

(ORIGINAL.)

## FAREWELL OF THE EMIGRANT.

Come on, come on, bold hearts, firm hands!  
That fear not to brave the sea;  
Come on,—we are bound to the distant lands,  
Where we'll live, the untrammelled free.  
Some sail for wealth on the heaving deep;  
Some sail for the warrior's gear;  
But we, when the billows' crest we sweep,  
For the home of our fathers steer.

What matters it, whether the oak or palm  
Is our shade from the mid-day glare;  
What matters it, whether 'tis storm or calm,  
If Liberty's home is there?  
Though we'll owe our bread to our weary toil,  
Where the winds round Cape Palmas play,  
Yet the Krooman's hut is on Freedom's soil,  
And 'tis far from the white man's sway.

Come on, let the cravens stay behind,  
As comrades none such we claim:  
Farewell, farewell, to the willful blind,  
In the land where they live in shame.  
They think the breath of a master's power  
Less keen than the Harmattan;  
And that freedom's self is a cliff-born flower,  
Beyond their contracted span.

But we,—bold hearts, firm hands shall prove,  
We can win what we nobly dare,  
And though upon palm-girt shores we rove,  
We shall crouch to no masters there:  
And the flag, on whose broad and azure field,  
The Liberian cross we see,  
Shall wave o'er our heads, a nation's shield,  
When borne by the slave made free.

L.

From the Missionary Herald.  
WESTERN AFRICA.

Journal and Letters from Mr. Wilson, written  
at Cape Palmas.

DIVERSITY OF LANGUAGES—SCHOOLS—CUSTOMS  
OPPOSED TO CHRISTIANITY.

UNDER date of April 1st, 1836, after remarking on the difficulty to be encountered in acquiring a knowledge of the language, arising principally from the want of intelligent interpreters, and mentioning that the school of Mrs. Strobel, the coloured assistant, connected with the mission, contained forty pupils, Mr. Wilson adds—

'Two of our boys speak a dialect different from that of the tribe among whom we live. This will not surprise you, however, when it is remembered how numerous are the languages of this country. The people of this settlement cannot go more than twenty miles in any direction, without meeting a language that they cannot understand. And there are within thirty-five miles of this place, along the windward beach, three distinct dialects. One village has its own language, the inhabitants of which do not speak that of either of the two neighbouring settlements, although one is within ten and the other twelve miles of it, on opposite sides. How nearly these languages are allied I am not sufficiently acquainted with them to determine. The similarity, if considerable, consists in structure, and not in individual words; for these, except a few of common use along the coast, are quite dissimilar.

We have commenced an exercise in our schools which promises much good. It is to teach our American boys the native language, and the native boys the English. Our mode is to assemble both classes in our house every evening, and devote about one hour to the exercise. The American boys are required to speak a sentence in the country language, and each of the natives one in English. Every sentence is analyzed and understood by all present. We are by this amused as well as instructed; and I trust that this acquisition will be devoted to the glory of God.

We could, if it were desirable, enlarge our school almost to any extent. But we cannot at present attend to more than three or four, in addition to the number we have; and we shall be compelled no doubt to refuse many who will apply. Had Mrs. Wilson any one to assist her in her domestic affairs, she might teach a greater number; but she has not, and there is no probability that she will have such aid, until one comes from America. We have been trying ever since we came to Africa to get an American woman that would suit, but have failed, and we have now a native man who cooks for us and the boys, and does much better than any one we have previously had. We have five boys whom we think of setting off next year as teachers. Two of them will be fully grown and the other three in one year will be near the size of manhood. They will be capable of teaching reading, writing, arithmetic, and some of them geography. My wife exercises them on the Lancasterian plan at times, with reference to this object.

