Falls, it is "one of the things to see." I was animated by a different motive. I had often read about it and I longed to view the spot that so eloquently symbolized the vision and the imagination of the man I admired.

The grave is about twenty-eight miles from Bulawayo, in the heart of the Matopo Hills. You follow the road along which the body was carried nineteen years ago. You see the native hut where Rhodes often lived and in which the remains rested for the night on the final journey. You pass from the green lowlands to the bare frontiers of the rocky domain where the Matabeles fled after the second war and where the Father of Rhodesia held his historic parleys with them.

Soon the way becomes so difficult that you must leave the motor and continue on foot. The Matopos are a wild and desolate range. It is not until you are well beyond the granite outposts that there bursts upon you an immense open area,—a sort of amphitheatre in which the Druids might have held their weird ritual. Directly ahead you see a battlement of boulders projected by some immemorial upheaval. Intrenched between them is the spot where Rhodes rests and which is marked by a brass plate bearing the words: "Here Lie the Remains of Cecil John Rhodes." In his will he directed that the site be chosen and even wrote the simple inscription for the cover.

When you stand on this eminence and look out on the grim, brooding landscape, you not only realize why Rhodes called it "The View of the World," but you also understand why he elected to sleep here. The loneliness and grandeur of the environment, with its absence of any sign of human life and habitation, convey that sense of aloofness which, in a man like Rhodes, is the inevitable penalty that

true greatness exacts. The ages seem to be keeping vigil with his spirit.

For eighteen years Rhodes slept here in solitary state. In 1920 the remains of Dr. Jameson were placed in a grave hewn out of the rock and located about one hundred feet from the spot where his old friend rests. It is peculiarly fitting that these two men who played such heroic part in the rise of Rhodesia should repose within a stone's throw of each other.

During these last years I have seen some of the great things. They included the British Grand Fleet in battle array, Russia at the daybreak of democracy, the long travail of Verdun and the Somme, the first American flag on the battlefields of France, Armistice Day amid the tragedy of war, and all the rest of the panorama that those momentous days disclosed. But nothing perhaps was more moving than the silence and majesty that invested the grave of Cecil Rhodes. Instinctively there came to my mind the lines about him that Kipling wrote in "The Burial":

It is his will that he look forth  
Across the world he won—  
The granite of the ancient North—  
Great spaces washed with sun.

When I reached the bottom of the long incline on my way out I looked back. The sun was setting and those sentinel boulders bulked in the dying light. They seemed to incarnate something of the might and power of the personality that shaped Rhodesia, and made of it an annex of Empire.

[A KATANGA COPPER MINE](#)  
**A KATANGA COPPER MINE**

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# **CHAPTER IV—THE CONGO TODAY**

## I

Unfold the map of Africa and you see a huge yellow area sprawling over the Equator, reaching down to Rhodesia on the south-east, and converging to a point on the Atlantic Coast. Equal in size to all Latin and Teutonic Europe, it is the abode of 6,000 white men and 12,000,000 blacks. No other section of that vast empire of mystery is so packed with hazard and hardship, nor is any so bound up with American enterprise. Across it Stanley made his way in two epic expeditions. Livingstone gave it the glamour of his spiritualizing influence. Fourteen nations stood sponsor at its birth as a Free State and the whole world shook with controversy about its administration. Once the darkest domain of the Dark Continent, it is still the stronghold of the resisting jungle and the last frontier of civilization. It is the Belgian Congo.

During these past years the veil has been lifted from the greater part of Africa. We are familiar with life and customs in the British, French, and to a certain degree, the Portuguese and one-time German colonies. But about the land inseparably associated with the economic statesmanship of King Leopold there still hangs a shroud of uncertainty as to régime and resource. Few people go there and its literature, save that which grew out of the atrocity campaign, is meager and unsatisfactory. To the vast majority of persons, therefore, the country is merely a name—a dab of colour on the globe. Its very distance lends enchantment and heightens the lure that always lurks in the unknown. What is it like? What is its place in the universal productive scheme? What of its future?

I went to the Congo to find out. My journey there was the logical sequel to my visit to the Union of South Africa and Rhodesia, which I have already described. It seemed a pity not to take a plunge into the region that I had read about in the books of Stanley. In my childhood I heard him tell the story of some of his African experiences. The man and his narrative were unforgettable for he incarnated both the ideal and the adventure of journalism. He cast the spell of the Congo River over me and I lingered to see this mother of waters. Thus it came about that I not only followed Stanley's trail through the heart of Equatorial

Africa but spent weeks floating down the historic stream, which like the rivers that figured in the Great War, has a distinct and definite human quality. The Marne, the Meuse, and the Somme are the Rivers of Valour. The Congo is the River of Adventure.

In writing, as in everything else, preparedness is all essential. I learned the value of carrying proper credentials during the war, when every frontier and police official constituted himself a stumbling-block to progress. For the South African end of my adventure I provided myself with letters from Lloyd George and Smuts. In the Congo I realized that I would require equally powerful agencies to help me on my way. Wandering through sparsely settled Central Africa with its millions of natives, scattered white settlements, and restricted and sometimes primitive means of transport, was a far different proposition than travelling in the Cape Colony, the Transvaal, or Rhodesia, where there are through trains and habitable hotels.

I knew that in the Congo the State was magic, and the King's name one to conjure with. Accordingly, I obtained what amounted to an order from the Belgian Colonial Office to all functionaries to help me in every possible way. This order, I might add, was really a command from King Albert, with whom I had an hour's private audience at Brussels before I sailed. As I sat in the simple office of the Palace and talked with this shy, tall, blonde, and really kingly-looking person, I could not help thinking of the last time I saw him. It was at La Panne during that terrible winter of 1916-1917, when the Germans were at the high tide of their success. The Belgian ruler had taken refuge in this bleak, sea-swept corner of Belgium and the only part of the country that had escaped the invader. He lived in a little ch<sup>^</sup>alet near the beach. Every day the King walked up and down on the sands while German aeroplanes flew overhead and the roar of the guns at Dixmude smote the ear. He was then leading what seemed to be a forlorn hope and he betrayed his anxiety in face and speech. Now I beheld him fresh and buoyant, and monarch of the only country in Europe that had really settled down to work.

King Albert asked me many questions about my trip. He told me of his own journey through the Congo in 1908 (he was then Prince Albert), when he

covered more than a thousand miles on foot. He said that he was glad that an American was going to write something about the Congo at first hand and he expressed his keen appreciation of the work of American capital in his big colony overseas. "I like America and Americans," he said, "and I hope that your country will not forget Europe." There was a warm clasp of the hand and I was off on the first lap of the journey that was to reel off more than twenty-six thousand miles of strenuous travel before I saw my little domicile in New York again.

Before we invade the Congo let me briefly outline its history. It can be told in a few words although the narrative of its exploitations remains a serial without end. Prior to Stanley's memorable journey of exploration across Equatorial Africa which he described in "Through the Dark Continent," what is now the Congo was a blank spot on the map. No white man had traversed it. In the fifties Livingstone had opened up part of the present British East Africa and Nyassaland. In the Luapula and its tributaries he discovered the headwaters of the Congo River and then continued on to Victoria Falls and Rhodesia. After Stanley found the famous missionary at Ujiji on Lake Tanganyika in 1872, he returned to Zanzibar. Hence the broad expanse of Central Africa from Nyassaland westward practically remained undiscovered until Stanley crossed it between 1874 and 1877, when he travelled from Stanley Falls, where the Congo River actually begins, down its expanse to the sea.

As soon as Stanley's articles about the Congo began to appear, King Leopold, who was a shrewd business man, saw an opportunity for the expansion of his little country. Under his auspices several International Committees dedicated to African study were formed. He then sent Stanley back to the Congo in 1879, to organize a string of stations from the ocean up to Stanley Falls, now Stanleyville. In 1885 the famous Berlin Congress of Nations, presided over by Bismarck, recognized the Congo Free State, accepted Leopold as its sovereign, and the jungle domain took its place among recognized governments. The principal purposes animating the founders were the suppression of the slave trade and the conversion of the territory into a combined factory and a market for all the nations. It was largely due to Belgian initiative that the traffic in human beings which denuded all Central Africa of its bone and sinew every year, was brought



to an end.

The world is more or less familiar with subsequent Congo history. In 1904 arose the first protest against the so-called atrocities perpetrated on the blacks, and the Congo became the center of an international dispute that nearly lost Belgium her only colonial possession. In the light of the revelations brought about by the Great War, and to which I have referred in a previous chapter, it is obvious that a considerable part of this crusade had its origin in Germany and was fomented by Germanophiles of the type of Sir Roger Casement, who was hanged in the Tower of London. During the World War E. D. Morel, his principal associate in the atrocity campaign, served a jail sentence in England for attempting to smuggle a seditious document into an enemy country.

With the atrocity business we are not concerned. The only atrocities that I saw in the Congo were the slaughter of my clothes on the native washboard, usually a rock, and the American jitney that broke down and left me stranded in the Kasai jungle. As a matter of fact, the Belgian rule in the Congo has swung round to another extreme, for the Negro there has more freedom of movement and less responsibility for action than in any other African colony. To round out this brief history, the Congo was ceded to Belgium in 1908 and has been a Belgian colony ever since.

We can now go on with the journey. From Bulawayo I travelled northward for three days past Victoria Falls and Broken Hill, through the undeveloped reaches of Northern Rhodesia, where you can sometimes see lion-tracks from the car windows, and where the naked Barotses emerge from the wilds and stare in big-eyed wonder at the passing trains. Until recently the telegraph service was considerably impaired by the curiosity of elephants who insisted upon knocking down the poles.

While I was in South Africa alarming reports were published about a strike in the Congo and I was afraid that it would interfere with my journey. This strike was without doubt one of the most unique in the history of all labor troubles. The whole Congo administration "walked out," when their request for an increase in pay was refused. The strikers included Government agents, railway, telegraph and telephone employes, and steamboat captains. Even the one-time cannibals

employed on all public construction quit work. It was a natural procedure for them. Not a wheel turned; no word went over the wires; navigation on the rivers ceased. The country was paralyzed. Happily for me it was settled before I left Bulawayo.

LORD LEVERHULME  
**LORD LEVERHULME**  
ROBERT WILLIAMS  
**ROBERT WILLIAMS**

Late at night I crossed the Congo border and stopped for the customs at Sakania. At once I realized the potency that lay in my royal credentials for all traffic was tied up until I was expedited. I also got the initial surprise of the many that awaited me in this part of the world. In the popular mind the Congo is an annex of the Inferno. I can vouch for the fact that some sections break all heat records. The air that greeted me, however, might have been wafted down from Greenland's icy mountain, for I was chilled to the bone. In the flickering light of the station the natives shivered in their blankets. The atmosphere was anything but tropical yet I was almost within striking distance of the Equator. The reason for this frigidity was that I had entered the confines of the Katanga, the most healthful and highly developed province of the Congo and a plateau four thousand feet above sea level.

The next afternoon I arrived at Elizabethville, named for the Queen of the Belgians, capital of the province, and center of the copper activity. Here I touched two significant things. One was the group of American engineers who have developed the technical side of mining in the Katanga as elsewhere in the Congo; the other was a contact with the industry which produces a considerable part of the wealth of the Colony.

There is a wide impression that the Congo is entirely an agricultural country. Although it has unlimited possibilities in this direction, the reverse, for the moment, is true. The 900,000 square miles of area (it is eighty-eight times the size of Belgium) have scarcely been scraped by the hand of man, although Nature has been prodigal in her share of the development. Wild rubber, the gathering of which loosed the storm about King Leopold's head, is nearly exhausted because of the one-time ruthless harvesting. Cotton and coffee are infant industries. The principal product of the soil, commercially, is the fruit of the palm tree and here Nature again does most of the ground work.

Mining is, in many respects, the chief operation and the Katanga, which is really

one huge mine, principally copper, is the most prosperous region so far as bulk of output is concerned. Since this area figures so prominently in the economic annals of the country it is worth more than passing attention. Like so many parts of Africa, its exploitation is recent. For years after Livingstone planted the gospel there, it continued to be the haunt of warlike tribes. The earliest white visitors observed that the natives wore copper ornaments and trafficked in a rude St. Andrew's cross—it was the coin of the country—fashioned out of metal. When prospectors came through in the eighties and nineties they found scores of old copper mines which had been worked by the aborigines many decades ago. Before the advent of civilization the Katanga blacks dealt mainly in slaves and in copper.

The real pioneer of development in the Katanga is an Englishman, Robert Williams, a friend and colleague of Cecil Rhodes, and who constructed, as you may possibly recall, the link in the Cape-to-Cairo Railway from Broken Hill in Northern Rhodesia to the Congo border. He has done for Congo copper what Lord Leverhulme has accomplished for palm fruit and Thomas F. Ryan for diamonds. Congo progress is almost entirely due to alien capital.

Williams, who was born in Aberdeen, Scotland, went out to Africa in 1881 to take charge of some mining machinery at one of the Kimberley diamond mines. Here he met Rhodes and an association began which continued until the death of the empire builder. On his death-bed Rhodes asked Williams to continue the Cape-to-Cairo project. In the acquiescence to this request the Katanga indirectly owes much of its advance. Thus the constructive influence of the Colossus of South Africa extends beyond the British dominions.

In building the Broken Hill Railway Williams was prompted by two reasons. One was to carry on the Rhodes project; the other was to link up what he believed to be a whole new mineral world to the needs of man. Nor was he working in the dark. Late in the nineties he had sent George Grey, a brother of Sir Edward, now Viscount Grey, through the present Katanga region on a prospecting expedition. Grey discovered large deposits of copper and also tin, lead, iron, coal, platinum, and diamonds. Williams now organized the company known as the Tanganyika Concessions, which became the instigator of Congo

copper mining. Subsequently the Union Miniere du Haut Katanga was formed by leading Belgian colonial capitalists and the Tanganyika Concessions acquired more than forty per cent of its capital. The Union Miniere took over all the concessions and discoveries of the British corporation. The Union Miniere is now the leading industrial institution in the Katanga and its story is really the narrative of a considerable phase of Congo development.

Within ten years it has grown from a small prospecting outfit in the wilderness, two hundred and fifty miles from a railway, to an industry employing at the time of my visit more than 1,000 white men and 15,000 blacks. It operates four completely equipped mines which produced nearly 30,000 tons of copper in 1917, and a smelter with an annual capacity of 40,000 tons of copper. A concentrator capable of handling 4,000 tons of ore per day is nearing completion. This bustling industrial community was the second surprise that the Congo disclosed.

Equally remarkable is the mushroom growth of Elizabethville, the one wonder town of the Congo. In 1910, when the railway arrived, it was a geographical expression,—a spot in the jungle dominated by the huge ant-hills that you find throughout Central Africa, some of them forty feet high. The white population numbered thirty. I found it a thriving place with over 2,000 whites and 12,000 blacks. There are one third as many white people in the Katanga Province as in all the rest of the Congo combined, and its area is scarcely a fourth of that of the colony.

The father of Elizabethville is General Emile Wangermee, one of the picturesque figures in Congo history. He came out in the early days of the Free State, fought natives, and played a big part in the settlement of the country. He has been Governor-General of the Colony, Vice-Governor-General of the Katanga and is now Honorary Vice-Governor. In the primitive period he went about, after the Congo fashion, on a bicycle, in flannel shirt and leggings and he continued this rough-and-ready attire when he became a high-placed civil servant.

Upon one occasion it was announced that the Vice-Governor of the Katanga would visit Kambove. The station agent made elaborate preparations for his reception. Shortly before the time set for his arrival a man appeared on the

platform looking like one of the many prospectors who frequented the country. The station agent approached him and said, "You will have to move on. We are expecting the Vice-Governor of the Katanga." The supposed prospector refused to move and the agent threatened to use force. He was horrified a few minutes later to find his rough customer being received by all the functionaries of the district. Wangermee had arrived ahead of time and had not bothered to change his clothes.

When I rode in a motor car down Elizabethville's broad, electric-lighted avenues and saw smartly-dressed women on the sidewalks, beheld Belgians playing tennis on well-laid-out courts on one side, and Englishmen at golf on the other, it was difficult to believe that ten years ago this was the bush. I lunched in comfortable brick houses and dined at night in a club where every man wore evening clothes. I kept saying to myself, "Is this really the Congo?" Everywhere I heard English spoken. This was due to the large British interest in the Union Miniere and the presence of so many American engineers. The Katanga is, with the exception of certain palm fruit areas, the bulwark of British interests in the Congo. The American domain is the Upper Kasai district.

Conspicuous among the Americans at Elizabethville was Preston K. Horner, who constructed the smelter plant and who was made General Manager of the Union Miniere in 1913. He spans the whole period of Katanga development for he first arrived in 1909. Associated with him were various Americans including Frank Kehew, Superintendent of the smelter, Thomas Carnahan, General Superintendent of Mines, Daniel Butner, Superintendent of the Kambove Mine, the largest of the Katanga group, Thomas Yale, who is in charge of the construction of the immense concentration plant at Likasi, and A. Brooks, Manager of the Western Mine. For some years A. E. Wheeler, a widely-known American engineer, has been Consulting Engineer of the Union Miniere, with Frederick Snow as assistant. Since my return from Africa Horner has retired as General Manager and Wheeler has become the ranking American. Practically all the Yankee experts in the Katanga are graduates of the Anaconda or Utah Mines.

With Horner I travelled by motor through the whole Katanga copper belt. I visited, first of all, the famous Star of the Congo Mine, eight miles from

Elizabethville, and which was the cornerstone of the entire metal development. Next came the immense excavation at Kambove where I watched American steam shovels in charge of Americans, gouging the copper ore out of the sides of the hills. I saw the huge concentrating plant rising almost like magic out of the jungle at Likasi. Here again an American was in control. At Fungurume I spent the night in a native house in the heart of one of the loveliest of valleys whose verdant walls will soon be gashed by shovels and discoloured with ore oxide. Over all the area the Anglo-Saxon has laid his galvanizing hand. One reason is that there are few Belgian engineers of large mining experience. Another is that the American, by common consent, is the one executive who gets things done in the primitive places.

I cannot leave the Congo copper empire without referring to another Robert Williams achievement which is not without international significance. Like other practical men of affairs with colonial experience, he realized long before the outbreak of the Great War something of the extent and menace of the German ambition in Africa. As I have previously related, the Kaiser blocked his scheme to run the Cape-to-Cairo Railway between Lake Tanganyika and Lake Kivu, after King Leopold had granted him the concession. Williams wanted to help Rhodes and he wanted to help himself. His chief problem was to get the copper from the Katanga to Europe in the shortest possible time. Most of it is refined in England and Belgium. At present it goes out by way of Bulawayo and is shipped from the port of Beira in Portuguese East Africa. This involves a journey of 9,514 miles from Kambove to London. How was this haul to be shortened through an agency that would be proof against the German intrigue and ingenuity?

[ON THE LUALABA](#)  
**ON THE LUALABA**  
[A VIEW ON THE KASAI](#)  
**A VIEW ON THE KASAI**

Williams cast his eye over Africa. On the West Coast he spotted Lobito Bay, a land-locked harbour twenty miles north of Benguella, one of the principal parts of Angola, a Portuguese colony. From it he ran a line straight from Kambove across the wilderness and found that it covered a distance of approximately

1,300 miles. He said to himself, "This is the natural outlet of the Katanga and the short-cut to England and Belgium." He got a concession from the Portuguese Government and work began. The Germans tried in every way to block the project for it interfered with their scheme to "benevolently" assimilate Angola.

At the time of my visit to the Congo three hundred and twenty miles of the Benguella Railway, as it is called, had been constructed and a section of one hundred miles or more was about to be started. The line will pass through Ruwe, which is an important center of gold production in the Katanga, and connect up with the Katanga Railway just north of Kambove. It is really a link in the Cape-to-Cairo system and when completed will shorten the freight haul from the copper fields to London by three thousand miles, as compared with the present Biera itinerary.

There is every indication that the Katanga will justify the early confidence that Williams had in it and become one of the great copper-producing centers of the world. Experts with whom I have talked in America believe that it can in time reach a maximum output of 150,000 tons a year. The ores are of a very high grade and since the Union Miniere owns more than one hundred mines, of which only six or seven are partially developed, the future seems safe.

Copper is only one phase of the Katanga mineral treasure. Coal, iron, and tin have not only been discovered in quantity but are being mined commercially. Oil-shale is plentiful on the Congo River near Ponthierville and good indications of oil are recorded in other places. The discovery of oil in Central Africa would have a great influence on the development of transportation since it would supply fuel for steamers, railways, and motor transport. There is already a big oil production in Angola and there is little doubt that an important field awaits development in the Congo.

It is not generally realized that Africa today produces the three most valuable of all known minerals in the largest quantities, or has the biggest potentialities. The Rand yields more than fifty per cent of the entire gold supply and ranks as the most valuable of all gold fields. Ninety-five per cent of the diamond output comes from the Kimberley and associated mines, German South-West Africa, and the Congo. The Katanga contains probably the greatest reserve of copper in



existence. Now you can see why the eye of the universe is being focused on this region.

## II

When I left Elizabethville I bade farewell to the comforts of life. I mean, for example, such things as ice, bath-tubs, and running water. There is enough water in the Congo to satisfy the most ardent teetotaler but unfortunately it does not come out of faucets. Most of it flows in rivers, but very little of it gets inside the population, white or otherwise.

Speaking of water brings to mind one of the useful results of such a trip as mine. Isolation in the African wilds gives you a new appreciation of what in civilization is regarded as the commonplace things. Take the simple matter of a hair-cut. There are only two barbers in the whole Congo. One is at Elizabethville and the other at Kinshassa, on the Lower Congo, nearly two thousand miles away. My locks were not shorn for seven weeks. I had to do what little trimming there was done with a safety razor and it involved quite an acrobatic feat. Take shaving. The water in most of the Congo rivers is dirty and full of germs. More than once I lathered my face with mineral water out of a bottle. The Congo River proper is a muddy brown. For washing purposes it must be treated with a few tablets of permanganate of potassium which colours it red. It is like bathing in blood.

Since my journey from Katanga onward was through the heart of Africa, perhaps it may be worth while to tell briefly of the equipment required for such an expedition. Although I travelled for the most part in the greatest comfort that the Colony afforded, it was necessary to prepare for any emergency. In the Congo you must be self-sufficient and absolutely independent of the country. This means that you carry your own bed and bedding (usually a folding camp-bed), bath-tub, food, medicine-chest, and cooking utensils.

No detail was more essential than the mosquito net under which I slept every night for nearly four months. Insects are the bane of Africa. The mosquito carries malaria, and the tsetse fly is the harbinger of that most terrible of diseases, sleeping sickness. Judging from personal experience nearly every

conceivable kind of biting bug infests the Congo. One of the most tenacious and troublesome of the little visitors is the jigger, which has an uncomfortable habit of seeking a soft spot under the toe-nail. Once lodged it is extremely difficult to get him out. These pests are mainly found in sandy soil and give the Negroes who walk about barefooted unending trouble.

No less destructive is the dazzling sun. Five minutes exposure to it without a helmet means a prostration and twenty minutes spells death. Stanley called the country so inseparably associated with his name "Fatal Africa," but he did not mean the death that lay in the murderous black hand. He had in mind the thousand and one dangers that beset the stranger who does not observe the strictest rules of health and diet. From the moment of arrival the body undergoes an entirely new experience. Men succumb because they foolishly think they can continue the habits of civilization. Alcohol is the curse of all the hot countries. The wise man never takes a drink until the sun sets and then, if he continues to be wise, he imbibes only in moderation. The morning "peg" and the lunch-time cocktail have undermined more health in the tropics than all the flies and mosquitoes combined.

