

## Missionary Intelligence.

From the Colonial Church Chronicle, for Feb. 1856.

## THE CHURCH IN YORUBA.

We have already in a former number of this Magazine thought it our duty to direct the attention of our readers to the Mission of the Church Missionary Society in the Yoruba country, and have endeavoured to enlist their sympathy for the most interesting field of labour. And we are glad to find, in the publications of the Society, material for a renewed notice of their work. The infant Church of Yoruba has since welcomed and lost its first Bishop. A worthy successor has stepped into the place that death had made vacant. The work of God has continued to be prosecuted, amid much anxiety, but with greater zeal. Exploratory tours have been made in the vicinity of Abeokuta. A more distant prospect of usefulness has been opened to our Missionaries, by the success of the Government expedition up the River Tshadda. Our labours for the suppression of the slave trade are beginning to bring an unlooked for reward into our bosom, and the emancipated slaves of Cuba promise to swell the number of our converts in their native land.

Bishop Vidal was taken to his rest on Christmas Eve, 1854, on his voyage to Sierra Leone, whither he was returning from his first Visitation of the Church in Yoruba. Accompanied by Archdeacon Graf, he had advanced beyond Abeokuta, made the circuit of the principal stations, holding Confirmations, and admitting two Native Preachers to Holy Orders. Illness and death arrested his pen, before he could complete any official report of his Visitation; and the fragment only of an unfinished letter to a relative remains as his own record of his work. "I have had much to delight me in this deeply interesting tour. These vast cities in the interior of Africa, and the extraordinary cultivation which surrounds them on all sides, are very striking indeed. To stand in the centre of Abeokuta, and see around you hills and valleys densely covered with crowded houses, conveys a far more real and lively idea of the immense amount of population than any mere amount of numbers can. And then such an interesting population too—so hearty, sociable, and friendly, go where you will among them. Their salutation meets you on every side, as you ride through the streets. The Christian converts of Abeokuta clubbed together to make me a present of a horse, and the Alaka and chiefs gave me another for travelling through the Mission. I should like to spend many months in Abeokuta, instead of one, that I might really see something of the country and people. As it was, I had very little time for this, and my official duties were very pressing."

A more detailed account has been received from Archdeacon Graf, the Bishop's companion in travel, extracts from whose journal were printed in the *Church Missionary Monthly Intelligence* for November last.

Their first stay was at Lagos, which they reached on the 24th of October, where they remained a week, the Bishop opening the new Church of the Holy Trinity, holding a Confirmation, and delivering a charge explanatory of the Baptismal Vows. "Neither king nor chiefs attended," writes the Archdeacon, "but, at my suggestion, service was held in the afternoon at the king's. His palace was too small; the court was too small likewise; and so we had to go in an open space in front of the palace. There we were, under the canopy of a temple not made with hands, surrounded by various personages and groups of people. The king sat in his best apparel under the open verandah of his palace: at his feet were squatted his war chiefs and councillors of state, forming an imposing circle, under a huge umbrella of many colours. To the king's right and left were his male and female slaves, with their children; further on, to his right, were the Christians, dressed in white man's apparel; and to his left, opposite the last, were his numerous wives and little ones, able to gratify female curiosity by being placed on a slight eminence, from whence they could overlook the whole. Conspicuous in the centre of all stood a table on a mat, surrounded by chairs, the emblems of civilized life, occupied by the Bishop and Mr. Gollmer, in their robes, besides the interpreter, Samuel Pearce, formerly a schoolboy at Hastings, now a Schoolmaster at Lagos. On the 1st of November," he continues, "we proceeded on our way, and pitched our tents in a small village temporarily built for the convenience of travellers and the surrounding farmers. It was a beautiful moonlight night. It was amazing to see several hundred travellers lying on mats in the open street, and screened by mats or country cloths from the dew. The Shango worshippers, however, were jingling their peculiar instruments, crying for

rain, and preparing to sacrifice on the following day, the whole night through."

