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Exploration of the Tributaries of the Congo, between Leopoldville and Stanley Falls

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the pugnacious character of the Englishman would not allow him to feel much gratitude. So there had been no true benevolence in the gifts to the natives, and therefore, he did not think it could yet be said that the natives had neither affection, courage, nor gratitude. Colonel de Winton had wisely emphasised the fact that it was time something was done to connect the sea with the vast stretch of navigation on the Upper Congo, but it was not in the power of anybody outside the royal palace at Brussels to lay down a railway. There was the utmost readiness in England to contribute the full number of shares, but until the king's permission was obtained no one would dare to make a railway. No doubt the permission would be granted by-and-by, but so far it had not been obtained. Until the sanction was given it was premature to say a single word relative to the railway, except that it was possible of accomplishment. Without the railway the entire Congo State, vast though its area and inexhaustible its resources, was not worth a two-shilling piece, not worth even a passing thought.

The CHAIRMAN said that Mr. Stanley had given the assurance that there was no physical impossibility about laying a railway past the cataracts, and whenever it pleased His Majesty the King of the Belgians to make the necessary arrangements it was to be hoped that the enterprise of all Europe would be called into play in order to perfect the result of the efforts of so many bold and able men who had taken the preliminary steps for the exploration of Africa. Philanthropy and commerce must join hands in order to put down the slave traffic, and he hoped that before long the iron horse would be got to work, when an almost unlimited field would be opened for almost every kind of enterprise. He was sure the meeting would join with him in a vote of thanks to Sir Francis de Winton for his interesting paper, and to Mr. Stanley for the valuable information he had given them.

Exploration of the Tributaries of the Congo, between Leopoldville and Stanley Falls.

By Rev. GEORGE GRENFELL.

Map, p. 680.

BEING at the present moment on a journey, and not having the notes of my previous ones with me, it is not possible for me to write so fully as I might otherwise do. However, as I must not delay any longer to write something concerning the sketch maps I sent to the Society so long ago, I will at once take the opportunity which presents itself to send a short account of those affluents of the Middle Congo, which I have visited in the Baptist Missionary Society's steamer *Peace*.

The Kwa was the first of these affluents which the *Peace* ascended, and it has also been the field of her most recent journeyings, for a week has not yet elapsed since we completed our return voyage from Luebo Station. Of the first journey you have already had an account,* and you will since have discovered that what we took to be the Lake Leopold river was the Kasai, and that we journeyed upon the waters of that important tributary without knowing it. The Lake Leopold river, as I

* 'Proceedings R.G.S.,' 1885, p. 353.

have now seen, and as indeed Mr. Stanley's new book had told us, falls into the Kwa just beyond Mushie; and later I have learned from Lieutenants Kund and Tappenbeck that the Lukenye, which I suppose joins the Lake Leopold river at Grove Island on Mr. Stanley's map, is an important and far reaching navigable stream. From the description of the place given by Lieutenant Kund, and the accounts of the natives, there can be no doubt as to the point where his expedition crossed the Kasai. I make it in $3^{\circ} 41'$ S. lat., and about $18^{\circ} 40'$ E. long. Lieutenant Wissmann, the pleasure of whose company we had on the upward portion of this last journey, makes it further east, but we are both very considerably westward of the position to which Lieutenant Kund thought he had attained. The difficulties he encountered in the long overland march, and the terrible hardships his expedition suffered are more than enough to account for his being "out."

The latest news (you heard it by last mail I expect) is that which we brought down of Dr. Wolff having explored the Sankuru and proved it navigable to beyond the town of Mona Katchichih, and also of his having ascended for seventy miles or so a river which falls into the Sankuru from the north-east and known both as the Luecho and the *Lomami*. I can hardly bring myself to believe that this is the Lomami of Cameron and Wissmann which we supposed a while ago to be the river which flows into the Congo just below Stanley Falls, and which I ascended as far as $1^{\circ} 33'$ S. lat. in January of last year. Lieutenant Wissmann is inclined to regard this new Lomami as identical with the Lukalla of his previous journey.

