

Missionary Intelligence.

AFRICA.

Bishop Payne's tour up the Cavalla River, in order to select a site for the new Buhlen Mission, in the hill country, is given in the last number of the *Spirit of Missions*, and is so interesting, that we are loth to abridge it. It is accompanied by a map, which is rude, but better than none.

In passing up, he stopped a little while, for supper, at a place called Wese:—

At 8 o'clock we had reached Wese, and were soon in the house at Tankwa, the chief of the town, who had entertained us so hospitably a few weeks before. The women were soon busily engaged in preparing rice and fowl, which our wearied men greatly enjoyed. An old acquaintance cooked me something separately, which he called *buck-meat*, but which had such a human aspect as to quite take away my appetite.

Great Dragons are known in Africa, as well as in Medieval and Classical romance:—

It was now towards midnight, and we were moving along for two hours through the dark forest. I observed the men were unusually silent, and the headman whispered that he had a story to tell about this place, after he had got through it. His courage failed, however, even after he had passed it, and it was not until our return in broad daylight, that my head-krooman, passing this beautiful reach of the river, gave the following fearful account:—"In that creek formerly lived the great dragon *Daside*. He devoured men, women, and children—every living thing which came this way; swallowing canoes with their whole contents. Many were the plans proposed to destroy the monster. This was at length adopted; a canoe was prepared; in it were put a goat tied, and a pile of heated stones; and then the canoe was sent floating down the stream. As soon as the dragon heard the crying of the goat he darted at the canoe, and in a moment swallowed it with its cargo. The canoe and goat occasioned no difficulty; but the heated stones threw him into an agony. He at length dragged himself on the bank (a low strip of land one hundred yards long), and died. The tribes around feasted on him till they were tired. But so much was left, and so much oil ran from him, that the trees have never grown there since. See," said my informant, growing animated with his subject, "though no farms are ever made in this region (for fear of *Daside's* son, who still lives in that smaller creek), no trees ever grew where *Daside* died."

With exposures so severe, want of sleep, weariness, hunger, and hot African sun, are almost enough to kill even an African Bishop:—

It was to me a weary day. Our men had eaten nothing, and we had to work our way against the current. My head man had determined to reach the Falls before night, but he could not prevail upon the men to proceed. By noon they were perfectly exhausted. I was in no better case, but rather worse. The night journey, two hours' sleep in the damp atmosphere about the rock, on a blanket, discovered next morning to be wet, want of food, and six hours exposure to one of the hottest African suns, were more than even an old resident could bear.

By eleven o'clock I felt the most distressing nausea, which was only relieved by profuse vomiting. When at twelve o'clock, our party stopped at a small Barak town, I could scarcely walk up the hill. And when I did, there seemed little promise of relief or refreshment for an invalid. Having been recently burnt in war, the town had no better houses than huts scarcely wide enough for one to stretch himself in. As soon, however, as possible, I threw myself into one of these, followed by noisy men, women, and children, all mad to see the *kube* (foreigner). But the *kube* could heed them little until he had stretched himself on a mat, and slept about one hour. After this he ate some parched corn, the only refreshment the place afforded, and then sat up, and spoke to the people, in Grebo, the good news of the Gospel.

Grand scenery repays somewhat the fatigues of the ascent:—

The discomforts of the morning almost made me insensible to the grand scenery, which, towards noon, began to open up. It was at the distance of ten miles only, that on making a turn in the river, the twin sisters, *Pank* and *Gero* some fifteen hundred feet high, appeared, towering on the horizon. And then their children (children, as the natives call them), came down to meet us, approaching nearer and nearer, until arranging themselves in beautiful parallel ranges, on

either side, they completely enclosed us within their emerald walls. It was in one of these loveliest and most picturesque of nature's favored places, that we were to pass our second night in the interior. A sudden turn in the river, above and below, leaves a section of it, about two miles, running nearly East and West. A plain, on the North, lies at the foot of mount *Gero*, while on the opposite side is bounded by a chain of imposing hills and mountains. On either plain is a town, governed by two brothers. From the name of the tribe to which these towns belong, I call this the *Burewarebo* Pass.

King *Damo* and his reception are peculiarly characteristic of Africa:—

It was not long before the King himself arrived. I had heard much of this personage—how that by deeds of enterprise, boldness, and blood, he had made himself a fear of name through all this region. His appearance agreed well with his antecedents. Below the middle stature, there was character manifested in every feature and movement. On his finely formed head there was a turban, with several tiger's teeth lashed around the forehead, with some potent green-grease. A large green-grease was also suspended around his neck. A handsome shirt and cloth completed his dress, while a musket and sword, which he grasped as if he never liked to dispense with them, made up the picture of the savage chieftain.

Towards me his manner was courteous, mild, communicative; but to all around it was magisterial and haughty. Very soon he commanded the drums to be beaten with increased spirit, and women with boys to dance; while he, with a trumpeter by his side, to repeat and ring over his words, narrated his own exploits, and his present honor in having so distinguished a visitor.

When we had been refreshed by food, and the tumult had somewhat abated, we asked *Damo* to assemble his people for religious services. This he at once did, taking his seat in their midst, and expressing assent as we preached. In my introductory remarks I expressed thankfulness for the joyful manner of my reception, but added they would feel livelier and more real joy if they could understand what good news I had come to bring.

After the services were over, T. C. Brownell, the native catechist, proposed that we should sing, as we sat in the beautiful moonlight, Bishop Heber's missionary hymn. We evidently realized the sad contrast between the surpassing beauty of God's work around us, and the moral degradation of man, and all of us from our hearts, prayed for the coming of the saving health of the Gospel.

