

BOYS AND GIRLS

Uganda.

(Rev. Richard H. Leakey, of the Church Missionary Society, in the 'Illustrated Missionary News.')

Koki, where the last two years of my work in Uganda was spent, is a small kingdom, separate from, but tributary to, Uganda. It is south-west of Uganda proper, and about thirty miles west of the lake. I went there early in 1899, and was the first English missionary to reside, though Mr. Fisher had paid a short visit to the place before.

Work had been begun by Waganda Christians who took refuge there in 1885 from the persecutions in Uganda. In 1894 native teachers had gone to Koki, at the request of Kamswaga, the king. On my arrival there I found several at work in different parts of it, and at the capital a small church and about ten men who wanted to be baptised, and about a hundred and twenty readers. The king used to come to church on Sunday morning, and spend the rest of the day drinking, and not be sober for a day or two afterwards. Yet he called himself a Christian! But he was at that time quite ignorant of even the elements of Christianity, as I found

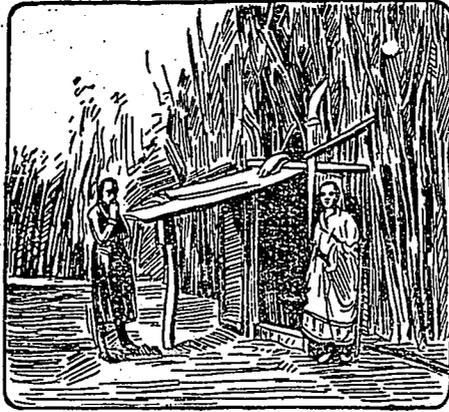


THE LITTLE KING OF UGANDA.

out when I began to read the gospels with him, as I did soon after reaching Koki. Though he himself was learning to read, he would not allow his children to learn. He was afraid of their becoming as clever as he was. His wives, too, were not allowed to be taught. He had about four hundred wives; they are kept inside a fence about twelve or fourteen feet high, and no one sees them except the king, a few old men who act as gatekeepers, some small boys, and female slaves who wait on them.

After about four months and many talks on the subject, I persuaded Kamswaga to allow his boys to be taught, pointing out that it would never do for his heir to be so ignorant. He has one son and two nephews. The two nephews soon learned to read, and after some further talks on the subject, were actually allowed to come to the church services. In the meantime, Kamswaga was showing signs that God's word was going home to his heart; he was less often the worse for drink, more willing to help our work by allowing us to build churches in other parts of Koki as well as at the capital. But I was most anxious to get at his wives; the question arose, 'how could they be reached?' Men would not be allowed to teach them; there were no women capable of doing it. At last, after nearly a year, he agreed to allow two boys to teach them to read, and asked me to suggest some names. I selected one of my own personal servants,

a boy of about twelve, and one of Kamswaga's own pages of about the same age. In a few weeks several of them had learned to read, and I then urged that they be allowed to come to church so as to get better teach-



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ing than the boys could give them. But this was altogether too much for Kamswaga's idea of propriety. However, at the end of about eighteen months, he said he would build them a church for themselves inside their enclosure. The style of this church was to be rather off the usual lines for church buildings. About thirty feet wide by forty feet long, it was to have a door at each end, one for the use of the women, the other for the male part of the congregation. But there was to be a high partition across the building so that the women would not be seen by the preacher or any of the men in the church. I am sorry to say that the church was only just finished when Kamswaga's place was burnt to the ground and the church with it.

Women are in a little better position in heathen lands than flocks and herds. As an example of this let me tell you a story. I was one day talking to Kamswaga's groom who looks after a fine white Arab donkey he has, and I asked him what the donkey was worth. He said: 'Oh! ten women.'

Another time I was visiting an old heathen chief, who, after asking what dye I used for my beard (I had a red beard then), and if I took my boots off when I went to bed (he thought they were built on me), asked



A CHRISTIAN WAGANDA AND HIS WIFE.

if I had a wife. On my informing him that I had not yet got one, he said: 'What will you give me and I will choose you a good one out of my lot?'

These two stories give you some idea of the heathen view of women in Uganda. But,

you will ask, what progress was made during the two years you were there? Well, when I got there I found one small church at the capital; when I left there were ten scattered about the country. I left fifty baptised in the place of none. Several of the native converts were engaged in teaching their fellow countrymen. Soon after I left the place was overrun by the rebels, and the people scattered, and the organized work destroyed. But when, after some months, Mr. Clayton, who followed me, was again able to visit Koki, he found that the number of readers had increased, as the Christians had, when scattered, taught those whom they had met. Kamswaga, too, seems much more in earnest now; we hope he may soon come forward and seek baptism. Pray for him.

I cannot now tell you about the most interesting and encouraging work in Buda among the Roman Catholics there, many of whom diligently study the Bible. Mr. Clayton, who is in charge of Buda as well as Koki, has a parish of about 2,000 square miles. He recently had his house burnt down over his head at night by the rebels. All my books, which I had lent him during absence, were also burnt.

The opportunities in and around Uganda are unique; open doors all round, and a people naturally gifted as teachers ready to step in as soon as leaders are to be found for them. But where are those leaders? The future of Central Africa depends, I believe, on Uganda, and the future of Uganda depends on the Christian young men of England! Who will say: 'Here am I, send me?'

At the Invitation of the Sea.

(By Phyril.)

O well for the fisherman's boy

That he shouts with his sister at play.

At last the long, hot term had ended, and the examination papers were corrected, and 'placing,' with its excitement and suspense, was a thing of the past. The fortunate ones had received their prizes and gone home to show them to admiring friends; the less fortunate had alike departed, to receive the condolences and encouragements of the family circle. The classrooms at the Lightwood Academy for Young Ladies were silent and deserted, and we weary teachers were now at liberty to follow the example of our young charges.

The July sun shone with all its power, making the empty rooms look bare and comfortless indeed, and without were dusty streets and heated pavements.

How I longed for a sea breeze, and, closing my eyes, saw in imagination the blue waves breaking on a shore of golden sand, the cool wind from the ocean almost fanned the hair upon my brow, and I felt as if my lungs must expand to drink in delicious draughts of sea air.

My mind was made up. The very next day I would go to Clenton, take old Mrs. Brown by surprise, and persuade her to let me have the use of her cozy little front room and the pleasure of taking meals with her for a month at least.

This stimulating thought helped me through the usually tedious process of packing in a very short time. Instead of spending long intervals of sitting on the side of my bed in deep meditation, interspersed with such remarks as 'Now shall I want that jacket, or can I leave it here in my big trunk?' it was a very simple matter to decide that my very oldest and most unfash-