

BISHOP WILLIAM TAYLOR.

Said John Wesley: "I look upon all the world as my parish;" and so, evidently, does William Taylor. On the eve of one of his departures from London to Australia, a gentleman said to him: "Mr. Taylor, what is your address now?" "I am sojourning on the globe at present, but don't know how soon I shall be leaving," was the reply. And such words were not unseemly in the mouth of a man through whose living voice the word of salvation has come to many hundreds of souls in Europe, Asia, Africa, America, and Australasia. "His distinct and plain Gospel utterances, logically addressed to the common sense and consciences of his hearers, have been heard and heeded in nearly every important town and village of all the British colonies in the world."

Bishop Taylor's ancestors on both sides were early settlers in the American colonies. He was born in May, 1821, and is now, therefore, in his 65th year. In 1842 he entered the ministry of the American Methodist Episcopal Church. Believing that the best way to reach the masses was to go to them, he at once commenced his street-preaching in several American cities, and gave convincing proof of special adaptation and gift for that department of Christian effort. The success of his work at home pointed him out as a suitable man for preaching the Gospel to the thousands who were at that time crowding to the shores of the Pacific in search for gold. In 1849 he was sent as a missionary to California, where he labored for seven years. His well-known book, "Seven Years' Street Preaching in San Francisco," furnishes a graphic account of his labors in "the land of gold and crime," labors in which the Lord was with his servant and gave him good success.

We have just referred to the fact that Bishop Taylor is an author: and thereby hangs a tale, which will be best told in his own words:—

"The panic and utter depreciation of values in 1855, that swamped California and shook all the commercial nations of the earth, together with a fire that burnt out my church property, left me under an intolerable burden of debt, for which, on behalf of the Church, in my sincere but unwise generosity, I had become personally responsible. Knowing the difficulty of collecting funds for a burnt-up undertaking, I determined not to ask or receive donations, but to make the money and settle with all concerned by writing and selling books. I meantime entered into a distinct agreement with God to go on fulfilling the Gospel ministry He had entrusted to me the same as before, without the slightest compromise with the book business. Through all the intervening years, I have stuck conscientiously to the principle of refusing offered gifts of money for my personal benefit or that of my family, with the qualified exceptions which I will name." [We have not space, nor is it necessary, to give particulars of these.] "My preaching, dispensed day and night, six days per week, was without money or price; and out of the profits of my books I paid my own travelling expenses and supported my family."

These books have had an aggregate circulation of more than two hundred thousand copies, and have been used in the conversion of many souls. Chief amongst them are the following: "California Life Illustrated," "The Model Preacher," "Reconciliation; or How to be Saved," "Infancy and Manhood of Christian Life," "The Election of Grace," "Four Years' Campaign in India," "Ten Years of Self-supporting Missions in India," and "Pauline Methods of Missionary Work."

After an evangelistic tour in Australia, New Zealand, and South Africa, Mr. Taylor, in 1870, by special request of the American missionaries, visited India. As the result of his preaching in Bombay and other places, a large number of English-speaking persons were converted, and these he was led to organize into "Fellowship Bands." The bands increasing, he decided to establish a branch of the American Methodist Episcopal Church, in direct relationship with the home organization, "without the intermediate sponsorship of a missionary society." This was largely made possible by the fact that, from the first, he purposed that the work in India should be self-supporting, friends at home being merely asked to supply passage-money to convey the workers to their field of labor. The ulterior aim was to make the English-speaking congregation of Europeans and Eurasians, sup-