We afterwards sang *Benedict omnia opera Domini*, for we did feel that all the works of God here praised Him; and at the conclusion called upon the people, who had been listening with great interest, to learn, like the winds, and dews, and rains, and rivers, and valleys, and mountains of their fine country, to praise their Maker, and now Redeemer too.

It was late before I retired to the comfortable little room assigned me for the night. It was only just long enough for me to lie comfortably in, and though my couch was a dirt floor, and a piece of wood my pillow, all was quite as good as Jacob's accommodation when he "lighted upon a certain place and tarried there all night, and took of the stones of that place and put them for his pillow, and lay down to sleep." And though we saw them not, doubtless the angels of God camped round about us, as I like the patriarch, we lay down and slept in safety.

Next morning we were aroused by *Damo* and his trumpeter. As soon as we could get ready we again called the people together, to hear the Gospel. This over, the king very formally brought a goat, and killed it for me—that is, gave it to me to be killed, if I so wished. But we could not spare the time for this. At about ten o'clock on Wednesday morning, we left *Damo's* hospitable town.

Immediately above this the river turns abruptly towards the North, and here passes directly between the mountains *Gero* and *Pank*. On the offshoots from these were beautiful sites for building, some of which are occupied by towns of the *Kabo* tribe. *Mt. Pank* appeared to be cultivated almost to its very summit in rice farms.

Along the Northern base of the mountain are the first rapids of the Cavalla river. In some places our men were compelled to get out and drag the canoes through them.

Just above the rapids the river spreads itself out three-fourths of a mile, and dividing into numerous channels, comes pouring and foaming down, through

islands and inlets, ever variant in indescribable beauty. We were now at the Falls of the Cavalla, and we felt almost repaid for our trouble in this view alone.

Making our way with difficulty, below the Falls, at about 1 o'clock, P. M., we landed at *Vishia*, a *Webo* town on the right bank of the river. The people were soon assembled, and heard gladly the Word of God. We might not tarry here long, however, as we must still walk three miles to reach *Nitie Lu*, the place of our destination.

Nitie Lu is a charming spot: and if selected for the Buhlen Mission, it will, we trust, prove to be as healthful in atmosphere, as it is lovely for beauty of scenery:—

After a walk of an hour and a half, along a path covered over with grass, or leading through thick forests and undergrowth, at about three o'clock we were on the summit of *Nitie Lu*. It was no easy matter to reach this, for the hill must be at least 300 feet high and the ascent was slippery and difficult.

But the panorama from the top of the hill repaid a thousand-fold the trouble of getting to it. Two miles south, towered up *Pank* and *Gero*, with their spur and numerous offshoots,—while east, west, north, and in every direction one turn between these points as far as the eye can reach, hill peeps over bill, and mountain over mountain, in every variety of size and shape. And at every point, whether on hill, mountain, valley, or plain, cultivated fields, or palmy groves, or dense forests, stand out to view in the same rich emerald dress. It is a glorious mountain, and the whole region beautiful as the garden of the Lord.

The town on *Nitie Lu* is about 300 yards in diameter, and has a population of at least two thousand. It is the capital of the *Webo* tribe, which may have an average of forty miles, with a population of thirty thousand. The villages are generally small, and from *Nitie Lu* appeared nestled on the tops or sides of the mountains, or in the valleys below. And beyond *Webo*, to the distance of a hundred miles, are numerous tribes with whom the people of *Nitie Lu* have intercourse.

Such is the position in which we were now to attempt to establish a Mission Station. The beginning was auspicious. We were kindly received by the king of the town, a very old man, who graciously had refreshments cooked for our party. By the people in town we were warmly welcomed, and all the more from the report having preceded us that we were to leave a teacher amongst them. Indeed, Mrs. Clarkson, a native of the place, and one of our Christian villagers who had been for some time here on a visit, informed us that a place had been already selected for the residence of the teacher.

No little curiosity was excited by the arrival of the *kube*. When we arrived, there were not a great many in town; but towards evening all returned from their farms; and all men, women, and children, flocked to see the stranger. And from that time until he lay down to sleep at night, whether he sat or walked, or eat or drank, a dense mass surrounded, gazed upon, and talked to him. Even when I had arranged mat and blanket, and sat on it, ready to lie down, the same crowd—in all good nature, indeed—pressed into my hut, and stood over me. It was only when some of my friends put out all the lights, and in some way frightened them, that they could be got away.

The excitement was so great during the evening that it was with difficulty we could hold religious services. We did so, however, and requested the people to rest the following day, that we might speak to them again. The temptation to go to their farms, in this their very busiest season, and when, too, there was plenty of palm wine near these farms, all ready to drink, proved too great, and our congregation the following day was not large.

To those assembled on this occasion, including the king and head men, I formally announced my readiness, with their consent, to leave amongst them a Christian Teacher. I was very careful to explain that he was not a trader—as I was not a trader, but simply a teacher of the religion of the true God. Some few imagined a wish that he might be a trader too; but when I informed him that this could not be, and the reasons for it, objections of this kind ceased; and they gladly received him as teacher.

About 8 o'clock the king formally brought and presented me with a goat, apologizing for the smallness of his gift. I answered him it was ample, as I came not to seek his or his people's, but themselves. The morning of Thursday was passed in receiving attentions (that is, dinners) from some old acquaintances.