The next day the party arrived at a village of considerable size, named Awoyade, eight miles from Abeokuta; and here they were gratified by meeting a body of 200 Christians, who had come to welcome them to the town; and, with a considerable cavalcade of horsemen and footmen, made their way through the winding streets, markets, and lanes of the singular city of Abeokuta. Here the Bishop staid five days at first, and nine days more on his return from Ibadan. To describe the impositions produced by Abeokuta, would require, the Archdeacon says, an entire volume. "Its mild, aged, and prudent alake—king—whose private name is Sagbun; its spirited, powerful, and portly war-chiefs, with their ludicrously dancing, tall war-horses; the huge mass of granite heaped up in the middle of Abeokuta, overtopped by the one monstrous pebble overhanging the other rocks all around; the shelter this, in bygone days, of bands of robbers and marauding war-parties, going now by the name of 'olumo,' and from which the name of Abeokuta (*abbe*, 'under,' *okuta*, 'stone') is derived; then, again, the friendliness of the crowds accompanying us from place to place; the welcome of slavery abolishing chiefs, and the ill-hid sullenness of slavery looking champions; the rapture of hearing the things of God read, and preached, and sung, and chanted, in their own native tongue in Church, Sunday-school, and Class, their faces beaming with intelligence, and eagerly devouring the bread of life; the simple and modest appearance of men and women in their native attire; the wonderful flexibility of the Yoruba salutations, adapting a special word of congratulation or of sympathy to every imaginable though trifling circumstance in life; the magic charm of being addressed in the street, though a perfect stranger, as 'my mother's child!' thus touching nature's tenderest chord; the confidence in public and universal honesty, evinced by the exposure on the roadside of vegetables for sale without a seller, each lot having a certain number of pebbles laid by its sides to be replaced by a corresponding number of coins by the passing traveller, &c., &c., &c.; a volume would be required to detail it all."

While staying at Abeokuta, the Bishop held Confirmations at Mr. Crowther's Church of Igbeon, and at Mr. Townsend's Church of Ake. He also held conferences for four consecutive days with all the Missionaries of the Yoruba country, and examined the Candidates for Holy Orders. And on the Sunday next before Advent, the Rev. Messrs. Mann, Kefer, and Mason were ordained Priests; and Messrs. King and Macaulay were admitted to Deacon's Orders, in the Mission Church at Ake. On November 8th, the Bishop and Archdeacon left Abeokuta for Ibadan, accompanied by the late Dr. Irving, R. N.

"The road led us for many miles through flourishing farms and fine forests. In the midst of one of the latter we pitched our tents in the evening, there being again neither town nor village to be met with, though we passed frequent ruins as such. Our two tents had hardly been put up when a violent tornado drove us all inside, and well nigh robbed us of our scanty supper by putting the fires out. The following morning, at dawn, the signal was given; the baggage was packed up; kettles, pots, saucepans, &c., were stowed away; the tents taken down and folded up, with the surplus weight they had acquired by the previous heavy rains; and onward the caravan moved again, on and on, through prairies, forests, and farms, all day long, without the sight of even a solitary human habitation, until we were met, a few miles from Ibadan, by our friends, Messrs. Hinderer and Kefer. We rested a while, to await the different parties belonging to us, and then moved on once more. But just as we were getting a beautiful view of Ibadan, the first town of Yoruba proper, lightning and thunder in the east forwarded us of an approaching tornado, and speedily it came pouring down in torrents of rain, causing us tamely though hastily to wind our way through numberless streets and lanes, until, about five o'clock P. M., we arrived, drenched from head to foot, and fairly shivering from cold, at the Mission-house."

Nov. 9, *Lord's Day*.—The Bishop held a Confirmation in a good sized Church, which Mr. Hinderer was just finishing.

