

their own appeal at the bar of your conscience; but now that I have asked you to step thus shamefully away from the Bible, I deem it my deference for you and lay aside my own preferred modesty and with the force of the reasons I shall present to you demand of you—yes *demand* of you, sympathy, interest and aid for this great foreign mission work.

Let me here say that in making certain statements, I do not repeat to you what I have heard at second-hand, but what I personally know to be true in my own life in Africa; and in thus reporting you must pardon the necessarily frequent mention of myself and my own doings.

1. I ask you to look at some *commercial* considerations. You are a business man. When any project is brought to your attention your first thought is to look at it in its financial aspect. When you are asked to invest in any undertaking, your first question is, "Is there money in it?" In asking your aid for foreign missions, I unhesitatingly reply, "Yes, there ~~is~~ money in it." Not that I promise that one thousand-dollar bond on which you are receiving regular annual interest will actually place in your own pocket that same interest if that bond be transferred to a mission treasury (although I am disposed to believe that God does actually make, to a cheerful giver, more than an equivalent in money value; but let that, whether it be so or not, pass to-day). What I assert is that money invested in foreign-mission work does return to the world, to your country, to your community (if not actually to yourself) its value in money. (1) *Imports*. The Rev. Dr. J. L. Wilson, the pioneer of our Equatorial West-African Mission, fifty years ago in his itinerations in the native villages, saw boys playing—as boys play everywhere—their native games. They were throwing back and forth to each other a somewhat round dark object, which as it struck the ground rebounded. The thought of elasticity struck Dr. Wilson's attention.

He examined the dark object, observed that it was ductile, and asked them where they obtained it. "Out in the forest, from the gum of a vine." They led him into the forest and showed him their process of its collection. He recognized that he was handling india-rubber. It came not from a tree, as in Para, South America, but from a vine. He introduced it to the notice of merchants in Boston, but it having been carelessly collected, with sand and other admixtures, they did not give it much attention; but it was taken up by British merchants, and now enormous quantities of it are exported from my own region.

About 1866—I do not remember the exact year, that is not material to my point; what I state is the fact, that when one of the Atlantic cables was being made, and the demand for rubber was stimulated in the markets of the world, a large part of the insulating material of the cable was made of African rubber from my own region. In my visits in America, in its factories of various industries, I have met, in the rubber-mills of Lambertville, N. J., and other places, with the gum mixed with the pure Para in certain processes—gum that has come from my own Ogoe River, past my own door. For the few thousands of dollars that the Church invested in Dr. Wilson's missionary work, this gum discovered by him in an hour of recreation has made a return of millions to the commerce of the world. Let commerce repay him!

Twenty-five years ago I saw my natives at Benita, when they were starting out on a journey to places where they would not expect to obtain hospitality (for though a people hospitable to friends, among their very frequent tribal animosities they can be cruel and treacherous). I observed that they carried with them a certain nut. Without other food, and nibbling on that nut, they would go a day's journey, destitute of the sensation of hunger, and return with strength unexhausted. That nut is the kola, comparatively recently