

THE MISSIONARY SURVEY



JULY, 1917

“There are times when words seem empty and only action seems great. Such a time has come, and in the providence of God, America will once more have an opportunity to show to the world that she was born to serve mankind.”

President Wilson in his address at Arlington, Memorial Day, May 30, 1917.



HOME
MISSIONS

CHRISTIAN
EDUCATION
AND
MINISTERIAL
RELIEF



FOREIGN
MISSIONS

PUBLICATION
AND
SABBATH
SCHOOL
WORK

THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN THE U.S.
AT HOME AND ABROAD

PUBLISHED BY
PRESBYTERIAN COMMITTEE OF PUBLICATION
RICHMOND, VIRGINIA.

in a hurry) and reach the hot plain where the high grass shuts off the air, and between the rains the sun beats down with merciless force. But you must go on—a man is dying!

Neither does rain stop you; as we left Luebo at 5 a. m. we heard the thunder, and soon saw the heavy sky, which meant rain without fail! Steady, steady it comes down nearly all the day, and all the dry stitches disappear in spite of umbrella and raincoat; the forest is very wet, as it is full of undergrowth, and it comes at you from all sides; the grass is very wet and high, and slashes you in the face. The long pole of the hammocks steadily drops big drops on your remaining dry stitches. To make the picture complete, the red pillow transfers a wet stream of red dye to the overcoat, coat, shirt, and on through, making a complete job.

But there is an end to all going, and we reached, after 35 miles of hard traveling, the big village of a Bakuba chief; he met us with village pomp, and showed me a tiny two-by-four that barely held my cot, and you had to enter somewhat like a dog would; the walls were very thin, and therefore not noise-proof; after I had given the chief a "matabish" of two boxes of matches and two candles, with a little salt, I retired, only to listen to the noise of the native dances that are indulged in till late on all the wonderful moonlight nights; retiring does not always mean sleeping, and this night there was very little, but tired myself and with tired men, we got an early start, and covered mile after mile, going fast by hammock wherever good, and climbing or crawling or sliding through ravines and laboring through deep sand till almost ready to drop and quit.

So, in the evening of the second day we came to our destination, very thankful to be there, and now I am sitting here on the dirt porch of my native house, with a beautiful picture spread before me. I can see

mountains, forests and ravines for many miles, and in the far distance is a broad band of the Kassai winding its rapid course about among the big hills. As I sit here, I think: Are you not afraid to be all alone in this dark land, all so new to you—far away from loved ones, in a land full of terrible heathen customs and with Satan rampant? Alone, yes; afraid, but "Lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the world," even to this lonesome place. Oh, the sin, the ignorance, the cruelty, the superstition and the injustice hidden in these hills? And there is the Son of Man standing, saying: "The harvest truly is plentiful, but the laborers are few," etc., and there was little I in this vast region; it almost makes one cry out, and yet, there is no end to what God can do for others through us, if we are open, clean channels.

Night is here, and the remarkable picture it presents is worth telling; although it is barely half-moon yet, the night is like one of our full-moon ones. Through the miles of hills, where the Kassai winds its swift way, is a heavy silver gray ribbon of clouds and fog following the river for distances as far as the eye can reach, and presents a scene of great beauty; from the direction of this meandering "silver cord" comes the deep, steady roar of the big rapids. As I sit, and look, and listen, and wonder at the beauty of it all, I get absorbed in this picture of nature and find peace, and I feel with the Psalmist that "night unto night sheweth knowledge." But my thoughts are brought back to reality by the monotonous, distant sound of a drum and the weird noises of the native dances in two distinct villages on the next hills; and I stand before God, feeling again that it is these poor, dark souls wrapt in dense superstition and ignorance to whom my life must go out; and then, as I stand here I say with the Psalmist, "I will lift up my eyes to the hills, from whence cometh my help."

A LETTER FROM MR. BEDINGER.

LUSAMBO, CONGO BELGE, AFRICA,

January 7, 1917.