The peculiar customs and laws of native society here will interpose serious obstacles to the practical operation of christianity. I might enumerate a variety of examples, but will confine myself at present to one or two. And first, the marriage contract will present a weighty difficulty. Were it simply polygamy, the evil would be materially less; but it is polygamy in a most unfortunate form. Females become wives by purchase from the age of four to twelve years; and it would be difficult to find a single girl of the age of ten, who has not been sold. Fathers purchase them at this early period for their sons of a corresponding age, so that the feelings of neither party are ordinarily consulted. Indeed the task of procuring and distributing wives is not so much the duty of one man, as of a family or tribe. Each tribe embraces several families, and one individual is selected from it by unanimous consent, as the head, and distinguished in a political sense as head-

man. He is also an important officer in the general government. In his hands are deposited all, or nearly all, of the disposable property that belongs to the individual members of the family, however numerous it may be. No matter how long any member may have been absent, or how fortunate he may have been in amassing money, when he returns home, he faithfully deposits it with the head of the family, and is allowed to retain nothing more than a piece of cloth to wear, corresponding with his age. The head of the family, on the other hand, is amenable to the community at large for all the misdemeanors of the family. If any one is fined, (and this is the most common punishment,) the head-man is compelled to pay it, though it should amount to every farthing in his possession. He is also answerable to the individuals who deposit funds in his hands, and is compelled to give them wives, if there are any on hand, or purchase them, provided the general fund will allow. Should another member be indolent, or contribute nothing to the common stock, he cannot of course prefer any claim. Now the evil which I apprehend is this, such boys as we receive into our schools, if they continue with us as long as they ought, will contribute nothing to their family stock of money, and when they are men grown, and ready, if need be, to engage as teachers for the mission, it will be useless for them to apply to their respective head-men for wives. They will wish, as other men do, to have wives; but by the customs of the country they will be debarred. If it is said they might lay up a sufficiency of what they may receive for their services as teachers, it is replied that they must then go into the ranks of children to find them, and be for ten or twelve years without wives, and all the while exposed to a vice of the most degrading kind, and one more extensively prevalent in Africa than any other.

NATIVE FUNERAL—BOA CONSTRUCTOR—LEOPARD.

A few days since I had an opportunity to witness a native funeral. The deceased was a man of rank, and his burial was attended with more than ordinary display. The corpse was placed in a canoe of suitable size before the door of the house, where it remained several hours; during which time all the friends and relatives of the deceased, however remotely connected, brought their offerings of cloth, china, beads, or something else, and laid them in the canoe, as a final tribute of regard. This was the first instance in which I ever saw the generosity of this people triumph over their avarice. More presents were brought than could be deposited in the canoe and the chest that was to accompany it. Several persons were sent away with their offerings. The women brought many large jars of boiled rice as their contribution. A bullock, a goat, and several fowls were killed, and portions of each were carried to the place of interment. During these preparations drums or 'frutafraums' were beating, and about a dozen men were firing guns. It is considered a great deficiency at a funeral not to fire a large number of guns; and usually they are fired from the time the individual expires until he is buried. When all necessary preparations were made, two persons carried the corpse on their heads, accompanied by a large number who were to carry his food, to fire guns, etc. When the procession had gone about half way, the pall-bearers suddenly wheeled about, and run back to town. I inquired the cause of this unexpected movement, and was told that the dead man was not willing to go. After renewed exertion, however, he consented, and was taken to the island where all the dead are deposited. No grave is prepared, and the dead are laid on the ground without any covering, except the canoe which is laid over the body.

The presents which are made are for the use of the deceased, showing a very deep conviction on the minds of the people, that there is an existence after death. It is remarkable, however, that every article which is taken for the use of the dead is destroyed. If it is a mug, it is broken to pieces; if a piece of cloth, it is torn to rags. The secret intention of this is to prevent them from being stolen. They say that the dead man can make them whole and sound whenever he wishes to use them. The practice of feeding the dead, especially great men, is very common along this part of the coast, but not at this settlement; and the people interpret all their dreams as visitations from their departed friends, and are extremely superstitious in this respect. The men seldom if ever shed a tear over a dying friend, and usually appear heartless on such occasions. The women, however, give vent to their grief in the most touching expressions of sorrow. How sincere their pretensions are I do not know, for it is their business to mourn over the dead. When shall life and immortality, as brought to light in the gospel, be comprehended by them? When shall they be able by the eye of faith to trace the footsteps of their departed friends to the realms of glory?