During our recent ascent of the Kasai we paid special attention to the southern affluents with a view to obtaining an idea of their comparative size. The following are the results; but there are so many disturbing elements which enter into the problem of volume as determined by current-meter and lead that they can only be looked upon as comparative.

				S. Lat. (Observation).	E. Long. (By account, Leopoldville being $15^{\circ} 25'$).		
				° ' "	° ' "		
Kwango	..	..	..	3 11	17 30	145,000	cub. ft. per second.
Luballa	..	..	..	3 42	18 50	9,000	" "
Lebui	..	..	..	4 12	19 20	10,000	" "
Etembwa	..	..	..	4 17	19 30	24,000	" "
Kasai (above Lulua?)	..	..	..	5 5	20 30	54,000	" "
Lulua	..	..	..	5 22	20 40	27,000	" "
Luebo	..	..	..	..	..	8,000	" "
Sankuru	..	..	..	4 18	19 50	42,000	" "

At about one hundred miles north-east from Leopoldville the Kasai pours its waters into the Congo through a deep-cut channel between the hills which bound its left bank. This range of hills extends about two hundred miles beyond the cataract region to the edge of the great central depression of this part of the continent. The channel through this

range of hills is narrow, tortuous, and deep; so deep that with a line a hundred and twenty feet long we could get no soundings. The current is very strong at the confluence, where it is not more than 700 yards wide, and at one or two places a little higher up where it is not more than a quarter of a mile wide, it runs at the rate of seven or eight miles an hour. But though the current has been strong enough to cut its way through the hills, it has not yet carried away those portions of their rocky skeletons which in the shape of reefs it has left bare, to the chagrin of those who have to navigate its first twenty miles or so. However, the rocks are soon passed, and the narrow rapid river widens out, and communication is opened up with a series of magnificent channels, stretching away north and east and south, which are destined to play a most important part in the future commercial welfare of the Congo State. In fact, from what I have seen, I judge that this great affluent will be the first to show any "returns," as it furnishes a highway to countries where an extensive trade already exists, and which up to the present has had to encounter all the difficulties of a land march of a thousand miles. Portuguese traders are already aware of the new and easy route that is now opened up, and one of them whom I met has three hundred tusks of ivory ready, and will shortly send them to the coast, *viâ Stanley Pool*. I judge this venture will prove a very profitable one, as I saw a tusk worth 3*l.* in England bought for two necklets of glass beads.

After leaving the Kasai mouth the Congo receives no other affluent on the left bank till we approach the Equator, but on the right bank after fifteen miles or so we come to the Lefini. This river, however, is only navigable for two or three miles; the hills, unlike those which separate the basins of the Congo and Kasai, throwing up an unsurmountable barrier. By the time we have reached the second parallel of south latitude the hills which bound the right bank have given place to level country (they extend a few miles farther on the opposite bank) and we have come to the mouth of the Mikenye, which we ascended for fifty miles or so, so far as was possible in a steamer seventy feet long. The Bangulu-ngulu people whom we met on this river are a branch of the great Bateke tribe; they were but few in number, and did not appear to use the river as a means of communication; the swiftness of the current and many curves may possibly account for the absence of canoes. Dr. Ballay told me that the Mikenye was one of the mouths of the Alima delta, in this case the delta would include a hill 150 feet high within its limits.

The Alima, which is the next in order among the affluents as we ascend the right bank, is a stream which roughly measured gave an outflow of 8000 cubic feet per second, while the Mikenye did not give more than half that quantity.

The Likona-Mbunga, which flows into the Congo some 30 miles higher up, gives a very much greater outflow, though its volume is

masked by its many mouths. The main stream of the delta some five miles up, and not far from the head, gave a result of from 30,000 to 40,000 cubic feet per second.

A few miles beyond this last-mentioned affluent, and after having traversed a degree of latitude of low-banked water-way, since leaving the high land opposite Bolobo, we come to $1^{\circ} 6' S.$ lat., and to the rocky shores of hilly land which forms the water-parting between the Likona and Mobangi rivers.

