

looked forward to by the people. He earnestly preaches along the line of God's requirements of His people, and then, without pressure the offering is made. I am sure I do not exaggerate when I say that of all days this is our happiest. A bar-keeper in attendance at our church the day of our Foreign Mission collection remarked to me at the close of the service, when he saw the people giving with such cheerfulness: "This is what I call religion," and himself put in a liberal contribution. Who could help being happy when coming, as we had, from a week of study and prayer for the guidance of the Spirit, our collection, without any public gift or other strained effort, amounted to not less than a thousand dollars for 1897! What a joy it was for those people to give that day!

Brethren, I beg you to try this method. It will develop your people not only in the matter of giving, but will so deepen their spiritual life—which, after all, must precede the matter of their contributions—as nothing else, in my judgment, possibly can. The Holy Spirit in Missions! Oh, how we need Him to-day! The churches seem to have lost sight of the fact that He is their teacher. Let us come back to Him and honor Him at the risk even of being called extremists, and He in turn will honor the churches.

NEW LAWS FAVORABLE TO WOMEN EVEN IN AFRICA.

A few days ago our Kombe king came down from his headquarters at Bata to hold the semi-annual meeting of parliament, and, after very animated discussions, three or four new laws were promulgated, all bearing upon improvement in the condition of women. So, you see, this is becoming the burning question of the day even in Equatorial Africa.

Some of the Christian representatives were in favor of having payment of dowry, which means purchase of wives to be held as slaves, entirely abolished. Others felt that the mass of the people were not yet prepared for such an innovation, and the attempt to enforce such a law might only lead to rebellion. So it was decided that the amount of dowry be sensibly decreased and no more infants should be betrothed to grown men. They are to be left free until they have attained an age when they are supposed to be capable of making choice for themselves in this most delicate matter.

Then, heretofore it has been a law as binding as that of the Medes and Persians that in case a man dies his wife must be inherited, like his other property, and compelled to marry such member of the deceased husband's family as shall be decided upon in council by the male relatives, irrespective of any choice on her side. If the woman should have sufficient spirit to rebel, she would be ostracized at once and looked upon as a suspicious character. This custom has been a sore stumbling block to church members, who have come under discipline again and again for marrying polygamists by whom they were inherited, and in other cases where they held out they were subjected to real persecution.

The new law provides that in such cases women shall be left free to make their own election, whether to remain in the family of the deceased husband, seek some other agreeable alliance, or remain even as they are. Of course if one leaves the family, the dowry paid will have to be returned, or a portion of it according to the length of her service with her former owners. Narrow as this

liberty may seem to you, it means much in comparison with former bondage and will, we hope, open the way for perfect freedom. These laws the people have had translated into French and will present them to the administrator, asking his approval, and assistance in carrying them out. Our present king is a Christian, a member of our church, and so far as his light goes he will be in favor of reform. His prime minister has been an apostate for several years, but recent trials have been softening his heart and he seems penitent and anxious to return.—R. H. DE HEER, in *Woman's Work for Women*. Benito, July 15, 1896.

TREAD SOFTLY.

PHILIPPIANS II. 1-8.

Not where *lifeless* ones are sleeping
In the silent graves below,
But where *living* ones are weeping
Tears of bitterness and woe.

Where despair its home is making
Dark as night that has no end;
Where true hearts with grief are breaking
For a kind and faithful friend.

If we knew each other's spirit
As we know each other's face,
We should often find true merit
Where at first there seems no grace.

If we knew each other's feelings
As each other's words we know,
In our daily walk and dealings
Greater kindness we might show.

If we know the cares and labors
Which each human heart must feel,
We should learn to love our neighbors
And some wounded ones to heal.

If amid the conflict pressing
We just tread with loving care,
We shall make our lives a blessing
And be welcome everywhere.

Let that mind in Jesus dwelling
Evermore in us abide:
Then in works of love excelling
Living will be glorified.

Colborne, Oct., 1896.

T. WATSON.

Twenty-five years ago there was not a Woman's Foreign Missionary Society; now there are 75 Woman's Societies, 50 of which are in America; and there are in addition more than 20,000 Auxiliaries and upwards of 7,000 Mission Bands. These Woman's Societies have a combined income of more than \$2,000,000 annually.

There may be times when silence is gold and speech silver; but there are times, also when silence is death and speech is life, the very life of Pentecost.—*Maz Muller*.