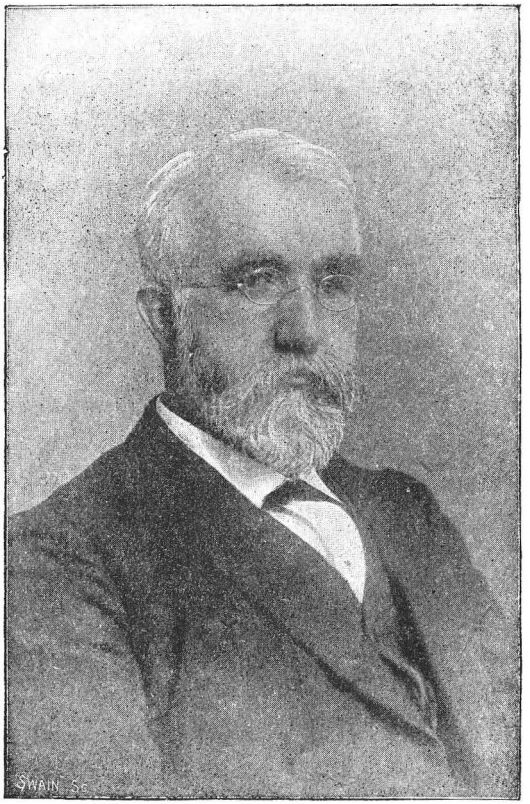

Photo.: Thos. Lewis. *Birmingham.*

Yours truly Sincerely
George Grenfell.

GRENFELL OF THE CONGO

Pioneer Missionary and Explorer

BY

SHIRLEY J. DICKINS

THIRD EDITION

LONDON:
THE SUNDAY SCHOOL UNION
57 AND 59 LUDGATE HILL, E.C. 4

TO

G. M. C.

PREFATORY NOTE

THE purpose of this little book is not only to present to its readers an interesting account of George Grenfell's life and work, that they may learn to honour one of the heroes of the mission field; but, by simple narrative, to place the missionary appeal before them in such a form that they may gain a deeper insight into the meaning of the Great Commission, and may possibly hear and respond to the same call which led George Grenfell out to service and sacrifice in the dark places of Africa.

I gladly acknowledge my great indebtedness to Grenfell's colleague, the Rev. Lawson Forfeitt, for the special information with which he has kindly provided me, and for the revision of the MS.; and to the Baptist Missionary Society for permission to use the accompanying illustrations.

S. J. D.

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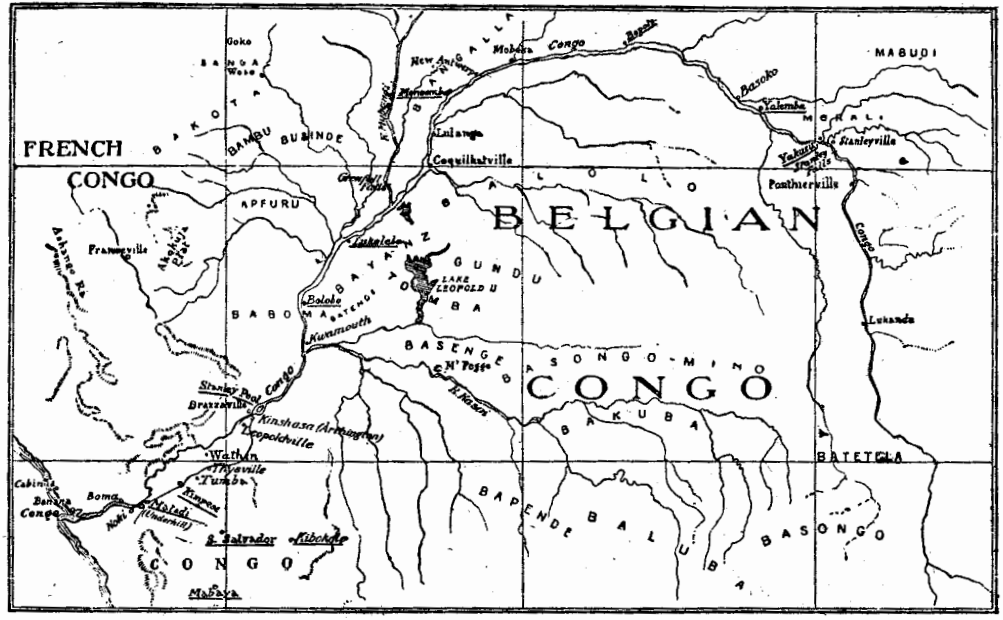


MAP OF THE CONGO, SHOWING BAPTIST MISSIONARY SOCIETY'S STATIONS, THUS BOLOBO.

GRENFELL OF THE CONGO

PIONEER MISSIONARY AND EXPLORER

CHAPTER I.

EARLY YEARS.

Childhood—Schooldays—An Active Young Christian—Missionary Enthusiasm—Enters Bristol College.

BOUT six miles from Land's End, on the uplands behind Penzance, stands the little village of Sancreed. Here, at Trannack Mill, in the earlier part of the nineteenth century, lived John Grenfell, who worked the farm and, in addition, carried on business as a carpenter. He was assisted in his work by his son George, who, with his wife, lived at Ennis Cottage, within a short distance of the mill. On 21st August 1849 there came to the cottage a baby boy, to whom was given the name of his father—George Grenfell.

Though young Grenfell was of Cornish descent and birth, most of his early years were spent in the Midlands, for, three years after George's birth, owing to declining business, his father removed to Birmingham. It was, however, one of George's chief delights to visit his grandparents at the old farm, and many were the happy days he spent in the little village in which he was born.

At school he displayed intelligence, but no marked ability. His mother showed some anxiety on this account, but she was assured by the doctor that if her son did not get on it would not be "for want of a good head." It was at the Gem Street branch of the King Edward's Grammar School, Birmingham, that young Grenfell received the greater part of his education, and it was here that he met Joseph Hawkes, who, becoming his chum as a boy, continued to enjoy his close friendship to the end of his life.

One incident in this early friendship is well worth recording. When both were about twelve years of age a slight difference of opinion between them developed into a quarrel, and, being boys, a fight was inevitable. This was carried out with the thoroughness which was one of the characteristics of Grenfell's after life. Rules were drawn up, the clay-pits in a field near at hand were selected as the battleground, and here, after school, young Grenfell and Hawkes proceeded to belabour one another to the best of their power with weapons consisting of their waterproof capes tightly rolled up.

At the end of an hour (short intervals for rest having been allowed) honours were even, and the duellists were exhausted; and these two facts formed the basis of an immediate reconciliation. Incidentally the combat had more disastrous results for Hawkes than for Grenfell, for when the former reached home explanations were demanded for the lateness of his arrival and his heated and dishevelled condition. His explanations were not considered satisfactory, and, as is usual on such occasions, the interview had a painful termination.

Joseph Hawkes was Grenfell's schoolfellow on Sundays as well as on week-days, for both were scholars at the Sunday School connected with Heneage Street Baptist Church. Mr. and Mrs. Grenfell belonged to the Church of England, and for a time both George and his younger brother went to St. Matthew's Sunday School. They were not comfortable there, however, owing to the presence of a big bully who made George's brother the object of his special attention, and so they joined the Baptist School.

When he was fifteen years of age Grenfell was baptized, together with Joseph Hawkes and another of his friends, William Hastings, and on 7th November 1864 he entered into church fellowship at Heneage Street. From this point he devoted a great deal of time and energy to Christian service, helping to distribute tracts, to hold open-air meetings, to visit the poor, and to teach in the Sunday School.

Grenfell and his young friends seem to have been somewhat precocious in spiritual matters. In 1866 they formed themselves into "The Bloomsbury Theological Class," and met weekly for mutual improvement at the house of Mr. W. Hawkes, in Bloomsbury Street. Papers on theological subjects were read by the members and were followed by criticism and discussion. Grenfell led the way, and at the first meeting, on 25th October, he read a paper entitled, "A Few Remarks upon the Inspiration of the Bible." The class continued to hold its weekly meetings for two years, at the end of which period it was decided to meet fortnightly, and an ambitious programme was mapped out for the coming session. Too much was attempted, however, and little was done, for in three months' time the class was wound up.

For some time, too, Grenfell and his companions studied elementary Greek under the tuition of the Rev. Benwell Bird, then pastor of Heneage Street Church. They all had business engagements, but so keen were they on mastering the language, that the little class met at Mr. Bird's house at half-past six on Monday mornings.

Every boy has his heroes whom he worships with great devotion. As a young boy Grenfell had been greatly interested in the pictures in the first book written by David Livingstone upon his missionary work in Africa, and when at the age of ten he read the book, no name sounded to him grander than that of David Livingstone, and no

work seemed more splendid than missionary work in Africa. Nor did he ever permanently change his opinion or lose his interest in missionary work. One of his first resolves as a Christian was to devote himself to mission work in Africa, and as time went on his interest deepened. Alfred Saker, one of the stalwarts of the Baptist Missionary Society, then at work in Africa, took place alongside Livingstone in Grenfell's heart, and all books concerning these two missionaries were eagerly looked for, and their contents quickly devoured by the young enthusiast.

His interest soon manifested itself in active service, and in 1871 he took a leading part in the formation of "The Birmingham Young Men's Baptist Missionary Society," the object of which was to create a deeper and wider interest in Foreign Missions, and to obtain increased financial support for the Baptist Missionary Society. Under the auspices of this Society a number of addresses on missionary subjects were given in various Sunday Schools, and Grenfell rendered able assistance in this direction. He also was appointed editor of the quarterly magazine of the Society, entitled, *Mission Work*, and in this capacity he wrote a number of helpful articles. The first number of the magazine was published in January 1873, and contained an article by "The Rev. Joseph Hawkes, Baptist Missionary at Jacmel." Grenfell's mind was almost made up, but his friend was already in the field.

When Grenfell was fifteen years of age, he had left school and had been apprenticed to a firm of merchants dealing in hardware and machinery. Here he made rapid progress, taking the greatest interest in the delicate machinery with which he had to deal; and in later years he found his business training and experience of great value on the mission field.

Later on, before he had definitely decided to become a missionary, he had entered into business on his own account, but it was not long before he felt compelled to enter the mission field. He spoke of his desire to the authorities at Heneage Street, who recommended him to the Midland Baptist Association for training at one of the colleges. After some delay the way was made clear, and so Grenfell left the world of commerce, and in September 1873 entered Bristol College to undergo his training for the mission field.

CHAPTER II

IN TRAINING FOR THE MISSION FIELD.

Life at College—An Adventure in the Roof—"Grind, Grind, Grind"—Accepted for Service.

HE Baptist College at Bristol, to judge merely by its exterior, did not seem likely to fire its inmates with enthusiasm for heroic service, or to keep burning the fire of enthusiasm with which they entered it. The building would have served as a prison, or some similar institution, without belying its appearance to any great extent.

Inside, however, all was bright and lively. Indeed the high spirits of the students were sometimes too much for Grenfell, who was by no means of a very quiet disposition. Dr. F. W. Gotch, one of the greatest Biblical scholars of his day, then Principal of the College, was rather indulgent, and although the taking of liberties was discouraged, the students were able to have many a "fling" which would have been impossible under a more austere Principal.

At the commencement of each session, if any fresh men were present, Dr. Gotch read through the "Rules of the House," and then added a few words to the effect that he trusted the students would observe the rules which they had just heard. He did not expect to have to look after them as if they were schoolboys, and he would assume they were gentlemen until they proved the contrary.

The majority of the students seemed to take "long views" as to what a gentleman might legitimately do, and at the commencement Grenfell had to "show his teeth" as a practical protest against some of their "boyish tricks." But he was soon on the best of terms with them all.

It must not be imagined that Grenfell could not enjoy a joke, or take his share in perpetrating one. He records, in a letter sent to one of his Birmingham friends, how two of the men tried to frighten him by dressing a dummy and placing it in his bedroom; and how he sewed up the sleeves of their night-shirts by way of revenge, and "had the laugh of them at breakfast." The Rev. George Hawker, who was then at the College, records[1] how on one occasion Grenfell and a fellow-student, afterwards a minister of distinction, got up into the roof and let down through a hole in his bedroom ceiling, used for purposes of ventilation, a string on which pieces of iron and tin had been placed. In the dead of night they pulled the string, and the noise was

[1] *George Grenfell, Congo Missionary and Explorer* (R. T. S.).

terrific. Suddenly it stopped, a heavy piece of iron crashed through the roof, and a pair of legs were seen dangling through the trap-door. The students, who, awakened by the noise, had assembled at the spot, at first were highly indignant, but when they discovered that the legs were those of Grenfell they were content to laugh the matter away.

But college life was not all sunshine, and especially so to George Grenfell. There was hard work to be done, for to qualify for a missionary meant a great deal of persistent study; and Grenfell was not a very good student. "It's grind, grind, grind," he wrote to a friend a couple of months after his admission to College, and "grind" was one of the things that he did not care for. Every Tuesday one of the students read a sermon, and then endured the criticisms of the Principal, the tutor, and his fellow-students. "And a nice flaying the poor wretch gets," said Grenfell. He found it easier to stay up late than to get up early, and generally sat up studying until one o'clock in the morning, and was up again by eight o'clock for another day's "grind."

In December he concluded his probationary period, and was accepted as a full student, and the next session found him applying himself more diligently to his studies. But he could not possess his soul in patience. Preparation and training were irksome to him. He was so filled with enthusiasm for the work to which he had dedicated his life, that he was continually straining at

the leash. He would not be content until he was actually engaged in the work of carrying the Gospel message to the heathen.

"Here have I lived in the world these four-and-twenty years," he wrote, "and have not yet begun to 'do,' only to prepare; and I've always been 'going to do.' I wonder if my life will be as resultless in the future as it has been in the past; if this 'getting ready' is to be the chronic condition of my being."

Owing to an affection in one of his eyes he had to submit to the ordeal of having it removed, and a glass eye substituted, but there is no indication that he ever suffered greatly through this handicap.

As soon as an opportunity presented itself he determined to offer himself for service. In February 1874 the Baptist Missionary Society were on the look-out for a capable man for service in Africa. Mr. Alfred Saker, the pioneer of Baptist Missions at the Cameroons, was finding his health unequal to the strain of continuing his work in Africa without further assistance, and a man was required who would be able to take charge of the work in the near future. Here was Grenfell's opportunity. To help in spreading God's Word in Africa had been his ambition; to do so in conjunction with one of his heroes was a chance he could not dare to miss. He applied, and was approved and provisionally accepted for the position. Interviews with Mr. Saker and

the officials of the Society followed, and on 10th November 1874 he was definitely accepted for service at the Cameroons.

Now Grenfell was supremely happy; and he was also exceedingly busy, for the time when he was to sail for Africa was not far distant, and there was much to be done in the way of preparation for the journey and for his new life, while there were many "good-byes" to be said and many visits to be paid.

The designation service was held in Broadmead Chapel, Bristol, on 3rd December, when Mr. Saker delivered a telling address on missionary work in Africa, and gave a graphic account of the field to which the young recruit was going. A fortnight later he was in Liverpool, and within a day or two he boarded the S.S. *Loanda, en route* for Africa. He was now twenty-five years old.

CHAPTER III.

AT THE CAMEROONS.

A Remarkable School Treat—A Demand for Medicine—Manners and Customs—Prospecting Tours—Return Home.

N the year 1480 some Portuguese ships sailing along the West Coast of Africa discovered an estuary lying to the south of a high range of mountains. The waters of this estuary were found by the sailors to contain a large number of prawns, and the name *Camerões*, Portuguese for "prawns," was given to the district. This was the origin of the name "Cameroons"—the English corruption of the Portuguese word; and it was for this place that Grenfell was bound.

The Baptist Missionary Society had been carrying on their work at the Cameroons since 1845, when Alfred Saker settled in King Akwa's town, on the southern bank of the Cameroons River, about twenty miles from the seacoast. Grenfell, therefore, found the ground already prepared for him. He reached the Mission Station with Saker in

January 1875, and received a cordial welcome from his new colleagues and from the natives. He was delighted with the place. "It is charming beyond all praise," he wrote home to a friend, shortly after his arrival.

One of the scenes which impressed him most during his early days in the mission field was a school treat given to the black children three or four days after his arrival. His description of the function makes interesting reading.

