WHITE *VERSUS* BLACK.

THE CONGO TRAINING INSTITUTE FOR NATIVE AFRICAN MISSIONARIES, COLWYN BAY, NORTH WALES.

THERE are no words in our language which so appeal to and fascinate vigorous earnest Christians of both sexes as, "Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature."

Under their influence they leave home and relations and go into strange lands and among strange peoples of whose habits and speech they are ignorant, and think no sacrifice too great if only they may convey the Gospel message to the heathen. The pity of it is that they go to these far-off lands with physical powers unsuited to the climate, and in utter ignorance of the language or dialect of the district in which they are to work; and before they have had time to learn to express even their most simple needs, they fall victims to the poisonous malaria.

Even supposing them to get beyond the A B C, it is very difficult to preach and pray in public in a newly-acquired or partly-acquired language. I was speaking with a missionary a short time since who had been some years in Central Africa, and he said, "Even now after all these years I find it difficult to preach and pray in a language not my own."

It is not surprising that many experienced and earnest missionaries, who know the difficulties of climate and language and the obstacles they form to successful work, should have come to the conclusion that if the conversion of the heathen in Africa is to be effected it must in a great measure be the work of the Africans themselves.

This subject of foreign missions is one that calls for immediate action, seeing that at the present time there are 200,000,000 more heathen and Mahomedans in the world than there were a hundred years ago, while the Christian converts of all the Protestant Missions are not reckoned at more than 3,000,000. It is strange that the special mission work of which I am about to speak was not put into practice long years ago as a supplement to the white missionaries' labours. It is so obviously the means of saving valuable lives and still more an effectual way of saving the souls of the heathen, that all who have mission work at heart should hail with delight and deep thankfulness the plan adopted at Colwyn Bay for training earnest-minded, religious native youths to be missionaries to their own people.

The founder and pioneer, the Reverend W. Hughes, is a Welshman, who was for many years a missionary in the Congo, and who, during his residence there had many opportunities of seeing the utter inadequacy of the number of workers to touch even the fringe of heathenism. Nor was it the inadequacy of numbers only that forced itself upon his attention; it was the insuperable difficulty of learning the many languages and dialects of the country, of which there are 600 in the Congo; and in Sierra Leone alone there are 60 spoken every day by the descendants of the old slaves who went there to be freed, and he emphatically declares that it would be a greater miracle for a white man to learn the 600 dialects required in the Congo than any that were worked in the old days. In addition to this difficulty there is the evil effect of the water and atmosphere upon the health and spirits of the white missionary.

At length Mr. Hughes was himself ordered home; a sea voyage being his only chance of life, and having given much prayer and thought to a scheme for remedying the evils which beset the white man in his mission work, he determined to put it into practice.

He therefore brought with him from the Congo two coloured students whom he knew as good earnest Christians, and began his work of training them in April 1889 in Colwyn Bay, at his own expense, and in a quiet unostentatious way, trusting as the work became known to the public, to get its support and recognition, and so increase gradually the number of students.

The idea consists in bringing over to this country African youths who have given evidence of real conversion to Christianity, and who know their own language or dialect thoroughly and a little English as well, and to give them a high moral, religious and industrial training, and at the end of four or five years to send them back to their native land to work with and under the superintendence of the white missionaries or native pastors.

The work has steadily developed from the day it was started. It began with two students, there are now thirty. It has the approval and co-operation of good and well-known men such as the King of the Belgians, the late Lord Coleridge, Lord Chief Justice of England, Mr. Gladstone, and Mr. Stanley. It is approved of and assisted by the people in whose midst the African Colony is settled; it is governed by a committee of good practical men, and directed by its founder, the Rev. W. Hughes, whose life is devoted to the work. A matron and tutor are attached to the Institute. A report of income and expenditure, properly examined and audited, is issued every year. The first year's income was a little over £80, it has gradually risen to £1504, and it is worth noting that £278 of this sum is contributed by the town of Colwyn Bay, which is a proof, if one were needed, of the high estimation in which the Institute is held in its own neighbourhood.

