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**SURVEY**

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PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN THE UNITED STATES

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*Grinding Barley in the Near East*



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# THE PRESBYTERIAN SURVEY

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# The PRESBYTERIAN SURVEY

XIV

APRIL, 1924

No. 4

## 1872—JOHN IRVINE ARMSTRONG—1924

### AN APPRECIATION

R. E. MAGILL, *Secretary*

With aching hearts, stunned minds, but, we trust, with submissive wills and unquestionable faith, we announce the death of the Editor-in-Chief of our Sunday School Publications, Rev. John I. Armstrong, D. D., which occurred on March 8, 1924.

He was stricken with pneumonia on Monday, March 3rd, and after five days' illness, during which every remedy known to modern medical science was used, he entered into eternal rest.

Dr. Armstrong left as a legacy a record of service to our Church and to the Kingdom of God conspicuous for its devotion to high ideals, the sacrificial giving of himself to his work, gracious consideration of the opinions of others, and of loyalty to his friends. He consecrated his life to the task of Christian education, and to a mental endowment of a high order he added the equipment which comes through continuous study and research. He received the degree of A. B. and S. M. from Hampden-Sidney College and immediately took up the profession of teaching. He was associated with the Wallace School for boys at Nashville, Tenn., until he entered Union Seminary at Richmond for his theological training. He graduated with distinction in 1904, and was called at once to the chair of Moral Philosophy and Preaching by his Alma Mater, Hampden-Sidney College. This position he held until he accepted the chair of Philosophy and English Bible at Agnes Scott College, Decatur, Ga., in 1906. In order to enlarge his usefulness, he accepted at the same time the pastorate of the Kirkwood Presbyterian Church in the suburbs of Atlanta. The double burden was carried successfully.

He became Educational Secretary of Foreign Missions in 1913, and held this position until 1920. A new literature of an exceptionally high order was created, and the Church was given a new vision of its missionary obligation and an intensive course of study

was launched, which, if followed, will give our people an intimate knowledge of conditions in every field we occupy.

The Lewisburg Seminary of West Virginia found itself in need of a President, and laid a call upon Dr. Armstrong's heart. He accepted this arduous task in 1920, and rendered a great service to the cause of Christian education in carrying this institution through a grave financial crisis.

The Publication Committee made three attempts to have Dr. Armstrong accept a place on its Editorial Staff. Our last call, to become Editor-in-Chief of all the Publications of the Southern Presbyterian Church, appealed to him as offering a field of boundless usefulness and a task that would tax his resources to the limit. It was characteristic of the man that he always sought tasks that involved great personal sacrifice. He took full charge of our publications on April 1, 1923, and here entered upon what promised to be his largest service to the Church. He began at once a broad and constructive plan of developing and improving our periodicals, and enlisted at once the enthusiastic support of his associates in the Editorial and Educational Departments.

Dr. Armstrong personally reviewed every line of copy appearing in our

twenty-four Sunday School periodicals, and his fine judgment was reflected in the improvement of all the periodicals. In addition he prepared the expository notes which appeared in the *Earnest Worker*, and many of the leading Editorials.

Throughout the Church his fine work and spirit were recognized, and this sudden ending of a rich and fruitful life brings grief and regret to the whole Church. He leaves a devoted wife and five children, ages six to eighteen years, and the sympathy of the whole Church is with them in their great bereavement.



John Irvine Armstrong.

serve loyally to protect their mutual interests in peace and war, even at the price of their own blood.

This part of the ceremony being complete, the sheep are killed by cutting the throat, the blood flowing out on the ground. The carcasses are divided, each party taking half of his own and half of the other's. The meat is dressed and cooked in two large native pots and all the near relatives of the representative parties eat of it. This signifies that they also obligate themselves to fulfil the conditions of the covenant.