The Duke of Wellington recommended a formula for India which may well be applied to the Congo. The doughty old warrior once said:

I know but one recipe for good health in this country, and that is to live moderately, to drink little or no wine, to use exercise, to keep the mind employed, and, if possible, to keep in good humour with the world. The last is the most difficult, for as you have often observed, there is scarcely a good-tempered man in India.

If a man will practice moderation in all things, take five grains of quinine every day, exercise whenever it is possible, and keep his body clean, he has little to fear from the ordinary diseases of a country like the Congo. It is one of the ironies of civilization that after passing unscathed through all the fever country, I caught a cold the moment I got back to steam-heat and all the comforts of home.

No one would think of using ordinary luggage in the Congo. Everything must be packed and conveyed in metal boxes similar to the uniform cases used by British

officers in Egypt and India. This is because the white ant is the prize destroyer of property throughout Africa. He cuts through leather and wood with the same ease that a Southern Negro's teeth lacerate watermelon. Leave a pair of shoes on the ground over night and you will find them riddled in the morning. These ants eat away floors and sometimes cause the collapse of houses by wearing away the wooden supports. Another frequent guest is the driver ant, which travels in armies and frequently takes complete possession of a house. It destroys all the vermin but the human inmates must beat a retreat while the process goes on.

Since my return many people have asked me what books I read in the Congo. The necessity for them was apparent. I had more than three months of constant travelling, often alone, and for the most part on small river boats where there is no deck space for exercise. Mail arrives irregularly and there were no newspapers. After one or two days the unceasing panorama of tropical forests, native villages, and naked savages becomes monotonous. Even the hippopotami which you see in large numbers, the omnipresent crocodile, and the occasional wild elephant, cease to amuse. You are forced to fall back on that unfailing friend and companion, a good book.

I therefore carried with me the following books in handy volume size:—Montaigne's Essays, Palgrave's Golden Treasury of English Verse, Lockhart's Life of Napoleon, Autobiography of Cellini, Don Quixote, The Three Musketeers, Lorna Doone, Prescott's Conquest of Mexico and The Conquest of Peru, Les Miserables, Vanity Fair, Life and Writings of Benjamin Franklin, Pepys' Diary, Carlyle's French Revolution, The Last of the Mohicans, Westward Ho, Bleak House, The Pickwick Papers, A Tale of Two Cities, and Tolstoi's War and Peace. When these became exhausted I was hard put for reading matter. At a post on the Kasai River the only English book I could find was Arnold Bennett's The Pretty Lady, which had fallen into the hands of an official, who was trying to learn English with it. It certainly gave him a hectic start.

### [A STATION SCENE AT KONGOLA](#) **A STATION SCENE AT KONGOLA**

Then, too, there was the eternal servant problem, no less vexing in that land of servants than elsewhere. I had cabled to Horner to engage me two personal

servants or "boys" as they are called in Africa. When I got to Elizabethville I found that he had secured two. In addition to Swahili, the main native tongue in those parts, one spoke English and the other French, the official language in the Congo. I did not like the looks of the English-speaking barbarian so I took a chance on Number Two, whose name was Gerome. He was a so-called "educated" native. I was to find from sad experience that his "education" was largely in the direction of indolence and inefficiency. I thought that by having a boy with whom I had to speak French I could improve my command of the language. Later on I realized my mistake because my French is a non-conductor of profanity.

Gerome had a wife. In the Congo, where all wives are bought, the consort constitutes the husband's fortune, being cook, tiller of the ground, beast-of-burden and slave generally. I had no desire to incumber myself with this black Venus, so I made Gerome promise that he would not take her along. I left him behind at Elizabethville, for I proceeded to Fungurume with Horner by automobile. He was to follow by train with my luggage and have the private car, which I had chartered for the journey to Bukama, ready for me on my arrival. When I showed up at Fungurume the first thing I saw was Gerome's wife, with her ample proportions swathed in scarlet calico, sunning herself on the platform of the car. He could not bring himself to cook his own food although willing enough to cook mine.

I paid Gerome forty Belgian francs a month, which, at the rate of exchange then prevailing, was considerably less than three dollars. I also had to give him a weekly allowance of five francs (about thirty cents) for his food. To the American employer of servants these figures will be somewhat illuminating and startling.

One more human interest detail before we move on. In Africa every white man gets a name from the natives. This appellation usually expresses his chief characteristic. The first title fastened on me was "*Bwana Cha Cha*," which means "The Master Who is Quick." When I first heard this name I thought it was a reflection on my appetite because "*Cha Cha*" is pronounced "Chew Chew." Subsequently, in the Upper Congo and the Kasai I was called "*Mafutta Mingi*,"

which means "Much Fat." I must explain in self-defense that in the Congo I ate much more than usual, first because something in the atmosphere makes you hungry, and second, a good appetite is always an indication of health in the tropics.

Still another name that I bore was "*Tala Tala*," which means spectacles in practically all the Congo dialects. There are nearly two hundred tribes and each has a distinctive tongue. In many sections that I visited the natives had never seen a pair of tortoise shell glasses such as I wear during the day. The children fled from me shrieking in terror and thinking that I was a sorcerer. Even gifts of food, the one universal passport to the native heart, failed to calm their fears.

The Congo native, let me add, is a queer character. The more I saw of him, the greater became my admiration for King Leopold. In his present state the only rule must be a strong rule. No one would ever think of thanking a native for a service. It would be misunderstood because the black man out there mistakes kindness for weakness. You must be firm but just. Now you can see why explorers, upon emerging from long stays in the jungle, appear to be rude and ill-mannered. It is simply because they had to be harsh and at times unfeeling, and it becomes a habit. Stanley, for example, was often called a boor and a brute when in reality he was merely hiding a fine nature behind the armour necessary to resist native imposition and worse.

### III

The private car on which I travelled from Fungurume to Bukama was my final taste of luxury. When Horner waved me a good-bye north I realized that I was divorcing myself from comfort and companionship. In thirty hours I was in sun-scorched Bukama, the southern rail-head of the Cape-to-Cairo Route and my real jumping-off place before plunging into the mysteries of Central Africa.

Here begins the historic Lualaba, which is the initial link in the almost endless chain of the Congo River. I at once went aboard the first of the boats which were to be my habitation intermittently for so many weeks. It was the "Louis Cousin," a 150-ton vessel and a fair example of the draft which provides the principal means of transportation in the Congo. Practically all transit not on the hoof, so to speak, in the Colony is by water. There are more than twelve thousand miles of rivers navigable for steamers and twice as many more accessible for canoes and launches. Hence the river-boat is a staple, and a picturesque one at that.

The "Louis Cousin" was typical of her kind both in appointment, or rather the lack of it, and human interest details. Like all her sisters she resembles the small Ohio River boats that I had seen in my boyhood at Louisville. All Congo steam craft must be stern-wheelers, first because they usually haul barges on either side, and secondly because there are so many sand-banks. The few cabins—all you get is the bare room—are on the upper deck, which is the white man's domain, while the boiler and freight—human and otherwise—are on the lower. This is the bailiwick of the black. These boats always stop at night for wood, the only fuel, and the natives are compelled to go ashore and sleep on the bank.

The Congo river-boat is a combination of fortress, hotel, and menagerie. Like the "accommodation" train in our own Southern States, it is most obliging because it will stop anywhere to enable a passenger to get off and do a little shopping, or permit the captain to take a meal ashore with a friendly State official yearning for human society.

The river captain is a versatile individual for he is steward, doctor, postman,

purveyor of news, and dictator in general. He alone makes the schedule of each trip, arriving and departing at will. Time in the Congo counts for naught. It is in truth the land of leisure. For the man who wants to move fast, water travel is a nightmare. Accustomed as I was to swift transport, I spent a year every day.

The skipper of the "Louis Cousin" was no exception to his kind. He was a big Norwegian named Behn,—many of his colleagues are Scandinavians,—and he had spent eighteen years in the Congo. He knew every one of the thousand nooks, turns, snags and sand-bars of the Lualaba. One of the first things that impressed me was the uncanny ingenuity with which all the Congo boats are navigated through what seems at first glance to be a mass of vegetation and obstruction.

The bane of traffic is the sand-bar, which on account of the swift currents everywhere, is an eternally changing quantity. Hence a native is constantly engaged in taking soundings with a long stick. You can hear his not unmusical voice, from the moment the boat starts until she ties up for the night. The native word for water is "*mia*." Whenever I heard the cry "*mia mitani*," I knew that we were all right because that meant five feet of water. With the exception of the Congo River no boat can draw more than three feet because in the dry season even the mightiest of streams declines to an almost incredibly low level.

My white fellow passengers on the "Louis Cousin" were mostly Belgians on their way home by way of Stanleyville and the Congo River, after years of service in the Colony. We all ate together in the tiny dining saloon forward with the captain, who usually provides the "chop," as it is called. I now made the acquaintance of goat as an article of food. The young nanny is not undesirable as an occasional novelty but when she is served up to you every day, it becomes a trifle monotonous.

The one rival of the goat in the Congo daily menu is the chicken, the mainstay of the country. I know a man who spent six years in the Congo and he kept a record of every fowl he consumed. When he started for home the total registered exactly three thousand. It is no uncommon experience. Occasionally a friendly hunter brought antelope or buffalo aboard but goat and fowl, reinforced by tinned goods and an occasional egg, constituted the bill of fare. You may



wonder, perhaps, that in a country which is a continuous chicken-coop, there should be a scarcity of eggs. The answer lies in the fact that during the last few years the natives have conceived a sudden taste for eggs. Formerly they were afraid to eat them.

### A NATIVE MARKET AT KINDU **A NATIVE MARKET AT KINDU**

Of course, there was always an abundance of fruit. You can get pineapples, grape fruit, oranges, bananas and a first cousin of the cantaloupe, called the *pei pei*, which when sprinkled with lime juice is most delicious. Bananas can be purchased for five cents a bunch of one hundred. It is about the only cheap thing in the Congo except servants.

Not all my fellow passengers were desirable companions. At Bukana five naked savages, all chained together by the neck, were brought aboard in charge of three native soldiers. When I asked the captain who and what they were he replied, "They are cannibals. They ate two of their fellow tribesmen back in the jungle last week and they are going down the river to be tried." These were the first eaters of human flesh that I saw in the Congo. One conspicuous detail was their teeth which were all filed down to sharp points. I later discovered that these wolf teeth, as they might be called, are common to all the Congo cannibals. The punishment for cannibalism is death, although every native, whatever his offence, is given a trial by the Belgian authorities.

So far as employing the white man as an article of diet is concerned, cannibalism has ceased in the Congo. Some of the tribes, however, still regard the flesh of their own kind as the last word in edibles. The practice must be carried on in secret. To have partaken of the human body has long been regarded as an act which endows the consumer with almost supernatural powers. The cannibal has always justified his procedure in a characteristic way. When the early explorers and missionaries protested against the barbarous performance they were invariably met with this reply, "You eat fowl and goats and we eat men. What is the difference?" There seems to have been a particular lure in what the native designated as "food that once talked."

In the days when cannibalism was rampant, the liver of the white man was looked upon as a special delicacy for the reason that it was supposed to transmit the knowledge and courage of its former owner. There was also a tradition that once having eaten the heart of the white, no harm could come to the barbarian who performed this amiable act. Although these odious practices have practically ceased except in isolated instances, the Congo native, in boasting of his strength, constantly speaks of his liver, and not of his heart.

It was on the Lualaba, after the boat had tied up for the night, that I caught the first whisper of the jungle. In Africa Nature is in her frankest mood but she expresses herself in subdued tones. All my life I had read of the witchery of these equatorial places, but no description is ever adequate. You must live with them to catch the magic. No painter, for instance, can translate to canvas the elusive and ever-changing verdure of the dense forests under the brilliant tropical sun, nor can those elements of mystery with their suggestion of wild bird and beast that lurk everywhere at night, be reproduced. Life flows on like a moving dream that is exotic, enervating, yet intoxicating.

Accustomed as I was to dense populations, the loneliness of the Lualaba was weird and haunting. On the Mississippi, Ohio, and Hudson rivers in America and on the Seine, the Thames, and the Spree in Europe, you see congested human life and hear a vast din. In Africa, and with the possible exception of some parts of the Nile, Nature reigns with almost undisputed sway. Settlements appear at rare intervals. You only encounter an occasional native canoe. The steamers frequently tie up at night at some sand-bank and you fall asleep invested by an uncanny silence.

I spent six days on the Lualaba where we made many stops to take on and put off freight. Many of these halts were at wood-posts where our supply of fuel was renewed. At one post I found a lonely Scotch trader who had been in the Congo fifteen years. Every night he puts on his kilts and parades through the native village playing the bagpipes. It is his one touch with home. At another place I had a brief visit with another Scotchman, a veteran of the World War, who had established a prosperous plantation and who goes about in a khaki kilt, much to the joy of the natives, who see in his bare knees a kinship with themselves.

At Kabalo I touched the war zone. This post marks the beginning of the railway that runs eastward to Lake Tanganyika and which Rhodes included in one of his Cape-to-Cairo routes. Along this road travelled the thousands of Congo fighting men on their way to the scene of hostilities in German East Africa.

When the Great War broke out the Belgian Colonial Government held that the Berlin Treaty of 1885, entitled "A General Act Relating to Civilization in Africa" and prohibiting warfare in the Congo basin, should be enforced. This treaty gave birth to the Congo Free State and made it an international and peaceful area under Belgian sovereignty. Following their usual fashion the Germans looked upon this document as a "scrap of paper" and attacked Lukuga. This forced the Belgian Congo into the conflict. About 20,000 native troops were mobilized and under the command of General Tameur, who is now Vice-Governor General of the Katanga, co-operated with the British throughout the entire East African campaign. The Belgians captured Tabora, one of the German strongholds, and helped to clear the Teuton out of the country.

Lake Tanganyika was the scene of one of the most brilliant and spectacular naval battles of the war. Two British motor launches, which were conveyed in sections all the way from England, sank a German gunboat and disabled another, thus purging those waters of the German. The lake was of great strategic importance for the transport of food and munitions for the Allied troops in German East Africa. It is one of the loveliest inland bodies of water in the world for it is fringed with wooded heights and is navigable throughout its entire length of four hundred miles. Ujiji, on its eastern shore, is the memorable spot where Stanley found Livingstone. The house where the illustrious missionary lived still stands, and is an object of veneration both for black and white visitors.

From Kabalo I proceeded to Kongolo, where navigation on the Lualaba temporarily ends. It is the usual Congo settlement with the official residence of the Commissaire of the District, office of the Native Commissioner, and a dozen stores. It is also the southern rail-head of the Chemin de Fer Grands Lacs, which extends to Stanleyville. Early in the morning I boarded what looked to me like a toy train, for it was tinier than any I had ever seen before, and started for Kindu. The journey occupies two days and traverses a highly Arabized section.

Back in the days when Tippo Tib, the friend of Stanley, was king of the Arab slave traders, this area was his hunting ground. Many of the natives are Mohammedans and wear turbans and long flowing robes. Their cleanliness is in sharp contrast with the lack of sanitary precautions observed by the average unclothed native. The only blacks who wash every day in the Congo are those who live on the rivers. The favorite method of cleansing in the bush country is to scrape off a week's or a month's accumulation of mud with a stick or a piece of glass.

In the Congo the trains, like the boats, stop for the night. Various causes are responsible for the procedure. In the early days of railroading elephants and other wild animals frequently tore up the tracks. Another contributory reason is that the carriages are only built for day travel. Native houses are provided for the traveller at different points on the line. Since everyone carries his own bed it is easy to establish sleeping quarters without delay or inconvenience. On this particular trip I slept at Malela, in the house ordinarily occupied by the Chief Engineer of the line. The Minister of the Colonies had used it the night before and it was scrupulously clean. I must admit that I have had greater discomfort in metropolitan hotels.

I was now in the almost absolute domain of the native. The only white men that I encountered were an occasional priest and a still more occasional trader. At Kibombo the train stopped for the mail. When I got out to stretch my legs I saw a man and a woman who looked unmistakably American. The man had Texas written all over him for he was tall and lank and looked as if he had spent his life on the ranges. He came toward me smiling and said, "The Minister of the Colonies was through here yesterday in a special train and he said that an American journalist was following close behind, so I came down to see you." The man proved to be J. G. Campbell, who had come to install an American cotton gin nine kilometers from where we were standing. His wife was with him and she was the only white woman within two hundred miles.

Campbell is a link with one of the new Congo industries, which is cotton cultivation. The whole area between Kongolo and Stanleyville, three-fourths of which is one vast tropical forest, has immense stretches ideally adapted for

cotton growing. The Belgian Government has laid out experimental plantations and they are thriving. In 1919 four thousand acres were cultivated in the Manyema district, six thousand in the Sankuru-Kasai region, and six hundred in the Lomami territory. Altogether the Colony produced 6,000,000 pounds of the raw staple in 1920 and some of it was grown by natives who are being taught the art. The Congo Cotton Company has been formed at Brussels with a capitalization of 6,000,000 francs, to exploit the new industry, which is bound to be an important factor in the development of the Congo. It shows that the ruthless exploitation of the earlier days is succeeded by scientific and constructive expansion.

Campbell's experience in setting up his American gin discloses the principal need of the Congo today which is adequate transport. Between its arrival at the mouth of the Congo River and Kibombo the mass of machinery was transhipped exactly four times, alternately changing from rail to river. At Kibombo the 550,000 pounds of metal had to be carried on the heads of natives to the scene of operations. In the Congo practically every ton of merchandise must be moved by man power—the average load is sixty pounds—through the greater part of its journey.

#### NATIVE FISH TRAPS AT STANLEY FALLS **NATIVE FISH TRAPS AT STANLEY FALLS**

Late in the afternoon of the day which marked the encounter with the Campbells I reached Kindu, where navigation on the Lualaba is resumed again. By this time you will have realized something of the difficulty of travelling in this part of the world. It was my third change since Bukama and more were to come before I reached the Lower Congo.

At Kindu I had a rare piece of luck. I fell in with Louis Franck, the Belgian Minister of the Colonies, to whom I had a letter of introduction, and who was making a tour of inspection of the Congo. He had landed at Mombassa, crossed British East Africa, visited the new Belgian possessions of Urundi and Ruanda which are spoils of war, and made his way to Kabalo from Lake Tanganyika. He asked me to accompany him to Stanleyville as his guest. I gladly accepted because, aside from the personal compensation afforded by his society, it meant

immunity from worry about the river and train connections.

Franck represents the new type of Colonial Minister. Instead of being a musty bureaucrat, as so many are, he is a live, alert progressive man of affairs who played a big part in the late war. To begin with, he is one of the foremost admiralty lawyers of Europe. When the Germans occupied Belgium he at once became conspicuous. He resisted the Teutonic scheme to separate the French and Flemish sections of the ravaged country. After the investment of Antwerp, his native place, accompanied by the Burgomaster and the Spanish Minister, he went to the German Headquarters and made the arrangement by which the city was saved from destruction by bombardment. He delayed this parley sufficiently to enable the Belgian Army to escape to the Yser. Subsequently his activities on behalf of his countrymen made him so distasteful to the Germans that he was imprisoned in Germany for nearly a year. For two months of this time he shared the noble exile of Monsieur Max, the heroic Burgomaster of Brussels.

I now became an annex of what amounted to a royal progress. To the Belgian colonial official and to the native, Franck incarnated a sort of All Highest. In the Congo all functionaries are called "Bula Matadi," which means "The Rock Breaker." It is the name originally bestowed on Stanley when he dynamited a road through the rocks of the Lower Congo. Franck, however, was a super "Bula Matadi." We had a special boat, the "Baron Delbecke," a one hundred ton craft somewhat similar to the "Louis Cousin" but much cleaner, for she had been scrubbed up for the journey. The Minister, his military aide, secretary and doctor filled the cabins, so I slept in a tent set up on the lower deck.

With flags flying and thousands of natives on the shore yelling and beating tom-toms, we started down the Lualaba. The country between Kindu and Ponthierville, our first objective, is thickly populated and important settlements dot the banks. Wherever we stopped the native troops were turned out and there were long speeches of welcome from the local dignitaries. Franck shook as many black and white hands as an American Presidential candidate would in a swing around the circle. I accompanied him ashore on all of these state visits and it gave me an excellent opportunity to see the many types of natives in their Sunday clothes, which largely consist of no clothes at all. This applies especially

to the female sex, which in the Congo reverses Kipling's theory because they are less deadly than the male.

At Lowa occurred a significant episode. This place is the center of an immense native population, but there is only one white resident, the usual Belgium state official. We climbed the hill to his house, where thirty of the leading chiefs, wearing the tin medal which the Belgian Government gives them, shook hands with the Minister. The ranking chief, distinguished by the extraordinary amount of red mud in his wool and the grotesque devices cut with a knife on his body, made a long speech in which he became rather excited. When the agent translated this in French to Franck I gathered that the people were indignant over the advance in cost of trade goods, especially salt and calico. Salt is more valuable than gold in the Congo. Among the natives it is legal tender for every commodity from a handkerchief to a wife.

Franck made a little speech in French in reply—it was translated by the interpreter—in which he said that the Great War had increased the price of everything. We shook hands all round and there was much muttering of "yambo," the word for "greeting," and headed for the boat.

Halfway down the hill we heard shouting and hissing. We stopped and looked back. On the crest were a thousand native women, jeering, hooting, and pointing their fingers at the Minister, who immediately asked the cause of the demonstration. When the agent called for an explanation a big black woman said:

"Ask the 'Bula Matadi' why the franc buys so little now? We only get a few goods for a big lot of money."

I had gone into the wilds to escape from economic unrest and all the confusion that has followed in its wake, yet here in the heart of Central Africa, I found our old friend the High Cost of Living working overtime and provoking a spirited protest from primitive savages! It proves that there is neither caste, creed nor colour-line in the pocket-book. Like indigestion, to repeat Mr. Pinero, it is the universal leveller of all ranks.

## IV

On this trip Franck outlined to me his whole colonial creed. It was a gorgeous June morning and we had just left a particularly picturesque Arabized village behind us. Hundreds of natives had come out to welcome the Minister in canoes. They sang songs and played their crude musical instruments as they swept alongside our boat. We now sat on the upper deck and watched the unending panorama of palm trees with here and there a clump of grass huts.

"All colonial development is a chain which is no stronger than its weakest link and that is the native," said the Minister. "As you build the native, so do you build the whole colonial structure. Hence the importance of a high moral standard. You must conform to the native's traditions, mentality and temperament. Give him a technical education something like that afforded by Booker Washington's Tuskegee Institute. Show him how to use his hands. He will then become efficient and therefore contented. It is a mistake to teach him a European language. I prefer him to be a first-class African rather than third-class European.

"The hope of the Congo lies in industrialization on the one hand, and the creation of new wealth on the other. By new wealth I mean such new crops as cotton and a larger exploitation of such old products as rice and palm fruit. Rubber has become a second industry although the cultivated plantations are in part taking the place of the old wild forests. The substitute for rubber as the first product of the land is the fruit of the oil palm tree. This will be the industrial staple of the Congo. I believe, however, that in time cotton can be produced in large commercial quantities over a wide area."

Franck now turned to a subject which reflects his courage and progressiveness. He said, "There is a strong tendency in other Colonies to give too large a place to State enterprise. The result of this system is that officers are burdened with an impossible task. They must look after the railways, steamers, mills, and a variety of tasks for which they often lack the technical knowledge.



"I have made it a point to give first place to private enterprise and to transfer those activities formerly under State rule to autonomous enterprises in which the State has an interest. They are run by business men along business lines as business institutions. The State's principal function in them is to protect the native employes. The gold mines at Kilo are an example. They are still owned by the State but are worked by a private company whose directors have full powers. The reason why the State does not part with its ownership of these mines is that it does not want a rush of gold-seekers. History has proved that in a country with a primitive population a gold rush is a dangerous and destructive thing.

"We are always free traders in Belgium and we are glad to welcome any foreign capital to the Congo. We have already had the constructive influence of American capital in the diamond fields and we will be glad to have more."

