

Theology on the Web.org.uk

Making Biblical Scholarship Accessible

This document was supplied for free educational purposes. Unless it is in the public domain, it may not be sold for profit or hosted on a webserver without the permission of the copyright holder.

If you find it of help to you and would like to support the ministry of Theology on the Web, please consider using the links below:



Buy me a coffee

<https://www.buymeacoffee.com/theology>

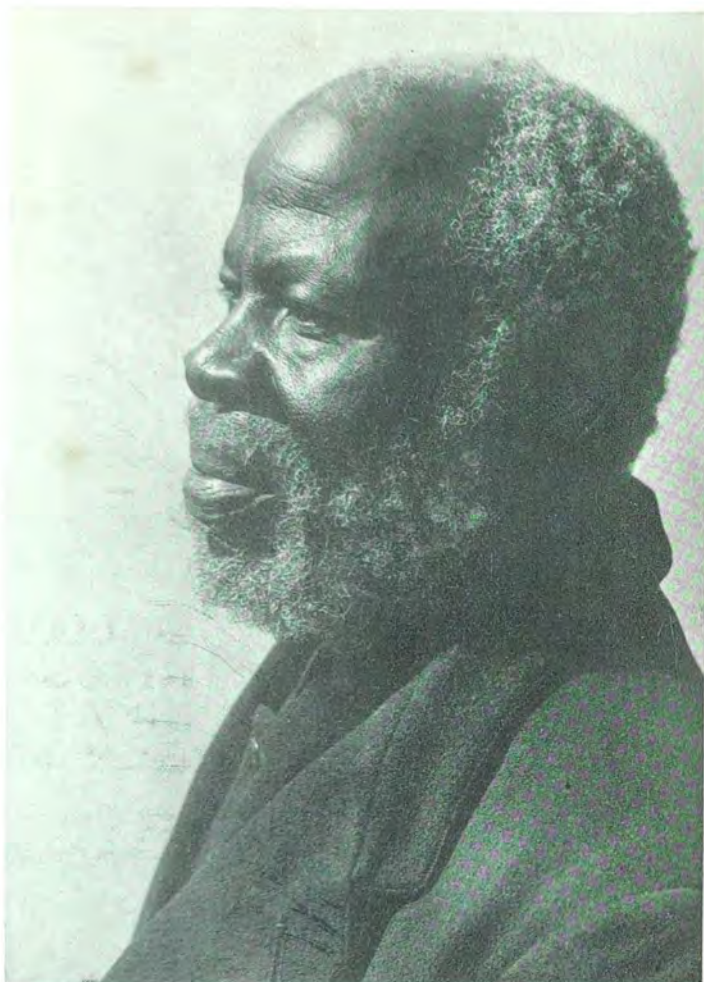


PATREON

<https://patreon.com/theologyontheweb>

PayPal

<https://paypal.me/robbradshaw>



Photograph]

[Dr. A. T. Schofield

Canon Apolo Kivebulaya

Frontispiece

APOLO OF THE PYGMY FOREST

By

A. B. LLOYD

Author of

*In Dwarf Land and Cannibal Country, Uganda to Khartoum,
Dayspring in Uganda, More about Apolo, Apolo the
Pathfinder—Who follows? etc.*

(New and Enlarged Edition)

CHURCH MISSIONARY SOCIETY
6, SALISBURY SQUARE, LONDON, E.C.4

1936

<i>First edition</i>	<i>December, 1923</i>
<i>Second impression</i>	<i>December, 1924</i>
<i>Third</i> ,,	<i>June, 1925</i>
<i>Fourth</i> ,,	<i>June, 1926</i>
<i>Fifth</i> ,,	<i>March, 1927</i>
<i>Sixth</i> ,,	<i>September, 1928</i>
<i>Seventh</i> ,,	<i>October, 1929</i>
<i>Eighth</i> ,,	<i>March, 1931</i>
<i>Ninth</i> ,,	<i>August, 1931</i>
<i>Tenth</i> ,,	<i>May, 1933</i>
<i>Eleventh</i> ,,	<i>November, 1933</i>
<i>New edition</i>	<i>June, 1936</i>

NEW AND ENLARGED EDITION

THIS new edition of *Apolo of the Pygmy Forest* appears in an enlarged form in response to a widely-expressed desire for the complete story of Apolo's life. It includes most of the material formerly in *More about Apolo* (now out of print) and a closing chapter by the Rev. R. C. Palin who, with Mr. C. A. Rendle, is carrying on the work which Canon Apolo laid down in 1933. Further sidelights on the amazing influence of that work will be found in *Apolo the Pathfinder* (C.M.S., 1s.), also by the Rev. A. B. Lloyd.

CONTENTS

CHAPTER	PAGE
I. APOLO FINDS THE LIGHT ..	7
II. TO TORO AS A PIONEER ..	17
III. WESTWARD STILL TO MBOGA ..	22
IV. TRIALS AND TRIUMPHS AT MBOGA	27
V. A CHURCH THAT SUFFERED AND GREW	36
VI. FROM MBOGA TO THE TRIBES OF THE FOREST AND HILLS	41
VII. MORE OF APOLO HIMSELF	44
VIII. SHARING THE BREAD OF LIFE	48
IX. EARLIER EXPERIENCES AMONG THE PYGMIES	53
X. TO PYGMY-LAND AND BACK	58
XI. A CALL TO PARTNERSHIP	67
XII. THE CHALLENGE OF APOLO	70
IN APOLO'S FOOTSTEPS. BY THE REV. R. C. PALIN	73
LETTERS FROM APOLO	76

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

CANON APOLO KIVEBULAYA	..	<i>Frontispiece</i>
		FACING PAGE
APOLO AND TWO PYGMY BOYS	16
THE REV. A. B. LLOYD AND APOLO AT THE EDGE OF THE FOREST	17
APOLO AND SOME OF HIS SMALL FRIENDS		32
A PYGMY WITH MAN OF ANOTHER TRIBE	33
CANON APOLO OUTSIDE HIS HUT IN A FOREST VILLAGE		33
BABIRA NATIVES AND CHIEF	33
A VILLAGE IN THE BALEGA COUNTRY	48
THE FIRST CONFIRMATION IN THE FOREST: CANDI- DATES AT KAINAMA	49

APOLO OF THE PYGMY FOREST

CHAPTER I

APOLO FINDS THE LIGHT

IT was not until 1877, in the reign of King Mutesa, that the first party of missionaries reached Uganda and began the preaching of the everlasting Gospel, which to-day has permeated the whole country and has even penetrated far into the unknown quarters of Central Africa. About thirteen years before the arrival of the pioneer missionaries (probably in 1864), there was born of very poor parentage in a small village some forty miles from the capital of Uganda, a man whose life was destined to be given to the service of God. Apolo (as he afterwards came to be known) spent his early life amid the darkest heathen surroundings, but for nearly forty years he was to be a lightbearer to some of the most degraded tribes in Africa.

The boy was one of twins. Now the birth of twins in heathen Uganda was an event of great importance and caused no little fear. The name of the mother was immediately changed, and the children were dedicated to the heathen gods. Drum beating and feasting were freely indulged in, and festivities were kept up for many days. Some structural alterations of the hut were deemed necessary, and an extra door was cut so that the twins never entered or left the house by the same doorway. In this family the other twin was a girl, consequently no particular care was taken of her as a child, and she died at an early age.

Apolo's birth therefore was a notable event in the village. Since he was dedicated to the gods it was believed that great things would follow, and that the twins would become of some importance in the land. This has proved to be true, although not in the way that was expected; for of the great men Uganda has produced, surely none will be greater in the Kingdom of God, when all things are made plain, than Apolo the Apostle to the Pygmy Forest.

Apolo's father was a Moslem. He had adopted that form of religion under the influence of Swahili traders then in the country, and he was determined that Apolo should follow his footsteps and become a leader in the Moslem religion. But God ordered otherwise. When Apolo was a boy of thirteen, his country was startled by the arrival of two strange men who were white, and who were said to have come out of the earth. Other rumours stated that they had come down from heaven and had tails like cows. Great excitement spread all over the country. The Moslems proclaimed a fast, and the king, Mutesa, who was a professed Moslem at this time, ordered all his loyal subjects to participate in the fast in order to avoid any trouble that might come to the country on account of the advent of these strange men. It was not long, however, before it was found that the coming of the white men brought peace to the whole country; the king turned to them to be taught himself, and ordered all his followers to do likewise. But darker days were close at hand, for Mutesa was taken ill and died, and Mwanga, his treacherous son, came to the throne.

It was at this time that Apolo made his first visit to Mengo, the capital of the country.¹ In spite of the fierce persecution which, at the instigation of the king, was already raging against all who read the Book, he began to

¹ The capital of Uganda is built on several hills. Mengo is the native capital; Namirembe, with the cathedral on its summit, is the C.M.S. centre; and Kampala is the political capital.

learn secretly. One day as he was walking along the road, he met a friend who told him of the white man, "full of grace," who had wonderful words to teach him about God. After much persuasion, Apolo agreed to go and hear for himself what the stranger had to teach.

With a considerable amount of fear Apolo at last stood in the presence of the great Alexander Mackay. Here in loneliness Mackay was facing the fury of the king, not knowing, like so many of those he had taught, when his last day might come and he might be led forth, perhaps to torture and to death. Struggling hard against untold difficulties, he was endeavouring to produce the written Word of God in the language of the country. Apolo relates that as soon as Mackay saw him love seemed to shine from his eyes; calling him into his hut, the lonely missionary at once began to tell him the story of God's love. Apolo (who at that time was called Munubi, because he wore a Nubian soldier's discarded coat) became deeply interested in all that he heard, and finally asked Mackay if he would teach him to read. Unfortunately the only books that were available at that time were printed in Kiswahili, and Munubi told his teacher that this was too difficult for him. For many days he stayed with Mackay and learned much by ear. But war again broke out, this time against the Moslems, who had set their hearts upon gaining possession of the whole country; and Munubi, much against his will, was forced by his father to join the Moslem army.

It was during this time of war that Munubi's eyes were at last opened to the light. First of all he saw that the Moslem religion had no high ideals to attract him; there was no love, and he was pained by the awful cruelty and lust of the leaders. He saw how the poor and innocent were done to death for no other reason than that they were not of the faith. Poor Munubi was longing for a saviour, and he could not find one among the Moslems. For many days he thought over these things, and he longed to get

back to his beloved teacher and open to him his heart. He felt so sure that there was something more that he must know in order to find peace.

One night when all was quiet in the camp, he crept out into the darkness, away from the blazing camp fires, and there he sought God with all the longing of his young heart. He cried aloud to Him for more light. Wrestling hard in prayer he waited for an answer, and not in vain. As in silence he knelt before God he remembered what he had learnt about Jesus Who had lived among men and taught them of God's infinite love ; how He had sought the poor and oppressed, and how He had delivered men from the power of sin. This was what Apolo felt that he needed more than anything in the world, and in the quietness of that lonely spot he called upon Jesus to come to him. Then he says : " I felt some presence with me, and knew that Jesus had heard me and come to seek me." After some time this young soldier returned to the camp full of peace and happiness, but fully determined to leave the Moslem army at the first opportunity. Not long after this incident he was with a party of Moslems when they attacked a small village where they knew that one of the Christian readers lived. After killing many of the men in the village, they proceeded to capture the women and children ; collecting them in a little crowd they surrounded them and slaughtered old and young in the most revolting manner. This was too much for Munubi and he determined to escape at once.

In the darkness of the night he made for the forest, and there lay hidden until the army had moved away. Then he wandered on towards Mengo until he met a small company of Christians who were fleeing from the Moslems. Soon they heard that the king, Mwanga, had joined the rebel army and was himself directing their raids upon the Christian readers. Orders were given that all who had in any way identified themselves with the new religion were to be killed without mercy. Among these wandering

Christians was an important chief who had been driven away by the king for not participating in the cruel slaughter of the readers, and this man was soon chosen by the persecuted band to become their leader. They formed themselves into a small army and attacked the Moslems. Alas ! they were soon scattered and driven hither and thither by the raiders. Some sought refuge in Bunyoro, but the majority escaped into Ankole and hid themselves in the houses of the friendly cattle people of that country.

One night Munubi found himself with a number of others in a hut close to a big cattle kraal. He was trying to pray to God, when one of the men came to him and said : “ Do you know this book ? ” Munubi looked at it in great surprise, and replied : “ Yes, this is the book that talks about Jesus ; can you read it to us ? ” It was a Kiswahili gospel.

The man to whom the book belonged had learned to read, and they all sat round him while he not only read but translated the words into their own language. Munubi was overjoyed, and he preached his first sermon in that grass hut in a strange land. He told his listeners how he had sought Jesus while with the Moslems, and how Jesus Himself had come to him just as He had come to the poor and needy when He was on earth. Then the little company knelt down together ; Munubi prayed, and one after another of those in the hut gave their lives to God in the Name of Jesus their Lord. From that day forward there was no turning back ; Munubi himself had found the Saviour, and had had the joy of leading others to Him. Henceforth his life should be given to God to make His wonderful love known among the heathen.

After some time the scattered readers once more got together, and being joined by a big army of loyal Baganda, they made another effort to drive the enemy from their

country. Success gradually came to them, and at last the Moslems were dispersed. Munubi writes in his little history of how he learned to pray: "Away in the bush, surrounded by enemies, I one day saw my chief friend go off by himself into the long grass and kneel down by the side of a big tree. He remained there for some long time, and then returned to our camp with a very bright and happy look. I could not understand this because I was only just beginning to learn to pray in those days. Very secretly I also went to the big tree and did as he had done; I knelt down and closed my eyes and asked God to make me happy too. I remained like this for some time, waiting to see what God would do. All was very quiet, and I was quite alone. Suddenly I seemed to hear some one speaking to me, and the words were soft and low, but the voice said: 'Come to Me and I will give you rest,' and then I knew that it was Jesus speaking to me, and that He was calling to me. So I said half aloud: 'O Jesus, I want to come to You, please show me the way so that I can come often.' Then the Voice said, oh, so softly: 'I am with you always.' Yes, I knew it was Jesus Who had spoken to me, and when I went back to the hut I was so happy, for I knew now that He would never leave me. I knew now how to pray; it does not mean that *I* do all the talking, but that God wants to talk to me too."

