

(JUNE 17, 1893)

This is in the printed letter Missionary, Nov. 1893, p. 438 - But where I'm indicated, this part was cut. I found it <sup>amusing</sup>

In a very short time, about every thing, movable, was out of the house - In the mean time God sent His angels to help us and the flames were driven away from the house, in a miraculous manner, and the house, roof and all, was saved. I would not have believed it possible, only that I said it - ~~And~~ I believe God interposed and stayed the flames - Mr. A. was tuckered out and for awhile was quite ill - Mrs. A. stood the excitement well Mr. R. + his wife came out from beds of sickness and the children cried, the men + women called out - and for a time excitement reigned - when all were calm it came to us, how good God was - Mr. A. remarked that even if the house had gone we could have been thankful because the goods were saved and I said "Yes, and if the goods had gone we could have been thankful because our lives were spared. We can always be thankful. We are looking for the boat every day to take these letters - It is too early to write of work or impressions of work. but, I have not, as yet, made up my mind that it is part of the missionaries work to inflict Corporal punishment. My mission was to be one of love - And somehow I can't use the rod. If begun my way it seems to me love would rule - Others of far greater experience think differently and the question is an open one with my conscience - Pray God I may know the right. One thing however I am sure of I can not and will not drink palm wine - I have seen men made drunk on it and how can I tell them not to drink it, if I do - even though their perfectly fresh it may not be intoxicating to the natives it is all "malfe"

Three reasons have been given me why I <sup>might</sup> ~~ought~~ ~~to~~ drink it. First: It is considered a prophylactic -  
 Second: The natives all drink it and look upon one who does not drink it, <sup>but does drink water</sup> just as you folks at home look upon a man who drinks his "toddy" three times a day, and four times in between. The natives call water, "a Romanus drink" -

Third: God planted the Palm trees and the wine flows freely from them -

As to the first reason - I don't believe it; I have been exceedingly healthy ever since my entrance into Africa and I have not drunk it - and vice versa.

Second - Well I always want to be on the Romanus side of such an argument. (I like to be on that side any way -)

Thirdly - Just let me tell you a little of the Palm tree. It grows sixty - seventy & eighty feet high with not a single branch. <sup>From</sup> No where but at the top of the tree can the wine be drawn - and at the foot of the tree God's water lies very near the surface and easily gotten - On my side I have this assurance - Palm wine will intoxicate inside of <sup>twenty four</sup> ~~four~~ hours after it is drawn - <sup>if enough is drunk</sup> <sup>the natives</sup>

As soon as I can talk to them, <sup>the natives</sup> I shall talk against the use of it for a drink - I have <sup>I have not</sup> seldom seen a native under the influence of it - But why the chiefs have passed a law, fining a native six goats for drunkenness, and the fine is collected, at home it would mean one thousand dollars for every drunk -

Yours sincerely  
D. H. Smyser