



THE BLOOD COVENANT

H. C. TRUMBULL



THE BLOOD COVENANT

H. C. TRUMBULL

H. C. Trumbull



THE BLOOD COVENANT

UUID: d73a4b42-0447-4fde-9144-e75b33a40202

This ebook was created with StreetLib Write

<http://write.streetlib.com>

-->

Table of contents

PREFACE.

I.THE PRIMITIVE RITE ITSELF.

II.SUGGESTIONS AND PERVERSIONS OF THE RITE.

III.INDICATIONS OF THE RITE IN THE BIBLE.

APPENDIX.

FOOTNOTES:

COLOPHON

PREFACE.

It was while engaged in the preparation of a book—still unfinished—on the Sway of Friendship in the World's Forces, that I came upon facts concerning the primitive rite of covenanting by the inter-transfusion of blood, which induced me to turn aside from my other studies, in order to pursue investigations in this direction. Having an engagement to deliver a series of lectures before the Summer School of Hebrew, under Professor W. R. Harper, of Chicago, at the buildings of the Episcopal Divinity School, in Philadelphia, I decided to make this rite and its linkings the theme of that series; and I delivered three lectures, accordingly, June 16-18, 1885.

The interest manifested in the subject by those who heard the Lectures, as well as the importance of the theme itself, has seemed sufficient to warrant its presentation to a larger public. In this publishing, the form of the original Lectures has, for convenience sake, been adhered to; although some considerable additions

to the text, in the way of illustrative facts, have been made, since the delivery of the Lectures; while other similar material is given in an Appendix.

From the very freshness of the subject itself, there was added difficulty in gathering the material for its illustration and exposition. So far as I could learn, no one had gone over the ground before me, in this particular line of research; hence the various items essential to a fair statement of the case must be searched for through many diverse volumes of travel and of history and of archæological compilation, with only here and there an incidental disclosure in return. Yet, each new discovery opened the way for other discoveries beyond; and even after the Lectures, in their present form, were already in type, I gained many fresh facts, which I wish had been earlier available to me. Indeed, I may say that no portion of the volume is of more importance than the Appendix; where are added facts and reasonings bearing directly on well-nigh every main point of the original Lectures.

There is cause for just surprise that the chief facts of this entire subject have been so generally overlooked, in all the theological discussions, and in all the physio-sociological researches, of the earlier and the later times. Yet this only furnishes another illustration of the inevitably cramping influence of a pre-conceived fixed theory,—to which all the ascertained facts must be conformed,—in any attempt at thorough and impartial

scientific investigation. It would seem to be because of such cramping, that no one of the modern students of myth and folk-lore, of primitive ideas and customs, and of man's origin and history, has brought into their true prominence, if indeed he has even noticed them in passing, the universally dominating primitive convictions: that the blood is the life; that the heart, as the blood-fountain, is the very soul of every personality; that blood-transfer is soul-transfer; that blood-sharing, human, or divine-human, secures an inter-union of natures; and that a union of the human nature with the divine is the highest ultimate attainment reached out after by the most primitive, as well as by the most enlightened, mind of humanity.

Certainly, the collation of facts comprised in this volume grew out of no pre-conceived theory on the part of its author. Whatever theory shows itself in their present arrangement, is simply that which the facts themselves have seemed to enforce and establish, in their consecutive disclosure.

I should have been glad to take much more time for the study of this theme, and for the re-arranging of its material, before its presentation to the public; but, with the pressure of other work upon me, the choice was between hurrying it out in its present shape, and postponing it indefinitely. All things considered, I chose the former alternative.

In the prosecution of my investigations, I acknowledge kindly aid from Professor Dr. Georg Ebers, Principal Sir William Muir, Dr. Yung Wing, Dean E. T. Bartlett, Professors Doctors John P. Peters and J. G. Lansing, the Rev. Dr. M. H. Bixby, Drs. D. G. Brinton and Charles W. Dulles, the Rev. Messrs. R. M. Luther and Chester Holcombe, and Mr. E. A. Barber; in addition to constant and valuable assistance from Mr. John T. Napier, to whom I am particularly indebted for the philological comparisons in the Oriental field, including the Egyptian, the Arabic, and the Hebrew.

