

BY EXPLORER GRIP.

IN TWO VOLUMES.—VOL. I.

CHAPTER III.—TO STANLEY POOL.

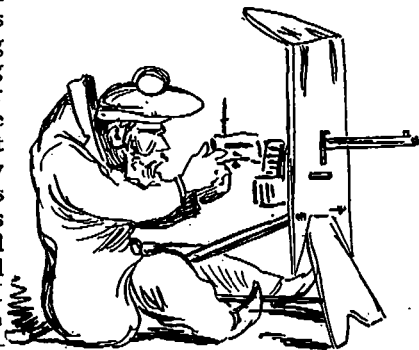


MR. W. BONNY.

I FOUND on arriving at Mataddi, 108 miles up the Congo from the Atlantic, that Stanley and his outfit had reached that point on March 21, 1887, and gone into camp preparatory to the commencement of their long promenade to Lake Albert Nyanza. He was himself as fat as butter, and his European companions, Zanzibari carriers, Soudanese soldiers and the rest were in equally good condition, as the result of three meals a day and nothing to do on board ship. Tippu Tib was there, of course, with his contract in his breeches pocket. It will be remembered that this interesting Arab had agreed, for

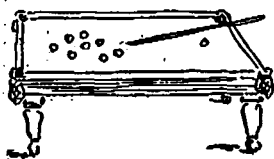
certain specified boodle, to supply 600 carriers for the Expedition from his own country, which was on the banks of the Congo south of Stanley Pool. Meanwhile he loafed about the camp and amused himself watching Lt. Stairs practising with the Maxim gun, which had been supplied by an enterprising English firm for the sake of a ten-line ad. in the book Stanley was to write.

The gun was a daisy, in Tippu's opinion, being capable of firing 330 shots per minute. The event proved that it could carry about 3,000 miles—and the fellows who toted it said it was powerful heavy, too. I observed a path leading eastwardly from Mataddi along the river,



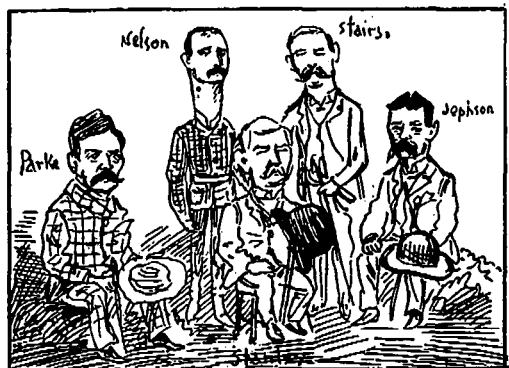
THE MAXIM GUN.

and from the long heels in the footprints I knew I could not be wrong in concluding that this was Stanley's route. I followed it to Stanley Pool, and, as this is a place of considerable importance, I have pleasure in submitting the accompanying faithful illustration of it. It is needless to mention that I was constantly attacked by the natives as I proceeded on my way, but fortunately I escaped all personal injury. It must not



be supposed that I indulged in any wholesale slaughtering of the aborigines. I was well armed, it is true, but it was luckily unnecessary for me to use my weapons except to kill an occasional elephant or alligator. Whenever the savages attacked me in overwhelming numbers

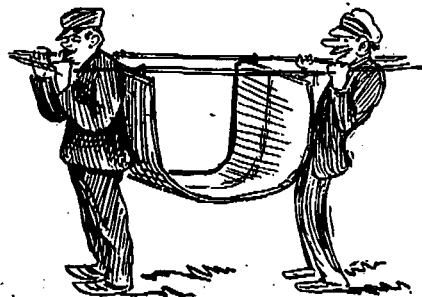
I just waited until they were well within ear-shot, and then, without the slightest warning to them, I burst out into song. I sang one of my sentimental ballads. It was curious to watch the paroxysm of agony into which the natives were instantaneously thrown. The moment they recovered themselves they scurried off helter-skelter and buried themselves in the depths of the bush. They



STANLEY AND HIS OFFICERS

were bloodthirsty cannibals, it is true; but instinct seemed to warn them that my voice was not good to eat. However, in these voracious chapters, I must not dwell upon my own adventures. My task is only to chronicle those of Stanley and his followers. At Stanley Pool I came across a Somali who had deserted the Expedition, and I made it my business to interview him as to the events of the march up to this point. "Dar warn't nuffin worf tellin' 'bout," said he, in the liquid dialect of Northern Africa. "We jes' moseyed 'long in de day time an' camped out like a picnic at night for a month, didn't get nuffin' to eat some days an' jes' 'bout de same de rest ob de time, an' it war mighty hot, an' everybody squabblin' an' swarin', an' nigh onto sixty men done deserted an' stole 'bout forty rifles, an' dar was trouble 'bout gittin' boats to go up de ribber, an' Stanley . was tarin' mad case he couldn't git de boats, an' yo' nebber see such a mess in yo' born days, an' lots of 'em was sick an' some done died, an' when I got here I sez, dis yar nigger don't go no furdur wiv dis picnic pawty nohow. I 'spected dey was goin' to have camels to carry us, but when I found out we got to hoof it, I sez, I don't want no mo' of it on my plate. So dat's how I come to be here." "But Stanley went on, didn't he?" I asked. "Oh, yes, he went on wiv de gang. Dey got hol' of a few boats—'nough to pack 'em all in somehow—an' went up de ribber to a town dey call Yambuya. You kin hear more about 'em if you go dar."

I thanked the Somali for his valuable information, and embarked in a native canoe for Yambuya, a nice, little voyage of 1, 100 miles.



A SECTION OF THE BOAT, "ADVANCE."

CHAPTER IV.—STANLEY POOL TO UNGARROWA'S.

The scenery up the Congo is delightful, being a perfect panorama of shrubbery, flowers and forest. The river is