

THE LONDON PIONEER.

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MADAGASCAR.

Recent events have thrown a degree of interest around Madagascar—the great Britain of Africa, as it is not altogether inappropriately termed. A brief sketch of its past history, and of the progress of the Gospel there, will be read with interest.

Those who will turn to the map will see the Island of Madagascar, situated in the Indian Ocean to the east of Africa, from which it is separated by the Straits of Mozambique. It is only distant about three hundred miles from the main land. The island is about nine hundred miles long, and three hundred wide, with a very prominent mountain range, running from North to South. As its northern extremity, Cape Ambro, is only eleven degrees south of the equator, Madagascar is one of the tropical isles, and marked by some of the peculiarities of that torrid region. Still, it is cooled by some of the missionaries, that in the cold season the thermometer has fallen as low as 30 deg. Especially is it thus cold in the mornings. It is even said that the thermometer will vary forty degrees in a few hours. A recent traveller has seen it at 40 deg. at six o'clock in the morning, while at three o'clock in the afternoon it stood at 80 deg. In general the island is healthy, though there are districts in which no man can enter without bringing back with him the seeds of death.

In the island two races are found co-existing with different languages. The Malayan, or lighter coloured race, in the interior, and extending to the eastern coast—and the Negro of the Caffre stamp, on the western side of the island. The Hovas, the present dominant tribe, are of the Malayan descent, and their language indicates very clearly their affinity to that widely scattered race of the east.

The island was first visited by the Portuguese, towards the close of the fifteenth century, when the adventurous De Gama doubled the Cape of Good Hope, and crept along the Africa, and so eastward to the renowned Calicut. After these the Dutch effected a temporary lodgment on the coast. The French made settlements on the island in 1642. The right of these three nations to the sovereignty of the country was strenuously contested by the Malagasy, in general the island is called. Two invaders sometimes severely dealt with. For a long period, these forced settlements were abandoned, and the island was visited only by Europeans passing to the rich marts of the East Indies. During the latter half of the last century, frequent attempts were made to colonize it from France, and from the Isles of Bourbon and Isle of France, which lie a few hundred miles east of Madagascar. But disasters thwarted all these attempts, and left France, at the commencement of this century, with only a settlement on the Isle of St. Mary, on the eastern coast, and a trading post or two for the purchase of cattle for the market of the Isles of France and Bourbon.

In the year 1810 these passages into the Indian Ocean were again opened, and the English influence has been powerful in Madagascar, which was regarded as a dependency of the Isle of France.

About the same time, the king of the central part of the island died. His name was almost as long as the radius of his dominions. He was the unpropitious successor of a tyrant, and a ruler of a kingdom. He was succeeded by his son, Radama, who extended his control over a large area, and entered into friendly relations with the English, who held the Mauritius, or Isle of France. It was during this king's reign that the missionaries of the London Missionary Society entered the island. Two began at the east, in the island of Nosy Be, and the other removed in consequence of ill health, to Mauritius. In 1820 a treaty was entered into by the Governor of the Mauritius and King Radama, for the extinction of the slave trade. Mr. Jones, the missionary at the Mauritius, having recovered his health, accompanied the embassy to Tananarivo, a city in the interior of the island, and the seat of the Royal Court. As a result of this visit, he remained, provided for by the king; and a royal request was sent to the Society at London for more missionaries. Radama placed under the care of Mr. Jones, sixteen native children, among whom were three children of his state, one of whom was the heir presumptive of the throne. Soon, other missionaries arrived, and all seemed to go on prosperously. The Bible was translated, corrected and printed; the schools were multiplied; the unwilling people were compelled, by the edict of the king, to give the children an education. Thus, way was preparing for the overthrow of the national superstitions. King Radama, however, died in 1828; and, after a series of butcheries, in which he got rid of most of the royal family, Ranavalona, one of the wives of Radama, found herself acknowledged queen. Rakotoke, the heir presumptive to the throne, and a Christian, was one of her victims. His father, Prince Ratafo, a man from whose enlightened and liberal spirit the missionaries had hoped much, was also slain.

