

disastrous to many of our churches. It is a most natural rebound from the clerical interference and systematic domination we too often have witnessed and felt. But it is a very mischievous rebound nevertheless, and one that has wrought havoc in too many cases. We have no reason to look with dread upon an organized Congregationalism. There is a vast difference between the dictatorialism of church courts and the sympathetic and wisely directed co-operation of sister churches. "In the multitude of counsellors there is safety," and if this safety had been always sought we should have had fewer defunct churches to mourn over to-day. There is no good reason why church business and missionary operations should not be administered with the strictest adherence to the rules of sanctified business and common sense. I very much doubt this can be claimed in many cases to which I could refer—Unwise settlements, bringing neither profit to the church nor honor to the pastor, would have been avoided by acceptance of what is known as the council system. True, a church has in one sense a right to manage its own affairs, but it has no right to ask the sympathy and fellowship of others from whom it withholds confidence. Hence let us have co-operation properly organized, the more the better, brothers of the pulpit and fellowworkers of the pew. Here we are one. This work is not shut up to ministers. Clergy, rev. gentlemen—they have their place and work. I trust they do it, if not, let us get rid of them. But they are only helpers in this glorious work, a work in which we might well scorn to be weary, and wish that we might live an eternity in order to do it. Who shall write the history of a soul? How mighty it is compared to the recital of the doings, the intrigues of queens, the court scandals and murders that go to make what is called national history! The history of one soul! The recording angel, in the flashing light of God's throne, wielding the pen of living fire, might employ his highest powers to describe the momentous issues attending such an history. A soul bearing the image of the invisible God, though it be sadly marred and broken, yet an image that may be fully restored and given a place as associate judge in heaven's highest tribunal judging assembled worlds. Surely the work of putting men on such a line of development is a work the dignity of which places the least of those engaged in it on a platform higher than all the kings, prophets, patriarchs and saints of the dispensations gone by. This work, this honor is ours.

It is stated that a syndicate of European capitalists will probably buy the Sandwich Islands for \$10,000,000.

Correspondence.

OUR MISSIONARIES' LETTER.

TRIP TO BENGUELLA.

About eight o'clock in the morning of Thursday, 6th of May, we were rowed to the steamer S. Thorne, which was anchored some distance out in the river Tagus. The morning was bright and pleasant. A number of visitors were on board the vessel to bid their friends adieu. Shortly before the anchor was lifted, a lighter laden with a number of convicts, in the custody of armed sailors, came alongside the vessel. The blue jackets formed two lines and the wretched convicts with their earthly possessions, generally consisting of the clothes on their backs and a few articles bound up in a handkerchief, were marched through the line to the bow of the boat where they took up their quarters for a free trip to Africa. When all was settled and the vessel on its way we found that among the passengers was a Portuguese Bishop, Marquis and Doctor; a Belgian Baron, Botanist and Naturalist; a Swiss Count, a French Missionary Priest and a Sister of Charity; two English, two American and two Canadian missionaries. Ten of the passengers were bound for the Congo State, and the six missionaries were going to Bailundu, from which place they were to launch out to several points in Central Africa. Ere the first day had drawn to a close we had reason to remember that we were no longer on terra firma. The rolling of the boat had deprived most of the passengers of their appetites, and sent them despairing of all comfort to their berths.

May 8th. After a fair share of experience incidental to sea travel we arrived at the island of Madeira about ten o'clock. No sooner was the anchor dropped than several boats filled with small boys either wholly destitute of clothing or clad in light bathing costume, came along side the steamer and began diving for coins which were thrown to them by the passengers and which they invariably caught before they reached the bottom, and brought up either in their fingers or between their toes. Some leaped into the water from the shoulders of their comrades who stood in the boat, and going beneath the steamer came out on the opposite side. Such was their skill in the water that they appeared more like aquatic animals than boys. When the usual preliminary business had been disposed of a fleet of small boats, some seeking passengers to go ashore, and some laden with willow work furniture of various kinds of small ware came alongside and made the air ring with their shoutings. Mr. Smart, an Englishman doing mission work on the island, came