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THE HUGUENOT COLLEGE  
AND SEMINARIES,  
SOUTH AFRICA.

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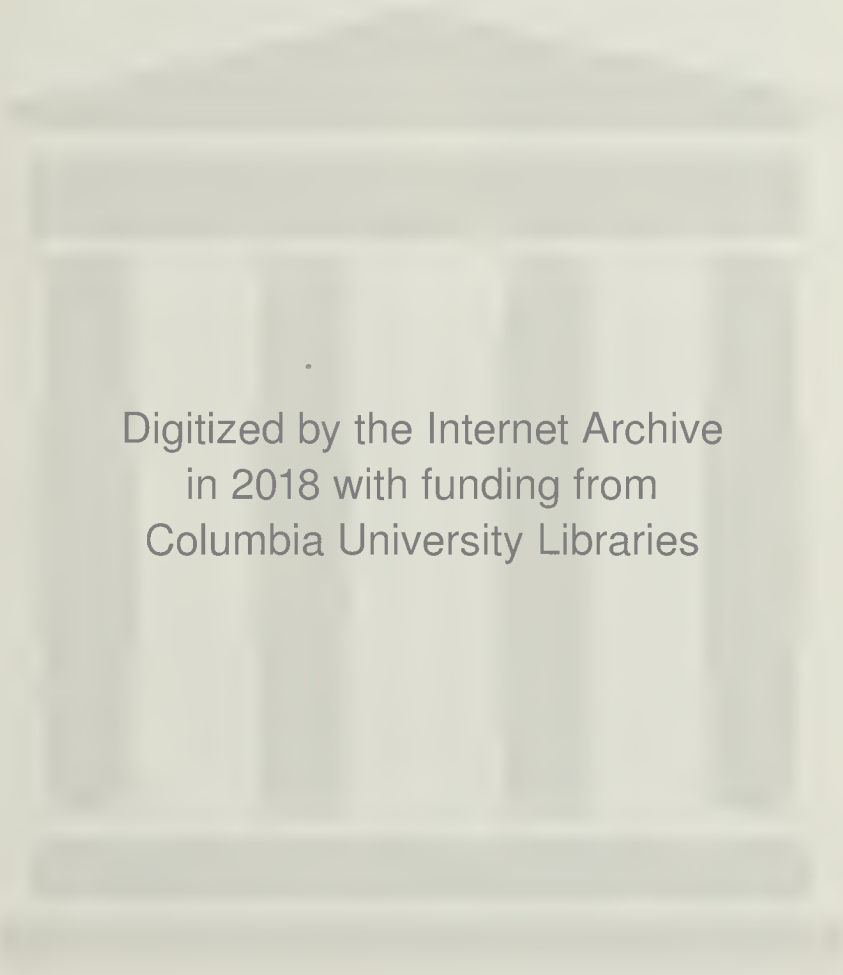