For a time, the Queen apparently favoured the missionaries and the schools. Still, the missionaries were in constant fear of a storm. Such was the character of Ranavalona that they never felt safe. In 1831, a series of edicts began to issue from the throne. First, Mr. Griffith, the missionary, was ordered to leave—though, finally, he was permitted to delay for an indefinite time. Next, permission to administer baptism and the Lord's Supper was withdrawn; then the slaves were prohibited from learning to read and write; and finally in February, 1835, the missionaries were forbidden to teach the religion of Christ; and all who had embraced it were required to confess their guilt and abjure it. It is said that a confederate persuaded the Queen that Jehovah was the first king of the English, and Jesus Christ the second; and that those who served them thus gave up their allegiance to her. It seems incredible that for fifteen years the religion of Christ had been taught, and yet the Queen was to ignore it. This looks like a laboured attempt to mortify a plea for persecution. The books, however, which the missionaries had scattered, were gathered up and returned to them. They formed a bulk large enough to fill an entire house. The courtesy of the Queen even went so far as to provide carts to protect the books from the rats that infested the house where they were stored to the last. These four-footed guards of this literary depot were furnished with an allowance of meat at the royal expense. But the day of hope for Madagascar seemed to have passed. The persecution continued, and at length, on the 14th of August, 1837, Refaravay, a Christian woman, about thirty-eight years of age, suffered as the martyr to the Christian faith in Madagascar. She was stoned to death, though firm and faithful to the last. Many were sold into hopeless slavery for their adherence to Christianity. The

accounts that have reached us from time to time seem to indicate that there is yet hope. There are men and women on that island who fear God more than they fear the Queen.

The latest accounts state that the son of the Queen herself is a Christian. The last Report of the London Missionary Society makes the following statement:—

"The only son of the Queen, and her successor to the throne, who has just attained to manhood, has conformed to the Christian religion, and he is a faithful brother in the Lord. In defiance of the laws, which pronounce slavery and death upon the Christian, the youthful convert assembled with them for worship in their place of retreat; and when their lives and liberties are threatened, he employs all means in his power to ward them off from impending danger and effect their rescue. He has been more than once reported to the Queen by her chief officer, as a Christian; but the love of a mother has prevailed over the spirit of a pagan persecutor, and the life of the prince has been spared. The characteristic of the Malagasy to their offspring was kindred as the most affectionate evidence of the bond of friendship is rarely severed, and the affections of the heart are torn and left bleeding with hopeless sorrow. All plans and projects are in a moment frustrated, and anticipated pleasures and honours are left behind.

Death is terrible, because it cuts us off from our possessions. However painfully and unjustly wealth has been accumulated, and however cautiously the soil clings to its treasure, death forces it away. As 'naked we came into the world, so naked we must go out.' Death severs the strongest, tenderest bands of nature; it takes away the beloved wife at a stroke, or the kind father; it snatches children, tenderly beloved, from the affectionate embrace of their parents; the bond of friendship is rarely severed, and the affections of the heart are torn and left bleeding with hopeless sorrow. All plans and projects are in a moment frustrated, and anticipated pleasures and honours are left behind.

It is not all that terrifies; there is something far worse. This king of terrors comes armed with a tremendous sting. Conscience imaged would inspire us with courage; but guilt, a sense of sin, a feeling of deserved punishment, above all other things, renders death terrible. In the gayety and baseness of life, men may dream of the voice of conscience; or by repeated violations of its dictates, men may enjoy temporary light from a gutter, shining upon the darkness of the mortal world, and then, as if by magic, the light is extinguished, and the soul is left in the gloom of death.

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THE SAILOR MISSIONARIES.

"God moves in a mysterious way, His wonders to perform."

In the South Pacific Ocean, lat 13, is a beautiful cluster of Islands called the Navigators. They were first discovered by Bougainville, 80 years ago, and were so called from the circumstance that the inhabitants had a great number of canoes, and showed an admirable skill in their management. They are surrounded by coral reefs, and seem to have been of volcanic origin. The people are numerous, well-built, and active. Their villages sloping up the hill-sides, or half-buried in the shady valleys, present a beautiful picture as seen from the sea. Pigs, poultry, bread-fruit, bananas, and oranges abound.

About the year 1823, a reckless sailor, preferring a chance among the savage natives, to the hard usage he received on board a British whaler ship, ran away, and found a home on one of these islands. The natives, finding him capable of teaching them many things useful, treated him with marked respect and kindness. The old chief gave him one of his daughters for a wife, in a year or two after, ten native missionaries, educated by the "Martyr Missionary," Williams, arrived from the Island of Rorotonga. Through their instrumentality the sailor became a changed, praying man, and immediately joined them in their various labours for the temporal and spiritual good of the people; and subsequently took charge of this missionary station.

