

EAST AFRICAN MISSION.

BLANTYRE.

The following extracts are from Mr McDonald's letters to Dr. McRae, of dates 9th and 12th February, and from Mr Buchanan's report of the Mission at Zomba :—

"We shall now make a few remarks upon our school companions.

"I have first to say of them all that I have been expecting much progress, and that I have not been disappointed in and case. Livingstone Marshall. John McRae, and Harry Cowan, are still keeping together. Livingstone Marshall is still superior in a conversational knowledge of English. John McRae is a good deal better; he now stays with ourselves, and is advancing much faster in the conversational knowledge of English. These three boys are beginning to reflect a good deal.

"James Robertson, Stephen Cunliffe, William Grange, and Christian Meldrum are continuing their English readings and also beginning the multiplication table. Mungo Park is in the same class. He is a son of Katunga, and deserves special notice for his active temperament and obliging disposition. If this young lad be spared, he will be a great blessing to the country. These sometimes assist in teaching the younger classes. Thomas Dunbarney is a very diligent and well-disposed boy. Lately, when out of school, he has been distinguishing himself by zealous work in the garden, under Mr Duncan's care. Alice Bethelnie and Mungo Murray are both members of a large Manganja class, which is often my own special care. They are doing fairly well.

"The natives are likely to have splendid crops this year. At Kumlomba's village the people are quite in ecstasies over the quantity of maize. They never saw so much 'about the village.' This is due to the fact that they are all free here, and were put under obligations to

cultivate a *minimum*, which they said willingly. The newly-liberated slave seem to be flattered at the prospect of a field that they could call their own.

"What we are anxious to carry out as our strongest 'advance' among the natives, is a translation of such parts of Scripture as will come closest to their hearts. They would be able to understand all that we have to tell them about the Scriptures. I was astonished to find them the other day listening with open mouth to the Sermon on the Mount and showing most marked attention. We can understand them listening to narratives of Joseph or David, but here was a piece of Scripture full of abstract terms. The difficulty with abstract truth is not found in the capacity of the native or of his language, but in our imperfect acquaintance with such language. We are quite astonished at the copious vocabulary of this language. We have succeeded in rendering most of the parables and miracles, and a great part of the narrative matter of the Bible. Most of these we have gone over again and again. John MacRae recites them to me from memory after I have told him, and this always gives some fresh insight into the language. As our venerable forefathers once did, we shall fall back on the Book of Proverbs as a standard reading-book for schools. Hitherto the only books of the Bible that we have tried to translate all through have been Matthew, Genesis, and Jonah.

"Every day we have an hour of some of the ablest men to help us in translating. One of Mrs McDonald's pupils excels in this way. His name is Chendombo and a most excellent translator he is. His own studies have benefited him in so far that he will soon be able to read. But they benefit me also. This man gives us the full benefit of his criticism. These headmen of Mrs McDonald's teaching may be very useful: they are men from about thirty or forty years of

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