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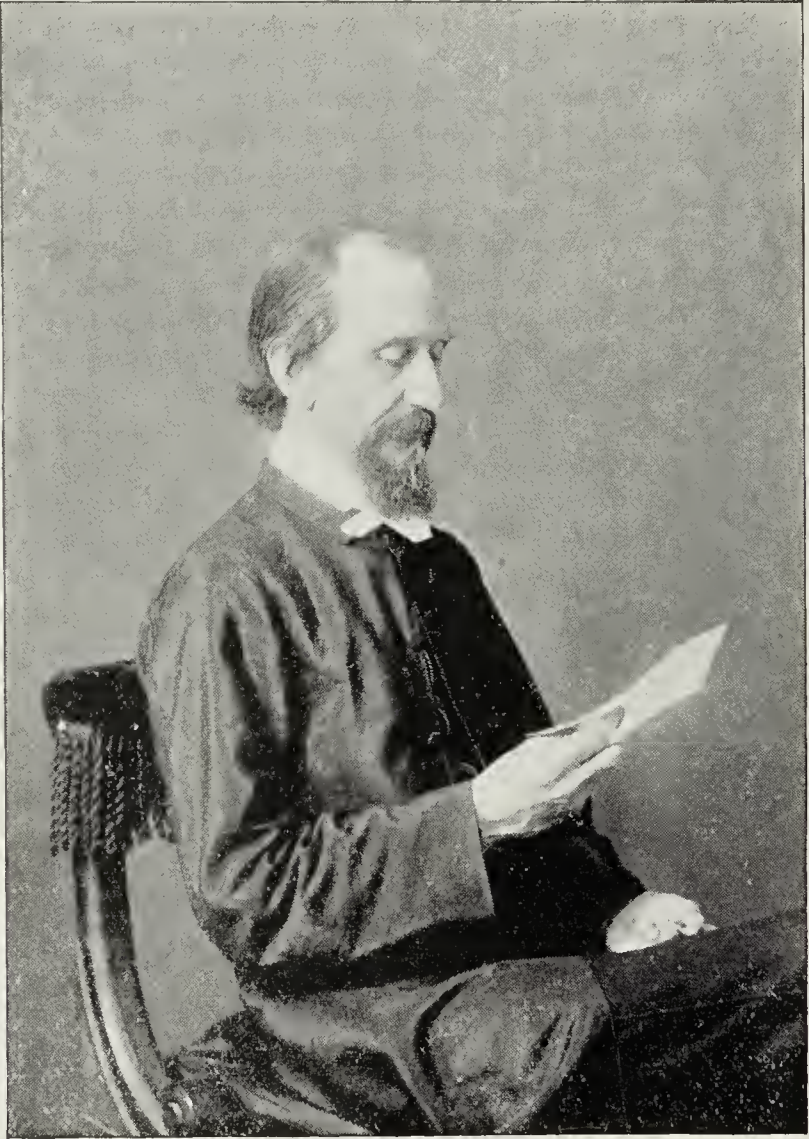
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THE MERIDEN GRAVURE CO.  
MERIDEN, CONN.

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In much sincerity  
your blessed friend  
Andrew Murray

THE  
HUGUENOT COLLEGE  
AND  
SEMINARIES,  
SOUTH AFRICA.

\* *“The Light of the Cape of Good Hope.”*

“If you want to serve your race,” said Mary Lyon, “go where no one else will go, and do what no one else will do.”

We propose to draw in profile the outline of one of the most wonderful and fascinating stories of modern times, the narrative of the founding of the Huguenot College at Wellington, Cape Colony.

Wellington, forty-six miles from Cape Town, is a gem set in a ring of mountains—the Drakenstein and Paarl ranges. It is now more than two centuries since some three hundred Huguenots, who had fled from France to Holland after the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes, accepted the invitation of the Dutch East India Company and settled at the Cape. What the

\* This sketch is taken from “The Miracles of Missions, No. XVIII.” written by Rev. A. T. Pierson, D. D., for the “Missionary Review of the World,” June, 1891. A few changes are made to bring it up to date, June, 1894.

Puritans were to America, these devoted refugees became to South Africa.

By law Dutch was the language of the colony; and so in a few generations, the French ceased to be their language and almost the nationality of these refugees was lost. Early in this century the colony passed into the hands of Great Britain, and the Dutch Reformed churches, already established, became largely supplied with Scotch Presbyterian pastors.

One of these was Rev. Andrew Murray, who was settled over the congregation at Graaff Reinet. He married a Germano-Huguenot lady, and five of their sons became ministers of the Gospel in the colony, and four of their daughters the wives of ministers. The second son, also called Andrew, is the pastor of the church at Wellington, and the now famous author of the most precious devotional books which perhaps during the past half century have been issued from the English press.

This man of God, Andrew Murray, over twenty years ago, buried two young children at his African home; and as Mrs. Murray expressed it, "their hands seemed emptied and ready for some work with which the Lord was waiting to fill them." The bereaved husband and wife went in December, 1872 to the seaside to rest, and there they read together the marvellous life of Mary Lyon. So thrilled were they by that story of heroism that they sought to obtain everything that could further inform them of the subsequent history of the Holyoke Seminary and its pupils, and eagerly devoured the story of Fidelia Fiske, the Mary Lyon of Persia.