Three years ago, another young sailor deserted from a British whaler-ship, and as a good providence directed, fell into the hands of this Sailor Missionary. Being a son of a minister of the Church of England, he had received instruction in the things of God in his earlier years, but had soon left the teachings of his brother Saviour, in this distant island of the sea. Seven years he had wandered a prodigal from his father's home, and native land; and now for the first time, was constrained to cry, "God be merciful to me a sinner." He also became a "new creature," and joined his brother sailor, and brother in Christ, in the missionary work. The natives built him a large and convenient house, in which he has taught school. The mission is located in a village of 800 inhabitants. A good meeting-house has been built, and a church organized, with 80 members at the present time. Every family in the village observes morning and evening prayer, while every day, the natives, in an American spirit, visit once upon the home and the friends of his youth. The other day he arrived in New-York; and having spent a short time in the service of his Divine Master. These two sailors are the only white persons on the island. Surely the isles shall wait for me, and the ships of Tarshish first to bring thy sons from far.—Sailor's Magazine for Oct.

It is said that in 1804, according to the best estimate that can be obtained, there were in existence only about 4,000,000 copies of the Bible. Now there are more than 30,000,000. In 1804, the Bible had been published in only 18 or 19 languages; in 1848, it existed in 136. In 1804, it was accessible in languages spoken by about 20,000,000 of men; in 1847, it existed in tongues spoken by 60,000,000. During the year, 1,410,283 copies were issued by the British and Foreign Bible Societies alone—400,000 more than in any year before, except 1845.

The Chinese Repository contains a list of Protestant Missionaries to the Chinese, 67 in number, of whom 13 are stationed at Hong-Kong, 13 at Canton, 9 at Amoy, 6 at Pucan, 9 at Ningpo, 15 at Shanghai, and 2 in Siam. Of the whole number, 49 are supported by American Missionary Societies, 19 by English, 2 by a Missionary Society in China, 1 by a Swiss, and 1 by a German Missionary Society. In this list the families of missionaries are not included.

THE KING OF TERRORS.

BY THE REV. DR. ALEXANDER.

His dominion is wide as the world; his subjects are all men except two. His tyranny is inexorable. By no art, by no flight, by no concealment, by no resistance, can we escape—Death is the doom of every man.

Death is terrible, because it cuts us off from our possessions. However painfully and unjustly wealth has been accumulated, and however cautiously the soil clings to its treasure, death forces it away. As 'naked we came into the world, so naked we must go out.' Death severs the strongest, tenderest bands of nature; it takes away the beloved wife at a stroke, or the kind father; it snatches children, tenderly beloved, from the affectionate embrace of their parents; the bond of friendship is rarely severed, and the affections of the heart are torn and left bleeding with hopeless sorrow. All plans and projects are in a moment frustrated, and anticipated pleasures and honours are left behind.

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BAPTIST CHURCH AT ST. HELENA.

Mr. Wade alluding to his detention at St. Helena on a late return passage, says:—

"We spent the first week at the very hospitable mansion of Mr. Carroll, the American consul. In the course of the week we were made acquainted with several jovial persons, seals of Mr. Bertram's ministry.

Mr. Bertram had left England with the intention of labouring at the Cape of Good Hope; but learning there the spiritual desolation of the people at St. Helena, he felt a strong conviction that it was his duty to go there. His friends dissuaded him from the attempt. 'Your friends dissuaded him from the attempt,' they said, 'they say, two chaplains, the colonial and the military, who are sustained by the strong arm of Government; and the entire population of the island is in religious indifference under their immediate supervision. They will, of course, oppose your efforts; none will dare listen to you, everything is dear on the island, and you will have no means of support.' 'The Lord,' said he, 'is stronger than men, and he has promised to do all things for them that believe.'—I will not be deterred by the opposition of men. When he arrived, he knew not a person on the island; but he was not deterred; he soon formed some acquaintances, and procured a private house to be open to him for preaching, his congregation became large; the chaplains were disturbed, and reported him to Government; he was called before the governor and his credentials demanded; these were produced; His Excellency said they were legal, and he was dismissed. His congregation now increased; numbers of the most respectable families attended. The chaplains made another effort against him on the charge of holding unlawful assemblies. This obliged him to purchase the island with all his belongings, and to sail from government service; his popularity increased, until, at length, he gave out the astounding notice, that at such a time he should preach on the subject of baptism, and undertake to show from the bible that 'immersion of the whole body in water is the only mode, and he would be the only subject of Christian baptism.' From this time many turned back and followed no more after him; others, whose hearts the Lord had touched, gladly received the word, and requested baptism.