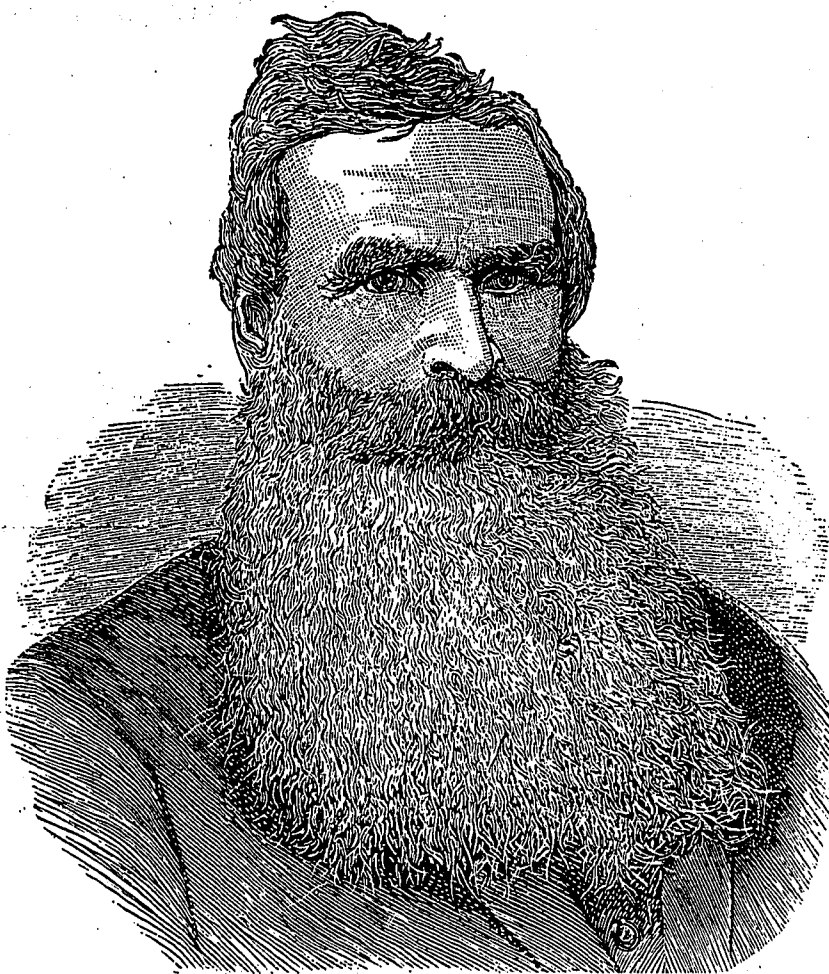
porting their own pastor, a means of acting directly and indirectly, upon the surrounding mass of heathenism. The work spread to Southern India, and a South India Conference was the outcome. In all, more than fifty pastors have been sent out, all of whom, with their families, are supported by the people to whom they minister.

Some years later, in 1877, William Taylor felt himself called to establish similar self-supporting missions in South America. A very interesting record of his pioneer experiences in this work is to be found in his book, "Our South American Cousins." Discouraged by the authorities, and obliged to travel steerage through want of funds, he took passage to Callao, the principal port of Peru, and from thence proceeded to visit all the more important places on the west coast of South America. He sometimes lived on seventeen cents a-day, and by his unselfish devotion won the confidence and sympathy of even men of the world. He returned home with pledges that enabled him to send out at once a number of ministers and teachers to commence work in important centres. At present there are in connection with his self-supporting missions in Central and South America forty-five workers, who preach, labor in Sunday-

from India, one of his own converts, and the colored delegate from Africa, whose pleading had been so happily successful. It is not hard to believe that the scene was most impressive. "Such a trinity of persons, of three different races, and from three different continents, presented a picture of moral grandeur that has never been surpassed in the history of the Church, and it drew tears from many eyes."

The new Bishop at once faced his work with all the ardor and enthusiasm of a young man. "I would rather go to Africa among the heathen," said he, "than to heaven to live with the angels. They can get along without me. The Lord was forty years drilling Moses to lead a host out of Africa, and He has been drilling me for forty years to lead a host into Africa." Within eight months of his appointment, he planned the African Mission, and received, fitted out, and sent on their way, with provisions and stores for one year at least, the largest number of missionaries ever known to leave any Christian country at one time; and all this without an appeal being made to any church or individual for funds.

The missionary party, consisting of forty-three men, women, and children—one of the original forty-four had been left at



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schools, and teach over 800 young people in day-schools. In the capital of Ounli, there is a male and female college attended by 240 students.

It was while assisting with his own hands in the erection of a church and schoolhouse at Coquimbo, Chili, that William Taylor, entirely without his knowledge, was elected to represent the South India Conference at the General Conference of the American Episcopal Church, held at Philadelphia, in May, 1884. At that Conference a colored man, the delegate from Liberia, pleaded for the appointment of a bishop for Africa. His forefathers were compelled as slaves to come from Africa to America, and he would get even with them by compelling at least one white man to live in Africa. The request was granted, and a number of persons were put in nomination. The prospect of a life of homeless toil in the wilds of Africa, with untold hardships and privations, was too uninviting to awaken much competition. One after another the nominees withdrew their names, and William Taylor alone was left. Amid great excitement this noble man was elected to the uncoveted bishopric by a two-thirds vote of the whole Conference. To present him for ordination he chose the Eurasian representative

