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# ETHIOPIA *the* VALIANT

*By*

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DEDICATED TO THE  
EMPEROR AND PEOPLE OF ETHIOPIA  
WHO HAVE FOUGHT SO NOBLY  
FOR THE RIGHT

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## PROLOGUE

THE heroic stand of the Emperor of Ethiopia and his people against the aggressor has won for them the admiration and sympathy of all the right-thinking peoples of the world. This story will be one of the epics of the century. For the moment it would appear that tyranny has triumphed, but as so often in the past centuries Ethiopia has risen, Phoenix-like, to new life and power, so to-day her admirers and sympathisers will pray that once again ETHIOPIA THE VALIANT shall be ETHIOPIA THE FREE.

All lovers of freedom are indebted to the splendid series of cartoons which have appeared in the pages of *Punch*.

WM. J. W. ROOME.

Corfe Castle,  
Dorset.  
July 1936.

## CHAPTER I

### ABAYTE ! THE CALL FROM ETHIOPIA

A RICHLY furnished reception room in a well-built house on the high plateau in Ethiopia (Abyssinia).

The Ras (Governor) sits there in State, surrounded by his courtiers, soldiers, and State servants. It breathes the atmosphere of ease and security—of contentment and luxury.

Suddenly the silence is broken by a persistent wail from a distant hill-crest. Scanning the horizon, one saw some twenty men, dishevelled, wan, and half-clothed; with one frantic cry they sought to draw the Governor's attention as together they pleaded: "Abayte! Abayte!"

Their anguished cry seemed to stab our spirits, and stir to action: "Abayte! Give justice! Have mercy! Avenge us of our adversaries. Show pity! Abayte! Abayte!"

The cry persisted for thirty—sixty—minutes and more. These desperate men would not be denied. They were in dire need. The Governor could satisfy it. He might continue his journey and then all hope would be lost. He must hear their case; he must give justice now, or else they would perish.

That appeal was eloquent in its brevity and insistence. It said: "You have choice wine: we have nothing to slake our thirst. You have rare and rich food to eat: we are starving. You have friends to comfort and soldiers to protect: we are friendless and helpless. Abayte! Do justice!"

At last the Governor could bear it no longer. Like the unjust judge in our Lord's parable, he was stung to action, less by the desire to do justice, than by the remorseless importunity of the twenty distracted men.

Summoning a servant, he commanded: "Go to those men, inquire their grievance, do whatever they desire; thus shall peace be restored to my spirit."

Abayte! It is Ethiopia's plea to the favoured Christians of other lands. Do justice. Have mercy. Show pity. Avenge us of our adversaries. Abayte!

Abayte! You have the true Light: we are in darkness. You rejoice in Christ's salvation: many of us are worshipping trees or demons. You feast on the finest of the wheat: we perish with hunger. You dwell secure in your strong cities: we are threatened with ruthless war, and our enemies would "swallow us up quick." Abayte! Show pity! Such is the story from the pen of one of Africa's noblest and most chivalrous of pioneers for the Kingdom of Christ, Dr. T. A. Lambie, F.R.G.S., the leader of the splendid effort for the redemption

of present-day Ethiopia. "ABAYTE" is indeed to-day the cry of Ethiopia in her hour of distress.

One of the oldest nations in the world with a continuous history, and one of the most ancient of dynasties can be found to-day in that Switzerland of Africa, in the country now known as Abyssinia. This name, however, is a mere modern corruption of the ancient titles that carry the story back for three or four millenniums. Abyssinia is derived, according to the Geographic Society, from an Arab term, "HABESHI," which means "a mixed race." ETHIOPIA is derived from "ITIOPIYAVAN," by which the people have been known since ancient times.

The civilised world has watched the great conflict between a so-called "civilised" nation in Europe and the last remaining nationality in Africa. It has been a terribly unequal conflict, and to-day, after some fifty nations have formally declared Italy the aggressor, she has been allowed to overrun that romantic land with fire and sword, bomb, and poison gas. In this unequal combat the Ethiopian has shown, as he has shown on so many a battlefield in the days gone by, that Ethiopia is a land of heroes, and that, although to-day the flag of the aggressor may fly over the capital, Ethiopia still remains a distinct nationality. As Ethiopia was unconquered so often in the millenniums that have passed, her friends are confident that she will once again rise, Phoenix-like, from the ashes of the conflict now seemingly over.

Ethiopia, the Valiant, has held her own down the centuries. The Egyptians sought to lay her low, and were themselves overrun. The Persians sought to conquer her, but were themselves conquered. Rome sought to embrace her in her mighty empire, but never succeeded. The Arabs, with the Moslem, had invaded the country time after time, from the eighth century to the nineteenth, but had never succeeded. She has ever been Ethiopia the Valiant. Her mountains and her warriors have kept the invader and the aggressor at bay.

During the sixteenth century the Turks sought to conquer the country, and it is on record that the only reason they were able to invade the country was that they brought into their warfare new and terrible engines of destruction, the products of gunpowder. They, however, were soon driven out or assimilated, and once again the Ethiopian reigned in his own country. Can we not see here a striking parallel? Italy would never have overrun Abyssinia but for the frightful use of those modern destructive weapons—aeroplanes, with their bombs and poison gas. In fair fight Ethiopia the Valiant would never have permitted the aggressor to soil the country with his foot. For the moment, however, Ethiopia suffers, and waits the day when once again the invader shall be driven out, and ETHIOPIA THE VALIANT shall be ETHIOPIA THE FREE.

The British intervention in 1867 was the first armed invasion of Abyssinia by Europeans since the Portuguese; its cause was the imprisonment of the

British Consul, Cameron, and other Europeans, by Theodore : its sole object was to release them ; which purpose was accomplished by the capture of Magdala. This was followed by the instantaneous evacuation of the country. Thus, the British invasion of Sir Robert Napier and his army was in no respect an attempt to add the ancient state of Ethiopia to the British Empire.

Some sixty-seven years ago, the Emperor John effectively opposed Italian aggression in the direction of his country. Italy was then advancing from a comparatively small section of country on the coast which she had purchased from the local Sultan in 1869. Some twenty years later Menelik sought to seal the friendship of Italy and Ethiopia by the Treaty of Ucciali. There appears to have been some deception in the Italian version of this Treaty, which apparently committed Menelik to availing himself of the Italian Government's help in any negotiations into which he might enter with other Governments. The Ethiopian Amharic text, however, only indicated that Menelik " may avail himself, etc."

The Italians, seeking to profit by this difference of interpretation, advanced into Tigrè. This advance ended in a clash at Adowa in 1896, and the complete defeat of the Italian Army. The peace treaty that followed repudiated the Treaty of Ucciali. Menelik, in a generous spirit, allowed the Italians to retain the Abyssinian highlands in Eritrea. This generosity the Italians, however, sought to turn to

their own advantage. It has been confirmed by a series of treaties which Italy has sought to impose on Ethiopia. These events led up ultimately to the terrible aggression of 1935, the incidents of which are too well known to need repetition. In 1913 Menelik, the Emperor, died, and was succeeded by his son Lij Yasu. He was deposed in 1916, as the result of internal fighting following his conversion to Islam. After his death, Menelek's daughter Zauditu became Empress with Ras Tafari, son of Menelik's nephew, Ras Makonnen, as Regent and heir to the throne. Zauditu was crowned on 11th February, 1919. The Regent, an educated and enlightened man, welcomed progressive movements for his people. The Empress, however, supported by the Abuna, or Archbishop, and the Minister for War, sided with the reactionary forces. In 1923 Abyssinia applied for admission to the League of Nations, and ultimately secured this, thus placing her country in company of the civilised nations. Ras Tafari, having thus maintained the principle of Abyssinian independence, signed a twenty-year pact of friendship and arbitration with Italy in 1928. The treaty was officially reaffirmed by both parties in Rome on the 29th September, 1934. Notwithstanding this profession of friendship, within twelve months Signor Mussolini was plotting the capture of the ancient land of Ethiopia, one of the most flagrant breaches of faith that any prominent statesman has ever made. Ethiopia, through its Emperor, placed the matter before the League of Nations, professing its willingness to abide by its covenant.

The League formally declared Italy the aggressor, and some fifty nations joined (in theory at least) in imposing sanctions, which, alas! were never effectively enforced, or Ethiopia would not now be under the heel of the invader.

## CHAPTER II

### ETHIOPIA, THE LAND OF HISTORY AND MYSTERY

HAM begot Kush, Kush begot Aethiopsis, Aethiopsis begot Aksumawi ; and the six sons of Aksumawi founded Aksum.

So runs one Abyssinian legend about the Holy City of Abyssinia.

It is one legend among many. Another connects Aksum with Baltis, Azeeb Maqueda, the Queen of Sheba who visited Solomon.

This is how it happened.

Some years after the sons of Aksumawi had founded Aksum, it became the home of Angabo, slayer of a famous dragon.

One of Angabo's descendants was the Queen of Sheba.

To trace the origin of this land of history and mystery, one of the most romantic the world has ever seen, we go back to the very dawn of history, as recorded in Divine Writ. We are not through the second chapter of Genesis before we find that "Ethiopia" is actually the third-place name given. Genesis, chapter ii, verse 13, reads: "And the name of the second river is Gihon: the same it is

that compasseth the whole land of Ethiopia." As we know now, Gihon stands for Father Nile. In those far-off days as to-day, that historic river embraces within its watershed the lands we know to-day besides Abyssinia, the Anglo-Egyptian Sudan, Uganda, and even into Kenya and Tanganyika. If we accept the probable date when the Pentateuch was written by Moses, probably about 1450 B.C., we can visualise the extent of the might of that empire in the days of Moses. We pass on a few chapters and we read, "And the sons of Noah, that went forth of the ark, were Shem and Ham and Japheth; and Ham is the father of Canaan." Later on, "And the sons of Ham; Cush, and Mizraim, and Phut and Canaan"—countries that we find represented to-day, Cush as Abyssinia, Mizraim as Egypt, Phut as Arabia, and Canaan as Palestine. Cush had a son named Ramah, and his son was named Sheba, which introduces us at once to the ancestry of the Queen of Sheba and the land of Ethiopia.

There seems to be quite an erroneous impression abroad that the negro races are descended from Ham. This cannot be substantiated. The ancient and original Ethiopian race was not negroid. Herodotus, the ancient historian, described a straight-haired race as occupying the pleasant land of Ethiopia. This distinction is indicated also in the Egyptian monuments, and in the XVIII Egyptian dynasty Ethiopia became, for the time, an Egyptian province, but their independence was won back towards the eleventh century B.C. There are

traditions, which may not be substantiated, that the Hyksos, or Shepherd Kings, who conquered Egypt, and were ruling it in the time of Joseph, were the same Ethiopian people. Close contact with Egypt developed to a large extent a common culture.

Some centuries later the centre of power for Ethiopia passed from the western border of the country to the eastern, and a new capital was founded at Aksum, which to-day is situated at the northern province of Tigrè. Its seaport, Adulis, opened up commerce with Greece, and Aksum became one of the great crossroads for commerce, connecting Africa with Asia, and through its northern routes with Europe. We can well picture something of the news that traders brought from this centre of the far-off lands with which they did their business. One of these trade-routes led to the lands of the Jews, and Aksum traded with Jerusalem.

The present reigning family of Abyssinia claims direct lineage from Solomon and the Queen of Sheba. The name of the Queen has come down to us as Baltis. She was known as Azeeb Maqueda (the virgin Queen). The graphic story of her visit to Solomon given to us in Holy Writ needs no emphasis. It is one of those romantic stories that will live through all history. It is so graphic that we can picture the development of their friendship as Solomon answered all her questions, until we are told "there was no more spirit in her" and she could only exclaim, "The half was not told me."

“ And when the Queen of Sheba heard of the fame of Solomon concerning the name of the Lord, she came to prove him with hard questions. And she came to Jerusalem with a very great train, with camels that bare spices, and very much gold, and precious stones: and when she was come to Solomon, she communed with him of all that was in her heart. And Solomon told her all her questions: there was not *any* thing hid from the king, which he told her not. And when the queen of Sheba had seen all Solomon’s wisdom, and the house that he had built, And the meat of his table, and the sitting of his servants, and the attendance of his ministers, and their apparel, and his cupbearers, and his ascent by which he went up unto the house of the Lord; there was no more spirit in her. And she said to the king, It was a true report that I heard in mine own land of thy acts and of thy wisdom. Howbeit I believed not the words, until I came, and mine eyes had seen *it*: and, behold, the half was not told me: thy wisdom and prosperity exceedeth the fame which I heard. Happy *are* thy men, happy *are* these thy servants, which stand continually before thee, and that hear thy wisdom. Blessed be the Lord thy God, which delighted in thee, to set thee on the throne of Israel: because the Lord loved Israel for ever, therefore made he thee king, to do judgment and justice. And she gave the king an hundred and twenty talents of gold, and of spices very great store, and precious stones: there came no more such abundance of spices as these which the queen of Sheba gave to king Solomon. And

the navy also of Hiram, that brought gold from Ophir, brought in from Ophir great plenty of almug trees, and precious stones. And the king made of the almug trees pillars for the house of the Lord, and for the king's house, harps also and psalteries for singers: there came no such almug trees, nor were seen unto this day. And king Solomon gave unto the queen of Sheba all her desire, whatsoever she asked, beside that which Solomon gave her of his royal bounty. So she turned and went to her own country, she and her servants."

The Ethiopian historians have woven many a romance around this visit. On her return to her own country she looked forward to the advent of a child, of whom Solomon would be the father. When a son arrived he was given the name of Menelik, a name that has carried down the three thousand years of the reigning generations. When the Queen left Jerusalem, among the legends that have come down through the years is one to the effect that Solomon sent a number of his learned men to teach the story of the one God, Jehovah, to the people of the Queen, and this, the first revelation of the one true God, was brought to this ancient but heathen land. When Menelik, her son by Solomon, was twenty-two years old he expressed a wish to see the father he had never known. The Queen gave him the ring Solomon had presented to her, and he set out for Jerusalem.

Solomon gave a royal welcome to his son Menelik, and wished him to remain in Jerusalem.

On his declining to do so, Solomon sent a retinue of young Jewish nobles to take back with him to Aksum. Legend tells us of their grief at the thought of leaving their city and the Ark of the Covenant. They plotted to take this back with them. When the Ark was brought to Aksum it was placed in the charge of a guard of thirteen hundred men. Tradition claims that the Ark still rests there. Other stories indicate that it was a copy of the Ark that was taken.

Even to-day there is said to exist an Ark covered with gold and with gems. Throughout the Christian era in Ethiopia, the Ark has survived as a Christian symbol, and no Abyssinian church is complete without this emblem of sanctity.

To-day the Coptic Christian Church in Ethiopia numbers some five million, and they comprise the Tigrinyans, Shoans, Amharas, and Gojams in the north, west, and centre of the country, a combination which is the military backbone of the empire, and the stronghold of Coptic Christianity.

To-day, one of the most progressive units of population in Ethiopia is that of the Falasha Jews, who claim to be the descendants of the early immigrants. Down through three millenniums these people have maintained their identity, and now number some 150,000.

From ancient times the Ethiopian has been steadfastly religious. From the worship of the sun and the moon, and the religious thought of Egypt, the nation appears to have turned heartily to the God of

Israel. Their churches were based on the plan of the Temple of Jerusalem, and were divided into court, holy place, and Holy of Holies. This latter contained the ark of the covenant.

