

Missionary Intelligence.

From the Colonial Church Chronicle, for Feb., 1856.

THE CHURCH IN YORUBA.*

Ibadan, in extent, is only inferior to Abeokuta. It is chiefly inhabited by Yoruba proper, although some Egbas and Ijebus are residing here likewise. It is beautifully situated, spreading over the whole of a beautiful hill, and extending considerably beyond its base. The scenery is not, indeed, so fantastically grand as the several mounds of rocks, heaped, as it were at random, upon each other, at Abeokuta, but more gradual in its slopes, and softer in its windings. The Bishop took several sketches at this place. A singular circumstance struck me in most of the large towns in this country, that whereas you may travel day after day, at the rate of thirty miles, you hardly ever see a stone, or even a pebble—it is nought but fine, soft, alluvial soil: in the large towns rocks are plentiful, even abundant. They have raised a certain locality into an elevated hill, the rocks boldly appearing on the surface, as if some volcanic action had at some period been at work, but become abortive. Here a town is built. Such is Ibadan, as well as Ijaye. Here, as in Abeokuta, the markets are held daily, special days being chosen for extraordinary ones, to which strangers resort. The most busy times are morning and evening, when food of every kind can be purchased for a few cowries, ready cooked, and smoking hot, which is a great convenience to the inhabitants, who can thus provide themselves, before and after the day's toil, without the trouble of cooking at home. In the middle of the day the market-women lazily crawl under their sheds, and chat and sleep their time away. Among the produce exposed for sale, I noticed here particularly, malt made of Indian corn, which makes a tolerable sort of beer. A great quantity of pottery is also made here; but although very good looking, and of handsome shape, it is neither glazed nor burnt properly, owing to the admittance of air into their furnaces, one side of the earthenware being exposed to the same. There are also here large public sheds for the express manufacture of oil from sundry kinds of nuts.

In a religious point of view this station is, in every respect, in its infancy; nevertheless, promising well for the future. The *bali* is a mild and very friendly king, as well as rather intelligent-looking. Some of the chiefs are also friendly to our Missionaries, but, unfortunately, they are all engaged in war at some distant town, where they had all repaired, with their soldiery, wives, and children, have besieged a town for the last twelve months, building temporary houses, and engaging in hunting and farming, and now and then in petty marauding expeditions. Thus is war carried on in Africa, the object never being to put a speedy end to it by some chivalrous *scélis*, and a thorough *tête-à-tête* fight, but to prolong it indefinitely, as long as it proves profitable; thus keeping up the warlike spirit, and the war-weapons ever in trim. A church is just finished; open air preaching is practised frequently: the Missionaries are gaining a standing, and are everywhere met with civility, and listened to by attentive crowds, being never interrupted, except now and then by some insolent Mohammedan. The Bishop was delighted with the prospect of this station, especially as it leads immediately to Ilorin, Rabba, &c.

In point of salubrity we certainly thought Ibadan cooler, and otherwise more healthy, than localities nearer the coast; but this sensation may have been imaginary or subjective only.

Nov. 14.—We left our friends at Ibadan with hearty good wishes, and took the road to Ijaye, where we wished to pay a hasty visit to Mr. Mann. We reached there after six hours' travelling, and found him in good health, but withal very busy.

The following day we paid a visit to Are—king—the man who 'literally thirsts after blood,' the same who, some time ago, made a human sacrifice of a considerable number of slaves. At the slightest report or suspicion against a wife or a subject, he simply calls for the party, makes them kneel down in presence of his court, and at one stroke, with his own hand, severs the head from the trunk, without examination of the merits of the case, without judge or jury. And when his eye is not delighted with the sight of human blood, he takes his hatchet in hand, and, parading through his spacious court, he chops the head off the best sheep or goat that comes in his way. Yet, strange to say, this man even has asked for Missionaries, and protects them, having two American Baptist Missionaries at Ijaye, besides Mr. Mann. But such a dread do the inhabitants entertain of the tyrant, that they dare not attend church