At the best, my work in this volume is only tentative and suggestive. Its chief value is likely to be in its stimulating of others to fuller and more satisfactory research in the field here brought to notice. Sufficient, however, is certainly shown, to indicate that the realm of true Biblical theology is as yet by no means thoroughly explored.

I. THE PRIMITIVE RITE ITSELF.

1. SOURCES OF BIBLE STUDY.

Those who are most familiar with the Bible, and who have already given most time to its study, have largest desire and largest expectation of more knowledge through its farther study. And, more and more, Bible study has come to include very much that is outside of the Bible.

For a long time, the outside study of the Bible was directed chiefly to the languages in which the Bible was written, and to the archæology and the manners and customs of what are commonly known as the Lands of the Bible. Nor are these well-worked fields, by any means, yet exhausted. More still remains to be gleaned from them, each and all, than has been gathered thence by all searchers in their varied lore. But, latterly, it has been realized, that, while the Bible is an Oriental book,

written primarily for Orientals, and therefore to be understood only through an understanding of Oriental modes of thought and speech, it is also a record of God's revelation to the whole human race; hence, its inspired pages are to receive illumination from all disclosures of the primitive characteristics and customs of that race, everywhere. Not alone those who insist on the belief that there was a gradual development of the race from a barbarous beginning, but those also who believe that man started on a higher plane, and in his degradation retained perverted vestiges of God's original revelation to him, are finding profit in the study of primitive myths, and of aboriginal religious rites and ceremonies, all the world over. Here, also, what has been already gained, is but an earnest of what will yet be compassed in the realm of truest biblical research.

2. AN ANCIENT SEMITIC RITE.

One of these primitive rites, which is deserving of more attention than it has yet received, as throwing light on many important phases of Bible teaching, is the rite of blood-covenanting: a form of mutual covenanting, by which two persons enter into the closest, the most enduring, and the most sacred of compacts, as friends and brothers, or as more than brothers, through the inter-commingling of their blood, by means of its mutual tasting, or of its inter-transfusion. This rite is still observed in the unchanging East; and there are historic

traces of it, from time immemorial, in every quarter of the globe; yet it has been strangely overlooked by biblical critics and biblical commentators generally, in these later centuries.

In bringing this rite of the covenant of blood into new prominence, it may be well for me to tell of it as it was described to me by an intelligent native Syrian, who saw it consummated in a village at the base of the mountains of Lebanon; and then to add evidences of its wide-spread existence in the East and elsewhere, in earlier and in later times.

It was two young men, who were to enter into this covenant. They had known each other, and had been intimate, for years; but now they were to become brother-friends, in the covenant of blood. Their relatives and neighbors were called together, in the open place before the village fountain, to witness the sealing compact. The young men publicly announced their purpose, and their reasons for it. Their declarations were written down, in duplicate,—one paper for each friend,—and signed by themselves and by several witnesses. One of the friends took a sharp lancet, and opened a vein in the other's arm. Into the opening thus made, he inserted a quill, through which he sucked the living blood. The lancet-blade was carefully wiped on one of the duplicate covenant-papers, and then it was taken by the other friend, who made a like incision in its first user's arm, and

drank his blood through the quill, wiping the blade on the duplicate covenant-record. The two friends declared together: "We are brothers in a covenant made before God: who deceiveth the other, him will God deceive." Each blood-marked covenant-record, was then folded carefully, to be sewed up in a small leathern case, or amulet, about an inch square; to be worn thenceforward by one of the covenant-brothers, suspended about the neck, or bound upon the arm, in token of the indissoluble relation.

The compact thus made, is called, *M'âhadat ed-Dam* (معاودة الدم), the "Covenant of Blood." The two persons thus conjoined, are, *Akhwat el-M'âhadah* (اخوة المعاودة), "Brothers of the Covenant." The rite itself is recognized, in Syria, as one of the very old customs of the land, as *'âdah qadeemeh* (عادة قديمة) "a primitive rite." There are many forms of covenanting in Syria, but this is the extremest and most sacred of them all. As it is the intercommingling of very lives, nothing can transcend it. It forms a tie, or a union, which cannot be dissolved. In marriage, divorce is a possibility: not so in the covenant of blood. Although now comparatively rare, in view of its responsibilities and of its indissolubleness, this covenant is sometimes entered into by confidential partners in business, or by fellow-travelers; again, by robbers on the road—who would themselves rest fearlessly on its obligations, and who could be rested on within its limits,

however untrustworthy they or their fellows might be to any other compact. Yet, again, it is the chosen compact of loving friends; of those who are drawn to it only by mutual love and trust.