Most of the students have been sent from the Congo and Cameroon districts, the American and German missions, and lately a Zulu chief is very anxious for his sons to come.

Never before has a work been established which is more in harmony with the wishes and aspirations of the Africans than this. For the first time we hear of natives of their own accord taking deep interest in a missionary enterprise; the most prominent and educated of the natives all along the West Coast have formed organisations for the purpose of co-operation and collection of funds towards its support; the Sierra Leone committee have sent as a first instalment a collection of £15, and Lagos has contributed in the course of one year £100 to the Institute, in fact the scheme seems really to have touched the black man's heart.

The Congo is not rich, and as a rule the boys bring no money with them. One brought £40, and another £20 towards their support, these are the only ones able to do so.

It is satisfactory to know that these young Africans stand our climate and way of living exceedingly well, indeed they enjoy better health here than in their own country; on the whole the sacrifice to them is but small compared with that of the white missionaries who go out to Africa.

In the matter of cost also the Africans have the advantage. A white missionary spends on his outfit from £60 to £100 before he leaves this country; his passage to some parts of the west coast is £30, and the cost of his keep and work when he reaches the scene of his labours is often £500 a year.

Now look at the other side. To keep a student here for five years' training costs £125, or £25 a year. Of course, the expense would be much larger were it not for the great generosity of good friends, such as Messrs. Elder, Dempster and Co.—the African Steamship Co. They bring the students over and take them back free of charge because of their strong belief that the work of this institution is the very thing under God's blessing to civilise and evangelise Africa.

Another Company, the Tudno, shows its appreciation of the work by bringing the students from Liverpool to Llandudno without charging a penny, and a Welsh cab proprietor, no whit behind, adds his help by bringing them from the Llandudno landing-stage to the very door of the Institution also without charge. Thus every expense of the journey is saved. Again, as every student is apprenticed to some trade, the cost of fees would be enormous, but that in no instance have the masters taken a fee; they give the young men a thorough knowledge of the various businesses as their contribution to what they believe to be a most excellent work.

Thus, side by side with secular and religious training, the business is learned by which each hopes to earn his living while carrying on the work of teaching and preaching among his people, much as St. Paul did in the early days of Christianity. The students are allowed to choose their trades when they start work here, and the favourites are those of carpenters, wheelwrights, masons, printers, tailors, chemists and photographers. There are four printers among the present students.*

They all learn ambulance work, and the report given by Dr. Lees of Chester is very good. He says to the director: "It gives me great pleasure to testify to the high state of efficiency shown by your pupils at the recent First Aid Ambulance Examination held in your Institute under the auspices of the St. John's Ambulance Association. The quality of the work done by each of the candidates was of a very high order . . . I purposely made the examination to bear as much as possible on the accidents and injuries likely to be met with in their distant homes, that is bleeding, fractures, personal wounds and snake-bites. I trust that this work will always occupy a prominent position in the college syllabus."

The reports of the various masters are exceedingly good; they speak of their African apprentices as "attentive, eager to learn, willing, diligent."

The reports of the several professors are equally satisfactory; they speak of the papers as of a high order, evidencing thorough knowledge of the subject, whether it be Biblical knowledge, English composition, music or arithmetic. Nothing could be more practical, and at the same time elevating, than the treatment of these African students; their training is entirely with a view to an African career. They are brought under gentle and elevating influences, and mentally equipped with all that will enable them to be teachers among their own people; they are removed from old habits, superstitions and temptations, and they come under the influence of a Christian country.

