

We were now about three hundred yards from the village of Ujiji, and the crowds are dense about me. Suddenly I hear a voice on my right say, "Good morning, sir!"

Startled at hearing this greeting in the midst of such a crowd, I turn sharply around in search of the man and see him at my side, animated and joyous — a man dressed in a long white shirt with a turban of American sheeting around his head, and I ask, "Who are you?"

"I am Susi, the servant of Dr. Livingstone," said he, smiling. . . . "Now, you Susi, run and tell the Doctor I am coming."

"Yes, sir," and off he darted like a madman.

By this time we were within two hundred yards of the village, and the multitude was getting denser and almost preventing our march. Flags and streamers were out; Arabs and Wangwana were pushing their way through the natives in order to greet us. . . .

Selim said to me, "I see the Doctor, sir. Oh, what an old man! He has got a white beard. . . . My heart beats fast, but I must not let my face betray my emotions, lest it shall detract from the dignity of a white man appearing under such extraordinary circumstances."

So I did that which I thought was most dignified. I pushed back the crowds, and, passing from the rear, walked down a living avenue of people until I came in front of the semicircle of Arabs, in front of which stood the white man with the gray beard. As I advanced slowly toward him I noticed he was pale, looked wearied, had a gray beard, wore a bluish cap with a faded gold band round it, had on a red-sleeved waist-coat and a pair of gray tweed trousers. I would have run to him, only I was a coward in the presence of such a mob — would have embraced him, only he being an Englishman, I did not know how he would receive me; so I did what cowardice and false pride suggested was the best thing — walked deliberately to him, took off my hat, and said, "Dr. Livingstone, I presume?"

"Yes," said he, with a kind smile, lifting his cap slightly.

I replace my hat on my head, and he puts on his cap, and we both grasp hands, and I then say aloud, "I thank God, Doctor, I have been permitted to see you."

He answered, "I feel thankful that I am here to welcome you."

Then, oblivious of the crowds, oblivious of the men who shared with me my dangers, we — Livingstone and I — turn our faces toward his [cottage]. . . .

We are seated . . . with our backs to the wall. . . .

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Shortly I found myself enacting the part of an annual periodical to him. There was no need of exaggeration. . . . The world had witnessed and experienced much the last few years. The Pacific-railroad had been completed; Grant had been elected President of the United States; . . . a Spanish revolution had driven Isabella from the throne of Spain; . . . Prussia had humbled Denmark and annexed Schleswig-Holstein, and her armies were now around Paris, the "Man of Destiny" [Napoleon III] was a prisoner, . . . his wife, Eugenie, the Queen of Fashion and the Empress of the French, was a fugitive; . . . the Napoleon dynasty was extinguished by the Prussians Bismarck and von Moltke; and France, the proud Empire, was humbled to the dust. . . .

We kept on talking and talking, and prepared food was being brought to us all that afternoon. . . .

This day, like all others, though big with happiness to me, at last was fading away. . . .

"Doctor," I said, "you had better read your letters. I will not keep you up any longer."

"Yes," he answered, "it is getting late. I will go and read my friends' letters. Good night, and God bless you."

The Destruction of Human Life in the Congo

Stanley's imagination was fired by the potential wealth of Africa. After receiving the backing of King Leopold II of Belgium and a number of financiers, he sailed back to the region of the Congo. There he set about acquiring rights to exploit the area by making "treaties" with hundreds of native chiefs. The Congo yielded great quantities of rubber, which was in great demand in Europe and America.

Leopold ruled the Congo as his own domain. The few foreigners who were allowed into the area returned with reports of unbelievable horrors inflicted on the natives by the Belgians. Finally in 1904 a commission was forced on Leopold which confirmed, on the basis of evidence from Belgian officials and others, some of the worst tales of slavery and murder. In 1908, before

Leopold died, he turned the Congo over to the Belgian government, which did away with many of the abuses. Here are a number of eyewitness reports on the treatment of natives in the Congo during those years.

