

—what advantage hath she! Much every way: chiefly because that unto her are committed the oracles of God.

Missionary.

U-GANDA, CENTRAL AFRICA.

We are sure that our readers will be glad to hear fresh news from the mission-field in U-Ganda. We will begin with a short resume of the work done from the commencement of the mission. From March, 1881, to May, 1883, our only two missionaries in U-Ganda were the Rev. P. O'Flaherty and Mr. A. M. Mackay. Mr. Mackay is the only member of the original party of eight now remaining in Africa. Four died there; two came home very soon; one, Mr. Wilson, was out four years and then came to England with Mtesa's envoys, and now he has joined the Palestine Mission. Of the next four sent *via* Zanzibar, three are dead; the fourth, Mr. Stokes, has just gone back to Africa after a short visit to England. The four sent out in 1878, *via* the Nile, all came home after a longer or shorter period of service, but two, Mr. Hall and Mr. Litchfield, are now labouring in India. Others followed to occupy the intermediate stations of Mamboia, Mpwapwa, and Uyui, but no one else was appointed to U-Ganda till Mr. O'Flaherty went out in 1880. In May, 1882, a party of six sailed for Africa, viz., the Revs. J. Hannington, R. P. Ashe, and E. C. Gordon, and Mr. C. Wise, for the Victoria Nyanza, and two others for Uyui. Mr. Hannington, after a journey of much suffering, reached the south end of the Lake, but then was compelled by dangerous sickness to turn back, and it is indeed owing to the mercy of God that he reached Zanzibar and England safely, and is now quite well, though forbidden to return to Africa. The other three have had many difficulties owing to the desertion of porters and consequent non-arrival of stores, and especially of Mr. Hannington's boat; and two of them have remained at the south side of the Lake, near Kagei. Mr. Ashe, however, succeeded in crossing to U-Ganda alone, in canoes sent by Mtesa; and he arrived safely at Rubaga, the capital, on the 2nd of last May, almost a year since the date of his leaving England. He writes,—

"To my great joy I at last reached here on May 2nd, and received a warm welcome. I was greatly struck with the beauty of the country. The mission grounds are neatly enclosed by reed fences, and the buildings are very nice, especially the new house, in which I am living. There is a large piece of land under cultivation, which bears ample testimony to Mr. O'Flaherty's labours, who undertakes the farming department in addition to his work of teaching; and this very teaching is the most encouraging thing I have seen in Africa. The people here, though terribly depraved, and great thieves, do not manifest that apathy which appears to exist where our other stations are situated. They are very quick, and very eager to learn. Every day O'Flaherty and Mackay hold classes. I was astonished at hearing a young fellow go through the Lord's Prayer in Ru-Ganda, who had only a few lessons.

I have been in bed for nearly the whole of the last three weeks with intermittent fever, but Mackay has doctored me and nursed me with unremitting kindness, and I am much better.

In the new mission fields like Central Africa, one of the most important and fruitful of a missionary's labours is the translation of the Scriptures into the native languages, and the

preparation of grammars and vocabularies, by which a foundation is laid for the work of those that come after." Mr. O'Flaherty writes,—

"I have collected 15,000 Ru-Ganda words, besides fables and proverbs which illustrate the life of a people. I have translated the Gospels of St. Matthew, St. Mark, and St. Luke, and Old and New Testament History, and the Morning and Evening Baptismal Services; and prepared a Grammar and Reading-book. Mr. Mackay with his toy press and imperfect letters has managed (most marvellously) to print beautifully 300 alphabet sheets, 300 spelling and reading sheets, 300 sheets of the Lord's Prayer, Decalogue, Creed, and Scripture texts."

Our latest date from U-Ganda itself is July 1st; but we have letters to Sept. 18th from Mr. Mackay, who had come over to the South side of the Lake to help Mr. Gordon and Mr. Wise. He mentions five youths baptized in March, 1882. One of them, his own namesake, was accompanying him, and is described as leading a consistent Christian life, and as being "busy with St. Paul's Epistles" since they left Rubaga. Three of the others were not so satisfactory, and the fifth, Mr. Mackay says, "seems to have fallen quite into the world again—a great heartsore to us." Several others, however, who had been long under instruction, were asking for baptism.

We must give one extract from Mr. Mackay's journal, written in January, 1883:—

"Shortly before Christmas I spent a day at court. In the king's baraza strangers were called forward to describe burial customs in various parts of Africa and Arabia. Some told of burying scores of living virgins with a dead king; others told of human sacrifices on similar occasions; while others again told of pomp and ceremony in funeral rites. One described how Suna (Mtesa's father) slaughtered thousands at his (Suna's) father's grave.

