

A PRAYER USED BY MOHAMMEDANS.

At the great Mohammedan Missionary University in the Mosque of Azhar in Cairo, where six or eight thousand students are assembled from all parts of the Mohammedan world, studying the Koran and preparing to teach it throughout Asia and Africa, a prayer is offered every evening in which the whole company unite. It runs thus :

"O Lord of all creatures! O Allah! destroy the infidels and the polytheists, thine enemies, the enemies of thy religion. O Allah! make their children orphans and defile their bodies. Cause their feet to slip; give them and their families, their households and their women, their children, and their relations by marriage, their brothers and their friends, their possessions and their race, their wealth and their lands as booty to the Moslems, O Lord of all creatures!"

What a fierce prayer! How different in spirit from the prayer of our Lord! Which will prevail? Which will be answered? Blessed be God, we know that the Gospel of Jesus will some day supplant the religion of the False Prophet.

A NATIVE AFRICAN SPEAKS.

THE Congress on Africa convened at Atlanta last month was a success in gathering together for deliberation some of the men and women most deeply interested in labors for the advancement of the African race, and the enthusiastic helpfulness of their discussions.

Among the most interesting addresses was that of Orishetuka Faduma, a native African, dealing entirely upon the successes and difficulties of missionary work in Africa. He spoke at length of the importance of teaching the natives in their own tongue instead of trying to give them another language, in connection with which he said :

"None of the European languages is poetic enough, none is as euphonious, none touches the tender chords of the soul as the native language spoken to a native."

Of the importance of the early introduction of the plan of self-support into missionary movements, he spoke as follows :

"Another drawback in the work of missions is the difficulty of having self-supporting churches. In many cases dependence on home churches has come to mean a life of parasitism. One of the causes of this dependence is found in a lack of foresight at the beginning of a mission. When natives are taught to expect all supplies from outside it is difficult to convince them that they are expected to support themselves. To begin a mission with massive churches, fitted as they are in Europe or America, leaves the impression that the friends of missionaries are very rich. The natives are first astonished by the sudden grandeur and massiveness of their buildings. They pride themselves in them, but cannot keep them up. The best plan would have been to have a small beginning and gradually raise the standard. Begin with what the natives have, however small, and the time will come in the course of their training when they will be able to go up higher. Nothing is more destructive of the self-respect of a native than to place him in a position in which he is always a dependent. While it is true there are cases where praiseworthy attempts at establishing independent and self-supporting churches have been made, yet they are not as many as one would naturally expect."

Industrial work he considered of great importance, regretting that so little had yet been attempted in that

direction, and gave these four reasons for its encouragement :

- "1. The development of the native.
- "2. The self-support of the missions.
- "3. The self-respect of the natives.
- "4. A cure for parasitism and sycophancy."

* * *

THE native Africans have some very striking expressions, showing that they are full of poetical ideas. The Mpongues call thunder the "sky's gun," and the morning is with them "the day's child." The Zulus call the twilight "the eyelashes of the sun." An African who came to America was shown some ice, which he had not seen before, and he called it "water fast asleep." When asked to give a name to a railroad car he said, "Him be one thunder mill."—*American Missionary Almanac.*

ADVANCEMENT OF NATIVES.

ONE need not be exclusively optimistic to believe that Africa is not destined to remain a "Dark Continent" any more than the great central region of North America was so destined. It is interesting to read in the *British Central Africa Gazette* (Zomba) local news items which indicate the possibilities in the way of training the natives in the ways of civilization. For instance, native boys are now at work as telegraph operators on the African Transcontinental Line, the office at Blantyre being in sole charge of an African. Some natives—one of whom is named David Livingstone—have become landowners near Blantyre, under the British regulations, and are planting coffee. Not only has Zomba a printing office, but letters have been received from there type-written in excellent style. From another source it is learned that several Kaffirs have learned to ride bicycles, of which more than four thousand are said to be in use about Johannesburg.

CLIMATES OF AFRICA.

THE interior of the continent is not, as many suppose, a burning desert, exhaling death to all but native tribes. Much of it is high and salubrious, covered with forests, watered by copious rains, and tempered by lakes and mountains. It is ascertained that the annual rainfall is between forty and eighty inches in a belt ten degrees wide, extending from coast to coast across the continent just north of the equator. This belt also extends ten degrees south of the equator, from the great lakes to the east coast. The rest of South Africa, except Kalahari Desert, receives from twenty-four to forty-eight inches of rain. Most of the Congo Free State is heavily wooded.

Few parts of the world have a more delightful climate than the eastern provinces of the Cape Colony, the Dutch republics, Natal, and the high parts of Matabeleland. The wide plateau of Nyassaland, with parts of Sahara, Algeria, and Tripoli are mild and salubrious. As trees are planted the African climate is improved.

IN some parts of Africa, when a chief is buried, a number of slaves are brought and taken to the graveside, where their heads are struck off and with the bodies thrown in until they form a layer, on which the corpse of the chief is placed, for it must not touch the earth. Other bodies of slaves are arranged all around and over the top, and so the dead chief rests embedded in the ghastly remains of his murdered victims.