

river. They spoke of cataracts, and cannibals, and warlike tribes.

"Speak no more, Tippu-Tib," I said. "You, who have travelled all your life among slaves, have not yet learned that there lies something good in the heart of every man that God made. Speak not a word of fear to my people; and when we part I shall be to you 'the white man with the open hand.'"

Day after day the expedition floated down the river in such canoes as they could procure, accompanied by a land party which made its way through the jungle on the banks, often encountering hostile parties and passing unfriendly villages.

The following extracts from the journal will indicate the nature of the adventure: On the 26th, the land division kept close to the river, and though it was buried frequently in profound depths of jungle, we were able to communicate with it occasionally by means of drum taps. Not a soul has been seen in any of the villages passed. The march through the jungles and forests, the scant fare, the fatigue, and subsequent sufferings, resulted in sickness. Small-pox and dysentery attacked the land division. Thorns had also penetrated the feet and wounded the legs of many of the people, until dreadful ulcers had been formed, disabling them from travel. In the course of two days' journey, we found six abandoned canoes, which, though unsound, we appropriated and repaired, and, lashing them together, formed a floating hospital. In a rapid two canoes were upset. In mid-stream we saw the five Wagwana riding on the keels of the upset canoes, attacked by half-a-dozen native canoes. We soon had the gratification of receiving them on shore, but four Snider rifles were lost.

Tippu-Tib and the Arabs wished to know whether I would not now abandon the project of continuing down the river, now that things appeared so gloomy—with rapids before us, natives hostile, cannibalism rampant, small-pox raging, and people dispirited. "What prospects," they asked, "lie before us but terrors, and fatal collapse, and ruin? Better turn back in time." But still the expedition held on its way.

On December 6th we reached the valley of Ikundu, consisting of a broad, uniform street, thirty feet wide, and two miles in length! The huts were made very elegantly of the Panicum grass, seven feet long by five feet wide, and six feet high. They are as cosy, comfortable, and dry as ship's cabins, as we found in the tempests of rain that every alternate day now visited us.

The town of Ikundu was entirely deserted. Whither had such a large population fled? For assuredly the population must have exceeded two thousand. The small pox was raging; dysentery had many victims. Every day we tossed two or three bodies into the deep waters of the Livingstone. Frank and I endeavoured our utmost to alleviate the misery, but when the long caravan was entering the camp I had many times to turn my face away lest the tears should rise at sight of the miserable victims of disease who reeled and staggered through the streets. Poor creatures. What a life! Wandering—ever wandering in search of graves!

At Ikundu, left high and dry by some mighty flood years ago, there was a large condemned canoe, with great holes in its keel, and the traces of decay both at bow and stern, yet it was capacious enough to carry sixty-six people; and by fastening cables to it the boat might easily take it in tow. I therefore called my carpenters, and offered twelve yards of cloth to each if they would repair it within two days. The success of the repairs which we had made in this ancient craft proved to me that we

possessed the means to construct a flotilla of canoes of sufficient capacity to float the entire expedition. I resolved, therefore, should Tippu-Tib still persist in his refusal to proceed with us, to bribe him to stay with us until we should have constructed at least a means of escape.

Opposite Mutako, the natives made a brilliant and well-planned attack on us, by suddenly dashing upon us from a creek; and had not the ferocious nature of the people whom we daily encountered taught us to be prepared at all times against assault, we might have suffered considerable injury. Fortunately, only one man was slightly punctured with a poisoned arrow, and an immediate and plentiful application of nitrate of silver nullified all evil effects.

Again and again the expedition was attacked by large parties—sometimes hundreds of natives—and had to form stockades in the forest, and fight against overwhelming odds. By a bold manœuvre, we cut out—at night—thirty-six of the large native canoes, and let them drift down the stream, to be intercepted by Pocock. Keeping twenty-three of these, we had sufficient transport for the expedition down the river.

At length Tippu-Tib and Sheikh Abdallah declared their intention of returning, and with such firmness of tone, that I renounced the idea of attempting to persuade them to change their decision. Indeed, the awful condition of the sick, the high daily mortality, the constant attacks on us during each journey, and the last terrible struggle, had produced such dismal impressions on the minds of the escort, that no amount of money would have bribed the undisciplined people of Tippu-Tib to have entertained for a moment the idea of continuing the journey. It was then announced to the members of the expedition that we should embark, and begin our journey down the river to the ocean—or to death.