This covenant is commonly between two persons of the same religion—Muhammadans, Druzes, or Nazarenes; yet it has been known between two persons of different religions; ^[1] and in such a case it would be held as a closer tie than that of birth ^[2] or sect. He who has entered into this compact with another, counts himself the possessor of a double life; for his friend, whose blood he has shared, is ready to lay down his life with him, or for him. ^[3] Hence the leathern case, or *Bayt hejâb* (بيت حجاب) “House of the amulet,” ^[4] containing the record of the covenant (*'uhdah* , عهدة), is counted a proud badge of honor, by one who possesses it; and he has an added sense of security, because he will not be alone when he falleth. ^[5]

I have received personal testimony from native Syrians, concerning the observance of this rite in Damascus, in Aleppo, in Hâsbayya, in Abayh, along the road between Tyre and Sidon, and among the Koords resident in Salehayyah. All the Syrians who have been my informants, are at one concerning the traditional extreme antiquity of this rite, and its exceptional force and sacredness.

In view of the Oriental method of evidencing the closest

possible affection and confidence, by the sucking of the loved one's blood, there would seem to be more than a coincidence in the fact, that the Arabic words for friendship, for affection, for blood, and for leech, or blood-sucker, are but variations from a common root. [6] *'Alaqa* (علق) means "to love," "to adhere," "to feed." *'Alaq* (علق), in the singular, means "love," "friendship," "attachment," "blood." As the plural of *'alaqa* (علقة), *'alaq* means "leeches," or "blood-suckers." The truest friend clings like a leech, and draws blood in order to the sharing thereby of his friend's life and nature.

A native Syrian, who had traveled extensively in the East, and who was familiar with the covenant of blood in its more common form, as already described, told me of a practice somewhat akin to it, whereby a bandit-chieftain would pledge his men to implicit and unqualified, life-surrendering fidelity to himself; or, whereby a conspirator against the government would bind, in advance, to his plans, his fellow conspirators,—by a ceremony known as *Sharb el-'ahd* (شرب العهد) "Drinking the covenant." The methods of such covenanting are various; but they are all of the nature of tests of obedience and of endurance. They sometimes include licking a heated iron with the tongue, or gashing the tongue, or swallowing pounded glass or other dangerous potions; but, in all cases, the idea seems to be, that the life of the one covenanting is, by this covenant, devoted—

surrendered as it were—to the one with whom he covenants; and the rite is uniformly accompanied with a solemn and an imprecatory appeal to God, as witnessing and guarding the compact.

Dr. J. G. Wetzstein, a German scholar, diplomat, and traveler, who has given much study to the peoples east of the Jordan, makes reference to the binding force and the profound obligation of the covenants of brotherhood, in that portion of the East; although he gives no description of the methods of the covenant-rite. Speaking of two Bed´ween—Habbâs and Hosayn—who had been “brothered” (*verbrüdert*), he explains by saying: “We must by this [term] understand the Covenant of Brotherhood ^[7] (*Churwat el-Ahĕd* [خوة العهد]), which is in use to-day not only among the Hadari [the Villagers], but also among the Bed´ween; and is indeed of pre-Muhammadan origin. The brother [in such a covenant] must guard the [other] brother from treachery, and [must] succor him in peril. So far as may be necessary, the one must provide for the wants of the other; and the survivor has weighty obligations in behalf of the family of the one deceased.” Then, as showing how completely the idea of a common life in the lives of two friends thus covenanted—if, indeed, they have become sharers of the same blood—sways the Oriental mind, Wetzstein adds: “The marriage of a man and woman between whom this covenant exists, is held to be *incest* .” ^[8]

