

Peter's gift has had its parallel since; nay, more precious ones yet than his have come from the poor in this world's gear. I have in my recollection at this moment one who, like Anna of old, "served God with fastings and with prayers night and day." To her a son was given, a son of many hopes. He was the subject of baptismal vows and consecrating prayers. She set him apart for God. As he grows up to man's estate a parent's eye beholds with joy the rising staff on which her old age is to lean when "desire shall fail, and the grasshopper become a burden."

But at length a voice comes from heathen lands—the death-cry of dying souls. And with it comes the command of God unto her as she waits for the redemption of Israel, "Take now thy son, thine only son whom thou lovest, and send him to the place of which I shall tell thee; the Lord hath need of him." These words, like those once uttered to Abraham, are at first stunning words. The struggle is a struggle of life and death. This is more than her heart "bargained for" when she made the consecration in infancy. But the answer of faith is "Here he is. Do with him, Lord, as seemeth thee good." The gift is made. The parting word is spoken amid heart-wrung tears and sobbings, and he goes away, "bound in spirit," to heathen shores.

When many weary months and years have rolled on, the tidings come to that mother's ears from those distant lands, that God has owned the labors of that son by a copious return of blessings. Benighted souls have been enlightened. Satan's maimed children have been healed. The spiritually dead have been restored to life. Broken-hearted penitents have been guided by the poor widow's son to the Saviour—his mother's Saviour. That stripling whose her faith laid on the missionary altar has become the spiritual father of many souls, and in "her seed" a whole heathen province may yet be "blessed." "Merciful God!" she exclaims with streaming eyes, and her poor old heart breaking with joy, "It is enough! it is enough! Let now thine handmaid depart in peace, for mine eyes have witnessed thy salvation!" For such gifts as hers the seats in our theological seminaries are waiting. For the want of more such maternal offerings the guilty world is perishing. Notice have you no gift to offer?

T. L. C.

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AFRICAN PROVERBS.—He who disappoints another is not worthy to be trusted. He who claps hands for a fool to do as he is no better than the fool himself. All men are related to another.