

A True View of Service.

I was borne along by irresistible influences to take part in the ministry of the gospel. I have never had any occasion to find fault with my calling and election. I cannot say that I have done anything for Christ—that is to say. I have never laid Christ under any obligation to my poor abilities and services. I have received everything and given back very little in return. Jesus Christ has crowned me beyond all my deserts and claims, and whatever I am in the ministry of his gospel, I am by his grace and his continual sustaining energy. Once let a man get the notions that he is doing God a great honor by denying himself the delights and the profits of business and is making a sacrifice in order to propagate the kingdom of heaven, that man's influence is gone forever. Christ will have no man's patronage. The gospel invites no man to bestow upon it the delight of his smile. The gospel confers dignity; it receives none.—Rev. Joseph Parker, in "The Christian Commonwealth."

The Song of the Absent.

It singeth low in every heart,
We hear it each and all—
A song of those who answer not,
However we may call.
They throng the silence of the breast;
We see them as of yore—
The kind, the true, the brave, the sweet,
Who walk with us no more.

'Tis hard to take the burden up,
When these have laid it down;
They brightened all the joy of life,
They softened every frown.
But O! 'tis good to think of them
When we are troubled sore;
Thanks be to God that such have been
Although they are no more.

More homelike seems the vast unknown
Since they have entered there;
To follow them were not so hard,
Wherever they may fare.
They cannot be where God is not,
On any sea or shore,
Whate'er betides, Thy love abides,
Our God forevermore.

—John W. Chadwick.

Up or Down

Africa is now making a new start. Half a century ago it was still the Dark Continent, cut off from all civilizing influences. The Mohammedans held the north, the savages the south. The only white men known there were the slave trader and the hunter of wild beasts. A large part of it was marked "Desert" on the maps, because nothing could be learned about it. Nowadays it is explored, possessed, and known, from end to end. Instead of being desert it is rich and swarms with people.

This opening of Africa means either a great upward or a downward step in its history. If with civilization the gospel comes in its fulness, then Africa is saved. If rum and greed and war and driving out of the native before the trader, come instead, Africa will be more unhappy and more unchristian than even heathenism could make it. The need for missionaries is tremendous and vital.

In many places in Africa to-day that need is being filled. Consecrated workers are training the natives in industry, in temperance, in godly living, and wonderful results are reached. If the Church is willing to spend as much as the liquor interests do on their side, there will be no failure,—and the rum traffic, too, will perish. But if the Church withholds, Africa is doomed.

"He that keepeth his mouth keepeth his life."

Our Young People

A Mission Study of Africa

Sun., Mar. 29. Ps. 68: 29-31; Isa. 43: 3.

The Re-conquest of Africa

We must not think of Africa as an altogether new field for Christianity. In the first centuries of the Church's life, northern Africa was largely conquered for Christianity. Alexandria became a great Christian center, and there, it is claimed, the Septuagint was made—the Greek version of the Scriptures which was so universally used in the early days of the Church.

Augustine, one of the greatest of Christian bishops and theologians, was an African, and returning from Italy after his conversion, labored much for his native province of Numidia, now the land of Algeria. Abyssinia was Christianized in these early days, and there are still Abyssinian Christians. Ethiopia did "stretch out her hands unto God" in those missionary times. But afterwards the fierce followers of Mohammed poured over northern Africa, wiping out Christianity in blood and fire; and their power has continued down to our own day.

Now, however, Christian nations are once more supreme in Africa. England holds the key of Egypt, and Gordon's memory is enshrined in a Christian college at Khartoum. Not only northern, but central and southern Africa are open to the gospel. There is no longer any conquering heathen power in Africa. It is ready for Christianity. Are the Christians of America ready to meet this great opportunity?

For Daily Reading.

Mon., Mar. 23.—God judging Ethiopia. Ezek. 29: 8-16
Tues., " 24.—The sons of Ham. Gen. 10: 1, 6-19
Wed., " 25.—A noble African. Matt. 27: 32, 33
Thurs., " 26.—An early African convert. Acts 8: 26-40
Fri., " 27.—Ethiopia shall know Christ. Ps. 87
Sun., " 28.—A prophecy about Ethiopia. Isa. 18: 1-7
Sun., " 29.—Topic. A mission study of Africa. Ps. 68: 29-31; Isa. 43: 3

The Century Fund.

The Editor of THE DOMINION PRESBYTERIAN: The Century Fund Committee met last week to take stock of the position at the end of the Century Fund period, and to wind up as far as possible the whole movement.

It was found that the total receipts up to the 28th Feb., for the Common Fund (including Specials which the General Assembly had permitted to rank on the Common Fund and also including any interest that had accrued) amounting to \$593,648.33, besides this amount there were certain securities on which interest is being paid amounting to nearly \$6000.00. There is little doubt, therefore, that the full \$600,000.00 will yet come in. Any doubt that there is may be easily removed in these two ways. 1.—If Congregations which have some shortage (of which a list has been deposited with Dr. Warden) will say this: "The Century Fund period may be over for others, but for us it will not be over until we have made out that shortage." I have no doubt from letters that I have had that

there are some, at least, who look at it in this way, and who before the Assembly meets will make up their amount. 2.—There are a very few who made the payment of their additional contributions, or of their original contributions, dependent on the whole \$600,000.00 being raised. These will now have the opportunity of implementing their intentions, and no doubt will send in the amount mentioned by them to Dr. Warden, who has their names.

Turning to the Debt Fund; the total amount reported as paid to Debt amounted to \$955,231.00, and of this amount \$24,874.00 had been contributed by stronger congregations to help to wipe off Debt in some weak congregations.

This latter amount very properly might have been looked upon as being in the same class with contributions to the Common Fund, for the object was the same—the strong were helping the weak.

Arrangements were made for the issuing of the Souvenir cards promised to the young people and to the S.S. children, and these will now be ready in a short time. A difficulty with regard to them is, that many congregations have not sent in the names, but a sufficient number will be produced to supply such cards to all who yet send in the number required by them, so that the Committee's promise of a card to each child contributing \$1.00 and to each young person contributing \$2.00 may be fulfilled.

As regards the Historic Volume; it was determined that it would be wasteful to publish at great cost a mere mass of names. These will be preserved in the Historic Roll; and a Committee was appointed to prepare a small Historic Volume in which the amounts contributed by congregations will be recorded, together with some short sketches, showing the work of the Church and of its schemes, past and present. This little Volume will be ready for distribution after a short time. So the great movement came to a close with some degree of credit to the Church on the financial side. There can be no doubt, either, that God will bless the work which will be done through the help of the gifts which so many have brought willingly. May we not hope, also, that He will stir up, and that He even has stirred up, the spiritual life of the Church and of her people as a result of this movement?

So may it be that the Century Fund movement, now closing, may mark a distinct stage in both the material and the Spiritual advancement of our beloved Zion. Perth, March 7th, 1903.

R. CAMPBELL.

Points for Study.

What did Livingstone's work in Africa accomplish?

What special missions has our church in Africa?

What has been done to stop the African drink traffic?

What nations now have possessions and protectorates in Africa?

"Take heed to thyself, and keep thy soul diligently."

"Little children, keep yourself from idols."

"My son, keep thy father's commandments."