Mayumba, some hundreds of miles further up the coast, to found a station there—landed at St. Paul de Loanda, the chief port of Angola, on March 18th, 1885. They were, with one exception, to use the Bishop's own words, "in perfect health, and in glorious good cheer." They remained in Loanda for some time to get acclimatized, and to make preparations for advancing into the interior. One young brother died there; another, with three ladies, had to relinquish the work on account of ill-health; and several retired from the mission. The rest were in due time dotted down at five stations, extending some 370 miles into the interior, to the eastern border of the province of Angola. The line is to be extended, God willing, year by year, to the centre of the Dark Continent and onward, as fresh recruits shall arrive. In this first round in his new diocese Bishop Taylor walked 600 miles, sixty-four years of age though he be!

But what about self-support in such a field as this, where there are no English-speaking colonies to form bases of operations? Let the Bishop state his own case:—

"The foundation principle of self-support is the principle of value for value, in all exchanges of equivalents of every kind. In its application to the spread of the Gospel,

it manifests itself by two methods: first by the pioneer founder of self-supporting missions in regions where his glad tidings have, through the ignorance or prejudice of the people, no appreciable value in the market, and hence command no equivalent, not even to support the messenger. In that case the missionary supports himself, either by his own funds in hand, or by building tents, as did Paul and Barnabas. This we call principle No. 1. But the missionaries who are called to minister to organized churches are supported by the people they serve—value for value. 'They that preach the Gospel shall live by the Gospel.' This we call principle No. 2."

Applying these principles to Africa, in each of the five stations already opened, schools have been commenced that yield a measure of support to the teachers on principle No. 2. And under principle No. 1 an industrial department is to be connected with each of these schools, in which "every productive employment at all suited to the country will be embraced, and constitute the legitimate work of the teachers so engaged." The barbarous millions of Africa live in the main from hand to mouth, and are hence a migratory people. To educate and Christianize them to an extent at all commensurate with the vast work to be done, the missionaries must, as quickly as possible, settle them. To settle them they must create local attractions and attachments—Christian homes, good farms, good orchards, good houses, good schools, houses of worship, the knowledge of God and of salvation in Jesus Christ. So it would seem that the principle of self-support, and the nature of the work to be done, alike justify the existence of an industrial department.

Having settled his first party, Bishop Taylor returned to Europe for a visit in October last. It is his purpose, God willing, to lead a missionary expedition up the Congo and Kasai into the Tushelange country during this year.

With regard to the cost of this work in Africa, Bishop Taylor estimates that £250 for tools, machinery, and buildings, will suffice to place each station on a basis of permanent self-support.

If only in a line, we cannot forbear to mention the Bishop's noble wife, who, for the sake of Christ's work amongst the millions of Africa, has not hesitated to willingly make the large and real sacrifice required on her part.

We close with a quotation that reveals something of the inner life of the man whose career we have endeavored thus briefly to sketch. It is taken from a paper in which the Bishop reviews his first seven months of labor in Africa:—

"I have been accustomed to walk with God for forty-four years without a break. Sometimes I have had a special manifestation to my spirit of the Son of God, when it was my pleasure to perceive his distinct personality, and sit in his presence and admire and adore Him, and in melting love sympathize with Him in his stupendous undertaking of bringing our lost race back to God, and feel the wish in my heart—'O that I could multiply myself into a thousand, and give a thousand years to help Jesus!' At other times, I have had a special manifestation of the personal Holy Ghost and the amazing 'love of the Spirit' for a perishing world; in adoring love and sympathy I have put myself entirely at his disposal, to illuminate and lead me according to his own infinite wisdom and love.

"But ever since I took charge of this expedition to Africa, with no less appreciation and admiration of the personal Jesus and the personal Holy Sanctifier, I have walked all these months in the manifestation of the personal presence of God the Father, with such enlarged perceptions of his wisdom, his love, his patience and forbearance, his infinitesimal desire to adjust the human conditions essential to the fulfillment of his covenant pledge to the Redeemer—to give Him the heathen for his inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for his possession. I sit in his presence, and more than ever before weep in adoring love. His special providence over me and my charge have been continuous and most distinctly discernible. My prayers, for the most part, are made up of thanksgiving for his innumerable, immeasurable mercies, and expressions of undoubting trust for the timely fulfillment, in detail, of all that He had engaged to do; and especially that I may see and do his will, and in no way defeat or mar any good that God would otherwise bring to pass as immutable certainty."—*The Christian*.