

REV. ANDREW MURRAY,
AUTHOR OF "ABIDE IN CHRIST," ETC.

A few years ago only a very few people were at all familiar with Andrew Murray's work. Save by those who had friends in South Africa, or were otherwise interested in the work of the Gospel there, he had hardly been heard of. Nor was much interest aroused when one London publishing firm announced a little volume entitled, "Abide in Christ," by a minister resident at the Cape. The sale was not first such as to warrant the hope of extensive popularity. But very quickly some of the thoughtful spirits that gather around the Mildmay Conference discovered that there was a blessing in the volume, and joyfully proclaimed the fact. This led to many more procuring it. Five other volumes appeared in annual succession, and so welcome have they been to readers of Christian literature, that at this hour there are few names which are more familiar than that of their beloved author.

As his name suggests, Andrew Murray is of Scottish extraction. Nearly seventy years ago the Governor of Cape Colony sent an urgent request to Scotland for a number of ministers to come out and work amongst the growing population there. Amongst the ten or twelve who responded was a Rev. Mr. Murray, a licentiate of the Church of Scotland, who was speedily settled at Graaf Reinet. Another brother of the same family became a minister in Scotland, and was soon well known as Dr. John Murray, of the Free North Church, Aberdeen. Mr. Murray had been but a short time in Africa when he made his influence felt. He was eminently a man of prayer, and before he died he had the joy of seeing very many connected with his flock added to the Lord.

But while thus exercising his gifts as a Christian minister, Mr. Murray had the additional honor and reward of becoming the father of a large family. Five of his sons became devoted ministers of the Dutch Reformed Church of South Africa. Four of his daughters became ministers' wives, while another daughter is still the Principal of a large school for girls. One of the sons, born at Graaf Reinet on May 9, 1828, was named Andrew after some of his kindred. And it is this Scotch-African with whom we are now concerned.

The preparation for the work which lay before Mr. Murray is seen even in his boyhood. When his eldest brother was sent to Aberdeen to complete his classical education, Andrew, then only nine years of age, accompanied him. There, while they were carrying on their studies in the Granite City, William Burns, afterwards the noble missionary in China, was frequently preaching there, and both the young men, enjoying the best opportunities of intercourse with him, caught not a little of his heroic fire. After graduation, they went to Holland to complete their theological education at the University of Utrecht.

Diligent in study and earnest in Christian effort, they were soon the centre of a circle of zealous disciples, and both took an active part in the formation of the students' missionary society named, "Thy Kingdom come" Association. When the curriculum at Utrecht was finished, they returned to South Africa, the elder brother to become first a minister, and ultimately a Professor in the Dutch theological seminary of Stellenbosch; the younger, Andrew, to be appointed to what was then the British Sovereignty, and now the Orange Free State.

Mr. Murray was only twenty years of age when he was ordained to this work. And for a long period he was to be the only minister in the wide territory; but he was not dismayed. He was constantly travelling to all parts of his vast parish, and very frequently passed across the border into the Transvaal, whose scattered population was then without any pastoral oversight. The people gladly gathered in large numbers to worship with him, generally in the open air, sometimes under sails stretched as a protection from the burning sun.

The influence of this activity is felt still in the whole province. It was while he was thus engaged that Mr. Murray found a helpmeet for himself in the person of Miss Emma Rutherford, daughter of Mr. Howson S. Rutherford, one of the leading merchants of Cape Town, and well known as a staunch

friend and generous supporter of the Lord's work in the whole country. It may be readily believed that it was to no paradisaic locality that the young bride was taken, but for the sake of her husband and the Gospel of his Master, she bravely faced and shared all the hardships of life on the frontier.

In 1860 he received a call to Worcester, an important inland town of Cape Colony, about eighty miles from Cape Town. It was at this time that the great wave of revival which, beginning with America and Ireland, and sweeping over the Eastern world, rolled in gladness also over South Africa. There was at Worcester a very marvellous manifestation of the convincing and converting power of the Spirit of Christ. A multitude of souls were gathered into the Kingdom, and the hands of the Lord's servants were full of work.

It was while pastor at Worcester that Mr. Murray began to present some of his utterances in literary form. Amongst the first of his books was a little volume entitled, "Waarom geloofst gij niet?" ("Why do you not believe?"), and another named, "Het nieuw Leven" ("The New Life"), a series of counsels to young Christians who have lately entered the narrow way. Both of these, and especially the latter, have

the days of their tribulation, and become associated with the Dutch Reformed Church.

It is in this sphere that Mr. Murray still lives and works with great joy and success. The people have plainly inherited the blessing promised to thousands of them that love the Lord and keep his commandments. And this is seen in the fact that again and again there have been most blessed times of refreshing and large harvests of souls for the Kingdom of the Lord. This, under God, is largely due to the single-hearted resolve of the pastor to know nothing among the people but Christ and Him crucified, and to seek above all things the salvation of souls. No one who looks at his spare, bent form, and watches the play of his deeply thoughtful yet kindly face, can doubt that he is a born student. But, as a friend of the present writer says: "This power is utterly subordinated to the spiritual purposes of the conversion and quickening of his hearers. I cannot imagine Mr. Murray sitting down to write a good sermon. That could never be his motive. He wants to convert or to build up and consecrate, and everything else is swept out of the way to gain these ends."