(*Concluded from last week.)

or school, for fear of incurring his displeasure, and yet it were dangerous to inform him of the fact. Truly, the town of Ijaye, though very large, and inhabited by the warlike Yorubas proper, is kept in excellent order. A police is needless, for crime or depravation is hardly ever committed. The king alone commits them; that is his royal prerogative. It is impossible that such a state of things should last very long, and yet thousands prosper being under the protection of such an iron sceptre, to being exposed, day by day, at home and abroad, to the marauding kidnappers of former years. Even Are, however, is capable of generous act.—Lately, a prisoner of the *bali* of Ibadan escaped, and took refuge with the Are of Ijaye, whom, instead of keeping as a slave, or selling him as such, he delivered him up to Mr. Mann, granting him thereby his freedom.

Mr. Mann has certainly a most difficult position, and a delicate task: on the one hand, to preach the Gospel at all hazards; on the other hand, not to act presumptuously, and incur Are's deadly displeasure. At present he is vigorously prosecuting the study of the Yoruba language, which, in some few things, differs from the dialect spoken by the Egbas.

Nov. 16.—We left for Abeokuta, which we reached after two days and a half, and sleeping two nights in our tent.

Even at Ijaye the first-fruits of the Gospel have been gathered in, on Whitsunday last, six months after the Bishop's visit, Mr. Mann had the gratification of baptizing three converts, a man, and two married women—the wives, one of a Heathen, the other of a Mohammedan.

The remotest station—which the Bishop and Archdeacon were unable to reach—is Oloru Pella, three miles distant from Ibadan. But a prospect of far greater extension of the work, beyond the present limits of the Mission, has been opened to us by the recent expedition to the Niger, sent out by the home Government, under the auspices of the Prince Consort, to encourage trade. The conductors of the expedition were glad to avail themselves of the services of the Rev. S. Crowther, the native clergyman. The vessels were three months in the river, and ascended the *Tchadda* for 300 miles beyond its confluence with the Niger. And Mr. Crowther enjoyed opportunities of free intercourse with the various nations through which they passed, and with a large and powerful towns near the extreme point to which they penetrated. He writes: "The reception we met with all along from the kings and chiefs of the countries was beyond expectation. I believe the time is fully come when Christianity must be introduced on the banks of the Niger: the people are willing to receive any who may be sent among them. The English are still looked upon as their friends, with whom they themselves desire to have connection, as with the first nation in the world. God has provided instruments to begin the work; namely, those liberated Africans in the colony of Sierra Leone who are natives of the banks of the Niger."

But the most interesting and unlooked-for encouragement which this Mission has recently received is in the accession of strength which she may hope to gain, the opportunity of usefulness which has already presented itself, among the Negro Emancipados of Cuba.

A mixed Commission, our readers may be informed of British and Spanish authorities exists at Sierra Leone and at Havannah, for adjudication on captured slaves. The slaves released from their captors at the Havannah remain in the hands of the Spanish Government, who, under cover of instruction in Christianity, have been accustomed to assign them as apprentices to respectable inhabitants for the term of five years, at a time which was continually renewed, and which was almost equivalent to domestic slavery. In all the Spanish colonies, however, the slaves possess a right (under the law of *Coartado*) of working on their own account, and purchasing their liberty by their savings. In July last year, a party of these emancipados, who had thus freed themselves and their families from bondage, presented themselves at Plymouth, whence they had been led to expect a free passage to their native land. They were forty-eight in number, and most of them Yorubas, who only a few years before had been shipped as slaves from Lagos, or some neighbouring port. They spoke a Negro-Spanish, and were communicated with at first in that language, by an interpreter. But a day or two previous to their departure in the mail-steamship *Gambia* Mr. Townsend, having arrived in England from Yoruba, went down to Plymouth, supposing he might be able to address them. So it proved; and the wild excitement they exhibited, when they first heard again their native African language, is spoken of as beyond description. There was besides, this additional grati-