Beside this, the trades they have learned will enable them on their return to build a house, mend a boat, sew a garment, print a book, take a likeness, and by means of these to earn their living and help to raise and civilise their country. Not only so, but as each student returns to his own land an endeavour is made to place in his hands such

* When they return to Africa they are equipped with suitable tools to the value of £10.

books as the works of Spurgeon, Moody, John Bunyan, Matthew Henry's commentary, and such-like, that they may read them in English, and so be able to tell their contents in their own language to their own people, for there are no instruments so effectual and natural for translating as the natives themselves.

There are no books to be found in their language; all that exist at present is the New Testament, published in the Dualla, and a few imperfect portions of the Scriptures in the Congo.

Two of the students in their spare moments have translated hymns into the Dualla or common language of the Cameroons, the result being that 2000 copies have been forwarded to the Rev. Joseph Dibundu for the native converts in connection with his work. This native pastor, who has had two sons in the Congo Training Institute, in acknowledging their receipt, says, "they are a source of joy to all Christian people in the Cameroons, and are the best books ever published in the Dualla tongue."

I ought to mention that there are two girls now in the Institute; they are both half-castes —their fathers being Dutchmen and their mothers Congo women. One pays £20 and the other £30 for the training, which consists of practical lessons in addition to those which will eventually fit them to go back to the Congo as missionaries to the women.

The director has hundreds of applications from young Africans who are desirous of training, and as he is able, he will gladly receive them.

Up to this point we have spoken only of the training of these young Africans to be missionaries, and if that has been found satisfactory, the results will, I am sure, be equally so.

About eighteen of the students trained in Colwyn Bay have returned to their own lands and commenced their careers as missionaries, and are doing well. It is a great advantage that they can begin work the moment they arrive. They know and speak the language; they are well acquainted with the habits and customs of the people, for they are their own; the climate, which is so deadly to the European, does not affect them; they were born and brought up in it, and they carry life, light and interest to the people to whom they have returned.

From most of them come very encouraging reports. Several are working in connection with the American missionaries on the Congo, others are in Liberia and the Cameroons.

I have taken the deepest interest in this work from the commencement, and it was in no wise lessened when I visited the Institute a week or two ago and saw the progress made, and how the plan was more than fulfilling the great things anticipated from it. For the sake of Africa, no branch of work is ever lost sight of by the committee, who have that country's welfare thoroughly at heart. Successful as the work is, however, there must be no resting on the oars, for the needs are pressing and immense.

One of the returned students writes: "I am thankful that I acquired a trade, because, owing to the state I met our church in, I have found it necessary for me to imitate the greatest of all missionaries and work with my hands for my support, and help on the cause of my Master voluntarily."

Alfred Dibundu, together with another student, returned to Africa two years ago, and on his arrival he wrote :—

"Akwa Town, Cameroon River,
"November 29th, 1895.

"DEAR MR. HUGHES,—I am exceedingly glad to inform you of my safe arrival at home last week, together with Joseph, for the steamer did not call at Victoria, so he was obliged to land and stay with me for five days. He preached last Sunday at our chapel and had a very crowded audience . . . Joseph's address seemed to give spirit to the people. Owing to the great extension of the work, I doubt whether the people will be able to support me, so I beg of you to see about a camera and the rest of the photographing apparatus, so that I may be able to support myself. Thousands have been to me already wishing me to take their photos, but returned with regret when they learned that I had not yet got my camera.

"I cannot express to you how thankful I am for all you have done for me and my country-people. I will write to you fully after visiting the various stations."

This lad went back to assist his father, and he has a mission station at Ndonga. He is a good scholar and, like his father, an eloquent speaker. By his knowledge of photography he will be able to give his services free of expense. His travelling companion of whom he speaks has learnt the tailoring business thoroughly, and has been a most successful student. He has returned to his home at Victoria, Amba Bay. Both these young men will be able to preach to and pray with their people in their own tongue, as well as interest them in all they themselves have seen and heard in the white man's country.

Last year four students left the Institute to labour in their native land, and very encouraging news has been received from them and from agents all along the coast.