When Menelik, son of the Queen of Sheba, left Jerusalem, his royal father Solomon gave him a seal with the device of the Lion of Judah, crowned by the Archangel Michael. This seal he always wore, so tradition says, and we have a remarkable confirmation from folk-lore and tradition amongst the primitive tribes in Tanganyika around the foothills on Mount Kilimanjaro.

Africa's mightiest mountain, Kilimanjaro, with its everlasting snowy peak, stood out boldly against the evening sky, towering nearly 20,000 ft. into the heavens. At the foot of the mountain the stations of the Leipzig Mission have brought light and blessing to the great Chagga race that inhabits the foothills. The Principal of the Seminary, the Rev. R. Reuch, is an enthusiastic mountaineer. As we talked over the wonders of the mountain, visible from the flowered garden where we walked, the writer asked him about the folk-lore of the people.

"Yes," he said, "for thousands of years these mountains have stood, becoming more and more interwoven with their legends.

"Mount Kibo is known even in Abyssinia, and one remarkable legend, told me beside the camp-fire by old Abyssinian soldiers and hunters, is connected with this snow-clad mountain. When the

first King of Abyssinia, called Menelik I, son of King Solomon and the Queen of Sheba, who governed 'Tigrè,' the oldest province in Abyssinia, as Negusi-Negeshti, King of Kings, had completed his successful conquest of Shoa or South Abyssinia, Somaliland, Kenya Colony, and Northern Tanganyika Territory (the Abyssinians are even now calling all these provinces Ethiopia), and was on his return journey, bringing with him much spoil of war, he one day encamped on the desert-like stretch of land which unites Mount Kibo and Mawensi, at the height of 15,000 ft. He was old, tired of life, and felt death drawing near. But because he was a king he wished to die as a king. 'King I am and as a king I wish to die,' he said to his followers. One morning he bade his army farewell, and accompanied by a few of his war-lords and slaves, who carried his jewels and treasure, he began to ascend the mountain. His soldiers from below followed him with their eyes until he reached the boundary of the eternal snows, where a cloud encompassed him, hiding him from their view. In the evening the war-lords returned without their king, for he had entered into the crater of the mountain with his slaves, jewels, and treasure. And here he will sleep for ever. But an offspring of his family will arise and restore the old glory of Ethiopia, conquering again all of the land to the Rufiji River. He will ascend Mount Kibo, find the jewels of Menelik I, and among them the seal ring of Solomon which the old King has upon his finger. The ring he will put upon his own hand. From this moment he will be

endowed with the wisdom of Solomon, and the heroic spirit of the old king will rest upon him. Thus says the legend.

“ I can testify to the strength of the Abyssinian belief in this legend to-day. When, in September 1926, after my first ascent of Kilimanjaro, I came back to the plains and told my Abyssinian Christians about it, they asked me whether or not I had seen King Menelik I and his jewel on the summit. When I replied in the negative, they were astounded and really doubted my statements, for if I had been on the top I should certainly have seen the King and his jewels. Although I gave them every possible proof of my ascent, they would not be persuaded but said, ‘ At least you should have seen some trace of him.’ But I could not say that I had seen him, or anything pertaining to him.

“ It is interesting that some 3,000 years afterwards the Abyssinians believe that their King Menelik II, who died in 1913, should have been a descendant of Menelik I. They expected him to conquer Somaliland, Kenya Colony, and Tanganyika Territory, ascend Kilimanjaro, visit his great ancestor, and appropriate Solomon’s seal ring.”

During the seventh century B.C. a race from Kush, the Ethiopians, descended from the highlands of Ethiopia into Egypt.

The ancient Ethiopian Empire in the eighth century B.C. conquered Egypt, and subsequently contested the empire of the world with Assyria.

Ethiopia resisted Persian invasion, Grecian influence, and the conquering Roman legions. She never was included within the orbit of the Roman Empire.

Under its Theban governors, the "Royal Sons," Cush became a second Thebaid. At Nepata, Amon reigned in his sanctuary at the foot of the Pure Mountain. There the authority of the governors and priests made itself felt, when the Valley below the First Cataract was a mere battlefield, contested by Thebes, Heracleopolis, Bubastis, Sais, and a score of lesser cities. The Egypt of the Upper Nile was rich in its gold-mines and its trade with the Sudan, and strong in its armies of Negroes. These economic and military resources were to make the chiefs of Cush the arbiters of the situation in the Valley.

Who were these chiefs? About 800 B.C. there appears at Nepata a Royal Family, whose monuments for centuries give evidence of kings who conquered the Thebaid and the Delta. They distinguished themselves by their devotion to Amon and other gods. The historian Manetho makes them into his "Ethiopian XXV Dynasty."

Again the Ethiopians took Thebes at the end of the XXIII Dynasty. From Thebes they passed on northward, and according to Greek tradition founded the XXV Dynasty of Egypt. The last Ethiopian king and overlord of Egypt, Tanutamon, was driven back above the Second Cataract, and the

history of the kingdom of Cush ceased to be merged in that of Egypt.

After the loss of Egypt, the kingdom of Cush at first kept its prosperity, its theocratic government, and its Egyptian civilisation, under Kings Aspalut, Horsiatef, and Nastesen, known from the fine stelæ of Gebel Barkal, and five or six others. A few centuries later, the capital of Kush was transferred to Meroe, above Atbara. The Meroitic kingdom lasted till the end of the Roman period, but was rapidly Africanised, by the mingling of Egyptians and Negroes. Civilisation declined, hieroglyphic writing gave place to the Meroitic script.

“After the XXI Dynasty a number of statues of the high priests of Amon, cold and correct, and realistic, give vigorous portraits of Ethiopian kings and warrior chiefs.”

“When I was in Abyssinia this year,” writes E. J. Rey, in his fascinating book, *Unconquered Abyssinia*, “I had the advantage of many discussions with the ‘Court historian,’ a learned old gentleman who supplied me with a great deal of information, and who had caused to be compiled for my benefit, on the instructions of Ras Tafari, a complete list of the rulers of Abyssinia from the beginning of time up to date. The list commenced with Ori (or Aram), one of the thirty-five sons of Adam, who reigned during sixty years from 4530 to 4470 B.C., and contained the names of no less than 312 sovereigns, many of Egyptian origin, from that date up

to A.D. 1779. This is, I think, as good an illustration as any of the difficulties of historical research in the country."

"A Greek monk, Cosmas Indicopleustes, discovered in the sixth century at Adulis, a port on the Red Sea, a marble throne, and above it a marble tablet on which were engraved inscriptions in Greek. The inscription on the tablet records how Ptolemy Euergetes, the third of the Greek dynasty in Egypt, in about the fourth year of his reign (*circa* 243 B.C.) invaded and conquered large tracts of country in Asia and Asia Minor, aided by a brigade of elephants, which he had himself captured in various parts of Abyssinia and trained for war in Egypt."

Again we return to Holy Writ. There is another visit to Jerusalem from Ethiopia. The story is told so graphically in the Acts of the Apostles, chapter viii, verses 26-40. May we not see in this thrilling account of the man of Ethiopia the coming of the Gospel of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ into this land where reigned Candace, who entrusted all the nation's treasures to this eunuch. May he not have been the Chancellor of the Exchequer of Ethiopia of that day? As we consider this earnestly religious man undertaking the long journey to worship in Jerusalem, may we not see a disciple seeking instruction from the land of his fathers? May he not have been a descendant of those Falasha Jews who were sent by King Solomon for the edification of Ethiopia, and a man whose proved ability had earned him this honoured

position. Had he been an Ethiopian in origin it is hardly likely that he would have been reading the Scriptures from a scroll, either in the original Hebrew, or probably the Greek version of the Septuagint.

As so often has happened, the Jewish alien in a strange land has risen to the highest position in the country through his ability and influence. May not this Ethiopian Jew have done likewise? As out of the visit of the Queen of Sheba to Jerusalem there came the knowledge of the one true God to Ethiopia, may it not be that the visit of this man of Ethiopia to Jerusalem brought the knowledge of Christ the Saviour, the story of Calvary, into this same land of Ethiopia?

“ And the angel of the Lord spake unto Philip, saying, Arise, and go toward the south unto the way that goeth down from Jerusalem unto Gaza, which is desert. And he arose and went: and, behold, a man of Ethiopia, an eunuch of great authority under Candace queen of the Ethiopians, who had the charge of all her treasure, and had come to Jerusalem for to worship, was returning, and sitting in his chariot read Esaias the prophet. Then the Spirit said unto Philip, Go near, and join thyself to this chariot. And Philip ran thither to *him*, and heard him read the prophet Esaias, and said, Understandest thou what thou readest? And he said, How can I, except some man should guide me? And he desired Philip that he would come up and sit with him. The place of the scripture which he

read was this, He was led as a sheep to the slaughter ; and like a lamb dumb before his shearer, so opened he not his mouth : In his humiliation his judgment was taken away : and who shall declare his generation ? for his life is taken from the earth. And the eunuch answered Philip, and said, I pray thee, of whom speaketh the prophet this ? of himself, or of some other man ? Then Philip opened his mouth, and began at the same scripture, and preached unto him Jesus. And as they went on *their* way, they came unto a certain water : and the eunuch said, See, *here* is water ; what doth hinder me to be baptized ? And Philip said, If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest. And he answered and said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God. And he commanded the chariot to stand still : and they went down both into the water, both Philip and the eunuch ; and he baptized him. And when they were come up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord caught away Philip, that the eunuch saw him no more : and he went on his way rejoicing."

Historians and archæologists agree that in the first century of the Christian era Aksum was the centre of an important kingdom, extending across the Red Sea into the Yemen.

Thus Aksum became the religious city of Ethiopia, which it remained up to the present. The Church of Aksum is the holiest place in the Holy City. It became a storehouse of treasure and a sanctuary for criminals. Ancient memorials still exist, and a number of monoliths. The tallest reaches 60 ft.

high and is 8 ft. wide at the base. It is claimed that they date back to the time of the building of the Temple of Baalbek in Syria.

From that time the story of the Church of Christ in Ethiopia is one long romance. The first Christian missionary to that land was one named Meropios, who set out, according to some records, from Tyre, and others from Egypt, anxious to carry the Gospel. The Ethiopians were known as people who remained faithful to the Jewish faith for a thousand years. That was in A.D. 330. Travelling with two youths, they were shipwrecked and he himself murdered by the natives on the Ethiopian coast. The youths were taken prisoners to the Ethiopian capital. Here one of them, Frumentius, was received as guest of honour, and entrusted with the task of instructing the young King. He found the people ready for his message, as they claimed to have in their custody the sacred Ark of the Covenant. A strong attachment grew up between the young tutor and the young King, who soon declared himself a Christian. The Gospel story seems to have led to a revival not only in the court, but in the country around. Frumentius returned to Alexandria, and sought an interview with Athanasius, then the recognised head of the Christian Church in Egypt. Athanasius, anxious to encourage this young Church in the far-away land of Ethiopia, consecrated Frumentius as its first Abuna or Bishop. He was the first Bishop of Aksum.

From its inception in the early fourth century the Ethiopian Church has lived in close association with the Coptic Church of Egypt. It shares with that church the doctrinal heresy known as "Jacobitism" or "the Monophysite Church," which recognises only the single nature of Christ, and not His dual nature as God and man. This heresy was overthrown by the Council of Chalcedon in A.D. 451. From that time both the Coptic Church of Egypt, and the Ethiopian Church, remained outside the orthodox faith of Christianity.

Two hundred years later (*circa* A.D. 520) the Abyssinians, who had apparently withdrawn from Arabia, returned thither and once more subdued the Yemen. Had this conquest been maintained and made effective, it would have changed the whole history of the world, but in A.D. 570, two months before the birth of Mohammed, the Abyssinians were defeated before the walls of Mecca, and shortly afterwards expelled from Asia for ever. This year, the year of Mohammed's birth, is said to be the first year of the era of the elephant, so called from the fact of elephants having been used by the Ethiopians in the attack on Mecca. In his incomparable style Gibbon thus sums up the effects of this reverse :

"If a Christian power had been maintained in Arabia, Mohammed must have been crushed in his cradle, and Abyssinia would have prevented a revolution which has changed the civil and religious state of the world."

The zeal of the early Ethiopian Church, as far

back as the sixth century, made it the protector of the persecuted early Christian Church of Yemen, in southern Arabia, and led it to defend the faith from pagan idolatry.

From the eighth century to the sixteenth, Ethiopia held out against repeated Moslem invasions, until the reign of the Emperor Lebna Dengel (A.D. 1508-1540). At this time the country was overrun by Mohammed Gran, who destroyed priceless churches and manuscripts. The Moslem armies were, however, driven out by his son.

A.D. 1268, the patron saint of the Ethiopian Church, Tekla Aimanot (i.e. Root of Faith), brought about the restoration of the old Solomonic line. This dynasty continued to occupy the throne until their deposition by Theodore in the year 1855.

During the Middle Ages there was intermittent warfare between Ethiopia and the neighbouring countries, but from the early seventeenth to the late nineteenth century Ethiopia remained a hermit land. Gibbon wrote that "the gates of that solitary realm were for ever shut against the arts, the science, and the fanaticism of Europe." Before the Turkish invasion of the early sixteenth century this Christian Empire was probably as civilised as many of the nations of Europe at that time.

The earliest European description of Abyssinia was acquired by the British Museum recently. It is a gift from the Friends of the National Libraries.

"Printed in Portuguese at Lisbon in 1521 as

*A Letter of the News which came to the King our Lord of the Discovery of Prester John*, it seems to have remained unknown until it appeared in a London saleroom a few weeks ago. No other copy is known.

“It describes how the Portuguese Governor of India and Admiral of the Fleet, Diogo Lopez de Sequeira, sailed from India to the Red Sea in the spring of 1520 with 24 ships, and landed in April at Massawa—to-day the main Italian base for their campaign, and then an island two bow-shots from the shore.

“The natives fled to the mainland and placed themselves under the protection of the local Ethiopian commander at Arquico, a neighbouring port. A Portuguese brigantine captured three of the natives, who were astonished to learn that their captors were Christians.

“‘They fell at their feet,’ says the narrative, ‘crying over and over again, “Christians, Christians, Jesus Christ, Son of the Holy Mary.”’

“Letters and gifts were exchanged with the local commander, who said that it had been prophesied that Christians would come there by sea and help them against the Moors. Then the Abyssinians asked the Portuguese if they knew ‘Abuna Matthew,’ an Armenian who had been sent from Abyssinia as ambassador to Portugal. The Portuguese, who had hitherto doubted Matthew’s credentials, had brought him with them, and there was a joyous reunion.

“ Finally an embassy was sent into the interior. This embassy, which remained in Abyssinia until 1527, included Father Francisco Alvarez, who wrote in 1540 an account of the country, hitherto the earliest known.

“ The new discovery precedes that of Alvarez by nineteen years, and provides a much more detailed and lively story of the first contacts of the Portuguese with the ‘ Empire of Prester John,’ as they called Ethiopia.

On four occasions, down the centuries, the Faith of the Ethiopian Church has been sorely tried. The first was in A.D. 451, when the Council of Chalcedon excommunicated them on the Monophysite heresy. This led to their practical isolation for a thousand years from fellowship with other Christian communions. The second trial was when the Moslem armies made repeated attempts at conquest during the seventh and eighth centuries. The third was the coming of the Jesuits from Portugal in 1500, who, after one hundred and thirty years of supremacy, were expelled, but they nearly succeeded in bringing the country under Rome. The fourth trial was in 1914, when the Christian Emperor, Lij Eyasu, became a Moslem, and did everything to make this religion dominant, but was dethroned.