Under date of May 17th, Mr. Wilson writes—

'We are occasionally visited by some of the monsters of Africa. A few months ago we killed a boa constrictor of enormous size. A few evenings since our yard was visited by a leopard, and you may judge of its size and powers from the circumstance, that it carried off a full-grown sheep, leaping with this load two fences not less than eight feet high. These animals are frequently seen about the settlement, and are sometimes very destructive to domestic animals, but they seldom attack a human being. To kill one of them is esteemed

by the natives a herculean feat, and the man who has the courage and good fortune to do it is raised to distinguished favour. The incident to which I have referred has been the occasion of developing a curious fact in relation to the superstitions of the natives about the leopard. His flesh is regarded as a choice dish, yet one family, and that embraces a fourth part of the population of the place, do not taste it, owing to a superstitious tradition handed down for several centuries. One of their distinguished ancestors, who was a great warrior, and regarded as invulnerable for many years, was finally destroyed by a leopard. Fetish was made for the man, and he uttered a command to his posterity to the end of time never again to taste of this animal; and it is probable that the injunction has been rigidly observed by the whole family for many centuries. The teeth of a leopard are considered by the natives as almost a fortune—they wear them around their necks and legs; and no pearl whatever would be more highly prized.'

On the 23rd of May, Mr. Wilson adds—

'When Mrs. Wilson opened school little less than a year ago, the people, to say the least, were very indifferent about sending their children. They were glad enough to have us live here, for this they supposed would enable them to sell a little more of their rice, fowls, etc.; but seemed to think that the art of reading and writing could not be acquired by their children, or would require quite too long a period of labour. They have frequently said that education was a good thing, and might be advantageous to their children, but before that time they themselves would be dead and could not partake of the advantages; and they would, therefore, rather have their sons to fish and farm. One boy, however, has staid with us ever since, and can now read and write with tolerable ease. This has filled the people with no little surprise, especially that he should have acquired the wonderful art of writing. They do not regard education now as unattainable, but begin to bring their sons of their own accord. We received one boy a few days since that was brought thirty or forty miles to be taught. And we were not a little affected this morning to see a man bringing his little son, just washed and his head neatly shaved, and telling us that we might have him for ourselves, if we would only teach him (in his own word-) to 'sabby book.'

Closing his communication on the 14th of June, Mr. Wilson submits the following paragraph on the same subject.

'We have recently been compelled to refuse several applications for the want of time and assistants to attend to more. The king was here yesterday to intercede for his brother's son, whom we had turned away for bad conduct; and as there were several other important men present, I embraced the opportunity to set forth the advantages of education. The king appeared particularly interested, and went immediately home and brought his favourite son and put him in our charge. We know the fickleness of these people, however, and do not indulge any undue anticipations.'

Two weeks later Mr. Wilson gives the following account of the—

DAILY LABOURS OF THE MISSION—SCHOOLS AND  
DESIRE FOR INSTRUCTION.

For the last two months both Mrs. W. and myself have enjoyed very good general health, and been enabled to prosecute our respective departments of labour with little or no interruption. Perhaps it may not be amiss to give you a summary sketch of our situation and daily employment. The morning, until breakfast, which is at an early hour, we appropriate to private devotion and family worship. After breakfast and until nine o'clock, Mrs. Wilson is attending to her domestic concerns and I to bodily exercise. From nine to twelve o'clock she is in her school, and I with my native boy poring over the country language. From twelve to two o'clock we spend in reading together, at dinner, etc. From two until four or half after four, Mrs. W. is again in her school, and I am either writing or attending to secular business connected with our establishment. From four to six we are generally walking or taking exercise in some other way. We have tea at an early hour, immediately after which the boys are assembled in our room for evening prayers, and for reciting English and native sentences. Sabbath morning previous to preaching Mrs. W. instructs the American boys on religious subjects; and the natives between forenoon and afternoon service; and the evening is usually spent in social worship. My evenings, excepting Sabbath, are devoted to the study of the native language. This is the line of engagements that we have marked out and ordinarily pursue, but we are liable to numberless interruptions.

