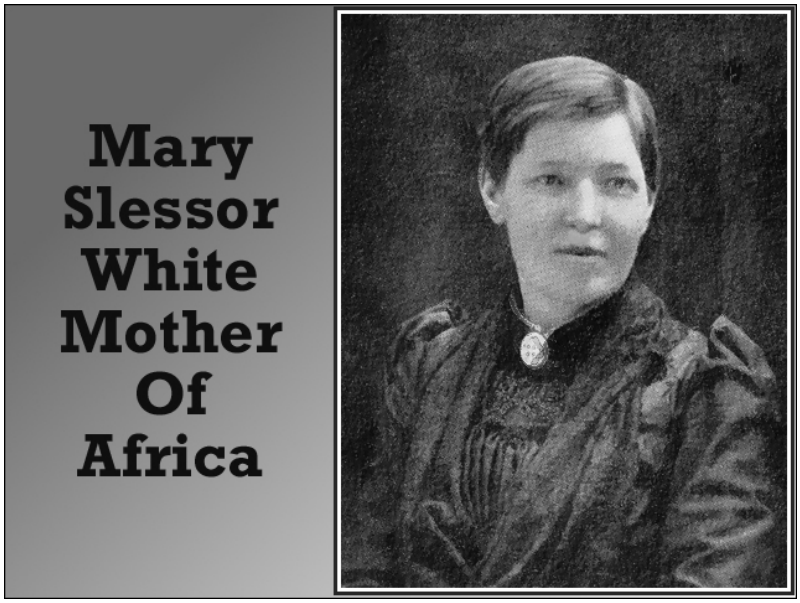
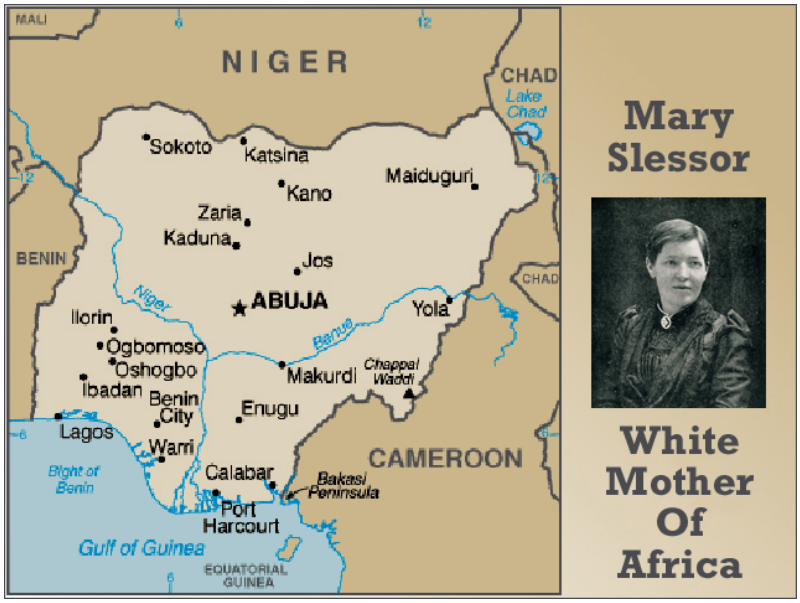
MARY SLESSOR, WHITE MOTHER OF AFRICA
Compiled and Edited By Duane V. Maxey





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"Heroines of Service"
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I am ready to go anywhere, provided it be forward. -- David Livlngstone

God can't give His best till we have given ours! -- Mary Slessor

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CONTENTS

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INTRODUCTION

This file about Mary Slessor contains material from two online sources and from "Heroines of Service" by Mary R. Parkman. Part 01 is a very brief synopsis of facts about Mary Slessor, while Part 02 is a more lengthy sketch of her life-work. I have taken the liberty to edit material from both sources. -- Duane V. Maxey, Holiness Data Ministry, Chandler, Arizona, December 22, 2006.

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01 -- A BRIEF SYNOPSIS OF MARY SLESSOR'S LIFE AND WORK

Mary Mitchell Slessor was born December 2, 1848, in Gilcomston, a suburb of Aberdeen, Scotland. She was the second of 7 siblings. Her father, Robert Slessor, was a shoemaker. Mary's mother came from Old Meldrum, was an only child, and had been brought up in a home of refinement and piety. She was a sweet-faced woman, patient, gentle, and retiring, with a deeply religious disposition. Like her mother, Mary had a soft voice and loving heart. Little is known of her early life, but no doubt following the religious persuasion of her mother, Mary was raised as a Presbyterian, and became a member of Belmont Street United Presbyterian Church. Later in life, Mary said: "I owe a great debt of gratitude to my sainted mother."