One of the first explorers to visit the country in recent times was Bruce, who described the country as the prey of feudal anarchy. “ The modern, as distinct from the mediæval, history of Ethiopia

began in 1855, when a remarkable soldier of fortune, Kassa by name, had himself crowned as Negus Negasti, after deposing the immemorially ancient imperial dynasty, and assumed the title of Theodore. Under his rule, the country was thrown open to foreigners, and a beginning was made of ending the feudal disunity of the empire."

## CHAPTER III

### ABYSSINIA TO-DAY

LYING between the Tropic of Cancer and the Equator is a high tableland dotted with huge peaks and scored by deep caverns. This is surrounded by a fringe of low-lying desert. The country as originally comprised in the ancient kingdom of Ethiopia must have extended as far south as the present-day Uganda and Tanganyika.

The geographical aspect of this country gives strange orographic conformation, with the vast mountain area rising towards the centre surrounded by a huge desert. The average height of these terraces and highlands runs something between 6,000 and 10,000 ft. This area has been cut, during the ages, by the heavy flow of water, the ravines now forming the beds of torrents and rivers. These cleavages are so deep that they form considerable barriers to transport. According to the varying altitudes, the fauna, flora, and climate, of course, vary. With these we have the historical and ethnical contrasts.

The main streams flow into the valley of the Nile, the Equatorial lakes, and the Indian Ocean.

Ethiopia is one of the most romantic and beautiful of countries. Vast mountain ranges, deep gorges, thickly wooded valleys where dwell the great Amharic race. Towns are few and far between. Hermits and villages are scattered over the country. The capital, Addis Ababa, the place of flowers, is a closely packed conglomeration of streets and houses. Overlooking the town are the royal palace and Government buildings. The population might have been estimated at 120,000 before the foot of the aggressor had trampled it down. The population of the country may be taken as anything between ten and twelve millions in a land about four times the size of the United Kingdom. Of this population besides the five million members of the Coptic Ethiopian Church, there are about three million Mohammedans, and the remainder are the scattered heathen tribes.

Abyssinia as we know it to-day has been described as the Switzerland of North-east Africa. These highlands and their highest peaks, some of which rise over 13,000 ft., are cut through by the great Rift Valley, one of Nature's strangest freaks. It stretches for some 6,000 miles, the greatest crack in the surface of old Mother Earth. Its rise commences with the source of the Jordan, and the Rift passes along the Jordan Valley, the Dead Sea, the Gulf of Akaba, the Red Sea, right through the highlands of Abyssinia. It forms that series of beautiful lakes, some eight in number, which stretch like a chain through the southern part of the country

into Lake Rudolf. This Rift again passes on through Uganda, Kenya, to the great lake system of Africa—Lake Albert, Lake Edward, Lake Kivu, Lake Tanganyika, and Lake Nyasa—and out into the Indian Ocean, forming the Valley of the Pungwee River, near the modern port of Beira. The whole life of the country is dominated by the seasonal rains—from mid-June to the end of September, the country is deluged. Even the highlands are flooded. Travel becomes virtually impossible, except where there may be a few modern roads. The small rains descend in March and April.

On the plateau vegetation is luxuriant, and of infinite variety. Forests, prairie-lands, rolling steppes, and park-like country have an immense variety of trees and plants. The fauna usually include every species found in Africa. Abyssinia only grows enough food for her own supplies, but this condition could easily be altered. Many acres could be put under cultivation, and much more could be produced by modern methods. Wooden ploughs are still used, and crops cut by hand. The corn is trodden out by oxen and afterwards winnowed by the winds of Heaven, just as in Biblical times. The excellent coffee-berry is proving a profitable export. Originally grown in the province of Kaffa—hence the name Kafa—it is said to have been transplanted to the Yemen in Arabia, whence the famous variety known as Mocha is grown. The coffee known as “Abyssinian Wild” is met with all over the country, but especially in the Gorè district.

An interesting story relates to the discovery of this berry as useful for food. Some shepherds feeding their flocks found they were becoming very lively in a certain district. On investigation, it was found that the sheep were eating the beans of certain trees. These were found to be good for food, and a useful drink.

The main river draining these highlands to-day is the Nile, with its various tributaries. The Abbayi, or Blue Nile, runs south from Lake Tsana, round Gojjam, north of Khartoum. The Tskkazye runs into the White Nile to the north, and the Hawash runs eastwards from the centre of the country, only to die in the sands before it can reach the Red Sea. Other rivers include the Omo, the Webi, Shebeli, the Ganale, and the Gorja, forming ultimately the Juba River.

The inhabitants are as diverse as the scenery. They have been cruelly described by their enemies as "Habesh"—a medley race of people. This, of course, is attributable to the fact referred to, that on the outskirts of the country as we know it to-day there is a vast conglomeration of tribes that have gathered from all directions.

The two principal races are Cushitic, resembling the Caucasians in colour and feature, and the Nilotic, which is black, and has all the characteristics of Negroes. Between these and the mixtures down the ages, they comprise a vast conglomeration of people.

The colour of the inhabitants varies from a light brown of the Abyssinian proper, the native of Tigrè Gojam, and Shoa. The black races are the negroid tribes of the Sudan and south-western provinces. Galla is a generic name for those tribes whose origin is obscure, but who occupy the main part of the country to the south-east. They populate the provinces of Sidamo, Jimma, Arussi, Wolloga, on the borders of the Danakil country. The Guragiv is another race whose origin is shrouded in mystery. They are largely the coolies of the empire, and earn seasonal wages. Shankalla, a term of abuse amongst the Abyssinians themselves, is the most akin to a Negro. He is a native of the western provinces that abut on the Anglo-Egyptian Sudan. The occupations and lives of these several peoples are very different. Some are nomadic, others more settled in their habitations. There must be few countries where customs and beliefs for 1,500 years have maintained themselves beside the strange advents of modernism; where slaves and the telephone compete for the carrying of messages. There is to-day an Ethiopian renaissance led by the Emperor himself. It seeks to build an African culture of the best of Ethiopian traditions and modern civilisation.

Most of these distinct tribal units have preserved their own speech or dialect, so that to-day there are probably over fifty different tongues used in the country. The main language is the old ancient one of Amharic. This to-day forms the

great language of the country, of the ruling class, and of literature.

The educated Ethiopian believes he has a great destiny to fulfil. The Ethiopians, led by their Emperor and his band of young reformers, would, but for the sad disaster of Italy's aggression, have been a vital force in the regeneration of the country. In thinking of Ethiopia to-day, we need to keep clearly in mind not only present boundaries, but the distinctive forms of worship—Coptic Christianity, Mohammedanism, and rank heathenism. Dean Stanley wrote: "Whatever there is of Jewish or of old Egyptian ritual in the old Coptic Church, it is carried to excess in Abyssinia. The likeness of the sacred Ark, called the Ark of Zion, is the centre of Abyssinian devotion. To it gifts and prayers are offered, on it the sanctity of the whole Church depends. Circumcision is not only practised, as in the Coptic Church, but is regarded as of equal necessity with baptism. In this country alone, the Jewish Sabbath is still observed as well as the Christian Sunday. The 'sinew that shrank' no less than the flesh of swine, hare, and aquatic fowl, are still forbidden to be eaten. Dancing still forms part of their ritual, as it did in the Jewish temple. The wild shriek that goes up at Abyssinian funerals is the exact counterpart of that heard by Herodotus in ancient Egypt. The polygamy of the Jewish Church lingers here, after having been banished from the rest of the Christian world. Whatever, it may be added, of extravagant

ritualism, of excessive dogmatism, of the fatal division between religion and morality, disfigures to so large an extent the rest of Oriental Christianity, is seen in its most striking form in the usages of Abyssinia. The endless controversies respecting the natures of Christ, which have expired elsewhere, still rage in that barbarous country. The belief in the efficacy of external rites to wash away sins is carried there to a pitch without a parallel. The greatest festival of all the year is the Feast of Epiphany. One, elsewhere unrecognised as a saint, appears in the Ethiopian calendar. Pilate is canonised because he washed his hands and said, 'I am innocent of the blood of this just man.' "

The commercial value of Abyssinia has yet to be proved. There may be considerable mineral wealth. Already small quantities of gold, silver, copper, platinum, and iron have been discovered. Much of the soil, excepting in the high mountain area, only awaits intelligent agriculture to prove its worth. The life of the nation has centred largely around its beautifully situated capital, Addis Ababa, since its founding in the year 1892 by the greatest of the Ethiopian Emperors, Menelik II. When he first saw the site it was surrounded by a forest of cedars. These survived but for a short time. Menelik replaced them with eucalyptus trees from Australia, which to-day encircle the city with a forest of greenery. These trees have a remarkable growth in that climate, sometimes as much as 12 ft. in a year. The friendly feeling between the

Ethiopian and the European has been manifested on many a happy occasion ; those who in recent years have gone out there with the Evangel speak of the friendly and kindly reception they have received. Everywhere, on recent journeys, where they met with Abyssinians, they were very friendly and ready to help.

“ It was with no little anxiety,” says one of them, “ that we approached the Abyssinian frontier. Our fears were unnecessary. The Abyssinian officials received us with the greatest joy and heartiness. They arranged for an afternoon in which to check our passports. We were surprised to find the table laid as we entered the hut of the chief Customs official. They brought us Tamarus lemonade, and tea, and coffee. The Abyssinian officer had invited the chief Sudanese Customs officer, a very agreeable man. ‘ You are already an Abyssinian, as you have been so long in the land. We don’t need to look at your papers, but only at those of the new missionaries.’ So said the good old Kengjasmadj.

“ In spite of the fact that our postal messengers were recently attacked and robbed on the way, the prompt intervention of our local governor proves the friendly feelings towards us, and that they mean to protect us under any circumstances. Before even the inquiry officer had returned from the wilderness the Governor had given orders for us to receive 100 dollars in compensation for the stolen objects. Five dollars were also paid to us for our

goat that had been stolen, though the value was scarcely two dollars.

“How kindly our Abyssinian friends are disposed towards us may be seen from the fact that they made us a present of five trees when they heard we were about to build a new meeting- and school-house. As trees are very rare, this present was a very valuable one.

“Anyone who knows the history of Abyssinia, and has had an opportunity to know the good qualities of its inhabitants, cannot help sympathising with this ancient people and empire.”

## CHAPTER IV

### THE MOSLEM INVADER

It was an Abyssinian slave, Bilal the Habshi, an early convert to the teaching of Mohammed, who was the first to call the Muezzin, or prayer summons. He was so steadfast in his faith that Abu Kayar purchased him, and gave him his freedom. He was among those who fled with the Prophet from Mecca to Medina. This fact has forged a link down the centuries between the Moslem and the Ethiopian. Another link was the kindly treatment given by the Ethiopians to certain Meccans. When Mohammed saw that his followers were being persecuted, he advised them to take refuge in Ethiopia.

In A.D. 570, the year of the birth of Mohammed, an Abyssinian army crossed the Red Sea and attacked his birthplace, Mecca. Later, another attack, if successful, might have changed the course of history, "by crushing, so to speak, in its cradle, the nascent empire of Islam and the religion of Mohammed." Later, Ethiopia assisted in the defence of the disciples of Mohammed, who took refuge there during the stormy period which preceded Mohammed's flight (Hegira) to Medina, and his rise to power in A.D. 622.

The subsequent rise and expansion of Islam through all the lands bordering on Ethiopia, to the north, east, and west, cut off the Christian kingdom of Ethiopia from the rest of Christendom. For some thousand years this isolation continued, the power of Islam more firmly encircling this ancient Christian land.

In the fifth year of Mohammed's call to the prophethip, eleven men embarked for Abyssinia to escape persecution from the Koraish idolators. "They met with a kind reception from the Najashy and his people. . . . If an Arab asylum at Medina had not at last offered itself, the Prophet himself might have emigrated to Abyssinia and Mohammedanism dwindled into an ephemeral Christian heresy" (Muir's *Life of Mahomet*, ii, 134).

A few years later there was a second migration to Abyssinia of Arabs numbering no less than one hundred. Among them were some of Mohammed's leading converts and Um Habiba, one of his future wives. Her husband, Obeidallah bin Jahsh, actually became a Christian and wrote from his exile to the Prophet, "We now see clearly, but you [like a puppy-dog] are still blinking." It surely is of interest to remember that the first Moslem conversion to Christianity took place in Ethiopia, and that the widow of this earliest convert became the wife of Mohammed. She it was who described the glory of the Abyssinian Cathedral of St. Mary to the Prophet on his death-bed (Muir's *Life of Mahomet*, iv, 270).

“From the time when the ruling tribe of the Amharas embraced Christianity they felt drawn towards the rest of Christendom. About A.D. 540 Christians from Ethiopia crossed the Red Sea to succour the persecuted Christians in Arabia.

When, several centuries later, fanatical Moslems were about to exterminate Christianity in Egypt and Jerusalem, Abyssinian Christian rulers, by threatening to divert the waters of the Blue Nile, compelled the Moslems to allow toleration.

“In the middle of the twelfth century, ruinous and bloody wars broke out all over the country to repress Moslem expansion. Periodic raids committed by the Mohammedan gangs gradually developed into a regular invasion of the entire territory. Warfare would probably have ended in the decline of the Christian Faith, and the fall of the Aksumite Kingdom, but for the help of the Portuguese who, coming from the Red Sea, marched boldly into the Abyssinian hinterland, defeating the Moslem hordes (1543).

The Ethiopians had to fight very hard for their existence. The coast-line already largely lost, owing to the conversion of the population of the litoral to Islam, opened the door to successive Moslem invasions and attacks, which all but engulfed the country. That Abyssinia was not attacked by Moslems at an earlier date when they carried the sword and the Book over so much of the rest of the world, is probably due to the fact that Mohammed's relations and followers had fled from

persecution in Arabia to Aksum, and had there found a safe asylum; in the commentaries of the Koran it is stated that Mohammed had accordingly given instructions that the country, which had sheltered his adherents, should not be assailed.

The fortunes of war varied; but generally Abyssinia, in spite of periodical internal civil warfare, was able to maintain its position against the invader pretty well, until the beginning of the sixteenth century. The records of the time deal at great length with the exploits of the warrior kings, and in particular with the epic of the life and struggles of a great national hero, King Amda Sion I, who during a thirty years' reign—from 1312 to 1342—extended enormously the boundaries of the Empire, and enjoyed an uninterrupted series of victories over the followers of Mohammed, his solitary defeat being the last battle of his life, in which he was killed. The Turks, who had recently conquered Egypt and the Yemen, desired to extend their sway over Abyssinia, and thus to close more securely the Red Sea against Europeans, and to facilitate their contemplated attack on India. They took Zeila (now in British Somaliland), assisted the inhabitants of the litoral northwards with fire-arms, artillery, janissaries, and even Arab mercenaries, and then set this motley collection of fanatics at the throats of the Abyssinians, who, armed only with sword and spear, were at a terrible disadvantage. Led by a chief of great capacity, Mohammed, or Ahmed Gran (Gran meaning left-handed), who had

risen from the rank of a mere soldier to be Emir of Harrar, the Moslem hordes poured into Abyssinia and wreaked a terrible vengeance for the earlier (and only) victory gained over the armies of Adal by King Lebna Dengel.

“ They won battle after battle, occupied province after province, massacred and enslaved large numbers of the population, burned and pillaged towns, monasteries, and churches, and seemed in a fair way to become masters of the whole country. His invasions of Ethiopia covered a period of some twenty years, very nearly extinguishing the empire of these early Christians. The Portuguese sent forces to their relief, and it may be fairly claimed that they saved the country from falling into the hands of a Moslem power. Although the Imam Ahmed led his troops from Bali in the south to Tigre in the north and made many converts wherever he went, he never really conquered the country for Islam. As soon as he withdrew from a province the inhabitants speedily reverted to Christianity.