Munubi's great desire now was to read God's Book. To his joy he met a man who told him that he had the book in Luganda and would lend it to him, provided that they both learned together, for though he had had the book for some time he could not understand it. Munubi knew the letters, and together these young fellows wrestled with them, and gradually began to make out the words. Night after night, by the light from a flickering camp fire they sat, puzzling over the sentences, and rejoicing as they found new light coming to them through the written Word. At

first some of their friends in the camp laughed at them and made fun of the Book, but after a time they also were strangely attracted by it, and they discussed together the wonderful sayings of Jesus. When at last the Moslems were driven into Bunyoro, and the country had settled down once more, Munubi went to the village where he was born, still keeping the book that had been lent to him. By degrees he mastered all the intricacies of reading, rejoicing day by day as fresh flashes of thought came to him.

One day a friend of his who lived in the same village came and told him that he had been given a wonderful pipe and some strange herb to smoke, and that it brought a soothing feeling that was greatly to be prized. He lit the pipe and gave it to Munubi, who began to smoke, and very soon was under the influence of the drug. He smoked and smoked until madness came upon him, and then he slept for a very long time. Day after day the pipe was brought, and poor Munubi soon became its slave.

Most pathetically he writes of those days : “ I loved the pipe ; it brought comfort and rest, but somehow it seemed to take the place of the Book. I could not sit and read it as I used to do. I would begin to read about Jesus and suddenly there would come the desire to smoke. At such times the Book seemed like an enemy to me, and I half hated it, because if I read the Book I could not smoke my pipe. Then another wonderful thing happened. A white man came to our village, bringing with him several men who knew how to read and who prayed to God. When he came to our hut he said : ‘ Is there anybody here who loves the Book ? ’ And I replied : ‘ Yes, I do, and I can read it slowly. ’ He soon saw that the pipe was my enemy, and that I was often under the influence of the drug. He talked to me very kindly, and said : ‘ There are many enemies of Jesus Christ, and opium is one of the worst, and therefore it is your great enemy. ’ He also said that he would pray that this enemy might be destroyed, and he

asked me to pray about it too. He told me many wonderful things about Jesus. I remember that he said that Jesus was much stronger than Satan and could drive him away. The white man stayed in our village for some time, and each day I went to him and he prayed to God for me. He also began to build a church where we might worship God, and I helped him in this work. When the time came for him to go back to his home I was very sorry; but the pipe was destroyed, and I had given up smoking for ever. He left with us one of the men who had come with him to go on teaching us. And now my heart was full of joy because I had such a good friend in this white man."

Munubi was true to his convictions, and although many laughed at him, urging him to go back to the pipe, he fought strongly against it and went regularly to the little church to worship God and to learn more and more of the wonderful Book. All his former friends left him when he gave up the pipe, and he had a hard time of persecution, but he stood firm, and went daily among those who were now his enemies, trying to lead them to Jesus.

At this time Munubi's chief joy seems to have been the reading of St. Matthew v and xiii, and he says that it was these words of our Lord that led him fully into the light, and helped him to understand what God desired of him. For a time he joined the army that had been enlisted by the European officers who were now in the country for the protection of the Baganda interests. But he found that he was not happy as a soldier, so he left. After this his chief selected him to be the leader of a party of workmen who were to cut a road through Buganda to Toro,¹ in the west

¹ References to Uganda in this book are to the whole protectorate. Buganda is that central part of the protectorate which was the old kingdom first visited. Baganda are the people of Buganda. Muganda is a single member of the community. Luganda is the language of the people. So also for Toro we have Batoro, Mutoro, Lutoro, *etc.*

of the protectorate. He remained at this work for some time, and was greatly praised by his master for his perseverance and skill in the face of many difficulties. The road was only about a quarter finished when an urgent message came to him to leave the work and join the army which was being sent against Kabarega, the king of Bunyoro, who had declared war against the Baganda. Many months of cruel fighting followed; hundreds were killed and many homes were made desolate. But the raiders were at last driven back into their own country, and the victorious army went right on to Toro to help the people there who were suffering from raids made by some of Kabarega's men. At last it was all over, and Munubi went home again.

During all this time he had not forgotten his intention of seeking baptism that he might identify himself definitely with the now rapidly growing company of followers of Jesus Christ. He felt strongly that God was calling him to give his whole life to His service, and he was consumed with a passion to take the wonderful message of salvation to those who were still in darkness. It was with this ever in view that he sought to be baptized. He was passed into a baptism class where he was carefully taught. He writes of this period as the happiest in all his life, for day after day he was learning more about the God Whom he had grown to love and to Whom he had dedicated his life. Our Lord's last command was imprinted more deeply than ever upon his soul, and he longed for the time when he might go to the darkest parts of the country and proclaim the blessed Gospel to those who dwelt in the shadow of death.

His father told him that before he was baptized he must marry a wife, and forthwith produced a young woman who was to be "written down" with him when he gave in his name to be baptized. Munubi agreed to this, but with no good grace, for as he afterwards said: "I did not want

a wife, because I knew it would be difficult for me to go right away to the heathen to preach the Gospel if I had a woman with me, and also I did not know the girl, for she was a heathen." However, the woman died soon after he had entered his baptism class, and he made up his mind that he would never marry, because he wished to be always free to go anywhere that God might send him. So to the end he remained single, and devoted himself ardently to the great work of evangelization.

The great day of his baptism came at last, and on January 10, 1895, at the age, probably, of thirty-one, he entered the visible Church of Christ. This day ever remained for Munubi the outstanding one of his life, for he then openly took his stand among men as a servant of Jesus Christ. He chose Apolo as his new name. During the same year he was confirmed by the late Bishop Tucker.¹

Immediately after his confirmation Apolo went to his dear friend, Archdeacon Walker, who had taught him in the early days in the village of his birth, and told him that he wished to go out as a teacher into the unevangelized districts far from Buganda. The Archdeacon very wisely advised him first of all to take up some definite work in Mengo. He gave him a class of children to teach on week days, and Apolo on Sundays took long walks into the villages around and held open-air services. With his bright, happy smile and attractive manner, he soon made hosts of friends among the heathen, and was so successful in his mission preaching that in a few months it was felt that he might have his heart's desire, and go further afield.

¹ Apolo was ordained deacon by Bishop Tucker in 1900, and priest in 1903; and in 1922 he was appointed a canon of St. Paul's Cathedral, Namirembe.



Apolo and two Pygmy boys



The Rev. A. B. Lloyd and Apolo at the edge of the Forest

CHAPTER II

TO TORO AS A PIONEER

IT happened that on a certain Sunday in July of the same year that Apolo asked to be sent out as a teacher, a great missionary meeting was held in the cathedral church of Namirembe. Various speakers from different parts of the diocese addressed the crowded congregation, and among them were two young men who had lately returned from Toro. They had spent some time in the country as teachers, and they told of the wonderful openings there were in the west for the spread of the Gospel, and how God had opened the hearts of the Toro people to receive His Word. They both spoke eloquently of the work and of the desperate need of fresh recruits. They said that the king of the country wanted to become a Christian, and had sent a message through them to the Baganda Christians, urging them to come to the rescue.

Apolo's heart was fired as he listened, and he determined that nothing on earth should stop him from going to Toro as a teacher. Directly after the service he went off to Bishop Tucker and told him of his decision. At first the Bishop seemed to think that Apolo was not sufficiently trained for this pioneer effort, and suggested that he should seek work near at hand for a few years, and eventually go to a more distant place. Further, the Bishop said that he did not know enough about him and his qualifications. But he soon found out that Apolo was deeply in earnest. "If you will not send me out from the Church," he said, "I will go on my own responsibility." He asked the Bishop to inquire of the chief Ham Mukasa, one of the leading men in Uganda, for he knew him well. Finally the Bishop said that he would see him again after he had spoken to

Ham. Without delay Ham was asked what he thought of Apolo, and if he considered him a suitable man to send. The reply was characteristic. "Apolo," he said, "is a good man; has he not passed through many difficulties and overcome them all? He is not clever, but he is 'full of grace.' Send him; he will do a great work for God." Apolo then had to appear before the church council, and after much discussion it was agreed that he should set forth on this great enterprise. His delight was wonderful, and he was full of gratitude to God Who had thus counted him worthy to be His servant.

Not many days elapsed before Apolo had got his few possessions packed up into a bundle, with his bark cloth and sleeping mat rolled round the whole. He said good-bye to his friends, slipped the bundle on to his head, and set out into the unknown. The journey to Toro, a distance more than 200 miles from Buganda, was mostly through uninhabited country. There were no less than seventy-five big papyrus swamps to be crossed; most of them were unbridged and some were full of very deep water. Lions and other wild animals were known to inhabit these swamps in great numbers. But what was all this to Apolo? He was soon to face fiercer odds, and his eyes were fixed upon that distant land where he longed to tell "how great things the Lord had done" for him. He covered the distance in ten days with but brief rests on the way, and reached Toro on September 9, 1895, just eight months after his baptism.

Although he was now among a strange people who spoke a language he did not know, it was not long before he had hosts of friends. He soon set to work on the language, and in a little while he could make himself perfectly well understood. The Toro language sounds quite unlike Luganda, but the newcomer quickly discovers that there is a close connexion between the two. The rolling R and the aspirated H, however, absolutely defeated Apolo, and to the end of his days he had not an aspirate in all his

vocabulary, and a rolling R was never heard. But these little things never worried him. He writes of this time : "God gave me much grace, for I found I could soon speak sufficiently for the Batoro to understand me, and they loved me and listened to my words, as I taught them about Jesus Christ."

The country of Toro to which Apolo went as a pioneer is by far the most beautiful district in the whole of the Uganda Protectorate. The altitude is between 5000 and 6000 feet above sea level, and the climate therefore is delightfully cool. The soil is very productive, so that serious famine is practically unknown ; food may always be found in some part of the country even if in another part people are starving. Toro has existed as an independent kingdom for nearly fifty years ; formerly it was part of the kingdom of Bunyoro. Owing to the disloyalty of the chief and his rebellion against the king of Bunyoro, large armies were sent to raid the territory and to capture if possible the rebel chief, Nyeka. After much fighting he was killed, and his son Kasagama, then a boy, escaped to Ankole. For a time he was in seclusion, carefully attended to by his mother, and finally he was taken to Buganda where the king received him kindly.

When Captain (now Lord) Lugard made his notable journey westward from Uganda in search of the Sudanese left behind by Emin Pasha, and for the purpose of marking out the western frontier of the protectorate, he took with him Kasagama, the young chief, who was of the royal family of Bunyoro, and established him as king of Toro. The army from Bunyoro was driven out of the country, and many forts were made to protect Toro against future invasion. While in Buganda Kasagama had acquired Luganda, and had learned many of the customs of that country, including its system of government ; and on his

return he at once introduced the same system in Toro. Later on he again went to Buganda, this time to answer some political charges brought against him, and also to find out for himself more about the Christian religion, of which he had heard a little from the Baganda teachers who had been sent to his country some twelve months previously. While in Mengo he was baptized and took the name of Daudi, and on his return to his own country he began in real earnest to try to live the Christian life.

In a letter which he wrote to "The Elders of the Church in Europe" the king said: "God our Father gave me the kingdom of Toro to reign over for Him, therefore I write to you, my brethren, to beseech you to remember me, and to pray for me every day. . . . I praise my Lord very much indeed for the words of the Gospel He brought into my country, and you I thank for sending teachers to come here to teach us such beautiful words. I therefore tell you that I want very much, God giving me strength, to arrange all the matters of this country for Him only, that all my people may understand that Jesus Christ He is the Saviour of all countries, and that He is the King of all kings."

The small church in which the work was started was built of reeds, and when Apolo arrived he found about fifty people who could already read the Gospel in Luganda. An extract from his own writings expresses his feelings at the outset of this new life: "When I reached Toro at last, my joy knew no bounds. Could there ever be such joy as this, to tell the people who did not know, the wonderful story of Jesus, how He loved us all and how He saved us by His death upon the Cross? I had never known such joy as this that had come to me now, as I preached the Gospel to the heathen Batoro. God filled my heart with His joy."

The preaching of the gospel of love very soon began to make an impression upon the whole country. An

interesting announcement was made by the king in his public *baraza* (council), to the effect that if there were any slaves in the country who wished to obtain their freedom, they were at liberty at once to apply for it. Fifty Baganda women were released, and returned to Buganda under proper escort. Witchcraft was pronounced to be illegal, and charms and fetishes were to be destroyed; for the entrance of the light of God into a heathen country immediately shows up the vile things that bring such misery in their train. Toro was now proclaimed a Christian country.

CHAPTER III

WESTWARD STILL TO MBOGA

APOLO had only been in Toro five days when he determined to see the country still further westward, beyond the great mountain range of Ruwenzori. Much has been written about this glorious range—its massive grandeur, its glistening peaks, towering for nearly 18,000 feet above sea level, the wonderfully snowy twin cones, and the magnificent mountain with its huge base stretching from north to south for over fifty miles, rugged and broken. Once seen the impression made can never be forgotten. Undoubtedly the chief source of the great River Nile, Ruwenzori's melted snows have for centuries past provided Egypt with its sustenance. The tiny rivulets rushing down the mountain sides from the eternal snows, broadening out upon the plains into great rivers, and emptying themselves either into the Albert Edward Lake or into the Semliki River, have been channels of mercy to the thirsty land of the Pharaohs.

Apolo told the king of Toro that he wanted to climb the great mountain, and look over into the valley beyond. The king replied at once that it could not be done, for it was said to be so cold up there that no man could live, and that the very blood in the veins would become hard. "But I must see what is on the other side," said Apolo. After some time the king gave his consent, and promised to provide two men to accompany him to the top of one of the lower slopes, from the summit of which he would be able to get a view into the country beyond. Early one morning they began to climb the rugged slopes; but when, after much exertion, they managed to reach the

forest belt, one of the men was quite overcome by the cold, and would go no further. Apolo, however, and the remaining man refused to give in, and at long last they reached a point from which they could look down into the country beyond, towards the great Congo River.