Things were different concerning her father. In 1858 the family moved to Dundee, and Mary's father, who had become an alcoholic, died in 1859. In contrast, Mary's mother joined the Wishart Church in Dundee and the children were sent to the regular services and Sunday School. But, more ill-fortune befell the family, and during the four years following her father's death 3 of Mary's siblings also died.

In spite of all, during this time Mary recalled herself as being "a wild lassie." But soon she was converted. An old widow who became anxious about the spiritual welfare of Mary and some of the other girls, decided to gather them together and talk to them about their souls. One winter afternoon when the girls had come into her home out of the cold, as all were sitting near the fire in the fireplace, the woman said to them:

"Do ye see that fire? If ye were to put your hand into the [flames] it would burn ye. But if ye dinna repent and believe on the Lord Jesus Christ your soul will burn in the lowin' bleezin' fire for ever and ever!"

Like arrows, those words struck Mary's heart, so much so, that her mind was tormented with fear and sleep was banished from her eyes. She decided to make her peace with God, "repented and believed" the gospel unto salvation. Later, she would sometimes say that it was hell-fire that drove her into the Kingdom. But, once in the Kingdom, she found it to be a Kingdom of love, tenderness, and mercy -- and it was

through exemplifying these aspects of Christ's Kingdom that she conducted her Christian labor.

Following the death of her father in 1859, in order to help her mother Mary Slessor began working part-time in a weaving mill during the day while attending school in the evenings. In 1862 she began working full time at the mill. In 1864 she became very active in her church, and in 1876 she went to Calabar (now part of Nigeria) as a missionary with the Presbyterian Mission Society. In 1880 she opened the Old Town Mission and in 1885 she was assigned to Creek Town. In 1886 she reconnoitered the murderous Okoyong area and in 1888 she settled at Ekenge among the Okoyong, which proved to be the beginning of several years of incredible service and adventure.

During her furlough to Scotland in 1891, Mary Slessor was recognized as an outstanding missionary, and she began writing articles that touted the abilities of Africans. Back in Africa, in 1892, she was appointed as the Vice-Counsel for the administration of justice to Okoyong. In 1896 she relocated to Akpap. In 1898 she took four of her adopted "children" with her on another furlough to Scotland. In 1903 she left Akpap to minister among the Aros and Ibibios. In 1906 she severed her ties with the Presbyterian Mission Society and took a judgeship. In 1907, at about 59 years of age, Mary suffered a great decline in her health. Nevertheless, in 1910 she opened a mission in Ikpe. In 1914, she was honored in Nigeria with the Silver Cross. Mary Slessor died in Africa at the age of 66, on January 13, 1915. -- From Online Sources

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02 -- A SKETCH FROM "HEROINES OF SERVICE" -- By Mary R. Parkman

Among all the weavers in the great factory at Dundee there was no girl more deft and skilful than Mary Slessor. She was only eleven when she had to help shoulder the cares of the household and share with the frail mother the task of earning bread for the hungry children. For the little family was worse than fatherless. The man who had once been a thrifty, self-respecting shoemaker had become a slave to drink; and his

life was a burden to himself and to those who were nearest and dearest to him.

"Dinna cry, mither dear," Mary had said. "I can go to the mills in the morning and to school in the afternoon. It will be a glad day, earning and learning at the same time!"

So Mary became a "half-timer" in the mills. At six o'clock every morning she was at work among the big whirling wheels. Even the walls and windows seemed to turn sometimes as the hot wind came in her face from the whizzing belts, and the roar of the giant wheels filled all her day with din and clamor.

But as Mary worked week after week, she learned more than the trick of handling the shuttle at the moving loom. She learned how to send her thoughts far away from the noisy factory to a still place of breeze-stirred trees and golden sunshine. Sometimes a book, which she had placed on the loom to peep in at free moments, helped her to slip away in fancy from the grinding toil. What magic one could find in the wonderful world of books! The wheels whirled off into nothingness, the walls melted away like mist, and her spirit was free to wander through all the many ways of the wide world. And so it was that she went from the hours of work and earning to the hours of study and learning with a blithe, morning face, her brave soul shining through bright eager eyes.