Lieutenant Tjikens writes: "Commandant Verstraeten visited my station and congratulated me warmly. He said his report would depend upon the quantity of rubber which I was able to provide. The quantity increased from 360 kilograms in September to 1500 in October, and from January onward it will amount to 4000 per month, which will bring me in a monthly premium of 500 francs. Am I not a lucky fellow?" . . . He continues: "S. S. Van Kerkhoven is coming down the Nile and will demand 1500 porters. . . . I can hardly bear to think of them. I am asking myself how on earth I shall be able to hunt up so large a number." Then: "Marshes, hunger, exhaustion. How much blood will be shed because of this transport! Three times already I have had to make war upon the chiefs who would not help me to get the men I needed. The fellows would rather die in their own forests than as members of a transport train. If a chief refuses that means war, with modern firearms on one side against spears and javelins on the other! A chief has just been to see me, complaining: 'My village has been destroyed and my wives have been killed!' But what on earth can I do? I have often been compelled to keep these unhappy chiefs in chains until they get for me one or two hundred porters. Very often my soldiers find the villages empty of men, and then they seize the women and the children." Next, to his major: "I see the likelihood of a general rising. The natives are sick of the regime, of having to work as porters, of gathering rubber, of being forced to provide foodstuffs. Once more I have been fighting for three months with only ten days' interval. I have 152 prisoners. For two years I have been making war in this district, but have not been able to force the natives to submit; they would rather die. What am I to do? I am paid for my work. I am merely a tool in the hands of my superiors and carry out their orders as discipline demands!"

Senator Picard . . . traveled in the Congo, Free State, in the "cultivated" district. . . . Here are his impressions: "The inhabitants have disappeared. Their homes have been burned; huge heaps of ashes amid

Source: Ludwig Bauer, *Leopold the Unloved*, Boston: Little, Brown and Co., 1935, pp. 263-65, 269-70.

neglected palm hedges and devastated, abandoned fields. Inhuman floggings, murders, plunderings, and carryings-off. . . ." Near Stanley Pool, on the caravan road, he notices "a continual succession of Negroes carrying loads upon their heads: worn-out beasts of burden with projecting joints, wasted features, and staring eyes, perpetually trying to keep afoot despite their exhaustion. By thousands they pass, in the service of the State, handed over by the chiefs whose slaves they are and who rob them of their wages. They totter along the road with bent knees and protruding bellies, crawling with vermin, a dreadful procession across hill and dale, dying from exhaustion by the wayside, or often succumbing even should they reach home after their wanderings. . . ."

Here are extracts from the reports of a commission of investigation which traveled through the whole State, compiled from the declarations of eyewitnesses. . . .

"Within the territories of the Abir the chief Isekifasu of Bolima was murdered. . . . There were public floggings inflicted upon six Ngombe men, each receiving a hundred lashes with a hippopotamus-hide whip. . . . Natives who tried to run away to their villages are in prison. A river can only be navigated by persons who have a passport from a rubber agent; a passport is often refused to missionaries. . . . Owing to the ruinous methods of collection, by 1904 the supply of rubber was falling off rapidly. . . . Sixteen Esanda witnesses testify to the fact that members of their families were murdered during the collection of rubber. The successor of the murdered Bolima chief Isekifasu, attended by twenty witnesses, comes and lays a hundred and ten twigs upon the table, each of them signifying a murder for rubber. The largest twigs represent chiefs, somewhat smaller ones ordinary men, short ones women, and very little ones children. The soldiers had shown him the corpses of his people saying: 'Now you'll bring us rubber!' So it goes on. . . . In one district more than two hundred murders were proved; in the next a much greater number. . . . Behind each who complains stand hundreds who do not dare to speak, or lie hundreds of slain who will never speak again. The wailings from the Congo are slow and repressed, but, irresistibly, the cry grows."