The average man thinks that the Congo and concessions are practically synonymous terms. In the Leopold day this was true but there is a new deal now. Let Monsieur Franck explain it:

"There was a time when huge concessions were freely given in the Congo. They were then necessary because the Colony was new, the country unknown, and the financial risk large. Now that the economic possibilities of the region are realized it is not desirable to grant any more large concessions. It is proved that these concessions are really a handicap rather than a help to a young land. The wise procedure is to have a definite agricultural or industrial aim in mind, and then pick the locality for exploitation, whether it is gold, cotton, copper or palm fruit."

"What is the future of the Congo?" I asked.

"The Congo is now entering upon a big era of development," was the answer. "If the Great War had not intervened it would have been well under way. Despite the invasion of Belgium, the practical paralysis of our home industry, and the fact that many of our Congo officials and their most highly trained natives were off fighting the Germans in East Africa, the Colony more than held its own during those terrible years. In building the new Congo we are going to profit by the example of other countries and capitalize their knowledge and experience of

tropical hygiene. We propose to combat sleeping sickness, for example, with an agency similar to your Rockefeller Institute of Research in New York.

"The Congo is bound to become one of the great centers of the world supply. The Katanga is not only a huge copper area but it has immense stores of coal, tin, zinc and other valuable commodities. Our diamond fields have scarcely been scraped, while the agricultural possibilities of hundreds of thousands of square miles are unlimited.

"The great need of the Congo is transport. We are increasing our river fleets and we propose to introduce on them a type of barge similar to that used on the Ohio and the Mississippi Rivers.

"An imposing program of railway expansion is blocked out. For one thing we expect to run a railway from the Katanga copper belt straight across country to Kinshassa on the Lower Congo. It is already surveyed. This will tap a thickly populated region and enable the diamond mines of the Kasai to get the labour they need so sorely. The Robert Williams railway through Angola will be another addition to our transportation facilities. One of the richest regions of the Congo is the north-eastern section. The gold mines at Kilo are now only accessible by river. We plan to join them up with the railway to be built from Stanleyville to the Soudan border. This will link the Congo River and the Nile. With our railroads as with our industrial enterprises, we stick to private ownership and operation with the State as a partner.

"The new provinces of Ruanda and Urundi will contribute much to our future prosperity. They add millions of acres to our territory and 3,000,000 healthy and prosperous natives to our population. These new possessions have two distinct advantages. One is that they provide an invigorating health resort which will be to the Central Congo what the Katanga is to the Southern. The other is that, being an immense cattle country—there is a head of live stock for every native—we will be able to secure fresh meat and dairy products, which are sorely needed.

"The Congo is not only the economic hope of Belgium but it is teaching the Belgian capitalist to think in broad terms. Henceforth the business man of all

countries must regard the universe as his field. As a practical commercial proposition it pays, both with nations as with individuals. We have found that the possession of the Congo, huge as it is, and difficult for a country like ours to develop, is a stimulating thing. It is quickening our enterprise and widening our world view."

It would be difficult to find a more practical or comprehensive colonial program. It eliminates that bane of over-seas administration, red tape, and it puts the task of empire-building squarely up to the business man who is the best qualified for the work. I am quite certain that the advent of Monsieur Franck into office, and particularly his trip to the Congo, mean the beginning of an epoch of real and permanent exploitation in the Congo.

THE MASSIVE BANGALAS  
**THE MASSIVE BANGALAS**  
CONGO WOMEN IN STATE DRESS  
**CONGO WOMEN IN STATE DRESS**

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# **CHAPTER V—ON THE CONGO RIVER**

## I

Two days more of travelling on the Lower Lualaba brought us to Ponthierville, a jewel of a post with a setting of almost bewildering tropical beauty. Here we spent the night on the boat and early the following morning boarded a special train for Stanleyville, which is only six hours distant by rail. Midway we crossed the Equator.

Thirty miles south of Stanleyville is the State Experimental Coffee Farm of three hundred acres, which produces fifteen different species of the bean. This institution is one evidence of a comprehensive agricultural development inaugurated by the Belgian Government. The State has about 10,000 acres of test plantations, mostly Para rubber, cotton, and cacao, in various parts of the Colony.

One commendable object of this work is to instill the idea of crop-growing among the natives. Under ordinary circumstances the man of colour in the tropics will only raise enough maize, manioc, or tobacco for his own needs. The Belgian idea is to encourage co-operative farming in the villages. In the region immediately adjacent to Stanleyville the natives have begun to plant cotton over a considerable area. At Kongolo I saw hundreds of acres of this fleecy plant under the sole supervision of the indigenes.

Stanleyville marked one of the real mileposts of my journey. Here came Stanley on his first historic expedition across Central Africa and discovered the falls nearby that bear his name; here he set up the Station that marked the Farthest East of the expedition which founded the Congo Free State. Directly south-east of the town are seven distinct cataracts which extend over fifty miles of seething whirlpools.

Stanleyville is the head of navigation on the Congo and like Paris, is built on two sides of the river. On the right bank is the place of the Vice-Governor General, scores of well stocked stores, and many desirable residences. The streets are long avenues of palm trees. The left bank is almost entirely given over to the railway

terminals, yards, and repair shops. My original plan was to live with the Vice-Governor General, Monsieur de Meulemeester, but his establishment was so taxed by the demands of the Ministerial party that I lodged with Monsieur Theews, Chief Engineer of the Chemin de Fer des Grands Lacs, where I was most comfortable in a large frame bungalow that commanded a superb view of the river and the town.

At Stanleyville the Minister of the Colonies had a great reception. Five hundred native troops looking very smart were drawn up in the plaza. On the platform of the station stood the Vice-Governor General and staff in spotless white uniforms, their breasts ablaze with decorations. On all sides were thousands of natives in gay attire who cheered and chanted while the band played the Belgian national anthem. Over it all waved the flag of Belgium. It was a stirring spectacle not without its touch of the barbaric, and a small-scale replica of what you might have seen at Delhi or Cairo on a fête day.

I was only mildly interested in all this tumult and shouting. What concerned me most was the swift, brown river that flowed almost at our feet. At last I had reached the masterful Congo, which, with the sole exception of the Amazon, is the mightiest stream in the world. As I looked at it I thought of Stanley and his battles on its shores, and the hardship and tragedy that these waters had witnessed.

Stanleyville is not only the heart of Equatorial Africa but it is also an important administrative point. Hundreds of State officials report to the Vice-Governor General there, and on national holidays and occasions like the visit of the Colonial Minister, it can muster a gay assemblage. Monsieur Franck's presence inspired a succession of festivities including a garden party which was attended by the entire white population numbering about seventy-five. There was also a formal dinner where I wore evening clothes for the first and only time between Elizabethville and the steamer that took me to Europe three months later.

At the garden party Monsieur Franck made a graceful speech in which he said that the real missionaries of African civilization were the wives who accompanied their husbands to their lonely posts in the field. What he said made a distinct impression upon me for it was not only the truth but it emphasized a

detail that stands out in the memory of everyone who visits this part of the world. I know of no finer heroines than these women comrades of colonial officials who brave disease and discomfort to share the lives of their mates. For one thing, they give the native a new respect for his masters. All white women in the Congo are called "mamma" by the natives.

The use of "mamma" by the African natives always strikes the newcomer as strange. It is a curious fact that practically the first word uttered by the black infant is "mamma," and in thousands of cases the final utterance of both adult male and female is the same word. In northern Rhodesia and many parts of the Congo the native mother frequently refers to her child as a "piccannin" which is almost the same word employed by coloured people in the American South.

Stanleyville's social prestige is only equalled by her economic importance. It is one of the great ivory markets of the world. During the last two years this activity has undergone fluctuations that almost put Wall Street to the blush.

During the war there was very little trafficking in ivory because it was a luxury. With peace came a big demand and the price soared to more than 200 francs a kilo. The ordinary price is about forty. One trader at Stanleyville cleaned up a profit of 3,000,000 francs in three months. Then came the inevitable reaction and with it a unique situation. In their mad desire to corral ivory the traders ran up the normal price that the native hunters received. The moment the boom burst the white buyers sought to regulate their purchases accordingly. The native, however, knows nothing about the law of demand and supply and he holds out for the boom price. The outcome is that hundreds of tons of ivory are piled up in the villages and no power on earth can convince the savage that there is such a thing as the ebb and flow of price. Such is commercial life in the jungle.

Northeast of Stanleyville lie the most important gold mines in the Colony. The precious metal was discovered accidentally some years ago in the gravel of small rivers west of Lake Albert, and near the small towns of Kilo and Moto. Four mines are now worked in this vicinity, two by the Government and two by a private company. At the outbreak of the war this area was on the verge of considerable development which has just been resumed. At the time of my visit all these mines were placers and the operation was rather primitive. With modern



machinery and enlarged white staffs will come a pretentious exploitation. The Government mines alone yield more than \$2,000,000 worth of gold every year. Shortly before my arrival in the Congo what was heralded as the largest gold nugget ever discovered was found in the Kilo State Mine. It weighed twelve pounds.

Stanleyville has a significance for me less romantic but infinitely more practical than the first contact with the Congo River. After long weeks of suffering from inefficient service I sacked Gerome and annexed a boy named Nelson. The way of it was this: In the Katanga I engaged a young Belgian who was on his way home, to act as secretary. He knew the native languages and could always convince the most stubborn black to part with an egg. Nelson was his servant. He was born on the Rhodesian border and spoke English. I could therefore upbraid him to my heart's content, which was not the case with Gerome. Besides, he was not handicapped with a wife. In Africa the servants adopt the names of their masters. Nelson had worked for an Englishman at Elizabethville and acquired his cognomen. I have not the slightest doubt that he now masquerades under mine. Be that as it may, Nelson was a model servant and he remained with me until that September day when I boarded the Belgium-bound boat at Matadi.

Nelson reminded me more of the Georgia Negro than any other one that I saw in the Congo. He was almost coal black, he smiled continuously, and his teeth were wonderful to look at. He had an unusual capacity for work and also for food. I think he was the champion consumer of *chikwanga* in the Congo. The *chikwanga* is a glutinous dough made from the pounded root of the manioc plant and is the principal food of the native. It is rolled and cut up in pieces and then wrapped in green leaves. The favorite way of preparing it for consumption is to heat it in palm oil, although it is often eaten raw. Nelson bought these *chikwanga*s by the dozen. He was never without one. He even ate as he washed my clothes.

The Congo native is in a continuous state of receptivity when it comes to food. Nowhere in the world have I seen people who ate so much. I have offered the leavings of a meal to a savage just after he had apparently gorged himself and he "wolfed" it as if he were famished. The invariable custom in the Congo is to

have one huge meal a day. On this occasion every member of the family consumes all the edibles in sight. Then the crowd lays off until the following day. All food offered in the meantime by way of gratuity or otherwise is devoured on the spot.

In connection with the *chikwanga* is an interesting fact. The Congo natives all die young—I only saw a dozen old men—because they are insufficiently nourished. The *chikwanga* is filling but not fattening. This is why sleeping sickness takes such dreadful toll. From an estimated population of 30,000,000 in Stanley's day the indigenes have dwindled to less than one-third this number. Meat is a luxury. Although the natives have chickens in abundance they seldom eat one for the reason that it is more profitable to sell them to the white man.

### CENTRAL AFRICAN PYGMIES **CENTRAL AFRICAN PYGMIES**

It is not surprising, therefore, that the Congo native suffers from ailments. Unlike the average small boy of civilization, he delights in taking medicine. I suppose that he regards it as just another form of food. You hear many amusing stories in connection with medicinal articles. When you give a savage a dozen effective pills, for example, and tell him to take one every night, he usually swallows them all at one time and then he wonders why the results are disastrous. A sorcerer in the Upper Congo region once obtained what was widely acclaimed as miraculous results from a red substance that he got out of a tin. It developed that he had stolen a can of potted beef and was using it as "medicine."

Stanleyville was called the center of the old Arab slave trade. While the odious traffic has long ceased to exist, you occasionally meet an old native who bears the scars of battle with the marauders and who can tell harrowing tales of the cruelties they inflicted.

The slave raiders began their operations in the Congo in 1877, the same year in which Stanley made his historic march across Africa from Zanzibar to the north of the Congo. It was the great explorer who unconsciously blazed the way for the man-hunters. They followed him down the Lualaba River as far as Stanley Falls and discovered what was to them a real human treasure-trove. For twenty

years they blighted the country, carrying off tens of thousands of men, women and children and slaughtering thousands in addition. This region was a cannibal stronghold and one bait that lured local allies was the promise of the bodies of all natives slain, for consumption. Belgian pioneers in the Congo who cooperated with the late Baron Dhanis who finally put down the slave trade, have told me that it was no infrequent sight to behold native women going off to their villages with baskets of human flesh. They were part of the spoils of this hideous warfare.

Tippo Tib was lord of this slave-trading domain. This astounding rascal had a distinct personality. He was a master trader and drove the hardest bargain in all Africa. Livingstone, Cameron, Stanley, and Wissmann all did business with him, for he had a monopoly on porters and no one could proceed without his help. He invariably waited until the white man reached the limit of his resources and then exacted the highest price, in true Shylockian fashion.

According to Herbert Ward, the well-known African artist and explorer, who accompanied Stanley on the Emin Pasha Relief Expedition, Tippo Tib was something of a philosopher. On one occasion Ward spent the evening with the old Arab. He occupied a wretched house. Rain dripped in through the roof, rats scuttled across the floor, and wind shook the walls. When the Englishman expressed his astonishment that so rich and powerful a chief should dwell in such a mean abode Tippo Tib said:

"It is better that I should live in a house like this because it makes me remember that I am only an ordinary man like others. If I lived in a fine house with comforts I should perhaps end by thinking too much of myself."

Ward also relates another typical story about this blood-thirsty bandit. A missionary once called him to account for the frightful barbarities he had perpetrated, whereupon he received the following reply:

"Ah, yes! You see I was then a young man. Now my hair is turning gray. I am an old man and shall have more consideration."

Until his death in 1907 at Zanzibar, Tippo Tib and reformation were absolute strangers. He embodied that combination of cruelty and religious fanaticism so

often found in the Arab. He served his God and the devil with the same relentless devotion. He incarnated a type that happily has vanished from the map of Africa.

The region around Stanleyville is rich with historic interest and association. The great name inseparably and immortally linked with it is that of Stanley. Although he found Livingstone, relieved Emin Pasha, first traversed the Congo River, and sowed the seeds of civilization throughout the heart of the continent, his greatest single achievement, perhaps, was the founding of the Congo Free State. No other enterprise took such toll of his essential qualities and especially his genius for organization.

Stanley is most widely known as an explorer, yet he was, at the same time, one of the master civilizers. He felt that his Congo adventure would be incomplete if he did not make the State a vast productive region and the home of the white man. He longed to see it a British possession and it was only after he offered it twice to England and was twice rebuffed, that he accepted the invitation of King Leopold II to organize the stations under the auspices of the International African Association, which was the first step toward Belgian sovereignty.

I have talked with many British and Belgian associates of Stanley. Without exception they all acclaim his sterling virtues both in the physical and spiritual sense. All agree that he was a hard man. The best explanation of this so-called hardness is given by Herbert Ward, who once spoke to him about it. Stanley's reply was, "You've got to be hard. If you're not hard you're weak. There are only two sides to it."

Stanley always declared that his whole idea of life and work were embodied in the following maxim: "The three M's are all we need. They are Morals, Mind and Muscles. These must be cultivated if we wish to be immortal." To an astonishing degree he worked and lived up to these principles.

No explorer, not even Peary in the Arctic wilds, was ever prey to a larger isolation than this man. In the midst of the multitude he was alone. He shunned intimacy and one of his mournful reflections was, "I have had no friend on any expedition, no one who could possibly be my companion on an equal footing,

except while with Livingstone."

I cannot resist the impulse to make comparison between those two outstanding Englishmen, Rhodes and Stanley, whose lives are intimately woven into the fabric of African romance. They had much in common and yet they were widely different in purpose and temperament. Each was an autocrat and brooked no interference. Each had the same kindling ideal of British imperialism. Each suffered abuse at the hands of his countrymen and lived to witness a triumphant vindication.

Stanley had a rare talent for details—he went on the theory that if you wanted a thing done properly you must do it yourself—but Rhodes only saw things in a big way and left the interpretation to subordinates. Stanley was devoutly religious while Rhodes paid scant attention to the spiritual side. Each was a dreamer in his own way and merely regarded money as a means to an end. Rhodes, however, was far more disdainful of wealth as such, than Stanley, who received large sums for his books and lectures. It is only fair to him to say that he never took pecuniary advantage of the immense opportunities that his explorations in the Congo afforded.

Still another intrepid Englishman narrowly missed having a big rôle in the drama of the Congo. General Gordon agreed to assume the Governorship of the Lower Congo under Stanley, who was to be the Chief Administrator of the Upper Congo. They were to unite in one grand effort to crush the slave trade. Fate intervened. Gordon meanwhile was asked by the British Government to go to Egypt, then in the throes of the Mahdist uprising. He went to his martyrdom at Khartoum, and Stanley continued his work alone in Central Africa.

While Stanley established its most enduring traditions, other heroic soldiers and explorers, contributed to the roll of fame of the Upper Congo region. Conspicuous among them was Captain Deane, an Englishman who fought the Arab slave traders at Stanley Falls and who figured in a succession of episodes that read like the most romantic fiction.

With less than a hundred native troops recruited from the West Coast of Africa, he defended the State Station founded by Stanley at the Falls against thousands

of Arab raiders. Most of the caps in his rifle cartridges were rendered useless by dampness and the Captain and his second in command, Lieutenant Dubois, a Belgian officer, fought shoulder to shoulder with his men in the hand-to-hand struggle that ensued. Subsequently practically all the natives deserted and Deane was left with Dubois and four loyal blacks. Under cover of darkness they escaped from the island on which the Station was located. On this journey Dubois was drowned.

For thirty days Deane and his four faithful troopers wandered through the forests, hiding during the day from their ferocious pursuers and sleeping in trees at night. On the thirtieth day he was captured by the savages. Unarmed, he sank to the ground overcome with weariness. A big native stood over him with his spear poised for the fatal thrust. A moment later the Englishman was surprised to see his enemy lower the weapon and grasp him by the hand. He had succored this savage two years before and had not been forgotten. Deane and his companions were convoyed under an escort to Herbert Ward's camp and he was nursed back to health.

Deane's death illustrates the irony that entered into the passing of so many African adventurers. Twelve months after he was snatched from the jaws of death on the banks of the Congo in the manner just described, he was killed while hunting elephants. A wounded beast impaled him on a tusk and then mauled him almost beyond recognition.

## II

Since Stanleyville is the head of navigation on the Congo there is ordinarily no lack of boats. I was fortunate to be able to embark on the "Comte de Flandre," the Mauretania of those inland seas and the most imposing vessel on the river for she displaced five hundred tons. She flew the flag of the Huileries du Congo Belge, the palm oil concern founded by Lord Leverhulme and the most important all-British commercial interest in the Congo. She was one of a fleet of ten boats that operate on the Congo, the Kasai, the Kwilu and other rivers. I not only had a comfortable cabin but the rarest of luxuries in Central Africa, a regulation bathtub, was available. The "Comte de Flandre" had cabin accommodations for fourteen whites. The Captain was an Englishman and the Chief Engineer a Scotchman.

On this, as on most of the other Congo boats, the food is provided by the Captain, to whom the passengers pay a stipulated sum for meals. On the "Comte de Flandre," however, the food privilege was owned jointly by the Captain and the Chief Engineer. The latter did all the buying and it was almost excruciatingly funny to watch him driving real Scotch bargains with the natives who came aboard at the various stops to sell chickens, goats, and fruit. The engineer could scarcely speak a word of any of the native languages, but he invariably got over the fact that the price demanded was too high.

The passenger list of the "Comte de Flandre" included Englishmen, Belgians, Italians, and Portuguese. I was the only American. The steerage, firemen, and wood-boys were all blacks. With this international congress over which beamed the broad smile of Nelson, I started on the thousand-mile trip down the Congo River.

It is difficult to convey the impression that the Congo River gives. Serene and majestic, it is often well-nigh overwhelming in its immensity. Between Stanleyville and Kinshassa there are four thousand islands, some of them thirty miles in length. As the boat picks its way through them you feel as if you were

travelling through an endless tropical park of which the river provides the paths. It has been well called a "Venice of Vegetation." The shores are brilliant with a variegated growth whose exotic smell is wafted out over the waters. You see priceless orchids entwined with the mangroves in endless profusion. Behind this verdure stretches the dense equatorial forest in which Stanley battled years ago in an almost impenetrable gloom. Aigrettes and birds of paradise fly on all sides and every hour reveals a hideous crocodile sunning himself on a sandspit.

Night on the Congo enhances the loneliness that you feel on all the Central African rivers. Although the settlements are more numerous and larger than those on the Lualaba and the Kasai, there is the same feeling of isolation the moment darkness falls. The jungle seems to be an all-embracing monster who mocks you with his silence. Joseph Conrad interpreted this atmosphere when he referred to it as having "a stillness of life that did not resemble peace,—the silence of an implacable force brooding over an inscrutable intention." This is the Congo River.

[WOMEN MAKING POTTERY](#)  
**WOMEN MAKING POTTERY**  
[THE CONGO PICKANINNY](#)  
**THE CONGO PICKANINNY**

The more I saw of the Congo River—it is nearly twice as large as the Mississippi—the more I realized that it is in reality a parent of waters. It has half a dozen tributaries that range in length from 500 to 1,000 miles each. The most important are the Lualaba and the Kasai. Others include the Itimbiri, the Aruwimi and the Mubangi. Scores of smaller streams, many of them navigable for launches, empty into the main river. This is why there is such a deep and swift current in the lower region where the Congo enters the sea.

The astonishing thing about the Congo River is its inconsistency. Although six miles wide in many parts it is frequently not more than six feet deep. This makes navigation dangerous and difficult. As on the Lualaba and every other river in the Colony, soundings must be taken continually. This extraordinary discrepancy between width and depth reminds me of the designation of the Platte River in Nebraska by a Kansas statesman which was, "A river three-quarters of a mile



wide and three-quarters of an inch deep." Thus the Congo journey takes on a constant element of hazard because you do not know what moment you will run aground on a sand-bank, be impaled on a snag, or strike a rock.

Although the "Comte de Flandre" was rated as the fastest craft on the Congo our progress was unusually slow because of the scarcity of wood for fuel. This seems incredible when you consider that the whole Congo Basin is one vast forest. Millions of trees stand ready to be sacrificed to the needs of man, yet there are no hands to cut them. In the Congo, as throughout this distracted world, the will-to-work is a lost art, no less manifest among the savages than among their civilized brothers. The ordinary native will only labour long enough to provide himself with sufficient money to buy a month's supply of food. Then he quits and joins the leisure class. Hence wood-hunting on the Congo vies with the trip itself as a real adventure. The competition between river captains for fuel is so keen that a skipper will sometimes start his boat at three o'clock in the morning and risk an accident in the dark in order to beat a rival to a wood supply.

All up and down the river are wood-posts. Most of them are owned by the steamship companies. It was our misfortune to find most of them practically stripped of their supplies. A journey which ordinarily takes twelve days consumed twenty. But there were many compensations and I had no quarrel with the circumstance:

I had the good fortune to witness that rarest of sights that falls to the lot of the casual traveller—a serious fight between natives. We stopped at a native wood-post—(some of them are operated by the occasionally industrious blacks)—for fuel. The whole village turned out to help load the logs. In the midst of the process a crowd of natives made their appearance, armed with spears and shields. They began to taunt the men and women who were loading our boat. I afterwards learned that they owned a wood-post nearby and were disgruntled because we had not patronized them. They blamed their neighbours for it. Almost before we realized it a pitched battle was in progress in which spears were thrown and men and women were laid out in a generally bloody fracas. One man got an assegai through his throat and it probably inflicted a fatal

wound.