"When we're all dragged out, and feel like grumbling at everything and nothing seems of any use at all, Mary Slessor is still up and coming, as happy as a cricket," said one of the girls who worked by her side. "She makes you take heart in spite of yourself, and think it's something to be glad over just to be living and working."

"It's wonderful the way your hand can go on with the shuttle and do the turn even better than you could if you stopped to take thought," Mary would explain. "That leaves your mind free to go another way. Now this morning I was not in the weaving shed at all; I was far away in Africa, seeing all the strange sights the missionary from Calabar told us about last night at meeting."

Heaven was very near to Mary Slessor, and the stars seemed more real than the street lamps of the town. She had come to feel that the troubles and trials of her days were just steps on the path that she would travel. Always she looked past the rough road to the end of the journey where there was welcome in the Father's house for all His tired children. There was, moreover, one bit of real romance in that gray Scotch world of hers. The thrill of beauty and mystery and splendid heroism was in the stories that the missionaries told of Africa, the land of tropical wonders -- pathless forests, winding rivers under bending trees, bright birds, and brighter flowers and people, hundreds of black people, with black lives because the light of truth had never shone in their world. She knew that white people who called themselves Christians had gone there to carry them away for slaves ; and to get their palm-oil and rubber and give them rum in exchange -- rum that was making them worse than the wild beasts of the jungle. How Mary Slessor longed to be one to carry the good news of a God of Love to those people who lived and died in darkness! "Somebody must help those who can't help themselves!" she said to herself.

"The fields are ripe for the harvest but the laborers are few," one of the missionaries had said. "We fear the fever and other ills that hide in the bush more than we fear to fail in God's service. Men have gone to these people to make money from the products of their land; they have bought and sold the gifts of their trees; they have bought and sold the people themselves; they are selling them death today in the strong drink they send there. Is there no one who is willing to go to take life to these ignorant children who have suffered so many wrongs?"

These words sank deep into Mary Slessor's heart. But it was plain that her mission was to the little home in Dundee. She was working now among the turning wheels all day from six until six, and going to school in the evening; but she found time to share with others the secret of the joy that she had found, the light that had made the days of toil bright. The boys that came to her class in the mission school were "toughs" from the slums of the town, but she put many of them on the road to useful, happy living. Her brave spirit won them from their fierce lawlessness; her patience and understanding helped to bring out and fortify the best that was in them.

Once a much-dreaded "gang" tried to break up the mission with a battery of mud and jeers. When Mary Slessor faced them quietly, the leader, boldly confronting her, swung a leaden weight which hung suspended from a cord, about her head threateningly. It came nearer and nearer until it grazed her temple, but the mission teacher never flinched. Her eyes still looked into those of the boy's -- bright, untroubled, and searching. His own dropped, and the missile fell forgotten to the ground.

"She's game, boys!" he cried, surprised out of himself.

And the unruly mob filed into the mission to hear what the "game" lady had to say. Mary Slessor had never heard of the poet, Horace; but she had put to the proof the truth of the well-known lines, which declare that "the man whose life is blameless and free from evil has no need of Moorish javelins, nor bow, nor quiver full of poisoned arrows."

As in her work with the wild boys of the streets, so in her visits to the hopeless people of the dark tenements, Mary Slessor was a powerful influence because she entered their world as one of them, with a faith in the better self of each that called into new life his all-but-extinguished longing for better things.

"As she sat by the fire holding the baby and talking cheerily about her days at the mills and the Sabbath morning at chapel, it seemed as if I were a girl again, happy and hopeful and ready to meet whatever the morrow might bring," said a discouraged mother to whom Mary had been a friend in need.

"It is like hearing the kirk-bells on a Sunday morning at the old home, hearing your voice, Mary Slessor," said a poor blind woman to whom Mary had brought the light of restored faith.

For fourteen years this happy Scotch girl worked in the factory for ten hours each day, and shared her evenings and Sundays with her neighbors of the mission. Besides, she seized moments by the way for study and reading. Her mind was hungry to understand the meaning of life and the truths of religion. One day, in order to find out the sort of mental food she craved, a friend lent her Carlyle's "Sartor Resartus."