"The incident was memorable," he wrote, "not on account of its being a treat given to black children, but because of the elements of the treat —boiled rice and salt beef—and the treatment the treat received. It was not a big affair. There were not many more than fifty children present, and these, instead of bringing cups, brought a collection of plates, and substitutes for plates, such as I never conceived could have been raked up by so small a company. There was the orthodox plate, from ten inches in diameter downwards. There were vegetable dishes, pie dishes, meat dishes, tureens, and tureen covers, serving as very good substitutes for plates. There were also a collection of calabashes, cotton-wood bowls, eighteen inches across, after the fashion of mincing bowls, enamelled and tinned iron bowls, and one washhand basin.

"Spoons were provided, but were soon discarded after operations had commenced; the majority, like David with Saul's armour, had not proved them.

They had had more practice with their fingers than with spoons, and managed, by a movement which I cannot imitate, to convert their hands into a sort of funnel through which the rice, after they had taken it up and thrown back their heads, ran into their mouths. Some sat on the benches, some on the sandy floor. The earnestness with which they set themselves to the task of demolishing the viands, and afterwards picking the bones, was evidenced by the speed with which the feat was accomplished. They dispersed, carrying away on their heads their plates, dishes, bowls, etc. Everything is carried on the head, from a pail of water to the books that are taken to chapel."

Grenfell's work at the Cameroons was to be chiefly educational. Owing to Saker's able tuition, the natives had a fair knowledge of the English language, and so the new recruit was enabled to commence his work without delay, administering teaching, as he put it, in very small doses.

The majority of the boys in the schools were dull and lazy, but Grenfell was glad to find one or two notable exceptions to the general rule among his pupils. One boy in particular impressed him, and the missionary found him to be an efficient and industrious servant. He spoke of the boy as being about the only genius in the country that he knew of. Dumbi—for that was his name—was a successful fisherman; he had made himself a shirt and a cap; he could climb a tree like a cat, and swim like a fish; he knew all the river creeks and

steering courses; he was very handy with carpenters' tools, and used to make model canoes and sell them to the passengers from the steamers; he had a good head, forgot nothing he was told, and had the bump of order well developed; he could do anything he had seen done once. Grenfell was delighted with him, and mentioned him very favourably in his "dispatches" to the Old Country. "I thought when I first saw him, 'That's the ugliest boy I have seen,'" he wrote; "but I would not part with him, looks or no looks, without a struggle."

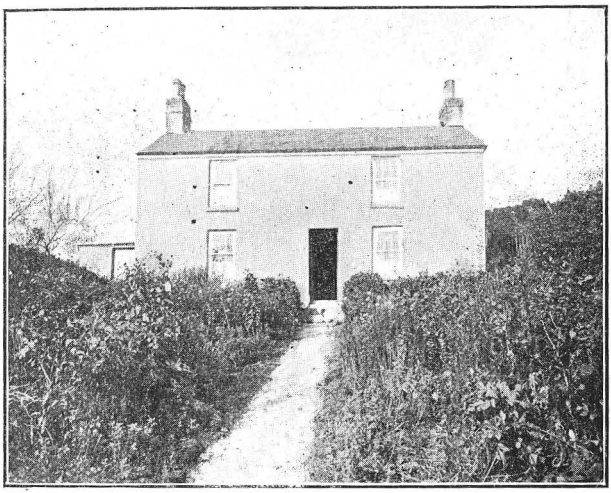
Grenfell's work was not confined to the schools, for before long he was in great demand as a doctor. As soon as the natives knew that he had medicine with him, the number of ailing ones amongst them was surprising. For the majority of those who really needed medicine he was able to prescribe a remedy, and for those who wanted the medicine but did not need it, he supplied pills of a perfectly harmless character. So all were satisfied, and most were cured. Grenfell's cook was one of his master's most persistent patients. "He was a capital hand at taking physic, for which he seemed at times to have acquired quite a passion," wrote Grenfell, after finding it necessary to dismiss him on account of misbehaviour. "We have known him afflicted with three distinct complaints in one day. Early in the morning he had worms; at midday he had a sore throat; and before nightfall there was something the matter with his heart. So bad a case called

for strong treatment, and I gave him a potent mixture. He has not troubled me much since, except that when my other boy got ill he was sure to be attacked too!"

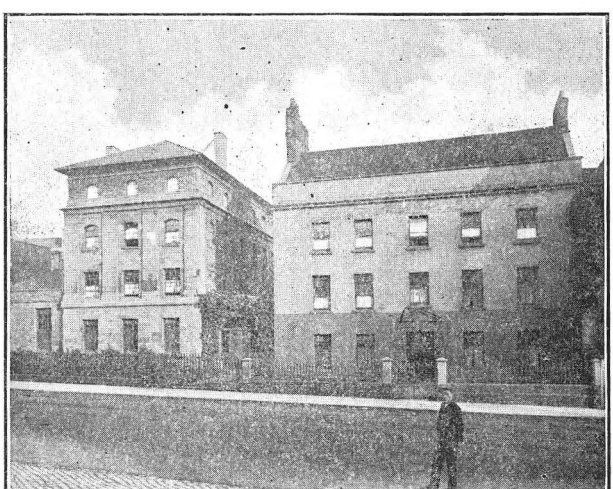
Amongst the natives, whenever a death occurred guns were fired to warn the spirits that another was on its way to join them. The gunner hid himself in a pit some distance from the gun, which lay on the ground, and discharged the weapon by setting fire to the long train of powder laid from the pit to the touch-hole of the gun. Little delay was allowed between death and burial, and the custom was to take the personal belongings of the dead man, break them, and then stack them under a rough shelter opposite his house. There seemed to be no reason for this action, and it was performed merely because it was "fashionable" so to do.

Another of the "country fashions" was one which compelled the women to work exceedingly hard while the men had comparatively an easy time. The lot of the Cameroons women was by no means a happy one. They were considered chiefly for their marketable value as wives, for the only way to obtain a wife was to buy one. The girls in a family were sold in order that wives might be bought for their brothers, and, consequently, the boy who had no sister had to put up with a "cheap" wife.

These were the people among whom Grenfell's lot was cast, and among whom he was to spread



GRENFELL'S BIRTHPLACE AT SANCREED, NEAR PENZANCE.
Photo.: Mr. Charles Stewart, Penzance.



BAPTIST COLLEGE, STOKES CROFT, BRISTOL.
Photo.: W. H. Midwinter & Co.

GRENFELL STARTING IN 1878 WITH FIRST B.M.S. MISSION TO SAN SALVADOR.

the knowledge of Christianity. Early in May, however, he started on a short journey up the river, to see if the operations of the Mission could be extended in that direction. Though this was a pioneering journey, he did not neglect the work which had first claim upon his time, and on the first day of the journey he was to be seen sitting in his boat speaking to the crowd of natives who had assembled on the shore. Many of these had never seen a white man before, and some, the children in particular, were too much afraid of him to approach closely to the boat. At night he went ashore and slept in a native house for the first time, finding the experience not very much to his liking.

Pushing on, the party reached a place where four waterways met, and Grenfell determined to find out as much as he could concerning these. For various reasons he had to turn back from each after he had made but little progress; and then his crew absolutely refused to proceed any farther, for between Akwa's people and the tribe whose country lay just ahead there was an unsettled feud, and a visit to their territory might have ended disastrously. There was nothing for it, therefore, but to return.

A month of fever was Grenfell's next experience, and during this time he had to suspend all his duties, for it was impossible for him to take either services or classes during this trying illness. In June he was on the water again, and eagerly pushing inland. He was well received at all the

towns he visited, and at some was able to deliver his great message to large audiences of natives.

Writing home during this month, Grenfell threw some more light upon the manners and customs of the people among whom he lived and worked. A lad named Quiri had just been rescued from a cruel fate. His mother had died, and as nobody would take care of him he was to have been buried with her. He was saved in time, however, and taken along to the Mission, Mr. Saker's cook playing the part of foster-mother to him.

"A boy nurse also came with the child," added Grenfell, "for the boys are as fond of nursing in the Cameroons as are girls at home. Married men, too, do a great deal of nursing while their wives are engaged on the farms. They have time, as their day's engagements often consist of little more than bathing three times in the river, and drying themselves as many times in the sun. The babies are taken into the river, ducked mercilessly, and if they survive become as much at home in the water as on land."

Shortly after this, Grenfell had another serious attack of fever, and as Mr. Saker was realising the strain of the work more and more, and it would be necessary in a short time that Grenfell should take control of the Station, it was decided that the young missionary should take a brief holiday. But he did not get away as soon as he would have liked, for the steamer which he expected failed to call for him. It was not, therefore, until the

end of 1875 that he found himself on the way to renew his old friendships, and to visit the places he loved so well in the Mother Country. He had been away only a year, but the first year spent far away from home and loved ones cannot be measured by the calendar.

CHAPTER IV.

SERVICE AND SACRIFICE.

Marriage—Death of Mrs. Grenfell—Unconventional Attire—Up River Again—Young Hopefuls.

HE first furlough of the young missionary was an exceedingly short one, extending for no longer a period than two months. Nevertheless, it served its purpose in giving him the rest and change which he so greatly needed, together with an opportunity for renewed fellowship with his old friends.

Only one incident in this brief holiday is of sufficient importance to be recorded, and this occurred on 11th February 1876, when, at his old church at Heneage Street, Birmingham, Grenfell was married to Miss Mary Hawkes, sister of his friend Joseph.

Within a fortnight he was again on the way to the Cameroons. At his journey's end he was welcomed with great enthusiasm by the natives, who had already learned to regard him as their friend.

Their delight on seeing Mrs. Grenfell gave great pleasure to the happy young husband.

But other things besides pleasure enter into the life of the missionary. After a few months of steady work Grenfell suddenly found his opportunity for service greatly enlarged. On the death of his colleague, Mr. Smith, who had charge of the two neighbouring mission centres, Grenfell had to assume responsibility for the three stations, for Mr. Saker was already making preparations to leave the Cameroons to spend the last years of his life in retirement in the Old Country.

The increase of responsibility and labour did not affect Grenfell to any great extent, but a great trouble overtook him early in the new year, and brought home to him the fact that service in this sphere would necessarily be accompanied by sacrifice. His wife, who had been suffering from dysentery for some little time, contracted a dangerous fever, and in two days was dead. The blow was a terrible one to Grenfell, and he staggered under it for several months. Shortly afterwards, however, the Rev. Thomas J. Comber, who had settled at the sister station at Victoria, transferred his home to that of Grenfell, and his companionship was a source of great consolation to the bereaved missionary.

Several months of hard work served to rally him, and a letter written home in July indicated a return of the high spirits which were one of his chief characteristics. The particular piece of work on

which he was then engaged was the re-erection of the Mission sawmill, which had been out of use for a couple of years, and Grenfell found his mechanical knowledge serving him in good stead in getting the sawmill in working order. In his letter referring to this matter, he gave an amusing description of his style of dress.

"It would not be much use," he said, "for me to turn out in a suit of regimentals every day. Pink shirt, minus several of the buttons, sail-cloth unmentionables, with a jack-knife in a sheath so as to be always handy when in the boat, or at work; a sou'wester if it's wet, or, if it's dry, an old helmet, serves as head-gear. A pair of shoes, well ventilated, and socks that are a perfect puzzle when I wear them, and often no socks at all. Good boots are a mistake, the water on our beaches spoils them in a day or two; and—as we don't study keeping feet dry—to protect them from the pebbles, etc., any old things do. I've a favourite old pair, which, by the bye, are not a pair, for one is a buttoned one minus the buttons, the other a lace, tied with a bit of bush grass.

"This is the style of my working rig. Of course, for meeting I adorn, with a decent "biled rag" and less questionable pants, and sometimes rise to the dignity of a collar. When a steamer comes in I tidy up a bit; and if I am out in the boat or steamer I have a change handy for going ashore."

"I don't write my sermons now," he said at the

same time. "One has to talk very plainly and very simply, and give it in small doses, and hit hard, to reach the people. A plainness that would not be tolerated at home is the best and only style suitable to these thick-skinned sons of Ham."

He had made up his mind that he would soon go up river again, and with this end in view he set about securing donkeys, as being useful and reliable for purposes of travel. The natives had never seen a donkey before, and the one which he obtained was the centre of attraction for miles around. The people crowded to see it, but when it brayed they rushed away, wondering what sort of creature it could be.

In his subsequent journeys Grenfell made his way up all the branches of the river, except one, as far as a boat could go, venturing, in several cases, into some districts where no white man had ever set foot before. On his second trip, during which he revisited some of these districts, he was accompanied by Comber. In several instances the people ran away when the missionaries approached, but, in addition to "spying out the land" with a view to future developments, the two missionaries took advantage of every opportunity afforded them to give the "good news" of Christianity to their black brethren.

The object of this travelling was to discover how best to get to the interior of the country. Grenfell was by no means satisfied with the results of the work when compared with the efforts that

had been put forth, and he felt confident that much better results would be obtained if the coast station were but the base from which the operations of missionaries at numerous stations in the interior were directed, instead of all the work of the missionaries being centred upon the coast station. He therefore appealed to Christian friends at home for a small sum of money sufficient to pay the expenses of a pioneering trip, with the object of ascertaining what kind of people lived in the districts beyond, and of determining what steps could be taken to reach and influence them.

Meanwhile, as a result of the steady labours of Grenfell and his co-workers, progress was being made at Cameroons, and the coast station was becoming the centre of an industrious community. Carpenters, brickmakers, bricklayers, printers, and other skilled workers were being "manufactured" by the missionaries, and the district showed increasing signs of civilisation. One day Grenfell discovered the need for a tailor, and the clever Dumbi, to whom reference has already been made, was considered the most likely person to fill the position. So a suit of clothes was ripped up, and he was given the task of putting the pieces together again. His efforts being successful, a sewing machine was secured by the missionaries, and soon Dumbi was supplying not only the growing demand of the natives for clothes but also the orders which were gladly placed with him by traders.

Another one of Grenfell's young hopefuls deserves mention here. Ti, who had been Mrs. Grenfell's favourite boy, had by his merits rapidly won favour with his master. He accompanied him on his journeys, and also performed the duty of setting the pulpit in order every Sunday, carrying the Bible, ringing the bell, and so on. Ti had earned a "new name" by his good conduct, and as "John Greenhough" he bore that of a noted Baptist minister, who had exerted a great influence over "black John's" master when at Bristol College. Lapses of memory in connection with the new name were not infrequent on the part either of Grenfell himself, or of the natives. Not so with Ti. When Grenfell used the wrong name he was politely reminded, "Please, sah, my name be John." If the almost unpardonable offence was committed by one of John's companions, he received no answer at all. John knew nothing of the whereabouts of Ti!

CHAPTER V.

PIONEERING ON THE CONGO.

An Important Letter—A Preliminary Journey—A Forward Move—Visiting the King—A Set Back—The Thieving Basundi.

"DEAR SIRS AND BRETHREN,—I trust the time has come when the Christian Church must put forth far greater efforts to preach the Gospel in all the world. . . . If each section of the Christian Church would do its part in the energy of true faith, we might make great advances in our day in extending the knowledge of saving truth throughout the world.

"There is a part of Africa, not too far, I think, from places where you have stations, on which I have long had my eye, with very strong desire that the blessing of the Gospel might be given to it. It is the Congo country—an old kingdom; once possessed, indeed, is now, of a measure of civilisation, and to a limited extent instructed in the externals of the Christian religion. . . . It is therefore a great satisfaction, and a high and

sacred pleasure to me to offer one thousand pounds, if the Baptist Missionary Society will undertake at once to visit these benighted, interesting people with the blessed light of the Gospel, teach them to read and write, and give them in imperishable letters the words of eternal truth. By and by, possibly, we may be able to extend the mission eastwards on the Congo, at a point above the rapids.

"But, however that may be, I hope that soon we shall have a steamer on the Congo, if it should be found requisite, and carry the Gospel eastwards, and south and north of the river, as the way may open. . . .—Yours in the Lord,

"ROBERT ARTHINGTON."