About this time the descendants of those Hugue-

not refugees living at Wellington and in its vicinity, were proposing to build some monument or memorial to their ancestors, and Mr. Murray was strongly impressed that the best memorial they could rear was just *such a school for their daughters*. The schools scattered through South Africa were few of them fitted to train immortal souls for service here and glory hereafter. Every indication of human need or divine Providence seemed to point to this as the time and place for a new Holyoke. And after much thought, consultation and prayer, letters were written to the Massachusetts Holyoke asking for a graduate to found a similar school at the Cape of Good Hope.

These letters awakened unusual interest at the parent Seminary, and were put into the hands of Miss Abbie P. Ferguson, a graduate of the class of 1856, who was at that time conducting a successful work in New Haven, Conn. Her mind was so deeply impressed that God was calling her to Africa, that she could not rest until she had laid herself at the Lord's feet to go wherever He might lead. She found that already Miss Anna E. Bliss, of the class of 1862, had signified her willingness to respond to this call, and all interested felt that it was a work for two rather than one alone. Just at this time, across the Atlantic special prayer was arising that Jehovah Jireh would provide a teacher, and so once more prayer and its answer joined in a blessed harmony, man's performance and God's purpose. Before the letters reached Wellington telling of the decision of these teachers, Mr. Murray, with characteristic faith, had sent passage money to America, and when the news of the decision of Miss Ferguson and Miss Bliss reached the



colonists, the open letters were bedewed with the tears of thanksgiving. They had asked one teacher and God had given two.

Mr. Murray rehearsed the whole story of this marked leading of God, commended the prepared work to the Lord in prayer, and pledges were given on the spot to insure the support of the new school. Though not a rich people, in a few weeks £1,500 (\$7,500) had been given by the Wellingtonians alone, one widow giving one-sixteenth of the whole amount, all her little patrimony.

Miss Ferguson and Miss Bliss sailed for Africa in September, 1873, and arrived in about eight weeks. They found that a large building with grounds had been bought for the school, the life of Mary Lyon had been translated into Dutch, and many young people were ready to enter as pupils into the new Huguenot Seminary, and others came for training as teachers seeking higher fitness for their calling.

The Seminary was formally opened January 19, 1874, and the large assemblage which that day prayerfully committed the work to the Lord will never be forgotten. During the first term there were forty students from fifteen to forty years of age; and the Bible and prayer were from the first characteristic features of the school life, the first hour of each day being given to instruction in the Holy Word, and a half hour each morning and evening being reserved for the quiet of personal communion with God.

The devout and earnest purpose of these teachers was to educate Christian character. God honors those who honor Him. One morning the Scripture



lesson was on the new birth, and before that day had gone *thirteen* had taken their place on the Lord's side. Even those whom candor compelled to confess that they were unsaved, could not rest content without salvation, and when another meeting was called for those who felt that they were Christ's, *every one in the school came*. And after all these years have put the confession to the test, nearly every one has remained faithful, and not a few have been filling positions of singular usefulness.

As might be expected the saved became saviours. Children were gathered from the streets, and a Sunday School was formed; through the children access was obtained to their parents; cottage meetings—as many as fourteen in or near the village—were conducted by the young ladies; the navvies and their families were reached by the same consecrated workers, and Wellington Seminary became a fountain of living waters.

The Seminary building became too strait for the growth of the institution and a new building became a necessity; its corner stone was laid November 19, 1874, the two buildings together costing £8,000 (\$40,000).

Two more teachers were sent for, and Miss Wells and Miss Bailey came from America, November 1874, and soon after Miss Spijker from Holland to teach Dutch and French.

In July, 1875 the new building was ready for use; the pupils increased from forty to ninety, and the school was divided into two departments—one preparatory.

In December, 1875, Miss Landfear came from New

Haven, Conn., to share the growing burden of the work; and still later, Miss Brewer of Stockbridge, Mass.

In the mean time other educational institutions were opened, largely due to the influence of Wellington. In 1874 the Bloemhof Seminary at Stellenbosch began an important career of usefulness under the care of Miss Gilson from America.

