

sends it out well. "Now with the first two of these we have nothing to do now, so I turn to the third, the way she sends out missions to West Africa; I know no other mission field, so confine myself to that—now understand strictly. Now it seems to me England could improve in the way she sends out missions to West Africa:—*First*, I do not think she pays the missionaries a sufficiently high stipend; missionaries do not spend their money on themselves as far as I know, but on their work, and their work wants more money. *Secondly*, the people at home do not give sufficient value to the opinions as to working methods in districts, held by the missionaries of the district. I venture to say this because I know how very hard the fight has been of many missionaries to be allowed to introduce into their scheme of evangelisation the factor of technical training. I am rather a fanatic I suppose, in favour of industrial missions in Western Africa, and, therefore, possibly unfair on those who do not regard this method of teaching as of great importance, therefore I will say no more on it now—merely hoping that when you see any subscription list for any industrial mission in West Africa that you will subscribe. I now leave this class of the imperfections of the home public that bears on the missionary, and turn to another class—namely, the desire here for sensational reports of progress. I have never met a sensational missionary, therefore the blame of sensationalism must be on the general public at home. The worst of it is, it on the one hand, does not lead to the appreciation of the work done by men and women who spend their lives among such people as many of the West African tribes. You cannot measure the work which men have done by the numbers of converts they have made. You should measure it by the number of people they, by their example and influence, have brought up to a stage wherefrom they could be converted if the pioneers work was carried on. The number of people so altered no man can tell. Who would dare to say to such men as Nassau, Jacot, or Tessories, so many men, and no more have you benefited. It is only necessary such men as these should have support and assistance in carrying on the work they have begun. I feel I cannot sufficiently urge on you the great importance of continuity in work in West Africa. It seems to me more important than immediate territorial expansion of the sphere of work. It is not so necessary that large quantities of men should be sent out to one spot, as that a good man should be well supported by funds, and with men who studying under him in his life can pick up the thread in the work at his death, and carry it on. I would not venture to say this had I not for many months been studying the History of the Missions to Congo.

From 1490 to the end of the seventeenth century from hand to hand, that mission work went on prospering exceedingly, in spite of the local difficulties and dangers, until the time came when it was interrupted from European political reasons. The consequence of that break is that Congo is, what Congo is to-day, namely, in need of being done all over again, and this is the fate of many a corner in the mission field of the world. But to return to that sensationalism. The missionary reports of the sixteenth century did not go in for it, nevertheless, they were interesting and convincing reading, and did not lack in incident. I could talk to you for hours of the various things that happened to my greatest friend among those earlier missionaries, Denis De Carli. No one can read his

works without knowing and honouring the man. He went out in 1666 to Congo, accompanied by a fellow missionary named Michael Angelo, of Gatlina, a worthy but sententious man, who when he happened to sleep sound through the horrid roarings of lions and tigers, and heard them not, took a very superior tone with Denis who had heard them and been seriously alarmed, but when Michael Angelo himself was roused one night by a lion and a tigress (good men they were, no naturalists) sporting together outside the frail hut that he and Denis were in for the night said, when Denis asked him if he heard that, "only too much and well," and was not quite so superior with Denis. Besides those two, there were many more of the earlier missionaries' reports on West Africa, that though abounding in interest and in a noble enthusiasm for their work, never go into that form of moral hysterical sensationalism. There is no dwelling on the bad points in African culture or African character in a way that ignores the good points, and you feel that those early missionaries were the sort of men who would have gone and tackled Plato, Socrates, and all the Greeks of Athens, at their best, not requiring the excuse that those people had bad customs, but just because they were not Christians, and those early missionaries held they ought to be. Now, whether one agrees with this view or no, anyone must acknowledge it is a healthy view, for it does not blind them to the good that exists in the nation they deal with so often; you find them saying, evidently with pleasure, the people of this country have some excellent customs, and they give you them in full, just as much in full as they give you the abuses among these people. When irritated the early missionary is liable to say, these people live after a beastly manner and converse freely with the devil, but they always calm down after a line or two and return to facts in general. I beg humbly to plead for a return to the recital by missionaries at large of facts in general. I do not want them to ignore those facts that bear on their own work of evangelisation, but to beg them to provide England at large with a knowledge of the native from all sides. No one has the equally great opportunities of knowing the natives with the missionary. The great work done by missionaries in the study of language alone in our time is a work that if it were only given its proper place and appreciation would save much misery and injustice; and the same value lies in much other information the missionary could give to England, which would enable her to fulfil in such lands as Africa what her greatest modern singer says her duty is—

Clear the land of Evil,
Drive the road and bridge the ford,
Make ye sure to each his own, that
He reaps what he hath sown.
By the Peace among our peoples let men
Know we serve the Lord.

I will detain you with but one more thing—you do not give up here sufficient appreciation to the missionary's wife. I am not a married man, or woman, myself, but I have the advantage of having friends who respectively are, and I therefore am led to believe that wives and husbands are in all countries at times very trying, but the missionary's wife in West Africa is a much tried person. The way the Rev. Mr. So and So will go and hold service or school, when he has a bad touch of fever on him, and ought to be in bed, is maddening. Children, I am also informed, are a constant source of anxiety everywhere, but when it comes to children, who, if they go outside the door, can, at all times of the day, avail

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)