There are, indeed, various evidences that the tie of blood-covenanting is reckoned, in the East, even a closer tie than that of natural descent; that a “friend” by this tie is nearer and is dearer, “sticketh closer,” than a “brother” by birth. We, in the West, are accustomed to say, that “blood is thicker than water”; but the Arabs have the idea that blood is thicker than milk, than a mother’s milk. With them, any two children nourished at the same breast are called “milk-brothers,”^[9] or “sucking brothers”;^[10] and the tie between such is very strong. A boy and a girl in this relation cannot marry, even though by birth they had no family relationship. Among even the more bigoted of the Druzes, a Druze girl who is a “sucking sister” of a Nazarene boy is allowed a sister’s privileges with him. He can see her uncovered face, even to the time of her marriage. But, the Arabs hold that brothers in the covenant of blood are closer than brothers at a common breast; that those who have tasted each other’s blood are in a surer covenant than those who have tasted the same milk together; that “blood-lickers,”^[11] as the blood-brothers are sometimes called, are more truly one, than “milk-brothers,” or “sucking brothers”; that, indeed, blood is thicker than milk, as well as thicker than water.

This distinction it is which seems to be referred to in a citation from the Arabic poet El-A’asha, by the Arabic lexicographer Qamus, which has been a puzzle to Lane, and Freytag, and others.^[12] Lane’s translation of the

passage is: "Two foster-brothers by the sucking of the breast of one mother, swore together by dark blood, into which they dipped their hands, that they should not ever become separated." In other words, two milk-brothers became blood-brothers, by interlocking their hands under their own blood, in the covenant of blood-friendship. They had been closely inter-linked before; now they were as one; for blood is thicker than milk. The oneness of nature which comes of sharing the same blood, by its inter-transfusion, is rightly deemed, by the Arabs, completer than the oneness of nature which comes of sharing the same milk; or even than that which comes through having blood from a common source, by natural descent.

3. THE PRIMITIVE RITE IN AFRICA.

Travelers in the heart of Africa, also, report the covenant of "blood-brotherhood," or of "strong-friendship," as in vogue among various African tribes; although, naturally retaining less of primitive sacredness there than among Semites. The rite is, in some cases, observed after the manner of the Syrians, by the contracting parties tasting each other's blood; while, in other cases, it is performed by the inter-transfusion of blood between the two.

The first mention which I find of it, in the writings of modern travelers in Africa, is by the lamented hero-missionary, Dr. Livingstone. He calls the rite *Kasendi*. It was in the region of Lake Dilolo, at the watershed

between the Indian Ocean and the Atlantic, in July, 1854, that he made blood-friendship, vicariously, with Queen Manenko, of the Balonda tribes. ^[13] She was represented, in this ceremony, by her husband, the ebony “Prince Consort”; while Livingstone’s representative was one of his Makololo attendants. Woman’s right to rule—when she has the right—seems to be as clearly recognized in Central Africa, to-day, as it was in Ethiopia in the days of Candace, or in Sheba in the days of Balkees.

Describing the ceremony, Livingstone says: ^[14] “It is accomplished thus: The hands of the parties are joined (in this case Pitsane and Sambanza were the parties engaged). Small incisions are made on the clasped hands, on the pits of the stomach of each, and on the right cheeks and foreheads. A small quantity of blood is taken off from these points, in both parties, by means of a stalk of grass. The blood from one person is put into a pot of beer, and that of the second into another; each then drinks the other’s blood, and they are supposed to become perpetual friends, or relations. During the drinking of the beer, some of the party continue beating the ground with short clubs, and utter sentences by way of ratifying the treaty. The men belonging to each [principal’s party], then finish the beer. The principals in the performance of ‘Kasendi’ are henceforth considered blood-relations, and are bound to disclose to each other any impending evil. If Sekeletu [chief of Pitsane’s tribe—

the Makololo—] should resolve to attack the Balonda [Sambanza's—or, more properly, Manenko's—people], Pitsane would be under obligation to give Sambanza warning to escape; and so, on the other side. [The ceremony concluded in this case] they now presented each other with the most valuable presents they had to bestow. Sambanza walked off with Pitsane's suit of green baize faced with red, which had been made in Loanda; and Pitsane, besides abundant supplies of food, obtained two shells [of as great value, in regions far from the sea, 'as the Lord Mayor's badge is in London,'] similar to that [one, which] I had received from Shinte [the uncle of Manenko].” [15]