The letter, of which the foregoing is the substance, remains to this day one of the most important communications ever received by the Committee of the Baptist Missionary Society. For Mr. Arthington's offer, coming at about the same time as the news that Mr. H. M. Stanley, the famous explorer, had crossed Africa from east to west, and had traced the course of the Congo River from the centre of the continent to the Atlantic Ocean, made possible the widening of the sphere of the Society's activity to include the vast region of the Congo, and led to the beginning of the greatest piece of work to which Baptist missionaries have laid their hands.

The letter, too, was of the greatest importance to

George Grenfell, for it meant to him the opening up of that dark region into which he had longed to penetrate on his Master's service, and it meant the alteration of the whole course of his life. It brought into connection the man and the great work which he had been raised up to do.

"It would be wise," wrote Mr. Arthington, in a subsequent letter, "without delay to send a man, most prayerfully chosen, full of faith and love, who will determinately make his way to the King of the Kongo, and ask him if he would receive and encourage your Christian missionaries; and, at the same time, he should make all needful inquiries. If you find the man and inform me, I intend at once to send you fifty pounds to encourage you."

It did not take the Committee of the Baptist Missionary Society long to decide that they had already found the man. On 5th January 1878 Grenfell and his colleague, Comber, received a communication from headquarters which caused the latter to throw his hat up in the air and dance like a schoolboy. It was the order to go forward, to start upon the work for which they had been yearning. Grenfell did not show his joy like his more youthful friend, but it was none the less keen, and before the day had passed he had written his reply to the Committee telling not only of his willingness, but of his eagerness to go, and his delight at being accompanied by Comber. "The decision of the Committee to undertake this new effort," he wrote, "we feel to be the right

one. God seems to hold out far more glorious prospects of success there than appear to be possible here. . . . If I stayed here I should never give up trying to open a way for the Gospel; and though the difficulties there may, on closer acquaintance, prove even greater than those at Cameroons, I should still try, for the victory is sure. It may not, perhaps, be in my time; but I hope as long as I have breath God will count me worthy to fight and to help in bringing about that good time which is so surely coming."

Ever a man of action, no sooner had he accepted the offer of the Society than he had started, accompanied by Comber, on a journey to the Congo, sailing on board the *Elmina*, which had called at Cameroons on its way to the Congo. It would not be well, he considered, to enter into such important work by halves, and so he paid this flying visit to the prospective field of action.

The journey to the mouth of the river took eight days. On landing at Banana, Grenfell was fortunate enough to meet an English doctor whose acquaintance he had made at the Cameroons, and the visions of an unfriendly welcome faded away. A small boat was placed at the missionaries' disposal, and a three days' journey up the river took them to Musuko, from which point it was their intention to reach San Salvador, the capital of the Congo, by an overland journey. Heavy rains were commencing, however, and after a letter had been written to the King of the Kongo, and a

mass of useful information acquired, Grenfell and Comber retraced their steps, and returned to the Cameroons, having been just over a month away.

From that time there was a great deal of hard work to be done, for in addition to the ordinary work of the station, preparations had to be made for the coming departure. The command, "Forward march," arrived on 29th March, but since there was a great deal of business to transact, it was nearing the end of June before they could get away.

The little company, which included two native teachers, one Portuguese interpreter, two Kru boys, one Cameroons boy from the Mission, and two small boys as servants, together with Jack, a donkey, landed at Banana on 4th July, and soon reached Musuko. They were more fortunate in regard to the weather this time, and, covering a hundred miles in eight days, the capital was reached, and a hearty welcome given to the missionaries by the King and his people.

In recording the reception Grenfell gives the following description: "Pedro Finga (the head man of the caravan), introducing us to His Majesty, went down upon his knees, and seemed struck with awe and reverence; and most of those who interviewed His Majesty rubbed dust on their foreheads and clapped hands long and vigorously. We found Dom Pedro, or Ntotela, as he is called by his people, sitting outside his house, his chair placed on an old piece of carpet. Taking off our hats as

we approached, we shook hands with the King, and inquired after his welfare. He placed chairs for his English guests, and seemed glad to see us."

"Inland to Stanley Pool" was the pioneer missionaries' motto, and after a stay of three weeks at San Salvador they started for the Makuta district. Here is Grenfell's description of his meeting with the King of Makuta.

"As we strode down the hill and crossed the river, the inhabitants gathered about us, curious and fearless, but not impertinent. In the centre of the town we found the people in a great state of excited curiosity. Some hundreds formed a half circle at the front of the house under the eaves of which we sat, and they were eagerly pressing upon one another, and gazing at us with an intense wondering gaze. One fine-looking old woman especially interested me. She took her pipe from her mouth, and looked at us long and silently, with piercing eyes and half-opened mouth; and this old woman was nearly always amongst the crowd, constantly sitting at a respectful distance from our tent, during the four days of our stay at Tungwa.

"After waiting about half an hour, the son of the Soba made his appearance, dressed in a red-and-black plaid wound round his body and over his shoulders, a military coat, and a military cocked hat. He advanced slowly to the sound of drums and bugles, his people forming an avenue at his approach. When he reached within a dozen paces, he stepped briskly forward from the umbrella

held over him, and, lifting his hat and making a good bow, sbook hands with us. He had come to conduct us to the Soba, his father, by whom we were grandly received. He was sitting on a bamboo native chair, dressed much in the same style as his son, and was surrounded by musicians. He rose from his seat on our approach, and advanced to meet us, while his band made such a deafening noise that our efforts to speak to him were in vain.

"The musical instruments consisted of some large drums, about six cornets and bugles, and seven ivory horns. These horns were each of a whole tusk, and gave forth very soft, sweet sounds. As he had nothing but leopard skins to offer us to sit on, and the music was almost too much, we retired, asking him to visit us in our tent. This he did, with his son, soon after, when we explained why we had come. He thought we were traders and had come to buy his ivory, and seemed scarcely to believe us when we said that we had never bought a single tusk, and only wanted to teach black men what was good. He had had no experience of missionaries before."

Despite their favourable reception, they were not allowed to go any farther. The supreme chief of the Makuta, who lived a few miles on, would not hear of it. "Oh," he exclaimed to the messenger, "they *don't* buy ivory? *What* do they want then? Teach us about God? Something about dying, indeed! There is far too much of

that now: people are always dying in my town They are not coming here to bewitch me. Why do not the Tungwa people send them back?" The upshot was, that Grenfell and Comber had to return to San Salvador, which town they decided to make the base station of the new mission. In the meantime, Comber returned to England to lay his report of the position of affairs before the Committee, while Grenfell made his way to the Cameroons, where he married Miss Rose Patience Edgerley, and, for a time, devoted himself to exploration and trading.

In the following year Comber returned with reinforcements in the persons of Messrs. Crudgington, Hartland, and Holman Bentley, and with Grenfell, who now resumed work in connection with the Society, a great deal was done in opening up stations along the river. San Salvador, Wanga Wanga, Bayneston, and Manyanga were the chief stations formed, while Comber and Bentley, after many unsuccessful attempts, and in the face of great hardship, managed to reach Stanley Pool, from which point it was hoped to extend the work of the Missionary Society right into the heart of Africa.

The Basundi district, through which the missionaries had to pass on the journey to Manyanga, was not one to be greatly desired by travellers. "It will be a very pressing call to assure me that it is my duty to undertake the land journey to Manyanga again and to encounter its worries,'

Grenfell wrote. "The Basundi, when encountered in small parties, run away and hide; when in companies they will rob you in the most barefaced manner, and laugh when accused and the fact brought home to them. Nothing is safe, from bales of cloth down to cooking-pot covers, if they can only get a chance of laying their hands upon them, and there is no knowing to what lengths a yelling mob may go when once a spark is kindled. We had a little experience with several types of African character, but never before met such people as the Basundi."

CHAPTER VI.

THE *PEACE*.

A Mission Steamer—Travelling in the Cataract Region—A Remarkable Bird—The *Peace* Rebuilt.

HERE was hard work to be done, and the workers were few, and Grenfell scarcely expected that he would get a holiday yet awhile; but before the year had ended he had started on his way to the homeland, where he was to remain for a year. It was only a holiday, however, in that it was a change of scene and of work, for there was little of rest about it.

It came about in this way. In the summer of 1880 Mr. Arthington sent a further letter to the Committee of the Baptist Missionary Society urging the necessity for carrying out the original purpose for which the Congo Mission was founded, and placing a steamer on the Congo River. In this letter he offered £1000 towards the purchase of a suitable steamer, and £3000 to be invested, and the interest used for the maintenance of the

steamer "until Christ shall be known all along the Congo."

George Grenfell had always been a lover of ships. One of his fellow-students at Bristol has recorded how they used to spend Saturday afternoons together by the riverside and along the quays, Grenfell always taking the keenest interest in the ships and their freights, the ports from which they had sailed, their methods of lading and discharge, etc. Then he became quite attached to the boats he had to leave behind him when he transferred his operations to the Congo. Moreover he had some engineering knowledge, and a great deal of mechanical skill. Bearing this, and his knowledge of the Congo River and its characteristics, in mind, the Committee of the Society decided that nothing better could be arranged than that Grenfell should supply the specifications for the projected steamer, and should also superintend the building operations in order that he might be acquainted with its construction and management.

This was the business, therefore, which brought him home to England toward the end of 1881, and he was kept busy both at Chiswick, where the boat was being built, and at the Mission House. The work proceeded at a fair pace, but it was not until September 1882 that the boat was finished and launched at Westminster.

Meanwhile a skilled missionary engineer—Mr. W. Doke, a student from Regent's Park College—had been appointed to work in co-operation with

Grenfell, both in the oversight of the building operations and in the task of reconstructing the vessel when the various parts arrived at the Congo after their long journey.

The boat was made of steel, with twin screws, so as to secure easy control, was 70 ft. long and 10 ft. 6 in. broad, and drew only 12 in. of water, the latter being necessitated by the shallowness of certain parts of the Congo River. The total cost, including a steel boat, duplicates of the most important parts of the machinery, and packing ready for the long journey, was little less than £2000. Owing to the cataract region through which the steamer would have to pass in order to reach its destination, it was necessary for the boat to be taken to pieces when built, transported to the Congo, and then reconstructed.

Seventeen cases of extra gearing for the engines were dispatched in good time on board the *Ethiopia*, but shortly after news came to hand that she had been lost, and so there was more delay and additional expense. All the news at this time, however, was not bad news, and a letter which Grenfell received from Mr. Comber was full of encouragement, for he reported that he had been successful in securing land at Stanley Pool suitable for the erection of a mission station and a landing-stage for the *Peace*.

After a trial trip or so in England, and a period during which the boat was open to inspection on the Thames, the work of dismantling and packing

was commenced. Every package was sewn up in canvas and numbered so that a duplicate could be ordered if one part should go astray on the journey. There was some risk of some of the packages being lost or stolen, for the carriers marched in caravans sometimes of a mile in length. To prevent any loss occurring, therefore, it was necessary that an inventory should be given to the head man at the commencement of the journey, and he would only be able to secure his pay at the end by producing all the packages.

All things being ready, a farewell meeting was held on 5th December, and four days later the vessel, containing some of the most valuable property of the Baptist Missionary Society—two men and the sections of a steamer—sailed from Liverpool.

January saw them at the end of their voyage, having picked up about seventy Kru boys from the coast towns for carriers. Full arrangements were being made for the transport of the packages to Stanley Pool, and the disposal of the missionaries at the various stations, when Mr. Doke, the Mission's engineer, fell a victim to fever and in a short time was dead. This meant increased duties for Grenfell, and overstrain paved the way for an attack of dysentery. He was exceedingly weak for some time, and he chafed at the delay which this meant in the work. But worse was to follow, for yet another colleague, Mr. Hartland, was removed by death from the sphere of active service.

Meanwhile the work of transport was proceeding, though slowly, for progress was not an easy matter, and rapid progress an impossibility. One obstacle was the grass, which grew sometimes to a height of 14 or 15 ft. and to a width of 1 in., and was only cut into narrow tracks.

It was decided that Grenfell should remove his household to Stanley Pool, and about half-way through the year he started out with his wife and child on the up-country journey. He refers to this journey as being without any special incident, but he had one or two rather unpleasant experiences. On one occasion the little party was turned out of the hut which had been their shelter during the night by hordes of driver ants. This occurred long before daylight, and they had no chance to do more than half-dress themselves. "The ants were quite masters of the situation," he wrote, "till they took themselves off, a couple of hours later. Their bites are suggestive of hot needles, and when once they take hold they won't let go. You may pull their bodies off, but they will still hold on with their heads."

But the journey itself would have been incident enough for most people, for travelling in those regions was a most uncomfortable business. In the early days of the Mission the carriers were somewhat afraid to undertake the journey, and the caravans were necessarily small, and the inconvenience very great. Grenfell's description of the

manner of his travelling shows the difficulties under which he laboured.

"Travelling in this style," he wrote, "and camping out in the open in the rainy season is not a pleasant experience, for after a hard day in the hot sun it is not at all agreeable to have to fold up one's blankets and sit upon them under the shadow of an umbrella to keep them dry, and to wait till the rain has finished before one is able to resume his disturbed slumbers. At times the rain won't leave off, and then one has to make the best of it, rolling himself up in his waterproofs, for it is easier to sleep, even out in the rain, than to sit up all night.

"Then, with the ceasing of the rains in June and July, the great grass ripens and sheds its barbed seeds in such profusion as to add greatly to one's difficulties, for they attach themselves to the traveller's clothes, and with every movement of the body work themselves in and in till at last the sharp seed case itself reaches the skin; and as this happens at some scores of points at the same time there are quite sufficient of these little miseries to give one a bad time of it."

Grenfell took up his abode at Stanley Pool, but he was only there two days when he was off again to the coast, taking with him some thirty of his carriers whose period of service was over, and with a view to engaging others to take their place. From Banana he was able to send word to friends in England that only two boxes of tools had been

lost of the hundreds of packages transported, these being stolen by two of the carriers, who ran off to their own town. By a strange coincidence they were the duplicate tools of those which went down with the *Ethiopia*, and so a third supply had to be ordered.

As a result of his visit to Loango forty new carriers were obtained. There was some excitement on the return journey to Banana. "A would-be very important personage" met the party and, after objecting to the singing of the men on the ground that it would disturb the villagers, insisted on them taking a certain path. This was too much for Grenfell, and he answered the man with much indignation, and immediately led his men along the forbidden road. Not long after they were overtaken by a dozen men with rifles, and there was nothing else to be done but to go back with them, amid the joyous howling of the people. When they reached the chief's house Grenfell read the chief a lesson upon the enormity of the offence of laying hold upon a white man, and insisted that he and his men should be carried back to the place where they had been arrested. "So it was arranged," he continued, in relating the incident, "that the young man who was so important in his own estimation, and the gentleman who favoured me with his particular attention in the matter of his musket muzzle, should carry my hammock. And they carried me, not only to the point from which they made me return, but an equal distance

beyond. Did not my boys shout, to make up for lost time!"

The following extract from a letter written from Stanley Pool, in the following December, tells its own story, and a strange story it is indeed: "There is a curio here, in the shape of a big adjutant bird, a fellow who stands four feet high and has a wonderful appetite. Fish, bones, leather (or, at least, sun-dried goats' skin, as hard as leather) are all alike palatable. He had a rare feast one day off a pet monkey of Bentley's, which died and which he swallowed whole. Dead monkey not being forthcoming every day, he went for a live kitten, or half-grown cat, and swallowed it. The boys raised a shout: 'He's swallowed pussy!' and sure enough muffled mewing came from the region of his capacious maw. His great jaws were opened in quest, but no glimpse of pussy. Another attempt, and his jaws being nearly rent, Mr. Comber just caught sight of pussy's tail and managed to get hold of it; then a better hold; and up came pussy, alive. Yes, and is alive to this day, though it is nearly three weeks ago since it happened."

Towards the end of January Grenfell started for a trip in a steel boat, 26 ft. long, with a crew of five, his purpose being to acquaint himself with the difficulties of the Upper Congo. Hippopotami, sandbanks, and mosquitoes were noticeable features of a large proportion of the journey. One hippopotamus got right under the

boat, and lifted the stern clean out of the water; while another left the mark of his teeth in the steel plate.