"How are you and Carlyle getting on together?" he asked quizzically when they next met.

"It is grand!" she replied with earnest enthusiasm. "I sat up reading it, and was so interested that I did not know what the time was until I heard the factory bells calling me to work in the morning."

Thus her mind was growing and expanding, while her spirit grew through faithful work and loyal service. Her simple, direct speech had an eloquent appeal that went straight to the heart. In spite of an unconquerable timidity that made her shrink from platform appearances, her informal addresses had wide influence. Once she rose in her place at a public meeting and gave a quiet talk on the words: "The common people heard him gladly." And, it was said, "the common people heard her gladly, and crowded around, pleading with her to come again."

In 1874, when everyone was stirred by the death of David Livingstone, Mary Slessor's life was transfigured by a great resolve. The years had brought changes. Her father was dead, and her sisters were old enough to share the burden of supporting the family.

"The time has come for me to join the band of light-bearers to the Dark Continent," said Mary, with a conviction that overcame every obstacle. "It is my duty to go where the laborers are few. Besides, there must be a way to work there and send help to mother at home."

She knew that the missionaries were given a stipend to support them in the manner of the country from which they came. "I shall as far as possible live on the food of the country," she said. "It may be that by sharing to a greater extent the conditions of life of the people, I can come to a fuller understanding of them and they of me. Besides, it will not be so hard to leave home if I can feel that I am still earning something for mother."

So Mary Slessor went, after a few months of special preparation to teach the natives of Calabar. She was at this time twenty-eight years old. Ever since she was a mere slip of a girl, she had longed to serve in that most discouraging of fields -- "the slums of Africa," it was called. The people who inhabited that swampy, equatorial region were the most

wretched and degraded of all the Negro tribes. They had for ages been the victims of stronger neighbors, who drove them back from the drier and more desirable territory that lay farther inland; and victims of their own ignorance and superstitions, which were at the root of their bloodthirsty, savage customs.

It was in September, 1876, that the vessel Ethiopia sailed out of the clean, blue Atlantic into the mud-colored Calabar River. At its prow stood Mary Slessor, gazing soberly at the vast mangrove swamps and wondering about the unknown, unexplored land beyond, where she should pitch her tent and begin her work. Though white men had for centuries come to the coast to trade for gold dust, ivory, palm oil, spices, and slaves, they had never ventured inland, and the natives who lived near the shore had sought to keep the lion's share of the profit by preventing the remoter tribes from coming with their goods to barter directly with the men of the big ships. So only a few miles from the mouth of the Calabar River was a land where white people had never gone, whose inhabitants had never seen a white face. It was to this place of unknown dangers that Mary Slessor was bound.

For a time she remained at the mission settlement to learn the language, while teaching in the day school. As soon as she gained sufficient ease in the use of the native speech, she began to journey through the bush, as the tropical jungles of palms, bananas, ferns, and thick grass were called. Her heart sang as she went along, now wading through a spongy morass bright with orchids, now jumping over a stream or the twisted roots of a giant tree. After the chill grayness of her Scottish country, this land seemed at first a veritable paradise of golden warmth, alluring sounds and scents, and vivid color. Now she paused in delight as a brilliant bird flashed through the branches overhead; now she went on with buoyant step, drinking in the tropical fragrance with every breath. Surely so fair a land could not be so deadly as it was said. She must keep well for the task that lay before her. She could not doubt that each day would bring strength for the day's work.

With two or three of the boys from the Calabar school as guides, she made the journey to some of the out-districts. Here a white face was a thing of wonder or terror. The children ran away shrieking with fear; the women pressed about her, chattering and feeling her clothing

and her face, to see if she were real. At first she was startled, but she soon divined that this was just the beginning of friendly acquaintance.

Miss Slessor soon showed an astonishing mastery of the language, and an even more amazing comprehension of the minds of the people. She realized that the natives were not devoid of ideas and beliefs, but that, on the contrary, certain crude conceptions, strongly rooted through the custom and tradition of ages, accounted for many of their horrible practices. They put all twin babies to death because they believed that one of them was a demon-child whose presence in a tribe would bring untold harm on the people. They tortured and murdered helpless fellow creatures, not wantonly, but because they believed that their victims had been bewitching a suffering chief, for disease was a mysterious blight, caused by the "evil eye" of a malicious enemy. When a chief died many people were slaughtered, for of course he would want slaves and companions in the world of spirits.