To the Ginter Park, Presbyterian Sunday School, Richmond, Va.:

DEAR FRIENDS:

When I received the graphic account of the "Might" Box offering last March, I was both thrilled and stirred. The thought kept coming to mind, why not attempt something like that out here? Several reasons why such an effort might be inopportune and un-

advisable presented themselves. First, the poverty of the natives. Not only are they desperately poor, but very improvident as well. They live from hand to mouth. A bank account is unknown among them. Saving up for a rainy day, and eight months out of the twelve are rainy, does not occur to them. One meal a day satisfies them. And clothing—well, they take no thought for what they shall wear. The highest salaried employee in our service receives the meager sum of \$3 per month, which includes his rations. It seemed hardly wise to urge

a. poverty-stricken congregation to deny themselves in order to increase their gifts. Second, the newness of the work and the danger of being misunderstood. It is less than five years since the first native evangelist entered this field. Three years and a half ago the first Protestant missionary took up his residence here. The native seldom voices his suspicions to the missionary, but there are some suspicions that even years of residence cannot obliterate. One of these is that the missionary, the white man, is fabulously rich. He eats three times a day, as much as he wants. His wardrobe is full, his clothes are never dirty, for there is always plenty of soap with which to keep clean. Barter goods come on every steamer—salt never gives out. His money chest is never empty and he can hire a hundred men to build him a dwelling house many times larger than the average native hut. "Why, then, should the missionary, from beyond the great waters, where there are other white people, likewise enormously rich, who can easily support the work, call upon us wretchedly poor, ignorant natives to deny ourselves for the spread of the gospel?" is the way the native reasons. And surely, from his viewpoint the reasoning is just. In many villages the natives have the idea that we are under great obligation to them for permitting us to bring them the gospel news! Being so small a candle in so dense a darkness, I wondered whether the "Might" box effort would not strengthen suspicion and awaken new prejudices. Third, the local followers were already responding largely and generously. This church, with less than one hundred members, is entirely supporting the two highest paid evangelists in the field, in addition to supplying food for the strangers and sick in our midst. Already responding in true Macedonian style, was it right to call for greater effort?

These were some of the problems and questions which naturally arose. After consulting the native leaders and after much prayer, it was decided to launch the idea. At the close of the sermon on the first Sunday morning of December, the plan was outlined. It was suggested that Christmas be set apart as a day of self-denial, on which we should bring our best gifts to the King, as an act of fealty and worship, just as the wise men of old did, and that these gifts should be used for the spreading of the story about the Cross on which this King voluntarily yielded His life to save His people from their sins. It was made plain that the gifts must be made "over and above regular contributions," that it must be a "free-will offering." There was no hurrahing, no shouting, no compulsion. Each succeeding Sabbath the plan was again outlined and suggestions offered how to earn

extra money. At the same time it was made plain that any who were suspicious or doubtful ought not to contribute anything. The people received the idea with apparent indifference. More than once I wondered if it would pan out.

The eventful day arrived. Outside the skies were heavily overcast with threatening clouds and distant rumblings proclaimed the approach of a tropical shower. Inside the church shed two hundred and seventy-seven dark faces seemed fairly lit up with the light of eager expectancy, and I thought that this presaged a spirited shower. Before the service, Mrs. Bedinger and I tried to guess what amount would be offered. Judging by the average Sunday collection, which ranges from \$1.20 to \$2.00, she guessed, "three and not over five dollars." Having inside information of ten dollars that had been gained in trading, I boasted, "Oh, there will not be less than fifteen and not over twenty dollars." After a quiet, sweet service, the offering was counted. Excluding what Mrs. Bedinger and I gave, the grand total amounted to \$24.06. Our astonishment was exceeded only by our gratitude. It was truly a marvelous response. Twenty-four dollars does not sound like very much to a Sunday School that raised on one day last March nearly \$500.00, I grant you. But let us make a just comparison. The \$480.00 you gave last year will support me, your foreign evangelist, one year. Whereas, the \$24.00 given here on Christmas Day will support two native evangelists for one year! As splendid as was your effort of last year, and I know it was a consecrated, whole-souled effort, I believe that you will agree that it has been surpassed out here by a people who, by reason of environment and opportunity, do not possess one-half your earning capacities or your Christian training in giving.