“ His Turkish-imported fire-arms proved irresistible, and he inflicted repeated defeats on the Negus, who eventually perished of privation in a remote part of the country : but for the timely arrival of the Portuguese it seems probable that the Abyssinians would have lost both their nationality and their religion.”

In the sixteenth century a large number of

Ethiopians were carried as slaves to Gujarat, in India, and there rose to high rank. In the history of Moslem India, frequent allusion is made to Abyssinian mercenaries.

By the year 1670 there were large Moslem communities in the country. The Moslems, because they held the coast, became the masters of commerce. By the end of the eighteenth century one-third of the total population was already Moslem.

Dr. S. M. Zwener, the great authority on Islamic expansion, states that :

“ Many migrated to other parts of Africa, others who remained were scattered and formed new centres for Islam. Under Menelik, who succeeded John and was more tolerant, many returned to the Moslem faith. The greater part of the people were from the beginning of the struggle indifferent to the entrance of Islam and did not realise its threatening danger to the Abyssinian Church. As in Egypt, so here the process was one, not of conquest, but of gradual infiltration and absorption. It is a miracle that under such circumstances, and in such geographical and spiritual isolation, the ancient Church survived at all. Whenever Islamic influence became political and turned into real attempts at invasion of the ancient Christian centres, the rulers and the people revolted against the intruders of an alien faith, and at great cost fought for their independence. Separated from the very gate of Mecca by only a narrow strip of land and sea, this Christian Church has continued like an oasis in the

desert, while to the north, east, and west nations have been desolated by Islamic usurpation."

As recently as 1875-6, Egypt endeavoured to invade Abyssinia, but meeting the resistance of the entire Empire, was thoroughly defeated.

The next attack upon the integrity of Ethiopia was made by the Mahdi during his ravaging of the Anglo-Egyptian Sudan. He determined to conquer the great Christian kingdom. In the Battle of Gallabat, when first the Ethiopians seemed to be losing, the Islamic forces of the Mahdi were ultimately conquered, and Ethiopia held her own again.

"About the year 1907 there was a Moslem mass movement toward Christianity, which gave proof that the Word of God has still its ancient power. A sheikh in Amhara, named Zacharias, originally from Sokota, had a vision and began to search for truth. He read the Koran and found many references to the Bible. Having secured a copy, he made comparisons, was converted, and began to preach."

At the present day the Moslem communities occupy the low-lying district of North Eritrea. They are also found in the east and west frontier districts, and in the southern provinces. Some Galla tribes are almost entirely Moslem. Even in the highlands, the centres of ancient Christianity, we find strong Moslem colonies in the towns. In the provinces of Bounno, Nonno, Botor, and Gour-aghe there are Moslem minorities. The chief

Moslem tribes are enumerated and described by Guerinot :

“In the south-east, the Province of Choa is largely Mohammedan, as is also the province of the Gallas. The other chief Moslem tribes are the Mensa, Habab, Baja (represented by the Bisharin), the Bogos, the Bajouk, the Bait Taqui, the Beni Amer, and the Marya.”

In Eritrea, as in Ethiopia, the Moslems are converts and not, with some exceptions, Arabinised immigrants. According to Massignon :

“Except for small groups of colonists, who came from Yemen, the Moslems of Eritrea belong to old indigenous tribes formerly animistic or Christian, and some among them, such as the Bogos and the Mensas, have been preserved, together with an old dialect of Tigrè, which Islam has not been able to supplant.

“In Abyssinia proper, the only Mohammedans who claim Arab origin are the Wollos, who say that they came from the Hejaz. This pretence is, for the rest, scarcely justified, for they are altogether of the Galla race and do not speak Arabic.”

*(The Moslem World.)*

As regards the rights of Moslems at the present day, they were more than tolerated by the Ethiopian Government.

“The Abyssinian Church,” wrote Iwarson in 1924, “tolerates a certain competition on the part of Islam, rather than on the part of other Christian communities; and yet, of course, she is anxious to preserve a distinct difference as regards her cult and her confession. Christian and Moslem never take food together; especially no meat, because an Abyssinian Christian would defile himself if he ate so-called Moslem meat, and vice versa. Concerning beverages they are less severe. But at marriages or funerals different rooms are preferably arranged for Christians and Mohammedans.”

At the death of Menelik, in 1913, Abyssinia entered upon a period of unrest. Menelik had been ill for many years before his death, and in 1909 had proclaimed his successor in the person of Lij Yasu, son of his daughter and of Ras Michael, of the Wollo Galla, a Moslem, who had been converted to the Christian faith. Religious reasons prompted the military party in the Shoa to oppose the young pretender, whose strong Moslem tendencies and his inexperience as a ruler put them in a state of alarm. Turkish advisers and emissaries influenced Lij Yasu to the extent of conceiving a scheme for a great Mussulman Empire in Africa, intended to absorb British, French and Italian possessions, all of which were inadequately garrisoned.

Lij Yasu was deposed on 21st September, 1916, and succeeded by Menilik's daughter Zauditu and by the young Regent Ras Tafari, the son of Ras Makonnen. His deposition was followed by a short war, during

which Michael, who had gone into battle to defend his deposed son, was defeated and taken prisoner on 27th October, 1916. Zauditu was crowned Empress in the following February. Lij Yasu attempted further resistance, but was defeated in August and finally captured in 1921.

With reference to the future, one experienced missionary writer says :

“ The present crisis is of immeasurable importance for the Gospel in Abyssinia with its unconquered martyr Church. Judging from the mentality of the Abyssinians, a war caused by a European Christian nation will prove a heavy blow to Christianity in the country, and will benefit only Mohammedanism, already strong and menacing. Should white Christians deprive the brown Ethiopian of his freedom, then he will turn en masse to those from whom he hopes to get help and freedom, to the men of his own colour. The Abyssinian problem may thus lead to strengthening the Panislamic movement.

“ We have to reckon with the fact that the opportunity for work may be short, and, therefore, we must buy up the time by every means at our command. Though there are many who sympathise with Abyssinia at this time, there are relatively few friends who think of her spiritual welfare.”

“ One striking feature in the present Ethiopia is the readiness with which the Gospel is received. In other mission fields, which for the most part are

in the colonies of the various Powers, the missionary enjoys many advantages offered by civilisation. Here, everything is as it was in the days of Abraham, and we have to put up with very primitive conditions and ways of travelling and living. Much time and energy are lost, but when we see the great readiness of this people to accept our message, we yearn to meet their great needs."

## CHAPTER V

### CÆSAR-NERO !

CÆSAR-NERO, the brutal tyrant of ancient Rome, has his modern counterpart in the Dictator attempting to pose as CÆSAR, and whose characteristics certainly entitle him to the name "NERO." The ancient tyrant delighted in torture by fire, and could even decorate his gardens with the flaming torches of Christian heroes and heroines, covered in pitch. The modern Nero has butchered his tens of thousands, the present-day representatives of a Christian Church, with bomb and poison gas, with torture and martyrdom. In that bombastic manner which has become characteristic of him, Signor Mussolini announced that the "war is finished, and that Abyssinia is henceforth Italian." "It is our peace," he declared, "a Roman peace. The Chiefs and the Rasses, defeated and fugitives, no longer count, and no power on earth can ever again make them count. . . . We are ready to defend our brilliant victory with the same inexorable and intrepid decision with which we have gained it."

The Dictator's distorted imagination, and lustful greed, conjured up "six good reasons" for the attack on an innocent, peaceful people. "Italy



"BY THAT SIN FELL THE ANGELS."

THE SINS OF DOORS. "THINK TWICE BEFORE YOU DEFY WORLD-OPINION. I TRIED IT ONCE, AND FOUND IT DIDN'T PAY."

*Reproduced by special permission of the proprietors of "Punch"*

must expand or explode." "Imperialism is the inevitable law of life," so says this Dictator.

A London newspaper has found in a speech by Il Duce these "six good reasons" for war with Abyssinia: (1) Because "we have entered upon a struggle." (2) Because "we have irrevocably decided to carry it to its conclusion." (3) Because "black troops have always been defeated by Italians." (4) Because "all Italy is behind her sons who are leaving for Africa." (5) Because "Italians prefer a life of heroism to one that is insipid." (6) Because "Italians to-day are protagonists of a glorious history."

The demagogue, Mussolini, tours the country bawling at his hearers such sentiments as :

"War is to man what maternity is to woman."

"Perpetual peace negatives the fundamental virtues of mankind, which are revealed only on the bloodstained battlefield in the full light of the sun."

"We must have arms for ten million men, and sufficient aeroplanes to obscure the sun."

On his visit to Tripoli he said : "I declare to you that when these cannon thunder it is really the voice of the Fatherland which speaks. . . . We need land, for we are too numerous for our present territories. This is a manifestation of a nation that derives its blood from Rome, and that shall carry Rome's triumphant and immortal fasces to every shore of Afric Sea. . . . It is the hand of destiny

that guides us back to our ancient possessions. No man can deny destiny, and above all no man can resist our unshakeable will." He intends to revive the ancient Roman Empire, hopes to include Gibraltar, Malta, and the North African States, and every island in the Mediterranean, which is to become an Italian Sea.

Another prominent spokesman of Italian Fascism, Signor Virginio Gayda, expresses himself in a similar strain. The following extract is taken from his pamphlet, *The Political and Social Doctrine of Fascism*, p. 11 :

"And, above all, Fascism, the more it considers and observes the future, and the development of humanity, quite apart from political considerations of the moment, believes neither in the possibility, nor in the utility, of perpetual peace. It thus repudiates the doctrine of pacifism—born of a renunciation of the struggle, and an act of cowardice in the face of sacrifice. War alone brings up to its highest tension all human energy, and puts the stamp of nobility upon the peoples who have the courage to meet it. All other trials are substitutes, which never really put men into the position where they have to make the great decision—the alternative of life or death.

"Thus a doctrine which is founded upon this postulate of peace is hostile to Fascism.

"For Fascism, the growth of empire—that is to say, the expansion of the nation—is an essential mani-

festation of vitality, and its opposite a sign of decadence. Peoples which are rising, or rising again after a period of decadence, are always imperialistic ; any renunciation is a sign of decay and of death."

It was in Africa that the ancient Roman Empire found its origin. The victorious issues of the Punic Wars in the third century B.C. made Rome the mistress of the Mediterranean. The title "Africanus" (i.e. "The African," "The Conqueror of Africa"), assumed by Scipio after his victory over Hannibal, was the precursor of the later host of titles wherewith succeeding Roman generals assumed similar emblems of victory from all the provinces, which, later on, made up the Roman Empire.

"The Roman Empire of classical times was, recalls F. A. Ridley, in *Mussolini and Africa*, in reality (if we ignore the belated glamour of the historians) in the first instance, a huge slave-raiding, commercial enterprise. The Roman 'mission' to civilise the Mediterranean was merely a pretext for the creation of a colossal slave market. Similarly, the modern Fascist—'Roman'—Empire is also a huge slave-hunting concern. For Fascism which has abolished trade unions, illegalised strikes, and which rules by beating-up, castor oil, and concentration camps ; for such a creed, whose *raison d'être*, and sole cause of being, is to enslave the proletariat, and to suppress all human freedom and autonomous culture ; for such a creed to prate of extending human liberty and to talk of conquering Abyssinia in order to free the

slaves is, assuredly, one of the most fantastic jokes which even that past mistress of irony, the Muse of History, has ever perpetrated.

“ But so it is. So naked is the barefaced highway robbery which Italian imperialism is about to commit against what she regards as a defenceless nation, that the only excuse she can proffer at the bar of world opinion, for her projected outrage, is that she is going to Abyssinia purely and simply for the sake of liberating the indigenous slaves. One has heard of Satan rebuking sin ; but in this respect, “ old Nick ” must resign his laurels in favour of Mussolini !

“ The present is not the place wherein to discuss the demerits of chattel slavery, as opposed to the merits—or otherwise—of imperialist exploitation, particularly as conditioned by Fascist countries—though it is probable that the ‘ liberated ’ slaves would find but little mitigation of their unhappy lot in an Italian Ethiopia—but it can, at least, be definitely asserted that, with the spread of modern civilisation, chattel slavery, as it still exists in Abyssinia and other mediæval backwaters, is, in any case, doomed, and does not, therefore, require Mussolini to kill off half the inhabitants of Ethiopia in order to liberate the other half.

“ We learn that, even now, motor-cars, factories, and even picture palaces are commencing to make their appearance in Addis Ababa ; and the eventual adoption of Western civilisation which these phenomena imply will, sooner or later, make an end of

chattel slavery : a primitive social institution which can never maintain itself in face of a scientific technique of production.

“ There is, accordingly, no need for Marshal Balbo and his bombing aeroplanes to go to Abyssinia in order to blow slavery—along with the slaves !—out of existence. The institution is, inevitably, doomed.

“ Italian Fascism, in its haste for Imperial expansion, is grasping at the monopoly of the Abyssinian market, the plunder of the mineral and agricultural sources, the power to rob a large and backward people of the products of its labour.”

Notwithstanding the fact that fifty nations declared Italy the unprovoked “ aggressor,” and pledged themselves to defend the innocent victim, Abyssinia, to-day Italy has become the world’s braggart. Abyssinians are driven from their capital, their homes destroyed, their land devastated. Bombs and poison gas have decimated the people, and still the fifty nations look on, and permit such atrocity.

A vivid account of his experiences when Italian planes dropped bombs in Abyssinia was given by Dr. E. Ralph Hooper.

Dr. Hooper, who is over sixty, had been in Abyssinia for three years, and joined an ambulance unit.

“ I reached Culmina, in the Dolo region,” he said, “ on the night on which General Graziani surprised Ras Desta’s forces. Ten thousand men had

been wiped out that day, and the rest were fleeing. There was nothing for us to do but to turn back also.

“In the bombing which followed we lost five lorries, hundreds of pounds’ worth of drugs, and everything else we had.

“We escaped by hiding in the forest, and when we got away the only thing I took with me was my typewriter. My servant carried it throughout the 140 miles’ journey on foot which followed.”

Mrs. Hooper paid high tribute to the foresight and ingenuity of Lady Barton, wife of Sir Sidney Barton, the British Minister.

“It was Lady Barton,” she said, “who trained the peasant women in nursing. She also devised emergency stretchers.”

The *Lavoro Fascista* declares that the time has come to lay aside Italy’s traditional chivalry and generosity towards her foe. “All we Italians feel to-day,” writes the newspaper, “that the Abyssinians must no longer have the advantage of our generosity and our reserve in the use of the most modern and lethal instruments of war at our disposal which, up till now, we have refrained from using.”

Heart-rending stories have come from these devastated lands.

“In twos and threes the Abyssinian troops from the northern front are straggling home.

“ Riding northward, I met a continual stream of incoming soldiers, some in uniform, some more or less clothed, and others almost naked.

“ All were limping, silent, and weary. Many were suffering from mustard gas, and others from body burns. Some, completely disfigured, hid their faces in their clothing.

“ Every now and then I saw a minor chief, followed by a few retainers. Sometimes a group of soldiers drove a pack-mule before them, carrying their few belongings.

“ Soldiers from almost all the Abyssinian provinces were returning. I had met some of them before, and they told me their story.

“ They said they were from the armies of the Emperor, the Crown Prince, and Ras Mulugueta, the seventy-year-old War Minister who was reported dead after the Italian victory at Amba Aradam.