The people seemed anxious to trade with the missionary, and among the articles which they most desired were the boat anchor, the flag, and Mr. Grenfell's spectacles! Nearly all the people he encountered were friendly, and as a voyage of exploration and introduction to the natives the journey was a great success. It took twenty-four days to reach the Equator (the turning-point), a distance of about four hundred miles.

Bad news awaited his return, and all his hopes for the future were dimmed by the announcement that three of his colleagues, including two new engineers sent out for the *Peace*, had died, while several others were incapacitated by illness. But the need of the work was too great to allow of despair, and Grenfell now devoted himself to the work of reconstructing the *Peace*, to the completion of which they were all eagerly looking forward. With a few coloured workmen to help him he made astonishing progress.

"This work," he wrote, "has progressed without a single hitch of any kind, and with much greater rapidity than any one of us dared to hope, and now, by the blessing of God, we are able to chronicle the desired end. Eight hundred pieces, transported from England to Stanley Pool by rail, steamer, and carriers, and now the whole work completed."

It was indeed a gigantic task, and Grenfell's colleagues were exceedingly proud of his achievement. On her trial trip the natives were full of enthusiasm. "She lives, master—she lives!" cried one of them, as the boat began to move.

CHAPTER VII

INTO THE INTERIOR.

The First Voyage of the *Peace*—Mischievous Congo Boys—The Cruel Practices of the Bolobo People—Native Methods of Execution—A Congo Dandy.

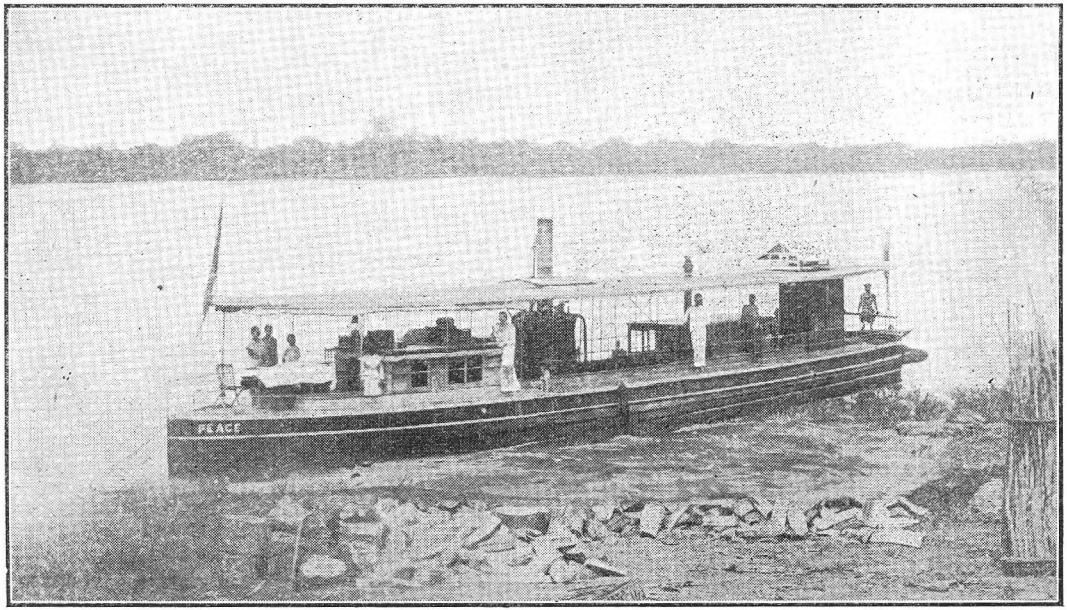
HE great value of the *Peace* to the Congo Mission was soon made manifest. Shortly after its completion Grenfell and Comber started off in her (on 7th July 1884) for an extended trip into the interior of the Congo region, to discover new fields and new human material for themselves and their fellow-missionaries to work upon. This tour was of no little importance, and the account of it is of great interest, not only as giving some idea of the kind of adventures through which pioneer missionaries have to pass and the difficulties they have to encounter, but also as giving some excellent pen-pictures of the natives among whom Grenfell and his colleagues were shortly to work. The account cannot better be given than in the words of the missionaries themselves, and in this chapter there will be little

intrusion upon their story, the extracts being from the letter sent to the Baptist Missionary Society, which was the joint production of Grenfell and Comber.

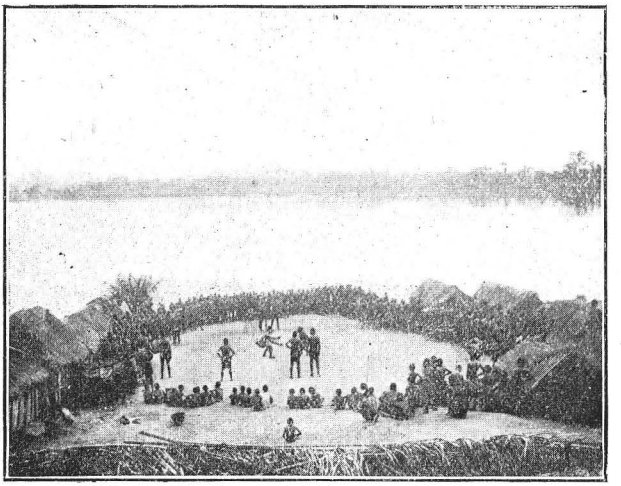
Not all the trouble of the journey was to be caused by the strangers whom they met.

"We ventured to take with us eight of our schoolboys," recorded the missionaries, "thinking that to take them a long journey would tend to enlarge their ideas of things. But, however desirable it may be to enlarge their ideas, we very much question if either of us will ever again face the responsibility of personally conducting a party of eight unruly cubs for a twelve hundred miles' tour. In the cold morning the stoker was their very dear friend; in fact, so attached did they become to the stoke-hole that most of them left bits of their skin sticking to the steam-pipes, contenting themselves for a time with a few swathes of bandaging, with rolls of which we were fortunately fairly well provided.

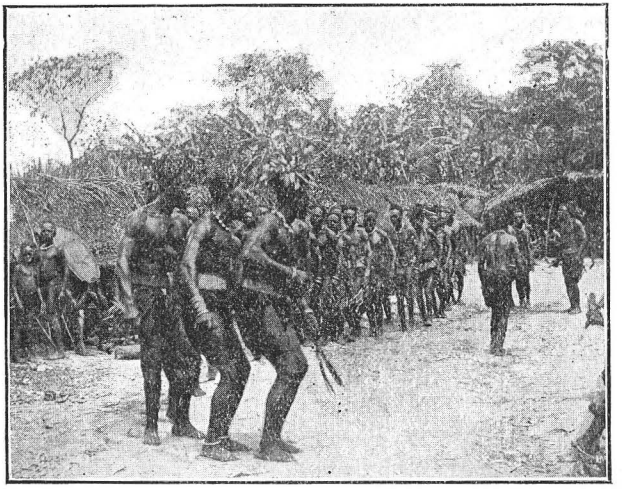
"In the middle of the day, when the stoke-hole had lost its charms, the water became a great temptation to them, and a constant source of anxiety to us; for not only were there the risks consequent upon their not being able to swim, but the grave possibility of hungry crocodiles being on the prowl. On one occasion we came very near to disaster. A boy, while playing, fell overboard, dragging another with him, who, like himself, could not swim. Happily, the small boat was able to



MR. AND MRS. GRENFELL ON THE S.S. *PEACE* ON THE ARUWIMI RIVER.
Photo.: Rev. H. Sutton Smith.



A WRESTLING MATCH, BOPOTO.
Photo.: Rev. William Forfeitt.



A FUNERAL DANCE, BOPOTO.
Photo.: Rev. William Forfeitt.

reach them without much loss of time, and we are now rejoicing in the fact that, notwithstanding the risks of fire, water, and rapidly revolving machinery, by God's good favour we have brought them all safely back again."

Starting on 7th July, the party made good progress, and in a day or two arrived at the mouth of the river Kwa. Here they decided to leave the main river and journey up the tributary for some distance. They did so, the chief item of interest in the detour being their coming into contact with Nga Nkabi, a noted Congo chieftainess. This remarkable woman received the missionaries warmly, and they left her shores assured of a welcome when they returned to commence active work among her people. They steamed for a mile or two up the Kwango, a stream nearly five hundred yards wide, and then turned round and proceeded back to Kwa-mouth, where the journey up the Congo was resumed.

"Our next stage, like our previous one on the Congo, was characterised by few or no people on the right bank, though we passed a whole series of towns on the left. We had heard that the chief of Chumbiri's town, which was our first stopping-place, had been deposed and killed by his son; so we were quite prepared to find another ruling in his stead, but hardly prepared for the son's version of the matter—that his father had gone up river to buy ivory. We were unable to decide upon its truth, and had to put up with his oily pretensions

of friendship for ourselves, and the grease and powdered redwood which he transferred from his person to our clothes as he persistently took our arms and squeezed himself in between us as we walked the narrow paths of his town."

After thirty miles among the islands which studded the river from this point, the Bolobo towns were reached. Adjoining these was Moië, a bigger district even than Bolobo. Here is a graphic pen-picture of the natives—

"Between Bolobo and Moië there is generally enmity, and one can generally reckon, too, on internal dissensions in each district, one chief frequently not being on speaking terms with his fellow-chief. The chief characteristics of Bolobo people appear to be drunkenness, immorality, and cruelty, out of which vices spring actions almost too fearful to describe.

"On the afternoon of our arrival we walked through all the towns of Bolobo and Moië. In Bolobo it was a great day—a gala day, indeed. The wife of one of the chiefs had died somewhere away, and, of course, there must be four or five days and nights of orgies—any amount of dirty sugar-cane-beer swilling, and a grand finale of four human sacrifices, each victim being a poor wretch of a slave bought for the purpose. Drums beating briskly, circles of women wearing the great heavy brass collar (25 to 30 lb.) dancing and clapping rhythmically, and plenty of people about in all the streets. The victims were tied up

somewhere, apathetically and stolidly awaiting their fate. Remonstrances and pleadings on behalf of these poor victims were all in vain.

"Another cruel tragedy was also shortly to take place. Prices of certain food were to be arranged, and, as a sign or seal of such arrangement, a slave was to be killed thus: a hole was to be dug between the two towns, and the victim's arms and legs broken, and he thrown into the hole to die, no one being allowed to give him food or drink. Oh, Christians at home!"—the appeal comes from the missionaries' hearts—"Oh, Christians at home, think of this!"

Pushing on from Bolobo they travelled for over one hundred miles before catching sight of the opposite shore. Farther on, the missionaries were able to make friends with the natives of the various towns, and to prepare the way for a later and more permanent visit. That they were not all of a very friendly and good-natured turn of mind, the following details will show:—

"These people about the great Ruki River are the most primitive of the people we have hitherto met. They are the only people we met who use the bow and arrow. They, for the most part, wore hats of monkeys' skins, the head of the animal coming to the front of their heads and the tail hanging down behind. They did not, however, appear wild or savage. That they are cruel, we know from the methods of execution obtaining amongst them. Certain victims die by the knife,

and others have to afford to the bloodthirsty spectators the pleasures of the chase. These last are given a certain start across country, and then are pursued in full cry by all the people armed with spears and bows and arrows. An obstinate victim, who will not run well, causes disappointment, but others are said to make a 'fine run' before they fall, pierced with arrows and spears.

"The death by the knife is given thus. The victim is tied down to stakes driven into the ground in a squatting position, his arms behind him, and his head bent well forward. Round the chin and coming to a loop at the top of the head is a strong plaited rope. Four feet or so in front is a strong young sapling, which with great force is bent down until its top reaches the loop at the head of the victim, to which it is made fast. The sacrificial knife (a strange sickle-shaped affair, the hollow fitting the curve of the neck) is brought, and, after a little playing about with the miserable doomed man, a smart deft stroke is given which never fails to sever the head, which springs high in the air by the relieved tension of the sapling. We have been told that among the Babangi, on the death of a chief, scores of victims are sacrificed." And yet there are still people who affirm that the African savage is happier without Christianity and civilisation!

Here is an interesting description of the pilot of the *Peace* on this journey: "Like all Babangi people, Mangaba was very superstitious, and carried

his fetishes with him on board. His toilet was never complete without the application of his face-powder and rouge, used to make mysterious red and white marks about his body. A white line up his back, from hip to left shoulder, to the left of the median line, and carried down thence along the outer part of the arm to the hand. Red and white lines on the left foot, and across forehead, but all drawn with the most religious care. Old Mangaba would have been dreadfully afraid to face the day without the protection of his mystic chalk adornments. Mangaba brought a boy (whom he had bought as a slave some time before) on board with him, and the boy's chief functions were the filling of his master's pipe and starting it well alight, together with the adornment of his body with the chalk.

"Old Mangaba was very active in communicating with the people, shouting at every canoe we met, and that long after they had ceased to hear what he said. He seemed to claim kinship with every one, found that he had a wife at every town we stayed at, met at least three mothers, and introduced nearly every chief of importance as his own father, until his family tree was, to say the least, perplexing."

When they were half-way to Stanley Falls they commenced the return journey. "On setting out from Arthington we had given ourselves five weeks, and, had this time been sufficient, there was nothing to prevent us going the whole distance of a thousand miles. The road was open and most

inviting; the *Peace* working well; the people above Bangala reported us 'all good' and warmly welcomed us. The only thing making any lengthening of our journey impossible was the fact that we had left only Mrs. Grenfell at Arthington, and one of us was overdue to go down to the coast and home to England. So we had, albeit most reluctantly, to start back.

"The *Peace* answers every expectation in the matters of speed, simplicity, and comfort. The journey was a prospecting one, and has resulted in our being able to choose very important and valuable sites for stations; it was our constant regret that we could not make it more of a missionary journey—that is, in teaching and preaching; that was impossible, chiefly because we knew so little of the language, but we sometimes tried it when, in the evening, we had prayer, and gathered around us our boys to sing our Congo hymns. We have, however, done a little more preliminary work, which is none the less our 'Father's business.' Oh, for the time when, settled among these people, there shall be servants of God, teachers of His Word, to show these heathen the Christian life, and to try to draw them home to God!"

CHAPTER VIII.

DIFFICULTY, DELAY, AND DISASTER.

Amongst the Cannibals—The Troubles of a Plump Pilot—A Scramble for "Hippo" Meat—A Disastrous Fire—The Death of Comber.

HE first journey of the *Peace* has been described somewhat fully, not because it was actually of more importance than the subsequent journeys, or because its results were farther-reaching than those of later voyages, for this was not the case; but a special interest surrounded the first trip taken in the boat, the advent of which was so eagerly awaited by the Congo workers; while the later voyages were conducted on similar lines to this, and the reception accorded the missionaries and the general results of the tours were of a similar nature. The extended description of the first voyage may therefore be taken as applying in a general sense to those which followed.

There were, however, several incidents of the

voyages taken in the *Peace* from 1884 to 1887 that are well worth recording as throwing light upon the lives of both the missionaries and the natives, and which cannot be omitted in any account of George Grenfell's life and work.

Grenfell's appreciation of Urna, the pilot of the *Peace*, must not be overlooked in dealing with the various trips made under his pilotage. "Urna," he wrote, "joined the *Peace* in January 1884. He is a native of the Upper Congo, and having been accustomed to long trading voyages in canoes was able to bring into the service of the Mission a stock of very valuable experience. Added to this, he has a fund of good humour and a merry face that went a long way towards commending him, and through him, ourselves, to the confidence of strangers when we got beyond the limits where his experience served him. Many a time when the beach was lined with armed, hostile men, who threatened to fight if the steamer ventured to land, Urna has got into a small canoe, and, all unarmed, has gone ashore to introduce himself and the strangers in the steamer—the like of which they had never seen before.

"On one occasion, after nearly an hour's manœuvring, Urna overcame threatened difficulties and landed among some hundred or more armed cannibals. Preliminaries arranged and vows of friendship exchanged, Urna asked that provisions should be exchanged for the cloth and beads and brass wire he had brought with him. But while

he was waiting for the promised bananas, his well-favoured condition seems to have excited a sort of watering of the mouth among the crowd, for the foremost ones pinched his arms and chest, and turning to those behind told them he had 'plenty of meat.' Under the circumstances one can excuse him for finding an excuse to push off to the steamer, and for refusing to carry on further negotiations except from the comparative safety of her deck. However, the ice had been broken, and the people brought as much food alongside the steamer as was needed.

