

DAVID LIVINGSTONE

MISSIONARY EXPLORER OF AFRICA

by

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CHAPTER ELEVEN

MEETING AND PARTING

"Very grievous it is to be standing here tinkering when we might be doing good service to the cause of African civilization, and that on account of insatiable greediness," wrote Livingstone while he was at Kongone repairing the Ma-Robert. And then the time it took them cutting wood to feed the engine!

Not less trying was the loss of a year's correspondence from home. Think of waiting months for mail, then to find that it has been lost on the way.

But one bright spot of this time was the receiving of a sugar-mill from a Miss Whately and her friends, of Dublin. He set it up at Tette, where the Makololo were still waiting for him.

In a long letter to Miss Whately he expresses the appreciation of the natives for the mill and gives somewhat of a description of the people of the region, contrasting the Shire natives with the Tette Portuguese.

"They (the natives) have fences made to guard the women from the alligators, all along the Shire; at Tette they have none, and two women were taken past our vessel in the mouths of these horrid brutes. The number of women taken is so great as to make the Portuguese swear every time they speak of them, and yet, when I proposed to the priest to make a collection for a fence, and offered twenty dollars, he only smiled, 'You Protestants don't know all the good you do by keeping our friends of the only true and infallible church up to their duty.' "

Since before Livingstone's return to England the Makololo had been waiting for him to take them home. Now that he was ready, however, they did not all want to go. But he started up the Zambezi with his brother, Charles Livingstone, and Dr. Kirk, who had recently come to Africa, and such of the Makololo as were willing to go home. It was a pleasure, his companions said, to travel with Dr. Livingstone, for he took time as he went along to observe the scenery and to enjoy the journey. After the morning's tramp the white men spent the afternoon in hunting in order to obtain food for themselves and the natives. The task was so hard that they were sometimes tempted to quit with enough food for the white men. But Livingstone had not the heart to do that.

On into the interior they went, meeting some of Livingstone's old acquaintances, among them Mpende, who had once given him a threatening reception, but who was now more friendly.

Farther on they met a tribe whose only clothing consisted of a coat of red paint. In one region which had been thickly sprinkled with villages they walked a whole week without meeting a single human being. Such was the result of the cruel native warfare. Long before they reached Mosilikatse they heard that the missionaries had been there. And they (Mr. Moffat and his co-laborers) had left their traces; for even the chief, who said he had been born to kill people, had dropped the practice.

In the beginning of his expedition Livingstone had been promised the assistance of the Portuguese, but it turned out to be just the opposite. When they learned of the missionary's opposition to the slave-trade they turned against him. And now Livingstone discovered that what he had hoped to make a road for freedom into the interior, the Portuguese were putting to use in the accursed slave-trade.

Wild were the wails of anguish of some of the poor Makololo, as they neared the home village, at the disappointing news that greeted them.

Their wives had been disposed of in various ways. One had been killed for witchcraft, another had remarried, and Masakasa learned that two years before his return a sort of wild Irish wake had been celebrated in honor of his memory. Consequently when he returned he presented himself as the inhabitant of another world.

Still more disappointing to Livingstone was the news of a party of missionaries who had gone to Linyanti to labor among Sekeletu's people. Mr. and Mrs. Helmore and several others of the party had died of fever, and the survivors had left. Livingstone regretted the fact that he had not reached them in time with his fever remedy. One bit of good news he received, however, was that his old friend Sechele was doing well, with nine tribes under him and with schools, conducted by the missionaries well attended.

The nearest route would have taken Livingstone and his party about twenty miles south of Victoria Falls, but so eager was he for his friends to see this wonderful waterfall that he gladly walked the extra distance.

A long drought had left the Makololo in low spirits. Then Sekeletu was ill with leprosy and was being treated by a native doctress. But he gave her up, and under the treatment of Dr. Kirk and Dr. Livingstone he made much improvement. Livingstone found the wagon and other articles

which he had left there seven years before, safe and sound except for the work of the weather and the white ants. He was glad for the privilege of once more preaching to the Makololo, though it seemed hard for the people to understand the story of CHRIST, his death, and resurrection.

