

Missionary Intelligence.

(From Wesleyan Notices Newspaper, Dec. 1850.)

Wesleyan Missions in Southern Africa.
THE NATAL DISTRICT.

Extract of a Letter from the Rev. William C. Holden, dated Port-Natal, April 12th, 1850.

ANOTHER quarter has passed away, and to us it has been one of exciting interest. The large influx of emigrants puts every thing and person in motion. No sooner has one vessel discharged her cargo of human beings, than another arrives.

Amongst the many who are thus pressing to our shores, are a number of English Wesleyans. About twenty-five or thirty church members have already arrived, chiefly under Mr. Irons. These are a very important and valuable addition to this colony.

The settlement of "Verulam" is situated on the Umthloti River, about twenty miles distant, along the coast, to the north east of D'Urban. It is a beautiful and romantic neighbourhood, diversified by hills and valleys of every size and form, is richly wooded, and has the river running through the whole of the settlement. The site of a town is already selected, and is being surveyed. A few families are already upon it, and others are daily expecting to follow. In a short time, both the town Ewen and the outside allotments will be ready for their respective occupants; and, with the blessing of God, after a year or two of effort and privation, I doubt not but they will be in circumstances of comfort.

The settlement is situated on the direct line of road to Zulu-land; and it is a matter of great importance to have a number of pious people along this line of country, on account of the many natives residing upon it, and of others who will be continually coming into the colony; for I hope the object of our friends will be rather to improve the natives than drive them away. Three Local Preachers are amongst the parties who have already gone out; and most of the members appear to be devoted Christians, enjoying the power of religion, and anxious to diffuse its influence around them. Notwithstanding my very great efforts to meet the wants of this rising Circuit, our friends at Verulam would have to be without the means of grace, were it not for the assistance of Local Preachers; for at the most I can, as yet, only devote one Sunday in the quarter, and one week evening in the month to them.

We have another English congregation formed about ten miles on this side of Verulam, which can only be supplied in the same manner. There are also two Kaffir congregations and societies; one connected with each place: so that there is already full employment for an additional Missionary beyond the Umgeni River alone; and I hope the time is very near when one will be sent. Affording direction and advice to our people about their temporal as well as their spiritual concerns, has greatly added to my previously passing engagements; but I am trying so to lay the foundation of a civil community and a spiritual house, that each succeeding year, as it rolls away, may give increased vigour and stability to the edifice, and that along this fine line of coast there may indeed be a peaceful and prosperous people, bringing glory to God, and making the land as the Garden of Eden.

In the Bay, our old English chapel is much too small for our English congregation. The completion of our new chapel has been delayed by circumstances over which we had no control; but I think there is a prospect of being able to open it in a few weeks, when our comfort and usefulness will doubtless be greatly increased.

Some of our people sustain spiritual loss on their voyage out, which is not to be greatly wondered at; but their case is made very much worse, if on their arrival they do not immediately unite themselves with the church of Christ, and place themselves under the pastoral care of their Minister.

It should be a source of great gratification to them to know that they are not coming to a place where they will have to be set down in the solitary wilderness, without the means of grace, or any one to care for their souls; but that already provision is

made for their spiritual wants, the same, in kind, as in their fatherland.

Our work among the natives continues much the same as before, only that in the summer our congregations are not usually so large, or our success so great, as in the winter. Many causes combine to draw aside the attention, and enervate the people from the house of God.

Five Kaffir adults have been baptised during the quarter, who all professed to be changed characters. Three of these had been the wives of polygamists; and had been obliged to forsake their husbands, in addition to other trials, in order to embrace the Gospel. We have many cases of difficulty and sacrifice here which are unknown in England.

There are now upwards of a hundred full church members, and fifty on trial, in this Circuit. We greatly need your sympathy and prayers.

Family Circle.

Gentleness.