"Just before the steamer weighed anchor the thought seems to have struck one of the natives that it was possible to do yet a further stroke of business, for, observing there was only one woman on board, he called out, 'You have only one woman in your big canoe. We have plenty of women. Let us change some of them for your men. We don't eat women.' Urna is a man of great resource and energy. He is not a Christian, but he is an honest man, and brave and kindly hearted—such as one soon learns to love, and such as fills one with hope as to the future of the people whom he represents."

During the years 1884 and 1885 Grenfell made five further journeys of investigation in the *Peace*, accomplishing a great deal of useful work both on behalf of the Mission he represented, and in the direction of increasing geographical knowledge. These tours included a journey over the 1080 miles

of waterway on the main river as far as Stanley Falls, an examination of the Mbura and Aruwimi, and a number of smaller rivers, an ascent of the great Mubangi River for more than 400 miles, and so on. The most important voyage of all was that in which the ascent of the Mubangi was made, for during that journey he traversed several hundred miles of waterway which had never previously been visited by a European, and he was able to send a valuable report concerning the river to the Royal Geographical Society.

It was by no means an easy life that he led while engaged in this work of exploration. "Thank God we are safely back," he wrote on one occasion. "It might have been otherwise, for we have encountered perils not a few. But the winds, which were sometimes terrific, and the rocks, which knocked three holes in the steamer as we were running away at night from cannibals, have not wrecked us. We have been attacked by natives about twenty different times, we have been stoned and shot at with poisoned arrows, and have been the marks for more spears than we can count, but our only casualty was one of our boys slightly wounded with a poisoned arrow."

In another place he told of an amusing experience while in search of meat in the "hippo" hunting grounds. After some trouble a good specimen was shot, standing on the edge of the deep water. "To make him fast with a rope through a hole cut between the bone and the

principal tendon of one of his legs, and have him alongside, did not take many minutes; and a little later we had towed our ton or so of flesh to a sandbank which was to serve as a beach for cutting him up. Here, after trying to drag our prize out of the water and get him into position, we had to give up the attempt, and to proceed to roll him up the sloping bank like a big cask.

"Before we had finished the rolling process, the natives had begun to assemble. About two hundred of them had collected by the time we had cut off the legs, and were eagerly waiting for the signal which would give them permission to scramble for the remains. The signal was no sooner given than the carcase was surrounded by a crowd that suggested the swarming of bees. Some of the little fellows got in between the legs of the big ones, others got in over the heads and shoulders of the first comers, while others again, not being able to get near enough to employ their knives, amused themselves by pelting their more successful comrades with wet sand.

"As soon as one retired with as big a piece as he could cut off, there were half a dozen ready to take his place and to engage in a regular scrimmage to get it. I was very glad it all went off so merrily, and that it ended up with a regular good-natured tug-of-war, waist deep in the water, to decide which party should get the dismantled ribs."

The following picture of Grenfell on board the *Peace* during these journeys was given by Dr.

Holman Bentley, in his book entitled *Pioneering on the Congo*: "Hour after hour on those long journeys Grenfell stood behind his prismatic compass taking the bearings of point after point as they appeared; estimating from time to time the speed of the steamer, and correcting all the work as occasion offered by astronomical observations. When the steamer was running, his food had to be brought to him, unless in some straighter run towards a distant point he could slip away for a few minutes."

While these journeys were opening up the way for future progress, discouragement after discouragement was meeting the efforts of the workers. On very few occasions did Grenfell find good news awaiting his return from a journey, and often the report presented to him was one of illness, death, difficulty, and delay. Minns, the new engineer, the fourth man sent out to take charge of the *Peace*, was, like his predecessors, prevented by death from reaching his destination. It was on the 9th of March that Grenfell had returned from his first voyage and had been met with news of the ravages of death among the Mission staff. On the 9th of March of the following year, returning from his second journey, worse news still awaited him. Four of his colleagues had died, one on the day of his arrival, and one two days before.

On the day before his return from his fourth journey a disastrous fire, started by some native boys, completely destroyed the buildings containing

the stores at Leopoldville Station, Stanley Pool, causing a loss to the Mission of fully £3000, in addition to the great inconvenience of a shortage in food, clothes, steamer stores and gear, etc. The missionaries might well have given way to despair at this great check upon the work; but their faith in their great Leader was more than sufficient to tide them over all obstacles and discouragements. Among other events of this period the death of Grenfell's little son, two months old, and his own illness, have to be recorded, while two successive failures in the rainfall and consequent scarcity of food were other features of the news sent home from the field.

Early in 1887 Grenfell returned to the Old Country for a well-earned and much-needed rest. As is usually the case with missionaries, and particularly with an active man like Grenfell, the furlough was not by any means given up to rest, and after a few weeks in England he was to be found in Belgium, paying a visit to King Leopold in the interests of the Congo Mission, and doing some important geographical work.

The story of the Congo Mission pioneers is largely one of difficulty and delay, as this chapter clearly shows. Now, on top of the discouragements of the past few months, there came disaster. Calling at the Mission House on 9th August Grenfell met the Rev. J. H. Weeks, just returned from the Congo, from whom he received the startling information that Comber had died home-

ward bound on the German mail after a severe illness. Grenfell immediately wired to Mr. Baynes, the Secretary of the Society, who was then away from London, offering to return to the Congo by the next mail, for this was, indeed, the severest blow that the Mission had yet received, and workers could ill be spared.

The Committee opposed Grenfell's return, although they fully realised the gravity of the situation. In this they were backed up by one of their influential supporters. "Should Grenfell now go out before his full furlough is up," he wrote, "and should he, while excited and anxious, and still enfeebled, be also struck down, the Congo Mission would receive a staggering blow. Grenfell is and has been the first man there. It is he who has fired the imagination of our young people, and won the admiration of the older. Grenfell is one of a generation, as a Gospel pioneer. Do let him get strong, and do not run risks with his life."

But Grenfell was determined. Furlough or no furlough, strong or feeble, the Congo called to him, and he could not be prevailed upon to delay his departure. In the end the Committee gave way, although with some reluctance, and on the 23rd of the month Grenfell, together with his wife and two new colleagues, sailed again, bound for the field of service and sacrifice.

CHAPTER IX.

CLOUD AND SUNSHINE.

A Refusal to Retreat—An Exciting River Adventure—The Natives and the Commandments—The Seizure of the *Peace*—Honoured by King Leopold.

HE death of Thomas Comber in the full vigour of his manhood was a terrible loss to the Congo Mission, and it was a long time before the clouds that hung over the Mission passed away for any appreciable length of time. As soon as Grenfell and his colleagues arrived at Banana they learned that two more of their brethren had been called to higher service. This, of course, meant harder work for those who were left, until reinforcements arrived from England, and, although Grenfell would have preferred to settle down at one of the stations, he was forced by the circumstances to devote the next two or three years mainly to travelling up and down the river doing the drudgery, and thus enabling his colleagues to carry on organised and regular

mission work at the various stations without hindrance.

During this time of hard work all along the line, a few rays of sunshine shone here and there through the clouds, and Grenfell's pleasure was great when he was able to report a baptismal service, the mastering of a difficult language, and the breaking down of barriers between the natives and the missionaries. But despite all that, he could not help feeling somewhat downhearted at the shorthandedness of the upper river staff, and he was constantly appealing for more men to be sent out. To be at a standstill was not to his liking, and the bare idea of failure or retreat he could not tolerate. "If," he wrote to his Committee, "the Society has decided to call the flag back, instead of bringing the men up to the flag, the sooner you sound the recall and begin to reorganise the better. We can't continue as we are, it is either advance or retreat; but if it is retreat, I will be no party to it, and you will have to do without me."

During this time there was much disputing between the Bolobo chiefs, and wars were continually breaking out. Grenfell's work was thus made all the more difficult, while a great deal of his time was taken up with efforts to patch up the little quarrels and to make peace between the combatants.

He had plenty of work to do also in other

directions, and the improving of the resources of the country, and the bettering of the supplies of food, gave him no little trouble. The first experiment in the introduction of cattle to the district, which took place in 1888, had a disastrous ending, and the description given by Grenfell of the exciting adventure is well worth quoting fully. It gives incidentally a good idea of the difficulties of navigation with which he was continually beset.

"The boat," he said, "was somewhat heavily laden, having on board, besides a general cargo, a blacksmith's forge, a ton and a half of firewood, a jackass, and two goats, as well as the cow; and in passing round a point it swung broadside on to the strong current that was running, took in a volume of water amidships, and went down all in a few seconds.

"The cries of the six or eight boys who were swimming about among the firewood resulted in the steamer being stopped. A few minutes and the boys were all safely on board, and the steamer was steering for the jackass, who had struggled loose and had kept himself afloat. But getting a jackass on board a small steamer without the aid of a winch was no light task, and when, after a ludicrous struggle, he was hoisted in, he proved an obstinate passenger. The cow and the goats were not so fortunate as the donkey, for either they were more securely tied, or they did not struggle so successfully, for they failed to come

to the surface, and remained tethered to the sunken boat.

"By this time the firewood had drifted far away down stream, and as the steamer was among grass islands that furnished no fuel, it became necessary to save as much of that which was afloat as was possible. Heading down stream the steamer was soon ahead of the firewood, and then, leaving one or two hands on board the steamer to manipulate it, the rest of the crew jumped overboard, and in a quarter of an hour the greater part of the firewood was steered alongside by the swimmers, and taken on board by those remaining in the steamer.

"The steamer was now a couple of miles away from the sunken boat. This was still capable of rendering valuable help, and as a new one could not be built and carried beyond the cataracts in much less than a couple of years, it was of great importance to save it. But how to find it in a channel half a mile wide, and at a point of which in the hurry of saving the boys it had been impossible to take the bearings! There was nothing for it but to drag for it with a grappling-iron attached to a long rope, and it was not until some hours had been spent, and the attempt nearly abandoned in despair, that the grappling-iron attached itself to the sunken boat.

"The drowned cow and goats were soon brought to the surface, and afterwards the forge and other items of cargo. The boat itself, however, refused

to be lifted from its bed before sunset, and so the wearied crew made for a friendly sandbank half a mile away and camped for the night. That evening, seeing that those on board the steamer had been strangers to fresh beef for more than a year, they did not let the fact that the cow had been drowned stand between themselves and beef-steaks.

"In the morning, before the sun was up, the work of raising the sunken boat recommenced with renewed vigour, but it was not until afternoon, and after many fluctuations of hope and fear, that these efforts were successful."

In October 1888, when he had been out a little over a year, the Committee of the Society, anxious for the health of their chief representative on the Congo, telegraphed for him to return home for the completion of his furlough. But he could not see his way to obey the call. "Under existing circumstances," he replied, "I feel that in delaying to obey I am doing the right thing, and that the climate will do me less harm than the worry I should suffer if I went home now and left things as they are."

The Bolobo people were gradually becoming friendly towards the missionaries, and the work at the station made progress. Early in 1890 the first baptismal service on the Upper Congo was held here, and shortly afterwards the first meeting-house was opened. About seventy natives attended the service. One old Bolobo chief was greatly

interested in the Mission harmonium, and when he heard the music coming from it, he asked if this was the God of whom the missionaries had been speaking!

This was a time of encouragement to Grenfell, for the natives were certainly improving under the missionaries' influence. It was not an easy matter, however, to get them to realise the distinction between right and wrong. They could not see that there was any harm in killing their slaves or witches, or in stealing or telling lies, so long as they were not found out. They liked the Ten Commandments—for other people. To accept them all for themselves would have been awkward. They were enthusiastic about the keeping of the Sabbath, for a rest from work was much to their liking; but they were not quite so appreciative when they came to "Thou shalt not kill."

On a further journey up the river in search of a suitable spot for a new station, Grenfell was accompanied by the Rev. Lawson Forfeitt, who had just joined the Mission staff. The people whom they came across were in a very wild state. Those near the coast were not cannibals, but not far inland these cruel savages were to be found. While on tour the missionaries heard of a woman, who had been killed among the coast tribes, being sold to a tribe not more than half an hour's journey inland, to be used as food, two live children being part of the price paid for the body.

Illness and death had kept the clouds hovering over the Mission, when towards the end of August 1890 the storm of trouble burst upon the workers in all its fury. Grenfell was at Bolobo, and the *Peace* at Arthington, Stanley Pool, when a small steamer arrived at Arthington, containing two officers of the State with a dozen soldiers. The officers demanded that the *Peace* should be handed over to the State for the transport of soldiers and ammunition up the Kasai River. Grenfell was communicated with, and was quickly upon the scene. He offered to carry stores, but stated that he had no power to lend the boat for the purpose of war. In accordance with their instructions, therefore, the officers claimed the boat, and hauled down the British flag.

Grenfell was greatly disturbed by this action on the part of the Congo State. He wired the information home to England, and proceeded to follow it in person with the utmost speed. He interviewed the Governor, and sent a formal protest against the seizure and the hauling down of the British flag, specially emphasising the fact that three powerful State vessels were lying in the wharf at the time. But in spite of all protests the *Peace* was sent on her warlike mission.

Grenfell duly arrived in London, and gave his account of the seizure, and a great deal of excitement was caused all over the country. Correspondence passed between Mr. A. H. Baynes, the

Secretary of the Baptist Missionary Society in London, Mr. Lawson Forfeitt, their Secretary on the Congo, and the representatives of the Congo State, both on the Congo and in Brussels. This dragged on until toward the end of December, when the *Peace* was returned and the British flag —which had been hauled down "by mistake"— was hoisted again with full military honours. The State offered to pay an indemnity of 3500 francs (£140) to the Society, but the offer was not accepted. Assurances were obtained, however, that nothing of the kind would happen again.

With the passing of this cloud came the sunshine, for the Committee decided to build a new steamer of the same type as the *Peace*, but larger and swifter. Grenfell was on the spot, and, the work being put in hand at once, he was able to superintend the building operations, as he had done with the *Peace*. The new ship, which was christened the *Goodwill*, was successfully launched, taken to pieces again, and dispatched to the Congo in like manner to its predecessor.

During a visit to Brussels Grenfell had an interview with the King of the Belgians (the sovereign of the Congo State), who conferred upon the missionary the insignia of "Chevalier of the Order of Leopold" in recognition of his services in opening up the territory of the Congo State, and of the efforts he had made towards ameliorating the condition of the peoples subject to His Majesty's rule. Grenfell naturally appreciated the honour conferred upon

him, but he bore it with much humility. Indeed, when a friend asked him how he felt when he had worn his decoration at some great function, he replied, "I felt like a barn door with a brass knocker."

CHAPTER X.

IN THE SERVICE OF THE STATE.

Grenfell as a State Official—A Wearying Task—A Miniature Plague of Flies—Riding an Ox—On Livingstone's Path.

HE arrangements for the launch of the *Goodwill* were complete, the furlough was nearing its end, and Grenfell was on a visit to Sancreed, spending a short holiday with his mother, when an important letter from Brussels was forwarded to him from the Mission House.

The boundary between the Congo State and the Portuguese territory lying between the Kwango and the Kasai Rivers had never been definitely settled, and, both Belgium and Portugal desiring to have this matter cleared up, it was decided to appoint a commissioner representing each party to travel over the ground and, between them, to fix the boundary. In the letter sent on to him at Sancreed the position of Commissioner representing the Congo State was offered to Grenfell.

The question was one, of course, for the Committee of the Baptist Missionary Society to decide, and Grenfell immediately sent the letter off to Mr. Baynes, asking for the Committee's decision. The work was one which he felt able to do, and which he would like to do, and he thought that possibly arrangements might be made whereby he could do it without much interference with his mission work. A few months, he thought, would see the whole business through.

