



BISHOP FERGUSON.
Cape Palmas, Africa.

movement. The recent death of Bishop Crowther is to be allowed, it seems, to place a quietus upon even this attempt at a native episcopate. Not that in this case it proved a failure; far otherwise; for it seems to be the impossibility of finding any native African worthy of being his successor that has determined the C.M.S. to recommend a European for the position. Many have heard this news with feelings of deep regret, for, at this distance, at all events, from Africa, it looks like a retrograde step. Yet it must be remembered that there are difficulties in the way of a work of this kind, which only those brought into immediate contact with it can realize. It is not all native races that could be entrusted with the episcopate. Our own aborigines will readily furnish us with an example of this. It is seldom that an American Indian is found capable of being a priest, and in the few instances that we have had of it, there have not been wanting cases of lamentable failure. And from the habits of the people and the evident weakness of the race, the elevation of one of their own number to be a bishop would scarcely be thought of. Such may not be the real difficulties in Africa, but difficulties of a kindred nature no doubt exist, and to such an extent as to render the continuation of the native episcopate in Africa, for the present, an impossibility, or, at least, a hazardous step. This is all the more to be regretted, for it only shows that the Africans, as far as Christianity is

concerned, are not yet considered able to stand alone.

This experiment was made in the case of Bishop Crowther in 1864, and ten years afterwards James Theodore Holly, of African descent, born of "free-born ancestors in Washington city," was consecrated a bishop in Grace Church, New York, and was specially charged with the care of souls in the island of Haiti, West Indies, where for several years he had been labouring as a missionary. Indeed he was the pioneer and founder of the Church's mission there. In the "Living Church Quarterly," Haiti is set down as an "Independent Diocese," and Dr. Holly's name does not appear there in the list of American bishops. The reason for this is not given and is not a little strange as reports from the bishop are received from time to time and published in the *Spirit of Missions*. As the island of Haiti is almost altogether given over to Romanism, this missionary project has not in it very much probability of continuance. Still this worthy bishop of color continues to guide the work there, full of discouragements as it certainly must be, with no weak or trembling hand.

In the next decade another attempt of the same kind was made by the Church in the United States, when Rev. Samuel D. Ferguson, an earnest and well-trying priest, of African descent, was consecrated "Bishop of Cape Palmas and parts adjacent." The experiment of re-peopling Africa with members of the black race in America, sending them back, in fact, to their old home, was tried with very strong hopes of success, and the colony of Liberia was formed. Here was to be the field of Bishop Ferguson's work, and to it he went, battling also with great discouragements; and there he remains to-day, doing what he can to minister the word of God in the land of his forefathers.

It is not a little strange that these three native bishops should have been consecrated in as many different decades—Crowther in 1864, Holly in 1874 and Ferguson in 1884. The hope arises naturally that in 1894 something of a more substantial nature may be done in the way of giving to foreign tribes what they ought to have, an episcopate of their own race and color.

THE DARK CONTINENT.



HE accompanying illustration shows the dark continent with here and there a glimmer of light, indicating the dawn of Christianity and civilization. The following, taken from *The Young Christian Soldier*, gives a very good idea of its inhabitants:—

The southern part of Africa, including all the country south of the eighth degree parallel of south latitude, includes the countries of