

Mission Field.

[From the S.P.G. Mission Field for June.]

NEARLY the whole of the speech of the Metropolitan of South Africa related to his province at large rather than to the diocese of Capetown, of which he was scarcely able to speak in the time allotted.

He called attention to the great fact that the South African Church has now almost completed its organisation as to area, its diocese at last reaching from the Cape to the Zambesi. Twenty years ago, when he went out, this was hoped, but seemed impossible. The creation of the diocese of Lebombo forms the last link in the series. He then alluded to the very serious illness of the Bishop of Mashonaland, who had just reached England. He spoke of him as noble-hearted and brave, told the story of his being with the advance column in the recent expedition, when he showed himself the Bishop not of the whites only, but equally of the natives; of his giving up his own waggon for the camp hospital, and of his going out under fire to bring in a wounded native. All this, said the Bishop of Capetown, was nothing surprising to those who knew Bishop Knight-Bruce. That which he wished to emphasise was that in Mashonaland there is an opening for the Church such as there never was elsewhere. In Matabeleland there had been Romanist and London Missionary Society Missions, but without success. In Mashonaland there had been no Missions at all.

With the exception of Mr. Selous, Bishop Knight-Bruce was the first European to go through the country. Before English enterprise was attracted to the country he went to Lobengula, and, after waiting six days outside his tent, received permission to open work in Mashonaland. The chiefs receive him as teacher and friend, and Mashonaland seems, as a great L. M. S. missionary said at a meeting in Capetown, to be given by God to the Church of England.

The Bishop then went on to speak of the obligations of the Church in South Africa to the Society, which had stood by it in both its missionary and its constitutional difficulties.

The Bishop of Lahore described his diocese as the Mahomedan diocese of India. There are more Mahomedans in Bengal, but the proportion to the population is far higher in the Punjab and the other parts of the diocese of Lahore.

Although the Mahomedan problem is formidable, it is far from hopeless, as the Bishop showed in several ways. Of the eighteen native clergymen in the diocese no fewer than eight are converts from Mahomedanism. As many converts are gathered from among Mahomedans as from the Hindus and Sikhs. Delhi, the Mahomedan centre, with its numerous and most splendid mosques, is the centre of our attack, with varied missionary

machinery, especially the graduated educational system, ranging from the simplest schools to the University classes, the itinerating work, and the work of the Ladies' Association, which is growing both in efficiency and force. The Delhi Mission, under Mr. Lefroy, approaches Mahomedanism on the plan of finding "common ground," and then, after seizing upon what is of good, seeing how much there is of evil. In the Bickersteth Conference Hall at Delhi Mr. Lefroy reasons for six hours at a time, often continuing the discussions until after midnight. Attention to Christianity is compelled. The Mahomedans would keep one another away from the Conference Hall if they could, but they cannot. The Bishop dwelt on the interesting case of the blind Maulvie who was converted, and said that he himself had an intimate knowledge of the man, and had great confidence in him.

It is in India that the conflict with Mahomedanism must take place. The Church seeks there 'no favour,' but it has—what cannot be had in Persia and other lands—a fair field. Therefore the Bishop earnestly asked to be supported by the prayers of the Church at home.



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