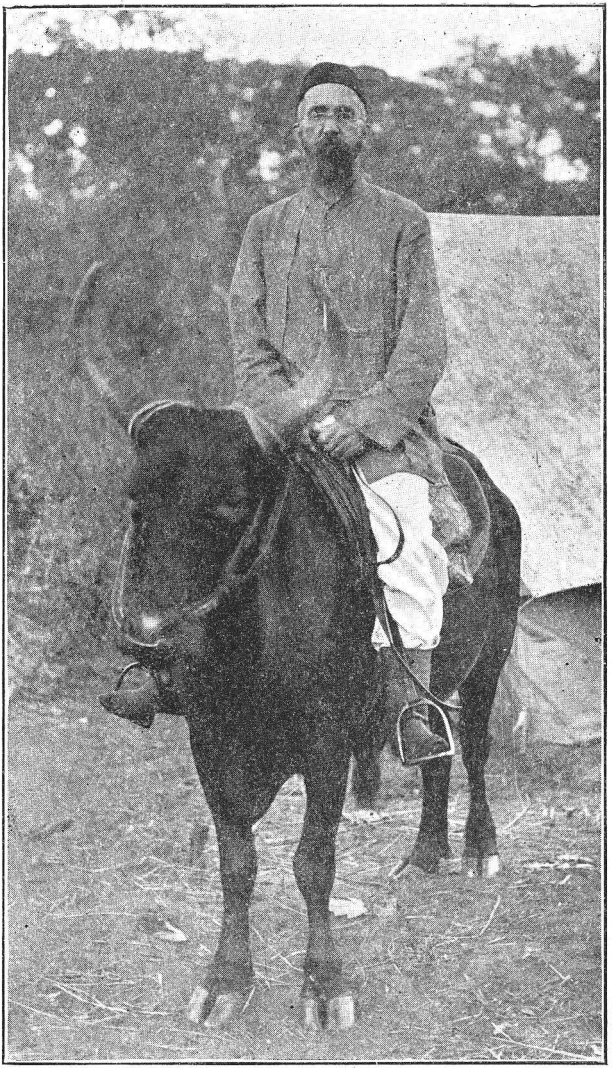
Eventually the Committee agreed to the proposal and gave Grenfell leave of absence during the time the Commission was at work. So far as the financial side of the matter was concerned, there was no desire to make it a money-making project either on the part of the Society or of Grenfell himself, and it was agreed that the Congo State should pay to the Society Grenfell's modest annual maintenance allowance as a missionary, and the cost of replacing his services during the time he was acting as Commissioner.

When the full arrangements had been made, Grenfell visited the Belgian King, and eventually sailed for the Congo on 6th November. The journey was not so smooth a one as many that he had made, and at one time the position looked desperate; but the boat weathered the storm, and the party landed at Matadi, a couple of miles beyond the Underhill Station, on 8th December.

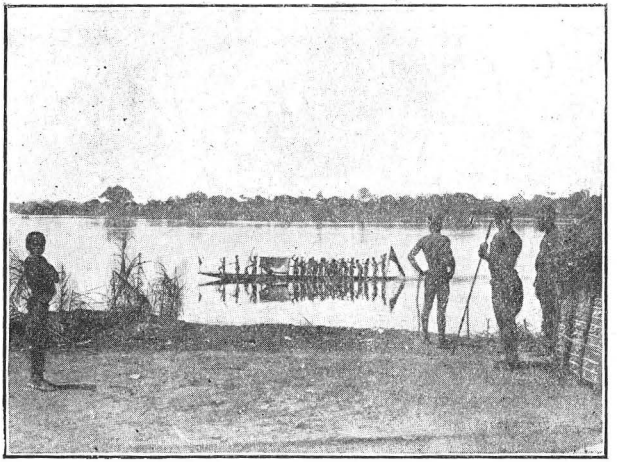
Any hope he may have had of a speedy settle-

ment soon vanished, for, owing to a number of delays, most of them due to negligence on the part of the Portuguese Commissioner, it was not until 10th May that he was able to start on his journey into the interior. The long delay had its advantages, for it enabled the "Plenipotentiary" to become once more the missionary during his enforced stay at Underhill. From that station he superintended the transport of the *Goodwill*, and looked after the affairs of the Mission generally. But his home was at Bolobo, and it was there that he could do his best work at this time, and he longed to get away for a spell in order to take a flying trip up the river. Finding this impossible, he tendered his resignation as Commissioner, which, however, was not accepted. Early in May the call came for Grenfell and the party which he commanded to proceed to the place where it had been arranged to meet the Portuguese Commissioner and his party.

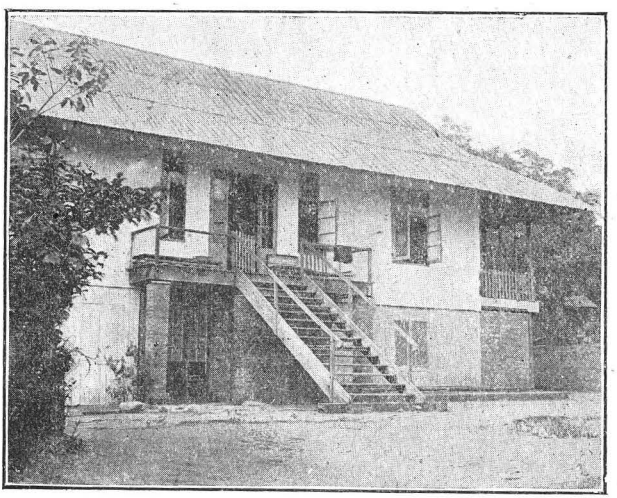
This was by no means an easy task. Over numerous mountains, and through perilous swamps, the party travelled, now forced to take a certain path or to wait with what patience they could muster for weeks at a stretch owing to the unfriendly attitude of the natives or to the fact that certain tribes were then at war; through terrible tornadoes; enduring terrific heat, uncomfortable coldness, serious illness, and numerous other hardships—the party made slow progress, and often Grenfell found himself wishing that he were back



GRENFELL RIDING AN OX, LUNDA EXPEDITION.



MISSION CANOE ON THE UPPER CONGO.
Missionary Visiting an Out-Station.
Photo.: Rev. William Forfeitt.



GRENFELL'S HOUSE AT BOLOBO.
Photo.: Rev. Frank Oldrieve.

at Bolobo, and miles away from the delimitation Commission. Eventually, toward the end of December, the two expeditions joined forces and proceeded eastward upon the business on which so much time and labour had already been spent.

In one of his letters home, Grenfell gave an incident or two showing the nature of the difficulties by which they were beset. Here are a couple—

"The swamps have been a great trouble to us—one mile of swamp meaning a couple of hours of wading through mud and water, sometimes up to one's waist. One of the last was one of the worst. We managed to get across by shortly after noon, but six of the oxen and the three mules were still three hundred yards from *terra firma* when night fell, and torrents of rain also, and they had to be left till morning. We scarcely expected to find them all alive. The oxen kept up a very melancholy lowing all night, and by morning were so weak that they submitted to being lifted out of the mud and having their legs tied together, and to being dragged along bodily over the surface of the swamp. The mules were literally carried in a kind of hammock slung under their bodies. One of the oxen had found a sort of island, or patch of hard ground, and taken possession of it, and could not be persuaded to move. It came across the swamp, however, in the shape of beef, to the amenable condition of which it was

reduced by the very emphatic argument of a rifle bullet.

"Coming down into the valley here was made memorable by passing through one of those belts of fly-country where life becomes almost a burden. Happily, in a couple of hours we had it behind us, and could breathe freely and think of something else. The flies are miserable little black creatures only half the size of house flies, that go straight for one's eyes and ears and nose, and get among the roots of one's hair. With one hand brandishing a wisp of grass or bunch of leaves, you try to keep them clear of your face; but they come in such swarms that some of them are sure to get past, while the other hand is searching for them in your ears, your eyes, or among your hair. They are stupid creatures, and don't take the trouble to get out of the way; a single pat of one's hand or blow with the flapper will sometimes kill as many as twenty. They don't seem to mind being killed a bit, and are not at all like the cute specimens you get in civilised countries. I can sympathise with the Egyptians—a plague of flies is no joke."

From the time of meeting the Portuguese party Grenfell rode on an ox. This practice had been introduced into the country by the Portuguese four hundred years before, oxen being found to be hardier than horses and easier to feed. But managing an ox was not altogether an easy matter, as Grenfell's diary showed. "Giganté does not like

wetting his tail when he goes through a swamp," wrote the missionary. "He arches it like a cat does when confronting an unfriendly dog. If his tail does get wet, the rider gets the benefit of it, for Giganté dries it by a few vigorous shakes right and left. If it is only clear water it does not much matter, but when passing through the mud the bull's tail becomes an effective paint-brush. When I first mounted Cahuca I was told never to wear a waterproof because the rustling of this garment was his pet aversion, making him frantic. I regarded this advice sufficiently to take care that when wearing my waterproof I made as little noise as possible, and sundry starts following an unintentional rustle emphasised the need for caution. After a while, however, he got used to it—in fact, when I began to take advantage of this by shaking my raincoat to accelerate his speed, he soon lost his fear. At first a slight shake was more effective than a stroke with the whip, but now, if I shake it with both hands, he doesn't care a bit."

Although the business was carried through satisfactorily after the State party had met the representatives of Portugal, the difficulties were not over by a long way. The carriers suffered severely from smallpox, which, together with starvation—for they were often very short of rations—greatly reduced the strength of the party. As time went on, the famine got worse, while the way was again barred at several points by native wars. But even the most tiresome journey has

an end, and on 16th June Loanda, on the Atlantic coast, was reached, and troubles of the road were a thing of the past.

One incident stands out in connection with the return journey. At one point the track of Livingstone was discovered. Grenfell would have followed it, but for the natives, who were adopting a hostile attitude to the white men. He called his wife to him, however, and walked up and down the track with her, saying, "I did not think I should ever tread the path Livingstone trod."

For a week or so Grenfell remained at Loanda as the guest of the Governor-General of Angola, until the documents relating to the delimitation were completed and signed. He was entertained in splendid style, but work was awaiting him up the river, and he was heartily glad when he could get away from officialdom and into the mission field again. There had not been much scope for missionary work during this expedition, but it was not possible for Grenfell to miss an opportunity of extending his missionary work among the people with whom he came into contact, and by making friends with the natives, by the actual preaching of the Gospel, and by keeping his eyes open to discover a way inland for the Congo Mission to take, he was able to do something on behalf of the Master whom he served, and to whom all his labours in the Congo were dedicated.

For his share in the work of the Commission

the King of the Belgians presented Grenfell with the Royal Order of the Lion (Commander), and gave him the insignia set in diamonds, while the King of Portugal bestowed similar decorations upon him.

CHAPTER XI.

PUSHING FORWARD.

The Launching of the *Goodwill*—An Exciting First Trip—Christmas at Bolobo—Death of Miss Grenfell—Encouraging Progress.

ALTHOUGH the actual work of the expedition was completed, and Grenfell was able to reach Underhill in July, the matter of the delimitation had yet to be wound up, and, what with the Mission business requiring attention on the spot, and the visit he paid, with Mr. Lawson Forfeitt, to the Mission station at San Salvador, it was not until 25th September that he arrived at Bolobo, where he had longed to be for many a day.

He received a great disappointment immediately on his arrival, for he had expected to find the *Goodwill* quite ready for launching; but illness and the pressure of other duties had retarded the work of reconstruction considerably, and consequently Grenfell had to spend months

upon it himself, often putting in nine hours a day on this work. Owing to his strenuous efforts, the boat was ready for launching in December.

Towards the end of January a start was made upon the first voyage of the new steamer up the river. Mr. Arthington had sent a letter some time before, asking that a visit should be paid to the shores of the Aruwimi, one of the large rivers flowing into the Congo, with a view to extending the work of the Congo Mission in that direction. Grenfell and his party were able to ascend only about thirty miles up the river, for it was low water and the sandbanks were a great trouble to them.

The return journey provided quite a chapter of accidents. First of all, in pushing off from the last sandbank, one of the natives, enjoying the sensation caused by the revolving propeller shaft on the sole of his foot, went a bit too far, and his leg was caught by the propeller. Instantly the engines were stopped, one or two jumped overboard, and after a great deal of trouble and anxiety the man was rescued with injuries no less serious than a broken leg and a mangled foot.

All went well until the boat was within a few hours' journey of Bolobo, when, through bumping on a sandbank, sixteen bolts were broken and the propeller casing was carried away. Half an hour later the breaking of a shaft made it necessary for one

engine only to be used. Then, with but a couple of hours' journey before them, they were caught by a terrible storm. Turning round, so as to head against the tornado, the boat was caught broadside by the wind, and, with a sudden gust, off went 100 square yards of the awning of the vessel which was carried down the stream. It was necessary to have two anchors down before the boat could stand against the storm. When the wind became calmer the journey was concluded without further incident.

But Grenfell's troubles were by no means at an end. Illnesses and deaths among the Mission staff made this period one of discouragement and sometimes almost of despair to the leader. There were times of brightness, as the following account of Christmas Day at Bolobo proves. "We have been having 'big times' to-day," wrote Grenfell; "school treat and workpeople's feast rolled into one, and just now the native women and girls are keeping it up by having a dance round our flag-staff. Our school children numbered nearly seventy, and so far as to-day is concerned I think they have nearly finished, for they have just dispersed (somewhat slowly) after eating a couple of pigs. True, they were not very big pigs, hardly more than 'porkers,' in fact. Still, they were big enough to take the go out of the feasters, who would cut but sorry figures now as compared with earlier in the day, when they were running, jumping, swimming,

diving, skipping, and playing pitch-back and cricket for prizes of knives, looking-glasses, and fathoms of cloth.

"Strange to say, our Mission girls are better swimmers and divers than the town's boys. When they came to take their turn they fished up not only the brass rods (our money) thrown in for themselves, but also succeeded in securing several of those which the boys had abandoned as beyond their reach in the previous contest.

"One of the best bits of fun was the tug-of-war between the Mission folk and the town's folk. First two tugs, our side ran away with the visitors, the third was a most determined struggle. The rope broke, and then there was such a jumble of more than a hundred pairs of arms and legs as one rarely sees."

This sounds cheerful enough, but he proceeded in the same letter to state that he has had anything but a merry Christmas, the conditions of the Bolobo people causing him great anxiety. "It is impossible," he wrote, "for me to tell you the wickedness and lawlessness of these folk. Our nearest neighbours, not a hundred yards away, celebrated New Year's Day by having a fight over fourpence. After they had so chopped each other with their long slashing knives that they could not continue the fight any longer, their respective friends took to their guns and went out into the bush and began blazing at each other. Happily it was pouring with rain, and the fizzing and popping

of their old flint-lock guns was more than usually ridiculous. Poor Bolobo! I wish I could see more readiness to accept what they know and feel to be the Truth which we try to explain to them."

Still pushing forward, Grenfell was able, early in 1896, to found a new station at Yakusu, twelve miles west of Stanley Falls, where the outlook for the future was most promising. Back at Bolobo, he busied himself in brickmaking and building, in getting the *Peace* again in working trim, and in carrying Mission supplies up and down the river. Grenfell was now able to report with great thankfulness that there were between fifty and sixty scholars in the Bolobo school, that services were held in the schoolhouse every evening, while night-school work was also being carried on. Over twenty sat down at the Lord's Table on the first Sunday of the month. Later on in the year came news of increase. "Baptismal service yesterday. Day-school average, over 120. Sunday School yesterday, 150. We are greatly encouraged. People are showing much more interest in our services."

Not much is said in Grenfell's letters or his diary about the danger the missionaries were in by reason of wild beasts, but occasionally a reference is made which serves to keep the existence of this danger in mind. In September 1898 he sent home a photograph of a leopard shot while he was up river. This particular animal had been credited

with having killed half a dozen Yakusu people within six months. On one occasion, too, he made an attempt to capture the cook at one of the missionary's houses, but, his paws coming in contact with the hot stove, he drew off, frightened. He was attracted again by the ducks, of which nine were kept at the house, the coop having been put under the house for safety. He broke in at midnight, and succeeded in killing six out of the nine ducks before the scuffling brought the people out of their beds. "His excellency, however, got safely away," stated Grenfell, "to come again the following night for the rest; but, as two of the men were waiting in the kitchen with loaded guns for his special benefit, he did not succeed in more than overturning the coop before he became dead leopard."