It may be thought that we are bestowing an undue portion of our attention upon education, but it would not, I think, if our situation was thoroughly understood. I have not yet sufficiently mastered the native tongue to be able by it to preach to the people; and the scanty knowledge which my instructor has of English does not fit him to be a safe interpreter. The liability to mislead the people on the great principles of Christianity through such a medium, is very considerable; and very few who are acquainted with our situation would recommend such a course. Besides it ought to be remembered that schools and education (I mean the elements of reading and writing) have special claims upon the attention of a missionary in a country like this. If they are not regarded as indispensables to the introduc-

tion of christianity, they must be so regarded in respect to its extension and perpetuity. Had the people a written language of their own and schools, then our most obvious duty would be to preach, to translate the Bible, tracts, etc. into that language, and circulate them among the people. But the condition of this people is vastly different. The missionary has, in the first place, to form a language, or to reduce an existing barbarism to some kind of system; erect schools, and teach people to write and read their own tongue. Besides, the hesitancy which is felt by white men about coming to this part of Africa renders the duty of training native teachers as speedily as possible very obvious.

Our school now consists of ten native boys, two native girls, five American boys, and two American girls—in all nineteen; to which we expect soon to add four more native girls. To this number we shall be compelled to limit ourselves until we have more assistance from America, as the whole of them, except the two American girls, live with us, and cause no small amount of care. Our school has become very popular, and in such a manner as frequently to affect our hearts. We have been compelled within a few days past to decline a half a dozen or more applications, and I have been affected to tears when I have seen these heathenish parents leading their reluctant sons from our house because we could not receive them. Yesterday afternoon about dusk one of our boys was hailed by another of his country lads, who stood without the gate, and requested to go and 'ask Wilson if he would not take another boy into his yard to learn book.' He was called in, and upon inquiry it was found that he had come, being about eight or ten years of age, by himself, and with the consent of his father, from a neighbouring village to plead his own cause for a place in our schools. When I told him that we could not now take him, his disappointment was indescribably touching; and it was with no little hesitancy that he consented to return, notwithstanding I promised that at some future time I would admit him to our school.

The people are not so willing to place their daughters in our charge, being regarded by their parents as marketable property, and they being required by us to give a pledge that they never will afterwards sell them or dispose of them in any way contrary to their personal wishes. Even on these grounds, however, we can procure as many as we can well take care of.

In a subsequent letter, dated July 20th, Mr. Wilson makes some additional remarks on the same subject.

'Our favourite boy and my principal teacher, Waser, came to my study this morning leading a naked native girl about eight years of age, and accosted me in his broken English by saying, 'Misser Wilson, how you like disher gal?' I told him very well; but asked him at the same time what he meant. He explained by saying, that her father wished to betroth her to him, and that if we would take her 'and learn her book and all Merica fash, my heart be very glad for dat palavar; for,' said he, 'hymby I be proper Merica man myself, den I no want dese here woman for my wife, cause he no sabby ay thing but for bring 'water and wood.' I told him we would take her if her father would request it; but that we would not recognize any right on his part to control her, and would allow no connection between him and her until she became marriageable according to American usages; and he must also pledge himself never to have more than one wife. To all of which he assented, and we shall probably take the girl into our family. We have two others bearing the same relation and under similar obligations. We are always gratified to get both the sexes into our family, when we find such a relationship existing; and we never fail to interpose our influence, when we can do it judiciously, to prevent these early negotiations, though we think it wise, when such is in existence, to train both parties, that they may be mutual helps to each other.

Although I regard it as injudicious to preach to the people with my slender knowledge of their language, or through such interpreters as I can command, we nevertheless use various means to impart the truths of the Bible to our boys and girls; and we are rewarded by seeing them generally favourable to religion, in some cases decidedly affected by its truths. One of our little girls sometimes evinces an anxious interest on the subject; and though she has not as yet given us evidence that her heart has been renovated, we cannot but hope that God will perfect what we hope he has begun.

Mrs. Strobel's school will commence in two weeks and I have already had twelve or fifteen applications for that. We well understand the fickleness of this people, however, and do not expect that a day-school, without furnishing board, will be sustained without a vigorous and persevering effort on our part.

The native people of this settlement will be very decidedly opposed to our establishing a school at Rocktown, because they bear in heart a grudge of long standing against that people. But their feelings will of course be disregarded in such a matter.

The Lord is blessing us with good health and contented minds; and we hope soon to be cheered by the arrival of our associates. We feel that we have been excluded from all society that was congenial, for the last two years; but in this God seems to be regarding us with a favourable eye.

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