In the midst of the mêlée one of my fellow passengers, a Catholic priest named Father Brandsma, courageously dashed in between the flying spears and logs of wood and separated the combatants. This incident shows the hostility that still exists between the various tribes in the Congo. It constitutes one excellent reason why there can never be any concerted uprising against the whites. There is no single, strong, cohesive native dynasty.

Father Brandsma was one of the finest men I met in the Congo. He was a member of the society of priests which has its headquarters at Mill Hill in England. He came aboard the boat late one night when we were tied up at Bumba, having ridden a hundred miles on his bicycle along the native trails. We met the following morning in the dining saloon. I sat at a table writing letters and he took a seat nearby and started to make some notes in a book. When we finished I addressed him in French. He answered in flawless English. He then told me that he had spent fifteen years in Uganda, where he was at the head of the Catholic Missions.

The Father was in his fifth year of service in the Congo and his analysis of the native situation was accurate and convincing. Among other things he said, "The great task of the Colonial Government is to provide labour for the people. In many localities only one native out of a hundred works. This idleness must be stopped and the only way to stop it is to initiate highway and other improvements, so as to recruit a large part of the native population."

Father Brandsma is devoting some of his energy to a change in copal gathering. This substance, which is found at the roots of trees in swampy and therefore unhealthy country, is employed in the manufacture of varnish. To harvest it the natives stand all day in water up to their hips and they catch the inevitable colds from which pneumonia develops. Copal gathering is a considerable source of income for many tribes and usually the entire community treks to the marshes. In this way the lives of the women and children are also menaced. The Father believes that only the men should go forth at certain periods for this work and leave their families behind.

Father Brandsma was the central actor in a picturesque scene. One Sunday morning I heard a weird chanting and I arose to discover the cause. I found that the priest was celebrating mass for the natives on the main deck of the boat. Dawn had just broken, and on the improvised altar several candles gleamed in the half light. In his vestments the priest was a striking figure. All about him knelt the score of naked savages who made up the congregation. They crossed themselves constantly and made the usual responses. I must confess that the ceremony was strangely moving and impressive.

As soon as I reached the Congo River I saw that the natives were bigger and stronger than those of the Katanga and other sections that I had visited. The most important of the river tribes are the Bangalas, who are magnificent specimens of manhood. In Stanley's day they were masters of a considerable portion of the Upper Congo River region and contested his way skilfully and bitterly. They are more peacefully inclined today and hundreds of them are employed as wood-boys and firemen on the river boats.

The Bangalas practice cicatrization to an elaborate extent. This process consists of opening a portion of the flesh with a knife, injecting an irritating juice into the wound, and allowing the place to swell. The effect is to raise a lump or weal. Some of these excrescences are tiny bumps and others develop into large welts that disfigure the anatomy. Extraordinary designs are literally carved on the faces and bodies of the men and women. Although it is an intensely painful operation, —some of the wounds must be opened many times— the native submits to it with pleasure because the more ornate the design the more resplendent the wearer feels. The women are usually more liberally marked than the men.

Cicatrization is popular in various parts of Central Africa but nowhere to the degree that it prevails on the Congo River and among the Bangalas, where it is a tribal mark. I observed women whose entire bodies from the ankles up to the head were one mass of cicatrized designs. One of the favorite areas is the stomach. This is just another argument against clothes. Cicatrization bears the same relation to the African native that tattooing does to the whites of some sections. Human vanity works in mysterious ways to express itself.

In this connection it is perhaps worth while to point out one of the reasons why

the Congo atrocity exhorters found such ready exhibits for their arguments. The Central African native delights in disfigurement not only as a sign of "beauty," but as a means of retaliation for real or fancied wrongs among his own. In the old days dozens of slaves, and sometimes wives, were sacrificed upon the death of an important chief. Their spirits were supposed to provide a bodyguard to escort the departed potentate safely into the land of the hereafter. One of the former prerogatives of a husband was the sanction to chop off the hand or foot of a wife if she offended or disobeyed him. Hence Central Africa abounded in mutilated men, women and children. While some of these barbarities may have been due to excessive zeal or temper in State or corporation officials there is no doubt that many instances were the result of native practices.

The reference to cicatrization brings to mind another distinctive Central African observance. I refer to the ceremony of blood brotherhood. When two men, who have been enemies, desire to make the peace and swear eternal amity, they make a small incision in one of their forearms sufficiently deep to cause the flow of blood. Each then licks the blood from the other's arm and henceforth they are related as brothers. This performance was not only common among the blacks but was also practiced by the whites and the blacks the moment civilization entered the wild domains. Stanley's arms were one mass of scars as the result of swearing constant blood brotherhood. It became such a nuisance and at the same time developed into such a serious menace to his health, that the rite had to be amended. Instead of licking the blood the comrades now merely rub the incisions together on the few occasions nowadays when fealty is sworn. I am glad to say that I escaped the ordeal.

Much to my regret I saw only a few of the much-described pygmies who dwelt mainly in the regions northeast of Stanleyville, where Stanley first met them. They are all under three feet in height, are light brown in colour, and wear no garments when on their native heath. They are the shyest of all the tribes I encountered. These diminutive creatures seldom enter the service of the white man and prefer the wild life of the jungle. I was informed in the Congo that the real pygmy is fast disappearing from the map. Inter-marriage with other tribes, and settlement into more or less permanent villages, have increased the height of the present generation and helped to remove one of the last human links with

Stanley's great day.

The Congo River native is perhaps the shrewdest in all Central Africa. He is a born trader, and he can convert the conventional shoe-string into something worth while. One reason why the Bangalas take positions as firemen and woodboys on the river boats is that it enables them to go into business. The price of food at the small settlements up river is much less than at Kinshassa, where navigation from Stanleyville southward ends. Hence the blacks acquire considerable stores of palm oil and dried fish at the various stops made by the steamers and dispose of it with large profit when they reach the end of the journey. I have in mind the experience of a capita on the "Comte de Flandre." When we left Stanleyville his cash capital was thirty-five francs. With this he purchased a sufficient quantity of food, which included dozens of pieces of *chikwanga*, to realize two hundred and twenty francs at Kinshassa.

These river natives are genuine profiteers. They invariably make it a rule to charge the white man three or four times the price they exact from their own kind. No white man ever thinks of buying anything himself. He always sends one of his servants. As soon as the vendor knows that the servant is in the white employ he shoves up the price. I discovered this state of affairs as soon as I started down the Lualaba. In my innocence I paid two francs for a bunch of bananas. The moment I had closed the deal I observed larger and better bunches being purchased by natives for fifty centimes.

This business of profiteering by the natives is no new phase of life in the Congo. Stanley discovered it to his cost. Sir Harry Johnston, the distinguished explorer and administrator, who added to his achievements during these past years by displaying skill and brilliancy as a novelist, tells a characteristic story that throws light on the subject. It deals with one of the experiences of George Grenfell, the eminent British missionary who gave thirty years of his unselfish life to work in the Congo. On one of his trips he noticed the corpse of a woman hanging from the branches of a tree over the water of the great river. At first he thought that she had been executed as a punishment for adultery, one of the most serious crimes in the native calendar. On investigation he found that she had been guilty of a much more serious offense. A law had been imposed that all

goods, especially food, must be sold to the white man at a far higher price than the local market value. This unhappy woman had only doubled the quotation for eggs, had been convicted of breaking the code, and had suffered death in consequence.

Since I have referred to adultery, let me point out a situation that does not reflect particular credit on so-called civilization. Before the white man came to Africa chastity was held in deepest reverence. The usual punishment for infidelity was death. Some of the early white men were more or less promiscuous and set a bad moral example with regard to the women. The native believed that in this respect "the white man can do no wrong" and the inevitable laxity resulted. When a woman deserts her husband now all she gets is a sound beating. If a man elopes with the wife of a friend, he is haled before a magistrate and fined.

[THE HEART OF THE EQUATORIAL FOREST](#)  
**THE HEART OF THE EQUATORIAL FOREST**

### III

On the Congo I got my first glimpse of the native fashion in mourning. It is a survival of the biblical "sackcloth and ashes." As soon as a death occurs all the members of the family smear their faces and bodies with ashes or dirt. Even the babies show these rude symbols of woe. It gives the person thus adorned a weird and ghastly appearance. When ashes and dust are not available for this purpose, a substitute is found in filthy mud. The mourner is not permitted to wash throughout the entire period of grief, which ranges from thirty to ninety days.

Like the Southern Negro in America these African natives are not only born actors but have a keen sense of humour. They are quick to imitate the white man. If a Georgia darkey, for example, wants to abuse a member of his own race he delights to call him "a fool nigger." It is the last word in reproach. In the Congo when a native desires to express contempt for his fellow, he refers to him as a *basingi*, which means bush-man. It is a case of the pot calling the kettle black.

Up the Kasai I heard a story that admirably illustrates the native humour. A Belgian official much inclined to corpulency came out to take charge of a post. After the usual fashion, he received a native name the moment he arrived. It is not surprising that he became known as *Mafutta Mingi*. As soon as he learned what it meant he became indignant. Like most fat men he could not persuade himself that he was fat. He demanded that he be given another title, whereupon the local chief solemnly dubbed him *Kiboko*. The official was immediately appeased. He noticed that a broad smile invariably illumined the countenance of the person who addressed him in this way. On investigation he discovered that the word meant hippopotamus.

The Congo native delights in argument. Here you get another parallel with his American brother. A Bangala, for example, will talk for a week about five centimes. One day at Dima I heard a terrific shouting and exhorting down at the native market which is held twice a week. I was certain that someone was being murdered. When I arrived on the scene I saw a hundred men and women

gesticulating wildly and in a great state of excitement. I learned that the wife of a wood-boy on a boat had either secreted or sold a scrap of soap, and her husband was not only berating her with his tongue but telling the whole community about it.

The chief function of most Belgian officials in the Congo is to preside at what is technically known as a "palaver." This word means conference but it actually develops into a free-for-all riotous protestation by the natives involved. They all want to talk at the same time and it is like an Irish debating society. Years ago each village had a "palaver ground," where the chief sat in solemn judgment on the disputes of his henchmen. Now the "palavers" are held before Government officers. Most of the "palavers" that I heard related to elopements. No matter how grievous was the offense of the male he invariably shifted the entire responsibility to the woman. He was merely emulating the ways of civilization.

Between Stanleyville and Kinshassa we not only stopped every night according to custom, but halted at not less than a dozen settlements to take on or deliver cargo. These stations resemble each other in that they are mainly a cluster of stores owned or operated by agents of various trading companies. Practically every post in the Congo has, in addition, a shop owned by a Portuguese. You find these traders everywhere. They have something of the spirit of adventure and the hardihood of their doughty ancestors who planted the flag of Portugal on the high seas back in that era when the little kingdom was a world power.

Some of them have been in the Congo for fifteen and twenty years without ever stirring outside its confines. On the steamer that took me to Europe from the Congo was a Portuguese who had lived in the bush for twenty-two years. When he got on the big steamer he was frightened at the noise and practically remained in his cabin throughout the entire voyage. As we neared France he told me that if he had realized beforehand the terror and tumult of the civilization that he had forgotten, he never would have departed from his jungle home. He was as shy as a wild animal.

One settlement, Basoko, has a tragic meaning for the Anglo-Saxon. Here died and lies buried, the gallant Grenfell. I doubt if exploration anywhere revealed a nobler character than this Baptist minister whose career has been so adequately



presented by Sir Harry Johnston, and who ranks with Stanley and Livingstone as one of the foremost of African explorers. In the Congo evangelization has been fraught with a truly noble fortitude. When you see the handicaps that have beset both Catholic and Protestant missionaries you are filled with a new appreciation of their calling.

The most important stop of this trip was at Coquilhatville, named in honor of Captain Coquilhat, one of the most courageous of the early Belgian soldier-explorers. It was the original Equatorville (it is at the point where the Equator cuts the Congo), founded by Stanley when he established the series of stations under the auspices of the International African Association. Here dwells the Vice-Governor of the Equatorial Province. Near by is a botanical garden maintained by the Colonial Government and which contains specimens of all the flora of Central Africa.

At Coquilhatville I saw the first horse since I left Rhodesia and it was a distinct event. Except in the Kasai region it is impossible to maintain live stock in the Congo. The tsetse fly is the devastating agency. Apparently the only beasts able to withstand this scourge are goats and dogs. The few white men who live in Coquilhatville have been able to maintain five horses which are used by the so-called Riding Club. These animals provide the only exercise at the post. They are owned and ridden by the handful of Englishmen there. A man must drive himself to indulge in any form of outdoor sport along the equator. The climate is more or less enervating and it takes real Anglo-Saxon energy to resist the lure of the *siesta* or to remain in bed as long as possible.

Bolobo is a reminder of Stanley. He had more trouble here than at any of the many stations he set up in the Congo Free State in the early eighties. The natives were hostile, the men he left in charge proved to be inefficient, and on two occasions the settlement was burned to the ground. Today it is the seat of one of the largest and most prosperous of all the English Baptist Congo missions and is presided over by a Congo veteran, Dr. Stonelake. One feature of the work here is a manual training school for natives, who manufacture the same kind of wicker chairs that the tourist buys at Madeira.

The farther I travelled in the Congo the more deeply I became interested in the

native habits and customs. Although cluttered with ignorance and superstition the barbaric mind is strangely productive of a rude philosophy which is expressed in a quaint folklore. Seasoned Congo travellers like Grenfell, Stanley, Ward, and Johnston have all recorded fascinating local legends. I heard many of these tales myself and I shall endeavour to relate the best.

Some of the most characteristic stories deal with the origin of death. Here is a Bangala tradition gathered by Grenfell and which runs as follows:

The natives say that in the beginning men and women did not die. That one day, *Nza Komba* (God) came bringing two gifts, a large and a small one. If they chose the smaller one they would continue to live, but if the larger one, they would for a time enjoy much greater wealth, but they would afterwards die. The men said they must consider the matter, and went away to drink water, as the Kongos say. While they were discussing the matter the women took the larger gift, and *Nza Komba* went back with the little one. He has never been seen since, though they cried and cried for Him to come back and take the big bundle and give them the little one, and with it immortality.

The Baluba version of the great mystery is set forth in this way:

God (*Kabezya-unpungu*) created the sun, moon, and stars, then the world, and later the plants and animals. When all this was finished He placed a man and two women in the world and taught them the name and use of all things. He gave an axe and a knife to the man, and taught him to cut wood, weave stuffs, melt iron, and to hunt and fish. To the women he gave a pickaxe and a knife. He taught both of them to till the ground, make pottery, weave baskets, make oil,—that is to say, all that custom assigns to them to-day.

These first inhabitants of the earth lived happily for a long time until one of the women began to grow old. God, foreseeing this, had given her the gift of rejuvenating herself, and the faculty, if she once succeeded, of preserving the gift for herself and for all mankind. Unfortunately, she speedily lost the precious treasure and introduced death into the world.

This is how the misfortune occurred: Seeing herself all withered, the woman took the fan with which her companion had been winnowing maize for the manufacture of beer and shut herself into her hut, carefully closing the door. There she began to tear off her old skin, throwing it on the fan. The skin came off easily, a new one appearing in its place. The operation was nearing completion. There remained the head and neck only when her companion came to the hut to fetch her fan and before the old woman could speak, pushed open the door. The almost rejuvenated woman fell dead instantly.

This is the reason we all die. The two survivors gave birth to a number of sons

and daughters, from whom all races have descended. Since that time God does not trouble about His creatures. He is satisfied with visiting them incognito now and again. Wherever He passes the ground sinks. He injures no one. It is therefore superfluous to honour him, so the Balubas offer no worship to Him.

[NATIVES PILING WOOD](#)  
**NATIVES PILING WOOD**  
[A WOOD POST ON THE CONGO](#)  
**A WOOD POST ON THE CONGO**

The animal story has a high place in the legends of these peoples. They represent a combination of Kipling's Jungle Book, Aesop's Fables, and Br'er Rabbit. Nor do they fail to point a moral. Naturally, the elephant is a conspicuous feature in most of them. The tale of "The Elephant and the Shrew" will illustrate. Here it is:

One day the elephant met the shrew mouse on his road. "Out of the way," cried the latter. "I am the bigger, and it is your place to look out," replied the monster. "Curse you!" retorted the shrew mouse furiously. "May the long grass cut your legs!" "And may you meet your death when you walk in the road!" replied the other crushing him under his huge foot. Both curses have been fulfilled. From that day the elephant wounds himself when he goes through the long grass, and the shrew-mouse meets her death when she crosses the road.

The story of the elephant and the chameleon is equally interesting. One day the chameleon challenged the elephant to a race. The latter accepted the challenge and a meeting was arranged for the following morning. During the night the chameleon placed all his brothers from point to point along the length of the track where the race was to be run. When day came the elephant started. The chameleon quickly slipped behind without the elephant noticing. "Are you not tired?" asked the monster of the first chameleon he met. "Not at all," he replied, executing the same manœuvre as the former. This stratagem was renewed so many times that the elephant, tired out, gave up the contest and confessed himself beaten.

In the wilds, as in civilization, the relation between husband and wife, and more especially the downfall of the autocrat of the home, is a favorite subject for jest. From the northeastern corner of the Congo comes this illuminating story:

A man had two wives, one gentle and prepossessing, the other such a gossip that he was often made angry. Neither remonstrances nor beating improved her, and finally he made up his mind to drive her into a wood amongst the hyenas. There she built herself a little hut into which a hyena came and boldly installed herself as mistress. The wife tried to protest but the hyena, not content with eating and drinking all that the wife was preparing, compelled her furthermore to look after her young. One day the hyena had ordered the woman to boil some water. While waiting the wife had the sudden idea of seizing the young hyenas and throwing them into the boiling water. She did this and then she ran trembling to take refuge in the home of her husband whom she found calmly seated at the entrance of the house, spear in hand. She threw herself at the feet of her spouse, beseeching him for help and protection. When the hyena arrived foaming with rage her husband stretched it dead on the ground with a blow of his spear. The lesson was not lost on the wife. From that day forth she became the joy and delight of her husband.

The Congo can ever reproduce its own version of the fable of "The Goose that Laid the Golden Egg." It is somewhat primitive but serves the same purpose. As told to the naked piccaninnies by the flickering camp-fires it runs thus:

Four fools owned a chicken which laid blue glass beads instead of eggs. A quarrel arose concerning the ownership of the fowl. The bird was subsequently killed and divided into four equal portions. The spring of their good fortune dried up.

To understand the significance of the story it must be understood that for many years beads have been one of the forms of currency in Central Africa. Formerly they were as important a detail in the purchase of a wife as copper and calico. The first piece of attire, if it may be designated by this name, that adorns the native baby after its entrance into the world is an anklet of blue beads. Later a strand of beads is placed round its loins.

When you have heard such stories as I have just related, you realize that despite his ignorance, appetite, and indolence, the Congo native has some desirable qualities. He is shiftless but not without human instincts. Nowhere are they better expressed than in his folklore.

## IV

Two stops on the Congo River deserve special attention. In the Congo there began in 1911 an industry that will have an important bearing on the economic development of the Colony. It was the installation of the first plant of the Huileries du Congo Belge. This Company, which is an offshoot of the many Lever enterprises of England, resulted from the growing need of palm oil as a substitute for animal fat in soap-making. Lord Leverhulme, who was then Sir William Lever, obtained a concession for considerably more than a million acres of palm forests in the Congo. He began to open up so-called areas and install mills for boiling the fruit and drying the kernels. He now has eight areas, and two of them, Elizabetha and Alberta,—I visited both—are on the Congo River.

For hundreds of years the natives have gathered the palm fruit and extracted the oil. Under their method of manufacture the waste was enormous. The blacks threw away the kernel because they were unaware of the valuable substance inside. Lord Leverhulme was the first to organize the industry on a big and scientific basis and it has justified his confidence and expenditure.

Most people are familiar with the date and the cocoa-nut palms. From the days of the Bible they have figured in narrative and picture. The oil palm, on the other hand, is less known but much more valuable. It is the staff of life in the Congo and for that matter, practically all West Africa. Thousands of years ago its sap was used by the Egyptians for embalming the bodies of their kingly dead. Today it not only represents the most important agricultural industry of the Colony, having long since surpassed rubber as the premier product, but it has an almost bewildering variety of uses. It is food, drink and shelter. Out of the trunk the native extracts his wine; from the fruit, and this includes the kernel, are obtained oil for soap, salad dressing and margarine; the leaves provide a roof for the native houses; the fibre is made into mats, baskets or strings for fishing nets, while the wood goes into construction. Even the bugs that live on it are food for men.

The "H. C. B." as the Huileries du Congo Belge is more commonly known in the Congo, really performed a courageous act in exploitation when it set up shop in the remote regions and devoted itself to an absolutely fresh enterprise, so far as extensive development is concerned, at a time when the rich and profitable products of the country were rubber, ivory and copal. The company's initiative, therefore, instigated the trade in oleaginous products which is so conspicuous in the economic life of the country.

The installation at Alberta, while not so large as the Leverville area on the Kwilu River, will serve to show just what the corporation is doing. Five years ago this region was the jungle. Today it is the model settlement on the Congo River. The big brick office building stands on a brow of the hill overlooking the water. Not far away is the large mill where the palm fruit is reduced to oil and the kernels dried. Stretching away from the river is a long avenue of palms, flanked by the commodious brick bungalows of the white employes. The "H. C. B." maintains a store at each of its areas, where food and supplies are bought by the personnel. These stores are all operated by the Société d'Entreprises Commerciales au Congo Belge, known locally under the name of "Sedec," formed as its name indicated, with a view of benefiting by the great resources opened to commerce in the Colony.

For miles in every direction the Company has laid out extensive palm plantations. In the Alberta region twenty-five hundred acres are in course of cultivation in what is known as the Eastern Development, while sixteen hundred more acres are embodied in the Western development. An oil palm will bear fruit within seven years after the young tree is planted. The fruit comes in what is called a *régime*, which resembles a huge bunch of grapes. It is a thick cluster of palm fruit. Each fruit is about the size of a large date. The outer portion, the pericarp, is almost entirely yellow oil encased in a thick skin. Imbedded in this oil is the kernel, which contains an even finer oil. The fruit is boiled down and the kernel, after a drying process, is exported in bags to England, where it is broken open and the contents used for salad oil or margarine.

Before the war thousands of tons of palm oil and kernels were shipped from the West Coast of Africa to Germany every year. Now they are diverted to England

where large kernel-crushing plants have been installed and the whole activity has become a British enterprise. With the eclipse of the German Colonial Empire in Africa it is not likely that she can regain this lost business.

RESIDENTIAL QUARTERS AT ALBERTA  
**RESIDENTIAL QUARTERS AT ALBERTA**  
THE COMTE DE FLANDRE  
**THE COMTE DE FLANDRE**

The creation of new palmeries is merely one phase of the company's development. One of its largest tasks is to safeguard the immense natural palmeries on its concessions. The oil palm requires constant attention. The undergrowth spreads rapidly and if it is not removed is liable to impair the life of the tree. Thousands of natives are employed on this work. A large knife something like the Cuban machete is used.

Harvesting the *régimes* is a spectacular performance not without its element of danger. The *régime* grows at the top of the tree, usually a height of sixty or seventy-five feet and sometimes more. The native literally walks up the trunk with the help of a loop made from some stout vine which encircles him. Arriving at the top he fixes his feet against the trunk, leans against the loop which holds him fast, and hacks away at the *régime*. It falls with a heavy thud and woe betide the human being or the animal it strikes. The natives will not cut fruit in rainy weather because many have slipped on the wet bark and fallen to their death.