“ ‘ We have done our best to defend our country,’ they said ; ‘ but the Italians are terrible. We would not have minded fighting. We are accustomed to it. But what can we do against a gas which not only burns when dropped, but hangs about the grass, burning our feet when we are not expecting it to be there.

“ ‘ Nor can we fight against aeroplanes, which are almost impossible to bring down by rifles. ‘ Planes have not only bombed us unceasingly, but have also often swooped upon us and mowed us down with machine-guns.

“ ‘ We have been sent home because we are worn out. Only fresh men can continue the struggle. We have been on the road for three or four weeks, exchanging our equipment for food ’ . ”

From Dessye, Captain Brophil went to Makale, and thence to Quoram, where he found the first cases of gas in the last week in December.

“ We had nothing with which to treat the victims, ” he continued. “ We did the best we could for the unfortunate women and babies who could barely toddle. They were brought in blinded, with burned hands and faces.

“ The ’ planes came over us eight or twelve times a day for four months—always on undefended villages.

“ They could not treat all those who were victims of the attacks, ” he added. “ Those who were burned and blinded were brought in each evening, and in the mornings, because during the day the ’ planes were always overhead. It was only safe to move when the mist was on the mountains. ”

The Royal Princess tells of the effect of gas bombs :

“ This suffering and torture is beyond description; hundreds of our countrymen are screaming and moaning with pain. Many of them are unrecognisable, since the skin has been burned off their faces. ”

This is part of a cable from Princess Tsehai, President of the Ethiopian Women’s Work Associa-

tion, received by Lady Gladstone, Chairman of the Women's Advisory Council of the League of Nations Union.

"For seven days without a break," the cable runs, "the enemy have been bombing the armies and people of my country, including women and children, with terrible gases. Our soldiers are brave men; they know that they must take the consequences of war. Against this cruel gas we have no protection, no gas-masks—nothing.

"May I appeal to the Women's Council of the League of Nations Union to protest against this criminal breach of the 1925 Protocol?"

On 27th April an Italian aeroplane flew over the capital of Abyssinia, dropping leaflets signed by the Chief of Staff of the Italian Army:

"People of Shoa, listen! I am the head of the victorious Italian Army, and will enter Addis Ababa with the help of God. . . . But if you destroy our roads or try to prevent the advance of our army, then the Italian Army will destroy and kill without pity, the aeroplanes will massacre from the air and destroy everything that exists."

Meanwhile, Princess Tsehai, daughter of the Emperor, was writing this desperate appeal, possibly one of the most poignantly pathetic that a Royal Princess has ever uttered to her people and the world:

"For God's sake help us. . . . Use your numbers

and your power to organise mass meetings and prepare petitions in all parts of every country. Rally your husbands, brothers, sons, and force them to use their massed strength to force the parliaments and rulers to take action. Do I ask you purely selfishly to do this? No. We are only a small race, but I am seventeen and its leading daughter, and I know, as you know, that if mankind lets armies and gas destroy my country and people, civilisation will be destroyed too. We have common cause, you and I. . . .

“ Make your Governments feel the weight of your power. . . . Keep on until they act. . . . They can, through their ambassadors, concentrate on Rome the horror of world contempt. They can, if made to, through their ambassadors, or the League, specially convened, summon Rome immediately to destroy all the Italians’ stocks of filthy gas in Africa, and then go on and get the stocks destroyed in Europe and elsewhere. They can, if made to, summon the League immediately, through the Committee of Eighteen, to prevent the sale of war materials to Italy. All this they can do quickly. But only if you make them. . . .

“ If you do not help quickly with all your strength, gas and aggression will be found to pay and will take such root in ‘civilised’ human conduct that you too will be overshadowed with us by death.”

## CHAPTER VI

### ROME : THE PAPAL TYRANT

WORLD opinion has been appalled at the spectacle of a so-called "civilised" nation making a deliberate, and carefully planned, attack upon an innocent and defenceless people. The use of modern weapons of destruction is not only revolting, but is a breach of an international covenant to which Italy herself subscribed. Aeroplanes, bombs, tanks, and machine-guns, the implements used to demonstrate that "might is right" and that faith in God is vain—all this with the—apparently—tacit acquiescence of the Church of Rome as represented by the Vatican! One word from the Pope would have nipped Mussolini's bandit-raid at the start. That word was never spoken! Various attempts were made to apologise for the Pope and his silence. The Archbishop of Westminster, Dr. Arthur Hinsley, devoted an address especially to this. He said, "What can the Pope do," he asked, "to prevent this, or any other war? He is a helpless old man, with a small police force to guard himself, to guard the priceless treasures of the Vatican, and to protect his diminutive State which ensures his due independence in the exercise of his universal right, and duty to teach and to guide his followers of all races.



**EXPERT ADVICE.**

SHAH OF ARD-UL-HAMID. "I DEFIED THE CIVILIZED WORLD AND DID MY BEST TO EXTERMINATE THE ARMENIANS—AND YOU KNOW WHAT HAPPENED TO ME."

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Can he denounce a neighbouring Power—a Power armed with absolute control of everything and with every modern instrument of force? It is said that he could excommunicate. Yes! and thus make war with his dictator-neighbour inevitable, besides upsetting the peace and the consciences of the great mass of Italians, with the result of a fierce anti-clerical outbreak.”

And so the Pope continued to keep silence while the whole world was shocked at the barbarity of Italy. After the so-called conquest of Abyssinia the Pope then spoke. There was an Exhibition, and he told of “the triumphal joy of a great and good people.” The Pope would have done well to maintain silence, if it could be broken only by such a reference. To his co-religionists in England the Pope’s utterance has given great concern. The attempts of the Roman Catholic Press to give innocuous meaning to the Pope’s words are evidence of their appreciation that Christian people of every creed, outside Italy, view with sad misgiving the evident inability of the Vatican to enter sympathetically into the sorrows and agonies of Ethiopia. The Roman Church will find that she has sown for herself a bitter harvest. She may have saved herself in Italy: she has lost in moral power and influence to the ends of the earth. The Pope, speaking of the present time as “historically solemn and important,” gave his consent to a proposition for the beatification of a priest who devoted his life to the spreading of Roman Catholicism in Abyssinia.

The priest was Father Justin de Jacobis, the first apostolic vicar in Abyssinia, who died in July 1860. The Pope exhorted the chaplains to "follow the very high example of heroism" of Father Jacobis when they arrived in Africa. He expressed the hope that peaceful means may be found to settle Italy's difficulties with Abyssinia. "We have every faith," he said, "that nothing will take place that is not in accordance with truth, justice, and charity." The Vatican was evidently only concerned at the sad plight of Roman Catholics in Abyssinia.

At the time of his death Father Jacobis had raised the number of Roman Catholics in Abyssinia to 15,000, but the present apostolic vicar reports that there are now only 2,500. Well may the Anglican Bishop of Southwark address the Diocesan Conference, "I say with a sad heart," he said, "a victory won by flagrant breaking of covenants, by bombs deliberately flung on Red Cross Hospitals, by mustard gas scattered to torture defenceless non-combatants, has been hailed as 'the happy triumph of a great and good people.'" When such congratulations came from the lips of the Supreme Pontiff of the most numerous and the most powerful of Christian communions, what were other Christians to say? "In the name of Christ," the Bishop continued, "we must most clearly disassociate ourselves from such an utterance, lest it be thought we think lightly of covenants, and admire the successful bully."

The eagerness of the Vatican to-day to secure the control of the ancient land of Ethiopia has been evident from many incidents. We have the record down the centuries of the various attempts that have been made by the Roman Church to subdue the ancient Christian Church of Ethiopia. During a period of Portuguese expansion, from about A.D. 1450 to 1550, the Portuguese, under Vasco da Gama, the discoverer of the sea route to India, helped to rescue Abyssinia from her invaders. The Portuguese did not annex the country. Their power was declining. The emissaries of the Roman Catholic Church, under the protection of the Portuguese, succeeded in a Jesuit attack on the Ethiopian Church. Roman priests entering the country with Portuguese military forces sought to impose their religion on the people. While the Galla tribes infested the south, the kingdom itself was split into opposing parties for, and against, the Roman Catholic Church. The anti-Catholics triumphed in the long run and the Negus Susenyos, who had adopted the Roman faith in 1626, was forced to abdicate six years later. His successor, Fasilides, chased the Jesuits out of the country and restored the faith of their fathers. Allegiance was re-affirmed to the Coptic Patriarch of Alexandria, and thirty years later the last of the Jesuits were expelled. The decision taken by the Church of Ethiopia, together with the parent Coptic Church in Egypt on the Monophysite controversy at the Council of Chalcedon in A.D. 451, made any

submission to the Church of Rome a national betrayal.

Relevant here are the words of George Sale—one of the earliest and most learned English translators of the Koran : “ The writers of the Romish communion in particular are so far from having done any service in their refutations of Mohammedanism, that by endeavouring to defend their idolatry and other superstitions, they have rather contributed to the increase of that aversion which the Mohammedans in general have to the Christian religion, and given them great advantages in the dispute. The Protestants alone are able to attack the Koran with success ; and for them, I trust, Providence has reserved the glory of its overthrow.”

Latin Africa, a Roman Catholic Africa, has become a *dictum* of the Church. These five nations, France, Belgium, Portugal, Italy, and Spain, include the larger part of Africa, with a territory of some seven million square miles in area. Within this area there are probably sixty-five to seventy million people. Here the Roman Church is making intensive efforts to increase its power, numerically and socially. Acting on the principle that the end justifies the means, many of its present-day activities are not merely “ uncharitable ” but actually “ unscrupulous.” The present Pope, Pius XI, is credited with “ a passion for missions,” which is finding an outlet in every part of the world. Using the immense sum of £17,500,000 paid by the Italian State to the Holy See, and to the recent

Financial Convention of the Lateran Settlement, the Vatican is making a bid for the conquest of Africa. How she is succeeding is well known to those who are studying the progress of Missions in Africa to-day. During the last decade the advance of Rome, in personnel and means, for occupying new territory has been far in advance of any such effort by Evangelical Missions. Does this account for the Pope's silent condoning of Italian atrocities in Africa? When the Dictator of Italy must have been planning his "bandit-raid" on Abyssinia, it would seem that he sought to silence the one Power whose public opposition to his scheme might have been effective.

We may well ask, was this financial transaction in the nature of a bribe? There is ample evidence from each of the Italian African colonies that the Vatican has effectively silenced the voice of Evangelical Christians in African Italian territory. As an illustration of this we see the splendid effort of the Swedish Mission, commenced in Eritrea in 1857, now closed down. Throughout the years it has done a magnificent work for Evangelical Christianity. It has established the faith of Christ, in all its simplicity and purity, in many a vast area and amongst various tribes. Now to-day Rome, through the expedient of refusing to grant passports to any new missionaries, and prohibiting the return of missionaries who have had to come home on furlough, has effectually silenced Evangelical effort. We may be sure that the Vatican

will not rest till the same policy has been enforced in Abyssinia, whatever may be the superficial promises made at the moment—promises evidently and surely only made to allay opposition at the time. The promises, like the other promises that have been made by Italy, have been made merely to serve the purpose of the moment, and to be discarded when the policy changes. In Ethiopia, in recent years, some eight Missionary Societies, with nearly 200 Evangelical missionaries, have established educational, literary, medical, and evangelistic work in many directions.

The writer has himself travelled in Italian Africa, and witnessed the sorrow and disaster that have taken place as the result of this policy. Wherever the Italian flag flies in Africa, the priest, through the Vatican, reigns supreme. Alas! we see in this priestly tyranny fresh evidence that confirms the character of the Church of Rome in other parts of Africa. In so much of Africa to-day we find the story repeated of the demoralisation and degradation of people, that occurred in past centuries in South America, and even to-day it can be found in such countries that are priest-ridden. It is all too sad to have to admit, but it is all too true, that the priest is to-day, as he has been down through the centuries, in all too many cases, a licentious man. We know, alas! that in Western lands there are many deluded and darkened women who accept the *dictum* of the priest that what is vice in ordinary men is virtue in them, because of their sacred office, and

who accordingly submit themselves body, soul, and spirit. When this is taking place in so-called civilised lands, we can appreciate the difficulty that faces would-be converts in the wilder races of the world. It is not saying too much, and it can be borne out by ample testimony, that the licentious priest of the Church of Rome, alas! too often makes the Confessional his happy hunting ground among the young women of the races he is supposed to be serving for Christ.

We must face this fact, that the introduction of the priest amongst the primitive people, far from elevating such people into the purity of the Christian faith, is, all too often, only dragging them down into a degradation that confirms their worst idolatrous, superstitious and degrading customs. The worship of idols, and the Church of Rome with its Mariolatry, can only be compared to this. That Church to-day is blocking the way to the true vision of the simplicity of Jesus Christ, and Calvary. Between the glorious salvation and communion with God through the Saviour, there stands the degrading person of the priest, a man, as we have already indicated, whose interest may be on the side of all that is sensual and degrading, rather than on that which is spiritual and enlightening. The story of Rome down the centuries, in every land where she has penetrated, has been one of Roman intrigue. To-day the Vatican, through Mussolini, is making a last desperate bid for the supremacy in that ancient land

of Ethiopia—for the conquest of its Christian Church, and for its submission to the “Holy See!” We may well believe there is every reason to fear that within a few years of Italian occupation, the witness of the Gospel will be quenched in Ethiopia as it has been in Eritrea. In the place of the present noble band of Evangelical messengers the Pope will instal his agents, and complete his tyranny, over eleven million souls for whom Christ died, as completely as the Fascists will enslave their bodies. There is good evidence, confirming reports that have already appeared in the Press, that for some time the Vatican has been training a large number of priests in time for what they believe will be the conquest of Ethiopia. Some figures have been given that indicate that some 400 have been in training, waiting to overrun the land, as soon as Italian authority is substantiated. In confirmation of this threat of Papal tyranny, we may quote the following :

Cardinal Manning, speaking in the name of the Pope and addressing his clergy in 1864, said : “ I acknowledge no civil power ; I am the subject of no prince ; and I claim more than this—I claim to be the supreme judge and director of the consciences of men, of the peasant that tills the fields and of the prince that sits upon the throne ; of the household that lives in the shades of privacy, and the legislator that makes laws for kingdoms. *I am the sole, last, supreme judge of what is right and wrong*” (sermon in the Pro-Cathedral, Kensington, as reported in the

leading Roman Catholic paper, the *Tablet*, of 9th October, 1864).

In perfect harmony with the above is Rome's teaching on exclusive salvation. The last clause of that authoritative document, the Creed of Pope Pius IV, reads: "I, N.N., do at this present freely profess and sincerely hold this true Catholic faith, without which no one can be saved."

It has been the bitter experience of every country in the world, where the Church of Rome has held sway, to have to repudiate the entire Roman system, before any progress could be made. Mexico was, until recently, one of the last strongholds of Romanism. Now the Church there has been spurned. In a recent letter the Secretary of the Interior made the following statements to the Roman Catholic Authorities:

"The Roman clergy (in Mexico)," he said, "has been the instigator and supporter of the bloodiest internal wars, and is still guilty of grave treason to the nation in seeking, and aiding, foreign invasions."

The Secretary declared it absurd for Mexican Catholics to appeal for freedom of conscience "when the Roman Catholic clergy condemned such freedom as opposed to its fundamental dogma, applying this criterion in its cruellest forms by the Inquisition."

