

## LETTERS FROM THE FIELD.

### AFRICA.

#### DR. SNYDER'S DIARY.

*Luebo, Congo Free State, Monday, September 3, 1894.*—Last week was a busy week—mail week always is—and, added to all the other work, is that of writing letters. It matters not how much one may intend to do towards being ready, the boat always finds him not ready. Wednesday last, we sent our mail over, believing that the boat was going that day, but we heard on Friday that it was still down the river.

Friday we heard that a State man, across the river, was dying from an arrow wound. We were told by the natives that there had been a fight between the natives and the State, at Malanoh. After dinner I went over to see the man, but he had been taken to the boat, and was on his way home. We learned that there had not been any fighting. It seems that the man had been sitting on his verandah in the evening, and some native had gone up behind him, and shot an arrow, which entered the thigh, passing out in front. The arrow was

a poisoned one, and naturally made a bad sore. We have learned from the natives that this man was a hard, cruel officer. How true this is, we do not know. It is a new thing, and one not pleasant to contemplate—that a native on the Upper Congo has *shot a white man!* It was a Baka-lula native, and they are a large tribe; some of them live across the river from us. We have four of them at work for us.

Sunday it rained so that we could not go to Kasenga, but we had a service here. We talked to the people on the "sower," and had a full house and a very interested audience. In the afternoon we had another interesting meeting.

To-day work has gone on as usual; have had our roof made over, to resist the coming rainy season. This was a necessity, as we knew from our experience of last year, when we had to get out of bed every time it rained, and try and find a dry place.

*Tuesday, September 4.*—A rainy day; evidently the rainy season has set in; we are exceedingly glad, for we hope

now to be rid of a most troublesome itch which has destroyed our sleep for many nights. An "*African cross*"—one of the many that the home folks never hear of. The women told me to-day that their hearts told them that they must go and see their people; we have always taught them that the paths are open; that they are free people; and therefore at liberty to go at any time. I told them that their "*mikenda*" would be finished in five months, and then if their hearts still said "go," there would be no palaver.

*Wednesday, September 5.*—Went to Kasenga this afternoon and showed the people the Bible pictures. Work is going on quietly and successfully.

*Thursday, September 6.*—An uneventful day; work, work, work, and an ever earnest seeking for souls; and every day something to discourage and disappoint.

*Friday, September 7.*—This morning one of the men came in haste to me with the information that a flock of guinea fowls was flying near. Quickly loading my gun, I went after them. It proved to be a large flock of fine ones. We had guinea for dinner, and it was a pleasant change from the "*everlasting*" chicken; much fatter and of a finer flavor.

*Saturday, September 8, 1894.*—Pay-day, and, of course, a busy day. Had the new chapel cleaned of building rubbish, preparatory to moving in to-morrow. We have looked forward to this for months; indeed, it was thought of over a year ago, when Mr. Rowbotham was here. I had the first service in it to-day. Several natives from over the river were on the station, and as I just had the new benches put in and in order, I invited them in to see "*N'zambi's nsoba*"—*i. e.*, God's house—and when they were seated, it occurred to me that

it was an opportunity, so I used it. May God bless our feeble efforts! The chief of Kasenga, Queto, came to me to-day in a state of excitement; he wanted my advice. He said that all Kasenga was in an angry state. It arose from an agent of the S. A. B., over the river, hiring a lot of the Bakete to put a new roof on his house. I had heard that he was severe with them, whipping them often, and not lightly, but I was not prepared for what I heard to-day. Queto said: "*Mukilenga dixi di mai waishipi muntu wai Kasenga*"—*i. e.*, "The white man over the river has killed one of the men of Kasenga." There are conflicting stories about it. The Bakete say that the man was doing his work, when the white man came to him, found fault with him, and began to whip him with a raw-hide. The man started to run away, when he received a cut over the eye that blinded him, and so, being unable to see, he ran into a hole, and falling, a large stick was thrust into his side, and that night he died.

The other story told by the natives from over the river admits the death of the man as told by the Bakete, but denies the whipping. They say the man ran away because he feared the white man, whom he saw coming, and because he had been sitting down and not working. I have not heard the white man's story yet; so cannot form any true opinion. Queto says that all Kasenga is very angry. My advice was for him to tell the people of Kasenga that Buli-Matadi [The State] is the earthly *nfuma* [king] of all of us, and that N'zambi [God] taught us to respect earthly authority, and therefore he must not take the law into his own hands, but patiently wait until Buli-Matadi came, and then tell him all about it. If he, Queto, took the matter

into his own hands, it would be equal to saying that he, Queto, was a bigger man than Buli-Matadi, and that would not do. He went off mollified, and I think they will quiet down and not do anything rash. Kasenga has forbidden the Bakete to receive any pay for what they have done for the agent. When a town *refuses money* you may safely say the people are exceedingly angry. We have made it a matter of prayer, and feel confident that God will order all for the best. Personally, we are in no danger, as we are on the best of terms with Kasenga; but it would not be a pleasant thing to see the agent suffer violence; still, from the fact of Queto's coming to me for advice, and leaving evidently well satisfied, I argue that the excitement will quiet down till Buli-Matadi comes.

*Monday, September 10.*—Yesterday we dedicated our new chapel. We had a very interesting service. Of course we could not use any but the simplest language and the plainest thoughts. We took for our text the 122d Psalm. The people were very attentive; may God bless his word! My wife and I remained a moment, after the rest had gone, in silent prayer. With David we could say: "I was glad when they said let us go up to the house of God."

Our people told us yesterday that the Bakete had refused to sell *chumbi* to them; we were not a little exercised about this, as it looked as if the Bakete had included us in the trouble over the river. To-day I inquired, and found out that the Bakete were still our friends. The way they expressed it may be of interest to you as showing their way of arguing. I will translate it as well as I can, so as to keep their mode of expression, though much is lost in putting it in English. I said: "Why is it that you [the Bakete] re-

fuse to sell my children *chumbi*?" The Mukete answered: "Why is it [this is not strong enough to express what they mean when they say '*Bolikai!*'] that long ago Tumengili [Mr. Lapsley] came here, took a good palaver, and never killed any of the Bakete? *Bolikai!* Shepardi [Mr. Sheppard] came and always took a good palaver with us, and never killed us? *Bolikai!* the men over the river who came before this always took good palavers with us, and never killed us? *Bolikai!* Diba [Mr. Adamson] sat here, and was always kind to us, and he never killed any of us? *Bolikai!* Nganga-buka [Dr. Snyder] gives us medicine for nothing, he always takes good palaver with us, he never kills us? *Bolikai!* this man over the river now beats us for nothing, and why did he whip the eyes out of one of us so that he [the man whipped] could not see the path, and in running away from the whip he fell in a hole and ran a stick in his side and died? *Yai m'lingila* [is that good]?" Then they added: "The children of God [meaning the missionaries] are good, but the other people '*mubi* [very bad]." Then they told me we could have all the *chumbi* we wanted, as there was no palaver with us.

*Tuesday, September 11.*—Palaver over the river patched up, but not settled. The agent is not treating the Bakete right, and is sure to make trouble in the end. Every mission has more or less evil to contend with through the traders. So far we have had fairly good men stationed across the river. Went to Kasenga this afternoon and had a very interesting service with the women; they said they "*wanted to love Jesus.*" One of them said this voluntarily, and the others then assented to it. We are having exceedingly hot weather, and both my

wife and I are suffering with aggravated prickly heat, which, with the hard work of the day and loss of sleep at night, makes trying times. Truly God's arms *are* around us, or else how could we stand it all!

[*To be continued in May number.*]