On my last visit I spoke with the student, Kwesi Quainoo, in whom the late Lord Coleridge took so deep an interest. His history and the way in which he arrived in England is so marvellous, that I feel sure everyone would like to hear it.

He is a native of the Gold Coast (a British colony) on the West Coast of Africa; his parents were Christians, and when quite a little boy he was sent to a mission school, in which he learned of God's great love. He was so impressed by it that he longed to study as much as possible, so that when he grew up he might be able to tell his people of this great love. His father was, however, too poor to keep him at school, and, after a long sickness, he induced his father to send him to one of his brothers at Accra, in the hope that when there he might be able to prosecute his studies in the higher grade school. This brother, who was a telegraph clerk, was too poor to pay the school fees and keep him too, and he obtained work for him in the Custom office to scrub, clean and go errands. But while so employed he did not forget his longing to study in order to be able to preach the gospel to his people, and he prayed to God every day to show him some way by which he might get an education which would enable him to be useful to his people and to tell them "the old, old story."

In the meantime he had heard people say that there were good men and women in England, and he thought they might like to do something for a boy who wanted to do good to his own people, and he made up his mind to write a letter to England to someone to send for him and train him there for the work of God.

He spoke of this to his brother, who laughed at him and pointed out that the passage alone to England would cost £25, beside getting warm clothes and thick boots, for England was a cold country, and all this meant money, and they had none.

The boy was not discouraged, for as he said money as well as everything else in the world belonged to God, and as he was God's child he would pray to Him for money, and he went on praying.

One day he saw on an old almanac on the office wall the names of English statesmen and noblemen, and he made up his mind to write to some of them. From the number he picked out two—one was the *Right Hon. W. E. Gladstone*, and the other Coleridge, Lord Chief Justice of England. He begged the clerks in the office to give him some paper, and as they were not allowed to use that belonging to the Government, they gave him a couple of sheets partly spoiled.

He cut off the parts that were not good, and after all the clerks had gone home and he had finished his work, he closed the windows and doors and knelt down and prayed to God to show him how to write the letters. He then wrote two, one to Mr. Gladstone and the other to the late Lord Coleridge. There was still another difficulty, he had no money with which to pay the postage; each would cost twopence-halfpenny, so again he had recourse to prayer. The next morning one of the supervisors of customs called him and gave him twopence-halfpenny in coppers, the change he had brought from the post-office.

The boy was thankful and full of joy at the answer to his prayer; he at once bought a stamp and fixed it on the letter to the late Lord Coleridge and put it into the letter-box. In due time a steamer brought him a reply, it was from Lord Coleridge's secretary. "His lordship could not do what he wanted as he had many claims upon him." Kwesi was very sorry but not discouraged; he determined to try again. He made first a special prayer, and then wrote a second letter to his lordship; an answer came in about two months, telling him that inquiries were being made to see what could be done. Several questions were put to him which he answered and sent off in a third letter; this was forwarded by Lord Coleridge to the Principal of the Congo Training Institute in Colwyn Bay. The next letter was to say that the Committee had agreed to accept him as a student, and that he would be able to come to England without paying any money, and that the British and African Steamship Company (Messrs. Elder, Dempster and Co.) were going to arrange it all for him.

As he was an office boy in the employ of the Government he had to give thirty days' notice, and he had only twelve days before the steamer would leave by which he was to come. He prayed again in this dilemma and then wrote his resignation giving twelve days' notice, and in the morning placed it on the table of the Comptroller of Customs. He was busy and did not notice it; it was placed before him again in the afternoon and again it was overlooked.

Kwesi wrote a fresh one next day and at length the Comptroller saw it and called out, "What do you mean by giving twelve days' notice instead of thirty?" The lad could not speak for he knew he had broken the laws; he stood there trembling and was bid to sit down.

At length one of the clerks spoke to him and asked what he could mean by making the Chief so vexed.

"Sir," he said, "I am going to England."