So wide is the Alberta fruit-producing area that a narrow-gauge railway is necessary to bring the fruit in to the mill. Along its line are various stations where the fruit is mobilized, stripped from the *régime* and sent down for refining in baskets. Each station has a superintendent who lives on the spot. The personnel of all the staff in the Congo is almost equally divided between British and Belgians.

While the "H. C. B." is the largest factor in the palm oil industry in the Congo, many tons of kernels are gathered every year by individuals who include thousands of natives. One reason why the savage takes naturally to this occupation is that it demands little work. All that he is required to do is to climb a tree in the jungle and lop off a *régime*. He uses the palm oil for his own needs



or disposes of it to a member of his tribe and sells the kernels to the white man.

The "H. C. B." is independent of all other water transport in the Congo. Its river tonnage aggregates more than 6,000, and in addition it has many oil barges on the various rivers where its vessels ply. The capacity of some of the barges is 250 tons of oil. They are usually lashed to the side of the steamer. The decks of these barges are often piled high with bags of kernels and become a favorite sleeping place for the black voyagers for whom the thousands of insects that lurk in them have no terrors. No bug inflicts a sharper sting than these pests who make their *habitat* among the palm kernels.

One of my fellow passengers on the "Comte de Flandre" was I. F. Braham, the Associate Managing Director of the "H. C. B." in the Congo. Long the friend and companion in Liberia of Sir Harry Johnston, he was a most desirable and congenial companion. It was on his suggestion and invitation that I spent the week at Alberta and he shared the visit. Our hosts were Major and Mrs. Claude Wallace.

Major Wallace was the District Manager of the Alberta area and occupied a brick bungalow on the bank of the river. He is a pioneer in exploration in the French Congo and Liberia and went almost straight from the battlefields of France, where he served with distinction in the World War, out to his post in the Congo. His wife is a fine example of the white woman who has braved the dangers of the tropics. She left the luxury and convenience of European life to establish a home in the jungle.

It is easy to spot the refining influence of the woman in the African habitation. You always see the effect long before you behold the cause. One of these effects is usually a neat garden. Mrs. Wallace had half an acre of English roses in front of her house. They were the only ones I saw in Central Africa. The average bachelor in this part of the world is not particularly scrupulous about the appearance of his house. The moment you observe curtains at the window you know that there is a female on the premises.

My life at Alberta was one of the really delightful experiences in the Congo. Every morning I set out with Braham and Wallace on some tour of inspection.

Often we rode part of the way on the little light railroad. The method of transport was unique. An ordinary bench is placed on a small flat car. The propelling power is furnished by two husky natives who stand on either side of the bench and literally shove the vehicle along with long sticks. It is like paddling a railroad canoe. This transportation freak is technically called a *maculla*. The strong-armed paddlers were able to develop an astonishing speed. I think that this is the only muscle-power railroad in the world. Light engines are employed for hauling the palm fruit trains.

After our day in the field—for frequently we took our lunch with us—we returned before sunset and bathed and dressed for dinner. In the Congo only a madman would take a cold plunge. The most healthful immersion is in tepid water. More than one Englishman has paid the penalty with his life, by continuing his traditional cold bath in the tropics. This reminds me of a significant fact in connection with colonization. Everyone must admit that the Briton is the best colonizer in the world. One reason is that he knows how to rule the man of colour for he does it with fairness and firmness. Another lies in the fact that he not only keeps himself clean but he makes his environment sanitary.

There is a tradition that the Constitution follows the flag. I contend that with the Englishman the bath-tub precedes the code of law and what is more important, it is in daily use. There are a good many bath-tubs in the Congo but they are employed principally as receptacles for food supplies and soiled linen.

Those evenings at Alberta were as unforgettable as their setting. Braham and Wallace were not only men of the world but they had read extensively and had travelled much. A wide range of subjects came under discussion at that hospitable table whose spotless linen and soft shaded lights were more reminiscent of London and New York than suggestive of a far-away post on the Congo River on the edge of the wilderness.

At Alberta as elsewhere, the "H. C. B." is a moral force. Each area has a doctor and a hospital. No detail of its medical work is more vital to the productive life of the Colony than the inoculation of the natives against sleeping sickness. This dread disease is the scourge of the Congo and every year takes toll of hundreds of thousands of natives. Nor is the white man immune. I saw a Belgian official

dying of this loathsome malady in a hospital at Matadi and I shall never forget his ravings. The last stage of the illness is always a period when the victim becomes demented. The greatest boon that could possibly be held out for Central Africa today would be the prevention of sleeping sickness.

Another constructive work carried out under the auspices of the "H. C. B." is embodied in the native schools. There is an excellent one at Alberta. It is conducted by the Catholic Fathers of the Scheut Mission. The children are trained to become wood-workers, machinists, painters, and carpenters. It is the Booker Washington idea transplanted in the jungle. The Scheut Missionaries and their Jesuit colleagues are doing an admirable service throughout the Congo. Some of them are infused with the spirit that animated Father Damien. Time, distance, and isolation count for naught with them. It is no uncommon thing to encounter in the bush a Catholic priest who has been on continuous service there for fifteen or twenty years without a holiday. At Luluaburg lives a Mother Superior who has been in the field for a quarter of a century without wandering more than two hundred miles from her field of operations.

## V

Now for the last stage of the Congo River trip. Like so many of my other experiences in Africa it produced a surprise. One morning when we were about two hundred miles north of Kinshassa I heard the whir of a motor engine, a rare sound in those parts. I thought of aeroplanes and instinctively looked up. Flying overhead toward Coquilhatville was a 300-horse power hydroplane containing two people. Upon inquiry I discovered that it was one of four machines engaged in carrying passengers, mail, and express between Kinshassa and Coquilhatville.

The campaign against the Germans in East Africa proved the practicability of aeroplanes in the tropics. The Congo is the first of the Central African countries to dedicate aviation to commercial uses and this precedent is likely to be extensively followed. Fifteen hydroplanes have been ordered for the Congo River service which will eventually be extended to Stanleyville. Only those who have endured the agony of slow transport in the Congo can realize the blessing that air travel will confer.

[A TYPICAL OIL PALM FOREST](#)  
**A TYPICAL OIL PALM FOREST**  
[BRINGING IN THE PALM FRUIT](#)  
**BRINGING IN THE PALM FRUIT**

I was naturally curious to find out just what the African native thought of the aeroplane. The moment that the roar of the engine broke the morning silence, everybody on the boat rushed to some point of vantage to see the strange sight. The blacks slapped each other on the shoulder, pointed at the machine, and laughed and jabbered. Yet when my secretary asked a big Baluba if he did not think that the aeroplane was a wonderful thing the barbarian simply grunted and replied, "White man can do anything." He summed up the native attitude toward his conqueror. I believe that if a white man performed the most astounding feat of magic or necromancy the native would not express the slightest surprise.

At Kwamouth, where the Kasai flows into the Congo River, we entered the so-

called "Channel." From this point down to Stanley Pool the river is deep and the current is swift. This means that for a brief time the traveller enjoys immunity from the danger of running aground on a sandbank. The whole country-side is changed. Instead of the low and luxuriantly-wooded shores the banks become higher with each passing hour. Soon the land adjacent to the river merges into foothills and these in turn taper off into mountains. The effect is noble and striking. No wonder Stanley went into ecstasies over this scenery. He declared on more than one occasion that it was as inspiring as any he had seen in Wales or Scotland.

In the "Channel" another surprise awaits the traveller. The mornings are bitterly raw. This is probably due to the high ground on either side of the river and the strong currents of air that sweep up the stream. I can frankly say that I really suffered from the cold within striking distance of the equator. I did not feel comfortable until I had donned a heavy sweater.

This sudden change in temperature explains one reason why so many Congo natives die under forty. They are scantily clad, perspire freely, and lie out at night with scarcely any covering. They go to sleep in a humid atmosphere and wake up with the temperature forty degrees lower. The natural result is that half of them constantly have colds and the moment pneumonia develops they succumb. Congestion of the lungs vies with sleeping sickness as the ravager of Middle Africa, and especially certain parts of the Congo.

Kinshassa is situated on Stanley Pool, a lake-like expansion of the Congo more than two hundred square miles in area. It is dotted with islands. Nearly one-third of the northern shore is occupied by the rocky formations that Stanley named Dover Cliffs. They reminded him of the famous white cliffs of England and with the sunlight on them they do bear a strong resemblance to one of the familiar signposts of Albion. More than one Englishman emerging from the jungle after long service remote from civilization has gotten a thrill of home at the name and sight of these hills.

Stanley Pool has always been associated in my mind with one of the most picturesque episodes in Stanley's life. He tells about it in his monumental work on the Congo Free State and again relates it in his Autobiography. It deals with

Ngalyema, who was chief of the Stanley Pool District in the early eighties. He demanded and received a large quantity of goods for the permission to establish a station here. After the explorer had camped within ten miles of the Pool the old pirate pretended that he had not received the goods and sought to extort more. Stanley refused to be bullied, whereupon the chief threatened to attack him in force. Let Stanley now tell the story, for it is an illustration of the way he combated the usury and cunning of the Congo native.

I had hung a great Chinese gong conspicuously near the principal tent. Ngalyema's curiosity would be roused. All my men were hidden, some in the steamboat on top of the wagon, and in its shadow was a cool place where the warriors would gladly rest after a ten-mile march. Other of my men lay still as death under tarpaulins, under bundles of grass, and in the bush round about the camp. By the time the drum-taps and horns announced Ngalyema's arrival, the camp seemed abandoned except by myself and a few small boys. I was indolently seated in a chair reading a book, and appeared too lazy to notice anyone; but, suddenly looking up and seeing my "brother Ngalyema" and his warriors, scowlingly regarding me, I sprang up and seized his hands, and affectionately bade him welcome, in the name of sacred fraternity, and offered him my own chair.

He was strangely cold, and apparently disgruntled, and said:—

"Has not my brother forgotten his road? What does he mean by coming to this country?"

"Nay, it is Ngalyema who has forgotten the blood-bond which exists between us. It is Ngalyema who has forgotten the mountains of goods which I paid him. What words are these of my brother?"

"Be warned, Rock-Breaker. Go back before it is too late. My elders and people all cry out against allowing the white man to come into our country. Therefore, go back before it be too late. Go back, I say, the way you came."

Speech and counter-speech followed. Ngalyema had exhausted his arguments; but it was not easy to break faith and be uncivil, with plausible excuse. His eyes were reaching round seeking to discover an excuse to fight, when they rested on

the round, burnished face of the Chinese gong.

"What is that?" he said.

"Ah, that—that is a fetish."

"A fetish! A fetish for what?"

"It is a war-fetish, Ngalyema. The slightest sound of that would fill this empty camp with hundreds of angry warriors; they would drop from above, they would spring up from the ground, from the forest about, from everywhere."

"Sho! Tell that story to the old women, and not to a chief like Ngalyema. My boy tells me it is a kind of a bell. Strike it and let me hear it."

"Oh, Ngalyema, my brother, the consequences would be too dreadful! Do not think of such a thing!"

"Strike it, I say."

"Well, to oblige my dear brother Ngalyema, I will."

And I struck hard and fast, and the clangourous roll rang out like thunder in the stillness. Only for a few seconds, however, for a tempest of human voices was heard bursting into frightful discords, and from above, right upon the heads of the astonished warriors, leaped yelling men; and from the tents, the huts, the forest round about, they came by sixes, dozens, and scores, yelling like madmen, and seemingly animated with uncontrollable rage. The painted warriors became panic-stricken; they flung their guns and powder-kegs away, forgot their chief, and all thoughts of loyalty, and fled on the instant, fear lifting their heels high in the air; or, tugging at their eye-balls, and kneading the senses confusedly, they saw, heard, and suspected nothing, save that the limbo of fetishes had suddenly broken loose!

But Ngalyema and his son did not fly. They caught the tails of my coat, and we began to dance from side to side, a loving triplet, myself being foremost to ward off the blow savagely aimed at my "brothers," and cheerfully crying out, "Hold fast to me, my brothers. I will defend you to the last drop of my blood. Come

one, come all."

Presently the order was given, "Fall in!" and quickly the leaping forms became rigid, and the men stood in two long lines in beautiful order, with eyes front, as though "at attention!" Then Ngalyema relaxed his hold of my coat-tails, and crept from behind, breathing more freely; and, lifting his hand to his mouth, exclaimed, in genuine surprise, "Eh, Mamma! where did all these people come from?"

"Ah, Ngalyema, did I not tell you that thing was a powerful fetish? Let me strike it again, and show you what else it can do."

"No! no! no!" he shrieked. "I have seen enough!"

[A SPECIMEN OF CICATRIZATION](#)  
**A SPECIMEN OF CICATRIZATION**  
[A SANKURU WOMAN PLAYING NATIVE DRAUGHTS](#)  
**A SANKURU WOMAN PLAYING NATIVE DRAUGHTS**

The day ended peacefully. I was invited to hasten on to Stanley Pool. The natives engaged themselves by the score to assist me in hauling the wagons. My progress was thenceforth steady and uninterrupted, and in due time the wagons and good-columns arrived at their destination.

Kinshassa was an accident. Leopoldville, which is situated about ten miles away and the capital of the Congo-Kasai Province, was expected to become the center of white life and enterprise in this vicinity. It was founded by Stanley in the early eighties and named in honour of the Belgian king. It commands the river, cataracts, forests and mountains.

Commerce, however, fixed Kinshassa as its base of operation, and its expansion has been astonishing for that part of the world. It is a bustling port and you can usually see half a dozen steamers tied up at the bank. There is a population of several hundred white people and many thousands of natives. The Banque du Congo Belge has its principal establishment here and there are scores of well-stocked mercantile establishments. With the exception of Matadi and Thysville it has the one livable hotel in the Congo. Moreover, it rejoices in that now indispensable feature of civic life which is expressed in a cinema theatre. In the



tropics all motion picture houses are open-air institutions.

In cataloguing Kinshassa's attractions I must not omit the feature that had the strongest and most immediate lure for me. It was a barber shop and I made tracks for it as soon as I arrived. I was not surprised to find that the proprietor was a Portuguese who had made a small fortune trimming the Samson locks of the scores of agents who stream into the little town every week. He is the only barber in the place and there is no competition this side of Stanleyville, more than a thousand miles away.

The seasoned residents of the Congo would never think of calling Kinshassa by any other name than "Kin." In the same way Leopoldville is dubbed "Leo." Kinshassa is laid out in streets, has electric lights, and within the past twelve months about twenty automobiles have been acquired by its residents. There is a gay social life, and on July first, the anniversary of the birth of the Congo Free State, and when a celebration is usually held, I saw a spirited football game between British and Belgian teams. Most of the big international British trading companies that operate in Africa have branches in Kinshassa and it is not difficult to assemble an English-speaking quorum.

In the matter of transportation Kinshassa is really the key to the heart of the Congo. It is the rail-head of the narrow-gauge line from Matadi and all merchandise that comes from Europe is transshipped at this point to the boats that go up the Congo river as far as Stanleyville. Thus every ton of freight and every traveller bound for the interior must pass through Kinshassa. When the railway from the Katanga is constructed its prestige will increase.

Kinshassa owes a part of its development to the Huileries du Congo Belge. Its plant dominates the river front. There are a dozen huge tanks into which the palm-oil flows from the barges. The fluid is then run into casks and sent down by rail to Matadi, whence it goes in steamers to Europe. More than a hundred white men are in the service of the "H. C. B." at Stanley Pool. They live in standardized brick bungalows in their own area which is equipped with tennis courts and a library. On all English fête days the Union Jack is hoisted and there is much festivity.

Two months had elapsed since I entered the Congo and I had travelled about two thousand miles within its borders. This journey, short as it seems as distances go these days, would have taken Stanley nearly two years to accomplish in the face of the obstacles that hampered him. I had only carried out part of my plan. The Kasai was calling. The time was now at hand when I would retrace my way up the Congo River and turn my face towards the Little America that nestles far up in the wilds.

[THE BELGIAN CONGO](#)  
**THE BELGIAN CONGO**

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# **CHAPTER VI—AMERICA IN THE CONGO**

# I

Go up the Kasai River to Djoko Punda and you believe, despite the background of tropical vegetation and the ever-present naked savage, that for the moment you are back in the United States. You see American jitneys scooting through the jungle; you watch five-ton American tractors hauling heavy loads along the sandy roads; you hear American slang and banter on all sides, and if you are lucky enough to be invited to a meal you get American hot cakes with real American maple syrup. The air tingles with Yankee energy and vitality.

All this means that you have arrived at the outpost of Little America in the Belgian Congo—the first actual signboard of the least known and most picturesque piece of American financial venturing abroad. It has helped to redeem a vast region from barbarism and opened up an area of far-reaching economic significance. At Djoko Punda you enter the domain of the Forminiere, the corporation founded by a monarch and which has a kingdom for a partner. Woven into its story is the romance of a one-time barefoot Virginia boy who became the commercial associate of a king.

What is the Forminiere and what does it do? The name is a contraction of Société Internationale Forestiere & Miniere du Congo. In the Congo, where companies have long titles, it is the fashion to reduce them to the dimensions of a cable code-word. Thus the high-sounding Compagnie Industrielle pour les Transports et Commerce au Stanley Pool is mercifully shaved to "Citas." This information, let me say, is a life-saver for the alien with a limited knowledge of French and whose pronunciation is worse.

Clearly to understand the scope and purpose of the Forminiere you must know that it is one of the three companies that have helped to shape the destiny of the Congo. I encountered the first—the Union Miniere—the moment I entered the Katanga. The second is the Huileries du Congo Belge, the palm-oil producers whose bailiwick abuts upon the Congo and Kwilu Rivers. Now we come to the third and the most important agency, so far as American interest is affected, in

the Forminiere, whose empire is the immense section watered by the Kasai River and which extends across the border into Angola. In the Union Miniere you got the initial hint of America's part in the development of the Congo. That part, however, was entirely technical. With the Forminiere you have the combination of American capital and American engineering in an achievement that is, to say the least, unusual.

The moment I dipped into Congo business history I touched the Forminiere for the reason that it was the pet project of King Leopold, and the last and favorite corporate child of his economic statesmanship. Moreover, among the leading Belgian capitalists interested were men who had been Stanley's comrades and who had helped to blaze the path of civilization through the wilds. King Albert spoke of it to me in terms of appreciation and more especially of the American end. I felt a sense of pride in the financial courage and physical hardihood of my countrymen who had gone so far afield. I determined to see the undertaking at first hand.

My experience with it proved to be the most exciting of my whole African adventure. All that I had hitherto undergone was like a springtime frolic compared to the journey up the Kasai and through the jungle that lurks beyond. I saw the war-like savage on his native heath; I travelled with my own caravan through the forest primeval; I employed every conceivable kind of transport from the hammock swung on a pole and carried on the shoulders of husky natives, to the automobile. The primitive and modern met at almost every stage of the trip which proved to be first cousin to a thriller from beginning to end. Heretofore I had been under the spell of the Congo River. Now I was to catch the magic of its largest tributary, the Kasai.

Long before the Forminiere broke out its banner, America had been associated with the Congo. It is not generally known that Henry M. Stanley, who was born John Rowlands, achieved all the feats which made him an international figure under the name of his American benefactor who adopted him in New Orleans after he had run away to sea from a Welsh workhouse. He was for years to all intents and purposes an American, and carried the American flag on two of his famous expeditions.

President Cleveland was the first chief dignitary of a nation to recognize the Congo Free State in the eighties, and his name is perpetuated in Mount Cleveland, near the headwaters of the Congo River. An American Minister to Belgium, General H. S. Sanford, had a conspicuous part in all the first International African Associations formed by King Leopold to study the Congo situation. This contact, however, save Stanley's share, was diplomatic and a passing phase. It was the prelude to the constructive and permanent part played by the American capitalists in the Forminiére, chief of whom is Thomas F. Ryan.

The reading world associates Ryan with the whirlpool of Big Finance. He ruled New York traction and he recast the tobacco world. Yet nothing appealed to his imagination and enthusiasm like the Congo. He saw it in very much the same way that Rhodes viewed Rhodesia. Every great American master of capital has had his particular pet. There is always some darling of the financial gods. The late J. P. Morgan, for example, regarded the United States Steel Corporation as his prize performance and talked about it just like a doting father speaks of a successful son. The Union Pacific System was the apple of E. H. Harriman's eye, and the New York Central was a Vanderbilt fetish for decades. So with Ryan and the Congo. Other powerful Americans have become associated with him, as you will see later on, but it was the tall, alert, clear-eyed Virginian, who rose from penniless clerk to be a Wall Street king, who first had the vision on this side of the Atlantic, and backed it with his millions. I am certain that if Ryan had gone into the Congo earlier and had not been engrossed in his American interests, he would probably have done for the whole of Central Africa what Rhodes did for South Africa.

[THOMAS F. RYAN](#)  
**THOMAS F. RYAN**

We can now get at the beginnings of the Forminiére. Most large corporations radiate from a lawyer's office. With the Forminiére it was otherwise. The center of inspiration was the stone palace at Brussels where King Leopold II, King of the Belgians, held forth. The year 1906 was not a particularly happy one for him. The atrocity campaign was at its height abroad and the Socialists were pounding him at home. Despite the storm of controversy that raged about him one clear idea shone amid the encircling gloom. That idea was to bulwark the Congo Free

State, of which he was also sovereign, before it was ceded to Belgium.

Between 1879 and 1890 Leopold personally supported the cost of creating and maintaining the Free State. It represented an outlay of more than \$2,500,000. Afterwards he had adequate return in the revenues from rubber and ivory. But Leopold was a royal spender in the fullest sense. He had a variety of fads that ranged from youthful and beguiling femininity to the building of palaces and the beautifying of his own country. He lavished millions on making Brussels a sumptuous capital and Ostend an elaborate seaside resort. With his private life we are not concerned. Leopold the pleasure-seeker was one person; Leopold the business man was another, and as such he was unique among the rulers of Europe.

Leopold contradicted every known tradition of royalty. The king business is usually the business of spending unearned money. Your royal spendthrift is a much more familiar figure than the royal miser. Moreover, nobody ever associates productive power with a king save in the big family line. His task is inherited and with it a bank account sufficient to meet all needs. This immunity from economic necessity is a large price to pay for lack of liberty in speech and action. The principal job of most kings, as we all know, is to be a noble and acquiescent figure-head, to pin decorations on worthy persons, and to open public exhibitions.

Leopold did all of these things but they were incidental to his larger task. He was an insurgent from childhood. He violated all the rules of the royal game not only by having a vision and a mind all his own but in possessing a keen commercial instinct. Geography was his hobby at school. Like Rhodes, he was forever looking at maps. When he became king he saw that the hope of Belgium economically lay in colonization. In 1860 he made a journey to the Far East, whence he returned deeply impressed with trade opportunities in China. Afterwards he was the prime mover in the construction of the Peking-Hankow Railway. I do not think most persons know that Leopold at one time tried to establish a Belgian colony in Ethiopia. Another act in his life that has escaped the casual biographer was his effort to purchase the Philippines from Spain. Now you can see why he seized upon the Congo as a colonizing possibility the

moment he read Henry M. Stanley's first article about it in the London Telegraph.

There was a vital reason why Belgium should have a big and prosperous colony. Her extraordinary internal development demanded an outlet abroad. The doughty little country so aptly called "The Cockpit of Europe," and which bore the brunt of the first German advance in the Great War, is the most densely populated in the world. It has two hundred and forty-seven inhabitants for each square kilometer. England only counts one hundred and forty-six, Germany one hundred and twenty-five, France seventy-two, and the United States thirteen. The Belgians had to have economic elbow room and Leopold was determined that they should have it.