Apolo thus described the feelings that surged through his mind as he stood gazing upon the far distant hills : "I saw the great country stretching out into the distance before me, most of it black with forest, and far away a range of hills that the guide told me was the Mboga country, where lived many, many people. Something seized my heart and gripped me tight ; it seemed to pull me towards those hills. A voice within me seemed to say : ' Over there in that country are thousands and thousands of people in heathen darkness ; they do not know that Jesus loves them. Many of them live in that great dark forest where no Muganda has ever been ; some are cannibals and eat human bodies, and some are the dangerous dwarfs of whom you have heard, who climb the trees to hunt ; no one has ever been there to tell them about Jesus.' I knew at that moment that God was calling me ! Toro had other teachers besides myself, while these people had none ; who would go to them if I did not ? Yes, I must go to them. I must go to them." When Apolo came down from that mountain a new light was within him, and he was conscious of a propelling force that he could not resist. From that day forward he knew that the call had come to him to go where no other teacher had ever been before, to a people who knew nothing about God's love.

It was always characteristic of Apolo to do *at once* what he felt called upon by God to undertake. He would never wait to question the advisability of a step forward in the dark ; he just went on, and, like a little child, trusted simply in God as his guide. It was therefore not long before he made all arrangements to leave Toro and to enter this new country. In December, 1896, he bade fare-

well to his friends, and once more turned his face westward. It was a long, desolate journey to Mboga. First he had to go round the mountain range to the north, and then drop down 2000 feet into the Semliki valley, and cross the hot plains to the swift-flowing river, which is nearly a hundred yards wide. He got a native to ferry him over in a dug-out canoe, and then had another long journey across the plain on the west, until at last he reached the Mboga hills and climbed up to the beautiful highlands, where thousands of people lived.

At the beginning of the present century the country of Mboga was nominally under the flag of the British protectorate, but it was in reality a sort of no man's land. In spite of the fact that the climate was excellent and the country fruitful, Mboga was not a desirable spot to live in. The trouble was that there was no sort of civilized rule, and the people were entirely at the mercy of a weak and wicked chief, who called himself the king. Being situated on the extreme edge of the protectorate, the region had never been visited by a government representative, indeed the officials in Uganda were fully occupied in looking after the country known as Buganda for the time being, so that the outlying districts had to be left.

The hills rise to a height of 6000 or 7000 feet above sea level and are very beautiful; but the open country only stretches for about ten miles to the west before the dreaded forest begins, and for days, and indeed months, one can travel westward without leaving the dark shades. This forest is the home of the pygmy tribes described by Stanley and other travellers; but the pygmies are by no means the most fearsome inhabitants of the jungle. Other tribes are to be found here, and, in the days when Apolo first entered the country, there was far more danger from them than from the little people whose chief desire is to

be left alone. Along the Ituri River, which flows eventually into the Congo, there lived many different tribes, practically all of them cannibals of the very lowest type.

At this time several large settlements of Arabs had come in from the east, and their obvious occupation was the collecting of slaves. Since they were hidden from any prying eyes, they had become a great terror to the inhabitants of the forest. Of course they were well armed, and they lived in stockaded clearings in the forest. They were careful to keep on terms of friendship with the wily pygmy, for in the forest the latter with his woodcraft was more than a match for the Arab. Fresh meat and honey, collected by the pygmies, were brought to the Arab settlements, and exchanged for sweet potatoes, maize, and other produce which the Arabs grew in their clearings.

The animal life of the forest is varied and awe-inspiring. Elephants and buffaloes roam about, sometimes in herds, sometimes singly. Wild pigs and forest antelopes, chimpanzees, gorillas, and vast troops of monkeys of every kind, leopards, panthers, wild cats, and snakes have their home there. The forest is threaded with a network of rivers and streams, which abound with crocodiles and hippos, water snakes and lizards, leeches and slow worms. Birds of many and varied descriptions are there also, parrots seeming to predominate. The insect life baffles description. Everywhere there is life; insects dropping from above, crawling about on the earth, flying in the space between. No one can grasp a stick without finding something alive in his hand, nor climb a tree without being immediately covered with ants or beetles. Cockroaches, centipedes, and crickets are everywhere. At night the stillness is broken by the incessant croak of the frogs, the shrill, perpetual noise of the cicada, the weird moanings among the trees, or the sudden crashing to earth of some forest giant which may have been standing for centuries, or the ghastly yelps of the leopard as it

APOLO OF THE PYGMY FOREST

creeps from its hiding place in search of food. In fact no place on earth's surface could be more in keeping with the strange little pygmy people who inhabit this dark forest.

Apolo's heart was set upon reaching as many as possible of these denizens of the thicket, but being a wise man, he knew that he himself could not hope to do much good among them until he had got hold of some of the people living on the outskirts of the forest. He hoped, after training them, to send them off as missionaries to the more inaccessible districts. His first interest therefore was with the Banyamboga, who spoke the Toro language, and who could readily be taught. A strong Church in Mboga, said Apolo, will make it possible for Christianity to reach right across to the Congo. We hear very little about his experiences during his first year in Mboga, but it is certain from hints here and there that life was hard for him.

CHAPTER IV

TRIALS AND TRIUMPHS AT MBOGA

AS soon as the people of Mboga found that Apolo had no wealth to distribute, and very few possessions of his own, they treated him with scorn, and most of them would have nothing to do with him. The so-called king at first received him with kindness, giving him a hut in which to live and a little bit of ground to cultivate for his food; but this attitude did not last long. When Apolo boldly told him of his sins and urged him to change his life, looking to God to give him strength, he turned utterly against him. Witchcraft, for instance, was an all important matter to the Banyamboga, but Apolo was not slow to point out that it was the work of the enemy of man, and could not be tolerated by a loving God, nor could it bring peace and happiness to the people. When Apolo told them that drunkenness and immorality and all cruelty were displeasing to the great God, the people taunted him as the killer of all their joys and, turning their backs upon him, they left him alone in his solitude.

One poor woman, however, said that she wished to read for baptism. She had been drawn to Apolo because he had defended her against a cruel husband, who constantly beat her and eventually turned her out of his house. Day after day she came to learn the way of eternal life, and was led to Christ. In January, 1898, she was baptized, and was the first Banyamboga to enter the Christian Church.

A tremendous sensation was caused by this baptism, and, as Apolo says: "A great fear came over the country, and a proclamation went forth that all women who became Christians would be cursed by the gods and would become barren." The head witch doctor of the place told the king that if he wished to save his country from absolute ruin

the only thing to do was to drive Apolo away, and never again to allow a teacher of this new religion to set foot in the land. The power of the witch doctor was so great and his influence so much dreaded that the king feared to disregard him, and promised to do what he could in the matter. He called his men together secretly, and told them that he would give a big present to the one who would burn Apolo's house down while he was inside, and so murder him. Several of the men agreed to carry out this plan.

We have Apolo's description of the attempt: "It was night time, and I was alone in my house. I was praying to God, for I knew that I was in great danger. I did not fear, because I knew God would keep me safe in the midst of all my enemies. Suddenly I heard whispering outside my hut; I could not hear what was being said, but I guessed that my enemies had come to do me harm. Very soon I smelt the smoke of a fire drifting through the walls. Again I prayed with all my heart, and asked God to protect me. Once more I heard a voice, and this time it was God's voice saying: 'Don't set fire to Apolo's house; he is My servant, he has come to do My commands.' It was all very wonderful, because the men outside heard the voice, and I heard them say: 'Who is that? Who tells us not to fire the house?' They were very frightened, for the flames were now roaring in the thatch of the hut. Then one of the men shouted to me from outside: 'Apolo, Apolo, are you in the house?'

"By this time the flames had burst through, and I should soon be surrounded. I shouted back that I was praying. Then the men broke down the door, burst into the house, and some of them seized me and dragged me into safety. The hut was a mass of flames and was bound to fall soon. I saw a great company of men with their spears poised and ready for use, and in the other hand many of them had firebrands; but no one touched me. They simply gazed at me in astonishment.

“ Some of the men had dashed again into the burning house and had brought out some of my possessions which they tied together with cords. Then, in great fright, they told me to take my things and fly for my life out of the country, for they were sure that the king would be very angry when he knew that they had failed in their task. To this I replied: ‘ If you wish to kill me, here I am, you may do so. Am I not alone before you all, and have you not got spears in your hands?’ But the hand of God protected me, and they could do me no harm, but they told me to go with them to the king.

“ When we got to his house he was waiting to hear the news of my death; and here I was, standing before him. He shouted to his men in great wrath: ‘ Why have you not done as I commanded you?’ They could only reply: ‘ We were afraid because we heard a voice which said to us: “ Apolo is My servant.” We think it was the voice of Apolo’s God, so we have brought him to you.’ The king was still very angry, and commanded me to sleep at Semliki that night and go to Toro the next day. I told him that God had sent me to Mboga, and that I could not leave unless He sent me. I then left the king and went back to my burning hut, but found that nothing remained but smoking ashes. The next day I began to build another hut.”

A few months passed without any incident. Apolo completed the hut and again took up his work. But he was not to be left in peace; greater trials were still before him. Once more the king sent a message forbidding him to remain, but promising that if he would go off at once no harm should come to him. In reply Apolo pointed out that he would do no harm in the country, and that many of the people were now his friends and wished him to stay with them. At the time that this order came he had just been reading about Jesus sending forth His disciples, telling them to preach the Kingdom of God to all the

world. He was sure that Jesus must have known that many who went to preach would meet with all sorts of trials and troubles, but He did not tell them to run away, what He *did* say was : “ Lo, I am with you alway.” With this assurance in his mind Apolo stolidly stuck to his post, in spite of repeated commands to clear out, ready to bear anything that came. But the king’s anger was soon aroused to a very high pitch by the renewed interference of the witch doctor, who even threatened the king if the man was not removed. Once more therefore the message came : “ If Apolo does not go at once he will be killed.”

Dear old Apolo said with his cheery smile : “ Go, and tell your master that God’s messengers were often killed in days gone by, but it did not stop other messengers taking their places ; tell him that I cannot leave.” Now the king was burning with rage, and at the same time full of fear. Had it not been for the witch doctor’s threats he would have let Apolo alone ; but as it was he feared for his own life, and was terrified at the thought of the disasters that were sure to come to his country if he disobeyed the witch doctor. One day he sent a number of his bodyguard to catch Apolo and bring him before him. Apolo made no resistance, but at once handed himself over to the men, who bound him with cords and led him to their chief. When he was bound Apolo said to his captors : “ Let us sit down for a little while, because I am sure God sent you men to me to be taught ; you do not know how good He is.” The men were as wax in his fingers, and they promptly sat down and listened to what Apolo had to say. Soon they were fascinated with the beautiful story, and after a little while they cut the cords that bound him and returned to their master, saying : “ Apolo is doing no harm, he is only teaching the people that God loves them ; we could not bring him.” The king, however, would not listen to them, but drove them away, and sent other men to fetch him, instructing his *katikiro* (prime minister) to go with

them and see that his orders were carried out. They, too, found Apolo in his hut reading.

"Come out," said the katikiro, "the king has sent me for you."

"Yes, I will come," said Apolo; and they forthwith tied his hands and led him out to the king's fence.

When they arrived at the king's quarters, they found him sitting on the raised platform at the entrance to his house, waiting to try the case. He at once addressed the prisoner: "I have sent several of my men to you telling you to leave my country; you have refused to obey me. Now tell me the reason why you have not gone." Apolo replied: "I also have a Master, and His Word is my law. He sent me here to teach your people, and until He tells me to leave I will not go willingly." "Well," said the king, "if I allow you to stay here will you give me your promise not to teach my people to read that Book, and that you will not try to persuade them to disobey my orders when I send them to raid the Balega?" (The Balega were a neighbouring tribe, rich in cattle.) Apolo promptly answered that he could not obey such an order, but that he must do the work God had sent him to do.

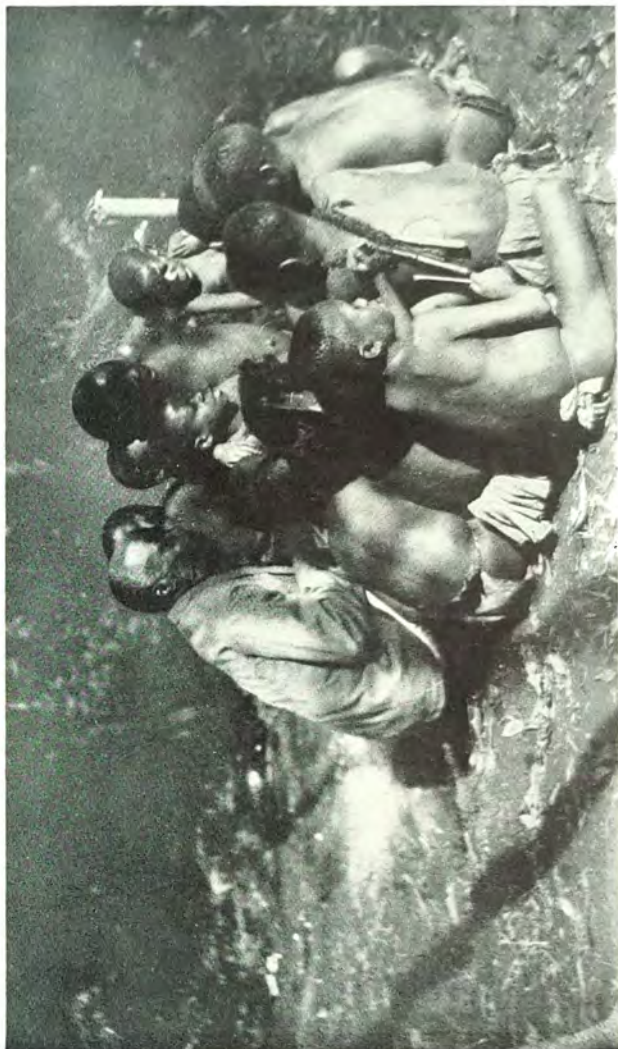
Without further talk a command was given to the men standing round to throw him to the ground, strip him of his clothing, and thrash him with a hippopotamus-hide whip. This is a very brutal punishment, for the lash is made from the dried hide, and when administered to the bare flesh cuts its way through the skin and causes terrible injury. Twenty lashes were given before the king stopped his men, and Apolo, weak and trembling, was driven back to his house, once again being commanded to teach no more. For several days the poor fellow lay sick, suffering agonies from the terrible wounds on his body. But still he put his trust in God, and prayed fervently day by day that he might yet be able to carry on his work.