During 1875 a request was sent to America from Worcester, by Rev. Wm. Murray, the minister there, for two teachers. And as at Wellington, the spirit of faith and prayer anticipated the arrival of the teachers in preparing for the school and sending forward the passage money. The Misses Smith, two sisters of Sunderland, Mass., responded. In April, 1876 the Seminary building at Worcester was completed. At the opening Rev. Andrew Murray spoke on the great need of multiplying such Christian schools in Africa, and it was determined to ask for six more teachers from over the seas.

At the same time, Miss Helen Murray, who had been one of the students at Wellington, began work at Graaff Reinet, taking charge of the Midland Seminary with twenty-five boarders and as many day scholars.

A revival during the first term put the significant seal of God's approval on the work at its very inception, and nearly all the pupils rejoiced in Jesus.

During 1877 Messrs. Andrew and Charles Murray visited America, and in answer to their appeal for teachers thirteen more went to Africa that year. And when in September, 1877, the Messrs. Murray returned, Rev. Geo. Ferguson, brother to the princi-

pal of the Huguenot Seminary at Wellington, came with them to take in charge an institute for training young men as evangelists and missionaries, and has since been engaged in that work at Wellington, sending out many efficient workers into different parts of Africa.

When this noble band of workers arrived in 1877 to reinforce the Christian educational work in Africa, a feast of rejoicing and thanksgiving filled an eight days like the feasts of ancient Israel. The windows were illumined, the flowers hung in festoons or bloomed in bouquets as on an Easter morning, and the Lord was magnified in the praises of his own. One day twenty-seven Americans dined in the building where, four years before, two teachers began their pioneer work. The teachers at Graaff Reinet, too far away to participate in person, flashed greetings over the electric wires.

After a few days the new teachers began to disperse to Worcester, Stellenbosch, Graaff Reinet, etc. Miss Clary, who had been one of the teachers at Mt. Holyoke, chose Pretoria in the Transvaal, because the *work was most difficult* and discouraging, and within a year she was not, for the Lord took her, and her unfinished work still calls for women of like spirit to undertake in the name of the Lord.

Three teachers were added to the staff at the Huguenot Seminary, Wellington, Miss Cummings, Miss Knapp and Miss Newton, and the standard of the school kept rising higher and higher both intellectually and spiritually.

During 1878, stimulated by the reports of the Ten Years' Work of the Woman's Board of Missions

in America, the Huguenot Missionary Society was organized, and became speedily the parent of many mission circles. Missionary offerings had been the habit at the weekly devotional meetings, and had been sent to Mrs. Schauffler in Austria, to Dr. Bernardo and Annie Macpherson in London, and to the Basuto, Natal, and East Indian missions, but now the work took organized form, and before the year closed a member of the school offered herself as a missionary, and subsequently went as their representative to the heathen in the Transvaal.

This same year, 1878, the first graduating class left the Huguenot Seminary. To trace the after careers of these graduates may give some hint of the streams which flow from this fountain.

One of the four, Miss Malberle was next year a teacher in her Alma Mater, and then took the principalship of Prospect Seminary in Pretoria. Miss de Leeuw and Miss Mader started a boarding school in the Orange Free State. Miss Wilson went to teach in the Rockland Seminary at Cradock. In December, 1879, seven more young ladies received diplomas, and all became teachers. Meanwhile God continued to bestow His Grace, and again in 1879 nearly all of the inmates of the school became disciples of Christ.

In April, 1880, Miss Ferguson left for rest and change, and visited her native land, returning the next year. In 1882 another building was erected to accommodate an increased number of boarders, and during the same year a normal department was organized, and a model school opened for the training of the younger children of the village, where the students of the normal class have practice in teach-

ing, and learn the most approved methods, kindergarten, etc. Books and chemical and philosophical apparatus, a Williston observatory and telescope, etc. were furnished by generous friends, and far and wide the "daughters" of Miss Ferguson and her fellow teachers scattered to diffuse new blessings.