His creation of the Congo Free State was just one evidence of his shrewdness and diplomacy. Half a dozen of the great powers had their eye on this untouched garden spot in Central Africa and would have risked millions of dollars and thousands of men to grab it. Leopold, through a series of International Associations, engineered the famous Berlin Congress of 1884 and with Bismarck's help put the Free State on the map, with himself as steward. It was only a year ago in Germany that a former high-placed German statesman admitted to me that one of the few fundamental mistakes that the Iron Chancellor ever made was to permit Leopold to snatch the Congo from under the very eyes and hands of Germany. I quote this episode to show that when it came to business Leopold made every king in Europe look like an office boy. Even so masterful a manipulator of men as Cecil Rhodes failed with him. Rhodes sought his aid in his trans-African telegraph scheme but Leopold was too shrewd for him. After his first audience with the Belgian king Rhodes said to Robert Williams, "I thought I was clever but I was no match for him."

The only other modern king interested in business was the former Kaiser, Mr. Wilhelm Hohenzollern. Although he has no business sense in the way that Leopold had it, he always had a keen appreciation of big business as an imperial prop. Like Leopold, he had a congested country and realized that permanent expansion lay in colonization. The commercial magnates of Germany used him for their own ends but their teamwork advanced the whole empire. Wilhelm was



a silent partner in the potash, shipping, and electric-machinery trusts. He earned whatever he received because he was in every sense an exalted press-agent,—a sort of glorified publicity promoter. His strong point was to go about proclaiming the merits of German wares and he always made it a point to scatter samples. On a visit to Italy he left behind a considerable quantity of soap. There was a great rush to get these royal left-overs. Two weeks later a small army of German soap salesmen descended upon the country selling this identical product.

Whatever may be said of Leopold, one thing is certain. He was not small. Wilhelm used the brains of other men; Leopold employed his own, and every capitalist who went up against him paid tribute to this asset.

We can now go back to 1906, the year that was to mark the advent of America into the Congo. Leopold knew that the days of the Congo as a Free State were numbered. His personally-conducted stewardship of the Colony was being assailed by the Socialists on one hand and the atrocity proclaimers on the other. Leopold was undoubtedly sincere in his desire to economically safeguard the African possession before it passed out of his control. In any event, during the summer of that year he sent a message to Ryan asking him to confer with him at Brussels. The summons came out of a clear sky and at first the American financier paid no attention to it. He was then on a holiday in Switzerland. When a second invitation came from the king, he accepted, and in September there began a series of meetings between the two men which resulted in the organization of the Forminiére and with it the dawn of a real international epoch in American enterprise.

In the light of our immense riches the timidity of American capital in actual constructive enterprise overseas is astonishing. Scrutinize the world business map and you see how shy it has been. We own rubber plantations in Sumatra, copper mines in Chile, gold interests in Ecuador, and have dabbled in Russian and Siberian mining. These undertakings are slight, however, compared with the scope of the world field and our own wealth. Mexico, where we have extensive smelting, oil, rubber, mining and agricultural investments, is so close at hand that it scarcely seems like a foreign country. Strangely enough our capital there has

suffered more than in any other part of the globe. The spectacle of American pioneering in the Congo therefore takes on a peculiar significance.

There are two reasons why our capital has not wandered far afield. One is that we have a great country with enormous resources and consequently almost unlimited opportunities for the employment of cash at home. The other lies in the fact that American capital abroad is not afforded the same protection granted the money of other countries. Take British capital. It is probably the most courageous of all. The sun never sets on it. England is a small country and her money, to spread its wings, must go elsewhere. Moreover, Britain zealously safeguards her Nationals and their investments, and we, I regret to say, have not always done likewise. The moment an Englishman or the English flag is insulted a warship speeds to the spot and John Bull wants to know the reason why.

Why did Leopold seek American capital and why did he pick out Thomas F. Ryan? There are several motives and I will deal with them in order. In the first place American capital is about the only non-political money in the world. The English pound, for example, always flies the Union Jack and is a highly sensitive commodity. When England puts money into an enterprise she immediately makes the Foreign Office an accessory. German overseas enterprise is even more meddlesome. It has always been the first aid to poisonous and pernicious penetration. Even French capital is flavoured with imperialism despite the fact that it is the product of a democracy. Our dollars are not hitched to the star of empire. We have no dreams of world conquest. It is the safest politically to deal with, and Leopold recognized this fact.

In the second place he did not want anything to interfere with his Congo rubber industry. Now we get to the real reason, perhaps, why he sent for Ryan. In conjunction with the late Senator Nelson W. Aldrich, Ryan had developed the rubber industry in Mexico, by extracting rubber from the guayele shrub which grows wild in the desert. Leopold knew this—he had a way of finding out about things—and he sought to kill two birds with one stone. He wanted this Mexican process and at the same time he needed capital for the Congo. In any event, Ryan went to see him and the Forminiére was born.

There is no need of rehearsing here the concrete details of this enterprise. All we

want are the essential facts. Leopold realized that the Forminiere was the last business venture of his life and he projected it on a truly kingly scale. It was the final chance for huge grants and the result was that the Forminiere received the mining and mineral rights to more than 7,000,000 acres, and other concessions for agriculture aggregating 2,500,000 acres in addition.

The original capital was only 3,000,000 francs but this has been increased from time to time until it is now more than 10,000,000 francs. The striking feature of the organization was the provision inserted by Leopold that made Belgium a partner. One-half of the shares were assigned to the Crown. The other half was divided into two parts. One of these parts was subscribed by the King and the Société Generale of Belgium, and the other was taken in its entirety by Ryan. Subsequently Ryan took in as associates Daniel Guggenheim, Senator Aldrich, Harry Payne Whitney and John Hays Hammond. When Leopold died his share went to his heirs. Upon the death of Aldrich his interest was acquired by Ryan, who is the principal American owner. No shares have ever been sold and none will be. The original trust certificate issued to Ryan and Guggenheim remains intact. The company therefore remains a close corporation in every respect and as such is unique among kindred enterprises.

## II

At this point the question naturally arises—what is the Société Generale? To ask it in Belgium would be on a par with inquiring the name of the king. Its bank notes are in circulation everywhere and it is known to the humblest peasant.

The Société Generale was organized in 1822 and is therefore one of the oldest, if not the oldest, joint stock bank of the Continent. The general plan of the famous Deutsche Bank of Berlin, which planted the German commercial flag everywhere, and which provided a large part of the bone and sinew of the Teutonic world-wide exploitation campaign, was based upon it. With finance as with merchandising, the German is a prize imitator.

The Société Generale, however, is much more than a bank. It is the dynamo that drives Belgian enterprise throughout the globe. We in America pride ourselves on the fact that huge combinations of capital geared up to industry are a specialty entirely our own. We are much mistaken. Little Belgium has in the Société an agency for development unique among financial institutions. Its imposing marble palace on the Rue Royale is the nerve center of a corporate life that has no geographical lines. With a capital of 62,000,000 francs it has piled up reserves of more than 400,000,000 francs. In addition to branches called "filial banks" throughout Belgium, it also controls the powerful "Banque pour l'Etranger," which is established in London, Paris, New York, Cairo, and the Far East.

[JEAN JADOT](#)  
**JEAN JADOT**

One distinctive feature of the Société Generale is its close alliance with the Government. It is a sort of semi-official National Treasury and performs for Belgium many of the functions that the Bank of England transacts for the United Kingdom. But it has infinitely more vigour and push than the Old Lady of Threadneedle Street in London. Its leading officials are required to appear on all imposing public occasions such as coronations and the opening of Parliament. The Belgian Government applies to the Société Generale whenever any national financial enterprise is to be inaugurated and counts upon it to take the initial steps. Thus it became the backbone of Leopold's ramified projects and it was natural that he should invoke its assistance in the organization of the Forminiére.

Long before the Forminiére came into being, the Société Generale was the chief financial factor in the Congo. With the exception of the Huileries du Congo Belge, which is British, it either dominates or has large holdings in every one of the sixteen major corporations doing business in the Colony and whose combined total capitalization is more than 200,000,000 francs. This means that it controls railways and river transport, and the cotton, gold, rubber, ivory and diamond output.

The custodians of this far-flung financial power are the money kings of Belgium. Chief among them is Jean Jadot, Governor of the Société Generale—the institution still designates its head by this ancient title—and President of the Forminiére. In him and his colleagues you find those elements of self-made success so dear to the heart of the human interest historian. It would be difficult to find anywhere a more picturesque group of men than those who, through their association with King Leopold and the Société, have developed the Congo and so many other enterprises.

Jadot occupies today the same position in Belgium that the late J. P. Morgan held in his prime in America. He is the foremost capitalist. Across the broad, flat-topped desk of his office in that marble palace in the Rue Royale the tides of Belgian finance ebb and flow. Just as Morgan's name made an underwriting in New York so does Jadot's put the stamp of authority on it in Brussels. Morgan

inherited a great name and a fortune. Jadot made his name and his millions.

When you analyze the lives of American multi-millionaires you find a curious repetition of history. Men like John D. Rockefeller, Henry H. Rogers, Thomas F. Ryan, and Russell Sage began as grocery clerks in small towns. Something in the atmosphere created by spice and sugar must have developed the money-making germ. With the plutocrats of Belgium it was different. Practically all of them, and especially those who ruled the financial institutions, began as explorers or engineers. This shows the intimate connection that exists between Belgium and her overseas interests.

Jadot is a good illustration. At twenty he graduated as engineer from Louvain University. At thirty-five he had directed the construction of the tramways of Cairo and of the Lower Egyptian Railways. He was now caught up in Leopold's great dream of Belgian expansion. The moment that the king obtained the concession for constructing the 1,200 mile railway from Pekin to Hankow he sent Jadot to China to take charge. Within eight years he completed this task in the face of almost insuperable difficulties, including a Boxer uprising, which cost the lives of some of his colleagues and tested his every resource.

In 1905 he entered the Société Generale. At once he became fired with Leopold's enthusiasm for the Congo and the necessity for making it an outlet for Belgium. Jadot was instrumental in organizing the Union Miniere and was also the compelling force behind the building of the Katanga Railway. In 1912 he became Vice Governor of the Société and the following year assumed the Governorship. In addition to being President of the Forminiere he is also head of the Union Miniere and of the new railroad which is to connect the Katanga with the Lower Congo.

When you meet Jadot you are face to face with a human organization tingling with nervous vitality. He reminds me more of E. H. Harriman than of any other American empire builder that I have met, and like Harriman he seems to be incessantly bound up to the telephone. He is keen, quick, and forceful and talks as rapidly as he thinks. Almost slight of body, he at first gives the impression of being a student for his eyes are deep and thoughtful. There is nothing meditative in his manner, however, for he is a live wire in the fullest American sense. Every

time I talked with him I went away with a new wonder at his stock of world information. Men of the Jadot type never climb to the heights they attain without a reason. In his case it is first and foremost an accurate knowledge of every undertaking. He never goes into a project without first knowing all about it—a helpful rule, by the way, that the average person may well observe in the employment of his money.

If Jadot is a live wire, then his confrere, Emile Francqui, is a whole battery. Here you touch the most romantic and many-sided career in all Belgian financial history. It reads like a melodrama and is packed with action and adventure. I could almost write a book about any one of its many stirring phases.

At fourteen Francqui was a penniless orphan. He worked his way through a regimental school and at twenty was commissioned a sub-lieutenant. It was 1885 and the Congo Free State had just been launched. Having studied engineering he was sent out at once to Boma to join the Topographic Brigade. During this first stay in the Congo he was in charge of a boat-load of workmen engaged in wharf construction. The captain of a British gunboat hailed him and demanded that he stop. Francqui replied,

"If you try to stop me I will lash my boat to yours and destroy it with dynamite." He had no further trouble.

After three years service in the Congo he returned to Brussels and became the military instructor of Prince Albert, now King of the Belgians. The African fever was in his veins. He heard that a mission was about to depart for Zanzibar and East Africa. A knowledge of English was a necessary part of the equipment of the chief officer. Francqui wanted this job but he did not know a syllable of English. He went to a friend and confided his ambition.

"Are you willing to take a chance with one word?" asked his colleague.

"I am," answered the young officer.

He thereupon acquired the word "yes," his friend's injunction being, "If you say 'yes' to every question you can probably carry it off."

Francqui thereupon went to the Foreign Office and was immediately asked in

English:

"Can you speak English?"

"Yes," was his immediate retort.

"Are you willing to undertake the hazards of this journey to Zanzibar?" queried the interrogator.

"Yes," came the reply.

Luck was with Francqui for, as his good angel had prophesied, his one word of English met every requirement and he got the assignment. Since that time, I might add, he has acquired a fluent command of the English language. Francqui has always been willing to take a chance and lead a forlorn hope.

It was in the early nineties that his exploits made his name one of the greatest in African conquest and exploration. He went out to the Congo as second in command of what was known as the Bia Expedition, sent to explore the Katanga and adjacent territory. After two hard years of incessant campaigning the expedition fell into hard lines. Captain Bia succumbed to smallpox and the column encountered every conceivable hardship. Men died by the score and there was no food. Francqui took charge, and by his indomitable will held the force together, starving and suffering with his men. During this experience he travelled more than 5,000 miles on foot and through a region where no other white man had ever gone before. He explored the Luapula, the headwaters of the Congo, and opened up a new world to civilization. No other single Congo expedition save that of Stanley made such an important contribution to the history of the Colony.

Most men would have been satisfied to rest with this achievement. With Francqui it simply marked a milepost in his life. In 1896, when he resigned from the army, Leopold had fixed his eyes on China as a scene of operations, and he sent Francqui there to clinch the Peking-Hankow concession, which he did. In the course of these negotiations he met Jadot, who was later to become his associate both in the Société Generale and in the Forminiere.

In 1901 Francqui again went to China, this time as agent of the Compagnie



d'Orient, which coveted the coal mines of Kaiping that were supposed to be among the richest in the world. The British and Germans also desired this valuable property which had been operated for some years by a Chinese company. As usual, Francqui got what he went after and took possession of the property. The crude Chinese method of mining had greatly impaired the workings and they had to be entirely reconstructed. Among the engineers employed was an alert, smooth-faced, keen-minded young American named Herbert Hoover.

Upon his return to Brussels Francqui allied himself with Colonel Thys, who was head of the Banque d'Outremer, the rival of the Société Generale. After he had mastered the intricacies of banking he became a director of the Société and with Jadot forged to the front in finance. If Jadot stood as the Morgan, then Francqui became the Stillman of the Belgian money world.

Then came the Great War and the German avalanche which overwhelmed Belgium. Her banks were converted into hospitals; her industry lay prostrate; her people faced starvation. Some vital agency was necessary to centralize relief at home in the same way that the Commission for Relief in Belgium,—the famous "C. R. B."—crystallized it abroad.

[EMILE FRANCQUI](#)  
**EMILE FRANCQUI**

The Comite Rationale was formed by Belgians to feed and clothe the native population and it became the disbursing agent for the "C. R. B." Francqui was chosen head of this body and directed it until the armistice. It took toll of all his energy, diplomacy and instinct for organization. Needless to say it was one of the most difficult of all relief missions in the war. Francqui was a loyal Belgian and he was surrounded by the suspicious and domineering German conquerors. Yet they trusted him, and his word in Belgium for more than four years was absolute law. He was, in truth, a benevolent dictator.

His war life illustrates one of the quaint pranks that fate often plays. As soon as the "C. R. B." was organized in London Francqui hastened over to England to confer with the American organizers. To his surprise and delight he encountered

in its master spirit and chairman, the smooth-faced young engineer whom he had met out in the Kaiping coal mines before. It was the first time that he and Hoover had seen each other since their encounter in China. They now worked shoulder to shoulder in the monster mercy of all history.

Francqui is blunt, silent, aggressive. When Belgium wants something done she instinctively turns to him. In 1920, after the delay in fixing the German reparation embarrassed the country, and liquid cash was imperative, he left Brussels on three days' notice and within a fortnight from the time he reached New York had negotiated a fifty-million-dollar loan. He is as potent in official life as in finance for as Special Minister of State without portfolio he is a real power behind a real throne.

Although Francqui is a director in the Société Generale, he is also what we would call Chairman of the Board of Banque d'Outremer. This shows that the well-known institution of "community of interests" is not confined to the United States. With Jadot he represents the Société in the Forminiere Board. I have used these two men to illustrate the type represented by the Belgian financial kings. I could mention various others. They include Alexander Delcommune, famous as Congo fighter and explorer, who is one of the leading figures of the Banque d'Outremer; Edmond Solvay, the industrial magnate, and Edward Bunge, the Antwerp merchant prince. Almost without exception they and their colleagues have either lived in the Congo, or have been guided in their fortunes by it.

You have now had the historical approach with all personal side-lights to the hour when America actually invaded the Congo. As soon as Leopold and Ryan finally got together the king said, "The Congo must have American engineers. They are the best in the world." Thus it came about that Central Africa, like South Africa, came under the galvanizing hand of the Yankee technical expert. At Kimberley and Johannesburg, however, the task was comparatively easy. The mines were accessible and the country was known. With Central Africa it was a different and more dangerous matter. The land was wild, hostile natives abounded on all sides, and going in was like firing a shot in the dark.

The American invasion was in two sections. One was the group of engineers headed by Sydney H. Ball and R. D. L. Mohun, known as the Ball-Mohun

Expedition, which conducted the geological investigation. The other was in charge of S. P. Verner, an American who had done considerable pioneering in the Congo, and devoted itself entirely to rubber. The latter venture was under the auspices of the American Congo Company, which expected to employ the Mexican process in the Congo. After several years the attempt was abandoned although the company still exists.

I will briefly narrate its experience to show that the product which raised the tempest around King Leopold's head and which for years was synonymous with the name of the Congo, has practically ceased to be an important commercial commodity in the Colony. The reason is obvious. In Leopold's day nine-tenths of the world's supply of rubber was wild and came from Brazil and the Congo. It cost about fifty cents a pound to gather and sold for a dollar. Today more than ninety per cent of the rubber supply is grown on plantations in the Dutch East Indies, the Malay States, and the Straits Settlements, where it costs about twenty cents a pound to gather and despite the big slump in price since the war, is profitable. In the Congo there is still wild rubber and a movement is under way to develop large plantations. Labor is scarce, however, while in the East millions of coolies are available. This tells the whole rubber story.

The Ball-Mohun Expedition was more successful than its mate for it opened up a mineral empire and laid the foundations of the Little America that you shall soon see. Mohun was administrative head and Ball the technical head and chief engineer. Other members were Millard K. Shaler, afterwards one of Hoover's most efficient aids in the relief of Belgium, and Arthur F. Smith, geologists; Roland B. Oliver, topographer; A. E. H. and C. A. Reid, and N. Janot, prospectors.

Mohun, who had been engaged on account of his knowledge of the country, had been American Consul at Zanzibar and at Boma, and first left diplomacy to fight the Arab slave-traders in the interior. When someone asked him why he had quit the United States Government service to go on a military mission he said, "I prefer killing Arabs in the interior to killing time at Boma." He figured as one of Richard Harding Davis' "Soldiers of Fortune" and was in every sense a unique personality.

You get some idea of the hazards that confronted the American pioneers when I say that when they set forth for the Kasai region, which is the southwestern part of the Congo, late in 1907, they were accompanied by a battalion of native troops under Belgian officers. Often they had to fight their way before they could take specimens. On one occasion Ball was prospecting in a region hitherto uninvaded by the white man. He was attacked by a large body of hostile savages and a pitched battle followed. In informal Congo history this engagement is known as "The Battle of Ball's Run," although Ball did no running. As recently as 1915 one of the Forminiere prospectors, E. G. Decker, was killed by the fierce Batshoks, the most belligerent of the Upper Kasai tribes. The Ball-Mohun group, which was the first of many expeditions, remained in the field more than two years and covered a wide area.

Up to this time gold and copper were the only valuable minerals that had been discovered in the Congo and the Americans naturally went after them. Much to their surprise, they found diamonds and thereby opened up a fresh source of wealth for the Colony. The first diamond was found at *Mai Munene*, which means "Big Water," a considerable waterfall discovered by Livingstone. This region, which is watered by the Kasai River, became the center of what is now known as the Congo Diamond Fields and remains the stronghold of American engineering and financial enterprise in Central Africa. On a wooded height not far from the headwaters of the Kasai, these path-finding Americans established a post called Tshikapa, the name of a small river nearby. It is the capital of Little America in the jungle and therefore became the objective of the second stage of my Congo journey.

[A BELLE OF THE CONGO](#)  
**A BELLE OF THE CONGO**  
[WOMEN OF THE BATETELAS](#)  
**WOMEN OF THE BATETELAS**

### III

Kinshassa is nearly a thousand miles from Tshikapa. To get there I had to retrace my way up the Congo as far as Kwamouth, where the Kasai empties into the parent stream. I also found that it was necessary to change boats at Dima and continue on the Kasai to Djoko Punda. Here begins the jungle road to the diamond fields.

Up to this time I had enjoyed the best facilities that the Congo could supply in the way of transport. Now I faced a trip that would not only try patience but had every element of the unknown, which in the Congo means the uncomfortable. Fortunately, the "Lusanga," one of the Huileries du Congo Belge steamers, was about to start for the Kwilu River, which branches off from the Kasai, and the company was kind enough to order it to take me to Dima, which was off the prescribed itinerary of the vessel.

On a brilliant morning at the end of June I set forth. Nelson was still my faithful servant and his smile and teeth shone as resplendently as ever. The only change in him was that his appetite for *chikwanga* had visibly increased. Somebody had told him at Kinshassa that the Kasai country teemed with cannibals. Being one of the world's champion eaters, he shrank from being eaten himself. I promised him an extra allowance of food and a khaki uniform that I had worn in the war, and he agreed to take a chance.

Right here let me give an evidence of the Congo native's astounding quickness to grasp things. I do not refer to his light-fingered propensities, however. When we got to Kinshassa Nelson knew scarcely a word of the local dialect. When we left a week later, he could jabber intelligently with any savage he met. On the four weeks' trip from Elizabethville he had picked up enough French to make himself understood. The Central African native has an aptitude for languages that far surpasses that of the average white man.

I was the only passenger on the "Lusanga," which had been reconstructed for Lord Leverhulme's trip through the Congo in 1914. I occupied the suite installed

for him and it was my last taste of luxury for many a day. The captain, Albert Carrie, was a retired lieutenant in the British Royal Navy, and the chief engineer was a Scotchman. The Congo River seemed like an old friend as we steamed up toward Kwamouth. As soon as we turned into the Kasai I found that conditions were different than on the main river. There was an abundance of fuel, both for man and boat. The daily goat steak of the Congo was relieved by duck and fish. The Kasai region is thickly populated and I saw a new type of native, lighter in colour than elsewhere, and more keen and intelligent.

The women of the Kasai are probably the most attractive in the Congo. This applies particularly to the Batetelas, who are of light brown colour. From childhood the females of this tribe have a sense of modesty that is in sharp contrast with the nudity that prevails elsewhere throughout the country. They swathe their bodies from neck to ankle with gaily coloured calico. I am often asked if the scant attire in Central Africa shocked me. I invariably reply by saying that the contemporary feminine fashion of near-undress in America and Europe made me feel that some of the chocolate-hued ladies of the jungle were almost over-clothed!

The fourth day of my trip was also the American Fourth of July. Captain Carrie and I celebrated by toasting the British and American Navies, and it was not in Kasai water. This day also witnessed a somewhat remarkable revelation of the fact that world economic unrest has penetrated to the very heart of the primitive regions. While the wood-boys were getting fuel at a native post, Carrie and I went ashore to take a walk and visit a chief who had once been in Belgium. When we got back to the boat we found that all the natives had suspended work and were listening to an impassioned speech by one of the black wheelmen. All these boats have native pilots. This boy, who only wore a loin cloth, was urging his fellows not to work so hard. Among other things he said:

"The white man eats big food and takes a big sleep in the middle of the day and you ought to do the same thing. The company that owns this boat has much money and you should all be getting more wages."

