

Lualaba, Kassai River,  
Congo Independent State,  
West Africa.

Jan 5<sup>th</sup> 1892

My own dear Dr.

I know you and Mrs. Heikel have repeatedly said "I wonder why William doesn't write" It may surprize you, but we get a steamer here once a year, or if an expedition is coming this way we get the benefit of the steamer, as you know we are a thousand miles from the coast. The mail is carried from this point down to Stanley's pool by steamer, thence to "Matada" by a post on foot 26 miles, thence to "Banana" by a river steamer and then waits for an ocean steamer.

Our principal time has been spent in exploring different rivers and making extended over-land journey, accompanied by native guides. When I first arrived here, I made a journey 4 months long and not sleeping in one village more than two or three days, and my rounds I met eight distinct tribes. I met only one cannibal tribe "The Zopozap". This is a powerful tribe the men are young giants, their weapons are guns, battle axes, clubs, bows and poisonous arrows, about two months ago, we had an attack by night from them, but, only a few of them appeared and we stood as firm as you please, and the trouble was soon over. We have on the whole been treated very kindly by all the people, we have received many nice and useful presents from different kings, such as a

bull, a cow, many goats, pigs, ducks, chickens, cloth, slaves &c. We generally recognize their services by giving them in return, cloth, brass wire, beads, couries, &c. Today I received a nice battle ax from a wealthy "Gop foy ap" it is a beauty & if you should like it I will bring it for you. The people like Mr. Lapsley very much, & call him "Toman geeler" i.e. a path finder, & am called "En fuman gailer" that is "En fuman" a king & "gailer" a hunter, so it reads the king of hunters, - I generally give them plenty beef-steak when I kill a hippo. I have at different times while traveling on the river, killed 26 of these fine cows, & also shot two very large elephants but did not secure them, I did not have time to trace them up, they generally walk a mile or so before dying.

I always wanted to live in Africa & felt that I would be happy, and so I am. I have built a very comfortable house, it has two rooms a hall & a nice large porch & Bro. Lapsley & I are as snug as possible. I am now clearing the ground & burning the bush to put a large roomy chapel for God's worship, I speak two languages so as to be understood with out an interpreter.

I expect to return home in the summer of 1872 to give a full & clear account of all things, & also (now this is between you & me) to Mary a very sweet christian woman, who is now teaching in Briningham Ala. her name is Mrs. Lucy J. Gantt, she will return with me. I have many nice parrots & a real funny monkey. I will bring some of these to Mrs. Florence, one of the birds I can speak two native languages, french, & english, hundreds of them pass out house daily - I must catch a baby elephant for Master Homer.

My very best wishes to Mrs. Hazel.  
I am your servant  
W. H. Sheppard