After a time he felt well enough to go to the church, and on his way he invited as many people as possible to go with him and join him in prayer. They all knelt together, and several of the people were touched to the heart, for they knew that Apolo was their true friend. For the next few days nothing further happened, and he went regularly to the church and prayed with the people.

This, however, was only a calm before the storm. Many enemies were at work, particularly the witch doctor, who had gone to the chief and laughed at him, telling him that he was afraid of this man Apolo, and that he would undoubtedly suffer for it. It came about, therefore, that Apolo was again sent for to be beaten. This time the determination was to kill him. Lash after lash fell upon his naked body, until at last he became unconscious. Then the order was given to take up the body and throw it into the long grass. "For," said the king with a sneer, "if life still remains, it will not be long before he is carried off by the wild beasts." So the poor bleeding body was taken into the jungle, to be a prey for the hyenas and wild cats.

The king thought that Apolo was now dead, and that the thorn in his side was for ever removed. No more would he be worried with thoughts of sin and its punishment; no longer would his people refuse to raid their enemies and capture their cattle; the old life should return once more to the Mboga people. He determined to make a great feast in celebration of the event. Much beer was to be drunk. Feasting and revelry were to mark the day when they banished the Book for ever from their country.

The one baptized woman of Mboga had been present when this cruel scene was enacted. Her beloved teacher had been killed before her eyes and thrown into the jungle to the wild beasts. The thought of the body lying there in the open and being torn to pieces was unendurable, so she determined to find the body and to give it decent burial. Taking great care that no one should see her, she



Apolo and some of his small friends



A Pygmy with man of
another tribe



Canon Apolo outside his hut in a Forest village

Babira natives and chief



followed the track through the thicket along which the men had gone. She searched and searched until at last her efforts were rewarded, for there before her, just as the men had left him, lay the beloved form. The place was a very lonely spot, quite close to the great forest. She knelt down beside the body and wept, perhaps as she had never wept before. Then suddenly, to her great joy and intense astonishment, there was a movement, which showed her that life still remained. At once she tried to make the poor man more comfortable, and then went off in search of water. Having found a little stream not far away, she managed, with a good deal of difficulty, to get some water to him. She bathed his wounds, and finally tried to carry him to a place of safety. It was a long way to her own home, and quite impossible for her to get him there; and yet she dared not leave him in this desolate place any longer, even to try to get help from her friends.

Apolo was still unconscious, and therefore unable to give any help himself; there was nothing for it, she must carry him. After almost superhuman efforts she reached a deserted hut just on the edge of the forest, where she deposited her burden, making him as comfortable as she possibly could. The hut was merely a shell that had been disused for a long time, and was surrounded by dense vegetation. Still she was not daunted; her beloved teacher was alive, and she must do her utmost to help him. First she gathered some sticks for a fire, and plenty of soft fresh grass to make a bed; and then, fastening up the entrance to the hut as best she could with some branches of trees, she went off to her own home and fetched food and water and fire, being very careful that no one should find out what she was doing. The place was thus made tolerably comfortable.

Weeks of secret service for this poor afflicted servant of God followed. She dressed his wounds and fed him like a child, and had the intense satisfaction, after long and

tedious efforts, of bringing Apolo back from the grave. During all this time many were secretly bemoaning the loss of their friend. They knew him to have been a good man, and his words had so stirred their hearts that not a few of them were secretly praying to God to send them another helper. They little knew that Apolo was close at hand, although at present unable to go to them. It was long before he could do anything for himself; but at length, more than six weeks after he had been so brutally treated, he informed his faithful rescuer that he wished to go back to the village to look after the people whom God had given him. The woman implored him not to do so; all the people thought he was dead; would it not be best for him to make his way back to Uganda?

But this was not Apolo's way. Had not God most wonderfully kept him through all these great trials? Was he given strength in order that he might run away? No, he could not believe that. God had more work for him to do, and at all costs he must do it. Early one Sunday morning he made a most dramatic appearance in the village church, calling the people to worship by beating the drum which for weeks had been silent.

The astonishment was tremendous! The whole place was in a ferment. The king, hearing the drum, was seized with apprehension, and sent off at once to find out why it was being beaten. The messenger returned with the astounding news that it was Apolo himself, alive from the dead, who was calling the people to prayer. At first the king would not believe it, and said that it must be some one else; but being assured that it was indeed Apolo, he wrapped his cloak around him, and went in fear and trembling to see for himself. As he drew near he heard the sound of voices, and one was speaking in a loud tone, who was, surely, Apolo himself. As he came at last to the little church door he saw the faithful messenger of God with a small crowd of awe-stricken men and women around

him. All was just as it used to be. Apolo, with a smiling face, sat in the midst of the little congregation with his Book in his hand, reading to them the wonderful story. When he saw the king he got up, and going towards him greeted him with a happy smile, and asked him to come into the church and join them at their class.

Then there happened a thing that had never before been known in the country. The king stepped forward into the building and, kneeling down before Apolo, begged him to forgive him the great sin he had committed against him. He declared before all the people that he himself would become a reader, and henceforth would do all he could to help forward the work. Apolo took the king's hands in his and, kneeling down by his side, called upon all the people to join in prayer. Then he lifted up his heart to his heavenly Father in fervent gratitude for this wonderful sign of His grace and love. There was indeed rejoicing in that little grass sanctuary, and the praise rose up to heaven where the angels of God rejoice over one sinner that repenteth.

The king and Apolo left the church hand in hand, and went together to the king's house. There the new convert declared, while the tears coursed down his cheeks, that henceforth he would be God's man and serve Him to the end. God had indeed spoken to him and turned his heart to Himself. While he was bitterly persecuting the Church the king had known that he was fighting against God. He knew that it was the love of sin that had kept him back, and he now determined to renounce it and try to atone to God's servant for some of the injury he had done to him. From that day the king went forward, striving to learn how best he might serve God. After weeks of strenuous effort he learned to read the Book for himself, and at last asked that he might be baptized. It was a day of great rejoicing for all Mboga when "Tabalo" the king became "Paul" the servant of God.

CHAPTER V

A CHURCH THAT SUFFERED AND GREW

THE village church soon became too small for the crowds that came day after day to worship, so the king decided that a new one should be built at once. All the readers were called together and the king explained to them that it was their duty and privilege to erect a more suitable building for the worship of God. There was no lack of willingness on their part, and all with one accord set to work to put up a suitable church. Through all the trials that had come to him, Apolo had never lost his faith in God. He knew in his innermost soul that the Cross of Christ would triumph, and now his wonderful faith was rewarded. He saw the victory for which he had longed.

In response to an appeal from Apolo, more teachers were sent from Toro, for it was fast becoming beyond the power of one man to cope with the eager desire of the people to be taught. When the recruits had arrived Apolo returned to Toro for a much-needed rest, leaving one of the senior men in charge. He was advised to go to Buganda also, to look after some property left him by his father, but, a day or two before he was to start from Toro, a messenger came from Mboga with startling news. It appeared that the big tribe of people living among the hills to the north of Mboga had suddenly risen in rebellion against the Belgian Government. In 1911 the British Boundary Commission surveyed the boundary between the British protectorate and the Belgian Congo, and finally fixed the western extremity of the protectorate along the Semliki from the Albert Lake and the central ridge of Ruwenzori, thus leaving Mboga in Belgian territory. The

native theory as to the cause of the rising was that the Balega were dissatisfied at having their country handed over to the Belgians, whom they did not love, which action they attributed to the intrigues of the Mboga people. It is true that the ceremony of handing over this strip of country to the Belgians took place in Mboga, and this lent colour to the idea.

Every one wondered what the result of this rising would be, for the warlike Balega were known not only to be more numerous than the Mboga people, but also to hate them, because in the past they had endured many raids from the Banyamboga with much looting of cattle. It was not long before another messenger arrived in Toro, bringing yet more serious news. "The Mboga people," he said, "have been wiped out, and their houses burned."

When Apolo received this news his grief was pathetic in the extreme. The sheep he had striven to rescue and bring into the fold of Christ were now no more, and his life's work seemed to human eyes to be utterly destroyed. His one desire was to get back again to his flock, or what remained of it. The church so lately completed was said to have been destroyed. His own house and the houses of nearly all his friends were burned to the ground. Yes, he would go back at once and seek out the remnant that might remain. What did he care if the enemy were still at large; his sheep were scattered, was he to leave them in their misery? No, at all costs he must go. The messenger who brought the news told a tragic story. He said that the raid was so sudden, and the Mboga people so little prepared for it, that it developed into the mere slaughter of a defenceless people. Men, women, and children alike were killed in their houses, for before they could get away the houses were burned over their heads. Over 200 of the Mboga readers were killed, and many others died afterwards of their wounds. Several teachers were among the missing. It was feared that they had met with a similar fate.

The Toro Christians, who were most sympathetic, did all they could to help their brothers in distress. A service was held in the church, and Apolo was asked to preach. Will any one who heard his appeal ever forget it? With tears streaming down his face, he cried out in his bitterness: "Are these not my children for whom I have suffered? Did not God give them to me? Are they not in deep distress? I must go to them quickly to help and comfort those that may be left; and once more God's house must be built." Seldom has any congregation of men and women, black or white, been so deeply touched as were the Toro people that day. Many gave gifts to Apolo for his own use and also for his work. And some who had few worldly goods gave themselves as teachers in place of those who were no more. All promised to pray.

At the end of the year 1911 Apolo returned to his beloved work. But what a sight met his eyes when at last he reached the village where he had passed through so much! Blackened ruins were on every side, and he sought in vain for many familiar faces among the little crowd that came out to meet him. There was a deep silence as he came face to face with the king, who had managed to escape with his life. They clasped each other in a mutual embrace, and the king said with emotion: "Thank God for bringing you back to us; but what sorrow we have seen! Look at the ruins of our church which we built for God; all is done, how can we ever read again?" Apolo hastened to assure the king that all was not lost; they still had God as their Helper, and they would soon rebuild the church and be happy once more.

Apolo's return caused intense delight to the people. Some of them had half believed the lying words of the witch doctor that Apolo would never come to Mboga again, and that it was the wrath of the *bacwezi* (spirits) that

A CHURCH THAT SUFFERED AND GREW

had brought the trouble, because the Banyamboga had forsaken their old beliefs and had served the white man's God. Apolo's coming not only caused great rejoicing, but it inspired the poor, scattered, homeless folk to get together and start to rebuild the village. It was not long before they were all agreed that they must rebuild their church. Willing hands were put to work, and every reader felt that it was his bounden duty to do his share.

Political changes followed. The Belgian Government decided that the king was not suited to be the leader of the Banyamboga, and thought fit to depose him. They put his son in his place, but made him the paramount chief of the district of Mboga only, whereas his father had been the ruler of a very large territory reaching from the shores of the Albert Lake on the north to the government post of Mbeni on the south. Once more Mboga was at peace, although the population was much reduced in numbers.

In the year 1915 the new church was completed, and a substantial school was built. At this early stage Apolo saw clearly that something must be done for the education of the children of the Christians, so he set about collecting money for the building of a school which he was pleased to call a central school. In an astonishingly short time this was finished. He had worked with his own hands day after day, setting such an example to the other men that before long every one turned out to complete the job as quickly as possible. The building was about sixty feet long by twenty feet broad. The walls were of mud, neatly finished off by a smearing of dark red earth which leaves an excellent surface. The school was intended to accommodate about a hundred pupils, but the attendance steadily grew to nearly twice that number.

Apolo made an excellent head master. It is simply

APOLO OF THE PYGMY FOREST

amazing that though he had no early advantages he yet showed himself capable of conducting a school on sensible, up-to-date lines. Surely the secret of his success lay in his great love and understanding of children. His chief difficulty in carrying on the school was that during his frequent absences to visit and cheer his scattered teachers there was no one qualified to be left in charge.

CHAPTER VI

FROM MBOGA TO THE TRIBES OF THE FOREST AND HILLS

ABOUT the time that the new church and school were built Apolo realized that Mboga Christians ought to be putting into effect the last command of our blessed Lord by preaching the Gospel of His love to the many tribes that were at present beyond the reach of the Mboga Church. There were immense possibilities, for many tribes and languages were within easy distance of Mboga. The great forest had hitherto been a stupendous barrier, for few of the people cared to penetrate its shades. Pygmies were spoken of with bated breath, every one was afraid of them; but Apolo called for volunteers for missionary work, and urged his people to follow the Master's command, even if it meant going among these dangerous little people.

In the forest live many different tribes, the Bambuba being perhaps the most numerous. They are a wild, naked race of people and are said to be cannibals. Apolo had conclusive proof of the truth of this statement. He visited them in their villages, often taking his life in his hands. He preached to them the "unsearchable riches of Christ" and found that they were quite willing to learn. Then he got into touch with several of the strange little pygmies whom he had often seen in the forest, and quickly made friends with them with a view to teaching them. One or two had indeed learned to read in his school, but it was almost impossible to get hold of them as a tribe, for they were always moving about, roaming in the great forest in search of elephant, buffalo, and other forest animals, from which they obtained their food. I shall have more to say about the pygmies later on.

There is another wild tribe called the Babira whose dwellings are close to Mboga. For the most part this tribe lives on the edges of the forest and is seldom found within its shades. They are an imposing looking people, and seem a little above the tribes around them. Also they are very numerous, and their territory stretches far to the north-west. These people are good cultivators of the soil, but as they possess very few cattle, they make up for the loss by immense flocks of goats and some sheep. It may be noted here that since the Africa Inland Mission came this tribe has been reached by them, but results are very slow in showing themselves, and the people are hard to touch. Apolo began to work among them, but when the new mission came he gladly retired.