It was wonderful the way Mary Slessor was able to move about among the rude, half-naked savages as confidently as she had among her people in Scotland, looking past the dirt and ugliness to the human heart beneath, tortured by fear or grief, and say a word that brought hope and comfort. She feared neither the crouching beasts of the jungle nor the treacherous tribes of the scattered mud villages. Picking her way over the uncertain bush trails, she carried medicine, tended the sick, and spoke words of sympathy and cheer to the distressed. Sometimes she stayed away over several nights, when her lodging was a mud hut and her bed a heap of unpleasant rags.

The people soon learned that her interest went beyond teaching and preaching and giving aid to the sick. She cared enough for their welfare to lead them by night past the sentries of the jealous coast tribes to the factory near the beach, where they could dispose of their palm oil and kernels to their own profit. She won in this way the good will of the traders who said:

"There is a missionary of the right sort! She will accomplish something because she is taking hold of all the problems that concern her people, and is working systematically to improve all the conditions of their lives."

One day she set forth on a trip of thirty miles along the river to visit the village of a chief named Okon, who had sent begging her to come. A state canoe, which was lent by King Eyo of Calabar, had been gaily painted in her honor, and a canopy of matting to shield her from the sun and dew had been thoughtfully erected over a couch of rice bags. Hours passed in the tender formalities of farewell, and when the paddlers actually got the canoe out into the stream it was quite dark. The red gleam of their torches fell upon venomous snakes and alligators, but there was no fear while her companions beat the "tom-tom" and sang, as they plied their paddles, loud songs in her praise, such as:

"Ma, our beautiful, beloved mother is on board! Ho! Ho! Ho!"

Such unwonted clamor no doubt struck terror to all the creatures with claws and fangs along the banks.

After ten hours' paddling, she arrived at Okon's village. A human skull stuck on a pole was the first sight that greeted her. Crowds gathered about to stare and touch her hand to make sure that she was flesh and blood. At meal times a favored few who were permitted to watch her eat and drink ran about, excitedly reporting every detail to their friends.

For days she went around giving medicines, bandaging, cutting out garments, and teaching the women the mysteries of sewing, washing, and ironing. In the evenings all the people gathered about her quietly while she told them about the God she served -- a God of love, whose ways were peace and lovingkindness. At the end they filed by, wishing her good night with much feeling before they disappeared into the blackness of the night.

These new friends would not permit her to walk about in the bush as she had been used to doing. There were elephants in the neighboring jungle, they said. The huge beasts had trampled down all their growing things, so that they had to depend mainly on fishing. One morning, on hearing that a boa constrictor had been seen, bands of men armed with clubs and muskets set off, yelling fearsomely, to hunt the common enemy. But more terrible to Mary Slessor than any beast of prey were the skulls, horrible images, and offerings to ravenous spirits,

that she saw on every side. How was it possible to teach the law of love to a people who had never known anything but the tyranny of fear?

"I must learn something of the patience of the Creator of all," she said to herself again and again. "For how long has He borne with the sins and weakness of His poor human children, always caring for us and believing that we can grow into something better in spite of all!"

After two weeks in "Elephant Country," Miss Slessor made ready to return to the mission. Rowers, canoe, and baggage were in readiness, and a smoking pot of yams and herbs cooked in palm oil was put on board for the evening meal. Scarcely had they partaken, however, when Mary saw that the setting sun was surrounded by angry clouds, and her ear caught the ominous sound of the wind wailing in the tree-tops.

"We are coming into a stormy night," she said fearfully to Okon, who was courteously escorting the party back to Old Town.

The chief lifted his black face to the black sky and scanned the clouds solemnly. Then he hastily steered for a point of land that lay sheltered from the wind. Before they could reach the lee side, however, the thunder broke, and the wild sweep of the wind seized the canoe and whirled it about like a paper toy. Crew and chief alike were helpless from terror when Mary took her own fear in hand and ordered the rowers to make for the tangle of trees that bordered the bank. The men pulled together with renewed hope and strength until the shelter of the bush was reached. Then springing like monkeys into the overhanging branches, they held on to the canoe which was being dashed up and down like a straw. The "White Mother," who was sitting in water to her knees and shaking with ague, calmed the fears of the panic-stricken children who had buried their faces in her lap, and looked about in awed wonder at the weird beauty of the scene. The vivid flashes of lightning shattered the darkness with each peal of thunder, revealing luxuriant tropical vegetation rising above the lashed water, foaming and hissing under the slanting downpour of the rain, and the tossing canoe with the crouching, gleaming-wet figures of the frightened crew.