The analogy between this ancient custom and the Christian's covenant relationship with Christ must not, of course, be pressed too far, but the essential features

serve as a vivid illustration of Christ's sacrifice for in order to bring peace between God and the rebellious sinner. Christ Himself is at once the Mediator of the covenant and the lamb of the sacrifice. We enter into the covenant relationship with Him and partake of His life through the symbols of His flesh and His blood. We pledge our loyalty to Him and He promises to sustain us. If we break the covenant we bring upon ourselves the fate of those who have "trodden under foot the Son of God and have counted the blood of the covenant wherewith they were sanctified, an unholy thing, and have done despite unto the Spirit of grace." Christ the Mediator of a "better covenant," which is established upon better promises.—*Missionary Review*.

### WHY DOES THE CONGO NATIVE RUN FROM HIS MOTHER-IN-LAW?

REV. ROBT. D. BEDINGER.

SOME time ago I lost my way in a village and requested a young man to put me in the right path. As we rounded a house he gave a sudden leap and was off at full speed. As I called to him he slackened his speed but never turned his face. I noticed his shoulders shaking as if he were convulsed with laughter, or was it fear? I inquired into his strange conduct. With a sheepish grin, he said: "That woman back there is my mother-in-law and I saw her face!"

Rev. P. Smith tells a choice bit. In the village of an important Lulua chief, he was invited to occupy the brick guest house, one of the few in this land. After becoming installed, his cook came up and said, "Mr. Smith, I wish to do your cooking here, but unless you move out of this immediate section I cannot do it." Much surprised, Mr. Smith inquired the reason for so unusual a demand. The cook answered, "My mother-in-law is one of the wives of this chief and if I remain in close proximity to this harem I am likely to see her face!" Rather than subject him to such a harrowing experience, Mr. Smith removed to the house of the evangelist, some distance away.

Recently I was doing pastoral work in the local village. I ran across a man who is not a Christian. He was not even attending the inquirers' class. When I

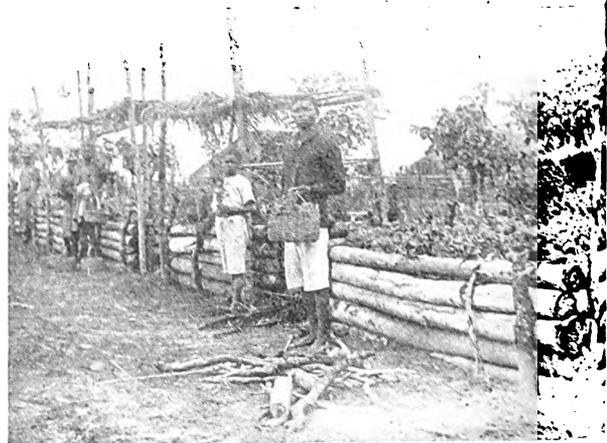
asked him why he did not attend, he replied, "I cannot because my mother-in-law attends."

Two years ago one of our most intelligent evangelists, Mulumbu, lost his wife with sleeping sickness. After many unsuccessful efforts he finally located a prospective wife in a nearby village. Since she is only in the inquirers' class we could not permit the marriage to take place until she becomes a baptized convert. Therefore we sent Mulumbu out for two months with a married evangelist. Last week I received the following note of distress from him: "This village to which you sent me is the place where my prospective mother-in-law was born. These people and those across the creek from Mutoto are the same tribe. They claim that it is the same as if my mother-in-law were here; that she returns from time to time. They are refusing to come to Church and to have anything to do with me. I have tried to tell them that the custom is evil, that the affair of God is of more importance, but they are obdurate. Please permit me to go to the village of Ditolo. There I may preach without embarrassment, but here I am constantly in hot water."

I know that the poor fellows who get married in this land suffer much from the demands of their in-laws.



Students in the Boys' School, Mutoto Station, Africa. Their mothers have little worry over soiled clothes or stockings to mend.



Raising vegetables on the Mutoto Farm, Belgian Congo, Africa. Note the shade built over the vegetable plots.

particularly of their mothers-in-law, but I had not worried much about them. It was not my problem, it was theirs! I knew a man became a slave, not to his wife, but to his mother-in-law, but I did not know that the tangling alliance might involve an entire tribe and two villages. But here it is, my problem now. A village denied the privilege of hearing the Gospel preached, a splendid preacher handicapped and unable to do his best work—all because of a custom as ancient as this one. How would you have met this problem?