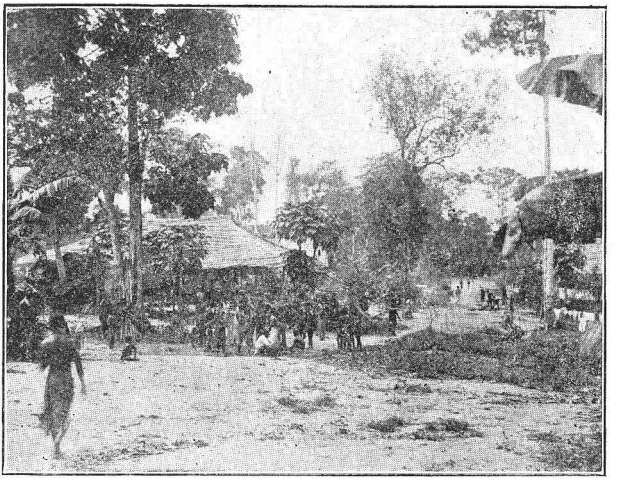
For a long while now Grenfell's time was fully occupied in travelling up and down the river, visiting the various stations, keeping things going where the illness or death of a colleague had left an awkward gap in the Mission ranks, and engaging in the drudgery of transport work.

During this time several of his friends in England were anxious that he should return home in order to recuperate, so that the strain upon his health should not be too great. But he would not hear of it. "Our up-river staff at the present moment," he replied, "counts but eleven on the field out of a nominal nineteen. You good

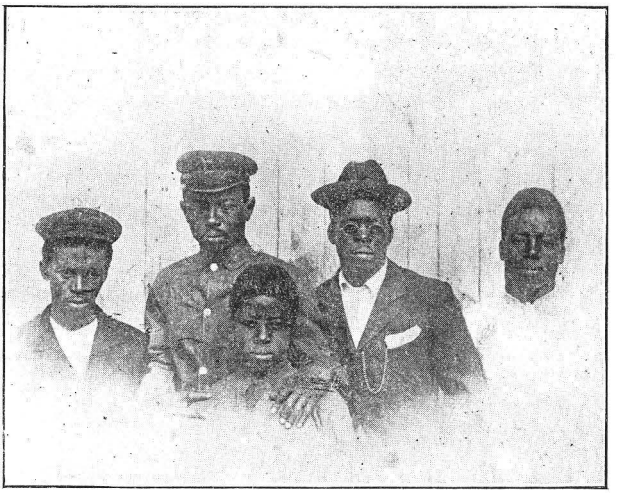
folk had better set to work and pray for me, if I'm to be saved from despair. Do you think I'm likely to leave, so long as my going would make the ninth gap in our narrow ranks? However, I won't get into the dumps—how can I when, as I am writing this, there are over forty young folk squatting round on the floor of the next room singing a translation of 'Lo, He comes with clouds descending' to the tune 'Calcutta,' with a swing that makes my poor old heart beat fast again with the assurance of our blessed hope? I should, however, be greatly cheered," he adds, "if the Committee were able to make such arrangements as would release me from my present active participation in steamer work, say for a year or a year and a half, and thus set me free for 'forward work' for that time. No furlough would be more agreeable than would be afforded by such a change if the money for a small caravan and travelling expenses could be found."

He was enabled to make his long-desired journey forward in January 1899, but found a great deal of unrest amongst the natives of the districts he visited, and reported that apparently the time was not yet ripe for extending the mission work to those districts.

One of his many river journeys was taken under very sorrowful circumstances. His eldest daughter, Pattie, had gone out in 1897 to help her parents in their work. After spending a few months at Bolobo she went up to Yakusu, and for a year or



YALEMBA: GENERAL VIEW OF GRENFELL'S LAST STATION, 1906.
Photo.: Rev. John Howell.



GRENFELL'S FAITHFUL ATTENDANTS AT YALEMBA AND BASOKO.

BALUTI MAWANGU LUVUSU MWANAMBILA NDALA

more assisted in the school there. Returning to Bolobo on board the *Peace* in March 1899, she suddenly developed a dangerous fever. Grenfell, who was in charge of the vessel, though ill himself, had to spend an anxious time repairing the engine, which had broken down, while his daughter lay almost dying in the cabin. At last, however, after getting on a sandbank and weathering a fearful storm in the night, the badly damaged vessel steamed slowly into Bolobo in time to allow Pattie to die in her mother's arms.

The death of his daughter was a severe blow to Grenfell, and he sought consolation in hard work. Under his energetic guidance, Sargent Station, Yakusu, developed satisfactorily. Two good dwelling-houses and a schoolhouse were built, the schoolboys making over 40,000 bricks for the purpose. The average attendance at the school reached ninety, two-thirds of the scholars being boys. The language difficulty, too, was being rapidly overcome, and a vocabulary and a grammar were being quickly prepared.

At Bolobo, too, there were hopeful signs. "When one looks back and remembers what Bolobo was ten years ago, when we first commenced our work here, one cannot but be encouraged. Of course, we wish progress had been greater, but still it is no small thing that we have a Christian Church witnessing for Christ in the midst of the terrible darkness that prevails. Christ is being uplifted, and many are being drawn to Him.

CHAPTER XII.

A WELL-EARNED FURLOUGH.

Travelling by Canoe among the Rapids—A Cheering Report—A Bad Breakdown—In England for the Last Time.

ONE of the chief features of Grenfell's journeyings in 1899 was the four months' trip he made up the Aruwimi River for 270 miles. He found, higher up the river, that the rapids made communication by water a matter of great difficulty, and that the opening up and development of the country by the Congo missionaries would be a slow process. Nevertheless he felt that the conditions were never so favourable for progress among the villages as at that time.

So far as the actual travelling was concerned, there was plenty of incident and excitement. A large part of the journey had to be made in small round-bottomed canoes, which were safest amongst the rocks of the rapids. In a letter home he gave a most interesting description of the method of progress in this part of the river, and explained why it was so very slow.

"For considerable stretches," he wrote, "the Aruwimi is often too shallow to allow of the use of the long-bladed paddles of the district, so each man is provided with a punting-pole, some fifteen or sixteen feet long. In our canoe we had sixteen poles. Half of these being firmly planted sufficed to keep us in position, while the other half made a kind of step forward, and these having found good holding-places would suffice for pushing us ahead a little, and for maintaining the slightly advanced position, while the others repeated the process. The movement was somewhat suggestive of what one might expect from a spider with a double allowance of legs. When the rapid happened to be a mile or so in length, or even less, this process of walking-up became wearisome; and if a step happened to miss, as it sometimes did, and we lost in a few seconds what it had taken us half an hour to gain, the passage would become exciting, and the possibilities of a capsize loom large.

"Sometimes a rapid would consist of a series of short perpendicular drops of one or two feet, and ascending it would be suggestive of climbing up stairs. In such places progress only became possible by disembarking our men and getting the help of our second canoe; then, by dint of combined pulling and pushing and lifting, we should get through a step at a time, and having got through, we should have to wait while canoe number two was being brought along.

"Happily we got safely through them all, though

not always at the first attempt. The passengers got a good shaking from time to time, and sometimes a pretty emphatic sprinkling. The crew, however, had a decidedly wet time of it, for they had often to work in the water for considerable spells. The polemen, too, would make a false stroke now and then, and fall overboard, taking an involuntary header, to the damage of paint and feathers.

"It was especially the paint that suffered at such times, for it won't stand washing. That the paint was not waterproof was very often made evident after half an hour's work, by rolling perspiration converting a suit of white or red pigment into a series of stripes. At first the effect would be suggestive of a striped blazer; but an hour's paddling, to say nothing of a fall overboard, would usually be sufficient to wash a coat of paint down to the region of the paddler's feet and ankles in the form of a little coloured mud."

Grenfell paid quite a number of visits to the people along the river. In some places he found them most industrious, vigorous, and resourceful. The journey, he considered, was not an important one, but it had certainly been very interesting. The people seemed to be just at the stage when they would be "readily susceptible to the influence of wise-minded and sympathetic followers of the Master, who would have a grand opportunity to help in the moulding of a people evidently destined to play no small part in the future of the country

and a part that would be immeasurably the happier if they could be brought under the influence of Christian teaching."

Although loth to leave his work he now began to realise that a visit to England was absolutely essential if he was to avoid a complete breakdown. His definite decision to take a rest came about earlier than he had anticipated. Going for a trip up the river in January 1900 he was struck down with fever, and had to be brought back to Bolobo to suffer the most serious illness of his life. It was thought at one time that he would not recover, but his constitution weathered the storm, and arrangements for his furlough were hurried along. His progress was a slow one, however, and there was a lot of work to be done, so that, in spite of his weakness, he busied himself as best he could with the affairs of the Mission until the time for departure came round.

By the time he reached Matadi on the homeward journey Grenfell felt like a new man, and had it not been for the fact that his long period of service made a holiday essential in the interests of the future, he would have returned up-river immediately. He arrived in London in May, and after he had seen the officials of the Society, and the doctor, he proceeded to Sevenoaks, where his daughters were at school, and then went home to Penzance. He could not remain at rest for long, and he enjoyed his holiday in the same vigorous manner as before, although he did not feel so

strong. He was successful first of all in securing a new Mission engineer, whose presence on the Congo would free one of his missionary colleagues for more definitely religious work. Then he went over to Brussels to interview the King of the Belgians with regard to the possibilities of moving forward on the Congo. He also visited Antwerp, Birmingham, and Glasgow on the affairs of the Mission.

He was relieved of much of the "deputation" work which usually falls to the lot of the missionary on furlough, but in spite of this he made slow progress towards complete recovery, and later on he had a bad breakdown in health. In order to recuperate he stayed for a long time at Bournemouth, and his health profited so greatly from this rest beside the sea that by the end of September 1902 he was fit to return to his labours in Africa, having spent sixteen months in the Old Country on a last and well-deserved furlough.

CHAPTER XIII.

STATE OPPOSITION.

Grenfell and the Congo Atrocities—Enforced Delay—Tsetse Flies and Sleeping Sickness—The *Peace* in Trouble—Progress at Yalemba.

T was during the later years of Grenfell's life on the Congo that terrible atrocities began to be practised upon the natives. These have now been revealed in all their hideous reality, but for a long time they were to many of the missionaries nothing more than fearful rumours. Grenfell could not, for some time, believe, even when the fact of the cruelties had been proved, that they were committed at the instigation of the State, and thought that they were due to bad administration which made it easy for the servants of the State to commit these crimes on their own account. He was severely criticised in England for his attitude on this question, but he was perfectly conscientious and consistent. He had always been treated by the Congo State officials, and by its sovereign, the King of the Belgians, with the greatest

possible courtesy and kindness, and all the impressions he had gained from his contact with many of the principal State officials led him firmly to believe that they would not lend themselves to any such policy of cruel oppression. But when the personal responsibility of King Leopold and his officials for the crimes was established beyond doubt, His Majesty had no more outspoken critic, and the natives no advocate more fearless and more strenuous, than George Grenfell.

The criticisms levelled against the Congo Administration by the missionaries were largely responsible for the fact that the story of Grenfell's labours after his return from England is almost entirely one of opposition and failure, so far as the upper river was concerned. He had no sooner arrived in the State in November 1901 than he started on a trip up the Aruwimi with the object of commencing work there. He found a spot apparently most favourable for a centre of mission work, at Yalemba, fifteen miles east of the junction of the Aruwimi and the Congo, and a second site higher up at Yambuya for future occupation. He then submitted his plans to the Government officials, requesting that permission might be granted to acquire the land in the usual way. But opposition to Grenfell's plans was shown by those in power, and so matters had to be delayed.

Travelling occupied much of Grenfell's time during this year, and on one of his voyages he reached the limit of his pioneering on behalf of the

Baptist Missionary Society in the direction in which the extension of the Mission was desired. Mr. Arthington had expressed the wish that the Baptist Mission stations should stretch right along to those of the Church Missionary Society in Uganda, thus forming a complete chain of Mission stations across Africa. In November Grenfell, leaving the *Peace* at Yambuya, pushed ahead along the river by means of canoes, until he arrived at Mawambi, about eighty miles from the Uganda frontier, and being now near the Church Missionary Society's field of service, he returned to Bolobo. Another journey to the Falls, and a further illness, are the outstanding events of this period.

He was most indignant when he found that, although the State, in violation of the Act of Berlin, had refused to grant the sites for which he had applied, some 2500 acres had been granted to the Roman Catholic Fathers in the same district. He asked his Committee, however, not to be discouraged because of the rebuff. "There is an infinitude of work to be done on the Congo," he said. "If we cannot for the present obtain other stations, we must enlarge our operations at the points we already occupy. We must establish schools and out-stations, teach the people to read, and give them the Gospel in print in their own dialects." He therefore settled himself down to this work.

When questions concerning the atrocities were first raised, King Leopold, in order to satisfy

inquirers, appointed a "Commission for the Protection of the Natives," of which Grenfell and Bentley were chosen to be members. Owing to the distance by which the various members of the Commission were separated from each other, there was very great difficulty in securing a sitting, and in September Grenfell wrote to the Secretary of the State resigning his position on the Commission, for he was convinced that it had only been formed as a "blind."

About this time, too, the State began to make things as difficult and uncomfortable for the Baptist missionaries as they could, one of the latest moves being to inform them that some of the orphans in their charge might have to be taken away and handed over to the Roman Catholic Mission. "It is very significant," commented Grenfell, "that the way should be opened for English Roman Catholics and closed against us. Evangelical Christianity does not breed the dumb cattle beloved of officialdom."

While he was waiting for the State to give way on the question of the Yalemba site, Grenfell put in a lot of hard work on the water, taking the light of the Gospel to new districts, as well as keeping it burning in the old places. A few extracts from some of his letters written at this time will give in rough outline a picture of the missionary leader at work.

State opposition was not the only trouble. Here are some details about another great handicap to

Grenfell and his colleagues. "Just at this point I have had a bite from one of the tsetse flies that are credited with doing so much harm among the natives. They swarm in certain places and make life a trial for the time being. Happily they hide themselves when the sun goes down; then, however, the mosquitoes begin. The puzzle is, where do these creatures get the germs of the sleeping sickness from? That they distribute them when they bite is now a well-established fact. Fortunately it is only when they get into the spinal fluid that they induce the characteristic symptoms of sleeping sickness.

"Poor Bolobo. All the fifty cases we counted in December last, except one about which we were mistaken, have proved fatal. I suppose all who are at all susceptible will take the malady, for there seems to be no way of checking it. It is very sad to see the poor people dying off without being able to help them, and all the more sad because their minds become lethargic as well as their bodies, and it is impossible to rouse them to think of the things we have so long been trying to teach them. Our little church, as yet, has suffered but very lightly. The better life the Christians live has, no doubt, helped them to resist the disease.

"Whether the natives are beginning to see there is a difference in our favour I don't know, but something is making them very much more ready to listen to our message. Our services are crowded as they have never been before, and

some are beginning to talk about building a bigger chapel."

From trouble on the water they could not get away. One day one of the cylinder covers of the *Peace* engines was smashed, and as there was not a spare one on board to replace it, Mawango, the carpenter, had to make a new one of wood. Such an accident might easily have proved serious to life and limb, and the success with which the whole business was managed was in itself a testimonial to the excellent training given to the natives by the missionaries. Another great set-back came in the shape of a serious accident to the *Peace* in October 1903, when she was carried from her moorings by the force of the wind and narrowly escaped being shattered to pieces on a long reef of rocks stretching out into the river just above the station at Bolobo. As it was, an enormous amount of damage was done, and it was entirely owing to the splendid work of the native boys that she was eventually saved.

Bees, too, in their turn, pestered Grenfell and the mission workers generally. A great swarm took possession of the dispensary, rendering it impossible for the medicine to be given out, so Grenfell had to do what he could to clear the way. Consequently he got "almost eaten up," and Mrs. Grenfell, coming to his assistance, was also badly stung. The bees remained masters of the situation for a short time, until they considerately moved on.

There is record of still another pest. "When we were on a sandbank the other day mending our

engine, the little boys while playing at building sandhouses found a crocodile's nest with seventy-two eggs. Each egg was three inches long, and two inches round the middle—a string of eggs six yards long in one nest. When they had taken the eggs they modelled a big crocodile in sand and left it for mother crocodile on her return to the nest. The creatures kill lots of people every season, and so everybody is glad when one of them is killed, or when their nests are found."