The pressure of pupils and too little room made it necessary again to enlarge, and a cottage adjoining the school grounds was purchased. In 1884 Miss Cummings of Strafford, Vermont, one of the teachers, came home for a year's visit. The needs of Wellington were so laid upon her heart that she felt sure that God meant to supply them. The Lord honored her prayer of faith. The Hon. E. A. Goodnow of Worcester, Mass., donated a building costing £3,000 (\$15,000). The upper story, used as a chapel, seats 500, while the lower floor is devoted to art rooms and class rooms. Other friends donated the furnishings for the building. Miss Ferguson made a famous journey in 1887-8. In October, 1887, she left the Seminary for her year's vacation. The first three months of it she spent in visiting the Midland province of the colony where some of the Seminary "Huguenots" are located as missionaries and teachers.

She returned to Wellington in December and met two of her pupils from Basutoland, and returned with them to their home. They went by train from Wellington to Kimberly (where the diamond mines are), spent several days with school daughters there. A bullock wagon, drawn by fourteen oxen belonging to the missionaries was sent to meet them. Leaving Kimberly on the 28th of December, they reached Morijah on the 10th of January, outspanning in the



heat of the day, and travelling often by moonlight. Two Christian natives who had long been in the mission family had charge of the party—Eleazer and Nkloroso.

I have before me the plan of the journey as Miss Ferguson sent it from Morijah. Here are extracts from her diary.

“February 5, at Hermon (Basutoland); February 12, Mofuka’s for the baptism of the sister of the old chief Moshesh, over eighty years old, and others. February 19, Leribe, Mr. Coillard’s old station. February 27, Bethlehem, Orange Free State, with Mrs. Theron, one of our former Huguenot teachers. March 3, Heilbron, Orange Free State, where four of my Huguenot daughters live. March 8, Vredefort, Orange Free State, the minister from Wellington. March 12, Potchefstroom, Transvaal, where I have several daughters. Here Mrs. Gonin, wife of the missionary at Saul’s Poort, Transvaal, meets me with her bullock wagon and we go on to Rustenburg, where one of my daughters is in the school with her father who is the principal. March 19 to April 20, in Saul’s Poort, Mabie’s Kraal and Mochuli, the latter in British Bechuanaland. In all these places we have our girls who are missionaries. The last of April I go to Pretoria, Transvaal, where there are quite a number of my girls, then on to Wakkerstroom, where one of my daughters is teaching, and from there to Utrecht, where Mr. Murray’s sister is the minister’s wife. The last of May to Rorke’s Drift, Natal, to my friend Baroness Posse, who is in mission work there. June and July I expect to spend in Natal with the American missionaries.”







Miss Ferguson was detained by rains and full rivers so that she did not leave Mochuli, Bechuanaland, until May. Piretermaritzburg, the capital of Natal, was *the first place where she spent a night at a hotel*. She arrived on Saturday night, and her letters to friends had not been received, but she was found on Sunday, and carried away to the home of Christian friends.

Early in August she sailed from Durban, Natal, to Port Elizabeth, Cape Colony, and from there on up to Graaff Reinet, then to Kimberly again in the interest of the mission work so near her heart, which has resulted in two mission houses cared for by eight of the Huguenot daughters, and back to Wellington the last of September.

Every letter speaks of the marvellous kindness everywhere received and the wonderful openings for work. If any of our readers will, on the map, follow this remarkable journey of Miss Ferguson through Southern Africa, they will see how many hundreds of miles she went, and in nearly every case she was the guest of "her daughters," the young ladies who had gone out from Wellington into all that land to become teachers, missionaries, wives of godly men and ministers of the Gospel, and who are thus turning many a "Valley of Desolation" and barren waste of paganism into the Lord's garden. Are we not right in calling Wellington's Huguenot Seminary "the light of the Cape?"

During the years 1887-8 a great effort was made to free the Huguenot Seminary from debt. The income of the school had met the running expenses, but for buildings and grounds it was dependent upon

the generosity of friends interested in Christian education.