Mussolini, that arch-tyrant, has sought to justify his action in the eyes of the world, by dwelling on the existing forms of slavery—and they may be

degrading forms—from which he is willing to deliver the country. If he would only turn his eyes nearer home, he would find that there is a far more degrading form of slavery in the slums of his own country! We cannot justify slavery anywhere, not even in Ethiopia, but why did not the Church of Rome deal with the question of slavery and slave-owning in some Western countries during recent years, rather than seek to uphold her present tyranny in Ethiopia? Here is a letter that appeared in a British publication recently, giving facts which provide much food for thought :

“ Your readers may remember that in 1930 our newspapers contained many stories of the awful horrors perpetrated by the Negro Government of Liberia (the Negro Republic in West Africa) during the forcible rounding up of thousands of tribesmen in the Liberian hinterland, in order to sell them as slaves for the plantations of Fernando Po, the island of the Spanish possession in the Gulf of Guinea. In January 1931, while King Alfonso was still on the throne, the League of Nations issued its Official Report condemning these methods of the Liberian Government. No one has drawn attention to the fact that, during all this period of slave trading, Fernando Po formed part of the Dominions of His Most Catholic Majesty, King Alfonso of Spain. Nor did one hear that the Catholic Vicar-General of Fernando Po (this prelate has the authority, but not the status of a Bishop) had ever raised his voice against this iniquitous buying and selling of human

beings. No Christian Power, for instance Italy, ever thought of invading Spain at that time in order to carry 'civilisation' there by fire and sword! Why is it that what is 'wrong' for Abyssinia now was 'right' for Spain then? The Roman Catholic Hierarchies will tolerate all sorts of iniquities when nobody is looking!"

Roman Missions in Ethiopia are grouped in three territories. The Vicariate of Ethiopia is in the north, staffed by the Vincentian missionaries. The Capuchins have a mission in the south and south-east among the Gallas. Their other activities include fourteen orphanages, five hospitals, fifteen dispensaries, two printing presses, and one periodical. They have a leper asylum, where the Franciscan Sisters of Calais assist them to care for 130 lepers. The Capuchins likewise have charge of the mission of Jibuti, in French territory, which cares for the area of Ethiopia bordering on French Somaliland. The Institute de la Consolata de Turin has a mission among the people in the Kaffa Province in the west and south-west. Seven churches, two schools, and seven dispensaries indicate the importance of this work. The missions of Kaffa, Gallas, and Jibuti are subject to the Congregation of Propaganda, and the Vicariate of Ethiopia is under the jurisdiction of the Congregation for the Oriental Church. We would give every credit to the faithful men and women, many of them very devoted, who are now seeking to proclaim the Roman faith in Ethiopia, and to add to their faith the works we have indi-

cated. All credit to their efforts, but behind them all lies the mystery of the Vatican, and its determination to crush out all free thought and action. With the prospect of the strangling of the present Evangelical efforts in Ethiopia with the advent of the agents of Mussolini and the Pope, we see also the prospect of the closing of the Bible. To-day, with the beneficent influence and inspiring example of His Majesty Hailie Selassie, the Bible is an open Book everywhere in his kingdom. He it is who has done his utmost to urge literacy amongst his people, the main purpose being that the Scriptures shall be an open Book. With the coming of Popery we will find most assuredly that the agents of the Vatican will seek to close that Book for the peoples of Ethiopia. Some apologists for Rome claim that Rome permits the open reading of the Bible. It is quite true that from time to time some Papal authority speaks of the power of the Word of God, and emphasises, or rather seeks to compromise with the Bible as an open Book for the Roman Faith. But, alas! behind such a statement there lies this assurance, that the army of priests and nuns that invade our streets to-day and would shock our forefathers, will do their utmost to prevent the direct reading of the Bible by the members of the Roman Church. There are specious pleas that the Bible is "open" only to the priests who can interpret it. They will seek to place the priest between the open Word of Life, and the vision of the Christ. The conquest of Ethiopia by Rome, if it should eventuate, will mean, under the tyranny of

the Vatican, the closing of the Bible for the people of Ethiopia. The priest still seizes, and destroys, the Bible, and tells would-be readers that it is a dangerous Book. Popery knows full well that if the Scriptures are read without comment, men will find out that salvation is the free gift of God, without the conditions imposed by priestcraft.

The next step in the Italian absorption of Ethiopia is the proposed coronation ceremony to signalise the assumption of the Imperial Crown of the Negus, by King Victor Immanuel.

May we quote from the *Advent Witness* without necessarily endorsing its conclusion :

“ Signor Mussolini appeared on the balcony of the Palazzo Venezia and announced that ‘ Abyssinia’s destiny was sealed,’ and that ‘ Italy at last has her Empire.’ The seriousness of this declaration cannot be overestimated. Italy will not readily relinquish its ill-gotten gains and the world cannot let the matter pass without action. But whatever may be the international developments, there can be no mistaking the prophetic importance of this thrilling news. We are hastening to the grand climax, as foretold in Scripture. It only remains for the Pope to crown the new Italian Emperor and the alliance between the Scarlet Woman and the Scarlet Beast will be evident. Both the Pope and the King, however, refused to agree to allow the new acquisition to be called the Roman Empire as Mussolini wished, so the King of Italy is as yet only the Emperor of Abyssinia, though his Empire

includes **Eritrea, Somaliland, Libya, Rhodes, Egeo,** and the **Dodecanese** Islands. The Roman Empire under the Cæsars stretched in its greatest extent from the Firth of Forth to Morocco, from Palestine and Mesopotamia through the Balkans to the German coast north of Holland." Never, however, did it include the Kingdom of Ethiopia.

## CHAPTER VII

### ETHIOPIA TO-MORROW

As one who has had some considerable experience in Africa, having crossed the continent thirteen times, may I emphasise the issues involved in what seems to many of us, especially the coloured races, the great betrayal of Ethiopia. In every African hut, kraal, camp, and community, for months past, this great subject has been uppermost in the thoughts and conversation of these "so-called" primitive people. To-day in many centres, they have their representatives as advanced in intelligence as we are in the West. They have their educated men who read the languages of Europe, the dominant languages, such as English and French, who can keep their fellows in touch with present-day movements, and, may we say, perhaps with added emphasis from their own point of view. They have seen during these last few months the failure of the European nations to prevent the terrible aggression and destruction of the last great native race in Africa—the Ethiopians. Hitherto, Great Britain has been regarded as the champion of the African races. Can we expect them to trust the word of the white man in the future as they have done in the past? It will be difficult for them to realise the cause of our



THE DAWN OF PROGRESS.

"BUT HOW AM I TO SEE IT! THEY'VE BLINDED ME."

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failure. They have looked to Great Britain as the mighty conquering nation. How can we let them know that we did our best—it may have been falteringly—to try to lead other nations to the victory of right? We failed, they will see our failure, but they will not be able to grasp our explanation. For them the one who has come through the contest with honour and dignity will be the courteous, and gallant, Emperor of Ethiopia.

What the repercussions among the coloured races may mean, it is impossible to say to-day. Not only in Africa, but in the far-distant parts of the world, the people, looked upon to-day as primitive, have not been unobservant. They have been following this attack on one, as they will believe, of their own smaller nations. *The Times* correspondent, as far back as last October, speaking of the serious riots in the West Indian island of St. Vincent, said, "Officials stated that the Italian attack on Ethiopia had also served to inflame the natives, and for this reason fears were entertained lest the rioting should develop into a racial struggle."

We can understand how such people, conscious of their African ancestry, have felt deeply this attack by a white Power on their last remaining African nation. Sir Hesketh Bell, from his extensive experience as an administrator in Africa, writes :

"Save in the countries on the seaboard, the natives of our Protectorates read no newspapers, and are dependent on rumour and report for a knowledge of what is happening beyond their

borders. In this case they know nothing about the circumstances that have brought about the conflict in Ethiopia. They only know that white men are killing blacks by thousands in East Africa, not on account of any offence committed by them, but with the object of stealing their land. In the Courts of the great Nigerian Emirs, in the compounds of the native traders, in the village market-places throughout tropical Africa, this story of unjust war and aggression is the subject of countless comments and conversations. Indignation, resentment, and distrust are seething in the minds of multitudes of unsophisticated natives, who, in the British territories at all events, have gradually been learning to trust in the justice and honour of the white man. Up to now the loyalty and obedience of the forty millions of Africans who are living under the shelter of our Flag have been a wonderful tribute to the success of our administrations, and nothing must be spared to prevent a reduction of the confidence which those people repose in us. The possession of their lands is the most precious of their rights, and the fear of any reduction of those rights might arouse throughout Africa a conflagration, the results of which no one could foresee. It is therefore of urgent importance that our subject races should be thoroughly persuaded of the complete dissociation with Italy's unjustifiable action. The conflict in Ethiopia should be stopped without delay. And it must be stopped in such a way that it will be clear to the people of Africa that the main principles of justice will not be smothered under

face-saving formulæ, or ambiguous agreements. Collective security is a splendid conception, but what the world needs chiefly is collective justice."

There are some people to-day, with a very superficial knowledge of Africa, who believe that the African races are dying. This is not so. Whatever may be happening to lessen the numbers of the primitive races in many parts of the world to-day, with the coming of medical science, education, and many another effort, mainly carried on through Christian agencies, we have the remarkable fact that some African races are growing at a more rapid rate than certain white races to-day. We cannot look upon the African, as we have looked upon the Red Indian of North America, as a man who is born to disappear before the advance of the white man. The African is living in his own country, a country that is hopeless and almost fatal to certain types of white men; a country that has been his home for millenniums, and will be if the world lasts, for millenniums still. The African is becoming a vigorous man. He is growing intellectually, he is growing in the sciences and arts. He is growing physically, and he is a man who to-day, coming out of his dark forest, is beginning to see that the white man is not the hero that he thought him to be. The African to-day is seeing the cruelty and folly of some of the systems of militarisation that have been imposed, especially by France, on the African. These have introduced misery, malnutrition, tuberculosis, and, as we have it given to us in

statements in the Press, "they have reduced the population of one colony in twenty years from 20 millions to 2½ millions." These things will all make the African think, and now that the last great calamity has befallen his beloved people, he will see in the white man not the friend of days gone by, but the possible tyrant of days to come. Mussolini has proclaimed that he must either "expand or explode." If he must expand, let him prove to the world that his so-called "civilising mission" will make for the enlightenment, the advantage, and the uplift of the people who have unfortunately come under his reign.

There is one aspect of this tragedy that Mussolini has kept in the background, but which we may be sure has not been absent from his thoughts and intentions. This has been given graphically by Mr. Collier, who has been Governor of the Ethiopian Bank for many years, and has been a close friend, confidant, and financial adviser of the Negus. No other Englishman has been so much on the "inside" of Ethiopian affairs. Mr. Collier's opinion as to the problems that are going to face Signor Mussolini in the colonisation of Ethiopia—which the Duce, it is said, intends to re-name Benitoland—is of some interest. "Apart from any personal glory that the Duce may have gained out of the conflict, his conquest of Ethiopia must turn out a very poor bargain indeed," says Mr. Collier. "It will be generations before the cost of the war can be covered, and before Ethiopia can be a sound

economic proposition for Italy. He may, to some degree, gain his point and relieve the congestion in his own country, but whether Italian colonists will be able to become acclimatised to Ethiopian conditions is another matter. What should interest England more than anything else is that Signor Mussolini can recruit, and train, 800,000 of the finest fighters in the world, and thus have at his command the finest Black Army that the world has ever known. The Ethiopians are a war-like race. Given proper arms and training, they will be a tremendously powerful fighting force."

## CHAPTER VIII

### THE NEGUS—EMPEROR AND GENTLEMAN

DURING the great Christian Convention last July, in the beautiful lake-side town of Keswick, England, some four thousand Christian men and women gathered for spiritual refreshment. During that time of fellowship one of the most dramatic appeals for prayer was received. The following cablegram arrived from the Christian Emperor of the last native State in Africa to maintain its independence. It ran :

“THE EMPEROR OF ETHIOPIA EARNESTLY REQUESTS BRITISH ASSIST BY PRAYER TO AVERT CRISIS.”

While Mussolini was compelling his legions to manufacture arms for every form of destructive warfare, the noble Emperor Haile Selassie, like Hezekiah of old, was making his request unto God, and God's people, that the catastrophe which was so seriously threatening his country might be averted, his country delivered from aggression, and peace maintained for his nation. In this incident and appeal we can measure the true value of the character of this Christian ruler.

The courage and ability with which he strove to defend the independence of his country against an overwhelmingly powerful, and singularly brutal, invader has won for him the respect of every nation that has not ceased to admire courage. He stated : " The people of Abyssinia are anxious to do right . . . but throughout their history they have seldom met with foreigners who did not desire to possess themselves of Abyssinian territory, and to destroy their independence. With God's help, and thanks to the courage of our soldiers, we have always, come what might, stood proud and free upon our native mountains."

He has won, as few men have won, the sympathies, and understanding, of the more intelligent of many a race and nation. He was not fighting the battle merely for Ethiopia, but for faith in treaties, and rule by international law.

During the festivities of last Christmas, when Haile Selassie himself had only just escaped the terrible air bombardment, this Christian Emperor conveyed to the people of Britain a tragic message for the Season. This was his message :

" I salute Christian Britain, and wish her people a continuance of that peace, contentment, and goodwill with which the Great Figure whose birth we celebrate to-day endowed them.

" Our own people, whose peaceful, pastoral lives are founded upon that of the gentle Shepherd of the Bible, lift up their hearts to-day towards God, and,

in the spirit of the greatest Peacemaker of all time pray that they may soon be delivered from the horrors of war, and vouchsafed the blessings of peace.

“ We hope that all great Christian nations, such as Britain, will join in that prayer, and that those precious principles of peace and love, the unity of which were sanctified by the life and death of Jesus Christ, may once again be restored throughout the distracted world.”

Well might the *British Weekly* say later, after the Emperor had left his country :

“ The Emperor of Abyssinia leaves the field the noblest Roman of them all ! We cannot recall, in all his dispatches, appeals, cables or messages, one single word which failed in dignity, in self-control, in faith, in patience. He has secured for himself a place on that roll of honour on which those names are written who greatly failed.

“ And even on the material plane it will not be forgotten that for seven months, and unassisted by those floods from heaven, which in more protracted wars were the defence of his country, he kept the field against weapons of war which at their first assault will paralyse any army and people.

“ The Emperor Haile Selassie is now about forty-five years of age, and is a member of the Royal House of Abyssinia. To give him the name by which he was known before his accession, Tafari Makonnen, he is the grandson of the daughter of Sable Selassie, King of Shoa. The Emperor

Menelik was a grandson on the male side of the same Sable Selassie.

“ His wife, the Empress, Itiyi Manen, is a granddaughter of Ras Michael, the ruler of the Wollo Galla. It was Ras Tafari Makonnen who, in 1916, at the head of the Shoan chiefs, revolted, overthrew Lij Yasu, who had become a Moslem, and installed the Empress Zauditu, daughter of Menelik, on the throne; the Emperor then became the Regent. He owes much to his father Ras Makonnen, a man of education and enlightenment. As a boy Haile Selassie was educated by the French Catholic Mission in Harar. He speaks and writes French fluently. A man of keen wit and unbounded energy, he often worked sixteen hours out of the twenty-four. To-day he is respected. Though in the past he has had many critical situations, he has consolidated his power year by year, and if he had been permitted to do so, would certainly have led his country to a new revival of learning and industry.”

Soon after the outbreak of the terrible war, two hundred Abyssinian merchants, carrying huge bags of Marie Theresa dollars, arrived at the capital, Addis Ababa. They offered the Emperor the equivalent of £10,000 to fight the Italians. The Emperor added the money to his secret war fund.