This was but one of many thrilling adventures that filled the days of the brave young missionary. When the appeal came, no matter what

the time of midday heat or midnight blackness, she was ready to journey for hours through the bush to bring succor and comfort.

Once the news came that the chief of a village had been seized by a mysterious illness. Knowing that this would mean torture, and death, perhaps, to those suspected of having enviously afflicted him by the "evil eye," she set off along the trail through the dense forest to use all her influence to save the unfortunate victims.

"But, Ma," the people would protest, "you don't understand. If you god-people not punish evil, bad ones say, 'God-ways no good!' Bad ones go round cast spells with no fear. No one safe at all."

Of all their superstitious fears, the horror of twin babies was the most universal. With great difficulty Miss Slessor managed to save a few of these unfortunate infants. At first some of the people refused to come into the hut where a twin child was kept; but when they saw that no plague attacked the place or the rash white "Ma" they looked upon her with increased respect. The "White Mother" must have a power much greater than that of the witch-doctors.

The natives thought that the witch-doctors knew a great deal. When a man had a tormented back, it was thought that they could tell what enemy had put a spell on him.

"Oh, yes, Ma, the witch-doctor he knows," declared a chief who was suffering with an abscess," just see all those claws, teeth, and bones over there. He took them all out of my back."

But still, they though if "Ma" did not understand about such spells, she had a wonderful magic of her own; she knew soothing things to put on the bewitched back that could drive the pain away and make it well. The influence of the healer was often stronger than the influence of the witch-doctor and the superstitious fears of all the tribe. Again and again her will prevailed in the palaver, and the chief to please her would spare the lives of those who should by every custom of the land be put to death.

"Ma" required strange things of them, but she was the best friend they had ever had. When she stood up before them and spoke so

movingly it seemed as if she would talk the heart right out of the sternest savage of them all! She made them forget the things that they supposed they had known all their lives. Who would have believed that they would even dream of allowing a chief's son to go unattended into the spirit-world? Yet when she begged them to spare the lives of the slaves who should have been sent with him, they had at last consented. And, even though they thought that a twin-child should never be allowed to live and work its demon spells in the world, still they allowed her to save some of them alive. It was said that prudent people had even gone into the room where the rescued twins were kept and had touched them without fear. They had been almost persuaded that those strangely born twin babies were just like other children!

The "White Mother" of Calabar always had a family of little black waifs that she had rescued from violent death or neglect. Besides the unfortunate twins, there were the children whose slave mothers had died when they were tiny infants. "Nobody has time to bring up a child that will belong to somebody else as soon as it is good for something," it was said. So the motherless children were left in the bush to die.

Mary Slessor loved her strange black brood tenderly. "Baby things are always gentle and lovable," she used to say. "These children who have had right training from the beginning will grow up to be leaders and teachers of their people."

For twelve years Miss Slessor worked in connection with the established mission at Calabar, journeying about to outlying villages as the call came. It had for long been her dream, however, to go still farther inland to the wild Okolong tribe whose very name was a terror throughout the land. Her mother and her sister Janie, who together made "home" for her, had died.

"There is no one to write and tell all my stories and troubles and nonsense to," she said. "But Heaven is now nearer to me than Britain, and nobody will be anxious about me if I go up country."

In King Eyo's royal canoe she made the journey to the strange people. Leaving the paddlers, who were mortal enemies to the Okoyong tribe, at the water's edge, she made her way along the jungle trail to a village four miles inland. Here the people crowded about her greatly

excited. They called her "Mother," and seemed pleased that she had come to them without fear. The chief, Edem, and his sister, Ma Eame, received her in a friendly fashion. Her courage, frankness, and ready understanding won favor from the beginning.

"May I have ground for a schoolhouse and a home with you here?" she asked. "Will you have me stay as your friend and help you as I have helped the people of Calabar?"

Eagerly they assented. It would be a fine thing to have a "White Mother" in their country.

"Will you grant that the house I build shall be a place of refuge for those in distress -- for those charged with witchcraft or threatened with death for any other cause? Will you promise that they shall be safe with me until we can consider together their case?"