### THE REVIVAL AT LUSAMBO.

REV. P. SMITH.

MR. HIGGINS asked me to come to Lusambo and assist in a series of services during April. I went with fear and trembling. The meeting began under very encouraging circumstances. Thanks to Mr. and Mrs. Higgins, who are the only missionaries here, and the native leaders, several prayer meetings had been in progress in the village for a number of days. The Holy Spirit was at work.

The fifteen native evangelists had been called in from the outstations and two conferences were held with them each day. At 6 A. M., 2 P. M., and 7 P. M., there were preaching services. As the visiting brother, it was my privilege to do the preaching. To preach was a pleasure, with people listening as they did. I do not know now when I have enjoyed a week so well. All seemed to be hungry for something.

We invited those who desired to stay after the night service to talk with us. One of the native leaders sat with Mr. Higgins, another with me. Members of the church, evangelists and even officers, began to come. There were one hundred and twenty confessions and re-consecrations by men and boys; eighty-six by women and girls. A number of evangelists confessed to sins of immorality, of which we had no way of knowing.

What does it all mean? Mr. Higgins expressed my thoughts when he said, "I thought with my experience with the negro in America and then out here, that I had learned them and knew even their thoughts, but I do not know now that I know very little about them. I am now ready to begin again. These people have opened their hearts, allowing us to see all that is therein. We have heard the rusty hinges creaking as they opened. Now it is our privilege to help them all we can, not only that they return no more to their sins but that they may go forward into holier and fuller lives."

For a native to call his thoughts sin was a new side

After consulting a colleague I wrote Mulumbu to stand by his job on the ground that he was not yet actually married to the girl or to the tribe. That now is a fine time to stiffen his backbone against a custom that will cost him even dearer if he knuckles under to it. That we will never get far with the evangelization of his people until many of their marriage customs are abandoned. I wonder which will win out in this case, the mother-in-law or the Gospel?

to his character. I think that I once heard a native admit his laziness, but he did not rate it among his sins. At Lusambo one evangelist said, "I have preached and preached, but I have been lazy. I might have been doing some house to house visitation, or I might have done some of this personal work about which you preached, but I did not." A washjack confessed to laziness in that since he had been a Christian he had never done any active work. He could have been doing personal work or preaching somewhere every Sunday.

Twenty-one women confessed to gross sin. Many confessed to anger and fighting. The women came to Mrs. Higgins at her home after the night services, the native pastor's wife assisting her. They came to Mrs. Higgins at other times also. One said, "I knew I had done wrong and was not happy. Now that I have confessed it is off my heart and I am happy once more."

The last night we asked all who had confessed to us to make a public confession before their fellow-men. We kept telling them that only God could forgive sins and that they should confess to Him and ask Him to keep them from sinning.

The remembrance of that week will always be a blessing to me. I had never seen God's Spirit working in the hearts of these people as during this week. I cannot believe that all who confessed will return to their sins. It remains for us to shepherd the flock. Let us remember Christ's words to Peter, "Feed my lambs." Some of them will always be lambs. The prayers of the natives, and Mr. and Mrs. Higgins were answered. "The effectual, fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much." The spirit of Christian love and harmony between the natives and missionaries at Lusambo bore fruit during our meeting. May God's richest blessing be with us as we work and live with those for whom Christ died.

### SOME RESULTS OF THE REVIVAL AT LUSAMBO.

W. W. HIGGINS.

FOR Lusambo station the last eight months have been months of trial. Due to the transferring of two families from Lusambo to other stations and the changing about of the program of work to a certain extent, the rumor got out that the mission village and work at Lusambo were to be closed. This rumor had a tremendous effect upon the work of the station and there started a decline in interest, in attendance and in church

offerings. The crisis was reached in February. Special sessions were held with the church officers for the purpose of prayer and instruction. Earnest prayers were made, that the spiritual life of Lusambo station might be saved. The backward sweep was checked, but there we stood, seemingly unable to make any great headway in regaining the ground we had lost. Just at this point, in one of the interesting chapters of Lusambo's history,