fication in the interview, that he found they were no strangers to his name; they had heard of his labors in Yoruba, from countrymen who had more recently been enslaved, and they had with them a letter for his coadjutor, Mr. Gollmer, at Lagos. He found their religious condition such as might have been expected. Upon the heathenism in which they had been born a slight knowledge of Christianity had been ingrafted by their Cuban instructors. "The women and children having been invited to tea with one of their frequent visitors, before retiring they all arose at a signal from one of the older women, who offered a long prayer to the Virgin Mary for the happiness and prosperity of their entertainer and her family, dividing it into sentences, which they all repeated with decorum and apparent solemnity." When the Rev. H. Townsend came amongst them, he recognised at once upon some of them the signs of idol worship, which he pointed out to them, especially on the person of one of the women, a worshipper of two idols, *Shango* and *Obbatala*.

These poor emancipados found kind friends at Plymouth, who provided for their return to their native land, and took every opportunity that their short stay allowed, for their better religious instruction. One of them, Leandro Yopar, who accidentally lost himself in London, was prevented from leaving England last August with his companions, and accompanied Bishop Weekes and his Missionary party in October, and gives promise of becoming himself a labourer in the field.

But the most interesting circumstance in their story remains perhaps to be added. These emancipados had been impressed in favor of our Missionaries by a fellow countryman, a Christian convert, John Baptist Dazalu by name, whom the misfortune of war had brought to Cuba as a slave, and who had conversed with them at Havannah. John Baptist Dazalu was one of the earliest of the converts at Abeokuta; and when the persecution of 1840 broke out, he was especially singled out to be a sufferer. He bore all that was laid on him, and he was the first to break through the prohibition against public worship, and on Christmas day that year openly presented himself at the church. In the war with Dahomey in 1831 he was taken prisoner beneath the walls of Abeokuta; no tidings could be heard of his place of detention; news was brought that he was dead; it now proves that he had been sold by his Dahomian captors to the slaveholders, who had shipped him for Cuba. At Havannah he meets with emancipados, who had been captured before him; he is able to give his countrymen the latest news of what our Church and nation has effected and is endeavouring for their race; and the band of emigrants arrive in England, knowing how much they are indebted to our laws, and willing to listen to our Gospel. C. F. S.

Selections.

THE LATE LORD RAGLAN AND THE WAR IN THE CRIMEA.—As peace gives leisure for inquiry, so does it clear up many misrepresentations about the war. The English army, which our journalists delighted to disparage will come out with a higher reputation when the truth is known. It is now ascertained that at the battle of the Alma not 6,000 Russian troops were left in Sebastopol. The Russian plenipotentiaries have stated this at the Conference. Lady Raglan has a letter in her possession proving that Lord Raglan sent to St. Arnaud when the battle was gained to say that he was pushing on to enter Sebastopol, and that the French commander-in-chief refused to support him, and required him to move on to Balaklava. Had Lord Raglan been commander of both armies we would have been in Sebastopol at the very opening of the campaign. We are further in a condition to state that four times over Lord Raglan ordered the bombardment of Odessa when he found the enemy drawing strength from it. The order was telegraphed to Paris, and four times Napoleon prohibited it. We can also state that at the battle of the Tchernaya the English general sent to the French commander to say that he would seize the bridge over the river, and intercept the retreat of 25,000 Russians, who the Russian plenipotentiaries now say were completely disorganized. The French commander again refused the offer, and allowed the Russians to escape.

THE NEW ICE CROP.—The gathering of the new crop of ice has been completed within the last few days, and the houses are now filled. Both as respects quality and quantity, the crop has never before been equalled. The superiority in point of quality, owing to the extraordinary knowledge of the ice, and its solidity, making it much more endurable. Considerable quantities have been cut 23 inches thick; but the average is about 15