On Sept. 17, 1860, the party started back for the coast. They left Tette for Kongone in the Ma-Robert, which had been patched considerably. But shortly before Christmas she grounded on a sand-bank. So she was deserted and they proceeded afoot to the coast to meet the new vessel which was being sent to them.

At last the new steamer, the Pioneer, arrived, and with it also arrived a new party of missionaries of the Universities Mission.

The missionaries were to go up the Rovuma River and explore it to see if it might not be used as a waterway to the Nyassa district. Livingstone was eager to try out the Pioneer, but while waiting for these missionaries to go with him he missed the high-water season, and as the Pioneer required deep water, he was unable to cover by boat the distance he had expected to. The trip was a discouraging one. Often the boat would run aground on a sand-bar. Then, the Portuguese, who had promised their help, were instead pushing the slave-trade and thus hindering the missionaries' work.

While Livingstone and his party were one time halted at the village of Mbame, they met a slave party and broke it up.

The eighty-four men and women captives were liberated, and the drivers were made to flee. Then the missionaries took the former captives under their care. The chief of the Manganja, the tribe to which these captives belonged, invited the missionaries to settle at Magomero, his village. But the bishop in charge of the Universities Mission thought best to first visit and pacify the chief of Ajawa, the tribe from whom they had taken the captives. But the Ajawas were not inclined to make peace. They met the missionaries with such a threatening attack that for the first time in Africa Livingstone was compelled to use a gun to defend himself against the natives. The struggle was hot, but it ended in the Ajawa being driven off without loss to the other side.

What attitude to take toward the hostile Ajawa was a question in the mind of the Bishop. Livingstone advised him to be patient and to take no part in the quarrels of the natives. Then he returned to his companions on the Shire. For a time the Bishop and his party followed Livingstone's advice. But later they took a different course, which resulted in serious trouble for the Mission.

At Chibisa's, Livingstone found he could go no farther on the Pioneer. So, accompanied by his brother and Doctor Kirk, he started for Nyassa in a four-oared boat which was carried by porters past the Murchison Cataracts. And on Sept. 23, 1861, they sailed onto Lake Nyassa for the first time, the original discovery having been made by Livingstone when on foot. They carefully explored the region and found it to be densely populated. At the south end of the lake the people were friendly. But at the north end they were lawless. There one night, for the first time in his African life, Livingstone was robbed.

In a letter to a friend he tells of the experience rather humorously:

"Expert thieves crept into our sleeping-places, about four o'clock in the morning, and made off with what they could lay their hands on. It was Sunday, and such a black mass swarmed around our sail, which, we used as a hut, that we could not hear prayers. I had before slipped away a quarter of a mile to dress for church, but seeing a crowd of women watching me through the reeds, I did not change my clothes. Next morning early all our spare clothing was walked off with, and there I was left with no change of shirt, flannel, or stockings."

There was an abundance of elephants and of animal and vegetable life in this region.

Too, the slave trade on the lake was immense. Dr. Livingstone was told that nineteen thousand slaves from the Nyassa region passed through the custom-house at Zanzibar every year. In addition to these, thousands were killed or died of their wounds or famine, so that not one fifth of the victims became slaves. Livingstone believed that a small, armed steamer on the lake might stop the traffic and he was glad when he heard that the Lady Nyassa was being sent from England.

For two months they remained at the lake, suffering more from hunger than on any previous journey. Then they decided to return to the ship.

News came that the ship bearing the pieces of the Lady Nyassa and other provisions was soon to arrive at the mouth of the Zambezi. And best of all, Mrs. Livingstone and some more members of the Universities Mission were on board. The Pioneer was to meet them at the mouth of the river. Imagine how eagerly Dr. Livingstone started out. But just twenty miles below Chibisa's the vessel was stranded for five weeks on a shoal. Very trying this delay was on Livingstone, not only because of his eagerness to see his wife, but because he disliked to lose so much time when he might be accomplishing something worth while.

