

Missionary Intelligence.

(From Wesleyan Notices Newspaper, Nov. 1850.)

Wesleyan Missions in Hayti.

Extract of a Letter from the Rev. Mark B. Bird, dated Port-au-Prince, August 26th 1850.

It is a matter of great thankfulness to be able to state, that the little storm through which we have passed in this country is now beginning to subside, and that the parties concerned in exciting ill feeling against Protestantism begin to see the great impolicy of all attempts at restricting religious liberty.

A few days ago I received a note from the office of *Le Ministre des Cultes*; requesting me to call there at a certain hour, which I did, and was kindly received by his Lordship, the Secretary of State, who stated to me that he had been requested by His Majesty to see me, and to make to me the following observations relative to our general proceedings:—

1st. It was the wish of His Majesty that all Haytians should be considered as entirely free and unrestricted on the subject of religion, and that all should be at liberty to adopt whatever religious creed they might prefer. On this subject the Secretary laid great stress, and seemed to wish that it should be entirely understood that His Majesty was favourable to the most entire toleration on the subject of religion.

2d. His Majesty had been informed that we had lately given money, to induce individuals to adopt our religious views. His Majesty wished it to be understood that such proceedings could not by any means be allowed.

3d. His Majesty had heard that we had gone into the country places, and occasioned disorder, by our efforts to win over the people to our views by means of money; and His Majesty therefore wished us to confine our labours to the towns.

Such were the remarks made to me officially by the Minister of State, in the name of the Emperor.

With regard to the first of these remarks, I, of course, did not fail to express the thanks which I felt to be due.

With regard to the second, I observed to his Lordship, that it refuted itself; for, if we thus gave money, we should certainly have the people after us by hundreds, if not by thousands, who most assuredly would not fail to surround us for the sake of gain. On the contrary, as I explained to his Lordship, those who joined our churches were expected to support, by voluntary contributions, the cause which they had adopted; so that, instead of receiving, they gave.

On the latter remark I explained to the Secretary that no proved disorderly person could remain a recognised member of our communion; and that it was not as a simple matter of policy, that our people respected the authorities, but as a matter of conscience, and as a religious duty.

It may, perhaps, be remembered, that in some of my former communications it was stated that the ebullition of intolerant feeling which has lately taken place in this country was much more Romish than Haytian. In proof of this, we have now the Emperor's own declaration on the subject of religious liberty. There is not the slightest doubt that the Secretary's communication in the above-related conversation on the subject of religious freedom is the sincere expression of His Majesty's feelings on that subject, and of the feeling of the whole nation. Long experience has taught us that the Haytians themselves are a tolerant and liberal people. They, however, have had the misfortune to fall under the yoke of Rome in religious matters; and if the same scenes that have lately disgraced the Church of Rome in Madeira had not been repeated in Hayti, we know that it is not because Romish power and influence have been more liberal here than there, but rather because the Haytians were too far advanced in their views of religious liberty to be guilty of such outrages on the rights of conscience.

It is indeed to be regretted that the country places are shut up from us; but, if we have access to all the towns, we shall have a wide field open; for there are several where the Gospel has not yet been intro-

duced; and even where we are established there is still much, very much, to be done. The towns, thoroughly saturated with the spirit of the Gospel, would inevitably open the way ultimately to the interior; indeed, already we have some country places that we have long been in the habit of visiting. Nor do we infer from anything that has been said, that what is done is to be undone, or even discontinued. Even the restriction that has already been intimated cannot be of long duration; for His Majesty will and must ultimately see that he has been deceived, and that we have been calumniated, by the enemies of pure Christianity. Nor are we to forget that Hayti is in the hands of Providence, and that it is easy for Him to turn the hearts of men, and to make use even of their political errors for His glory.

I am thankful to say that our congregations are now beginning to assume their usual appearance as to numbers; and the cause of God is going on encouragingly.

Our school by no means diminishes in interest. Our subscriptions are not quite what they were; but it must be remembered that, for some considerable time past, the whole country has been suffering in its commercial and financial affairs.

Our people at Jeremie, as may be supposed, are all joy and gratitude at being able to finish their chapel.

Mr. Hartwell, I am thankful to say, is recovering, though slowly, from the severe attack of sickness which he has lately experienced.

Family Circle.

The Philosophical Cobler.

— "It is quite unphilosophical," said Tom Roberts to my father: "I cannot believe anything that is contrary to experience." "This Roberts was a cobbler, and reckoned a skilful workman in his way; he was besides a great reader in his leisure hours, and by dipping a good deal into certain abstruse books, had acquired a way of talking that was beyond the comprehension of those who visited his little shop. Some persons alleged that he did not comprehend it himself, but others held him to be a very learned man, who had studied metaphysics. He was a great reformer too,—could point out many grievous errors both in church and state,—and had long talked of emigrating across the Atlantic. In religion he proposed to follow reason, and was much suspected of studying Paine; but this nobody knew with certainty. He was very skilful in disputation; and if at any time the argument was likely to go against him, his way was to commence hammering a shoelace with such industry and noise, that all further reasoning was in vain. In this manner he had silenced many a keen opponent, and had acquired the character of a disputant whom few people cared to meddle with.

