estimation of the committee or the church, lessened the importance and claims of the African mission. These ought not to affect those who acknowledge the obligation of the command—'Go, preach the Gospel to every creature;' and the church is ill-prepared for this great work, if her sons are not willing to 'lay down their lives' for the sake of the Gospel. God forbid, then, that she should ever relax her interest or her efforts, until she, with the blessing of God, plants the Gospel standard firmly on this benighted continent!"

MISSION SCHOOLS IN AFRICA.

It is exceedingly gratifying to find that the attention of the church is more and more awakened to the vast engine for moral and spiritual good which our missionaries in Africa have been building up in their schools. Especially do we rejoice that the interest of the children of the church is engaged in this matter, and that contributions for the education of the children of the poor heathen in Africa are flowing in from the youth of our own communion. Upon themselves the influence of this benevolent effort cannot be otherwise than happy—tending, as it infallibly does, to impress them with convictions of the value of the Gospel—to subdue in their hearts the natural spirit of selfishness, which is so contrary to the spirit and character of true christianity; and to encourage and nurture in them the sanctifying habit of living not to themselves, but to Him who died for them and rose again.

And upon the moral condition of Africa, this effort of little children, humble as it may seem, will have, nay, is now having, a blessed effect. The children of the mission school rescued from the degradation, barbarism and ignorance of heathenism, are transferred to the pious and parental care of our missionaries; form part of their household: and are subjected to all its quiet, restraining and wholesome influences. They are instructed not merely in those branches of human knowledge which fit them for a respectable station in civilized society, but they are sedulously "brought up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord." And all this is effected at a cost of *only twenty dollars* per annum, for each child. Is there a Sunday School of our church so poor that it cannot support *one child* in the schools of the mission in Western Africa?

We have been favoured with the perusal of a private letter, dated 5th of January last, from an officer of the U. S. Navy, attached to the squadron now on the African Coast. The following extracts, which we take the liberty of making, will be read with interest, in connexion with our remarks on the mission schools.

"While at Cape Palmas, I had the pleasure of meeting the Rev. Mr. Payne: I went out also to the missionary station at Mount Vaughan, and spent a day there in company with him and the Rev. Mr. Hazlehurst. I visited the schools, and made many enquiries as to the success of their labours with the natives. They said that they found the natives kindly disposed towards them, and that many of them seemed to appreciate the motive which brought the missionaries among them. The children were teachable and anxious to learn: and quick and intelligent to acquire the knowledge imparted to them.

Upon entering the gateway to the missionary house at Mt. Vaughan, the gate being at the foot, and the house at the summit of the hill, we passed a group of about a dozen children. The boys took off their hats, and the girls curtesied to us as we passed; and the countenances of all were beaming with smiles of pleasure and happiness. Every where that I had an opportunity of observing them during my visit there, they seemed to evince the utmost affection toward their teachers. I could scarcely believe that these children were of the same race as those that we saw in the native villages on our route, and elsewhere on the coast.

The stations of the Episcopal Mission number in all about 300 native children. These are instructed in reading, writing, arithmetic and geography, and of course in the *christian religion*. They are taught habits of industry and personal neatness. They are clothed at the expense of the mission,* with neat and comfortable garments: and the girls are taught to sew, and to cut and make dresses. It is pleasant to see the great satisfaction with which they view their altered and improved appearance. The natives among these tribes, of both sexes, and of all ages, go entirely naked, save a little piece of cloth wrapped about their loins; yet they are passionately fond of adornment, and nothing delights them so much as dress. It frequently happens in visiting the native towns along the coast that we see a native with a vest on, or some other article of clothing, given him by some traders, American or European, strutting about, the envy and admiration of all his village.

These children, educated at the missions, see and appreciate the great change and improvement in their existence. They go out frequently among their relations and friends in the native villages; and the other native children, and indeed the native adults also, see and wonder at the difference that education has effected; and are filled with desire to be likewise benefitted and elevated in the scale of existence. They look upon the children of the mission school almost as superior beings. Nor are the labours of the missionaries confined to the children, although they find in *them* the most promising and productive field. Many native adults have embraced christianity, and some are even employed as teachers in the schools.

It is the desire of the missionaries, that when these children who are now their pupils grow up, the educated boys shall marry from among them the educated girls; and for this purpose they purchase from the parents of the girls their right to dispose of them in marriage: a right which the natives all maintain over their female children, without any reference in its exercise to the wish and consent of the girls. This right, unless purchased from them, might materially interfere with the wish of the missionaries, to ensure arrangements that would contribute most to the developement, growth and influence of the principles they had laboured to implant.

When these children grow up, they will (certainly in the majority of cases) select from choice, for husbands or wives those who have been educated like themselves; they leave the mission and establish themselves in their tribe as householders and heads of families. Thus, their influence is disseminated around them, and carried down to posterity in their children. The males frequently will become, by their superior intelligence and information, the head-men of their tribe. This is the picture I draw of *the future*, (and it is by no means highly coloured.) It is not yet realized, to be sure, for the scholars are children yet. But the least reflection must show to any one that this will be the probable result; and *in this way* may we reasonably look forward to the evangelization of Africa."

* Several congregations of our church in the U. S. supply through the industry and agency of "*Ladies' Sewing Societies*," large quantities of clothing for the children of these mission schools. May the number of such benevolent associations be enlarged.

Maryland Historical Society

The Maryland State Colonization Society Papers

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