

many other places far north and south of there. At Libreville (Gaboon) the metropolis of this part of the coast, the Fang, who a generation ago had not seen a white man, are pressing into all kinds of employment in white men's service. Their ability to adapt themselves to new modes of life is shown in many ways. Coming from the country of mountain streams where canoeing is impossible, those who have settled on the rivers near the coast have already become expert canoemen. Du Chaillu found them with spears and poisoned arrows. Now, as far interior as white men have seen them, they have the trade guns, and they show as much skill in repairing and keeping in order their guns as if they had possessed them for generations.

A stock of people showing such vigor and adaptability offers the most hopeful field for missionary work. While labor for a vanishing tribe is noble and worth the cost, and neither Eliot's Indian Bible nor the Bakele Scriptures, translated by the early Gaboon missionaries, were in vain, yet a wise direction of missionary effort calls for the choice of a field where the work will bless future generations also.

Missionary work among the Fang is yet in its beginning. As long ago as Du Chaillu's travels, a young missionary of the American Board named Adams began labor up the Gaboon River among the Fang, who were then just beginning to come down from the interior. He was cut off by death after a year's work, and it was not till twenty-five years later that a missionary of the Presbyterian Board came to the same region, which was then populous with Fang. Mr. Marling is still carrying on his work there, but he is the only Protestant missionary who has been long enough among the Fang to have learned their language well and begun translating. The Catholics have a larger work up the Gaboon River, carried on chiefly by means of a strong industrial school. The work begun a few years ago on the Ogowe by the Presbyterian Board, and turned over in 1893 to the Evangelical Missionary Society of Paris, is largely among the Fang. The promising work begun three years ago in the Bule country, inland from Batanga in German territory, under the energetic leadership of the late Dr. Good, ought to be mentioned here, for the Bule are really a northern division of the Fang, with a slightly different dialect.

But one need only see the field to realize how much too small is the force, as yet, for the work to be done. The Gaboon and Conisco Mission of the Presbyterian Church has well-established churches at several places among the small coast tribes; these would furnish starting places for work among the Fang, and native helpers who need a missionary field of their own to develop their own Christianity. At many places, as in the well-worked field of Benito, the Fang themselves have come to the very doors of the coast churches. Where is there a heathen tribe so easily to be reached, and so well worth working for?—*N. Y. Independent.*

THY KEEPER.

There are only eight verses in the 121st Psalm, but the words "keep" and "keeper" occur in it six times, and the words "my help," as applied to God, occur twice. God helps us by keeping us. He watches over us with sleepless fidelity and love, so that He can do for us, in all emergencies, just what is needed. It is a beautiful picture of Divine providence and grace. And the repetition shows how anxious the Holy Spirit who inspired the writer is to impress that picture upon our minds and hearts. If we could only realize what is here so emphatically stated, there would be an end of all anxiety and fear; nay, we would be able to rejoice in the Lord always.

If a child wakes from a troubled sleep, and sees its mother watching by its bed, how happy it is! But He who watches over us is the Lord who made Heaven and Earth—the Lord who never slumbers or sleeps—the Lord who is always round about us for good if we love and try to serve Him. Dr. Samuel Cox, commenting on this Psalm, says:

As soon as we read it, it commends itself to us by its tender, tranquil beauty. It is the song of a heart urging and persuading itself to a calm, unwavering trust in the sleepless providence of God. The keeper of Israel is the keeper of the individual Israelite. And He does not fall into slumber from weariness, nor is His, through mortal weakness, an alternate waking and sleeping. He guards us from the perils of the

night as from the perils of the day. He keeps those who trust in Him from evil in every form. He keeps their very soul (verse 7)—their most inward and secret life. He keeps them in all the changes and intercourse of their outward life, their goings out and their comings in. He keeps them through all lapse of time, now and forever more. (Verse 8.) By the iteration of one word, by the varied repetition of one thought, by the tenacious insistence upon one point, the poet assures himself of the unceasing and watchful care of God, persuades himself to trust in it, banishes every shade of doubt from his heart, and loses all fear lest he should be overlooked and forgotten by the God who has all men and all worlds on His hands.

The 121st Psalm is not a song about the general providence of God. Like the twenty-third Psalm, it is intensely personal. It is full of pronouns. It is "my" and "mine," "thy" and "thee" in nearly every line. No wonder, then, that good old Robert Romaine, who died a hundred years ago, was in the habit of repeating it every night. Could one have a softer pillow to go to sleep on than this: "The Lord is my keeper. The Lord shall keep thee from all evil; He shall keep thy soul"?

Henry Melville says:

A promise that we shall be kept in all our ways; that in all our business, in all our moments, amid all the changes and chances of our mortal life, we shall evermore be defended by that ready help which issues from an eye that can not close and an arm that can not fail. "Even forevermore"; yes, there is a "going out" from this world; there is a "coming in" to the next world. Our "going out" through the dark valley shall be under the guidance of that blessed Shepherd, whose rod and staff shall never fail to comfort the believer; our "coming in" to the heavenly city shall be as heirs to that glorious Redeemer who must reign until He has put all enemies under His feet.

Read the forty-sixth Psalm in connection with the 121st. What beautiful companion pictures they are. If the Lord is our keeper, why should we fear, even though the earth be removed and the mountains carried into the midst of the sea?

THAT WONDERFUL WORD.

It was a good many years ago, when I was a young pastor. I was holding our regular prayer-meeting in my little church in Newark, N. J. I had made my remarks, I do not know what they were and had thrown the service open. One of my elders—he has been long in a higher life with the Saviour he loved—a very modest, but exceedingly intelligent and remarkably well-read man, rose in his place and softly and in a meditative way, exclaimed: "That wonderful word, forgiveness."

I do not remember what else he said, but through the mists of forty years, I see him standing and I hear the words that I have repeated a thousand times since over and over again: "That wonderful word, forgiveness."

And what a wonderful word it is. A heathen philosopher centuries ago cried in his perplexity and despair: "If God be just, how can He be merciful? If He be merciful, how can He be just?" The Gospel, glad tidings, solves the insoluble. "That He might be just and the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus." "Forgive us!" How slipperily sometimes we say it! Yet in the petition we ask for the greatest thing in all this universe of things. Assure me of forgiveness, and you assure me of safety and well-being anywhere in the realm of a good God. I can be careless of where I may be, in what part of space I may have my home. Forgiven, taken by that act into His favor, I can step out, I can even seem to drop into an unknown darkness, but I know that I shall come into light, His light.

A forgiven man is blessed now and evermore. If the great God has had thoughts of him, thoughts enough to see him in Christ His Son, he cannot let him slip out of His favor and love. "Say ye to the righteous—" and who is so righteous as one clothed in the white robe of the righteousness of Jesus Christ "it shall be well with Him!"