Every penny that went into this offering meant self-denial of the most heroic stamp. One evangelist, who already tithes, gave one month's salary. Another, who also tithes, gave two-thirds of his month's salary. A little four-year-old girl shelled peanuts to earn her four pennies. Eight boys, ranging from five to twelve years, one of whom did not possess even a loin cloth, pulled up weeds on the Station compound for one week, working the same hours as the regular workmen, to gain their money. One boy hoed my garden for two weeks and made sixty cents. That same boy, with a score of comrades, walked sixteen miles to attend the Christmas service. Twelve men bought twelve pieces of cloth and by trading gained \$9 clear. A group of people from a village only recently opened to us, sent word that they wished to attend the service, but were ashamed to come since they had nothing to contribute, adding with

emphasis, "The next time we'll have something."

Let it be understood that the Christmas effort did not diminish, as might be expected, the regular Sabbath offerings. The record shows that the December contributions, not counting the \$24.06 given on Christmas Day, amounted to \$2.10 increase over those of November, and that the contributions for November were \$1.10 more than those for the same month of the previous year. This gradual increase in the spirit of giving, as well as the fine effort on Christmas Day, is the logical result of God's blessing upon the faithful and splendid teaching of Mr. Sieg during the past two years.

Dear friends, the "Might" Box offering here on Christmas Day was an echo of last March. Your magnificent response fired me to appeal to these people. I did not hesitate to hold you up as an example. I told them of your joy in service and in giving, of your loyalty for Christ and of your willingness to sacrifice in order that they might have the gospel.

Yes, Ginter Park and Lusambo are now bound with stronger links than ever. We are now wondering what you will do this March, just as you will be wondering after reading this letter what we shall do next Christmas. You cannot, you will not, for Lusambo's sake—that means Christ's sake—

give less than you gave last year. Shall Africa set your goal at \$500.00 for this year? Hurry and send me another stirring appeal. I shall await it with breathless eagerness.

Now, for the best news last. Paul prides the Macedonians for two things, the giving of their substance and the giving of themselves to the Lord. And he put the latter first, as it is by far the more important, "but first gave their own selves to the Lord." God can accomplish His plans with life and money at His disposal. But to hold either and His cause must suffer. For ten years this Kasal region has been white unto harvest, but the people are now giving their lives to the Lord in unprecedented numbers. In the six months I have been back I have had the great privilege of receiving into the church seventy-nine precious souls. While in our field as a whole, 2,675 have been added to the Church during the past year. And, this is but a fraction of the numbers in the catechumen class. What a challenge is this for you and for us to redouble our efforts and take this land for Christ!

Lusambo's New Year's prayer for you is that you may "grow in grace"—the grace of giving, the grace of obedience, the grace of loving, the grace of living—"and in the knowledge of Christ."

Faithfully yours,

ROBT. D. BEDINGER.

TWO SUCCESSFUL PROGRAMS.

JNO. I. ARMSTRONG, *Educational Secretary.*

Several months ago a correspondent wrote us about a program that has been successfully given in her society. What she said interested me and I felt that I should like to pass it on to readers of THE SURVEY. Since that time another successful program has been given in the same place. The maker and mover of these programs is so modest that she has put me under promise not to use her name, but I am giving the account of the programs in her own words, as follows:

We chose a home for the meeting of August 30, 1916, that had a large living room. This was made to look as much like a rest room in a hospital as possible, with pillows, foot-stools and comfortable chairs.

The young ladies that took part were dressed as trained nurses, the Leader being the Head Nurse.

The invitations were sent out in the form of an announcement of the opening of a hospital.

The ladies were met at the door by the Head Nurse, who then turned them over to one of the other nurses to be made comfortable.

When they had all arrived, the Head Nurse gave each one a "prescription." These were afterwards used as answers to roll call.

R

Date-----

For-----
(Name of member inserted here)

"I am the resurrection and the life, he that believeth in Me, though he were dead, yet shall he live."

JESUS

The Great Physician

The following program was then carried out:

MEDICAL MISSIONS.

1. Hymn—"The Great Physician."
2. Scripture—Mark 5, 22: 43. (By Head Nurse.)
3. Prayer—(By Nurse.)
4. Minutes.
5. Roll Call—(Answer with prescription)