Another people whose language is very closely akin to that spoken in Toro are the Bakonjo. The great majority of this tribe live on the eastern and western slopes of Ruwenzori Mountain; but a large section has migrated to the Congo forest, and their homes are within easy reach of Mboga, a little to the south, and just inside the forest belt. Much work has been done among them from the Toro Church, and there are now a large number of baptized Christians, many of them still living on the lower slopes of the mountain. Several teachers from among them were sent to Mboga to help Apolo in his work among that portion of the tribe now spread across the Congo border. The Bakonjo are a fine people, and all who know them speak highly of them. They are hardy mountaineers, great cultivators, and thoroughly reliable in character.

Another tribe in that region, known as the Balega, occupy the mountainous district directly to the west of the Albert Lake. They are wild, cruel, and treacherous folk, and their sudden attack on the Mboga (see p. 37) shows how great a danger they are to their quieter neighbours. Apolo felt that it was incumbent upon the Mboga Christians to show the true spirit of Christ, and to return good for evil. He

therefore sought volunteers from his congregation who would go to the Balega and preach the love of God. He did not seek in vain, and very soon three of the principal villages of the tribe were occupied by those teachers. Numbers of small churches have since been built.

Certain other tribes with entirely different languages are being reached from Mboga. For instance, the Bahuku, another forest tribe, and the Bakobi, are each visited from time to time, and whenever possible teachers are placed, even in the most lonely spots. Apolo fully realized that to leave these young teachers by themselves, surrounded by savage peoples, and not to keep in close touch with them would be a fatal mistake. He constantly visited them, covering many hundreds of miles every year. He also formed a plan to bring them into the central church at Mboga every six months for further teaching and training. To meet the difficulty of leaving the churches untended, he always had a class of from twenty to thirty young men in training, and as soon as one came in from the forest for rest and teaching, another would be sent to take charge until the other should be ready to return to his post. In this way the work was kept going, and the teachers prevented from getting stale and tired.

In a very short time an immense field for missionary effort has been opened up, and the gallant little Mboga Church has risen to its glorious opportunities. The question naturally arises: How are these teachers paid, for surely work on this scale must cost a considerable sum to keep it in running order? This is quite true, but so keen are the Christians in Mboga that they give freely out of their deep poverty, and so far are supplying all the funds to support the teachers. In addition, they build all the schools and churches.

CHAPTER VII

MORE OF APOLO HIMSELF

THE Church of Mboga is a living testimony to the power of a consecrated life. Let us look a little more closely at the character of the man who has been so wonderfully used of God in the building up of that Church and has inspired its ministry to the many strange tribes of the forest.

Apolo's outstanding feature was his gentleness. In a country like this, where the history of the past has stamped its mark indelibly upon the people, it is not too much to say that cruelty and callousness to the sufferings of others are among the chief characteristics of the race. For centuries human life has been looked upon as of no account, and the most indescribable acts of cruelty have been so common throughout the country that inevitably they have reacted upon the nation as a whole. It is, therefore, all the more surprising to find a nature as gentle and loving as Apolo's in such surroundings.

The downtrodden and distressed found in him always a sympathetic friend, and his acts of kindness to poor deserted women, whose lives had been made utterly unbearable by the terrible ill-treatment of the men who owned them, body and soul, have become noteworthy throughout the country. Near to his own house Apolo built a small hut where three and sometimes four of these unhappy creatures could live, thankful to be under his tender care. He fed and clothed them, allowing them to stay until they could find a home. Where women are downtrodden and are the mere chattels of the men, liable to be cast off when old and feeble and left to die in poverty, it is surprising indeed to find one who lays

himself out to help them in their need. His attitude impressed the whole tribe.

Although gentle and kind in the extreme, Apolo was not often imposed upon. His ready common sense, combined with his sympathy, seemed to give him the power to read men, and he very soon got to the bottom of their troubles. Cases in the church councils that proved most puzzling to others, he dealt with in a masterly way, showing that he thoroughly understood men and was not easily misled. So in his definitely spiritual work for God he seldom made a mistake. A man or woman, perhaps, would be put back from the baptism class, and the ordinary outsider might very well think that the case had been hardly dealt with, but a little investigation and a better understanding of circumstances that were well known to Apolo, show that he was right.

He studied men. Some slight sign, that would mean nothing to an outsider, to him would suggest a reason for more searching investigation. He would follow up the clues, and before long find out what he wanted to know. For instance, a man might suddenly take to coming to the Holy Communion after, perhaps, months of irregularity. Apolo would say: "Why is this?" And it is possible that after investigating the matter he would discover that the coming to the Holy Table was merely a blind, and that the man was living in dreadful sin.

Perhaps the most pleasing of all Apolo's characteristics was his wonderful unselfishness. He was always willing to deny himself, even when it hurt, if he could help another. He was always ready to take what may be called a "back seat" and to efface himself. Being the senior native clergyman in Toro, he would naturally to a great extent be able to decide for himself which branch of the church work he would prefer to do, and where he would live. He invariably chose the most humble position, and never under any circumstances pushed himself forward. The very

fact that for so many years he willingly remained in Mboga, far away from the fellowship of his fellow-countrymen and from the enjoyments of social life, shows how utterly he forgot himself and put into the background any thought of self-pleasing. He sought for the greater joy of serving God, and of doing His will in this very lonely place, and he did not seek in vain.

Apolo was a man of prayer. His was that gloriously simple, childlike faith which accepts God's promises without any argument. Often in the course of private talks with him some difficult subject would be introduced, and it seemed impossible to come to any definite conclusion. Suddenly Apolo would say quite naturally: "This beats us; let us pray about it." And as a child speaking to a father he would ask God to make things plain to His children, certain that the prayer would be answered. Indeed, who could doubt it?

This, then, was the beloved and trusted friend whom I looked forward to meeting again when I set out for Mboga in 1928, after an absence of four years. What joy it was when, as we neared the end of the long journey, out of the deep gloom of the forest came Apolo's happy, smiling face! It was a real inspiration to look once more into the eyes of that splendid man. The scars of war were upon that face with its grey stumpy beard and wrinkled brow, but the bright smiling eyes and expressive mouth denoted the true character of the man who had not been daunted by the trials and persecutions of the past.

We had travelled less than a mile on the last lap of the journey when we met about twenty-five teachers from Apolo's church. These young men at once offered to carry the weary white man. When I protested I was met with the rebuke: "When we were young did not our fathers carry us? Now you our father are tired with your long

journey, will you not allow us to carry you ? ” I got into an improvised hammock, and borne swiftly on the shoulders of four stalwart young men through the gloom of the forest, was very soon lulled to sleep to the drone of African voices chanting a song of welcome as is their custom :—

He has come, he has come ; our father has come !
 We his children carry him
 Swift like the antelope of the forest.
 He has come, he has come !

Walk carefully, walk carefully ;
 Our father is tired, carry him gently.
 Hurry up, hurry up, and greatly rejoice,
 He has come, he has come, our father has come !

I woke with a start to find myself surrounded by an immense crowd of people, people who had waited hours to greet me and who now filled the air with their greetings of delight. No royal personage ever had a greater welcome or a heartier cheer as I tumbled out of the hammock to be clasped again and again in loving embrace by the many well-known Mboga Christians.

It was worth all the toil of the road, all the discomfort of the forest to see once more these happy folk who had been won out of darkness to light, and had found the true joy of life. Once more as I looked into the face of that saint of God who had been the instrument used for the uplift of these men and women I realized the power of a life possessed by the love of God.

CHAPTER VIII

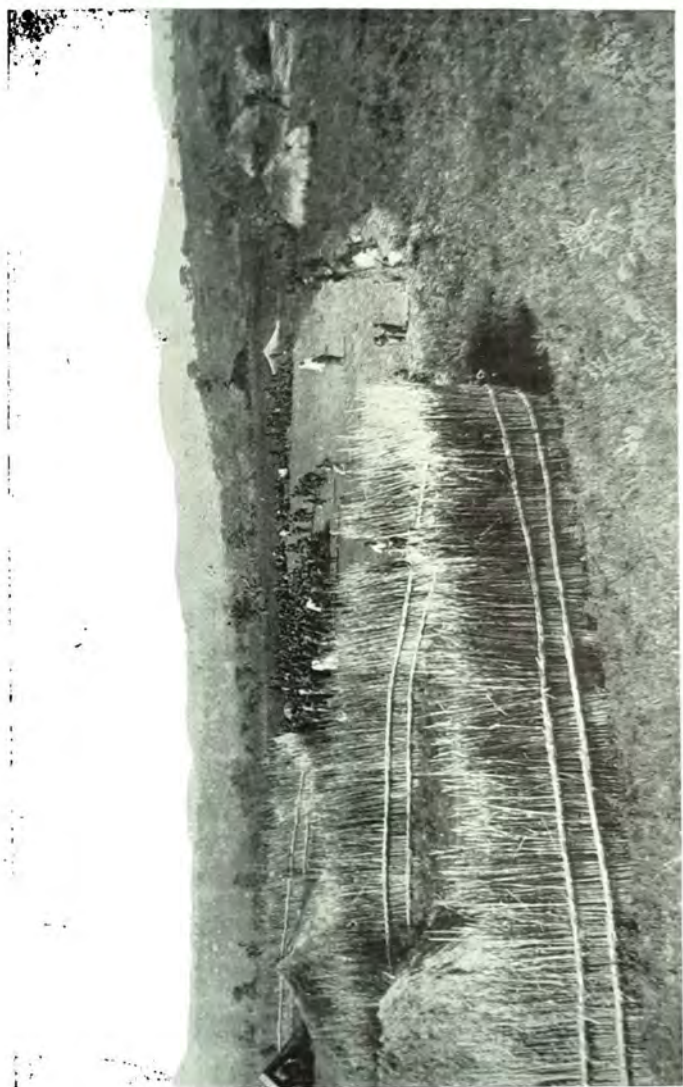
SHARING THE BREAD OF LIFE

PASSION SUNDAY, March 25, 1928, will linger forever in my memory as one of the really great days of my life. It was my first Sunday in Mboga on this return visit.

It was a glorious morning, the air was fresh and sweet after the close and stuffy atmosphere of the forest through which we had toiled the two days before. The birds were singing as they will sing, in spite of what some have said of the songless birds of Africa; and there seemed to be a quiet hush of expectancy in the place. At about 7 a.m. crowds began to collect in the great church, and half an hour later it was packed. There came to us the subdued drone of voices quietly singing some of the well-known hymns, thus passing the time until service was to begin. Just before nine o'clock my two companions and I made our way to the church. Our first surprise came as we entered the churchyard. Here was a quiet and orderly crowd of people seated in rows; they could not find room inside the building, but were determined to enter into the service. All had their books, and many were quietly reading.

I was led by Canon Apolo into the little vestry, where we had a few words of prayer together before beginning the service. I quite well remember the words he used: "Our father has come back to us, and we thank Thee, O God; may he speak to his family the words that Thou hast given him, and thus lead many to our Saviour Jesus Christ."

With that prayer ringing in my ears I entered the crowded building. Apolo took the service, very simply, using parts of the Prayer Book and suitable hymns. Then just before



A village in the Balega Country



The first Confirmation in the Forest : candidates at Kainama (Seated in centre : Canon Apolo, Bishop Willis, and the Rev. W. S. R. Russell)

I stood up to give the message he prayed again, and this time an earnest extemporary prayer asking for the Holy Spirit's power. I spoke for forty-five minutes to an absolutely still and attentive crowd. We all realized that Apolo's prayer was abundantly answered.

After the address there was a Communion service, to which over 300 people stayed. The service was beautiful in its glorious simplicity, and was taken throughout by Apolo. At the rail knelt a visitor from America with the chief (Apolo's former persecutor) on his right hand, and on his left the chief's son; a little lower down came Mr. Roome, of the Bible Society; the rest were rich and poor alike, gathered in from the heathen ranks of Mboga. Something happened at that service that none of us who were present could ever describe. Undoubtedly there was the presence of One in our midst that made our hearts burn within us as we left that sacred place where we had once more met with the Lord Himself.

Throughout the continent Africans have a very significant custom with regard to food. It may be described thus: The evening hour has come and the last meal of the day is to be set before the household. The householder with his children and retainers is sitting in the courtyard in front of the hut, and the cook brings the food steaming hot from the fire. The head of the house then proceeds to distribute it to the various members of the household. Just at this moment a man comes along the road, obviously on a journey. Maybe he is a stranger to the country, but seeing the people about to partake of their evening meal and knowing the native custom, he sits down with the rest of the family, at one side of the group. No word is spoken, no one asks a question, but the server of the food at once allocates a portion to the stranger. The latter washes his hands and proceeds with the meal, and when he has finished

he simply thanks the householder or praises the cook, washes his hands again, and passes on his way.

The origin of this custom was once explained to me in this way : " All food is God's gift to man, and if this be so we cannot deny to the stranger who comes along a share in the food that God has given to us." This beautiful custom has been taken right into the heart of the African before he embraces the Christian faith. God's gift to man ! If this be so we must share this gift with all who are hungry. And so it will be found that right through Africa the native Church places in the forefront of its faith the absolute duty of passing on to others the Bread of Life.

Apolo's heart was ever actuated by this desire, and when once a little company of faithful men and women had received the Bread of Life, they were taught as their first duty to carry this living Bread to other tribes. In Mboga, as we have seen, there sprang into being a company of men and women who, like their teacher, dedicated their lives to the spread of the Gospel.

One of the joys I had during this visit to Apolo's church was to welcome between fifty and sixty of these teachers who had come to their head-quarters to see me. These men and women came from all parts of the great forest. Ten of them were spending their lives among the dwarfs, living in their tiny villages, partaking of the same food, and moving about with them on their hunting expeditions, ever trying to distribute the Bread of Life. Four of these young men had come in from a place far out in the forest on the banks of the Ituri River, which is a tributary of the Aruwimi, which in turn runs into the Congo at the north-east corner of the great horseshoe bend in that river. Here they had been working among the cannibal tribes of that wild region, and the stories they had to tell were thrilling in the extreme. One young fellow said that only a few days before he came in to see me he had witnessed a horrible scene of murder and cannibalism which he was quite unable to prevent, although

at the risk of his own life he had attempted to do so. He added that the feast of human flesh was more often than not a religious rite and was usually ordered by the witch doctor of the tribe. In spite, however, of these harrowing scenes that took place in the village where this young hero lived, many of the people were not only reading God's Word but were really trying to live pure lives to the glory of God.