The delegation, which included Arabs, assembled in front of the palace. All were armed with rifles. Their spokesman said :

“ O Sovereign, take this, our mite in gold, as a contribution to save our dear Fatherland. But, O

mighty, conquering Lion of Judah, take also our lives as an offering on the altar of freedom. We would gladly die for you so that the nation may live."

The Emperor was deeply moved. Speaking from the balcony of the palace, he replied :

"When you offer your gold for the defence of your common Fatherland, you render a national service. But when you also offer me your lives as a sacrifice to save the Empire, you perform an even more precious act.

"I see no difference between you and the soldiers already on the battlefield. I accept your money and your blood : neither shall be spent in vain. By your patriotic action to-day you add another link to the great chain of unity and loyalty forged round the throne since the enemy threatened our independence."

The merchants then entered the palace, where the Emperor thanked each one personally. Many of them enrolled in the army. Others begged the Emperor to take them with him to Dessie.

Ras Tafari, as he was at first known, knew what he wanted in the way of reforms. So did the band of elder statesmen who were his advisers in those days. Their watchword was "progress by gradual stages." Tafari's services for Ethiopia have been conducted during the present crisis with patience and address only equalled by his skill.

An Ethiopian from the Tigrè is reported to have said : "People say Haile Selassie never fails. Every aim he has set himself he has triumphantly

fulfilled. Little by little, despite all opposition, reforms have been carried through which have united behind the Emperor all classes of national minorities, which were formerly oppressed by the ruling Amhara."

In 1930, the Parliamentary institution he introduced gave the beginning of political representation. In the judicial field, the courts were remodelled, judges paid, records kept, fees reduced, and a right of appeal established even to the Emperor himself, who sat twice a week in the capital. He alone can pronounce the death penalty. The criminal law has been codified. While such reforms won the support of broad masses, the development of a modern system of education has advanced the younger generation.

In many other fields, too, the drive for progress has been evident. Hospitals, roads, bridges, modern prisons, Chambers of Commerce, all speak of their part in the creation of this new spirit of progress.

Some years ago, Haile Selassie founded a newspaper which up to the time of Italian occupation appeared regularly. The title was not without interest. He called it *Light and Peace*. With great astuteness he has gradually wrought changes in the ancient feudal order, as one who knows what is right.

Little is known of the vast Ethiopian plateau which slopes gradually down from Addis Ababa to the Sudan frontier. Its obscurity has been preserved, first by an innate distrust of Europeans, often resulting in barbarity towards travellers, and secondly, by a system of feudal autocracy, which, for

long, frustrated attempts by the Central Government to improve communications.

In the present crisis, however, it is on these Central and Western provinces, and not on the better-known Eastern districts, that the integrity of Ethiopia will ultimately depend. Their potential mineral and agricultural wealth is far greater than is generally supposed; their reserve of man-power enormous, and their loyalty to the Central Government (in face of outside danger) surprisingly firm.

Mr. W. F. Deedes, the *Morning Post* Special Correspondent, writes :

“ In Addis Ababa, among all nationalities and most shades of political opinion, Haile Selassie is considered to be the outstanding figure of his country, not merely as titular head of the State, but by reason of his personal qualities. That is a statement which now may be made anywhere in Addis Ababa, and at a time when no two people agree on the many aspects of the Italo-Ethiopian dispute, it will rest uncontradicted.

“ Throughout the greatest crisis which has ever faced his country, the Emperor has conducted himself and his affairs in a manner which has aroused respect, if not always admiration, among all sections of intelligent opinion. Certainly, there would seem to be no other man in Ethiopia who could have accomplished it. Whatever view is taken of the affair as a whole, the Emperor's dignified handling of the Ethiopian end of the controversy, and at the same time his control of the wilder elements of his followers, is indeed remarkable.

“Those who imagine that the Emperor was guided to the point of being unduly influenced by his advisers and ministers are mistaken. One man had the last word in the affairs of this country—and that was the Emperor himself. In the last few months no man has worked harder in the direct interests of his country, yet, so far as I am aware, he never fell foul of any European diplomat in Addis Ababa, and held the respect of them all. In circumstances which might have driven an experienced European statesman to political disaster, or worse, the Emperor of this essentially undeveloped country has maintained his balance, his dignity, and his grip.

“Is there any other city in the world which could have been kept so quiet, so free from incident of any kind, under similar conditions to those which have existed in Addis Ababa during the last few months?

“The Emperor’s qualities are not easily analysed or defined. Individuals who have met him, who know him intimately, who have interviewed him, who have conducted business with him, can find no one single great quality to which they attribute his high standing and abilities. An American business man, after several interviews with the Emperor, said to me: ‘I can conduct more business with him in two hours than I can accomplish in fifteen hours on Wall Street, where exist all the telephones, telegraphs, and paraphernalia in the world for the transaction of rapid business.’

“A diplomat in Addis Ababa expressed it thus :

‘As a politician in any cabinet in Western Europe, including Great Britain, the Emperor would have won a name for himself, and would have made his influence felt by his quick brain and ability to get things done.’

“Beyond a peradventure, when the history of the last tragic months come to be written impartially, the figure of the Emperor of Ethiopia will tower high and well differentiated from those of his contemporaries. Puny European politicians, unable to see farther than the contingencies of the day, will fade into a confused background.

‘At every stage of the Geneva discussion, vitiated by procrastination and postponement, his messages rang out clear-cut masterpieces of logic, of rectitude, and of statesmanship.

“Under great difficulties, against a merciless foe who had prepared the attack for nearly twenty months, he, whilst ably directing the military campaign, maintained undying faith in Collective Security, that last sheet-anchor of safety against Fascist war.”

It is from such a statesman that the following challenge to the West has come :

“Do the peoples of the world not yet realise that by fighting on until the bitter end, I am not only performing my sacred duty to my people, but standing guard in the last citadel of collective security? Are they too blind to see that I have my responsibilities to the whole of humanity to face?”

“I must still hold on until my tardy allies appear.

And if they never come, I say, prophetically and without bitterness, 'the West will perish.'"

In another speech, delivered in the Throne Room of the Imperial Palace to an assembly of ministers, dignitaries, and journalists, the Emperor said :

"During our reign, our duty is to guide Abyssinia towards her high and noble destiny. As you know, the Imperial Abyssinian Government has not ceased to treat with consideration the interests of foreign Governments and citizens without making any distinction of nationality, while providing for the development of the country.

"It has done nothing to lessen Italian interests or prestige.

"Ethiopia places her hope especially in England and France. We know that great and noble England has always defended the rights of nations of different races and continents. We know also that France, with a proud and glorious past, cultivates the equal rights of brotherhood and liberty which forms the basis of her Government, and which is the basis of the League of Nations as well as great and small countries."

The speeches that have appeared in the Press will enhance the statesmanlike character of the Emperor of Abyssinia. Again we listen to his decisive words :

"Any discussions about peace with Italy at the present moment would be futile. Nobody desires peace more than I, but this subject cannot even be discussed while the invaders remain on our soil.

"I have been informed, that practically all the nations of the world are in sympathy with us, but I

know only too well that we ourselves must fight to save Abyssinia.

“ I do not predict victory, but knowing that God is with us, I can say that victory is still possible for Abyssinia. Opportunities still exist for the eventual triumph of our country.

“ The Ethiopian people are greatly attached to peace, but they also have a great love of country, and despite their disarmed condition, they will know how to oppose every aggression. The Ethiopian peasants are jealous of their independence and know how to use the sword and spear when it is a question of defending the lands they cultivate. We do not want war, but we will not undergo it without resistance.

“ Ethiopia has confidence in God, and knows that His justice transcends that of man. She knows also that the cunning weapons and modern methods of man to destroy their fellows have never been the symbol of civilisation.”

The Emperor concluded by declaring that his country had always fulfilled all her international obligations, and wished with all her heart that an honourable and peaceful settlement would be secured under the auspices of the League Council.

The respect, and even love, that Haile Selassie receives from those who serve him has been well described by Captain Brophil, late of the Leinster Regiment, who acted as Transport Officer for the Ambulance organised by Lady Barton, the wife of the British Ambassador. He recounted :

“ We were inspected by the Emperor, and he was

immensely pleased with the whole turn-out. He is the most wonderful man I have probably ever met. I have been with him under all circumstances, always calm and collected and so gentle. When history comes to be written, the name of Haile Selassie will stand out as one of the greatest men of his age. Having once met him, and soldiered under him, you are Haile Selassie's man for ever. He has that power of getting people for himself. He is always the Emperor, and at the same time kind and thoughtful. He saw to the smallest details for our comfort, looking into everything, although he had the weight of Abyssinia on his shoulders. As I see it, the difference between Haile Selassie and Mussolini is that one is a hero, the other a butcher with a lust to kill."

"Did you see anything of the Emperor's reforms?" I asked.

"Oh, yes," said Captain Brophil. "I wanted to know about them. I learned that, at his own expense, he had sent the cleverest youths he could find for training at European Universities in law, medicine, veterinary, architecture—all the professions. These young men were to be the groundwork of the future Ethiopian State. Unfortunately they had to be called back from their studies to the war. I met many of them—the two sons of Dr. Martin, the Minister here in London, the sons of the Minister of Foreign Affairs, the sons of the chiefs and others—all fine young fellows.

"As to the buying and selling of slaves the Italians write of, I saw no sign of it, but I saw servi-

tude. They are the personal servants of the chiefs attached to the families, and are given land, fed and clothed. I wondered, when I saw how they live, whether there is not more slavery in living on the dole here in London than under their conditions."

The Emperor, after he had found it advisable to leave the capital of Addis Ababa and had arrived in Jerusalem on 9th May, stated :

" A nation which has placed its complete faith in the League—of which Abyssinia is still a member—cannot believe that the League will not seek reparation against another member which has been condemned as the aggressor.

" We ask that justice be done to protect a weak nation against a stronger."

On 10th May the Emperor addressed the following letter to the Secretary-General of the League of Nations for communication to the Council :

" We request you to be so good as to convey the following to the member-States. We have decided to put an end to the most sweeping, the most unjust, and the most inhuman war of modern times by leaving the country in order to avoid the extermination of the Abyssinian people and to be able to devote ourselves freely and peacefully to the preservation of the age-old independence of Abyssinia and the principles of collective security, and the sanctity of international obligations, all of which are threatened by Italy. From the outset we have made every effort to avoid the disturbance of peace ; we have loyally defended our soil until, as a result

of Italy's raining of gas, it became obvious that our resistance could not be continued, and that, in any case, that resistance could only lead to the extermination of the Abyssinian people, and we now ask the League of Nations to pursue its efforts to ensure the respect of the Covenant and to decide not to recognise territorial extensions or the exercise of an alleged sovereignty resulting from illegal recourse to armed force, and many other violations of international obligations.

“ HAILE SELASSIE I, *Emperor.*”

Amidst all the responsibility that has rested upon him as Emperor, statesman, and leader of his people, he has been the one who has sought to lift them out of their low estate, and to set their feet on the rung of the ladder towards a Christian civilisation. In the midst of all this burden of duties, Haile Selassie has been the steadfast and loyal co-operator with every effort making for the uplift of his people, the evangelisation of the races, the restoration of health and strength, of body and of soul. During recent years—not more than fifteen—there has been an immense advance in this effort at the evangelisation of Ethiopia. Some eight Christian Missionary Societies have opened service in the country. Educational, medical, and many other spheres of service have been given freely and gladly by those who have dedicated their lives to this worthy cause. They have known that in the Emperor they had one who was with them, heart and soul, in the service of Jesus Christ.

Now that he has gone, though it may be only

temporarily, from his own country, we can but recall with gladness the testimony that he has left behind. Not merely as to his personal character, but as to the encouragement he has given to all efforts for the advance of his nation. Amongst those societies who have done the most for Ethiopia is the Sudan Interior Mission. Recently a resolution was passed by the Society expressing its love for, and sympathy with, and confidence in His Majesty, Haile Selassie :

“ With grave

Aspect he rose, and in his rising seem'd

A pillar of state ; deep on his front engraven

Deliberation sat ; and public care

And princely counsel in his face yet shone

Majestic, though in ruin. . . .”

Milton's *Paradise Lost*.

“ The anguish of recent months, crushing defeat, and exile have not yet broken the spirit of Emperor Haile Selassie, nor altered his proud bearing, nor robbed him of his Imperial dignity and calm,” writes a *Morning Post* representative recently in Abyssinia.

The small figure which stood upright, silent, and motionless before a sofa in a gold and white reception-room at No. 6, Prince's Gate, received representatives of the British and foreign Press with the same majestic serenity which he had showed months ago on similar occasions in the Imperial Palace at Addis Ababa.

Trappings and finery of State were absent, yet his presence was not less impressive. His face is now pinched, and sharper ; his hair has thinned a little ; and his remarkable eyes, though still strong and

steady, at moments betray the great weariness which must be afflicting him.

But his bearing is still unchanged, his shoulders are still square and held high, his features, always expressionless on public occasions, are still able to mask all emotion he may feel. The military cloak, well-polished riding boots, and spurs have gone. A dark cloak covered the neat navy blue suit and chamma.

As the Emperor received his guests in the bright, finely decorated suite of his temporary London home, it seemed inevitable that his memory should recall him to those same occasions, not long ago, when, in like circumstances, the world's Press had stood about him in his own palace.

As we filed through the doorway to stand grouped in the familiar semicircle around him, it was clear that the irony of the situation was not lost to him. To a few of us he gave the slightest nod, and faintest smile of recognition.

He remained still and silent, while beside him an official began to read a statement :

“ We have never desired war. It was imposed upon us. . . .” The Emperor rested, absolutely motionless, his eyes staring straight before him.

“ Devasted fields and ruined villages . . . the bodies of the aged and of the women and children. . . .” The Emperor's unblinking eyes slowly swept the assembly before him. He was still erect, his hands folded before him in the sleeves of his loose black cape.

“ . . . Cannot in silence and indifference be destroyed without subjecting humanity to the triumph and rule of force over right. . . . ”

We are confident that the wishes of the Emperor, repeatedly given, and the prayers of God's people on behalf of his country rather than himself, will be not only continued, but intensified. The Emperor himself realises that the hope for his country's future can only be won as his people lay bare their hearts and souls before God. He is indeed anxious that any resurrection of his country should come, not through the action of statesmen, not through the promise of so-called civilised nations, but through the steadfast bowing of his people before the true and living God. In and through God alone can come the redemption of Ethiopia. Then should we add, and add with all our hearts, emphasis to that notable appeal of Haile Selassie himself, for his people before God, that was so strikingly illustrated on the first opportunity that he had of making it on his accession in 1928. One of his first public acts, on being crowned King of Ethiopia, was to issue a series of stamps with the striking appeal of the Psalmist—“ Ethiopia shall extend her hands unto God,” as the words mean in the Amharic language. In the adoption of his own name and title of Haile Selassie he recognised that his strength came alone from God. Haile Selassie—the Power of the Trinity. This was significant, both of his personal character, and of his ideals for his people.