Carrie stopped the harangue, fined the pilot a week's pay, and the men went back to work, but the poison had been planted. This illuminating episode is just one of

the many evidences of industrial insurgency that I found in Africa from the moment I struck Capetown. In the Rand gold mining district, for example, the natives have been organized by British agitators and it probably will not be long before Central Africa has the I. W. W. in its midst! Certainly the "I Won't Works" already exist in large numbers.

This essentially modern spirit was only one of the many surprises that the Congo native disclosed. Another was the existence of powerful secret societies which have codes, "grips," and pass-words. Some antedate the white man, indulge in human sacrifice, and have branches in a dozen sections. Although Central Africa is a land where the husband can stray from home at will, the "lodge night" is thus available as an excuse for domestic indiscretion.

The most terrible of these orders is the Society of the Leopard, formed to provide a novel and devilish method of disposing of enemies. The members wear leopard skins or spotted habits and throttle their foes with a glove to which steel blades are affixed. The victim appears to have been killed by the animal that cannot change its spots. To make the illusion complete, the ground where the victim has lain is marked with a stick whose end resembles the feet of the leopard.

The leopard skin has a curious significance in the Congo. For occasions where the white man takes an oath on the Bible, the savage steps over one of these skins to swear fealty. If two chiefs have had a quarrel and make up, they tear a skin in two and throw the pieces into the river, to show that the feud is rent asunder. It corresponds to the pipe of peace of the American Indian.

Another secret society in the Congo is the Lubuki, whose initiation makes riding the goat seem like a childish amusement. The candidate is tied to a tree and a nest of black ants is distributed over his body. He is released only after he is nearly stung to death. A repetition of this jungle third degree is threatened for violation of any of the secrets of the order, the main purpose of which is to graft on non-members for food and other necessities.

In civilized life the members of a fraternal society are summoned to a meeting by telephone or letter. In the Congo they are haled by the tom-tom, which is the

wireless of the woods. These huge drums have an uncanny carrying power. The beats are like the dots and dashes of telegraphy. All the native news of Central Africa is transmitted from village to village in this way.

I could continue this narrative of native habits and customs indefinitely but we must get back to the "Lusanga." On board was a real character. He was Peter the capita. In the Congo every group of native workmen is in charge of a capita, who would be designated a foreman in this country. Life and varied experience had battered Peter sadly. He spoke English, French, German, Portuguese, and half a dozen of the Congo dialects. He learned German while a member of an African dancing team that performed at the Winter Garden in Berlin. His German almost had a Potsdam flavour. He told me that he had danced before the former Kaiser and had met many members of the Teutonic nobility. Yet the thing that stood out most vividly in his memory was the taste of German beer. He sighed for it daily.

Six days after leaving Kinshassa I reluctantly bade farewell to Peter and the "Lusanga" at Dima. Here I had the first piece of hard luck on the whole trip. The little steamer that was to take me up the Kasai River to Djoko Punda had departed five days before and I was forced to wait until she returned. Fifteen years ago Dima was the wildest kind of jungle. I found it a model, tropical post with dozens of brick houses, a shipyard and machine shops, avenues of palm trees and a farm. It is the headquarters of the Kasai Company in the Congo.

I had a brick bungalow to myself and ate with the Managing Director, Monsieur Adrian Van den Hove. He knew no English and my alleged French was pretty bad. Yet we met three times a day at the table and carried on spirited conversations. There was only one English-speaking person within a radius of a hundred miles and I had read all my English books. I vented my impatience in walking, for I covered at least fifteen miles through the jungle every day. This proceeding filled both the Belgians and the natives with astonishment. The latter particularly could not understand why a man walked about the country aimlessly. Usually a native will only walk when he can move in the direction of food or sleep. On these solitary trips I went through a country that still abounds in buffalo. Occasionally you see an elephant. It is one thing to watch a big tusker doing his tricks in a circus tent, but quite another to hear him floundering



through the woods, tearing off huge branches of trees as he moves along with what seems to be an incredible speed for so heavy an animal.

There came the glad Sunday—it was my thirteenth day at Dima—when I heard the whistle of the steamboat. I dashed down to the beach and there was the little forty-ton "Madeleine." I welcomed her as a long-lost friend and this she proved to be. The second day afterwards I went aboard and began a diverting chapter of my experience. The "Madeleine" is a type of the veteran Congo boat. In the old days the Belgian pioneers fought natives from its narrow deck. Despite incessant combat with sand-banks, snags and swift currents—all these obstructions abound in the Kasai River—she was still staunch. In command was the only Belgian captain that I had in the Congo, and he had been on these waters for twenty years with only one holiday in Europe during the entire time.

I occupied the alleged cabin-de-luxe, the large room that all these boats must furnish in case an important State functionary wants to travel. My fellow passengers were two Catholic priests and three Belgian "agents," as the Congo factors are styled. I ate alone on the main deck in front of my cabin, with Nelson in attendance.

Now began a journey that did not lack adventure. It was the end of the dry season and the Kasai was lower than ever before. The channel was almost a continuous sand-bank. We rested on one of them for a whole day. I was now well into the domain of the hippopotamus. I am not exaggerating when I say that the Kasai in places is alive with them. You can shoot one of these monsters from the bridge of the river boats almost as easily as you could pick off a sparrow from the limb of a park tree. I got tired of watching them. The flesh of the hippopotamus is unfit for white consumption, but the natives regard it as a luxury. The white man who kills a hippo is immediately acclaimed a hero. One reason is that with spears the black finds it difficult to get the better of one of these animals.

Our first step was at a Lutheran Mission set in the middle of a populous village. As we approached I saw the American flag hanging over the door of the most pretentious mud and grass house. When I went ashore I found that the missionaries—a man and his wife—were both American citizens. The husband

was a Swede who had gone out to Kansas in his boyhood to work on a farm. There he married a Kansas girl, who now speaks English with a Swedish accent. After spreading the gospel in China and elsewhere, they settled down in this lonely spot on the Kasai River.

I was immediately impressed with the difference between the Congo River and the Kasai. The Congo is serene, brooding, majestic, and fringed with an endless verdure. The Kasai, although 1,500 miles in length, is narrower and more pugnacious. Its brown banks and grim flanking mountains offer a welcome change from the eternal green of the great river that gives the Colony its name. The Kasai was discovered by Livingstone in 1854.

I also got another change. Two days after I left Dima we were blanketed with heavy fog every morning and the air was raw and chill. On the Kasai you can have every experience of trans-Atlantic travel with the sole exception of seasickness.

As I proceeded up the Kasai I found continued evidence of the advance in price of every food commodity. The omnipresent chicken that fetched a franc in 1914 now brings from five to ten. My old friend the goat has risen from ten to thirty francs and he was as tough as ever, despite the rise. But foodstuffs are only a small part of these Congo economic troubles.

We have suffered for some time under the burden of our inseparable companion, the High Cost of Living. It is slight compared with the High Cost of Loving in the Congo. Here you touch a real hardship. Before the war a first-class wife—all wives are bought—sold for fifty francs. Today the market price for a choice spouse is two hundred francs and it takes hard digging for the black man to scrape up this almost prohibitive fee. Thus the High Cost of Matrimony enters the list of universal distractions.

[FISHERMEN ON THE SANKURU](#)  
**FISHERMEN ON THE SANKURU**  
[THE FALLS OF THE SANKURU](#)  
**THE FALLS OF THE SANKURU**

On the "Madeleine" was a fascinating black child named Nanda. He was about

five years old and strolled about the boat absolutely naked. Most Congo parents are fond of their offspring but this particular youngster, who was bright and alert, was adored by his father, the head fireman on the vessel. One day I gave him a cake and it was the first piece of sweet bread he had ever eaten. Evidently he liked it for afterwards he approached me every hour with his little hands outstretched. I was anxious to get a photograph of him in his natural state and took him ashore ostensibly for a walk. One of my fellow passengers had a camera and I asked him to come along. When the boy saw that he was about to be snapped he rushed back to the boat yelling and howling. I did not know what was the matter until he returned in about ten minutes, wearing an abbreviated pair of pants and a short coat. He was willing to walk about nude but when it came to being pictured he suddenly became modest. This state of mind, however, is not general in the Colony.

The African child is fond of playthings which shows that one touch of amusement makes all childhood kin. He will swim half a mile through a crocodile-infested river to get an empty tin can or a bottle. One of the favorite sports on the river boats is to throw boxes or bottles into the water and then watch the children race for them. On the Congo the fathers sometimes manufacture rude reproductions of steamboats for their children and some of them are astonishingly well made.

Exactly twelve days after we left Dima the captain told me that we were nearing Djoko Punda. The country was mountainous and the river had become swifter and deeper for we were approaching Wissmann Falls, the end of navigation for some distance. These falls are named for Herman Wissmann, a lieutenant in the Prussian Army who in the opinion of such authorities as Sir Harry Johnston, ranks third in the hierarchy of early Congo explorers. Stanley, of course, comes first and Grenfell second.

On account of the lack of certain communication save by runner in this part of Africa—the traveller can always beat a wireless message—I was unable to send any word of my coming and I wondered whom and what I would find there. I had the strongest possible letters to all the Forminiere officials but these pieces of paper could not get me on to Tshikapa. I needed something that moved on

wheels. I was greatly relieved, therefore, when we came in sight of the post to see two unmistakable American figures standing on the bank. What cheered me further were two American motor cars nearby.

The two Americans proved to be G. D. Moody and J. E. Robison. The former is Assistant Chief Engineer of the Forminiére in the field and the latter is in charge of the motor transport. They gave me a genuine American welcome and that night I dined in Robison's grass house off American food that had travelled nearly fifteen thousand miles. I heard the first unadulterated Yankee conversation that had fallen on my ears since I left Elizabethville two months before. When I said that I wanted to push on to Tshikapa at once, Moody said, "We will leave at five in the morning in one of the jitneys and be in Tshikapa tomorrow night." Moody was an incorrigible optimist as I was soon to discover.

## IV

At dawn the next morning and after a breakfast of hot cakes we set out. Nelson was in a great state of excitement because he had never ridden in an automobile before. He was destined not to enjoy that rare privilege very long. The rough highway hewed by American engineers through the thick woods was a foot deep in sand and before we had proceeded a hundred yards the car got stuck and all hands save Moody got out to push it on. Moody was the chauffeur and had to remain at the wheel. Draped in fog, the jungle about me had an almost eerie look. But aesthetic and emotional observations had to give way to practicality. Laboriously the jitney snorted through the sand and bumped over tree stumps. After a strenuous hour and when we had reached the open country, the machine gave a groan and died on the spot. We were on a broad plain on the outskirts of a village and the broiling sun beat down on us.

The African picaninny has just as much curiosity as his American brother and in ten minutes the whole juvenile population was assembled around us. Soon the grown-ups joined the crowd. Naked women examined the tires as if they were articles of food and black warriors stalked about with the same sort of "I told you so" expression that you find in the face of the average American watching a motor car breakdown. Human nature is the same the world over. The automobile is a novelty in these parts and when the Forminiere employed the first ones the natives actually thought it was an animal that would finally get tired and quit. Mine stopped without getting tired!

For six hours Moody laboured under the car while I sat in the glaring sun alongside the road and cursed fate. Nelson spent his time eating all the available food in sight. Finally, at three o'clock Moody gave up and said, "We'll have to make the rest of this trip in a teapoy."

A teapoy is usually a hammock slung on a pole carried on the shoulders of natives. We sent a runner in to Robison, who came back with two teapoys and a squad of forty blacks to transport us. The "teapoy boy," as he is called, is as

much a part of the African scheme of life as a driver or a chauffeur is in America. He must be big, strong, and sound of wind, because he is required to go at a run all the time. For any considerable journey each teapoy has a squad of eight men who alternate on the run without losing a step. They always sing as they go.

I had never ridden in a teapoy before and now I began a continuous trip in one which lasted eight hours. Night fell almost before we got started and it was a strange sensation to go sailing through the silent black woods and the excited villages where thousands of naked persons of all sizes turned out to see the show. After two hours I began to feel as if I had been tossed up for a week in an army blanket. The wrist watch that I had worn throughout the war and which had withstood the fiercest shell shocks and bombardments, was jolted to a standstill. After the fourth hour I became accustomed to the movement and even went to sleep for a while. Midnight brought us to Kabambaie and the banks of the Kasai, where I found food and sanctuary at a Forminiere post. Here the thousands of tons of freight that come up the river from Dima by steamer and which are carried by motor trucks, ox teams, and on the heads of natives to this point, are placed on whale-boats and sent up the river to Tshikapa.

Before going to bed I sent a runner to Tshikapa to notify Donald Doyle, Managing Engineer of the Forminiere in the field, that I was coming and to send a motor car out to meet me. I promised this runner much *matabeesh*, which is the African word for a tip, if he would run the whole way. The distance through the jungle was exactly seventy-two miles and he covered it, as I discovered when I reached Tshikapa, in exactly twenty-six hours, a remarkable feat. The *matabeesh* I bestowed, by the way, was three francs (about eighteen cents) and the native regarded it as a princely gift because it amounted to nearly half a month's wages.

By this time my confidence in the African jitney was somewhat shaken. A new motor-boat had just been received at Kabambaie and I thought I would take a chance with it and start up the Kasai the next day. Moody, assisted by several other engineers, set to work to get it in shape. At noon of the second day, when we were about to start, the engine went on a sympathetic strike with the jitney, and once more I was halted. I said to Moody, "I am going to Tshikapa without

any further delay if I have to walk the whole way." This was not necessary for, thanks to the Forminiere organization, which always has hundreds of native porters at Kabambaie, I was able to organize a caravan in a few hours.

After lunch we departed with a complete outfit of tents, bedding, and servants. The black personnel was thirty porters and a picked squad of thirty-five teapoy boys to carry Moody and myself. Usually these caravans have a flag. I had none so the teapoy capita fished out a big red bandanna handkerchief, which he tied to a stick. With the crimson banner flying and the teapoy carriers singing and playing rude native instruments, we started off at a trot. I felt like an explorer going into the unknown places. It was the real thing in jungle experience.

From two o'clock until sunset we trotted through the wilds, which were almost thrillingly beautiful. In Africa there is no twilight, and darkness swoops down like a hawk. All afternoon the teapoy men, after their fashion, carried on what was literally a running crossfire of questions among themselves. They usually boast of their strength and their families and always discuss the white man they are carrying and his characteristics. I heard much muttering of *Mafutta Mingi* and I knew long before we stopped that my weight was not a pleasant topic.

[A CONGO DIAMOND MINE](#)  
**A CONGO DIAMOND MINE**  
[HOW THE MINES ARE WORKED](#)  
**HOW THE MINES ARE WORKED**

I will try to reproduce some of the conversation that went on that afternoon between my carriers. I will not give the native words but will translate into English the questions and answers as they were hurled back and forth. By way of explanation let me say beforehand that there is no word in any of the Congo dialects for "yes." Affirmation is always expressed by a grunt. Here is the conversation:

"Men of the white men."

"Ugh."

"Does he lie?"

"He lies not."

"Does he shirk?"

"No."

"Does he steal?"

"No."

"Am I strong?"

"Ugh."

"Have I a good liver?"

"Ugh."

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So it goes. One reason why these men talk so much is that all their work must be accompanied by some sound. Up in the diamond fields I watched a native chopping wood. Every time the steel blade buried itself in the log the man said: "Good axe. Cut deep." He talked to the weapon just as he would speak to a human being. It all goes to show that the Congo native is simply a child grown to man's stature.

The fact that I had to resort to the teapoy illustrates the unreliability of mechanical transport in the wilds. I had tried in vain to make progress with an automobile and a motor boat, and was forced as a last resort to get back to the human being as carrier. He remains the unfailing beast of burden despite all scientific progress.

I slept that night in a native house on the outskirts of a village. It was what is called a *chitenda*, which is a grass structure open at all the sides. The last white man to occupy this domicile was Louis Franck, the Belgian Minister of the Colonies, who had gone up to the Forminiere diamond fields a few weeks before. He used the same jitney that I had started in, and it also broke down with



him. Moody was his chauffeur. They made their way on foot to this village. Moody told the chief that he had the real *Bula Matadi* with him. The chief solemnly looked at Franck and said, "He is no *Bula Matadi* because he does not wear any medals." Most high Belgian officials wear orders and the native dotes on shiny ornaments. The old savage refused to sell the travellers any food and the Minister had to share the beans of the negro boys who accompanied him.

Daybreak saw us on the move. For hours we swung through dense forest which made one think of the beginnings of the world when the big trees were king. The vastness and silence were only comparable to the brooding mystery of the jungle nights. You have no feel of fear but oddly enough, a strange sense of security.

I realized as never before, the truth that lay behind one of Stanley's convictions. He once said, "No luxury of civilization can be equal to the relief from the tyranny of custom. The wilds of a great city are greater than the excruciating tyranny of a small village. The heart of Africa is infinitely preferable to the heart of the world's largest city. If the way were easier, millions would fly to it."

Despite this enthralling environment I kept wondering if that runner had reached Doyle and if a car had been sent out. At noon we emerged from the forest into a clearing. Suddenly Moody said, "I hear an automobile engine." A moment later I saw a small car burst through the trees far ahead and I knew that relief was at hand. Dr. John Dunn, the physician at Tshikapa, had started at dawn to meet me, and my teapoy adventures, for the moment, were ended. Dr. Livingstone at Ujiji had no keener feeling of relief at the sight of Stanley that I felt when I shook the hand of this bronzed, Middle Western medico.

We lunched by the roadside and afterwards I got into Dunn's car and resumed the journey. I sent the porters and teapoy men back to Kabambaie. Late in the afternoon we reached the bluffs overlooking the Upper Kasai. Across the broad, foaming river was Tshikapa. If I had not known that it was an American settlement, I would have sensed its sponsorship. It radiated order and neatness. The only parallels in the Congo are the various areas of the Huileries du Congo Belge.

## V

Tshikapa, which means "belt," is a Little America in every sense. It commands the junction of the Tshikapa and Kasai rivers. There are dozens of substantial brick dwellings, offices, warehouses, machine-shops and a hospital. For a hundred miles to the Angola border and far beyond, the Yankee has cut motor roads and set up civilization generally. You see American thoroughness on all sides, even in the immense native villages where the mine employees live. Instead of having compounds the company encourages the blacks to establish their own settlements and live their own lives. It makes them more contented and therefore more efficient, and it establishes a colony of permanent workers. When the native is confined to a compound he gets restless and wants to go back home. The Americans are helping to solve the Congo labour problem.

At Tshikapa you hear good old United States spoken with every dialectic flavour from New England hardness to Texas drawl. In charge of all the operations in the field was Doyle, a clear-cut, upstanding American engineer who had served his apprenticeship in the Angola jungles, where he was a member of one of the first American prospecting parties. With his wife he lived in a large brick bungalow and I was their guest in it during my entire stay in the diamond fields. Mrs. Doyle embodied the same courage that animated Mrs. Wallace. Too much cannot be said of the faith and fortitude of these women who share their husband's fortunes out at the frontiers of civilization.

At Tshikapa there were other white women, including Mrs. Dunn, who had recently converted her hospitable home into a small maternity hospital. Only a few weeks before my arrival Mrs. Edwin Barclay, wife of the manager of the Mabonda Mine, had given birth to a girl baby under its roof, and I was taken over at once to see the latest addition to the American colony.

On the day of my arrival the natives employed at this mine had sent Mrs. Barclay a gift of fifty newly-laid eggs as a present for the baby. Accompanying it was a rude note scrawled by one of the foremen who had attended a Presbyterian

mission school. The birth of a white baby is always a great event in the Congo. When Mrs. Barclay returned to her home a grand celebration was held and the natives feasted and danced in honour of the infant.

There is a delightful social life at Tshikapa. Most of the mines, which are mainly in charge of American engineers, are within a day's travelling distance in a teapoy and much nearer by automobile. Some of the managers have their families with them, and they foregather at the main post every Sunday. On Thanksgiving, the Fourth of July, and Christmas there is always a big rally which includes a dance and vaudeville show in the men's mess hall. The Stars and Stripes are unfurled to the African breeze and the old days in the States recalled. It is real community life on the fringe of the jungle.

I was struck with the big difference between the Congo diamond fields and those at Kimberley. In South Africa the mines are gaping gashes in the earth thousands of feet wide and thousands deep. They are all "pipes" which are formed by volcanic eruption. These pipes are the real source of the diamonds. The precious blue ground which contains the stones is spread out on immense "floors" to decompose under sun and rain. Afterwards it is broken in crushers and goes through a series of mechanical transformations. The diamonds are separated from the concentrates on a pulsating table covered with vaseline. The gems cling to the oleaginous substance. It is an elaborate process.

The Congo mines are alluvial and every creek and river bed is therefore a potential diamond mine. The only labour necessary is to remove the upper layer of earth,—the "overburden" as it is termed—dig up the gravel, shake it out, and you have the concentrate from which a naked savage can pick the precious stones. They are precisely like the mines of German South-West Africa. So far no "pipes" have been discovered in the Kasai basin. Many indications have been found, and it is inevitable that they will be located in time. The diamond-bearing earth sometimes travels very far from its base, and the American engineers in the Congo with whom I talked are convinced that these volcanic formations which usually produce large stones, lie far up in the Kasai hills. The diamond-bearing area of the Belgian Congo and Angola covers nearly eight thousand square miles and only five per cent has been prospected. There is not the slightest doubt that

one of the greatest diamond fields ever known is in the making here.

GRAVEL CARRIERS AT A CONGO MINE  
**GRAVEL CARRIERS AT A CONGO MINE**  
CONGO NATIVES PICKING OUT DIAMONDS  
**CONGO NATIVES PICKING OUT DIAMONDS**

Now for a real human interest detail. At Kimberley the Zulus and Kaffirs know the value of the diamond and there was formerly considerable filching. All the workers are segregated in barbed wire compounds and kept under constant surveillance. At the end of their period of service they remain in custody for two weeks in order to make certain that they have not swallowed any stones.

The Congo natives do not know what a diamond really is. The majority believe that it is simply a piece of glass employed in the making of bottles, and there are a good many bottles of various kinds in the Colony. Hence no watch is kept on the hundreds of Balubas who are mainly employed in the task of picking out the glittering jewels. During the past five years, when the product in the Congo fields has grown steadily, not a single karat has been stolen. The same situation obtains in the Angola fields.

In company with Doyle I visited the eight principal mines in the Congo field and saw the process of mining in all its stages of advancement. At the Kisele development, which is almost within sight of Tshikapa, the small "jigs" in which the gravel is shaken, are operated by hand. This is the most primitive method. At Mabonda the concentrate pans are mounted on high platforms. Here the turning is also by hand but on a larger scale. The Ramona mine has steam-driven pans, while at Tshisundu, which is in charge of William McMillan, I witnessed the last word in alluvial diamond mining. At this place Forminiere has erected an imposing power plant whose tall smokestack dominates the surrounding forest. You get a suggestion of Kimberley for the excavation is immense, and there is the hum and movement of a pretentious industrial enterprise. Under the direction of William McMillan a research department has been established which is expected to influence and possibly change alluvial operations.

Our luncheon at Tshisundu was attended by Mrs. McMillan, another heroine of that rugged land. Alongside sat her son, born in 1918 at one of the mines in the field and who was as lusty and animated a youngster as I have seen. His every

movement was followed by the eagle eye of his native nurse who was about twelve years old. These native attendants regard it as a special privilege to act as custodians of a white child and invariably a close intimacy is established between them. They really become playmates.

It is difficult to imagine that these Congo diamond mines were mere patches of jungle a few years ago. The task of exploitation has been an immense one. Before the simplest mine can be operated the dense forest must be cleared and the river beds drained. Every day the mine manager is confronted with some problem which tests his ingenuity and resource. Only the Anglo-Saxon could hold his own amid these trying circumstances.