Nov. 10.—We paid the *bali*—king—a visit, with a present of a Dutch clock, with which he was marvelously well pleased, caring little as to its going or not, provided it hung up for public show. This *bali* received us with great civility, and gave us permission to build a second place of worship at the opposite end of the town to our present Church. On leaving his Majesty, we immediately went in search of a suitable site, which we found near the road leading to Ijaye.

(To be concluded next week.)

## Fanny's Departure.

MY YOUTH'S BEST FRIEND.

SUCH was the salutation of Mary F. — as she tenderly embraced her widowed mother. She had been a loved and only child. They had lived together for many years in blessed and growing confidence; but now the day was come which was to separate them. Mary was affianced to a man of kindred spirit, and was about to venture from under the maternal wing upon new and untried scenes. Her heart was full to overflowing, and she sought relief, where she had ever found it—on her mother's bosom. That mother was, as usual, ready to receive her. She had risen betimes and after commending herself and her child to the care of her heavenly Father, with emotions peculiar to the occasion, she had been penning a few lines to her daughter, ready to put into her hands at the moment of her departure. We subjoin the leading paragraphs:

"My own precious Mary:—What shall I say to you that I have not already said? He who knows my heart, knows that I have sought, however feebly, to train you for his service and glory. You are the child of many prayers, and much may well be expected of you; but never forget the Saviour's words—'Without Me, ye can do nothing.' Live, my child, in habitual fellowship with Jesus. Let him still have the first place in your affections, and recollect that other friends and other objects can only be to you what he is pleased to make them. Be reasonable and moderate in your expectations, and think more of your obligations to your husband, than of his obligations to you. Strive to be contented with such things as you have; and aim to be a pattern of economy, neatness, diligence and propriety. Continue to cultivate your mind, and be careful to redeem the time. Avoid idle conversation, light reading, and worldly entertainment. Keep within your own sphere, and endeavour to make home attractive by a sweet, and cheerful and loving spirit. This is meant to be a state of trial and probation to us, and, therefore, you will have need of patience; but the vicissitudes of life are associated with many mercies, and we must not forget that for every night there is a morning. The experience of nearly three score years enables me to say that a child of God has nothing really to fear but sin; and against this he must constantly pray, 'lead us not into temptation.' Go, then, my precious one, and may you prove as great a comfort to your beloved husband as you have been to me, and may God grant that we may meet at last with your sainted father and many who have gone before, an unbroken family in heaven."

Such was the calm and Christian language of this devoted mother. She had been permitted to rear a tender plant, to inhale its early fragrance, and to taste some of its pleasant fruit; and now she cheerfully transferred her child to another home, where she could better fulfil the duties of riper years. From week to week the mother and daughter corresponded with each other and visits were often interchanged. The friends of each were the friends of all. Time swept on, and Mary had become the centre of a large and blooming circle, but neither domestic endearments or increasing cares caused her for a moment to forget the companion and guide of her youth. As age crept on, and Mary saw with concern the venerable form she loved wasting away, she became eyes to the blind and a staff to the trembling limbs. Often would she bring forth from the recesses of memory poems and hymns which were deposited there in early days, and many a bright gleam was by her affectionate skill caught from the past and thrown across the future. She loved to comment on the Divine faithfulness, and to retrace step by step the path of the now weary pilgrim. Her little ones, too, were all ministering children, and easily followed in their mother's pleasant track. At length came the closing scene—the last word, the lingering look, the darkened room, the funeral train; but years afterwards, Mary might be seen, in her little closet, gazing with a tearful eye on a well known miniature, beneath which she had inscribed, with characteristic tenderness, these emphatic words—"MY YOUTH'S BEST FRIEND."

## Selections.

THE PHARISEE AND THE PUBLICAN.

I also observe, that the extempore prayer of the Pharisee was formed by himself, or in the strength of his own natural parts; for so the text implieth: "The Pharisee," saith the text, "stood and prayed thus with himself," or "by himself," and may signify, either that he spoke softly, or that he made this prayer by reason of his natural parts, "I will pray with the Spirit," saith Paul; 1 Cor. xiv. 15. "The Pharisee prayed