At last, a month later than the time appointed, they reached the mouth of the river. But there was no sign of the other vessel. It had been there, but had started away, was caught in a gale, and was unable to return for three weeks. Then the Lady Nyassa, instead of having been sent by water, as Livingstone had instructed, had been sent in pieces, and the time required in putting it together would probably cause another delay. But in spite of his disappointment Livingstone would always say, "I know that all was done for the best."

Finally, on the last day of January, 1862, the vessel came in sight. The first signal received was, "I have steamboat in the brig."

"Welcome news," Livingstone replied.

Then, "Wife aboard," was the next and the most welcome signal of all. It was not long before the joyful meeting took place.

Then after the parts of the Lady Nyassa had been loaded onto the Pioneer they began the journey up the river. But the progress was very slow.

In the shallow places the vessel had to be hauled along by capstan and anchor cast ahead. At last it was decided to put the Lady Nyassa together at Shupanga and tow her up to the rapids. Then

they would have to wait nearly a year for the rainy season before they could get her over the rapids. Meanwhile the Doctor learned the sad news of the death of Bishop Mackenzie and Mr. Burrup, another member of the Mission. The Bishop had succumbed to fever the very day his sister reached the shores of Africa, and Mr. Burrup had died a few days later.

This was another disappointment for Livingstone, besides being a great blow to Miss Mackenzie and Mrs. Burrup, who had come with Mrs. Livingstone. Great was the sympathy of both Dr, and Mrs. Livingstone for these bereaved ones. And now they must be taken back to the coast. Arriving at the coast, they had to wait another two weeks for the vessel to return. Then Dr, and Mrs. Livingstone returned to Shupanga, but not for long.

The long delay during the most unhealthful season of the year had brought on fever. What a comfort, though. it was to Mrs. Livingstone to be once more with her husband!

After she had parted with him at the Cape she had gone to her parents at Kuruman where her youngest child, Anna Mary, was born. Later she had returned to Scotland to be near her other children, but some of them were away at school and they were unable to have a home together. Mrs. Livingstone had been troubled with some doubts and fears in her experience and she longed for the strong faith of her husband to aid her in regaining her bearings. And in him she was not disappointed. But their companionship was to be of short duration. The fever which she had contracted grew rapidly worse.

On April 27. Livingstone sent a message to Dr. Stewart saying that the end was drawing near. "He was sitting by the side of a rude bed formed of boxes, but covered with a soft mattress, on which lay his dying wife."

All consciousness had left her, and though life still remained he was unable to arouse her. Then the man who had braved so many dangers broke down and wept like a child.

Dr. Stewart came, and together they knelt beside the dying one. In less than an hour her spirit had returned to GOD.

Shortly afterward Livingstone wrote thus: "It is the first heavy stroke I have suffered, and quite takes away my strength. I wept over her who well deserved many tears. I loved her when I married her, and the longer I lived with her I loved her the more. GOD pity the poor children, who were tenderly attached to her, and I am left alone in the world by one whom I felt to be a part of myself. I hope it may, by divine grace, lead me to realize Heaven as my home, and that she has but preceded me in the journey, O my Mary. my Mary! how often have we longed for a quiet home, since you and I were cast adrift at Kolobeng; surely the removal by a kind Father who knoweth our frame means that he rewarded you by taking you to the best home, the eternal one in the heavens."

Beneath the large baobab tree at Shupanga she was laid to rest.

The first news of their daughter's death reached the Moffats by traders and by newspapers, but then a full month late.

Dr. Livingstone had written, but his letter went around by way of Europe. In reply to it the

sorrowing mother wrote a comforting letter to her son-in-law. Among other letters he wrote was one to his daughter Agnes, urging her to take CHRIST for her guide and to meet her mother in Heaven.

~ end of chapter 11 ~