It would be a mistake, however, to sup-



THE REV. ANDREW MURRAY.

been much blessed to many, and are still widely circulated at the Cape and in Holland. As we have indicated, they were first written in Dutch. So also were two other volumes which he published at this period, "Abide in Christ" and "Our Children for Christ." After remaining at Worcester for four years, Mr. Murray accepted a call to Capetown, where he remained about the same length of time. The work here was felt by him to be encompassed by many difficulties. There were three Dutch churches in the city, in which, according to the method still pursued in Holland, three ministers preached in turn. The arrangement prevented the growth of that strong pastoral sympathy which Mr. Murray had hitherto found a most valuable element in his work. He asked that he might have a church and a portion of the people as his own congregation. This being declined, he felt free to wait for a door of the Word in another quarter. This at last came in 1871 through a call to Wellington, a pleasant town about thirty miles from Cape Town, on the part of a congregation largely composed of descendants of French Huguenot families who had fled thither in

pose that, successful as Mr. Murray is as a pastor, he is a pastor and nothing more. He has also done a grand work as a Christian educationist. Even in his first charge he spared no pains to get good teachers for his people. And he has pursued the same aim ever since. This desire has been fulfilled with remarkable success in Wellington. Shortly after his removal thither he became acquainted with the life and work of Mary Lyon, of Mount Holyoke Seminary, in America, and became fired with the resolve to have a similar institution in South Africa, where the conversion and Christian education of girls might be made the chief aim. "This is what I have always wanted," said he. "In sending for teachers to England and Scotland I have no security that they will understand this aim, or enter fully into it. I shall send to America for teachers." He did so, and, being fortunate enough to secure the services of Misses Ferguson and Bliss, from Holyoke, he founded in 1874 the Huguenot Seminary at Wellington, over which these ladies still preside.

There are about two hundred young ladies from all parts of South Africa being

educated on the methods of Mount Holyoke and in the same spirit. A minister of the Dutch Reformed Church at Cape Town tells us: "It is difficult to say in a few words what blessings this institution has conferred on South Africa, not only by the education in a Christian spirit of many hundreds of young ladies, but also by a large number of them having become teachers imbued with the spirit of the Huguenot Seminary." "The story of the conversions and revivals at this institution," writes another, "is quite wonderful; and now there are several schools throughout the country which look to the Huguenot Seminary as their mother, and work on the same principles." The most prominent feature in the whole education is the paramount importance attached to Christian missions.

While maintaining this oversight of his flock and the Christian schools of the province, Mr. Murray is as much as ever bent on carrying forward the work of evangelization. In this direction he has had marvellous blessing. His tours on special missions have of late extended not only to the eastern province of the Colony, but also to the Free State, the Transvaal, and Natal. And we are informed that there are hardly any congregations in these different States where there are not found those who now look up to him as their spiritual father.

Mr. Murray has also established at Wellington a training seminary for missionaries to the Kaffirs, and other tribes. Here a much simpler course of study is required than for ordinary pastors. The students are ordained simply as missionaries, but they do a work which could not be carried on by any other agency. Amongst Mr. Murray's own relatives, also, the missionary spirit is still being deeply cherished. It is but recently that one of his nephews, Rev. Andrew C. Murray, has gone to Lake Nyassa as a missionary of the Dutch Church, and is to co-operate with the other Scotch brethren already there.

In connection with his work as an evangelist, one of our correspondents says: "I think all will admit that they never hear him without being stirred up from the very foundation, and made to feel as if they were only beginning the Christian life, and had yet to learn what full trust and consecration mean."

It is with this same power that his last four works, "Like Christ," "With Christ," "Holy in Christ," and "The Spirit of Christ," are fraught. All of them were written at Wellington, and only after the topics they deal with had been studied and meditated on, and spoken about at Christian conferences on subjects akin to them. One of the most remarkable of those already issued has always seemed to us to be that entitled, "With Christ in the School of Prayer." No book of the kind in our time deserves to be studied more. Here, also, Mr. Murray writes out of his own experience. This is true even of his manifest leaning towards faith in the power of prayer as an instrument in the healing of physical diseases. Mr. Murray propounds no dogmatic teaching on this subject. But, like Canon Wilberforce, he has a crisis in his life to look back upon, which constrains him to keep his heart open for growing light on the whole matter. In a severe illness in 1879 he suffered so much from a relaxed throat that he was told he would never be able to use his voice again. And for three years he was actually unable to preach. Subsequently he visited England and consulted physicians, who gave him little encouragement. But he was led to reside at Bethshan, and there he opened his heart by faith so fully to the power of the Lord that he was speedily restored; and he returned to Africa to resume not only his ordinary duties but an amount of additional service that has been a marvel to all who know him.

So lives and works, then, this faithful servant of Christ. He has a remarkable power of winning the confidence of men, and we learn without surprise that even in earlier years he was twice appointed a deputy on important missions to England in connection with civil questions in his country. But the Church is his chosen field of work. Moderator of Synod for no less than three times, he is honored and loved by all his ministerial brethren.—*The Christian*.