

a full-blooded negro, and the offerings were collected by six clergymen "of whom three were of the African race." Regarding this consecration the *Spirit of Missions*, the missionary organ of the American Church, wrote as follows: "It marks another epoch in the history of this Church. Fifty years after she declared herself to be the Domestic and Foreign Missionary Society, 'comprehending all persons who are members of this Church,' fifty years after the inception of the African mission, it has come to pass that the work there has advanced to such a position that a man of the African race, educated entirely in the mission schools, comes to a seat in our House of Bishops. So is happily concluded the first half century of the Church's corporate missionary work." The same journal contains a letter of the Rev. Dr. J. C. Eccleston, referring to a sermon preached by Dr. Ferguson one or two Sundays before his consecration. Dr. Eccleston says, "You will be gratified to hear of the very favorable impression made by the bishop elect this morning upon a rather critical congregation at my church. A large proportion of the members are Southern gentlemen, old *slave-holders*, and not altogether, as yet, 'reconstructed.' There was but one feeling, viz., that the preacher was a thoroughly earnest, godly man, peculiarly fitted for the difficult work to which he has been called. The modesty of his manner, joined with his effective style and natural eloquence, quite won the hearts of all who heard him * * * and produced a marked impression."

Immediately after his consecration Bishop Ferguson set out on his return to Liberia, to resume his work in the higher sphere of duty to which God's providence had called him. While on the voyage he wrote a statement of the present condition and prospects of the mission in its various departments, and accompanied it by recommendations as to the best plans for extending and carrying on the work. This document, which was published in the *Spirit of Missions* for November, 1885, will bear comparison, in every respect, with any similar report from any of the missionary bishops of the American Church. As a mere piece of English composition it is striking, being simple, lucid, and dignified. Its style evinces the calmness of conscious strength, along with a humble sense of deep responsibility; and it shows a wise and firm grasp of the principles which have been established by missionary experience throughout the world as the best basis for permanent success. His suggestions are modestly yet firmly stated, and did the Foreign Committee of the Board of Missions but possess the means to carry them into effect, they would, without question, bear the happiest fruit.

With two extracts from his report, I shall bring this hasty and imperfect sketch to a close:

"It will be observed that all this means greatly increasing our present number of boarding-schools. That is just my aim. The success of the work among the heathen depends largely upon the

attention paid to the children—gathering them into our schools, and training them in the ways of Christianity and civilization. It is a fact conceded from all quarters that Africa is to be evangelized by Africans themselves."

He recommends the establishment of "manual labor schools" in which the converts who have given up heathen modes of life may be taught how to gain an honest livelihood; and then referring to female schools, he touches on a difficulty which has sometimes made itself felt in the South African missions of the Mother Church of England. "The happy Christian families of native converts to be seen at some of our stations manifest the great good resulting from the early adoption of measures tending to the enlightenment and training of girls secured from heathenism. I say *secured from heathenism* because such was really the case. It was found necessary to redeem the girls, i. e., pay the marriage price required by their parents according to the heathen custom. * * * Of course it is not a very difficult matter to get small girls into our schools; but they will be allowed to remain only until they are paid for and demanded by their future husbands, which may be at any time between eight and sixteen years. One of the saddest things that we are forced to witness in the mission is when a girl on whom we have centered great hopes—intelligent and promising—is taken from us and carried off to become one of the wives of a heathen polygamist, whose right to her was secured by the payment of the customary dowry. The only chance left us to save the unfortunate girl is to pay the amount ourselves, and thus liberate her. The amount required in such case among the tribes near Cape Palmas is about \$80. To raise such a fund would be a good work for some new branch of the 'Woman's Auxiliary.'"

CHURCH FINANCE.

By REV. E. M. BLAND, M. A., ST. CATHARINES, ONT.

CHURCH finance, while it certainly is, to the majority of pastors at least, very vexing, can, we fear, hardly be said to be a much vexed question, since it too often happens that even in those parishes where there is practically the greatest need for the financier's skill, the matter is dismissed, yes almost tabooed, as if it were unworthy the consideration of Christians; and with a solemn shake of the head, and a display of what is intended to pass for the deepest faith, we are told by pious, but alas insolent Church economists, "You should try and keep business out of Church affairs," just as though it were sinful that the Church should endeavour to "provide things honest in the sight of all men," and take thought for the morrow in matters pertaining to the welfare of innumerable souls.

Now surely this is where a great fault lies; we do not bring sufficient business principle to bear upon