"Is your father going to pay for you?" questioned the clerk.

"No, sir," was the answer, "he has not money enough, but there is a gentleman in England who is taking me free of charge to be trained, so that I may be able to preach to my people."

The clerk did not believe it until Kwesi gave him one of his letters to read, and then he said, "I see, so you are the boy." He then went to the Comptroller, who sent for him, and after reading one of his letters said, as the clerk had done, "I see! you are the boy!"

Kwesi could not understand then, but a few days later he heard that the chaplain had

been searching for some boy who had written to one of the great men in England, but he did not find him and had gone back without him. Thus it came about that Kwesi was allowed to leave without giving the full notice.

The Comptroller was very kind, and when he wished him good-bye he said he hoped God would bless him and make him useful to his people.

At length the steamer came, and he went to the agent to get his note for the passage accompanied by his brother; a boat was waiting on the shore to take him to the steamer free of charge, otherwise he would have had to pay 2s. 6d. He went on board without a penny in his pocket, for his brother confessed almost with tears that he could not give him any. He went to the captain as he was ordered to do, and was passed from one officer to another until he found himself before the pantry man who said, "Do you know what I am going to make you do here?"

"No, sir," said Kwesi.

"I am going to make you sweep and scrub the floor, wash the plates and dishes, clean the knives, and anything else I may require."

He answered: "I shall be only too glad to do anything, sir." So he took off his coat and shoes and started at once to make himself useful in the ship.

On the voyage he received four shillings from friends.

The vessel reached Liverpool on Sunday. Everyone went on shore except Kwesi—he remained until Monday—when the cook came to him and said—

"You were very good on the way here; here is a shilling for you, and I am going to take you to the office of the company for nothing."

Another of the officers gave him a shilling, so that he now had six shillings in his pocket.

On arriving at the office the gentleman in charge telegraphed to his lordship in London that he had arrived, and he telegraphed back to send him to Colwyn Bay. He himself wrote to Lord Coleridge immediately after his arrival at the institute, and he, Lord Coleridge, wrote to him in his own handwriting, calling him "My dear boy." "Fancy," says Kwesi, "one of the best gentlemen in England calling me his 'dear boy,' and a black one too."