Said I: "All I ask of you is perfect trust in whatever I say. On your lives depend my own: if I risk yours I risk mine. As a father looks after his children, I will look after you. Many of our party have already died, but death is the end of all; and if they died earlier than we, it was the will of God; and who shall rebel against his will? It may be we shall meet many wild tribes yet, who, for the sake of eating us, will rush to meet and fight us. We have no wish to molest them. We have moneys with us, and are, therefore, not poor. If they fight us, we must accept it as an evil, like disease, which we cannot help. We shall continue to do our utmost to make friends, and the river is wide and deep. If we fight, we fight for our lives. It may be that we shall be distressed by famine and want. It may be that we shall meet with many more cataracts, or find ourselves before a great lake, whose wild waves we cannot cross with these canoes; but we are not children—we have heads and arms; and are we not always under the eye of God, who will do with us as he sees fit? Therefore, my children, make up your minds, as I have made up mine, that we are now in the very middle of this continent, and it would be just as bad to return as to go on; that we shall continue our journey; that we shall toil on and on by this river and no other, to the salt sea."

There was ample work for us all before setting out on our adventurous journey. Food had to be procured and prepared for at least twenty days. Several of the canoes required to be repaired, and all to be lashed in couples to prevent them from capsizing; and special arrangements required to be made for the transport of three riding asses, which we had resolved upon taking with us, as a precaution in the event of our being compelled to abandon

the canoes and to journey along the banks. Christmas-day we passed most pleasantly and happily—like men determined to enjoy life while it lasted. In the morning we mustered all the men, and appointed them to their respective canoes, twenty-two in number.

On the 27th, at dawn, we embarked all the men, women, and children—149 souls in all. When I ascertained that every soul connected with the expedition was present, my heart was filled with a sense of confidence and trust such as I had not enjoyed since leaving Zanzibar. In the evening, while sleep had fallen upon all save the watchful sentries in charge of the boat and canoes, Frank and I spent a serious time. Frank was at heart as sanguine as I that we should finally emerge somewhere, but, on account of the persistent course of the great river towards the north, a little uneasiness was evident in his remarks.

"Before we finally depart, sir," said Frank, "do you really believe, in your inmost soul, that we shall succeed? I ask this because there is such odds against us—not that I, for a moment, think it best to return, having proceeded so far."

"Believe! Yes! I do believe that we shall all emerge into light again some time. It is true that our prospects are as dark as this night. Even the Mississippi presented no such obstacles to De Soto as this river will necessarily present to us. I believe it will prove to be the Congo. If the Congo, then there must be many cataracts. Let us hope that the cataracts are all in a lump, close together. Anyway, whether the Congo, the Niger, or the Nile, I am prepared; otherwise I should not be so confident. Though I love life as much as you do, or any other man does, yet on the success of this effort I am about to stake my life—my all. To prevent its sacrifice foolishly, I have devised numerous expedients with which to defy wild men, wild nature, and unknown terrors. There is an enormous risk; but you knew the adage: 'Nothing risked, nothing won.'"

The crisis drew nigh when the 28th December dawned. A gray mist hung over the river. Slowly the breeze wafted the dull and heavy mists away until the sun appeared, and bit by bit the luxuriantly wooded banks rose up solemn and sad. Finally, the gray river was seen, and at 9 a.m. its face gleamed with the brightness of a mirror.

"Embark, my friends! Let us at once away! And a happy voyage to us!" The drum and trumpet proclaimed to Tippu-Tib's expectant ear that we were embarking. The brown current soon bore us down within hearing of a deep and melodious diapason of musical voices chanting the farewell song. How beautiful it sounded as we approached them! Louder the sad notes swelled on our ears—full of a pathetic and mournful meaning. With bated breath we listened to the rich music which spoke to us unmistakably of parting—of sundered friendship; a long, perhaps an eternal, farewell!

We came in view of them as—ranged along the bank in picturesque costume—the sons of Unyamwezi sang their last song. We waved our hands to them. Our hearts were so full of grief that we could not speak. Steadily the brown flood bore us by; and fainter and fainter came the notes down the water, till finally they died away, leaving us all alone in our loneliness.

But, looking up, I saw the gleaming portal to the Unknown. Wide open to us, and away down for miles and miles the river lay stretched, with all the fascination of its mystery. I stood up, and looked at the people. How few they appeared, to dare the region of fable and darkness! They were nearly all sobbing. They were leaning forward,