

Missionary Correspondence.

CHAPTER 6

MY CALL

Rev. H. C. Sanders, M. D.
(Continued.)

"As long as he liveth he shall be lent to the Lord." "Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you."

Soon after my conversation there came to me a strong conviction, which left no room for doubt, that God had chosen me for His work among the heathen. I cannot say that I was sorry at the time, for I had tasted the joy of soul winning, and desired to continue in that work.

Little did I then realize what this call of God would lead me through during the coming years. Our Lord kindly shows us but a step at a time. He understood that the material was crude and needed much moulding before it could be a trusted vessel to carry the water of life. There were hardships to pass through and fiery trials to test the metal to its utmost power of endurance. Yes, it is only when one is led this way that one learns to lean on the strong arm of Him who has said "When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee; when thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burned; neither shall the flame kindle upon thee." At that time I did not understand the philosophy of chastening, and thought it "strange concerning the fiery trials" that came my way.

God, I suppose, saw that a nature like mine needed something more than the ordinary to counterbalance its reticence, and keep it steady amid the coming storms; so He mercifully had given me a conversion as clear as the noon day sun and a call to Africa equally as certain. Many a time, when tempted to discouragement have I thanked God for these two anchor-like experiences. Only once have I ever harbored a doubt as to their genuineness, and then only for an hour. Ah, the "horror of great darkness" of that hour. But of that, however, another chapter will tell.

During three years at the Missionary Training Institute, and four at the Medical College, it was my lot to meet many missionaries-in-training, and to hear the account of their "call" But few were as definite as mine. Then, mine was to Africa, while the majority of them were led simply to the "heathen" or to the "work of the Lord". Several of them were going against the wishes of one or both parents, while here my way was easy. I shrank from informing my parents of my intention of being a missionary. But a few years later when I did they were both pleased, and mother told me a precious secret.

At the time of my birth she had, like Hannah, lending Samuel to the Lord all the days of his life, dedicated me to God for His service. This may seem a strange thing for a woman who was not a christian to do, but it may be accounted for by the fact that when she was a girl God had given her a call to the foreign field. She believes this now, but at that time she realized only a great desire to engage in such work, not looking upon it as a call and therefore her duty. She saw no open way before her, received no encouragement, was not even a professor of religion, and gradually despaired of realizing her ambition.

I sometimes think that mother must have been a christian all her life without the conscious witness of the Spirit. I recall the time

she prayed with me at my twelfth birthday, and how she warned me the time I first took God's name in vain. The above call of her youth and dedicatory prayer at my birth augue favorably. If this thought be correct, then at her baptism, she, as a child of God, received only the anointing of the Holy Spirit. Many holiness teachers contend that a soul never is regenerated and sanctified at one and the same time. Yet if I am mistaken in thinking mother's life Christian, previous to her public confession, you will kindly pardon my delusion as that natural to any fond son.

When we were about to embark on this voyage to Africa, and the sad farewells were being spoken, mother said to me, "Herbert, you are now going to the work that I have so greatly longed to do ever since God saved me. And even when I was a girl I had the same desire. But when I prayed about it, not long since, and asked God why I had this great yearning to tell the 'story' to those who never heard of Christ, He gave me this answer, found in Kings 8:18, 19, where God said to David, 'thou didst well that it was in thine heart. Nevertheless thou shalt not build the house, but thy son, he shall build the house unto my name.'" Thus David had a large share in the construction of the temple; so would she in any success that might attend the efforts of her son. Thus was dear mother comforted, and encouraged. She would now "tarry by the stuff", playing the important, though unnoticed part of intercession.

At the time mother first told me of her presenting me to the Lord, at my birth she also related a strange occurrence that took place when I was about eight years of age. A Sunday School concert was to be held in the Free Baptist church at Beaver River, and my part in the programme was to recite a piece. These verses described a poor newsboy listening to the address of a returned missionary. The boy was wonderfully stirred by the appeal, and thoroughly searched the pocket of his ragged clothes, but in vain, for a penny which he might add to the offering, now being received. By the time the collection plate reached him his decision was formed. He requested that it be set on the seat beside him. Then rising and placing one foot in the plate, he said, "I'll give myself, I've nothing more." The boy held to his inspired purpose, and became a foreign missionary.

After the concert was over, and we had reached home, a scene occurred. Grandmother Churchill, who was visiting us at that time, declared that she had received a "presentiment" that evening while I was reciting. "Herbert was to be a missionary and go to some far away land of awful dangers." So certain was she and so unreconciled that there followed a good crying spell.

Shortly after I had publicly confessed my "call" Mrs. Edna Porter surprised me by saying "Why Herbert, I was aware of that years ago." She then went on to tell me that when I was a small boy she saw me sitting on the front door step of our house one day as she was driving past. As she sat in her carriage noticing me, it was revealed to her by God, she declared, that I was to be a missionary. Sister Porter was one of the most godly women it has been my lot to meet, and has since gone to her reward.

These two latter incidents were, to me, interesting, but not needed as confirmation to the call which had come direct from God.

(To be continued.)

The French have granted greater religious liberty to the Island of Madagascar.—*Sel.*

ITEMS OF INTEREST ON MISSIONS.

(By Mrs. H. C. Sanders.)

A CRY FROM AFRICA

How long, O Lord, how long!

From burning sands to blazing skies
Shall Africa's millions
Lift their pleading eyes?

O! stay Thy hand,
And write it not
That Christian nations wait,
Until it be forever more too late
To save those stricken ones
From Sodom's fate!

Our God! by Thine almighty power
Fill these cold hearts this hour!

That we may cry
From our depths to Thee:
"Here am I, Lord!
Send me, send me!"

—*Katherine Lampton Paxson.*

A MISSIONARY CHURCH.

Through the current number of *Kingdom Tidings*, Rev. D. M. Stearns, Editor and Publisher, we learn that the pastor and congregation of the Reformed Episcopal Church of Germantown, Pa., have collected and sent to the Foreign Mission field, during the year just closed, \$56,781. Fourteen thousand dollars of this amount was contributed by the congregation of Dr. Stearns, and the balance, by the weekly Bible classes conducted by him in and around Philadelphia. We understand that the membership of the church does not exceed 150, and none of the members would be placed among the wealthy class. For 24 years, Dr. Stearns has kept the missionary enterprise prominently before his people and his Bible classes, and during that period they have contributed \$677,633.00 to the support of that great cause.

In our judgment it is unquestionably true, that the key to the spiritual life of the church at home, and the support of the great Missionary Enterprise, is in the hands of the pastors. Given a wholly consecrated and deeply spiritual pastor, enthused with the missionary spirit, there will be no lack of revival power, and no necessity of banquets at three dollars a plate, to awaken interest in foreign missions. The responsibility of the pastor, especially in our day is tremendous, and the necessity for extraordinary spiritual equipment was never greater.

We know of this man and his marvellous work as we have attended his class in Brooklyn N. Y.—(Dr. and Mrs. H. C. Sanders.)

Among the travelers visiting Palestine there came this year an Arabic Jew from the neighborhood of Bagdad, who related that a few days' march from that city there exist some 8000 Jews living in seclusion and known by the name of "The Tribe of God." These Jews say that further east there live a few other Jewish tribes, but the road to them is very difficult or known only by a few people.—*Sel.*

The Missionary Review of the World tells us of a church in Africa with 800 members, where less than five years ago the people had never heard of Christ, but which today is supporting 123 native missionaries to other African tribes. One other church with 300 members to whom less than three years ago the name of Jesus had never been spoken, is supporting 51 native missionaries.—*Sel.*