It was an inspiration to listen to the wonderful experiences of these young men who had dedicated their lives to the service of their fellow-men. It was not the men only who were thus working for God in these wild places, for among this small army of teachers were to be found some splendid women who were taking risks and suffering privations in just the same way as the men. Two very fine young women who were well educated and trained, one of them being the daughter of the chief of Mboga who had been Apolo's persecutor in the years gone by, were working in a heathen village of the Bakonjo, fifty miles from their home. I visited them years ago and secretly wondered if it was wise for two young women to be working alone so far away from home. Here they were to-day, happy and bright, having passed through many terrible times of risk and real danger, with a wonderful story to tell of the crowds of women and girls that they had been the means of winning for Christ. I believe their apparent helplessness had been their real safety in the eyes of these savage people, who realized that there must be a very strong power behind, enabling young girls to place themselves in such a position. However that may be, to me it was sufficient proof that God had sent them as I listened to the story they told of the conquests of the Gospel.

It is well to remember that there are many Apolos scattered over Africa of whom we seldom hear; and it is they who are spreading the knowledge of God's love where the white man cannot go. The Church of Mboga, which has

APOLO OF THE PYGMY FOREST

grown so wonderfully from the work of an African Christian, is the centre of a body of Christian men and women who by the grace and power of God are sending the Gospel to thousands of heathen people in the most remote parts of Africa, where it would be impossible for a white man to live.

CHAPTER IX

EARLIER EXPERIENCES AMONG THE PYGMIES

WITHIN a few days of my return to Mboga we made preparations for a week's tour in the forest to try to get into closer touch with the strange little pygmies. Before telling of that journey into the forest with Apolo as guide, I will recall some of my earlier experiences among the pygmies.

It was nearly forty years ago that I first penetrated the pygmy forest, crossing to its western border, and met for the first time some of these little men. With my small caravan I struggled on day after day through the unutterably dismal jungle, camping at night in its lonely shades and often wondering if it would be possible to get through. Food was scarce, and only with the help of the gun was it possible to find enough to keep body and soul together. Sometimes it was wild pigs that gave us a meal or two, often it was monkeys or even parrots ; but the anxiety to supply one's physical needs was tremendous.

One day my little store of food was almost exhausted ; I was wandering through the bush with my gun hoping to find a fresh track of wild pig or some other forest beast, when suddenly there was a slight rustle of the branches of one of the huge trees that towered high above our heads. My boy who was with me spotted it first, and pointed it out to me as a great monkey ! Once more I felt that I must be half cannibal and shoot what at that great height certainly seemed to be a very large-sized monkey. No time was to be lost, however, and up went the gun, and a bead drawn upon the half-concealed monster. Another moment, and the trigger would have moved ! My boy saved me from what might have been a dreadful tragedy and the unhappy

end of an innocent white man. "Don't shoot," said he; "it is a man!" The gun fell from my shoulder, and with the utmost astonishment I saw that he was right. It was a pygmy! He was peering down at us, and he had a bow and arrows in his hands. For a moment he stood thus, and then ran along the branch upon which he stood, heaved himself up to another by a great creeper, and—disappeared!

My poor boy was much more frightened than I was, and I was uncommonly scared. What would happen now? With great anxiety we made our way back to the little camp. The boy was quite convinced that our last hour had come, and I was very much inclined to think so too. I remember sitting outside the tent trying to read, and, if possible, to divest my mind of the possibility that the end was near. I had of course read Stanley's wonderful book, and I remembered his thrilling descriptions of these dangerous little folk, of their poisoned arrows that never seemed to miss the mark, and invariably proved fatal to the unfortunate being who might be struck by one.

My thoughts were wandering on, and the gloom seemed to be getting worse and worse, when suddenly there was a distinct movement in the bush in front of me, and in a moment I found myself looking into the face of the strangest little man I had ever seen. Then another appeared and still another, until every tree seemed to hide some strange form, and a little head peeped out every now and then to gaze upon me. What was I to do? Obviously not to show any sign of fear, and this was not so easy when a cold shiver was running down my back and I was wondering what part of my anatomy was to receive the poisoned dart!

Thus we gazed at one another for some moments; nothing serious happened, and my drooping spirits began to revive. Perhaps it was not so serious after all; any intention to kill the lonely stranger in the forest might be far enough away from the minds of the little people. I took my courage in both hands and called out in a

friendly tone the ordinary greeting used by the people of Mboga. I repeated this several times, and then at last to my joy came a response from one of the men. It was the breaking of the ice, and in a little while a company of these funny little fellows were standing round me. Their height was scarcely more than four feet, many being much smaller; their colour was chocolate brown; their limbs were beautifully formed and quite normal in shape, in fact, they were men. Conversation was difficult indeed, for although some of them seemed to understand a little of what I said, I am quite sure the majority were completely ignorant of the language I used. I did, however, gather from them that they had followed us for ten days and knew exactly what we had done. Obviously they had decided that we were quite harmless, and therefore had not interfered with our progress. Subsequent relations with the pygmies have convinced me that they have been maligned by those who say that they are a treacherous and dangerous people. My opinion is that they are a timid folk who would never dream of attacking others unless they did so in self-defence. In later years I have had many opportunities of studying the pygmies, and have many reasons for holding them in great regard.

Once I was taken by a pygmy chief to see for myself where these strange forest people live. The only condition he made was that I should go alone. This I agreed to do, feeling I could implicitly trust myself in his hands. I shall never forget this experience, as for more than an hour I stumbled after him through the densest forest I have ever been in. On and on, amid a perfect maze of gigantic trees, stumbling over hidden stumps, struggling over fallen monarchs of the forest, down into almost hidden river beds of the innumerable streams that thread their way through the undergrowth, until I was told to sit down and rest. This I gladly did, but was soon astonished to find my guide had disappeared! Thank goodness it was only for a

moment or two, otherwise I am quite sure I should have gone mad in that awful solitude. He came back with a ghost of a smile upon his face, which was no doubt due to the look of utter hopelessness on mine. He told me the village was near, and that he had warned the people of my approach so that no one would run away, nor would they greet me with a shower of poisoned arrows.

The village was quite close, but cleverly hidden away in one of the darkest parts of the forest. There was a little circle of huts about four feet high, built of the boughs of the trees and thatched with leaves, there being no grass in the forest. Tiny men and women stood looking with wonder at the white man, the first specimen of the species that most of them had ever seen. In the middle of the circle of huts I saw what looked like an ordinary hut standing by itself. Something about this building, however, made me feel that it was different from the rest. I therefore asked the chief if the house belonged to him, and my surprise was great when he replied that it was not a hut, but the pygmies' temple to the great God.

"What do you know about the great God?" I asked.

"The great God Who made the trees and the wild beasts of the forest, Who made me and made you, white man."

"Why do you build a temple to Him?"

"In order that we may present our offerings to Him."

It was all most strange, and I could hardly bring myself to believe that the little man had not been prompted by some one to tell me these things. That the pygmies should believe in God at all was wonderful, for surely here was man in the most primitive state; how could he have any knowledge of God? Now after many years among the wilder tribes of Central Africa I have learned that everywhere God is known and every tribe has its name for Him.

I asked one more question before I left that wonderful village in the forest. "Why do you make offerings to God of these pots of honey, these fruits from the trees; why are

they offered to Him ? ” It was some moments before the answer came to my question, and then the expression on the pygmy’s face burnt itself into my very soul ; there was a wild and fearful look as if he dreaded some awful happening.

“ White man, we are afraid of Him ! He is cruel, and hates us. He brings trouble to us, the wild beasts that catch our women and children ; the sickness that steals among us, and we sicken and die. God hates us, and that is why we build a temple to Him and put there our offerings, if perchance He may have pity upon us and save us from the evil.”

I was conducted back quite safely to my camp by my little friend, more than ever convinced of the world’s great need of Christ as revealed to us in the Gospel of the grace of God. Man believes in God, but Christ alone can lead him to God, for He is the Way, the Truth, and the Life.

CHAPTER X

TO PYGMY-LAND AND BACK

SOON after eight o'clock on a beautiful morning in March, 1928, a well-equipped caravan threaded its way along the narrow village paths of Mboga, making as straight an approach as possible to the forest. The air was deliciously cool, and the morning breezes were still blowing from the snow mountain to the east. The rising sun had turned those snow-capped peaks a deep rose colour, and the glory of that great mountain range had never seemed more inspiring. Being a well-equipped little company, we were determined if possible to penetrate into the very heart of Pygmy-land. With the five cameras that we possessed (one being a kinema camera) we hoped to get some permanent records of our little friends, and we were not altogether disappointed.

The first day brought us to the edge of the forest, where we found a large village inhabited by Bakonjo people. All who live in Toro on the eastern side of the mountain are well aware of this sturdy tribe of mountaineers who dwell on the lower slopes of Ruwenzori—happy hard-working people for whom the Mutoro has high regard, because they can always be depended upon when there is some really hard work to be done for the chief or for the Government. The Mutoro does not love work, and the presence of this tribe on the mountainside is a great joy to him. All along the lower slopes of the mountain where the Batoro have their villages may be found innumerable little companies of the sturdy Bakonjo digging the fields or cutting poles for the lazy Mutoro, who quietly sits and smokes his pipe. If you go into one of the Toro markets you will find that the people who are offering food for sale

are mostly Bakonjo from the mountainside. Their land on those higher slopes is very fertile, and the bananas grown there are the envy of the man who lives in the plain, for one banana will sometimes measure a foot in length, and the potatoes also are of abnormal size.

The Bakonjo tribe seems to have been divided into two sections at some time in its history, for the people living on the lower slopes of the mountain on the eastern side are absolutely identical with those folk who are found right across the Semliki valley to the west, occupying the outside fringe of the forest. It has been supposed that the great Semliki valley is of comparatively recent formation, and that when the subsidence took place and the valley became partly submerged by floods of water, the tribe was gradually split into two divisions, the one to occupy the lower slopes of the mountain, while the other section made its way westward and climbed the high land which in reality is the watershed of the mighty Congo River. However that may be, here on the edge of the great forest is to be found this strong and virile race. As we saw in an earlier chapter, Apolo had long ago got into touch with them, and, indeed, during some of the troublous times of the early history of the Mboga Church, sanctuary had often been found among these kindly people by the persecuted Banyamboga Christians. It was with joy, therefore, that we made our first stop among them.

We found a charming little house substantially built, with a delightful garden abounding in several kinds of European flowers and a nice little patch of pineapple and Cape gooseberries. A teacher from Mboga was in charge and lived in another smaller house in the same compound with his wife and small children, while a third house was occupied by two women teachers. Crowds flocked to the church for a service of welcome, and when this was over horns began to sound and drums to beat all over the village, and along came a crowd of dancers. The occasion of our

APOLO OF THE PYGMY FOREST

visit was to be marked by a time of laughter, dancing, and fun of every kind.

What a jolly crowd it was ! The African loves a dance ; why deprive him of it ? Of course everybody knows that these African dances are usually accompanied by drinking and all sorts of vice, but here Apolo's influence had been at work, for there was no drinking and nothing obscene in the performance. It was just a frolic of real joy to show the delight of the village people at the advent of the three white men among them. Gifts of chickens and food of all kinds were brought to us, and the chief came along himself bringing a fine fat-tailed sheep for our acceptance. At sundown there was a sudden hush as the church drums boomed forth to prayer, and the whole crowd packed themselves into the church for evening worship, hot from their dancing, but very reverent and quiet as they knelt to pray. Then came the evening meal, and gradually silence stole over the village and a hush pervaded the whole place, broken only now and then by the cry of a sleepy child or the bark of some forest animal.

The next day was to be a very strenuous one, for we were to leave the road and make our way through the forest as best we might with a pygmy as our guide. Several of the Bakonjo Christians accompanied us, and although we penetrated far into the forest where no paths existed, these loyal people remained with us, giving us all the help they could. I was soon left far behind by the more vigorous, and plodded on with a pygmy as my companion and guide. He often looked at me with a kind of pitying expression as I stumbled along, and I wondered what was passing in his mind.

Once I had to sit down and rest, then he turned and said : " Are you tired, white man ? " " Yes," I said, " I am a little lame, and my feet are sore." He looked so sympathetic and told me to wait there ; he disappeared in the forest for a while and presently came back with a long, solid

bamboo stick, and shyly presenting this to me said : " This will help you, white man." Well, I thought, he may be a heathen pygmy, but he is a gentleman for all that. But I saw something more in this spontaneous act of kindness. Where is the heathen pygmy who would care two straws about the fatigue of the white man ? Is not the secret to be found in the fact that this little man has learned something of the love of God ? Yes, it was so, he was one of the readers of the Book which tells of the One Who went about doing good, and in his own way he was learning to follow the holy example of the Christ.

For several days we plodded on deeper and deeper into the dark shades, until at last we came near to the pygmy haunts. We realized our whereabouts by the almost startling appearance of a small army of dwarfs headed by their chief. As soon as they caught sight of us they ran forward shouting : "*Itiri, itiri!*" which we quickly learned was the pygmy greeting, and might be translated as meaning " Welcome, welcome ! " Very shy they were, and one could not but notice the strange shiftiness of the eyes, rather like those of a nervous dog. Some carried horns which they continued to blow, and others had whistles cleverly made of bamboo cane. All seemed to be armed with bows and arrows, and a few with short throwing spears. There was nothing repulsive about their appearance, and one was struck with the perfect physical formation of their limbs. Some were very hairy, others extraordinarily light coloured, with practically no hair on the body. They were all very excited to meet three white men in their own forest domain. After greetings were over they proceeded to escort us to their camp, which we found was not far away. It consisted of the usual collection of roughly built huts thatched with leaves, none of them more than a few feet high, but quite big enough for a pygmy to scramble into.