I begin with distinguishing true gentleness from passive tameness of spirit, and unlimited compliance with the manners of others. That passive tameness, which submits without a struggle to every encroachment of the violent and assuming, forms no part of Christian duty; but, on the contrary, is destructive of general happiness and order. That unlimited complaisance, which, on every occasion, falls in with the opinions and manners of others, is so far from being a virtue, that it is itself a vice, and the parent of many vices. It overthrows all steadiness of principle, and produces that sinful conformity with the world that taints the whole character. In the present corrupted state of human manners, always to assent and to comply is the very worst maxim we can adopt. It is impossible to support the purity and dignity of Christian morals, without opposing the world on various occasions, even though we should stand alone. That gentleness therefore, which belongs to virtue, is to be carefully distinguished from the mean spirit of cowards, and the fawning assent of sycophants. It renounces no just right from fear. It gives up no important truth from flattery. It is, indeed, not only inconsistent with a firm mind, but it necessarily requires a manly spirit, and a fixed principle, in order to give it any real value. Upon this solid ground only, the polish of gentleness can with advantage be superinduced.

It stands opposed, not to the most determined regard for virtue and truth, but to harshness and severity, to pride and arrogance, to violence and oppression. It is, properly, that part of the great virtue of charity which makes us unwilling to give pain to any of our brethren. Compassion prompts us to relieve their wants. Forbearance prevents us from retaliating their injuries. Meekness restrains our angry passions; candour, our severe judgments. Gentleness corrects whatever is offensive in our manners, and, by a constant train of humane attentions, studies to alleviate the burden of common misery. Its office, therefore, is extensive. It is not, like some other virtues, called forth on peculiar emergencies; but it is continually in action, when we are engaged in intercourse with men. It ought to form our address, to regulate our speech, and to diffuse itself over our whole behaviour.

I must warn you, not to confound this gentle "wisdom which is from above," with that artificial courtesy, that studied smoothness of manners, which is learned in the school of the world. Such accomplishments the most frivolous and empty may possess. Too often they are employed by the artful, as a snare; too often affected by the hard and unfeeling, as a cover to their minds. We cannot, at the same time, avoid observing the homage which even in such instances the world is constrained to pay to virtue. In order to render society agreeable, it is found necessary to assume somewhat that may at least carry its appearance. Virtue is the universal charm. Even its shadow is courted, when the substance is wanting. The imitation of its form has been reduced into an art; and, in the commerce of life, the study of all who would either gain the

esteem, or win the heart of others, is to learn the speech, and to adopt the manners, of candour, gentleness, and humanity. But that gentleness, which is the characteristic of a good man, has, like every other virtue, the seat in the heart: and let me add, nothing, except what flows from the heart, can render even external manners truly pleasing. For no assumed behaviour can at all times hide the real character. In that unaffected civility which springs from a gentle mind, there is a charm infinitely more powerful than in all the studied manners of the most finished courtier.

True gentleness is founded on a sense of what we owe to him who made us, and to the common nature of which we all share. It arises from reflection on our own failings and wants, and from just views of the condition and the duty of man. It is a native feeling, heightened and improved by principle. It is the heart which easily relents, which feels for everything that is human; and is backward and slow to inflict the least wound. It is affable in its address, and mild in its demeanour; ever ready to oblige, and willing to be obliged by others, breathing habitual kindness towards friends, courtesy to strangers, long suffering to enemies. It exercises authority with moderation; administers reproof with tenderness; confers favours with ease and modesty. It is unassuming in opinion, and temperate in zeal. It contends not eagerly about trifles; is slow to contradict, and still slower to blame; but prompt to allay dissension, and to restore peace. It neither intermeddles unnecessarily with the affairs, nor pries inquisitively into the secrets of others. It delights above all things to alleviate distress, and, if it cannot dry up the falling tear, to soothe at least the grieving heart. Where it has not the power of being useful, it is never burdensome. It seeks to please, rather than to shine and dazzle, and conceals with care that superiority, either of talent or rank, which is oppressive to those who are beneath it. In a word, it is that spirit and that tenor of manners, which the gospel of Christ enjoins, when it commands us to "bear one another's burdens; to rejoice with those who rejoice, and to weep with those who weep; to please every one his neighbour for his good; to be kind and tender-hearted; to be pitiful and courteous; to support the weak, and to be patient towards all men."—Blair.

The Trifles of Life :

OR, TRIFLES NOT ALWAYS TRIVIAL.

