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Our Churches must needs be missionary for the sake of their own power. They need the reactive influence upon themselves. They need to be constantly confirmed in the power of the truth which they hold. If they are not militant, they cease to be churches. Militant churches need to have victories. They need to see them. They need the inspirations which come, under the manifestations of their power, over those whom they seek to save. They need the correction of selfishness from terminating themselves with themselves.

Otherwise they grow selfish and worldly; they accept the secondary blessings of a faith which, as it dies out, will lose even these, and prove anew that "from him that hath not shall be taken away even that which he seemeth to have."

When churches thus seek to enjoy the comforts and consolations of faith with no forth-putting energies to bring others into the knowledge and love of God; when they cease self-renunciations and the missionary spirit, the "falling away" will come. If Heaven itself were ever to be a cessation of out-spreading and out-going service, it would be false to its name and would cease to represent God.

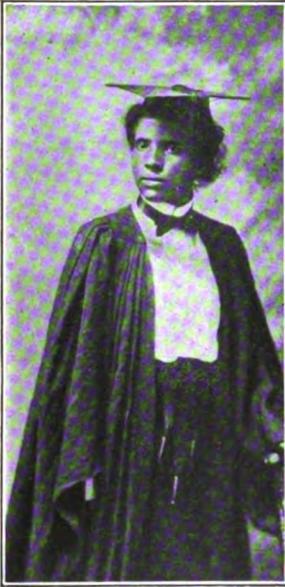
The Congo Atrocities. The iniquities practiced among the Africans in the Independent State of the Congo are attracting the authorities of civilized people everywhere, but especially in England. The country which has been given control in that land is Belgium. By the agreement of "the powers," Leopold II was recognized as sovereign of this new state, which includes a territory of

sion seeking protection. A white officer, unacquainted with the missionary whom he was addressing, after a cruel raid, jokingly remarked that he had "killed many and secured a fine lot of curios," and that while his soldiers were firing upon the Negro villages the people ran wildly about crying "Sheppite, Sheppite"—their name for the Rev. William H. Sheppard, whom they were beseeching to come to their aid.

This devoted and able missionary, Mr. Sheppard of the Southern Presbyterian Church, whose missions in Africa were established about fourteen years ago, was educated at Tuscaloosa, Ala., and his wife is a graduate of Talladega College. They have been at their present location in Ibanj about five years.

Fisk and Talladega in Central Africa. Miss Althea M. Brown, a native of Missouri, whose letter to the Fisk University Christian Endeavor Society is given below, is a graduate of Fisk University of 1901, having been at Fisk eight years. She was converted to the Christian life and faith in the early part of her course at Fisk, and soon made known her purpose to devote her life as a missionary in Africa. She worked her way through college by service in families and teaching during vacations. After graduation—in the college course—she took a year of training for mission work in Chicago, and joined the mission directed by Mr. Sheppard in 1902.

One more year has been spent in the work of my heart's desire, and it has been one of the sweetest and most precious years of my life. The Lord has been good to me; given me good health; and, best of all, loosened my tongue, so that I am now speaking quite freely in the native language, telling the precious old story of the Saviour's love. However, that which has been so satisfying and uplifting is the wonderful way in which I have seen the love of God and the power of the Gospel of Christ manifested among this people who have been sitting in the most dense darkness so long. Their hearts seem so hungry, so thirsty and so ready for the blessed message our Lord left for them. Many are being born into His kingdom. The seed sown by the early missionaries is now springing up into everlasting life. No year since the beginning of the mission has been more fruitful than the past year. The Lulua and Baluba people are ready and eager to put aside the old superstitions; they grasp foreign ideas readily and are easily civilized. It is among these that we have the most of our pupils for our school, evangelists and converts. Seven hundred of them united with the Church last year, making a total of nine hundred and twenty baptized into the Church during 1903. The number received this past year surpassed the numbers received during the previous seven years by sixty, showing how mightily the Spirit, power and love of God are working among them. It is true that there are failures on the part of some who enter the Christian faith, yet, on the other hand, there are many who are zealous, steadfast, earnest and faithful.



ALTHEA M. BROWN.

Our work at Ibanj is principally among the Bakuba. As I have already said, they are just now becoming interested in the Gospel. Formerly, only a very few attended church, and these few were mostly small girls, boys and women; now they are coming by scores, whole villages sometimes come, even the old gray-haired chiefs, grandfathers and mothers. They are not only listening to the message of salvation, life and love, but they are also accepting it.

The Bakuba are the most intelligent, thrifty and independent people of Central Africa. They live in good, well-built houses, of two and three rooms, and are very clean about their person and homes. They have a great many industries of remarkable interest; they are fine weavers and blacksmiths; they have large fields of corn, peas, pumpkins, etc.; they are great and successful hunters; their women, many of whom are very pretty, clean and lady-like, do beautiful fancy work.

Mr. Sheppard has just returned from a month's itinerating tour among the Bakuba. He brings back a most encouraging report. He was warmly received by all the villages. He visited all of our evangelists, who are doing a very promising and satisfactory work. They have built large churches (sheds), and have large schools and catechumen classes. He said he preached to large crowds every day; all seemed interested. He also visited the king's own village, the capital of this great tribe of more than two hundred and fifty thousand souls. The king seems interested and wants the evangelists to continue to teach and preach in his village. We are earnestly praying that the seed sown during this tour may mean much fruit for the Master; especially do we pray that it may soften the heart of the king, for, although he is very intelligent and politic, he is exceedingly superstitious. If we can win him, it will not be difficult to win his subjects, who all but worship him.

Our work among the women continues to grow in interest and is becoming far-reaching in its influence. It is strengthening their growth in the faith, bringing them and their children into closer touch with the Church, and making them better wives, mothers and homekeepers.

Mr. and Mrs. Sheppard will be leaving for the homeland about the middle of March. Then I shall be quite alone, with my hands more than full. I dare say they will visit Fisk soon after their arrival. I know you will do all you can to make them happy, for they are worthy. Then, too, they will be most interesting people. I shall miss them almost sorrowingly; I have learned to think a great deal of them. We have had our meals together ever since I came. They are now boarding with me. I shall soon have to take my meals all alone. Yet, I have no fear, for I shall be so busy all the while that I shall not have time for home-sickness; then, my Lord is always near. I hope one of you dear girls can soon come to join me in this work. The field is very ready. Come and help us!

Thanking you again for your love, interest and prayers, I am with love,

Yours in His service,

ALTHEA M. BROWN.