But despite the great drawbacks there were encouragements all along the line. Visiting Yalemba, for instance, Grenfell found that the young men whom he had left in charge there to teach their own people about the things of God had kept the flag flying proudly. They had built a good clay-walled house and a storehouse, and were carrying on school work. At one of the services in the town that he attended there were one hundred youths whose ages ranged from six to sixteen, and some two hundred others.

During a trip up the Lomami River visiting the various out-stations along that way, he reported thus: "At several of the landing-places we were welcomed by the assembled choir of scholars with their teacher, singing translations of 'Around the throne,' 'Crown Him Lord of all,' and other well-known hymns. The singing, as singing, was often very poor, but there was no doubting the heartiness with which they sang. Even before the engines had stopped, and while we were still some distance

off, the strains reached us. Remembering what I could remember about these places, one is not inclined to criticise the singing. For myself, my heart was too full, and I had to join in.

"Some of these places I had seen in the possession of the Arab raiders, some of them I had seen still smoking after the raiders had done their worst and burned them out. In all of them wickedness and cruelty had had a long reign, and the people had suffered many sorrows. But now, surely, was the beginning of better days, for was not this the beginning of the rising of the 'Sun of Righteousness, with healing in His wings'? God has indeed been good to me, to let me see the dawn of such a day."

CHAPTER XIV.

THE REWARD OF IT ALL.

The Yalemba Station Founded—Chastising Infuriated Savages—Death of Bentley—The Coming of the *Endeavour*—Grenfell's Illness and Death.

AS time went on, the position of the Baptist and other Protestant missionaries on the Congo became increasingly difficult. Some of the Roman Catholic missionaries desired to get all the Protestants out of the country, and the State evidently wished to make it difficult for the Protestants to remain. This opposition, together with the evils of the State administration which had so largely reduced the native population and distracted those who were left, caused Grenfell to be at times greatly discouraged. But, through it all, he still saw the clouds dispersing, and did not despair about the final results of his work.

Although he had not been allowed to found the new station, the call to Yalemba was so urgent that, after waiting anxiously at Bolobo until the end of June for the permission to build, he started

off up the river, hoping that he would receive the welcome news *en route*. The journey was not a hurried one, for a great deal of time was taken up in visiting the various outposts of the Mission. He joyfully recorded the fact that there were now 120 out-schools. In many cases the schoolhouses had been built by the native people, and the teachers were being maintained by the native churches. In not a few cases the people had so greatly desired to have the benefit of the schools that they had erected the schoolhouses and appointed teachers from among their own number; and thus the missionaries were forced to take up the work, almost before they were ready to do so.

When Grenfell reached Yalemba, the long-desired permission to build there had been given as the result of an interview which Mr. Lawson Forfeitt had with the authorities at Brussels. Grenfell was delighted.

Everything was not running smoothly, however, and he found the country in a state of great unrest. The natives were continually quarrelling, and on one occasion he had to interfere, or things might have grown serious. To interfere in a quarrel between bands of infuriated savages required a great amount of courage, but Grenfell, nothing daunted, boldly stepped in between the combatants. "I got in between the rival factions," he wrote, in recording the incident; "but my poor shouting was simply nowhere when they got a howl on, and I had to resort to a piece of bamboo I had

in my hand for making an impression. They got it both sides indiscriminately when the lines closed up for another charge. They were over a hundred of them, many of them with no other covering than their shields, and armed to the teeth with knives, spears, bows and arrows, and all the savage panoply of the real old-time scrimmage—paint and feathers galore. They must have felt very ridiculous standing there, being licked with a stick by a little old white man. This was altogether too tame, and so they drew off and let their tempers down. The next morning they allowed I had done well to give them the stick, 'for,' said they, 'if you had not interfered, somebody would have died.'" Besides showing the absolute fearlessness of the "little old white man," there is an indication here of the great respect in which the natives had learned to regard him. Most men would have been slaughtered on the spot for daring to interfere.

The publication of the statements which Grenfell had made before King Leopold's Commission of Inquiry into the Congo atrocities served only to stir up the anger of the State against him and his colleagues. "I have been proud," he had said, "to wear the decorations His Majesty had conferred upon me, but now I am no longer proud so to do." He had an interview with the Governor-General, and spent a none too pleasant time with him. He had behaved, he was told, worse than any other of the Protestant missionaries. Now the State

pushed their opposition still further, and issued a decree ordering that new buildings could not be erected nor alteration made to existing ones without permission!

Early in the new year Grenfell proceeded to Kinshasa, where the General Missionary Conference was to be held, followed by the meetings of the local committee of the Baptist Missionary Society. Two days after the conference had begun, Mr. Lawson Forfeitt arrived. He immediately sought out Grenfell, and gave him the most unwelcome news it had ever been his lot to convey. Dr. Holman Bentley, who had been at home in England nursing a troublesome illness, had had a sudden relapse and had passed away. The Mission had for many years received no heavier blow than this; while Grenfell personally felt very keenly the loss of so great a friend and so able a colleague, to whose memory he paid a warm tribute at the memorial service held by the missionaries on the following Sunday.

At the conference a resolution was also passed denouncing the misrule of the State. Grenfell had some strong things to say, and he did not hesitate to say them. "We must not," he said, in a letter sent home soon after this time, "because it threatens to upset our plans for the future, fail in testifying against the wrongs committed upon the people; better renounce our plans altogether than neglect so palpable a duty."

While he was down the river there arrived at

Stanley Pool the various parts of the new steamer, the *Endeavour*, which was to carry on the good work started by the *Peace* and continued by the *Goodwill*. The greatest care had been taken to see that the new boat was thoroughly fit for its work, and an expert authority had been consulted in England before the *Endeavour* was completed.

Within a month's time Grenfell was again on the upper river, taking with him the necessary material for building the new station at Yalemba, where he arrived after a voyage of six weeks, lengthened on account of the heavy load. When the cargo had been discharged he went on to Yakusu. But he was soon recalled, for trouble amongst the natives at Yalemba required his attention. On 28th April he started back in the *Peace*. He was unwell in the night, suffered from headache in the morning, and during the day had to give in to the great enemy of the Congo Mission—fever.

When the boat reached Yalemba he went to bed, but he could not be persuaded to remain there. The erection of the buildings on the new site had to be proceeded with. He insisted on supervising the building operations from his bed, and when he felt strong enough he came out, though much to the dismay of his "boys," who were alarmed for his safety and wished to write to Yakusu for help; but Grenfell would not hear of it.

The condition of the natives, and the pressure of work involved in the erection of the new station, were a great trouble to Grenfell. Moreover, there

was no improvement in his health. Fever, acute rheumatism in arms, knees, and wrists, together with inflammation of the throat and mouth, made a great strain upon his strength. He began to mend, but the advent of June found him very feeble and in great suffering. Nevertheless he managed to write letters to England and to his fellow-missionaries.

As the days went on and his condition became worse, Grenfell, having seen so many of his comrades go, concluded that the time had come for him to throw off the mantle and to say farewell to the scene of his earthly labours. "A man at my age in Central Africa is an old man," he said, "and these last two or three years have told upon me a great deal. However, God has been wonderfully good to me, and I can wait the unfolding of His will concerning me with all confidence."

On 11th June he began a letter to Mr. Lawson Forfeitt, in which he discussed the affairs of the Mission, recording that "in between the spells" he "got up and worried round, trying to put things into shape a bit." That letter was the last he ever penned, and was never finished. During the next few days he grew much worse, and on the 17th his faithful attendants, without his knowledge, sent the following pathetic appeal to the missionaries at Yakusu :—

"My dear Sirs—Millman and Kempton and Smith,—We are sorrow because our master is very

sick, so now we beging you one of you let him come to help Mr. Grenfell, please, we think now is near to die, but we don't know how to do with him.—Yours,

"DISASI MAKULO and MASEVO LUVUSU."

Next day Grenfell found himself unable to bear the pain, and at last was prevailed upon to make the journey to Basoko to seek help, being carried on board the *Peace* by his faithful boys. When the steamer arrived at Basoko the doctor was waiting on the beach. He thoroughly examined his patient and did all he possibly could for him. Grenfell was carried on shore. Here he rallied, but only temporarily, for now, far away from wife and children, away from nearly all his colleagues, but having round him a number of those to whose interests he had devoted and sacrificed his life, he began to sink. He looked at the young natives around him and cried, "Help me, my children; I am dying. Pray for me." A little later on he was heard to whisper, "Jesus is mine; God is mine." To the last he thought of the welfare of others before his own. Noticing the doctor in the room, he asked him if he had slept. The doctor replied, and Grenfell smiled. This was the beginning of the end, for in the early hours of the following morning (1st July 1906) he passed peacefully away.

. . . . . .

When he knew that the end was near, Grenfell

had expressed a desire to be buried at Yalemba. But, in the absence of the Commissioner, the necessary permit could not be obtained. "We will bury Grenfell at Basoko, as great men are buried," said the doctor; and so it was decided.

The last words of the story shall be told by Baluti, the native boy who had been with Grenfell almost from the beginning of his work on the Congo, and who remained with his master throughout his long illness. "Workmen toiled through the darkness by lamplight and made a good coffin. Cloth was put round him well. The soldiers were dressed in their uniforms, and came to the burying. First we and the teachers sang a hymn, 'Shall we gather at the river?' Then the soldiers fired their guns, and we raised the body and carried it gently, gently, the soldiers blowing their trumpets as they marched. When the body was laid to rest, they fired their guns again. Mr. Millman read the service. Then we sang another hymn, the State white men looking on, and a Roman Catholic priest. Last of all we closed the grave, replacing the earth, and so the death of 'Tata' (father) finished."

CHAPTER XV

THE MAN AND HIS WORK.

Grenfell on the Value of Congo Mission Work—Tributes from the Revs. Lawson Forfeitt and W. H. Stapleton—Grenfell as Explorer—Conclusion.

HENEVER any great piece of work has to be done in the world, God, in His own good time, raises up a great man to do it. The foregoing story has placed before its readers the picture of a great man and the great work for which he was called into being. A great work—the pioneering of Christian Missions in the Congo region, the speading of the light of the Gospel and of civilisation among millions of heathen, savage men and women; and a great man—whose greatness was revealed in the successful manner in which he carried out his great work.

It was, indeed, a hard and difficult piece of work, as all pioneer missionary work among savages must be—"a shrivelling-up sort of work," Grenfell himself called it. The immediate reward of those

who undertook it was frequent illness and an early death. Christianity has had to pay the price of many valuable lives in order that the dark continent may be brought under the influence of Christ. Has it been worth the price? Let us see what Grenfell himself had to say on the subject.

"On the Upper and Lower Congo alike, the people have been debased by long centuries of immorality, slavery, cruel superstitions, and by practically unceasing internecine wars; natural affections have been largely destroyed, mere children learn early to delight in blood, and later have no compunction about abandoning their helpless parents; parents sell their children, and brothers their own brethren. Every traveller's story and every missionary's record tells of this till the heart sickens, and one almost despairs of the possibility of a brighter future for a country where such evils abound. Those who have not realised the power of Christianity are not slow to say that there is no hope for these poor people; but those who have lived longest among them, and have laboured most arduously for their uplifting, say there is hope—but from one source alone.

"The only work which can possibly succeed in regenerating a people so degraded is that which has the foundations of Christianity for its basis; for, apart from the regeneration that is quite outside the range of mere civilisation, there is no prospect that the tracts devastated by slavery and depopulated by immorality will ever be repeopled, that the

fertility of thousands of abandoned valleys will ever be renewed, or that the remnants of the people will ever be freed from the bonds of superstitions even more cruel than those of slavery, ere the race has brought upon itself the doom that inevitably follows such evils as those from which it suffers, and disappears from the face of the earth."

There is surely no cause more worthy of sacrifice on its behalf than that of taking to the Congo people their only means of physical, mental, moral, and spiritual salvation. George Grenfell, by his life and by his death, took a glorious share in this great work, and was privileged also to take his share of the sacrifice.

Undoubtedly George Grenfell's life and work make a powerful appeal to those who read his story fully, as it may be read in the larger biographies by Sir Harry Johnston and the Rev. George Hawker. Had they the same appeal to those who, by reason of their intimacy with him and with his work, are the most competent judges?

Probably none of Grenfell's fellow-missionaries came into closer contact with him than did the Rev. Lawson Forfeitt, who pays tribute to his leader in the following words:—

"Throughout the whole of the vast Congo region no name was more widely known or more universally respected than that of George Grenfell. For more than a generation the timid and suspicious natives of many different tribes inhabiting the region were reassured when they knew it was the

steamer of Tala Tala (Grenfell's native name) which they saw approaching.

"My first meeting with Grenfell was at Bolobo, in January 1890. His great reputation as one of the foremost missionaries of the day made this event one to which I had looked forward with keen anticipation, and upon which I look back with pleasure and thankfulness. My respect, regard, and affection for our friend continued to grow and increase from that day forward, and his confidence and friendship have been among my most prized possessions. To see how Mr. Grenfell met a wild horde of naked savages, fully armed with spears, knives, bows, and arrows, and how he successfully completed the negotiations with the native chiefs for the establishment of a mission station among those wild people, was a powerful object-lesson in the way of dealing with such tribes, and explained the unique position and influence he had secured for himself in the Congo region.

"Great in his gifts and distinguished in service, Mr. Grenfell was also great in the beautiful humility which characterised him in so marked a degree. With a nature tender and sympathetic, he always carefully strove to avoid giving offence or pain to another, and always sought to put the best construction upon any action, and to reconcile in the spirit of truest Christian brotherliness any misunderstandings which might arise in the work. None can tell the extent of his beneficent influence as the leader of the Mission."

Another of the Congo missionaries, the Rev. W. H. Stapleton, in an appreciation of his chief, speaks of his rare and beautiful modesty, his old-world courtliness, his resourcefulness, his youthful spirit, and the absolute simplicity of his faith in God. "For myself," he continues, "I shall ever treasure as a priceless memory the fact that of late years I was the chosen confidant of such a leader, and shall ever count it a joy that he found heart-relief in these troublous times in telling me of his hopes and fears with regard to forward work. We delight to honour his memory, for we of this generation will never look upon his like again."

To Grenfell's work as an explorer many tributes have been paid. Three must suffice here. The first was the action of the Royal Geographical Society in awarding him their gold medal. The following is a quotation from the memoir published in the *Times* on the occasion of his death: "Few explorers in any part of the world have made such extensive and valuable contributions to geographical knowledge as this modest missionary, who, had he possessed the ambition and the push of men who have not done a tithe of his work, would have been loaded with honours."

M. Wauters, the Belgian geographer, spoke of Grenfell in these terms: "George Grenfell, who has just been struck down by death much too soon, is one of the most noble figures in the history of the foundation of the Congo Independent State. He explored and evangelised Central Africa after the

fashion of Dr. Livingstone, whom he resembled in his medium stature, his kind, calm demeanour, his native meekness, and his inquiring and open turn of mind. He came as a man of peace, winning the confidence of the savage natives by his patience and tact. He fulfilled his mission for twenty-five years as a pioneer, with as much humanity as success. Therefore, all honour is due to his name. When we consider that the conquest of new lands is so often accompanied by abuses, excesses, and by guilty practices and doings, condemned by civilisation, it is refreshing to be able to recall the remembrance of this good man, a missionary in the purest sense of the word, who succeeded, as the messenger of peace, in irradiating the immense basin of the Congo by his journeys. The Congo Independent State never had a more faithful auxiliary nor a more reliable adviser than George Grenfell."

Of Grenfell the man it is unnecessary to speak, for he is revealed all through his life-story. Those who have had the privilege of reading some of the letters he wrote home to his children in England have been impressed by the view they obtained of Grenfell as the fond parent, sending to his children words of counsel and advice, cheery messages, and thoughtful gifts, and longing for the time when he would be able to see his daughters again. The thought of the loved ones far away often made him long to be back in the Old Country; but the call of the Congo was the

stronger, and, although it meant separation from her children, Mrs. Grenfell shared his dangers and trials, rendering him that efficient help for which she was so eminently fitted.

Peace has her heroes, no less renowned than war; and George Grenfell was one of these. He lived and died for Christ and the Congo, and neither Christianity nor the Congo will outlive the memory of his name. His work can be described, but it can never be measured until its great consummation, when sin shall be no more, and the kingdoms of this world have become the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ.

Printed by MORRISON & GIBB LIMITED, *Edinburgh*