Mrs. H. B. Allen of Meriden, Conn., a sister of Miss Ferguson, sent a circular letter to her sister's classmates asking for help to reduce their indebtedness, it being her sister's "jubilee year," and the two hundredth anniversary of the settlement of the Huguenots in South Africa. They were making a special effort to "go free" that year. Mrs. Allen secured about \$200 in money but interest and prayer which were worth more. The friends of Christian education, and especially the daughters of the Huguenot Seminary, responded nobly to the call for aid. Sir Langham Dale, the Superintendent General of Education for Cape Colony, had influenced the Colonial Parliament to grant the Seminary £1,000 and in 1889 a second grant of £1,000 was received and there was much rejoicing at Wellington over the accomplishment of the long desired freedom from debt. The prayer of faith was answered.

Mention should be made of the Chautauqua Circles that have been formed all through South Africa.

Miss Landfear, one of the Huguenot teachers, is the secretary for South Africa, and is introducing a class of reading that is educating and elevating those who have left school. A circle has been formed among the native boys at Morijah.

Important temperance work also centres at Wellington; a branch of the W. C. T. U. has been formed in Cape Colony of which the Huguenot teachers are active members and much has already been accomplished in that line of work.

At the beginning of 1890 the applications were so



many that it was again necessary to provide more room, and while hesitating whether to build or rent rooms near the Seminary, the principal of a girls' school at the Paarl, a village eight miles distant, applied to the trustees to purchase his building, failing health making it necessary that he and his wife give up the work. Some of the Paarl people were very anxious that the school should come under the influence of the Huguenot Seminary, and after much thought and prayer the purchase was made and the work undertaken. This school takes the younger boarders who are transferred to Wellington when they have reached the standard required for admission there. Miss Pride, one of the American teachers took charge of the work at Paarl.

The Lord has owned this new work; the numbers have so increased that new buildings are required, and many of the pupils have learned to follow Jesus.

The success of this undertaking has led to a new and important advance in the general work. Two years later a request came from Bethlehem in the Orange Free State for a branch Huguenot Seminary there on the same plan as at the Paarl. Mrs. Theron the minister's wife, and formerly one of the Wellington teachers, had long been praying for a Huguenot Seminary there, and now God's time had come, and at Wellington they felt they could not refuse to enter this open door. In February, 1892, Miss C. Murray, a daughter of Rev. Andrew Murray, and a graduate of the Huguenot Seminary, took charge of this most important work. A house was given, rent free, and as this became too small, other buildings were hired. Later ground was given by the people, and

in 1894 a building for the accommodation of forty boarders was begun.

About the same time as at Bethlehem, another branch Seminary was asked for at Greytown, Natal, a place that had been wonderfully blessed of God in the conversion of many of the farmers and their families, and they in their turn had become missionaries to the Zulus living on their farms, and many of the heathen had been brought to God. It was a joy to open a branch Seminary for Natal in the midst of such influences, a joy that has been increased by seeing most of the pupils in both these branches become disciples of Christ. The Paarl Seminary gave Miss Gates, one of their American teachers to be the principal of the Greytown branch. Miss Ferguson had seven hundred and fifty under her care in 1893.

Each of these schools is known as a Huguenot Branch Seminary, and is under the management of the trustees and principals of the Wellington Seminary.

A fourth branch has been asked for in the Transvaal, and it is believed that this too is of God. This would make important centres of Christian education in each of the four states of South Africa.

At the beginning of 1894 an annex under the care of Miss O'Neil was opened at Wellington for girls who could pay nothing for their education. Rooms have been rented, and nine girls received, for each of whom the Education Department gives £12 (\$60) a year, and it is hoped to train these girls as elementary teachers.

The time seems to have come for the mother seminary at Wellington to develop into a college. For



several years college work has been done in the more advanced classes, and now if the needed funds can be obtained for scholarships, buildings, library, etc., the students can go on to the B. A. examination of the University of the Cape of Good Hope, and can go forth as thoroughly furnished educators for whom there is a great demand in the country.

About *five hundred* teachers have gone out from the Wellington Seminary during her twenty years, most of the teachers of the branch seminaries are from Wellington, and it is believed that the time has come for a forward movement and that God is going to "supply all their needs according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus," just as He has promised.

Although the intellectual training is important, it is believed that education in its true sense has far more to do with character than with the mere acquisition of knowledge. Every effort is made to teach the girls to govern themselves. When they enter the school the rules are given them and they are carefully explained to them, and they are asked if any rule is broken to report what has been done.