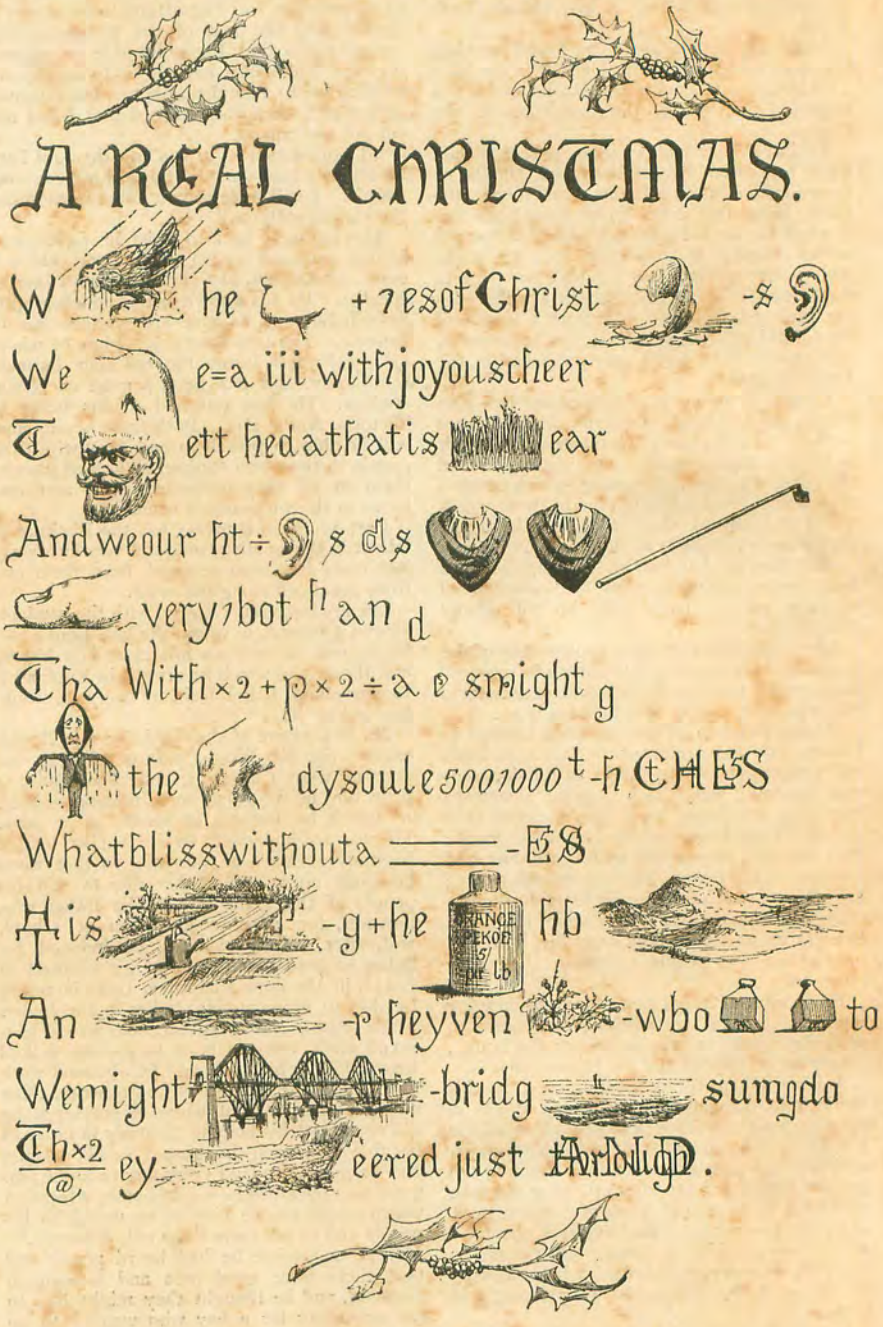
He sent him some pocket-money and invited him to spend Christmas, 1893, with him and Lady Coleridge at Ottery St. Mary's in Devonshire. Lady Coleridge gave him a watch. The young man, in referring to this visit, said, "See how God cares for me and how grand it is to trust in Him as your own personal Heavenly Father." The morning he left Ottery St. Mary's, his lordship went to the boy's room, and, putting his hands on his shoulders said—

"I am sorry you are going away, my dear boy. I hope you will come and see me again, but if I do not see you again, may God bless you and make you useful to your people in Africa."

His lordship is dead now, but Kwesi says he shall always thank God for putting it into Lord Coleridge's heart to be the means of helping him, and he begs all his friends to pray that, while he is being trained over here to be a doctor, he may do everything to God's glory, so that He may use him to do His work.

There is still very much I should like to tell you of this grand work, but I hope I have said enough to give you an interest in it and to induce you to go and see with your own eyes, and hear with your own ears, all that is being done in the little Welsh town. Both the director and matron would afford every opportunity for doing so.

OUR NEW PUZZLE.



*** PRIZES to the amount of six guineas (one of which will be reserved for competitors living abroad) are offered for the best solutions of the above Puzzle Poem. The following conditions must be observed:—

1. Solutions to be written on one side of the paper only.
2. Each paper to be headed with the name and address of the competitor.
3. Attention must be paid to spelling, punctuation, and neatness.
4. Send by post to Editor, GIRL'S OWN PAPER, 56, Paternoster Row, London. "Puzzle Poem" to be written on the top left-hand corner of the envelope.
5. The last day for receiving solutions from any part of the world is February 15, 1898.

N.B.—This competition is open to all, without any restriction as to sex or age.

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