## CHAPTER IX

### THE HEALING TOUCH

THE call from Ethiopia reached the ears and won the hearts of two devoted medical missionaries, Dr. Lambie and his wife. Some twenty years ago, stretching out into the unknown, Dr. Lambie founded a mission station and hospital at Nasser, in the Sudan, near the Ethiopian frontier. He describes how on clear days he could see the rocky mountain-peaks of that country. He records, "We looked towards that peak, and prayed. One day there came to us an Ethiopian official, on a boundary-limitation commission, who wanted two things—medicine and an Ethiopian Bible. We were able to provide the first, and we promised to send the second. He said, 'Why do you spend your time among these ignorant blacks? Come up to us, and help us in Ethiopia.'" This invitation left its mark. Later, two other invitations came. They were unable to accept them at the time, but the call remained in the memory and never wholly died away. His story is an inspiration; it continues :

"There is perhaps no country where a medical diploma acts more efficiently as an entrance *passé*

*porte* than Ethiopia. It is little wonder that foreigners are suspect in that ancient land, for many who have come to her from the outside world with kind words and fair promises have remained to cheat and plunder; but somehow they classify doctors differently, and it is my earnest aim to try to live up to the high opinion that they have formed of our profession.

“Over sixteen years ago, after having spent twelve years in the Anglo-Egyptian Sudan at Khartoum, and at a remote and needy place on the Sobat River, treating annually tens of thousands of cases, my wife and I received an invitation to Ethiopia to help with the ‘flu’ epidemic. Ethiopia was then a closed land to missionary enterprise, in fact, in all the land there was one single lone Protestant worker. Thus, medicine was once again the spear point, or the camel’s nose, or whatever you choose to call it. Thousands of Gallas and Amharas were treated in western Ethiopia and had the Gospel preached to them. Most of the population seemed to need syphilitic injections. Pneumonia and typhus were rampant. The ‘flu’ epidemic had passed off before we arrived.

“A small hospital was commenced and a mission station established, and we found that the tree-worshipping Gallas seemed to have a real hunger for the Word of God. Others came to fill our places, and we decided to take the long overland trip to Addis Ababa, the capital. *En route* we stopped at Gorè and treated Ras Nado, who came in the middle

of the night with excruciating earache. From his ear I extracted a tiny, black, wood-boring beetle, which his soldiers solemnly assured him, if not removed, would have bored its way through his head and caused death! In spite of all I said to the contrary, he believed them, and wrote a letter to the Regent, His Majesty Ras Tafari, which preceded us and helped us to get to the ear of Royalty! His Majesty begged us to build a hospital in Addis Ababa, and in answer to much earnest prayer alone, for no one was asked for a penny, one man gave £14,000 and others gave nearly as much again, and the hospital was built to the glory of God. Thousands have been treated and discharged cured. Some have died. Thousands have had the Gospel preached to them. The hospital is modern in every respect. Station after station has been opened in these few years. A large Leprosarium has recently been built and is running at full capacity all the time. The corner-stone was laid by His Majesty himself on the 15th November, 1932, in the presence of Sir Sidney Barton and Mr. Southard, the diplomatic representatives of Great Britain and America. The corner-stone was engraved: 'Jesus Christ Himself being the chief corner-stone.'

“ ‘WITH GOD ALL THINGS ARE POSSIBLE’ ”

“ ‘Love ever gives—forgives—outlives,  
And ever stands with open hands;  
And while it lives, it gives;  
For this is love's prerogative  
To give—and give—and give.’ ”

A splendid medical work has also been going on at Soddu, Wollamo, one of the populous southern capitals.

“Were there enough doctors, Ethiopia might be opened to the Gospel from end to end, for where a doctor goes several other missionaries can go. We cannot escape the fact that there is a tremendous disparity between the numbers of young medical students who volunteer for the mission field, and those who actually get there. If the number of doctors on the foreign field could be trebled and their spirituality was in proportion, something tremendous would result.”

## CHAPTER X

### THE WORD OF LIFE

THE Church Missionary Society, in 1825, in seeking to strengthen its work in Egypt, sent out five young German missionaries from Basle. In an effort to extend beyond Egypt, Samuel Gobat and Christian Kugler reached Tigré, where they were received with kindness. From this time may be reckoned the advent of modern missionary effort into Ethiopia. As there was much illiteracy among the people, an early effort was made to introduce such portions of Scripture as were available in the languages of the people. The Psalter and the New Testament were ready in Ethiopic, and were used in the Church services, but not in the vernacular. In 1820 William Jowett discovered a manuscript of a Bible in Amharic. It consisted of no less than 9,539 pages, and it was purchased by the British and Foreign Bible Society.

Another acquisition was a part of the New Testament. These were eagerly received by the chiefs. "The common people offering a yoke, or two, of oxen or more valuable property to obtain a copy." It is believed there are still many old and valuable manuscripts preserved in the monasteries of Ethiopia—some, it is claimed, go as far back as the second century.

To-day, while Amharic is the official tongue, Tigrinya prevails in the north. In the south four dialects of Galla are used. Ethiopic or Geez was once the official language. This has now been largely replaced by Amharic. During the fourth and fifth centuries A.D., the Bible was translated from the Septuagint into the Ethiopic. It is due to this fact that the Ethiopic Christian Church was able to maintain its independence while the Christian Church of North Africa was overrun by Islam in the seventh and eighth centuries. That North African Church succumbed because the people had not the Bible in their mother tongue; but only in the classic languages of Latin and Greek.

Throughout the country there are some twenty languages, into which the Bible, or some part, has been translated, and of which copies are now being sold.

We have a remarkable story from Abyssinia given by Dr. T. A. Lambie, F.R.G.S.

“Printed statistics can never give an adequate appraisal of a work of God. We view with profound gratification the reports of millions of Bibles and Gospels sold, and of new translations into many languages, but it sometimes happens in the providence of God that a single copy of the Bible, to an obedient heart, becomes a sword of infinitely more value than ten thousand Bibles would do in the hands of cold and indifferent Christians.

“In the 1890's there lived at Sakota, in northern

Ethiopia, a certain Mohammedan, Sheik Zacharias. Through some Providence an Arabic Bible came into his hands, and the Holy Spirit so blessed the reading of it, that he yielded himself to the Lord Jesus Christ and was soundly converted.

“ He then had to decide whether he would join the Coptic Church, which seemed to him so different from the simplicity of the Gospel, or whether he would be a Bible Christian, following the Book as the Holy Spirit revealed it to him. He decided to follow God’s Word whatever the cost. As a result both Coptic Christians and Mohammedans became his enemies, but God honoured his faith and through his witness hundreds of Mohammedans in northern Ethiopia turned to Christ.

“ The Emperor Menelik gave Sheik Zacharias a writ of tolerance which afforded these Christians a certain amount of freedom, but their persecutors found ways of getting round it.

“ As the Bible was read and pondered over by Sheik Zacharias it became indeed the Word of God to him. He received it, he believed it, and, most important of all, he obeyed it and, beginning from his home at Sakota, he preached it with glorious results.

“ Zacharias never saw a Christian missionary. The Spirit of God alone was the interpreter of what he read. He made the Bible his guide. His fellow Mohammedans raved and persecuted, but he held true.

“The nearby Coptic Christians had never heard of such a thing as a Mohammedan becoming a follower of Christ, and they were greatly incensed when he did not join with them. The Bible was his teacher, and as much of what was done in the Coptic Church had no authorisation in the Bible, he preferred to walk in, what he believed to be, the Scriptural way. In so doing he incurred enmity, and was persecuted.

“Many Mohammedans followed him, so that it became almost a mass movement, hundreds, even thousands, becoming Christians, and all through one copy of God’s Word. In course of time Zacharias died, and the flames of persecution, which had somewhat subsided during the last years of his life, through the influence of the Emperor Menelik, who had issued a writ of tolerance, were kindled afresh.”

“In 1924,” Dr. Lambie says, “I was in Addis Ababa. A young man approached me one day, and briefly his story was this. He, Yusef, was the successor of Zacharias. They were having great trouble. When things got too bad they had special seasons of prayer, and then matters improved. They had heard of the arrival of the missionaries and hoped that some would come to them, but none had come. At that time they were in much distress, as their local ruler had accepted a bribe from their enemies. He had been deputed to come to the capital to see what he could do, but he had been unable to see the Regent—His Majesty Ras Tafari.

Could we help? If only he could get to the big man, he felt something could be done."

"Could we help? No, we couldn't, but God could. We therefore told Yusef to pray, and we would see what God would do. He was to return on the Friday and await events. On the Friday His Gracious Majesty had consented to honour our home by dining with us, and His Excellency Sir Charles Bentinck, the newly appointed minister to Addis Ababa, was also to honour our table. His Majesty came in great state with 2,000 men. At luncheon we talked of the future state, and whether we should know our loved ones in heaven. With the presence of an eminent Christian diplomat like Sir Charles Bentinck such a conversation was natural and easy.

"After dinner, while sipping our coffee, I committed what might be regarded as a social breach in asking His Majesty if he would consent to see a man, a friend of mine. He graciously consented, and Yusef was shown in. He told his story and exhibited an ancient parchment, the writ of tolerance given to Zacharias by Menelik. 'Your Majesty, these people may not be Christians in your mode or mine, but I believe they are true Christians, and if you could help them I believe God would bless you.' 'I can and I will,' was his terse reply. An officer was summoned, some orders were given, and a few days later Yusef went on his way rejoicing."

For some time things went better, though no missionaries were able to go and help them as Yusef had begged. Grievous wolves have come

in and harried the little flock. Then again persecution broke out, and one night Yusef was shot and killed, thus joining the company of those martyred for the sake of the Lord Jesus.

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The following letter from the Emperor of Ethiopia indicated his intense interest in the open Bible for his people.

Writing to the Secretary of the Scripture Gift Mission recently, Mr. Alfred Buxton quoted the following letter, written to him by the Emperor of Ethiopia as he was under the stress of starting almost immediately for the front line :

“ We have received copies of your Gospel of St. John. Understanding that 1,000 unbound Gospels are urgently needed for the good of the people, we have telephoned concerning them to the Foreign Minister. By this time you may have received them. Our great desire is that this plan might be carried out, and that the Books might reach our camp for the use of the soldiers.”

Missionaries, prepared by long and effective training, are engaged in carrying to Ethiopia a Bible-Christianity which should prove a new inspiration to the Christian Church already in that land, and win Moslems and Pagans to the freedom and light which is in Christ Jesus.

The welcome that was given by the Emperor and high State officials, and also by the Church, afforded to these missionaries great encouragement. In the compound at the head station in Addis

Ababa the Bible is systematically studied every morning, about a dozen Ethiopian men attending regularly, many of them men of position and influence. On all sides there is evidence that Ethiopia hungers for Christ and is definitely stretching out her hands to God.

Mrs. Alfred Buxton, who had lately returned after six months' work in Addis Ababa, reported as follows :

“ In these days of crisis Ethiopia has turned, not so much to Armaments as to Prayer. From my room in Addis Ababa I used to watch every morning the gathering of the next compound for prayer. Together the Ethiops would stand in a semicircle round the door of the hut, and pray—this was by commandment of His Majesty the Emperor. Soon the air was full of the cry of prayer going up from other compounds around. God has never yet turned away from outstretched hands. Will He not answer these prayers and give to a nation now free the continuance of its own national existence and crown that existence with peace, especially at this time when the leaders of the Nation are welcoming with open hands the emancipating and uplifting Gospel of Jesus Christ.”

In a letter received from Harrar we read :

“ Spiritually, as well as politically, these are momentous days for Ethiopia. One has only to examine the spiritual status of a country like Eritrea to appreciate what havoc would most likely be wrought in this land were Italy allowed to sweep in on all sides. To those of us who are on the

spot, it seems that the spiritual 'check-mate' to the Roman system—assuming for a moment the inroad of Italy—will be an enormous literacy campaign, together with an intensive distribution of portions of the Word of God. Ethiopia is eager to know the Way of Life; hundreds of soldiers have flocked into our compound during these past few weeks anxious to procure cheap editions of the Gospels, and there is no saying what the fruits of Scripture distribution will be. Give Ethiopia the Word of God. Let evil in the guise of Rome, or anything else, come along—and nothing shall be able to move the spiritual welfare of a people who are founded on The Rock which liveth and abideth for ever."

The following is a literal translation of an address given at one of our Gospel Meetings by a boy who recently accepted Christ in the Government Boys' School:

"Respected Fathers and Brethren; whenever we assemble weekly to hear the life story of our Saviour Jesus Christ, which is sweeter than milk or honey, people read, explain, and feed us from the passages which please them most. Young I am in age and knowledge, but following the example of the Apostle Paul, who said, 'I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ,' I venture to speak boldly among you, my Fathers, and to set before you the 'Glad Tidings' of our Saviour as I was taught by my teachers. I assure you that you will get something useful out of what I say if you will listen with a clear conscience."

## EPILOGUE

### ETHIOPIA PRAYER LEAGUE

THE Ethiopia Prayer League was formed in 1935 for the purpose of mobilising Prayer for the Evangelisation of Ethiopia. Its members receive guidance in their intercessions by means of a Monthly Prayer Bulletin, which gives news of the missionary labours of all Societies, including the translation and diffusion of the Word of God among the diverse peoples living in that land. The Italian aggression does not make the call to prayer less urgent than when the League was formed. On the contrary, its constant appeal to God for the continuance of effective Gospel witness by means of every Evangelical agency and through the faithful work of Ethiopian Christians is manifestly of strategic value in the present conditions.

The following Resolution was publicly read to His Majesty Haile Selassie in the presence of 400 guests gathered to do him honour at the Ethiopian Legation, 5 Princes Gate, London, on 9th June, 1936.

“ To His Imperial Majesty Haile Selassie.

“ May it please your Majesty. The members of

the Ethiopia Prayer League beg leave to take occasion of your visit to this City to offer their deep sympathy with your Majesty, and with your family and Kingdom in the profound distress and sorrow which has befallen.

“ The Ethiopia Prayer League has set itself to plead with the living God that your Majesty may be divinely sustained in, and brought victoriously through, this present fiery trial.

“ The League has observed with sincere gratitude your Majesty's deep concern for the spiritual welfare of your people in granting every facility for the diffusion of God's Holy Word and for furthering the labours of the messengers of our Lord Jesus Christ throughout your Empire.

“ The League continues its ministry of intercession on behalf of your Majesty's Empire and people in the confident hope that the sovereignty of God over all peoples, and His justice and judgment in human affairs, will be abundantly vindicated.”

In a gracious reply to this Resolution, His Majesty expressed his gratitude for the prayers of God's people on behalf of his family and people, and added that great as was the need of prayer in time of peace, it was more necessary that prayer should be intensified and widened in the present distress of Ethiopia.

It may be that multitudes of Christians would wish to help Ethiopia in the present crisis ; the *greatest*

*help that can be rendered is earnest, importunate believing prayer.*

The Ethiopia Prayer League has been formed to enlist and encourage prayer during the time of Ethiopia's need, and to supply information concerning the missionary situation in that land. The issues involved are not primarily economic, territorial, or racial, but spiritual. Progress of the Gospel in Ethiopia during the past seven years has been, possibly, without precedent in the history of missions. Now, at a time when evangelism is being intensified from Lalibella in the north to Bulke in the south, when a revision of the whole Bible in Amharic is in progress, when the blind are being taught to read, when the sick are being healed, and hospitals and churches planted, invasion threatens to jeopardise, or at least hinder, missionary work. About 100 missionaries, however, are remaining at their posts, and look for prayer-support during these crucial days. Particulars from Mr. Ernest E. Grimwood, 18 John Street, Bedford Row, W.C.1., Hon. Secretary and Treasurer of The Ethiopia Prayer League.

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The Christian Missionary Societies operating in Abyssinia to-day are : The Church Mission to the Jews ; The Sudan Interior Mission ; The Bible Churchman's Missionary Society ; The American Presbyterian Mission ; The Swedish Evangelical Mission ; The Seventh Day Adventists.