The girls are given a great deal of liberty and at the same time they are held very strictly to the points for which they are responsible. In reporting with regard to the rules, opportunity is given to teach them to be faithful and true. If after a test time they are found faithful, they are voted on to the "Roll of Honor," and after a still further test may be voted on to a "Self Governed List," and are free from rules, free to do right. The candidates are proposed and voted upon by the girls themselves.

The Roll of Honor and Self Governed girls share with their teachers the responsibility of maintaining a high standard of excellence and integrity and often help their school-mates even more than their teachers can. There are dangers in the busy school life and grand lessons to be learned; danger of making the gain of present knowledge the aim of existence, danger of being satisfied with a high moral character, while one may learn that knowledge is good; noble character is good, is power, a good and a power that only come into their right place when laid at the Divine Master's feet to be used for Him.

There has been an important advance as regards mission work during the last five years. When Miss Ferguson returned from her famous journey of 1887-8, she was fired with new interest in missions, and could scarce refrain from going into mission work herself, but God showed her that he had more important work for her to do in sending out her daughters into the mission field.

The "Huguenot Missionary Society" grew into the "Woman's Missionary Union for South Africa," which adopted the missionaries that had been supported by the Huguenot Society. A mission class was formed at the Huguenot Seminary for the especial training of those going into mission work.

A mission house was opened at the Diamond Fields and later a second house for work among the thousands of natives who came from all parts of South Africa to work in the mines and then return to their own people, as well as for work among the whites who are brought together by mining interests. A similar work has been begun at the Gold Fields in the Trans-



GOODNOW HALL, WITH MURRAY HALL IN THE DISTANCE.  
HUGUENOT COLLEGE, WELLINGTON.



vaal. In 1893 three Huguenot daughters formed the advance guard in woman's missionary work from South Africa by going to Mwera near Lake Nyassa, two of them as wives of missionaries, and one as a missionary teacher. In 1894 another goes as a missionary's wife to Banyailand, the first white lady in that mission. So that beside the three mission stations where Miss Ferguson found Huguenot daughters, they are now at the Diamond Fields, the Gold Fields, in Banyailand, and in Nyassaland, and in connection with the French mission; in Basuto-land and on the Zambesi, about twenty-five in all.

In 1893 Miss Bliss made a third visit to America, and aroused much interest in the South African work. She returned, going to Africa for the fourth time, and takes charge of the work during Miss Ferguson's absence for a visit to America.

Many applications have been sent to America for consecrated Christian teachers. Mrs. H. B. Allen of Meriden, Conn., (sister of Miss Ferguson) has generally had the choice of teachers, and to her wise and prayerful selection much of the success of the work is due. The work has seldom seen a more devoted band of teachers.

In 1892 Mrs. Allen had the joy of visiting her sister and spending eighteen months in South Africa, seeing the work to which she had so long ministered. Though she had been having weekly letters she felt that the half had not been told her.

That devoted man of God, Andrew Murray, has been wonderfully used of Him in this great work. No words can express the blessing which has come through this period to the whole of Africa through



these grand Christian schools. They are building light houses, not at the Cape only, but all through the southern half of the continent. We doubt whether any work ever done for God has had, from the inception, more signal tokens of His approbation and blessing.

Those who have visited Graaff Reinet have remarked that it stands close by the "Valley of Desolation," so called from its absolute barrenness and absence of life. In fact Graaff Reinet is simply a section of a barren waste reclaimed by culture and irrigation. How completely the whole aspect of this waste has been transfigured may be inferred from the fact that in the garden of Rev. Charles Murray eighty different species or varieties of roses may be found in bloom. May this not be a precious symbol and type of what the Huguenot Seminaries and their companion schools are doing for the wild wastes of Africa, flashing out rays to illumine the midnight, and sending forth streams to irrigate the barrenness until where darkness and death abounded there shall be a radiance as of a morning without clouds and as of an earthly Eden.

"The wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad for them; and the desert shall rejoice and blossom like the garden of the Lord."