It is wont to be affirmed of women, in a sarcastic tone, that their lives are made up of trifles, and perhaps, in a certain sense, the accusation may be a true one, for the duties which are allotted to our sex consist chiefly of quiet and unobtrusive offices, which, in the rapid succession, may seem trivial to those whose minds are occupied with the stirring business of life; but we would venture to remind these contemners of our homelier lot, that small matters often become trifling by the trivial spirit in which they are pursued, that this material world itself, "clogged up with its weighty mass of joy and woe," is composed of atoms, and that the long flight of ages, bearing upon their wings the destiny of humanity, is measured out by single moments. Let us not therefore, undervalue the value of trifles, but strive to impart a dignity to every occupation, however humble, or however passing be its nature, by the spirit of truth and kindness with which it is performed. It would, indeed, be well for us women, if, even in our highest and gravest duties, we kept in mind the gentle admonition of the poet:

"He prayeth best who loveth best,
All things both great and small;
For the great God who loveth us,
He made and loveth all."

Even in our efforts to do good to others, may we not oftentimes fail from a want of that loving spirit which clothes the most trivial acts with grace, and which enables the possessor of it, whether poor or rich, to soothe the sad and ruffled spirit and to strengthen the feeble one?

"She won't give you a flower; not she, indeed!" Such were the words which met my ear as I hurried through the streets on a showery spring morning, carrying in my

hand a nosegay of those early blossoms which are doubly welcome to our sight as the harbinger of sunnier hours and brighter skies. I was on my way to an invalid to whom flowers were indeed a valued gift—to her they cheered the long hours of lonely suffering, and every bright hue and lovely form seemed to suggest thoughts of soothing hope and comfort, while they directed her thoughts to that All-mighty and All-loving Father, who, whilst He "calleth the stars by their names," is yet careful thus to clothe the grass of the field, and to lavish beauty on the very herbs, that we tread beneath our feet.

A far different being from this patient sufferer was she whose cold, scornful looks had fallen so harshly upon my ear. As I walked hastily along, anxious to escape from the increasing rain, I had not perceived by the side of the path a middle-aged woman of repelling aspect, who held in her arms a sickly child that reached out its little hand with a longing gaze towards the bright flowers which I held, and struggled in its inarticulate language to ask for the treasure. It was in answer to those demonstrations on the part of the child that the mother had made the observation which had drawn my attention and arrested me in my course. I stopped, and pulling out some of the gayest and gaudiest of the group, placed them with a few words of kindness in the infant's grasp, whilst the mother thanked me and fondled her cowering child with an expression of mingled surprise and pleasure.

The incident was a trifling, and might seem an unimportant one; but how often has it since recurred to my mind as I have passed in the way, those whose countenances have betrayed inward feelings of discontent with their own lot, and dislike towards those who possessed more of the comforts and luxuries of life than themselves.—What a key to the heart-burnings, the jealousy, the dislike which are felt, alas! by many a poor man and woman to their richer neighbours, lies in those words, spoken by a mother in bitterness of spirit, "She would not give you a flower!"

Filial Duty.

There is no virtue that adds so noble a charm to the finest traits of beauty, as that which exerts itself in watching over the tranquility of an aged parent. Nothing gives so fine a lustre to the cheek of innocence, as the tears of filial sorrow.

Substitute for Beauty.

Inviolable fidelity, good humour, and complacency of spirit, outshine all the charms of a fine face, and make its absence or decay invisible.

General Miscellany.

A Self-Taught Engineer.

The following autobiography of this eminent civil engineer, Stephenson, is from the London correspondence of the New York *Albion*:

I was the son of a very poor man, who with his dying breath charged me (then but 10 years old) to do the best I could for my mother and two sisters, who by the death of my father were left destitute. I was very fond of my mother, and I got employment to empty ships of their ballast, and in various other ways I earned from eighteen pence to two shillings a day, and thus supported my mother and sisters till I was about fourteen years old. I had taught myself to read and write a little, and about that time I met with a little book which set me a thinking, and I thought why should a man get his bread through the exertion of his muscles when he has got brains. I had a great taste for mechanics, and borrowed of my uncle an old watch that never went well, because I wanted to examine its works. I took it to pieces and put it together three times, having by that time made myself acquainted with its mechanism. I then wrote in large characters, on a piece of pasteboard, which I placed in my mother's window, "Clocks, Watches, and Jacks cleaned here." I soon had plenty of work, which I could do of an evening, and was enabled to add greatly to the comforts of my mother, and put my sisters to school. One evening a gentleman called to inquire if the man who cleaned watches