When we set out upon our journey, besides following the banks of the main stream so as to be able to report upon the population of the various districts, our purpose was to visit some of the tributaries, but we were not prepared for losing our way, and for finding ourselves 100 miles up one of these tributaries instead of on the Congo. The fact is, the Mobangi has so wide a channel, so many islands, and a course so nearly identical in its lower reaches with that of the Congo, that the mistake though apparently absurd is comprehensible. As soon, however, as we were beyond the first parallel of north latitude, and I could not find the town of Libongo, the first town I had seen on the right bank on crossing the river in this same latitude on my previous voyage, the case was clear that we were not on the Congo, and we had to turn round and go down stream. Not, however, till we had taken in a supply of food, for which we were in great straits, for we had not been able to buy anything for some days, as the people as soon as they caught sight of us ran away, crying out, "bedimo! bedimo!" (ghosts! ghosts!) The assertion that we were men like themselves, that we ate and drank, and were now hungry, that we slept as they did, and that we had the same number of fingers and toes as they possessed—arguments usually sufficient to convince the native mind—were in this case without effect upon the timorous Baloi. There was nothing for it but to lay siege to one of the towns where an abundance of food was visible, and after about four hours holding off and on, and threatening not to go away till we got something to eat, at last, after a series of tactics that only hungry people could bring themselves to indulge in, we were able to get into communication, and a little while later to go away with as much food as we could carry, and at the same time to leave excellent friends behind us.

By following the left bank of the Mobangi as we descended, we joined the Congo 25 miles south of the equator, or 15 miles north of the point where first we struck the Mobangi delta. Following the right bank of the Congo, it was not till we were some 40 miles beyond Bangala that we found another affluent, a stream from the north-east, for which I could get no other name than "Ngala" (a river). It is a stream of some 25,000 cubic feet per second, and evidently furnishes a water-way for a very considerable distance, but we did not ascend it for more than 30 miles, through the whole of which distance it was bounded by

uniformly low banks, and at high-water scarcely afforded a site for the larger and important trading community of Mobeka.

No other affluent of considerable size is met with till we reach the Loika or Itimbiri, in about $22^{\circ} 20'$ E. long. Though this river is not much larger than the Ngala it is very much more interesting, the whole of its course from the Congo to the Lobi Falls, a distance of over 120 miles, being through picturesque and hilly, as well as populous country. In addition to houses of the "extinguisher" type, described by Mr. Stanley as characterising the towns on the Beyerre river, we found well-built clay houses which were extremely neat and pleasing in their appearance. If style of architecture may be taken as indicative of race, then we encountered three different tribes, those who lived in the four-sided grass and mat houses, such as are found on the Congo; those who lived in the round houses, and those again who built substantial dwellings of a much higher type with clay walls. Lobi Falls, or rapids, in $2^{\circ} 50'$ N. lat. and about $23^{\circ} 30'$ E. long., is interesting as being the nearest point to the Soudan which has yet been attained from the south-west. We were very much disappointed to find our way barred so soon, as we had begun to hope it would prove to be a route by which we might approach within a practicable distance of the Welle or Shari valley, and thus realise the hope of the donor of our steamer, who is desirous that our Society should engage in mission work in the Western Soudan. It is possible that in the high-water season the falls may disappear and a passage for canoes at least be practicable; the people were evidently in communication with the higher reaches.

As the Aruwimi (or Beyerre) people were not inclined to be friendly, and as we already know from Mr. Stanley's explorations that it offered no advantages as a route northward, we did not ascend this important tributary but passed on till we came to the Mbura. After making our way for two or three miles up this stream, we found that it carried to the Congo the waters of two separate branches, one from the east the other from the north-east. The latter, which is about 100 yards wide, is the larger of the two, and after ascending it for some seven or eight miles we found our way barred by rapids, though it was quite feasible for canoes, and possibly at high-water even for ourselves. The eastern branch was not available for even the short distance which we ascended the other, and then, when our way was stopped, it was stopped most completely by a sheer fall of 40 feet.