In the previous chapter I described my first visit to a

pygmy settlement, when I saw the temple to the great unknown God, in which were placed the offerings of the people. Here was something quite different. Instead of the little heathen temple to the unknown God there was a building, much bigger and better built, and its distinguishing feature was a rough cross on the roof, the symbol of the Christian faith. Into this church my little friends invited us, and there kneeling with them in a common act of worship, we all felt the nearness of God. The teacher, a young man from Mboga, first read a few passages from the pygmy book, which contained portions of the Gospel, and then we all joined in the Family Prayer. Who could remain unmoved with the knowledge of the past, when fear was the only impetus to worship God? There knelt Apolo, and on either side of him a pygmy man knelt with upturned face, looking into his eyes and repeating after him the words of that grand prayer: "Our Father, which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy Name." When we came from the church I asked one of the pygmies: "Do *you* pray to Jesus now you have heard about Him?"

"Yes," replied he, "I do."

"What do you pray for?"

"O sir, I do not know yet what to pray for, so I just pray; He knows what I need, I don't; it's all right."

No sooner were we outside the little church than the day's entertainment commenced. We could see that our friends were very curious to know what we intended doing, and they watched our every movement, often chattering among themselves when some strange European contraption such as a camera or field glasses appeared. It was quite a task to get them to stand still for a moment while we took pictures of them. Usually when the camera was pointed in their direction there would be a general stampede for the bush, and only a hearty laugh from some of the more knowing among them finally convinced the timid folk that it was safe to face the little box and that nothing dangerous

would appear. With Apolo as our interpreter we got on well, for it was obvious that they trusted him absolutely, and whatever he might ask them to do was at least safe if it might seem a little ridiculous. For instance, why should they climb the trees when there was nothing at the top that was of any use to them? Still, if Apolo told them to do it there was nothing to be said; so up they went, hand over hand, with their legs drawn up in such a manner that the knees seemed to come right up to the shoulder and the feet ran up the tree trunk in exactly the same way as a monkey's.

We had the greatest difficulty in getting pictures, for the light was so bad, and only when we were lucky enough to find a break in the forest where some tree had fallen, thus revealing the fact that there really was a little sky overhead, could photographs be taken with any degree of success. The pygmies gave us a very interesting display of their skill with bow and arrows, and I was thankful we did not have to face these little marksmen as combatants, for with their skill at making themselves almost invisible to the eye and the deadly precision with this weapon that they all seemed to have, there would have been but little chance for us.

After entertaining us for some time in this way, they decided that the hour had come when they must go off to hunt for their evening meal. The chief blew his tiny whistle and very soon his men were around him, ready to start off into the jungle to hunt the pigs, monkeys, or any other beasts that might come their way. It is a fact that even elephants are well within the limits of their ambition, and are often hunted and killed. I remember coming across a dead elephant killed by them that was literally like a gigantic pin cushion; arrows were sticking out all over him.

We spent nearly a week with the pygmies before we turned eastward once more and began our return journey through the forest.

* * *

On our way back we passed through the wild Bambuba tribe. Here we found further evidence of the wonderful enterprise of our friend Apolo, for numbers of the people in this tribe are learning to read the Word of God, and many of them have been baptized. In one of the villages was a big church which was well filled, and we attended a service conducted by one of the Bambuba, a lad of about nineteen, who had been baptized and was trying to pass on the good news to his own people. Apolo told me that he himself often spent weeks among these wild and dangerous folk, making friends with them and striving to teach them the things of God.

The Bambuba are mostly tall and well-set-up fellows. They make clearings in the forest, cutting down the trees and removing the undergrowth. Ground thus prepared is immensely productive, the soil being very rich, so that potatoes, bananas, millet seed, and yams grow excellently. The men do not seem to hunt very much, and I fancy that they hold the pygmies in very high regard as masters of the jungle. They benefit considerably, however, by the hunting powers of their forest neighbours, for the pygmy wants vegetable food just as much as the Bambuba desires meat. The pygmy has solved the difficulty for himself. When he has had a kill and feels he would like a bunch of bananas or a basket of potatoes to eat with his meat, he steals off at night to the Bambuba village, bearing with him a big joint of meat. Silently he makes for the potato patch and digs up what he wants, and then he fastens the meat to a tree out of reach of any wild beast, but in full view of the village, and leaves it as a *quid pro quo*. No one is offended, indeed both parties are satisfied, and no harm is done.

It was interesting to find that many of the older people of this tribe remembered quite well the advent of Stanley's party in the forest (December, 1888), and although some very bitter things were said about the rough African followers that were with him, not a word was said against

the leader of that great expedition. It is good to think that he was looked upon by many of these untamed people as a "man of grace," as they express it. We who have lived in Uganda realize that it was Stanley who did the first bit of missionary work in the country, for, as he tells us in his records, he used to read to King Mutesa passages from the Bible, and try to explain to the people something of the love of God. Indeed, had it not been for Stanley, Central Africa might still be the dark continent.

After spending some time among the Bambuba we passed on, and soon came to the Bahuku, a very similar tribe, perhaps not quite so numerous nor so virile, but none the less interesting. Their appeal to Apolo to send them teachers had not been in vain, for we found four living in their villages who by the grace of God had worked wonders. There were men and women who had not only learned to read, but who had been baptized. These experiences reminded us of a request which had reached Apolo a few years before, when I was staying with him. Some of the wildest people in the forest had heard of the presence of a white man, and wanted to see him. We went to the appointed place, a few days' walk into the forest, and there found a large party of extremely wild-looking people sitting among the trees. They greeted us in a language which we could not understand, but fortunately we found a young man who could interpret it. An old man got up slowly and began to speak: "We have come from our forest home to see you and speak with you, O white man. We have heard that you teach men about God, and that He is a God Who loves. We know that you have taught the Mboga people, and that a great change has come to them. They no longer raid our country to capture our women and children as slaves. We ask you to tell the people in Europe to send us teachers, *for we also are men*, that we may learn about this great God of love. When you go home, tell the people this our message." Having said this, he sat down,

and a murmur of assent came from all the assembled crowd of wild men. Soon after this the whole crowd arose and solemnly bade us farewell as they disappeared in the jungle.

What a call! Could it be responded to? Yes, Apolo took up the challenge. He called his Christians together, and told them of the open door, urging the young men to accept the invitation. He did not plead in vain. Two young men went to live in the cannibal village from which the deputation came, and through the message of the love of God have been the means of uplifting many of the people.

Unfortunately, time did not permit us to visit this village. We had to continue our tramp, and after a few hours found ourselves on the good road that was to take us back to Mboga.

CHAPTER XI

A CALL TO PARTNERSHIP

ONE night, as I sat in my tent thinking over all the wonderful things we had seen, and thanking God once more for that great man Apolo who had been inspired by Him to undertake such self-denying work, there was a step outside and a voice said: "May I come in?" It was the man I was thinking about, and I quickly told him to enter.

"Well, Apolo. Nothing wrong, I hope?"

"No," he replied with his cheery smile, "but I want to talk to you."

Of course I told him to fire away, and he began like this: "I am getting an old man, and my legs are often stiff when I struggle through this forest; I find I cannot do what once I did and what I still long to do. I cannot expect to live much longer, and yet there is so much still to be done, for many of the forest people have not yet heard the gospel message. You are going back to England where there are so many who serve the Lord Jesus; could you not find a man who would come here and carry on the work I have tried to start? Do not think that Apolo wants to go back to his native land and give up the work he loves. Oh, no, not that; but what is to become of my children when I am taken away? Also, dear friend, you must remember that Africa is different from what it was when I first came to Mboga. Now the Belgian Government require all sorts of forms filled up and statistics which I feel I am not able to do. I never went to school like other Baganda boys, and I am very ignorant. Can you not find some brave young Englishman who would come and take over the responsibility of this work? I would work with him and help

him to understand these people, for I shall never willingly leave my people here."

The tears were in the dear old man's eyes as he said this. What an appeal! Could a finer field for service be found anywhere? Not an easy task, I admit; for the forest is a lonely place to wander in; but with such a helper as Apolo and such a call from the heathen men, surely some young disciple would feel constrained to offer. We knelt together in the tent, and as often before we prayed to the God of love Who must be far more anxious to bring these wanderers to Himself than we could ever be.

It was hard indeed to part with my many friends in Mboga, but hardest of all to say farewell to Apolo. It had been suggested more than once that I should sound him as to his willingness to travel to England with me and undertake a tour through the country, so that supporters in England might get to know him and hear from his own lips the wonderful story of his work among these wild tribes. I called him to my tent one evening for another chat, and put the suggestion to him. His dear old face beamed with joy at the idea, as he thanked me for telling him. Then he sat quite still for a moment or two.

"You would like to go then, Apolo, would you?"

"Like to go? I should love it; but this is a very big thing you are suggesting to me. I cannot give an answer now, for I must have time to seek God's will."

And with that he got up and left me. The next evening he came back, and said with his wonderful smile: "Last night I prayed very much to God about what you asked me, for truly I should love to go to Europe and see all the wonders of your country, and above all to tell the people of the great needs of the work out here. But oh, sir, it cannot be. Think of my poor people to be left without their shepherd; there is no one to take my place. Then again, sir, I am an old man and I might die of the cold and never come back to my people. No; there is so much work still

to be done and I have not very long to live in any case, for I am an old man, and I must go on with my work. I cannot please myself; I must try to please my dear Master. As I think of the many who need Him so much, and yet do not know Him, I *must* stay with them and tell them about Jesus"; and the tears came unrestrained from the old man's eyes.

Of course he was right, though I am convinced that, could young Christian men and women of England have looked into that saintly face and seen for themselves this humble hero, and heard from his lips what can never be adequately written, they would surely have felt the tremendous urge for self-sacrificing effort to bring in the Kingdom of our Lord. Again we knelt together, and with glorious childlike faith Apolo committed me to the care of God. No grander benediction could be given to any one, and we parted as brothers have to part sometimes, but with the sure and certain hope that we shall meet again.

CHAPTER XII

THE CHALLENGE OF APOLO

“Deeply regret, Apolo died, May 30.”—*Cable*

THE above cable received by the C.M.S. at the end of May, 1933, tells the solemn story of a life laid down in glad surrender. But it also comes as another challenge to the Church of Jesus Christ, a call to service from one who fell at his post of duty far out on the front line; from one who wrote just before he passed to his eternal reward: “In spite of illness and much weakness, I rejoice in the work of Jesus Christ.”

Apolo had laid down his life to blaze a trail in the Congo forest for the Gospel of Christ. He had been used by God to build up a Church which has become a bright and shining light in that dreary forest.

“Who through faith subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions, quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness were made strong, waxed valiant in fight, turned to flight the armies of the aliens.”

Truly such words may well be written of Apolo.

Soon after his death I returned to Mboga and went on a long tour through the forest in which he lived and worked for nearly thirty-six years; there I saw how, by his faith in the message that he carried, he also “subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises,” and out of weakness was made strong.¹

I visited beautiful little churches in the midst of the cannibal villages, and I prayed with and communed with converted men and women, who but a short time ago were,

¹ A record of the outcome of Apolo's life, especially as I saw it revealed during this tour, is given in *Apolo the Pathfinder—Who follows?*

by their own confession to me, cannibals of the lowest type. One and all spoke of their beloved friend Apolo with bated breath, and often with a catch in their voices. One old man, who was a cannibal chief, told me himself that Apolo had brought the Light to him only a few weeks before his death, and had baptized him, giving him his own name, Apolo. The old man's eyes filled with tears as he talked to me about him and said: "Yes, I was a cannibal, but Apolo brought me the Light, and now I and my three sons are all baptized Christians. But there will never be another like Apolo!"

Right away in the midst of this lonely forest the great heart of this dear African had overflowed with love for the lost sheep. He had prayed with them and taught them, and by the beauty of his simple life had won them to the Saviour. At every church I visited, some fifty odd, I found not only hundreds of children learning to read, but old men and women also. At one church which was so crowded that more than half of the people were standing outside, I spoke to the people of the wonderful love of Apolo in giving his life in order that they might have the knowledge of God, Who is a God of love; I said that I wanted them to show their love for him by their gifts in order that we may build a memorial school to his memory. I knew that I was speaking to the poorest of the poor who had scarcely any money, but at any rate they could all give a little. They gave in a wonderful way; men took the wristlets from their arms and the women their bracelets, and they solemnly handed them over to me as their gifts in memory of their dear teacher. Over a hundred of these love tokens were laid upon the Holy Table and dedicated to God, and all who could gave what coins they possessed. One noted witch doctor publicly renounced his craft and brought a bundle of his charms and fetishes, saying that he had done with them for ever, and that henceforth Apolo's God should be his God.

We never knew that Apolo had penetrated so far into this great forest. At one place nearly a hundred miles due west of Mboga I found a wonderful church with its tiny Christian community, and scores of people, with no teacher to guide them, were trying to learn for themselves of the great glory of God's love. At most of the churches there was a teacher in charge, often a very young fellow who had come straight from his baptism to take up the work of teaching. Of course, he was very ignorant, knowing practically nothing but the Gospel in all its simplicity and beauty, and yet in weakness he "was made strong to turn to flight the armies of the aliens." I have seen literally *thousands* of young children gathered in these village churches, eager and anxious to learn, with perhaps but one book between fifty or more of them.

What can I say about the strange little pygmies with whom Apolo often lived for months at a time, sharing their food and sleeping in their tiny huts? I saw many of them in their remote encampments far away from the beaten tracks. About fifty have been baptized by Apolo; many of them are now far away in the midst of the forest, leading their roving lives. But they will carry to others the blessed truth that they have been taught, and the knowledge of God will spread. From among this strange remnant of past ages there is growing a branch of the great family of our loving God.