He had not an opportunity of trying his powers upon my father, until one morning, as we were going to work, he stopped at Tom's shop, to have a heel piece put upon his shoe. He happened to have but one pair, times being hard, which had reduced him to this method of having one of them mended. Tom was extremely talkative: he began with some general allusions to hard times, heavy taxes, and oppressive government,—slightly alluded to some remedies that were in a state of forwardness,—and then enlarged on the mighty consequences which would result to the poor, when despotism and superstition should fall together. "They deaden the energies of the mind," said he to my father; "they cramp the soul, Mr. Thompson, and shrivel it like a piece of burnt leather." Now my father was particularly well placed for being obliged to hear the argument quietly to an end.—He was sitting upon a block which was used for beating leather on;—one foot was on the ground, and the other, the shoe of which was under repair, was raised up in rather an awkward posture, to keep it from resting on the floor, which was none of the cleanest. Thus sat my father, the very picture of patience, listening, whether he would or not, to Tom's bad politics and divinity.

"But perhaps I should not speak in this way to you," said Tom Roberts. "You believe the Bible Mr. Thompson?" "I would

not give up that belief," said my father, "for the Duke of —'s estate." "But don't you think many of the stories in it most improbable?" said Tom. "People walk through the sea: a man heals the sick by a touch: and by a word raises the dead!" "They are miraculous events," said my father, "produced by an exercise of the power of God to prove the divine character, or the divine mission, of the person at whose command they took place." "But they are contrary to the established works of nature," said Tom. "If they were not so," replied my father, "they would not be miracles, and would prove nothing." "But can any one alter the course of nature?" asked Tom. "God," returned my father, "created worlds out of nothing; and I believe that he can do anything." Tom beat rather hard upon the heel of my father's shoe, and seemed anxious to get it finished.—"On these points," said he, "every man must judge for himself: for my part, I think the laws of nature are fixed and determined; we never knew any of them altered; and it is more probable that man should impose upon us, than that such a thing should be.—Probability is against it, Mr. Thompson; it is quite unphilosophical; I never can believe anything that is contrary to experience. The laws of nature my good friend; what think you of the laws of nature?" "I think," said my father, "that He, by whose boundless power those laws were framed, can alter them at his will." "There is your shoe," said the Cobler, hastily; "it is four pence." "It used to be but three pence," said my father. "But I cannot do it for that now," said Tom, "leather is so dear." My father put on his shoe, and paid his four-pence, but seemed inclined to have a little more chat. "What is that picture you have got up in the corner, Mr. Roberts?" "It is Mount Vesuvius," said Tom; "it is a Volcano." "What is a Volcano?" Now my father knew very well about Vesuvius and Volcanos, for he had a great deal of knowledge, only he wished to engage Roberts in conversation.—"A Volcano," said Tom, "is a mountain which burns like a glass furnace, throwing out red hot ashes; and such is the heat that the hardest stones are melted as if they were but rosin, and run down the side of the mountain in a stream like boiling pitch." "Did you ever see it?" said my father. "No," answered Tom; "there is none of them in this country, but travellers have seen it."—"But you do not believe it," replied my father. "Why not?" said Tom. "Is it not unphilosophical and contrary to your experience?" said my father; "is it not more probable that travellers should tell stories, than that a great mountain should burn like a tar-barrel, and the hardest stones run down its sides like melted pitch?" Now Tom Roberts seemed very anxious to show off his knowledge about volcanos, but the stroke of my father appeared quite unexpected;—he started up, looked at the picture, then looked at the ground, wheeled full round, and looked at my father with an air which said, in spite of himself, "you have caught me fairly." In an instant he seized a piece of leather, laid it on the block and commenced hammering with such vehemence, that my father moved back several steps, and stood looking at him with wonder. "You are too busy for conversation," said he; but Tom heard him not. "You are spoiling your sole;" but Tom only beat the harder. "Let us go my boy," said my father; and so we left him; but as far as the coppersmith's shop, as we turned the corner, we heard Tom beating with all his might, and making more noise than anybody in the street. "He has spoiled a good sole," said my father; "it will never be fit for anything; and it is a pity," added he, looking down at his shoe which had just been mended, "a great pity, when leather is so dear."