After having spent Christmas at Stanley Falls we started down river again before the new year. It had not been a very merry Christmas, for we were among Arabs, and the memory of their terrible doings a little lower down river was still fresh upon us. Having started, a few hours brought us to the mouth of the Lomami and the Arab camp there. The fact that these marauders had met with a reverse and lost one or two men and guns up this river, only strengthened my wish to

ascend it. I felt quite anxious to go and make friends if possible with people who were strong enough to make a stand and defend themselves. It was a task which took time and much patience, but one in which we were eminently successful. However, after a while, we had pushed beyond the range of our friends and found ourselves among wild people, who had hid themselves in the bushes along the banks and sent flights of arrows after us. This hostility was explained afterwards when we learned that the notorious Mtagamoyo (the "butcher") was leading an expedition in the neighbourhood, and that consequently all the country was in a ferment of excitement. But suffering no harm we passed on, and were surprised to find ourselves among people who spoke the same language as our interpreter from the Equator Station, they being members of the same great Balolo family, which we afterwards proved to extend along the equatorial belt for five degrees of longitude. The course of the Lomami was very tortuous, and its current very strong, sometimes as much as 400 or 500 feet per minute, our progress in consequence was very slow. We were a fortnight before we reached the first degree of south latitude, and then, as it took us another week to reach $1^{\circ} 33'$, we thought it was quite time to turn back. We left it at a point where it was still a stream of 35,000 cubic feet per second, and at an altitude of 1350 feet above the sea.

For five degrees of longitude the great northern bend of the Congo between the Lomami and Lulanga receives no tributary of any size, though we sought carefully; the most important was the Bokumbi, a stream of from 2000 to 3000 cubic feet per second, which falls into the Congo a few miles eastward from Bangala on the other bank.

This long stretch without any important affluent was, however, explained on our following voyage when we ascended the Lulanga river and found that its course was nearly due east, and that, together with the Ikelemba and Juapa rivers, it made up a series of water-courses with curves analogous to that of the Congo, which drained the whole country west of the Lomami and north of the second parallel of south latitude.

Having left the Lomami we continued our journey down stream, our minds in the meanwhile being often occupied concerning our failure to find the hoped for avenue leading in the direction of the Shari valley. It was not very surprising then, that by the time we had reached the Mobangi, although we had been already four months on our voyage, that we determined to push our way up its stream and make one more effort before returning to Stanley Pool. All was simple enough as far as the point which we reached by mistake at the outset of our journey, excepting that in many places where we had had a fathom of water we now found sand banks high and dry. However, there was no lack of channels between the islands which through the five degrees of latitude which I have navigated are the characteristics of this river, as they are also of the Congo. Upon ascending this river it is not till we reach

2° 30' N. lat. that we leave the low level land behind us and enter upon hilly country. Here, the leadsman's warnings of "hard" begin to keep us on the look out for rocks, but it is not till we have reached 3° 50' that they seriously threatened to prove an obstacle, and even there by careful steaming we avoided them all. This was at dead low-water (February of last year), and as soon as the river commenced to rise there would be no difficulty at all. At 4° 27' north we found the river break through a range of quartz and red clay hills a thousand feet high, which quite altered its course. Previously we had found the stream coming nearly uniformly from north by east; now we found that to cross this range of hills which ran north-west and south-east it had made a gap nearly east and west. Before we attempted to pass through this gap and between the immense masses of quartz which broke up the river into a semblance of rapids, we deemed it wise to anchor the *Peace*, and do some prospecting in the rowing-boat we had alongside before we ventured farther. As in our five-oared gig we got safely past everything and into the open water-way beyond without the use of ropes, we were assured that it was quite safe to make the attempt in the steamer. Half-an-hour after an early start on the following day we were safely through; but if we had the rapids behind us so had we also the friendship we had secured with much difficulty a few miles below, and we now found ourselves among people bent upon mischief, and we were compelled either to fight or beat a retreat. Our appearance at first seemed to inspire fear, for men, women, and children sought refuge in the fortlets they had constructed in the branches of the tall straight-stemmed trees, securing their retreat by hauling the rope ladders up after them. From these coigns of vantage they assailed us with flights of poisoned arrows, but as we were well protected by arrow-proof wire netting we went on our way unmindful of them. This was taken as a sign of weakness and as a good argument for following us in their canoes. The people on ahead seeing us apparently flying before pursuers came out in their canoes to meet us. If it had not been nearly sunset we might have run the gauntlet, but with unknown water before us and darkness coming on we had no option but to seek safety by flight in the direction we had come. The canoes were soon left behind and all went well till an hour after sunset and we were nearly past the last of the hostile villages; here the water shoaled after a succession of "two fathoms, two fathoms," to "one fathom, hard"; and then before the leadsman could give us the result of the next cast, we had struck with a terrific crash, and the water was rushing into two of our watertight compartments at such a rate that three minutes later it was up to the level of the river outside. I will not attempt to describe our feelings, among hostile people and in the dark as we were, they can be better imagined than described. Happily for us the *Peace* had been built in watertight divisions, and we were thus able to keep afloat, and a few minutes later to run her ashore

