

MORE LABORERS.

More reapers for the harvest white,
For which the Master grieves;
Strong hands to bear the sickle bright
And gather in the sheaves.

More loyal, loving hearts to seek
The souls that grope in night,
More tender hands to lift the weak
And lead them to the light.

Lord of the rippling fields, we pray,
As thou didst bid us do,
Send of thy children, day by day
More laborers good and true.

Nerve thou, with strength each falt'ring heart,
Our shrinking faith uphold,
And give us each to bear our part
To bind thy sheaves of gold.

—Selected.

FIELD STUDY FOR AUGUST.

AFRICA, "the Great Dark Continent," so recently marked on our maps "unexplored" or "Sandy desert," with its three great barriers against the entrance of the Gospel, namely, slavery, superstition and the religion of Islam, is now showing wonderful signs of Christian light, and opening its doors to the heralds of salvation. The very antiquity of this country appeals to our reverence; this continent that sheltered Abraham when driven by famine from Canaan, which nurtured Jacob, and afforded shelter to a greater than Abraham—the land of the Cyrene, who bore the cross of the world's Redeemer. This vast continent, with an area equal to North and South America combined, and a population of 200,000,000, or, more than three times the United States, is re-echoing the cry, heard of old by Paul, the Apostle, "Come over and help us."

Africa is no longer an unknown territory, for the explorations of the last thirty years have revealed Africa almost as thoroughly as the discovery of Columbus revealed America. Livingstone, Schweinfurth, and lastly, Stanley, have opened up the country from "salt sea to salt sea," and now the missionary may go wherever he will. Alas! how great is the need when we think that there is only one ordained missionary to every 300,000 people, and one region, whose population exceeds the United States, is without a missionary at all! Still the work is not without encouragement, and now it is estimated that there are in all about 3,500,000 Christians. The first missionary to Africa was sent by the Moravian Society in 1737, George Schmidt, who landed in Cape Town, and during the eleven years in which he was permitted to labor, gathered around him a little group of fifty Christians. Following him came Vanderkemp, Moffat, Livingstone and Mackay, until now there are 1,800 foreign missionaries and 200 native ordained pastors and 500 native teachers. But this work is chiefly in countries bordering on the coast. Millions, probably, in the interior have never yet heard the story of the cross, and are to a great extent cannibals.

Bishop Taylor has reported recently the conversion of King Hodge, the big ruler of the Grebos, and about forty of his people. These have built a Methodist church on their own account.

The condition of girls and women in Africa is a very hard one. They are married at the age of twelve or even younger, and are literally slaves all their lives. They must work in the fields, doing the hardest work, while the men spend their time eating, drinking and sleeping. Added to this is the cruel practice of wife-beating. In no heathen country are women more ignorant, vicious and utterly degraded than in some parts of Africa. A man may have as many wives as he can afford to buy, and a girl has no part in the choice of her husband. Surely we, whose girlhood is so sheltered, and whose womanhood is so honored, should remember in love and pity our dusky sisters in far-off Africa!

One of the greatest drawbacks to missionary work in Africa is the rum traffic, which, sad to relate, has been introduced by the very same ships which bore our missionaries. Hottentots and Kaffirs are alike destroyed by the thousand by this curse. Let us pray that so-called Christian nations may see the evils of this traffic and cease to inflict it on the poor, ignorant African.

The Jew is the most remarkable character in the world to-day. Whenever we see a Jew we look upon him as a representative of the race that rejected and crucified our Lord and Master; and all through the centuries that have intervened since that sad time he has stubbornly adhered to his ancient faith, and still worships God according to the Mosaic ritual. There are about 10,000,000 Jews in the world to-day, scattered throughout Europe, Africa, Australia and America. Twenty-eight American missionary societies are conducting work among them with varied success. In some instances the missionaries suffer persecution at the hands of the Jews, but in other places many are accepting Jesus Christ as the true Messiah and the Redeemer of Israel.

A. C. W.

QUESTIONS FOR AUGUST.

What are the three great barriers to the Gospel in Africa and what are the signs now?

What is said of its antiquity?

What is said of its area and population, and what is the cry that comes to us?

How and by whom has the country been opened up to the missionary?

In what proportion is the missionary to the people?

Is there any encouragement? How many Christians there now?

Who were the first missionaries to Africa? How many there now?

Has all Africa then heard the story of redemption?

What has Bishop Taylor reported lately about King Hodge?

Will you describe the condition of women and girls in Africa?

How does it compare, in this respect, with other heathen countries?

What can we do for our sisters in Africa?

What is one of the greatest draw-backs to missionary work in Africa? What can we do?

What is remarkable about the Jews?

How many Jews in the world to-day, and where are they?

Is any missionary work done among them?

Do any of them accept Christ?