My father said nothing more, but seemed in deep thought, until we reached our own shop, and were ready to sit down to our looms. He then called me to him, and said, "How melancholy is it, my dear boy, to see a man thus deluding himself to his eternal destruction, by the silly conceit of using words to which he affixes no meaning, and which really have none. Let us be thankful for common sense, and let us learn to apply to the great truths of the Bible the same

principles of common sense by which we judge in other matters." "What did he mean?" I enquired, "by all that about experience and probability." "It is a mere farrago of words," said my father, "introduced by certain shallow reasoners, as if there were some argument in it. The miracles that were wrought by our Lord Jesus Christ showed that he was the divine person he professed to be, and consequently, that the doctrine delivered by Him and his apostles is eternal truth. These miracles were seen by thousands, who could not be deceived themselves, and had no object in deceiving others; and we believe them upon their testimony transmitted down to us. It is precisely upon the same principles that we believe that Robert Bruce defeated the English at Bannockburn, that King Charles was beheaded, or any other remarkable event in history. 'But no,' say these reasoners, 'these events which you call miracles are contrary to experience; they are out of the common course of nature.' Now this is certainly true; for if they were not so, if they were things of ordinary occurrence, they could not have been miracles, and would not have answered the purpose for which we believe miracles were wrought. 'But it is not very possible and probable that such things should happen; and therefore we cannot believe them.' Now observe," said my father, "what this argument resolves itself into;—it comes precisely to this at last, that we shall believe nothing but what we see, except we have seen something exactly similar; it is making our own knowledge the standard of what we are to believe. How limited would our knowledge be in that case!" "Ay, you caught Tom there," said I, "about the volcano." "He could not believe the possibility of such a thing upon his principle," said my father, "nor any of the wonders described by travellers—nor any of the great discoveries of philosophers,—nor any remarkable fact in history;—in short, there would be an end of testimony,—there would be an end of philosophy,—we could believe almost nothing; O let us be thankful for common sense, experience and probability!" continued my father, after a short pause, his voice somewhat raised;—"my experience of the power of God is such, that nothing that he should do would be improbable; it is above me, and around me, and within me; I see it in the celestial bodies that keep their appointed times—I see it in the insect that flutters over my head—I see it in every little flower that springs up in its proper season, perfect in all its parts—I feel it in the astonishing structure of my own body, in every beat of my heart, in every motion of my arm, in the still more wonderful powers of my mind, by which he has taught me to rise to himself. His power," continued he, clasping his hands and raising his eyes to heaven, "is unbounded—is infinite! I have only to look at what he has done, and I must believe he can do anything. In the Bible he has revealed to us the words of eternal truth, and has shown us the way by which we may obtain them. He has placed us in the world for a few short years, and has appointed the situation which we are to occupy in it; and he calls our chief attention to that awful period when all the distinctions which exist in this world are to cease for ever, when the last trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and small and great shall stand before God. Then shall begin a state which is to be eternal. Ah! my dear boy, of what little moment is every thing here, when we think of eternity! Let us study to fill with fidelity and integrity the situations in which God has placed us, remembering that his eye is upon us every moment—let us be thankful for the mercies which he daily bestows on us—let us trace his wisdom and his power in all that we see around us—and, by the way which he has taught us in the Bible, let us aspire to immortality." My father sat down to his loom, and wrought a long day's work, for wages were very low; but I thought he looked stouter and more active than I had seen him for many years; he sat more erect than usual, and the expression of his countenance was peace. At night we returned, contented and happy, to our humble fireside; and my father, as was his practice, called his

family around him to sacrifice of prayer and us give thanks to God daily mercies, for he many comforts of this but, above all, let us poor man's best inher Leisure Hours.

Impressions.

Parents and others very lasting impressions the minds and on the great Frederick of his nephew, afterward a lad, to recite to him his pocket an edition of "Fables," pointed out so happened that familiar with that part did it fluently. Upon improvement, "I Frederick William, having previously brightened up, and p he said, "That's r always honest and seem to be what thou than thou appearest tion made an indelible heart: and though from my childhood, hated and detested bling and lies."

General.

The Golden Eagle.

The golden eagle is family; and he was at the mountainous districts still be frequently seen in the Highlands, and of Ireland. He has a double beak, a bright firm and massive with expense. The female built on some inaccessible lofty mountain, and rashes, and other brood are usually two commonly fed on the ducks, or smaller which she has just bred swimmingly about the male in size and him in power of flight superior to most birds the sagacity of her spired wings comp the fell sweep of her lively Christians to and the care of God and untiring solicitude an eagle sees her you venture upon flying, flutters with her wintate her, and to take sees them weary of her back, and carries the fowling cannot her own body." Ne her nest, flutters abroad her wings, to her wings; so the L there was no strange ride on the high pl might eat the incre Mother's Magazine.

Franklin.

The following story treating the animal ger," is worth retri ed occasionally, e tion. One fine morn preparing his newsp stepped into the stor in looking over th tking one in his in price. "One dolla dollar," said the lo than that?" "No price." Another h the lounge asked, "Yes, he is in the see him," said the medially informed man was in the st lin was soon behind ger, with book in Mr. Franklin, wi