

WILLIAM McCUTCHAN MORRISON TWENTY YEARS IN CENTRAL AFRICA

This is the title of a most valuable book written by Rev. T. C. Vinson, of our Congo Mission, and published by the Presbyterian Committee of Publication, Richmond, Va.

Our Church has been blessed in having many

body, with broad shoulders and splendid chest. Thus he laid the foundation for that remarkable strength and endurance that served him so well during twenty years of arduous and exacting labors in a tropical climate."

He was educated at Washington and Lee University and expected to make law his profession. To provide the means for completing his education he taught school for six years. The call to the ministry came to him and for some time he tried to put it away, but it persisted, until he finally surrendered. The theological course was taken at Louisville Seminary.

Immediately upon his graduation he applied for appointment as a missionary to Africa, and he was accepted by the Committee on Foreign Missions.

On November 5, 1896, he left his home for that long journey, which ended at Luebo on May 7, 1897.

In 1903 Dr. Morrison returned to America on furlough. "In the summer of 1905 he was sent to the Young People's Missionary Conference at Asheville, N. C., to deliver one of the principal addresses. To that conference also came a Miss Bertha Stebbins, who was sent as a delegate from the Presbyterian church of Natchez, Miss. Here they met for the first time. She was on the front porch of the hotel when he arrived and among the first of the new friends to whom he was presented. There seems to have been a mutual attraction between them from the very beginning of their acquaintance. They were married at Gueydan, La., on June 14, 1906, Dr. M. E. Melvin, of Port Gibson, Miss., a cousin of the bride, performing the ceremony.

Mrs. Morrison was a most attractive and thoroughly consecrated Christian woman, and proved a great help in the mission work when she went to Luebo with her husband some months after their marriage. But the work and the climate were too much for her, and in November, 1910, she gave her life for the people whom she had come to serve.

The difficulties of travel on the Congo may be judged by looking at the picture of "The Devil's Cauldron." This is above Matadi, near the mouth of the Congo River.

The first steamer Lapsley, built for the Congo Mission by the Sunday school children of our Church, had been lost. A new and larger boat had been built. Dr. and Mrs. Morrison made the last part of their long bridal trip on this boat, as it made its first journey up the Congo.

Mr. Vinson, in speaking of Dr. Morrison's first arrival on the mission field, says:

"When Mr. Morrison reached Luebo the mis-

sion consisted of one station, occupied by eight missionaries, three of whom were white; one Sabbath school, with an enrollment of fifty; one day school with an average attendance of forty-six, and one organized church of forty-eight communicant members. The equipment consisted of four



Mrs. Morrison.

or five small missionary residences made of mud and sticks, a small church shed which also served as a school building, a general store in which the barter goods and other necessary articles were kept, and a few other minor buildings. These were all built in the midst of the primeval forest, as the station compound had not yet been cleared."

Dr. Morrison at once took hold of the work in real earnest. He soon gained the esteem and good will not only of his fellow-missionaries, but



The Devil's Cauldron.

of the natives as well. He had been sent to Ibanche on business for the mission, when an event occurred which showed his ability and the high opinion in which he was held by the natives.

"Shortly after his arrival at Ibanche he returned to Luebo on business. During his absence war broke out between two of the tribes to the north of Luebo. These tribes lived on the main highway between Ibanche and Luebo, and communication between the two places was cut off. This condition of affairs resulted in considerable financial loss to the people in the region of Ibanche, for Luebo was a great commercial center and traders from all sections were gathered there at the market on Saturdays.

"When the conflict had quieted down Mr. Morrison very cautiously returned to Ibanche. While en route he called in the contending parties and succeeded in making peace between them. When he reached Ibanche the good news had spread far and wide, and people came in from all sections to congratulate him and to thank him for opening the path to traffic. And as they were leaving they said to him, 'Kuonyi nshila,' or 'Don't let the path get closed again'; thus Dr. Morrison received this expression as his native name. Time proved him to be not only a true peace-maker, but also one who opened up new paths for them."

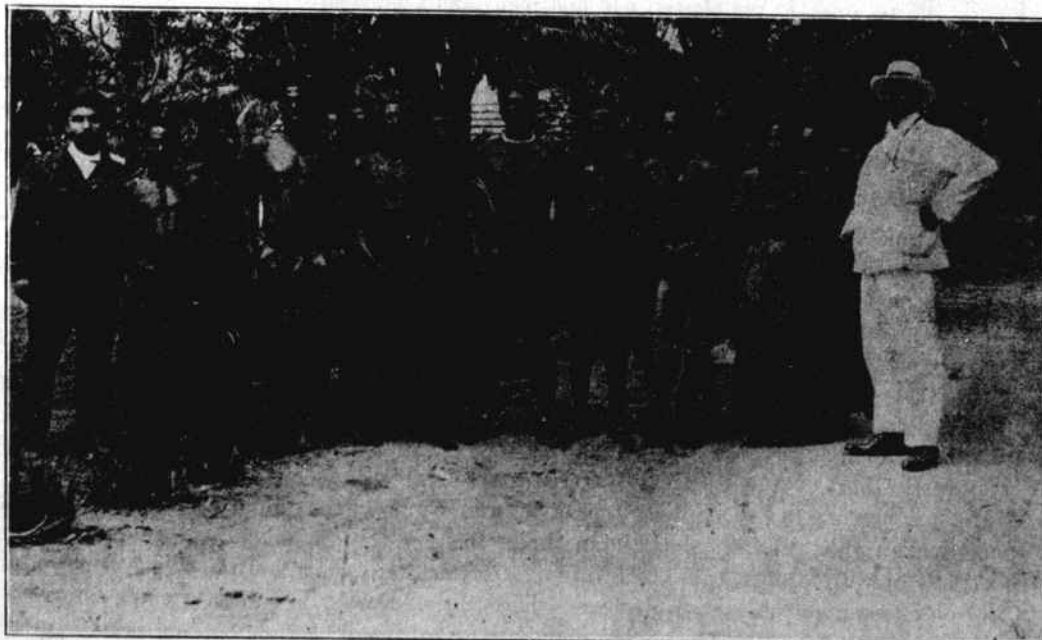
Dr. Morrison realized that

men and women of ability and consecration on its missionary force. The mission on the Congo has had its full share of these devoted workers for the salvation of the lost. Among the choicest of all these workers was Dr. William M. Morrison.

Dr. Morrison came of the Scotch-Irish stock that gave the Valley of Virginia a type of Presbyterianism that is not surpassed anywhere. His father was Luther Morrison, an elder in Monmouth church, in Rockbridge County. His mother was Miss Mary Agnes McCutchan, of Bath County. He was the oldest of eight children, and was born November 10, 1867.

Our author says: "His mother was especially noted for her piety, and it is said that her pastor often sought her advice in his pastoral work. Three of William's first cousins on his mother's side were missionaries to China. William was consecrated to the gospel ministry from his birth, and all of his early training was directed with this end in view. Another factor in his early training was a very godly aunt on his father's side, Mrs. Susan Crawford, who lived in the family. She took a special interest in him from his birth and taught him as few children are taught.

"William grew to manhood in the quiet retreat of his father's plantation and received his training along those practical lines that became invaluable to him in later life. He learned to use his hands and was not at a loss when called upon to build a house and do the scores of other things demanded of the missionary to Africa. He was a hard worker, and outdoor exercise developed a strong



Dr. Morrison and Dr. Sheppard With the Native Witnesses at the Trial.