Of the binding force of this covenant, Livingstone says farther: “On one occasion I became blood-relation to a young woman by accident. She had a large cartilaginous tumor between the bones of the forearm, which as it gradually enlarged, so distended the muscles as to render her unable to work. She applied to me to excise it. I requested her to bring her husband, if he were willing to have the operation performed; and while removing the tumor, one of the small arteries squirted some blood into my eye. She remarked, when I was wiping the blood out of it, ‘You were a friend before; now you are a blood-relation; and when you pass this way always send me word, that I may cook food for you.’” [16]

Of the influence of these inter-tribal blood-friendships,

in Central Africa, Dr. Livingstone speaks most favorably. Their primitive character is made the more probable, in view of the fact that he first found them existing in a region where, in his opinion, the dress and household utensils of the people are identical with those which are represented on the monuments of ancient Egypt. ^[17] Although it is within our own generation that this mode of covenanting in the region referred to, has been made familiar to us, the rite itself is of old, elsewhere if not, indeed, there; as other travelers following in the track of Livingstone have noted and reported.

Commander Cameron, who, while in charge of the Livingstone Search Expedition, was the first European traveler to cross the whole breadth of the African continent in its central latitudes, gives several illustrations of the observance of this rite. In June, 1874, at the westward of Lake Tanganyika, Syde, a guide of Cameron, entered into this covenant of blood with Pakwanya, a local chief.

“After a certain amount of palaver,” says Cameron, “Syde and Pakwanya exchanged presents, much to the advantage of the former [for in the East, the person of higher rank is supposed to give the more costly gifts in any such exchange]; more especially [in this case] as he [Syde] borrowed the beads of me and afterward forgot to repay me. Pakwanya then performed a tune on his harmonium, or whatever the instrument [which he had]

might be called, and the business of fraternizing was proceeded with. Pakwanya's head man acted as his sponsor, and one of my askari assumed the like office for Syde.

“ The first operation consisted of making an incision on each of their right wrists, just sufficient to draw blood; a little of which was scraped off and smeared on the other's cut; after which gunpowder was rubbed in [thereby securing a permanent token on the arm]. The concluding part of the ceremony was performed by Pakwanya's sponsor holding a sword resting on his shoulder, while he who acted [as sponsor] for Syde went through the motions of sharpening a knife upon it. Both sponsors meanwhile made a speech, calling down imprecations on Pakwanya and all his relations, past, present, and future, and prayed that their graves might be defiled by pigs if he broke the brotherhood in word, thought, or deed. The same form having been gone through with, [with] respect to Syde, the sponsors changing duties, the brother-making was complete.” [18]

Concerning the origin of this rite, in this region, Cameron says: “This custom of ‘making brothers,’ I believe to be really of Semitic origin, and to have been introduced into Africa by the heathen Arabs before the days of Mohammed; and this idea is strengthened by the fact that when the first traders from Zanzibar crossed the Tanganyika, the ceremony was unknown [so far as those

traders knew] to the westward of that lake.” ^[19] Cameron was, of course, unaware of the world-wide prevalence of this rite; but his suggestion that its particular form just here had a Semitic origin, receives support in a peculiar difference noted between the Asiatic and the African ceremonies.

It will be remembered, that, among the Syrians, the blood of the covenant is taken into the mouth, and the record of the covenant is bound upon the arm. The Africans, not fully appreciating the force of a written record, are in the habit of reversing this order, according to Cameron’s account. Describing the rite as observed between his men and the natives, on the Luama River, he says: “The brotherhood business having been completed [by putting the blood from one party on to the arm of the other], some pen and ink marks were made on a piece of paper, which, together with a charge of powder, was put into a kettleful of water. All hands then drank of the decoction, the natives being told that it was a very great medicine.” ^[20] That was “drinking the covenant” ^[21] with a vengeance; nor is it difficult to see how this idea originated.