No less difficult were the natives themselves. Before the advent of the American engineers, industry was unknown in the Upper Kasai. The only organized activity was the harvesting of rubber and that was rather a haphazard performance. With the opening of the mines thousands of untrained blacks had to be drawn into organized service. They had never even seen the implements of labour employed by the whites. When they were given wheel-barrows and told to fill and transport the earth, they placed the barrows on their heads and carried them to the designated place. They repeated the same act with shovels.

The Yankees have thoroughly impressed the value and the nobility of labour. I asked one of the employes at a diamond mine what he thought of the Americans. His reply was, "Americans and work were born on the same day."

The labour of opening up the virgin land was only one phase. Every piece of machinery and every tin of food had to be transported thousands of miles and this condition still obtains. The motor road from Djoko Punda to Kabambaie was hacked by American engineers through the jungle. It is comparatively easy to get supplies to Djoko Punda although everything must be shifted from railway to boat several times. Between Djoko Punda and Tshikapa the material is hauled in motor trucks and ox-drawn wagons or conveyed on the heads of porters to Kabambaie. Some of it is transshipped to whale-boats and paddled up to Tshikapa, and the remainder continues in the wagons overland. During 1920 seven hundred and fifty tons of freight were hauled from Djoko Punda in this laborious way.

At the time of my visit there were twelve going mines in the Congo field, and three new ones were in various stages of advancement. The Forminiere engineers also operate the diamond concessions of the Kasai Company and the Bas Congo Katanga Railway which will run from the Katanga to Kinshassa.

More than twelve thousand natives are employed throughout the Congo area alone and nowhere have I seen a more contented lot of blacks. The Forminiere obtains this good-will by wisely keeping the price of trade goods such as salt and calico at the pre-war rate. It is an admirable investment. This merchandise is practically the legal tender of the jungle. With a cup of salt a black man can start an endless chain of trading that will net him a considerable assortment of articles in time.

The principal natives in the Upper Kasai are the Balubas, who bear the same relation to this area as the Bangalas do to the Upper Congo. The men are big, strong, and fairly intelligent. The principal tribal mark is the absence of the two upper central incisor teeth. These are usually knocked out in early boyhood. No Baluba can marry until he can show this gaping space in his mouth. Although the natives abuse their teeth by removing them or filing them down to points, they take excellent care of the remaining ivories. Many polish the teeth with a stick and wash their mouths several times a day. The same cannot be said of many civilized persons.

I observed that the families in the Upper Kasai were much more numerous than elsewhere in the Congo. A Bangala or Batetela woman usually has one child and then goes out of the baby business. In the region dominated by the Forminiere it is no infrequent thing to see three or four children in a household. A woman who bears twins is not only hailed as a real benefactress but the village looks upon the occasion as a good omen. This is in direct contrast with the state of mind in East Africa, for example, where one twin is invariably killed.

I encountered an interesting situation concerning twins when I visited the Mabonda Mine. This is one of the largest in the Congo field. Barclay, the big-boned American manager, formerly conducted engineering operations in the southern part of America. He therefore knows the Negro psychology and the result is that he conducts a sort of amiable and paternalistic little kingdom all his

own. The natives all come to him with their troubles, and he is their friend, philosopher and guide.

After lunch one day he asked me if I would like to talk to a native who had a story. When I expressed assent he took me out to a shed nearby and there I saw a husky Baluba who was labouring under some excitement. The reason was droll. Four days before, his wife had given birth to twins and there was great excitement in the village. The natives, however, refused to have anything to do with him because, to use their phrase, "he was too strong." His wife did not come under this ban and was the center of jubilation and gesticulation. The poor husband was a sort of heroic outcast and had to come to Barclay to get some food and a drink of palm wine to revive his drooping spirits.

The output in the Congo diamond area has grown from a few thousand karats to hundreds of thousands of karats a year. The stones are small but clear and brilliant. This yield is an unsatisfactory evidence of the richness of the domain. The ore reserves are more than ten per cent of the yearly output and the surface of the concession has scarcely been scratched. Experienced diamond men say that a diamond in the ground is worth two in the market. It is this element of the unknown that gives the Congo field one of its principal potentialities.

The Congo diamond fields are merely a part of the Forminiere treasure-trove. Over in Angola the concession is eight times larger in area, the stones are bigger, and with adequate exploitation should surpass the parent production in a few years. Six mines are already in operation and three more have been staked out. The Angola mines are alluvial and are operated precisely like those in Belgian territory. The managing engineer is Glenn H. Newport, who was with Decker in the fatal encounter with Batchoks. The principal post of this area is Dundu, which is about forty miles from the Congo border.

As I looked at these mines with their thousands of grinning natives and heard the rattle of gravel in the "jigs" my mind went back to Kimberley and the immense part that its glittering wealth played in determining the economic fate of South Africa. Long before the gold "rush" opened up in the Rand, the diamond mines had given the southern section of the continent a rebirth of prosperity. Will the Congo mines perform the same service for the Congo? In any event they will be



a determining factor in the future world diamond output.

No record of America in the Congo would be complete without a reference to the high part that our missionaries have played in the spiritualization of the land. The stronghold of our religious influence is also the Upper Kasai Basin. In 1890 two devoted men, Samuel N. Lapsley, a white clergyman, and William H. Sheppard, a Negro from Alabama, established the American Presbyterian Congo Mission at Luebo which is about one hundred miles from Tshikapa straight across country.

The valley of the Sankuru and Kasai Rivers is one of the most densely populated of all the Belgian Congo. It is inhabited by five powerful tribes—the Baluba, the Bena Lulua, the Bakuba, the Bakete and the Zappozaps, and their united population is one-fifth of that of the whole Colony. Hence it was a fruitful field for labour but a hard one. From an humble beginning the work has grown until there are now seven important stations with scores of white workers, hundreds of native evangelists, one of the best equipped hospitals in Africa, and a manual training school that is teaching the youth of the land how to become prosperous and constructive citizens. Under its inspiration the population of Luebo has grown from two thousand in 1890 to eighteen thousand in 1920.

### WASHING OUT GRAVEL

### **WASHING OUT GRAVEL**

### DONALD DOYLE (LEFT) AND MR. MARCOSSON

### **DONALD DOYLE (LEFT) AND MR. MARCOSSON**

The two fundamental principles underlying this splendid undertaking have been well summed up as follows: "First, the attainment of a Church supported by the natives through the thrift and industry of their own hands. The time is past when we may merely teach the native to become a Christian and then leave him in his poverty and squalor where he can be of little or no use to the Church. Second, the preparation of the native to take the largest and most influential position possible in the development of the Colony. Practically the only thing open to the Congolese is along the mechanical and manual lines."

One of the noblest actors in this American missionary drama was the late Rev. W. M. Morrison, who went out to the Congo in 1896. Realizing that the most

urgent need was a native dictionary, he reduced the Baluba-Lulua language to writing. In 1906 he published a Dictionary and Grammar which included the Parables of Christ, the Miracles, the Epistles to the Romans in paraphrase. He also prepared a Catechism based on the Shorter and Child's Catechisms. This gave the workers in the field a definite instrument to employ, and it has been a beneficent influence in shaping the lives and morals of the natives.

One phase of the labours of the American Presbyterian Congo Mission discloses the bondage of the Congo native to the Witch Doctor. The moment he feels sick he rushes to the sorcerer, usually a bedaubed barbarian who practices weird and mysterious rites, and who generally succeeds in killing off his patient. More than ninety per cent of the pagan population of Africa not only acknowledges but fears the powers of the Witch Doctor. Only two-fifths of one per cent are under Christian medical treatment. The Presbyterian Missionaries, therefore, from the very outset have sought to bring the native into the ken of the white physician. It is a slow process. One almost unsurmountable obstacle lies in the uncanny grip that the "medicine man" wields in all the tribes.

It is largely due to the missionaries that the practice of handshaking has been introduced in the Congo. Formerly the custom was to clap hands when exchanging greetings. The blacks saw the Anglo-Saxons grasp hands when they met and being apt imitators in many things, they started to do likewise. One of the first things that impressed me in Africa was the extraordinary amount of handshaking that went on when the people met each other even after a separation of only half an hour.

## VI

I had originally planned to leave Africa at St. Paul de Loanda in Portuguese West Africa, where Thomas F. Ryan and his Belgian associates have acquired the new oil wells and set up still another important outpost of our overseas financial venturing. But so much time had been consumed in reaching Tshikapa that I determined to return to Kinshassa, go on to Matadi, and catch the boat for Europe at the end of August.

There were two ways of getting back to Kabambaie. One was to go in an automobile through the jungle, and the other by boat down the Kasai. Between Kabambaie and Djoko Punda there is practically no navigation on account of the succession of dangerous rapids. Since my faith in the jitney was still impaired I chose the river route and it gave me the most stirring of all my African experiences. The two motor boats at Tshikapa were out of commission so I started at daybreak in a whale-boat manned by forty naked native paddlers.

The fog still hung over the countryside and the scene as we got under way was like a Rackham drawing of goblins and ghosts. I sat forward in the boat with the ranks of singing, paddling blacks behind me. From the moment we started and until I landed, the boys kept up an incessant chanting. One of their number sat forward and pounded the iron gunwale with a heavy stick. When he stopped pounding the paddlers ceased their efforts. The only way to make the Congo native work is to provide him with noise.

All day we travelled down the river through schools of hippopotami, some of them near enough for me to throw a stone into the cavernous mouths. The boat capita told me that he would get to Kabambaie by sundown. Like the average New York restaurant waiter, he merely said what he thought his listener wanted to hear. I fervently hoped he was right because we not only had a series of rapids to shoot up-river, but at Kabambaie is a seething whirlpool that has engulfed hundreds of natives and their boats. At sunset we had only passed through the first of the troubled zones. Nightfall without a moon found me still moving, and

with the swirling eddy far ahead.

I had many close calls during the war. They ranged from the first-line trenches of France, Belgium, and Italy to the mine fields of the North Sea while a winter gale blew. I can frankly say that I never felt such apprehension as on the face of those surging waters, with black night and the impenetrable jungle about me. The weird singing of the paddlers only heightened the suspense. I thought that every tight place would be my last. Finally at eight o'clock, and after it seemed that I had spent years on the trip, we bumped up against the shore of Kabambaie, within a hundred feet of the fatal spot.

The faithful Moody, who preceded me, had revived life in the jonah jitney and at dawn the next day we started at full speed and reached Djoko Punda by noon. The "Madeleine" was waiting for me with steam up, for I sent a runner ahead. I had ordered Nelson back from Kabambaie because plenty of servants were available there. He spent his week of idleness at Djoko Punda in exploring every food known to the country. At one o'clock I was off on the first real stage of my homeward journey. The swift current made the downward trip much faster than the upward and I was not sorry.

As we neared Basongo the captain came to me and said, "I see two Americans standing on the bank. Shall I take them aboard?"

Almost before I could say that I would be delighted, we were within hailing distance of the post. An American voice with a Cleveland, Ohio, accent called out to me and asked my name. When I told him, he said, "I'll give you three copies of the *Saturday Evening Post* if you will take us down to Dima. We have been stranded here for nearly three weeks and want to go home."

I yelled back that they were more than welcome for I not only wanted to help out a pair of countrymen in distress but I desired some companionship on the boat. They were Charles H. Davis and Henry Fairbairn, both Forminiere engineers who had made their way overland from the Angola diamond fields. Only one down-bound Belgian boat had passed since their arrival and it was so crowded with Belgian officials on their way to Matadi to catch the August steamer for Europe, that there was no accommodation for them. By this time they were

joined by a companion in misfortune, an American missionary, the Rev. Roy Fields Cleveland, who was attached to the Mission at Luebo. He had come to Basongo on the little missionary steamer, "The Lapsley," and sent it back, expecting to take the Belgian State boat. Like the engineers, he could get no passage.

Davis showed his appreciation of my rescue of the party by immediately handing over the three copies of the Post, which were more than seven months old and which had beguiled his long nights in the field. Cleveland did his bit in the way of gratitude by providing hot griddle cakes every morning. He had some American cornmeal and he had taught his native servant how to produce the real article.

At Dima I had the final heart-throb of the trip. I had arranged to take the "Fumu N'Tangu," a sister ship of the "Madeleine," from this point to Kinshassa. When I arrived I found that she was stuck on a sandbank one hundred miles down the river. My whole race against time to catch the August steamer would have been futile if I could not push on to Kinshassa at once.

Happily, the "Yser," the State boat that had left Davis, Fairbairn, and Cleveland high and dry at Basongo, had put in at Dima the day before to repair a broken paddle-wheel and was about to start. I beat the "Madeleine's" gangplank to the shore and tore over to the Captain of the "Yser." When I told him I had to go to Kinshassa he said, "I cannot take you. I only have accommodations for eight people and am carrying forty." I flashed my royal credentials on him and he yielded. I got the sofa, or rather the bench called a sofa, in his cabin.

[THE PARK AT BOMA](#)  
**THE PARK AT BOMA**  
[A STREET IN MATADI](#)  
**A STREET IN MATADI**

On the "Yser" I found Mr. and Mrs. Charles L. Crane, both Southerners, who were returning to the United States after eight years at service at one of the American Presbyterian Mission Stations. With them were their two youngest children, both born in the Congo. The eldest girl, who was five years old, could only speak the Baluba language. From her infancy her nurses had been natives

and she was facing the problem of going to America for the first time without knowing a word of English. It was quaintly amusing to hear her jabber with the wood-boys and the firemen on board and with the people of the various villages where we stopped.

The Cranes were splendid types of the American missionary workers for they were human and companionable. I had found Cleveland of the same calibre. Like many other men I had an innate prejudice against the foreign church worker before I went to Africa. I left with a strong admiration for him, and with it a profound respect.

Kinshassa looked good to me when we arrived after four days' travelling, but I did not tarry long. I was relieved to find that I was in ample time to catch the August steamer at Matadi. It was at Kinshassa that I learned of the nominations of Cox and Harding for the Presidency, although the news was months old.

The morning after I reached Stanley Pool I boarded a special car on the historic narrow-gauge railway that runs from Kinshassa to Matadi. At the station I was glad to meet Major and Mrs. Wallace, who like myself were bound for home. I invited them to share my car and we pulled out. On this railway, as on all other Congo lines, the passengers provide their own food. The Wallaces had their servant whom I recognized as one of the staff at Alberta. Nelson still held the fort for me. Between us we mobilized an elaborate lunch fortified by fruit that we bought at one of the many stations where we halted.

We spent the night at the hotel at Thysville high in the mountains and where it was almost freezing cold. This place is named for General Albert Thys, who was attached to the colonial administration of King Leopold and who founded the Compagnie du Congo Pour le Commerce et l'Industrie, the "Queen-Dowager," as it is called, of all the Congo companies. His most enduring monument, however, is the Chemin de Fer du Congo Matadi-Stanley Pool. He felt with Stanley that there could be no development of the Congo without a railway between Matadi and Stanley Pool.

The necessity was apparent. At Matadi, which is about a hundred miles from the sea, navigation on the Congo River ceases because here begins a succession of

cataracts that extend almost as far as Leopoldville. In the old days all merchandise had to be carried in sixty-pound loads to Stanley Pool on the heads of natives. The way is hard for it is up and down hill and traverses swamps and morasses. Every year ten thousand men literally died in their tracks. The human loss was only one detail of the larger loss of time.

Under the stimulating leadership of General Thys, the railway was started in 1890 and was opened for traffic eight and a half years later. Perhaps no railway in the world took such heavy toll. It is two hundred and fifty miles in length and every kilometer cost a white life and every meter a black one. Only the graves of the whites are marked. You can see the unending procession of headstones along the right of way. During its construction the project was bitterly assailed. The wiseacres contended that it was visionary, impracticable, and impossible. In this respect it suffered the same experience as all the other pioneering African railways and especially those of Sierra Leone, the Gold Coast, Uganda, and the Soudan.

The scenery between Thysville and Matadi is noble and inspiring. The track winds through grim highlands and along lovely valleys. The hills are rich with colour, and occasionally you can see a frightened antelope scurrying into cover in the woods. As you approach Matadi the landscape takes on a new and more rugged beauty. Almost before you realize it, you emerge from a curve in the mountains and the little town so intimately linked with Stanley's early trials as civilizer, lies before you.

Matadi is built on a solid piece of granite. The name is a version of the word *matari* which means rock. In certain parts of Africa the letter "r" is often substituted for "d." Stanley's native name was in reality "Bula Matari," but on account of the license that I have indicated he is more frequently known as "Bula Matadi," the title now bestowed on all officials in the Congo. It was at Matadi that Stanley received the designation because he blasted a road through the rocks with dynamite.

With its winding and mountainous streets and its polyglot population, Matadi is a picturesque spot. It is the goal of every official through the long years of his service in the bush for at this place he boards the steamer that takes him to

Europe. This is the pleasant side of the picture. On the other hand, Matadi is where the incoming ocean traveller first sets foot on Congo soil. If it happens to be the wet season the foot is likely to be scorched for it is by common consent one of the hottest spots in all the universe. That well-known fable about frying an egg in the sun is an every-day reality here six months of the year.

Matadi is the administrative center of the Lower Congo railway which has extensive yards, repair-shops, and hospitals for whites and blacks. Nearby are the storage tanks and pumping station of the oil pipe line that extends from Matadi to Kinshassa. It was installed just before the Great War and has only been used for one shipment of fluid. With the outbreak of hostilities it was impossible to get petroleum. Now that peace has come, its operations will be resumed because it is planned to convert many of the Congo River steamers into oil-burners.

Tied up at a Matadi quay was "The Schoodic," one of the United States Shipping Board war-built freighters. The American flag at her stern gave me a real thrill for with the exception of the solitary national emblem I had seen at Tshikapa it was the first I had beheld since I left Capetown. I lunched several times on board and found the international personnel so frequent in our merchant marine. The captain was a native of the West Indies, the first mate had been born in Scotland, the chief engineer was a Connecticut Yankee, and the steward a Japanese. They were a happy family though under the Stars and Stripes and we spent many hours together spinning yarns and wishing we were back home.

In the Congo nothing ever moves on schedule time. I expected to board the steamer immediately after my arrival at Matadi and proceed to Antwerp. There was the usual delay, and I had to wait a week. Hence the diversion provided by "The Schoodic" was a godsend.

### [A GENERAL VIEW OF MATADI](#) **A GENERAL VIEW OF MATADI**

The blessed day came when I got on "The Anversville" and changed from the dirt and discomfort of the river boat and the colonial hotel to the luxury of the ocean vessel. It was like stepping into paradise to get settled once more in an



immaculate cabin with its shining brass bedstead and the inviting bathroom adjacent. I spent an hour calmly sitting on the divan and revelling in this welcome environment. It was almost too good to be true.

Nelson remained with me to the end. He helped the stewards place my luggage in the ship, which was the first liner he had ever seen. He was almost appalled at its magnitude. I asked him if he would like to accompany me to Europe. He shook his head solemnly and said, "No, master. The ship is too big and I am afraid of it. I want to go home to Elizabethville." As a parting gift I gave him more money than he had ever before seen in his life. It only elicited this laconic response, "Now I am rich enough to buy a wife." With these words he bade me farewell.

"The Anversville" was another agreeable surprise. She is one of three sister ships in the service of the Compagnie Belge Maritime du Congo. The other two are "The Albertville" and "The Elizabethville." The original "Elizabethville" was sunk by a German submarine during the war off the coast of France. These vessels are big, clean, and comfortable and the service is excellent.

All vessels to and from Europe stop at Boma, the capital of the Congo, which is five hours steaming down river from Matadi. We remained here for a day and a half because the Minister of the Colonies was to go back on "The Anversville." I was glad of the opportunity for it enabled me to see this town, which is the mainspring of the colonial administration. The palace of the Governor-General stands on a commanding hill and is a pretentious establishment. The original capital of the Congo was Vivi, established by Stanley at a point not far from Matadi. It was abandoned some year ago on account of its undesirable location. There is a strong sentiment that Leopoldville and not Boma should be the capital and it is not unlikely that this change will be made.

The Minister of the Colonies and Monsieur Henry, the Governor-General, who also went home on our boat, received a spectacular send-off. A thousand native troops provided the guard of honour which was drawn up on the bank of the river. Native bands played, flags waved, and the populace, which included hundreds of blacks, shouted a noisy farewell.

Slowly and majestically the vessel backed away from the pier and turned its prow downstream. With mingled feelings of relief and regret I watched the shores recede as the body of the river widened. Near the mouth it is twenty miles wide and hundreds of feet deep.

At Banana Point I looked my last on the Congo River. For months I had followed its winding way through a land that teems with hidden life and resists the inroads of man. I had been lulled to sleep by its dull roar; I had observed its varied caprice; I had caught the glamour of its subtle charm. Something of its vast and mysterious spirit laid hold of me. Now at parting the mighty stream seemed more than ever to be invested with a tenacious human quality. Sixty miles out at sea its sullen brown current still vies with the green and blue of the ocean swell. It lingers like the spell of all Africa.

The Congo is merely a phase of the larger lure.

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## Transcriber's notes:

Typos replaced:

- [p 26](#): separate streams → separate streams"
- [p 38](#): Africa.—the → Africa,—the
- [p 40](#): betwen → between
- [p 49](#): man con → man can
- [p 51](#): betwen → between
- [p 52](#): Britian → Britain
- [p 56](#): 'The destiny → "The destiny
- [p 56](#): Britian → Britain
- [p 57](#): n the world → in the world
- [p 59](#): betetween → between
- [p 72](#): It no → It is no
- [p 73](#): a quarter or → a quarter of
- [p 73](#): reoganization → reorganization
- [p 82](#): speriority → superiority
- [p 89](#): Eeast → East
- [p 89](#): stragetie → strategic
- [p 100](#): auother → another
- [p 101](#): Belian → Belgian
- [p 103](#): III → CHAPTER III
- [p 103](#): 'We've → "We've
- [p 110](#): irrenconcilable → irreconcilable
- [p 124](#): considering, Every → considering. Every
- [p 124](#): stock, The → stock. The
- [p 131](#): maximun → maximum
- [p 132](#): marval → marvel
- [p 139](#): IV → CHAPTER IV
- [p 139](#): controversay → controversy
- [p 152](#): developent → development
- [p 163](#): invarably → invariably
- [p 163](#): conspicuous → conspicous
- [p 166](#): rail-dead → rail-head
- [p 169](#): distaseful → distasteful
- [p 174](#): Rokerfeller → Rockefeller

- [p 177](#): V → CHAPTER V
- [p 182](#): Adthoug → Although
- [p 184](#): invariably → invariably
- [p 184](#): cruelty → cruelty
- [p 186](#): exporations → exploration
- [p 187](#): capured → captured
- [p 190](#): removed whole line "from his automobile and the creaky, jolty train started" from between "that you" and "feel on"
- [p 191](#): sacrificied → sacrificed
- [p 193](#): Uguanda → Uganda
- [p 195](#): resplendant → resplendent
- [p 201](#): high sease → high seas
- [p 210](#): incased → encased
- [p 214](#): unforgetable → unforgettable
- [p 219](#): arival → arrival
- [p 222](#): Begian → Belgian
- [p 225](#): VI → CHAPTER VI
- [p 226](#): Transporte → Transports
- [p 241](#): Forminere → Forminiere
- [p 243](#): Banqe → Banque
- [p 249](#): chololate-hued → chocolate-hued
- [p 255](#): heirarchy → hierarchy
- [p 255](#): Wissman → Wissmann
- [p 258](#): Fir → For
- [p 270](#): that → than
- [p 283](#): that → than
- [p 285](#): 194 → 194,
- [p 286](#): 85' → 85,
- [p 287](#): Societe → Société
- [p 288](#): Wissman → Wissmann

No attempt was made to harmonise the inconsistent hyphenation; e.g. both spellings *bed-room* and *bedroom* can be found in this book.

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