The people looked at the strange white woman wonderingly. Why should she ask this thing? What difference could it make to her?

"All life is precious," she said simply, as if she had read their thoughts. "I am here to help you -- to care for those who are sick or hurt, and I must be allowed to see that each one who is in any sort of trouble is treated fairly. Will you promise that my house shall be a place of refuge?"

Again they gravely assented. So, greatly encouraged, she returned to Calabar to pack her goods and prepare to leave the old field for the new.

All her friends gathered about her, loudly lamenting. She was surely going to her death, they said. Her fellow workers regarded her with wonder and pity. "Nothing can make any impression on the Okoyong save a consul and a British gunboat," they declared. But Mary Slessor was undaunted. She stowed her boxes and her little family of five small waifs away in the canoe as happily as if she were starting out on a pleasure trip. To a friend in Scotland, she wrote:

"I am going to a new tribe up-country, a fierce, cruel people, and every one tells me that they will kill me. But I don't fear any hurt -- only

to combat their savage customs will require courage and firmness on my part."

The life in Okoyong did indeed require fortitude and faith. Remote from friends and helpers, in the midst of that most dreaded of all the African tribes, she patiently worked to lighten the darkness of the degraded people and make their lives happier and better. With her rare gift of intuition she at once felt that Ma Eame, the chief's sister, had a warm heart and a strong character.

"She will be my chief ally," she said to herself, and time proved that she was right. A spark in the black woman's soul was quickened by the White Mother's flaming zeal. Dimly she felt the power of the new law of love. Often at the risk of her life, should she be discovered, she kept the missionary informed in regard to the movements of the people. Whether it was a case of witchcraft or murder, of vengeance or a raid on a neighboring tribe, "Ma" was sure to find it out; and her influence was frequently strong enough to avert a tragedy.

As at Calabar, she found that the greatest obstacle in the way of progress was the general indulgence in rum, which the white people gave the natives in exchange for their palm oil, spices, rubber, and other products.

"Do not drink the vile stuff -- do not take it or sell it," she begged. "It is like poison to your body. It burns out your life and heart and brings every trouble upon you."

"What for white man bring them rum suppose them rum no be good?" they demanded. "He be god-man bring the rum -- then what for god-man talk so?"

What was there to say? With a heavy heart the White Mother struggled on to help her people in spite of this great evil which men of the professed-Christian world had brought upon these weak, ignorant black children. And she did make headway in spite of every discouragement. "I had a lump in my throat often, and my courage repeatedly threatened to take wings and fly away -- though nobody guessed it," she said.

For years this brave woman went on with her work among the wild tribes of Nigeria. As soon as she began to get the encouragement of results in one place she pressed on to an unworked field. Realizing that her pioneer work needed to be reenforced and sustained by the strong arm of the law, she persuaded the British Government to "take up the white man's burden" and (through the influence of consuls and the persuasive presence of a gunboat or two) assume the guardianship of her weak children. In spite of failing health and the discouragement of small results, she went from one post to another, leaving mission houses and chapel-huts as outward signs of the new life to which she had been a witness. "I am ready to go anywhere, provided it be forward," was her watchword, as well as Dr. Livingstone's.

There are many striking points of likeness between the careers of these two torch-bearers to the Dark Continent. As children both had worked at the loom, studying hungrily as they toiled. Both did pioneer work, winning the confidence and love of the wild people they taught and served. No missionary to Africa, save Dr. Livingstone alone, has had a more powerful influence than Mary Slessor.

When at last in January, 1915, after thirty-nine years of service, she died and left to others the task of bearing on the torch to her people, Sir Frederick Lugard, the Governor-General of Nigeria said:

"By her enthusiasm, self-sacrifice, and greatness of character she has earned the devotion of thousands of natives among whom she worked, and the love and esteem of all Europeans, irrespective of class or creed, with whom she came in contact."

She was buried in the land to which she had given her long life of service. At the grave when the women, after the native fashion, began their wild wail of lament, one of them lifted up her voice in an exalted appeal that went straight to the heart:

"Do not cry, do not cry! Praise God from whom all blessings flow. Ma was a great blessing."

Of all the words of glowing tribute to her faithful work, we may be sure that none would have meant more to the lowly missionary than this cry from the awakened soul of one of her people of the bush.

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THE END