The gallant and adventurous Henry M. Stanley also reports this rite of “blood-brotherhood,” or of “strong friendship,” in the story of his romantic experiences in the wilds of Africa. On numerous occasions the observance of this rite was a means of protection and

relief to Stanley. One of its more notable illustrations was in his compact with “Mirambo, the warrior chief of Western Unyamwezi;” [22] whose leadership in warfare Stanley compares to that of both Frederick the Great [23] and Napoleon. [24]

It was during his first journey in pursuit of Livingstone, in 1871, that Stanley first encountered the forces of Mirambo, and was worsted in the conflict. [25] Writing of him, after his second expedition, Stanley describes Mirambo, as “the ‘Mars of Africa,’ who since 1871 has made his name feared by both native and foreigner from Usui to Urori, and from Uvinza to Ugogo, a country embracing 90,000 square miles; who, from the village chieftainship over Uyoweh, has made for himself a name as well known as that of Mtesa throughout the eastern half of Equatorial Africa; a household word from Nyangwé to Zanzibar, and the theme of many a song of the bards of Unyamwezi, Ukimbu, Ukonongo, Uzinja, and Uvinza.” [26] For a time, during his second exploring expedition, Stanley was inclined to avoid Mirambo, but becoming “impressed with his ubiquitous powers,” [27] he decided to meet him, and if possible make “strong friendship” with him. They came together, first, at Serombo, April 22, 1876. Mirambo “quite captivated” Stanley. “He was a thorough African *gentleman* in appearance.... A handsome, regular-featured, mild-voiced, soft-spoken man, with what one might call a

‘meek’ demeanor; very generous and open-handed;” his eyes having “the steady, calm gaze of a master.” [28]

The African hero and the heroic American agreed to “make strong friendship” with each other. Stanley thus describes the ceremony: “Manwa Sera [Stanley’s ‘chief captain’] was requested to seal our friendship by performing the ceremony of blood-brotherhood between Mirambo and myself. Having caused us to sit fronting each other on a straw-carpet, he made an incision in each of our right legs, from which he extracted blood, and inter-changing it, he exclaimed aloud: ‘If either of you break this brotherhood now established between you, may the lion devour him, the serpent poison him, bitterness be in his food, his friends desert him, his gun burst in his hands and wound him, and everything that is bad do wrong to him until death.’”

[29] The same blood now flowed in the veins of both Stanley and Mirambo. They were friends and brothers in a sacred covenant; life for life. At the conclusion of the covenant, they exchanged gifts; as the customary ratification, or accompaniment, of the compact. They even vied with each other in proofs of their unselfish fidelity, in this new covenant of friendship. [30]

Again and again, before and after this incident, Stanley entered into the covenant of blood-brotherhood with representative Africans; in some instances by the opening of his own veins; at other times by allowing one

of his personal escort to bleed for him. In January, 1875, a “great magic doctor of Vinyata” came to Stanley’s tent to pay a friendly visit, “bringing with him a fine, fat ox as a peace offering.” After an exchange of gifts, says Stanley, “he entreated me to go through the process of blood-brotherhood, which I underwent with all the ceremonious gravity of a pagan.” ^[31]

Three months later, in April, 1875, when Stanley found himself and his party in the treacherous toils of Shekka, the King of Bumbireh, he made several vain attempts to “induce Shekka, with gifts, to go through the process of blood-brotherhood.” Stanley’s second captain, Safeni, was the adroit, but unsuccessful, agent in the negotiations. “Go frankly and smilingly, Safeni, up to Shekka, on the top of that hill,” said Stanley, “and offer him these three fundo of beads, and ask him to exchange blood with you.” But the wily king was not to be dissuaded from his warlike purposes in that way. “Safeni returned. Shekka had refused the pledge of peace.” ^[32] His desire was to take blood, if at all, without any exchange.

After still another three months, in July, 1875, Stanley, at Refuge Island, reports better success in securing peace and friendship through blood-giving and blood-receiving. “Through the influence of young Lukanjah—the cousin of the King of Ukerewé”—he says, “the natives of the mainland had been induced to exchange their churlish disposition for one of cordial welcome; and the

process of blood-brotherhood had been formally gone through [with], between Manwa Sera, on my part, and Kijaju, King of Komeh, and the King of Itawagumba, on the other part.” [33]

It was at “Kampunzu, in the district of Uvinza, where dwell the true aborigines of the forest country,”—a people whom Stanley afterwards found to be cannibals—that this rite was once more observed between the explorers and the natives. “Blood-brotherhood being considered as a pledge of good-will and peace,” says Stanley, “Frank Pocock [a young Englishman who was an attendant of Stanley] and the chief [of Kampunzu] went through the ordeal; and we interchanged presents”—as is the custom in the observance of this rite. [34]