On this journey alone I had the joy of baptizing no less than 160 people, most of them from the cannibal tribes. Old men and women, young men and maidens, are pressing into the Kingdom. *What an ingathering there might be!*

Here is the trail already made for the ambassadors of Christ! The challenge is flung down by the old warrior who, through blood and fire, has opened up the way by the willing sacrifice of his life to God. May God help us to follow the trail thus blazed with his life's blood and bring the Kingdom of God into this great dark land.

IN APOLO'S FOOTSTEPS

By the Rev. R. C. PALIN, Mboga

IT is three years since that great African saint, Canon Apolo Kivebulaya, known to thousands of people throughout the world as "the Apostle to the Pygmies," passed to his rest after a wonderful life of witness and service for his Master. I will try to give you a picture of what we, who follow in his steps, are trying to do, and a glimpse of the glorious possibilities which lie before the people of Mboga and the great forest beyond who first heard the Gospel from his lips.

One of the most interesting features of Mboga to-day is the new school built under the supervision of Mr. C. A. Rendle. Curiously enough the old school building collapsed early in the morning of Mr. Lloyd's last Sunday at Mboga; its place has been taken by a large, well-equipped building, attended each day by 150 children, and the staff includes a trained Muganda teacher well qualified to help in this important work. The large church built by Apolo about ten years ago still stands, and is the centre of much activity. There are regular daily services, varying in their form and appeal, through which we are trying to teach our Christians that as members of the Church of Christ they belong to a world-wide fellowship, and that through intercession they may have a share in spreading the Gospel throughout the world. There is also a branch of the Scripture Union, and a weekly class for women, in addition to the daily classes for inquirers and baptism candidates, all of which are exceedingly well attended. A start has been made in the important work of training our teachers and of equipping them more fully for their work as evangelists, pastors, and

schoolmasters, a task which will require all our energies in the days to come.

What rejoices us more than anything else are the signs of spiritual awakening among the people of Mboga. We found that many of the oldest Christians had fallen into sin, and that in the place which ought to be the mainspring of all the work there were still large numbers of heathen who, either from sheer indifference or from a spirit of opposition, refused to hear the glad news of Jesus Christ. But to-day we can tell of some wonderful conversions among the heathen of Mboga, and it is a real joy to see the large numbers, both of men and women, who come each day to read in the church.

So much for Mboga itself, and now for a brief glimpse of that which has to be done outside. When Apolo sought to extend his work from Mboga, he first went in a westerly direction, which brought him in contact with the many tribes of the forest area, including the famous pygmies; afterwards in a northerly direction, which enabled him to open up work among the then fierce and warlike Balega of the hills. Our teachers, many of whom were brought to Christ by Apolo himself, are doing a splendid work among the many tribes of the forest, and are courageously witnessing to the power of Jesus Christ, sometimes in the face of active opposition. In two villages where a strong heathen influence is at work, the Christians have more than once been intimidated by the heathen who have carried their wooden fetishes in procession around the church; but in spite of this fresh people are being won for Christ every day. The pygmy tribes, owing to their rapid movements from place to place in search of food, are difficult to touch, but as far as possible their teachers endeavour to accompany them on their travels, and to teach them something about the God Who looks upon them as His children. No less impressive is the work among the Balega of the hills, a people very primitive and conservative in their

customs, but eagerly coming forward to be taught the Christian faith.

In August, 1935, we had the privilege of welcoming the Bishop of Uganda, who confirmed nearly 500 people drawn from all these many different tribes. There are now approximately 2000 confirmed Christians in the area in which we work. As yet they have but little conception of the greatness of the fellowship into which they have been called, but these simple people with their simple faith in Christ Jesus are the nucleus of the Church of the future in which their children will find peace, joy, and fellowship, in place of ignorance, vice, and fear.

On the spot close beside the church of Mboga where the body of Apolo lies buried, there now stands the bronze cross given by many of his friends in England and elsewhere. The simple inscription, translated, reads thus:—

Apolo Kivebulaya
Passed to Rest 30 May, 1933.
An Apostle of Jesus Christ.

We hope that one day it may be possible to erect another memorial to that great saint—whether it be a school or a church, or both—that will for ever remind us of his keenness and courage in the service of his Master. Yet his greatest memorial is not to be found in buildings of brick or mud, but in the *lives* of those whom he loved to call his “children”—keen Christian men and women in and around the great Ituri forest, who are striving to live out the teaching of Jesus Christ in the face of great temptations and sometimes opposition. To hear a youngster belonging to one of the primitive forest tribes bearing his simple witness to the changing power of Jesus in his own life, and the complete satisfaction and joy which His service brings to men, is to realize the greatness of that humble saint of God who dedicated his life to preaching the Gospel of good tidings to his own people of Africa.

LETTERS FROM APOLO

(TRANSLATED)

Mboga,

Congo Belge,

April 16, 1928

TO MY DEAR FRIEND AND MY TRUE FATHER, REV. A. B. LLOYD.

How are you, sir? I hope you are still well. God give you and Mrs. Lloyd His richest blessings. I hope she is well these days.

Here at Mboga all is peace, and I must tell you at once that your visit has been greatly blessed to all at Mboga, and especially to the pygmies. They have now greatly increased in numbers, and they are always talking about the love you showed to them, especially by your sleeping in their village with them. This, they say, is a great wonder and surprise to them all, and as a result they have all decided to read God's Word and they will not allow their teacher to leave them for a moment; they read the Book by night and day. I went back to see them after you had gone, and I find there are many more who now really believe in Jesus Christ. I must confess that I have been amazed at the blessings that have come to us as a result of your visit. It is true indeed that the father of the children brings blessings to his little ones.

Then the greatest cheer of all to me is the blessing that followed your addresses in our church at Mboga. To give you only one result—a man of great importance here in Mboga, who was a bad man, was truly changed after listening to you. He came to me and said: "I want to be baptized and become a real Christian." I asked him: "What has made this great change in you?" and he said: "When I

listened to the words that white man spoke, my soul saw its need and my old life died." I was delighted to hear this, and I have entered him as a member of the catechumens class to prepare for Holy Baptism.

There are many other things I could tell you. For instance, in the village of the Bakonjo where you spoke to the great crowd, there was a woman who listened to your words, and her whole life has been changed. She had been a very bad woman in the power of Satan, but she believed the words of Jesus, and she came to me and said: "I feel as if I could not leave the little church, I want to learn all about Jesus." There are many, many others who have been brought in.

It is indeed a great wonder, dear Mr. Lloyd, to us all, for people have been coming to me from all sides wishing to join the baptism class; already fifty-four have been written down, and we are truly amazed that God should have brought such great blessing as a result of your messages to us. And I also, my dear friend, have been tremendously helped and filled with rejoicing, as I have looked into your eyes once more and had the joy of hearing again the words that you have spoken—such wonderful words of God.

I do not hesitate to say that God the Holy Spirit was with you and He came down with power upon the people, and many have been filled with the Holy Spirit in this church of Mboga. When they came to me in such numbers to be written down for baptism I knew that they were sent by God the Holy Spirit.

Thank you, dear brother, for bringing this great gift to us. We shall continue to pray for you and for your wife that you may get back to Europe in peace, for you have the joy of knowing that many have been brought to the Lord by your visit to us and the messages you gave to us.

Excuse me for not writing to you before. I was anxious to get back first into the forest in order that I might send you the latest news, and let you know what the people are

saying in the places where you preached the wonderful Gospel of Jesus Christ. And so I kneel down, humbling myself before God, and praying Him to take you safely back on your long and difficult journey.

All the teachers of Mboga send you greetings and good wishes. All the boys and girls of the schools and the chief Paulo Tabalo greet you. The chief says: "Tell him I was so delighted to see him again, for he is my Father in God." All the women greet you and your wife, and say how sorry they were that they did not see Mrs. Lloyd with their eyes.

And so March 24, 1928, will be remembered by us as a great day for us all, when you came to Mboga as the messenger of God.

My friend, I shall never forget your love to me. God keep you and give you great grace from His holy place.

I am,

APOLO KIVEBULAYA.

June 4, 1928

MY DEAR FRIEND, A. B. LLOYD.

How are you, sir? I was delighted to get your letter and was very pleased to know that all goes well with you and Mrs. Lloyd on your homeward journey. The great gift that you left with us that came from the words that you preached in our church is still with us, for your message went deep into our hearts. Those words of yours were all so wonderful.

We rejoice to know that you will speak about our great need for a European missionary here in Mboga. If I were not an old man I should not have asked for a European to come here. But you know as old age comes along our minds are not so clear and we are apt to make mistakes. Please do not misunderstand me; it is not that I am seeking rest, but it is for the sake of the work of Jesus Christ—*this* is my need. Do not think that if a European came Apolo would leave the work. No, but I do not want to feel that if

I die in the forest while I am preaching the Gospel of Jesus Christ, there is no one to carry on the work. I know God can keep me safe in the forest as elsewhere, and who could get tired of His work, or wish to lay it down? You, my dear friend, do not get tired of His work. Would it not be an amazing thing if the child got tired before the father did? How could I get tired?

My dear friend, we pray for you both. Did not the teachers rejoice as they carried you through the forest to bring you to Mboga! They know you love them and help them although you are far away, and so they were delighted to carry you when you were tired. I am so glad you were able to visit the Bakonjo villages with us, and to speak such good words to them.

On Ascension Day Edwardi preached to us here and told us how wonderfully the work among them has grown. He told us about the Bakonjo chief who was so impressed by your visit, and got up in the church and said: "That white man who came from Europe to visit my country and talked to us in this church—was he not a messenger from the great God, did he not tell us of His great love for us? What are we waiting for? Shall we not serve Him and read His Book?" As a result of this over 300 of his people decided to follow Jesus.

Then at the little church in the forest called Bulindi where you met some of the pygmies and preached to them, there has been a great awakening, and many of the pygmies have asked to be baptized. They cannot all yet read the Gospel because we only have that one little book in their language. But I ask you, dear sir, ought I to refuse to baptize them because of this? What do you think about it? They say to me: "We are always travelling about the forest, we are here to-day and a long way off to-morrow. We have learned about Jesus and we love Him, but soon we may be far away and we have not the chance to read very much, we want to be baptized."

And so you see, my dear chief, how your journey here has brought to us great things which are very good. Be assured I shall never forsake our friends the pygmies ; I shall strive day by day, and pray for the Holy Spirit's power so that the Gospel may enter into the very hearts of the people here.

I thank God for bringing you to the Congo forest again. Greet all my friends for me, especially those that pray for me and yet do not know me in the flesh. To all who are near and to those who at present are far away, it is my earnest desire to make known the love of God in Jesus Christ. God be with you every day.

I am,
APOLO KIVEBULAYA, your true friend.

June 14, 1928

TO MY BELOVED FRIEND, A. B. LLOYD.

I greet you. We still see you with the eyes of our spirit, and there is great joy in our hearts, as a result of your visit to the Congo forest. For although many in the past have come to see us, there is this great difference about your visit—you are our father, and since the day you left us I have been constantly writing down the names of people who definitely wish to join the classes and prepare for baptism.

This was wonderfully seen at Bukima. An old man who was in the little church sent for the teacher after you had gone. He said : " I am a very old man, and I have been trying to read for a long time, but I have not gained much by it. I have a wife and many children, and I went to the little church. There I saw the white man, and I knew at once that he was sent by God as His messenger, for I heard him speak. I am an old man, but I want to give the rest of my life to God, and I should like to be baptized." The teacher said to him : " Why do you wish to be baptized ? " His reply was : " I have seen that white man Lloyd again ;

I saw him years ago when he was a young man, and he told me of my sin and my need of a Saviour, and he urged me to come to God, and I did not go to God. Now I am an old man, and I have heard the message again ; please do not delay ; take me at once to Apolo, and tell him that I give myself to God.” “ Listen,” he said. “ Last night I dreamed a dream, and I saw the white man once more, and he said to me : ‘ Get up quickly, and go into the little church.’ ”

So the teacher with the help of some friends brought the old man to me, and again I asked him : “ What makes you wish to be baptized ? ” He replied : “ In the night I saw God’s messenger standing by me, and he said : ‘ Rise up quickly and be saved,’ so I have come to you. Will you baptize me in the Name of the Lord Jesus Christ ? ” I have baptized him, for God had called him.

At another place, a village of the Bakonjo, a similar wonder has taken place. Do you remember the place where you slept in a garden belonging to a Mukonjo, and at his request pitched your tent on some ground covered with native potatoes ? Well, that man was an absolute heathen, and he told me that when we all met together outside your tent to pray to God, and it was quite dark, he joined the party, for he had brought some cooked food for you. He heard you pray for the Bakonjo, who lived in that village where we were camped. After we had left, this man went to the teacher, and said : “ I also want to know about God ; will you tell me what I must do to be saved from my sins ? ” The teacher said to him : “ Why do you come to me ? What makes you want to be saved ? ” He replied : “ Last night, as you know, the white man slept on my potato patch at my request. His name is Loida, and I heard him talk to God, and he asked Him to lead the Bakonjo to Jesus Christ the Saviour. Afterwards he spoke to me and urged me to trust in God, and I mean to do so ; will you help me ? ” The teacher has now had the joy of welcoming into the Church not the man only, but his whole

APOLO OF THE PYGMY FOREST

household. These, dear brother, are some of the results of your visit to us, and I believe there are many more that we shall never know about. It is all a great wonder!

Brother Lloyd, you are ever before my eyes, I see you every day, and I remember what you said to me when you bid me good-bye: "Strive on, Apolo, my brother, I am with you always in spirit and with all my children in Mboga." It is like a beautiful vision to me every day as I seem to see you and hear your words—yes, it is God's great miracle.

Good-bye, sir, God be always with you.

APOLO KIVEBULAYA

FROM APOLO'S DIARY

In his C.M.S. diary the last entry is on Saturday, April 22, 1933: "I have two cattle and the profit from these I leave to the church at Mboga. I have no money at all."

On a blank page is written this prayer—an entry made apparently at the beginning of the year he received the new diary: "O God our Father and His Son Jesus Christ and Holy Spirit, bless me in the country, forests, lakes, and on mountains where You have enabled me to pass to do Thy work for Thee among Thy people. Grant me to be beloved by Thee and Thy people. Amen. 1933.

"APOLO KIVEBULAYA"