

## Our Young People

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### OUR TOPIC TALK.

MARCH 29.—A mission study of Africa. Ps. 68: 29-31; Isa. 43: 3.

The area of Africa is 12 million square miles, and the population is estimated to be nearly 200 million. One half of this number is composed of Mohammedans, Jews, Hindus and Christians; the other half is made up of Pagans of the lowest type.

Religiously, Africa is the world's darkest continent. Nowhere else is found so large a number of persons with no sacred books and no pretensions at a system of morality. The heathen hordes of China and India are high in the scale of civilization when compared with the heathen Africans.

Such religion as they have shows three elements. (1) The lowest form is fetishism. A fetish is any object—stick, stone, or other inanimate thing—which is supposed to be the abode of a superhuman being. The owner has complete control of his fetish, yet it is supposed to protect him from harm, particularly that of evil spirits. The fetish power is imparted to the material object by a priest or a medicine man, who cruelly imposes upon the superstitious people. (2) Another element is ancestor-worship. Some animals are thought to be the incarnation of departed ancestors, and so are treated with reverence. (3) Another element shows a kind of belief in a God, most likely derived by projecting ancestor-worship backwards to "the old-old one," that is, the first ancestor. But no phase of this religion reaches above the baseness of low superstition.

The life of the people varies with the different tribes; but the condition of any is low enough. The moral sense is very dull, vices are abundant, and indifference to better things are among the greatest obstacles to the missionary.

Much has already been accomplished. Approximately we may say that 2,000 missionaries, American and European, are now on the field with an assistant native force of over 5,000. Though these figures seem large, they are small for the enormous task of enlightening 100 million of the darkest souls that inhabit the earth. S. J. C.

Be sincere. Do not say all you mean, but mean all you say. Perfection may be impossible to men, but we can at least be true.

### PLEDGE PAPERS.

No. V.

#### CHURCH SUPPORT AND ATTENDANCE.

"I promise Him that I will . . . support my own church in every way, especially by attending all her regular and mid-week services, unless prevented by some reason which I can conscientiously give to my Saviour."

#### THIS PROMISE KEPT

guarantees pleasant and successful work for Christ. And never doubt that your church is Christ's own planting, for it is, as is every organization that extends His kingdom. He who is not against Christ is for Him. His church is to "prevail." Remember that the Christian church is a divine institution, established by Christ to direct us, weak mortals, into the realms of eternal bliss.

#### OUR TREATISE AND PLEDGE.

Our treatise gives the pledge a basis. In Chap. xi of our *Treatise* we have given us the following definition of a church: "A Christian church is an assembly of persons who believe in Christ and worship the true God agreeably to His word." 1 Cor. 1: 2; Acts 2: 47; 2 Cor. 8: 5. In a more general sense it signifies the whole body of Christians throughout the world." Eph. 5: 23; 1: 22; 3: 10. Gal. 1: 18-24.

In section II of this chapter the ordinances of the church are thus set forth: (1) "Christian Baptism is the immersion of believers in water, in the name of the Father, the Son, and Holy Ghost, in which are represented their death to the world," etc. (2) Again "the Lord's Supper is designed to commemorate the sufferings of Christ, and to represent, in the use of bread and wine, the communion which saints have with Him and with each other," etc.

In section III is given the duty of the church: "The duty of the church is that obligation which the revelation of God enjoins upon it collectively, or as individuals, for the manifestation of His manifold wisdom, the perfecting of the saints, and the conversion of the world." This is what we support.

The pledge aims to give C. E.'s a truer appreciation of these divine means of grace and have them become, in consequence, better defenders and exemplars of the faith.

#### OUR COVENANT AND THE PLEDGE.

How nearly our covenant is like the C. E. pledge, in enforcing support of the church, and church going, is seen in articles 2 and 3: (Article 2) "we will contribute of our substance for the support of a faithful ministry among us, and for the other necessary means of grace. We will be benevolent to the needy, especially to the poor of our own church." (Article 3) "We will, as constantly as we can, attend upon the public worship of God and the stated meetings of the church. In every Conference meeting we attend we will report ourselves to the church. We will labor for its prosperity and upbuilding in the most holy faith; we will not forsake it in adversity, but will bear each other's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ."

The duties thus imposed upon us are reasonable and necessary. Our fathers in the church, as our leaders in C. E. work, are one in exhorting us to give to the cause of religion a hearty support, and not to neglect the assembling of ourselves together.

### MUTUAL HELP.

Christian Endeavorers should see how reasonable and righteous is this section of the pledge. Why? Because it means a mutual help that is essential to the good of the church and the individual Christian.

This age of interest, in worldly affairs, daily adding new discoveries and precipitating new events that are irresistibly fascinating, tends to distract our thoughts and absorb our attention, to the exclusion of things religious. The church needs those who can legitimately divide their interest, who can rightly divide their energies, who can give to temporal and eternal interests the thought, and time, and activity, due them both. The church never has had the subtle difficulties she has today. And it has, moreover, no other than the faithful support of its individual members as its human guarantee of ultimate success. "The gates of hell shall not prevail against it," but the avenues of earth may lead away from, and weaken it.

The church is a help. It has a place in human affairs that no other organization can take. It supplies for our needs, and provides for our wants, what no organization could. In it alone are we sure of spiritual good. The sinner she offers forgiveness. She gives comfort when the heart is nigh broken. She strengthens the fainting soul. She calms the confused mind. She wipes the tears from the eyes with hands more tender than those of a mother.

Our covenant and conscience tells us what "our own church" is. The church has a good friend in the young hearts of today; but the young have a better friend in the church. Our fathers, whose work was less involved than ours, but harder, have left us a care. And if our duties and responsibilities have increased with the years, let us try, with increased facilities and aids for doing this work, and the same divine help, to support the cause and witness its advance.

"Like a mighty army  
Moves the church of God,  
Brothers we are treading  
Where the saints have trod;  
We are not divided,  
All our body we,  
One in faith and comfort,  
One in charity."  
"Onward Christian soldiers."



#### A WORD FROM THE COMMITTEE.

Even the smallest favors are most thankfully received by the Press Com. Contributions for our column from our societies are not super-abundant. We do the best we can to pass on to our readers any word of interest we hear from "our field," but the words are meagre and indefinite. Are there not some who are interested enough, and brave enough to respond to our call for short articles on committee work? Out of the seven societies especially asked to help in this way, Gibson alone has responded. Are we not over-modest sometimes? Is there not a danger of wrapping our talent in a napkin, and stowing it away where it is useless? Is there not a possibility of growth for us through exercise? We do not ask for sermonettes, or learned expositions, but can we not hear in some practical, straight-forward way from our societies, as to their condition, and ways and means of working. Spring is just the time for new beginnings; let us make one in this direction.

COM.



Fantastic stories have been written of magic mirrors in which the future was revealed. If such a thing were

possible many a bright-faced bride would shrink from the revelation of herself, stripped of all her loveliness. If there is one thing which would make a woman shrink from marriage it is to see the rapid physical deterioration which comes to so many wives. The cause is generally due to womanly diseases. Lost health and lost comeliness are restored by the use of Dr. Pierce's Favorite Prescription. It cures irregularity and dries weakening drains. It heals inflammation and ulceration, and cures female weakness.

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