At the island of Mpika, on the Livingstone River, in December, 1876, there was another bright episode in Stanley’s course of travel, through this mode of sealing friendship. Disease had been making sad havoc in Stanley’s party. He had been compelled to fight his way along through a region of cannibals. While he was halting for a breakfast on the river bank over against Mpika, an attack on him was preparing by the excited inhabitants of the island. Just then his scouts captured a native trading party of men and women who were returning to Mpika, from inland; and to them his interpreters made clear his pacific intentions. “By means of these people,” he says, “we succeeded in checking the warlike demonstrations of

the islanders, and in finally persuading them to make blood-brotherhood; after which we invited canoes to come and receive [these hostages] their friends. As they hesitated to do so, we embarked them in our own boat, and conveyed them across to the island. The news then spread quickly along the whole length of the island that we were friends, and as we resumed our journey, crowds from the shore cried out to us, ‘ *Mwendé Ki-vuké-vuké* ’ (‘Go in peace!’)” [35]

Once more it was at the conclusion of a bloody conflict, in the district of Vinya-Njara, just below Mpika Island, that peace was sealed by blood. When practical victory was on Stanley’s side, at the cost of four of his men killed, and thirteen more of them wounded, then he sought this means of amity. “With the aid of our interpreters,” he says, “we communicated our terms, viz., that we would occupy Vinya-Njara, and retain all the canoes unless they made peace. We also informed them that we had one prisoner, who would be surrendered to them if they availed themselves of our offer of peace: that we had suffered heavily, and they had also suffered; that war was an evil which wise men avoided; that if they came with two canoes with their chiefs, two canoes with our chiefs should meet them in mid-stream, and make blood-brotherhood; and that on that condition some of their canoes should be restored, and we would purchase the rest.” The natives took time for the considering of this

proposition, and then accepted it. "On the 22nd of December, the ceremony of blood-brotherhood having been formally concluded, in mid-river, between Safeni and the chief of Vinya-Njara," continues Stanley, "our captive, and fifteen canoes, were returned, and twenty-three canoes were retained by us for a satisfactory equivalent; and thus our desperate struggle terminated."
[36]

On the Livingstone, just below the Equator, in February, 1877, Stanley's party was facing starvation, having been for some time "unable to purchase food, or indeed [to] approach a settlement for any amicable purpose." The explorers came to look at "each other as fated victims of protracted famine, or [of] the rage of savages, like those of Mangala." "We continued our journey," goes on the record, "though grievously hungry, past Bwena and Inguba, doing our utmost to induce the staring fishermen to communicate with us; without any success. They became at once officiously busy with guns, and dangerously active. We arrived at Ikengo, and as we were almost despairing, we proceeded to a small island opposite this settlement, and prepared to encamp. Soon a canoe with seven men came dashing across, and we prepared our moneys for exhibition. They unhesitatingly advanced, and ran their canoe alongside of us. We were rapturously joyful, and returned them a most cordial welcome, as the act was a most auspicious sign of

confidence. We were liberal, and the natives fearlessly accepted our presents; and from this giving of gifts we proceeded to seal this incipient friendship with our blood, with all due ceremony.”^[37] And by this transfusion of blood, the starving were re-vivified, and the despairing were given hope.

Twice, again, within a few weeks after this experience, there was a call on Stanley of blood for blood, in friendship’s compact. The people of Chumbiri welcomed the travelers. “They readily subscribed to all the requirements of friendship, blood-brotherhood, and an exchange of a few small gifts.”^[38] Itsi, the king of Ntamo, with several of his elders and a showy escort, came out to meet Stanley; and there was a friendly greeting on both sides. “They then broached the subject of blood-brotherhood. We were willing,” says Stanley, “but they wished to defer the ceremony until they had first shown their friendly feelings to us.” Thereupon gifts were exchanged, and the king indicated his preference for a “big goat” of Stanley’s, as his benefaction—which, after some parleying, was transferred to him. Then came the covenant-rite. “The treaty with Itsi,” says Stanley, “was exceedingly ceremonious, and involved the exchange of charms. Itsi transferred to me for my protection through life, a small gourdful of a curious powder, which had rather a saline taste; and I delivered over to him, as the white man’s charm against all evil, a half-ounce vial of