"Don't mention such things," I said, with such a gesture of horror that he shut up at once, 'they are too cruel to be spoken about before the Mtesa of to-day. You, Mtesa, far surpass anyone, not only in Africa, or in Arabia, or in India, but even in Ulava (Europe) itself. I never heard of so much valuable cloth being buried in a royal grave as you buried with Namasole' (the king's mother). This, of course, pleased him, as black men are as fond of flattery as bread is of butter. 'But let me tell you what; all that fine cloth and those fine coffins will one day all be rotten. It may take ten years, or may be a hundred years, or it may be a thousand years; but one day all will be rotten, and the body inside will rot too. Now we know this, hence in Christian countries we say that it matters little in what way the body is buried, for it will rot some time or other; but it matters everything what becomes of the soul. Look at these two head chiefs of yours sitting by you. They are both very rich. Next to you they are the greatest in the kingdom. They have cloth, and cattle and lands, and women and slaves—very much of all. Here they have much honor, and when they die they will be buried with much honor, but yet their bodies will one day rot. Now let me have only an old bark cloth, and nothing more of this world's riches, and I would not exchange for all their wealth and all their greatness. I know that my soul is saved by Jesus Christ the Son of God, so that I have riches that never perish which they know nothing about.'

"Mtesa then began with his usual excuses. 'There are these two religions,' he said. 'When Masudi reads his book, the Koran, you call it lies; when you read your book, Masudi calls it lies: which is true?'

"I left my seat, and going forward to the mat, I knelt on it, and in the most solemn

manner, I said, 'Oh, Mtesa, my friend, do not always repeat that excuse! When you and I stand before God at the great day of judgment, will you reply to Almighty God that you did not know what to believe because Masudi told you one thing and Mackay told you another? No, you have the New Testament; read there for yourself. God will judge you by that. There never was any one yet who looked for the truth there and did not find it.'

The court soon after rose."

(To be continued.)

British & Foreign News.

ENGLAND.

GLEANINGS FROM ANNIVERSARIES.

The Children's Special Service Mission.

THE friends of the children who assembled at Exeter Hall had a good and pleasant gathering.

Mr. T. B. BISHOP (Hon. Sec.), in reviewing the work of the past year, brought out a few prominent facts; for example, that upwards of one million picture leaflets, tracts, hymn sheets, &c., have been circulated by the mission during the year, that during last summer seaside services were held at forty different watering-places, and that the Scripture Union now embraces one thousand eight hundred branches in Great Britain alone, while Scripture cards are issued in French, German, Italian, Spanish, Portuguese, Dutch, Swedish, Danish, Bohemian, Arabic, Chinese, Japanese, four or five Indian languages, and also Welsh.

Methods and principles are thus summarized:—Recognizing the supreme importance of the Christian home, the Christian ministry, and the Sunday school, we desire, not to supersede these agencies, but to supplement their work. Children's services, with their adaptability to every age and to every class, to every time of the day or of the week, to the public hall, the schoolroom, the church, the drawing-room, the cottage, or to the open air—have proved the most useful means to this end. The variety in the kinds of services held by different workers in different circumstances is most interesting to notice.

Our mission is quite undenominational. Holding firmly and proclaiming clearly the old evangelical truths, and avoiding new and "strange doctrines," we endeavour to work with all who love the Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity.

A special appeal is made for £2,000 for the foreign work, towards which £1,000 has been raised, and Her Majesty the Queen of Sweden has sent £10 on behalf of this fund.

The Child in the Midst.

BY REV. J. MONRO GIBSON, D.D.

ALTHOUGH this work has specially come to the front of late years, it is not an invention of the nineteenth century. It is not an invention at all, it is a discovery of what has all along been in the Holy Word. It is wonderful how long we have been seeing the vast importance of seeking directly the conversion of the children. When we read such passages as that read at the opening of this meeting (Matt. xviii. 1-14), there we find how our Saviour estimates the value of child life. He set a little child in the midst and said, "Whosoever shall humble himself as this little child, the same shall be greatest in the kingdom of Heaven, and whoso shall receive one such little child in My name receiveth Me." There is only one other to be found in the Bible to place alongside that, and it is found in that chapter (Matt. xxv.), where we see the King on the throne of judgment and He says, "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto the least of these My brethren, ye have done it unto Me." So says the King on His throne, and it is quoted five hundred times for every once you hear this passage, "Whoso shall receive one such little child in My name receiveth Me," and yet the one passage has quite as much emphasis and force as the other. Then our Lord proceeds to warn His hearers against offences, and He says, "Take heed, take care of offending them, for whoso shall offend one of these little ones which believe in Me, it were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and that he were drowned in the depths of the sea." Better your right hand cut off, better your right foot cut off, better your eye plucked out, better you should be drowned than that you offend or cast a stumbling-block before one child. After that He says, "Take heed, and despise not one of these little ones." Why? Ponder the beautiful reason given: "For I