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WINNETKA



MISSION WORKERS WIN BELGIAN DECORATION

Parents of Mrs. Robert Coit Meleney Spend 40 Years in Modernizing the Congo

(Contributed)

Rev. and Mrs. Joseph Clark, parents of Mrs. Robert Coit Meleney, 1097 Oak street, on furlough from their mission field in Africa, have been signally honored. "For long and valuable service" among the nations of the Belgian Congo, Albert, King of the Belgians, has conferred upon each of them the dec-

oration of the Royal Order of the Lion. It will befit this fearless couple, who in 40 years have seen tribe after tribe pass from cannibalism to the printing press and the sewing machine. Truly a tremendous change. Yet no greater than the accompanying exchange of witch-doctor for clergyman and totem for cross. The work of the modern missionary includes the "arts of civilization"—schooling, trade and medical care. These learned, the emergence from paganism is inevitable. Mr. Clark is a master craftsman. Mrs. Clark was trained in the Glasgow Medical Mission.

It was by Livingston, the hero of Scotland, in Mr. Clark's boyhood, that the missionary was inspired to become a missionary. How well he was fitted to undertake such work is shown in the fact that he is being returned to the Congo, though beyond the age of retirement. He knew Stanley, entertained him, in fact, for several days in 1887, and repudiates the charge that the famous explorer left a trail of bleaching bones behind him. "He was severe with his white men," says Mr. Clark, "but kind to the natives of his expedition."

One thing Americans have not learned, adds Mr. Clark, is that the exploitation of the Congo is a thing of the past. He admires the spirit with which the Belgian parliament is going about the establishment of an orderly government in this, its first colony. "Only one, but a lion," may well be said of this gigantic territory. He feels that an honest effort is being made to ensure the welfare and uplift of the natives. This tribute to Belgian rule is the more significant because Mr. Clark was one of those who in the early 90's protested the atrocities of King Leopold's misrule in the same domain. His protest was embodied in a report to Elihu Root at the latter's request.

The Clarks will return to Africa during the summer. At present they are vacationing in California.

Mr. and Mrs. Henry A. Gardner of 844 Bryant avenue are spending several weeks of the early spring season in White Sulphur Springs at the Green Brier hotel.

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