—at such a time it was not for us to ask whether the people were friends or foes.

An anxious night at last gave place to the watched for morning, by which time boards and clay and cotton waste had so sufficed to close the three principal holes, that we were able to bale out the water faster than it came in, and were thus in a position to continue our journey to the sandbank we knew of just below the “gap.” Here, after a couple of days’ hard work, we succeeded in fixing the three needed patches, which put us into good going order once more. Our return journey was a pleasant contrast to the upward one, for we were welcomed everywhere, our only difficulty being that we could not stay long enough to satisfy our newly made friends.

Mission Steamer *Peace*, Congo River,
29th April, 1886.

*The Last German Congo Expedition, 1884-6.**

THE expedition of the German African Association, which departed from Hamburg in April 1884, under the leadership of Lieutenant Ed. Schulze, had for its object the further exploration of the southern tributaries of the Congo, along which excellent work had already been done by Lieutenant Wissmann and Dr. Pogge. On the voyage out, Schulze dropped one of his companions, Dr. Büttner, the botanist, at the Gabon, with instructions to have a look at Dr. Soyaux’s coffee-plantation; he landed another, Dr. Wolff, at Kabinda; the third, Lieutenant Kund, at Banana; and installed the fourth, Lieutenant Tappenbeck, at Ambriz, whilst he himself continued southward to Loanda and Novo Redondo in quest of porters. Men willing to go to the north were found, but the Governor-General politely refused permission for their embarkation on “foreign” service, and Lieutenant Schulze consequently was compelled to look to Loango, a not very promising field, for the porters required.

On November 14th all the members of the expedition were reunited at Banana, whence, soon afterwards, the head-quarters were removed to Tundua (Under-hill). Here they parted, and whilst Lieutenant Kund and Lieutenant Tappenbeck took the road up the river to Leopoldville, Lieutenant Schulze and the others directed their steps to San Salvador. They all looked forward to a happy meeting at the residence of the Muene Puto Kasongo on the Kuango, whence, with united strength, they hoped to push their way far into the interior. Schulze and Büttner left Tundua on December 13th, with Congo people as carriers, and reached *San Salvador* on December 18th, 1884. The king appeared not overmuch pleased, for the operations of Stanley, the “Stone-breaker,” had filled him with distrust. The porters were frightened with cannibal stories, and many deserted. Dr. Büttner notwithstanding made an excursion to the Arthington Falls (January 20th to February 1st, 1885). Dr. Wolff reached San Salvador on February 2nd. Lieut. Schulze, the leader of the expedition, died soon afterwards, on February 15th.

On February 27th, Dr. Wolff left San Salvador for *Damba* (Ndamba), a dis-

* From the ‘Mittheilungen’ of the German African Association, and the ‘Verhandlungen’ of the Berlin Geographical Society. For Map, see p. 680.

LULANGA, IKELEMBIA AND JUAPA RIVERS

Scale of English Miles, for the Plans

Heights in Feet.

Edw. Weller, Lith., Red Lion Square