This was the state of things when Mrs. Wade and myself arrived on the island. Mr. Wade preaching the Gospel with all boldness; and the Holy Ghost was making it the power of God unto the conversion of souls. Religious meetings for preaching or prayer was held almost every evening in the week; it was in fact a time of revival. Soon the chaplains were finished, and his waters consecrated by the immersion of about forty converts in a profession of their faith in Christ. One of the converts of these converts was a Mr. Jaish, a young married gentleman, of German origin and excellent education. His father, now deceased, had been for many years the Dutch consul on the island, and had educated this son for the English army; but he since his conversion, had devoted himself to the ministry of the Gospel. Mr. Carroll spoke of him in terms of the highest commendation, and I was much edified by the sermons which I heard him deliver. At his earnest solicitation, we spent two weeks at his house. Subsequently we were invited to spend some time in the country with a young lady who was an Anglican. Here we spent six weeks, and as the Lord was pouring out his Spirit upon the people of the neighbourhood, we had many delightful meetings and witnessed many hopeful conversions. Three of the new converts were members of the family in all were baptised, and some twenty more were expected to be baptised soon.

The greater part of the native inhabitants are exceedingly ignorant, having scarcely any knowledge of science, or of the world beyond their own little island, and still less of religious truths beyond what is contained in a book of common prayer. Many are quite as ignorant of God and his will as the heathen. But we saw several of the finest specimens of Christian character, as exhibited under suffering of pain or want, that I have ever seen in any country. One who had been reduced from affluence to poverty, now a widow, old, and almost sufficed with infirmities, was calmly waiting for the Lord to send her sustenance, and blessing God for everything. Several young ladies had been repeatedly beaten by their parents or other guardians, to prevent their attending the meetings. Others had been turned out of doors by those on whom they were dependent, because they would follow Christ in baptism; but they remained firm under their sufferings, nor did we hear them complain.

St. Helena is truly missionary ground; but in other places, it is mostly among the poor that the gospel finds its way to the heart; and the little Baptist church which has been begun there, claims the prayers and sympathies of all who are true to the cause of the cross. And they need a sympathy which extends beyond the mere sound of words. Their chapel is not yet free from debt; their pastor is wholly dependent on them for support, and their means are small; but if their chapel were free of encumbrance, they would follow Christ in baptism; but they would remain firm under their sufferings, nor did we hear them complain.

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FRENCH PROTESTANT SEMINARY FOR YOUNG LADIES IN MONTREAL.—Many promising Protestant children have been diverted from the ways of truth into those of Popish error by being educated in Convents and Nunneries; and no accomplishments, however valuable in their own place, can justify parents for sending their children to such places. We learn, with much pleasure, that a Seminary for young ladies, conducted by Middle, Tregeant, and Madame Lesuey, from Geneva, Switzerland, has been opened in Montreal. We heard very favourable accounts of these ladies, when recently in that city; and found, on our return, a letter from Mr. Tregeant, Missionary, waiting us, in which he thus speaks of them.

If it were for the honour of Protestantism, such a boarding-school ought to be supported or encouraged by every friend of the Redeemer's kingdom. It is the first of the kind that has ever been tried in the country; whilst the Roman Catholics have long ago been abundantly supplied. I doubt, however, whether any one of the leaders of the French Catholic school can outdo Miss Tregeant, as to an accomplished and long-experienced way of tuition; but none, I am convinced, could be compared to her as to child piety and true respectability.—Eccler. Record.

Whatever busies the mind without corrupting it, has less than this use, that it rescues the day from idleness, and he that is never idle will not often be vicious.

PAPUS IX—THE OTHER SIDE.

[While the world is resounding the praises of the liberal Pontiff, it is well to listen to the statements of those who take different views, that we may be able to form a just judgement. It is well known that there have been from the first those who have denied the sinews of the Pope, and declared his only purpose to be to secure the more firmly the Pontifical ascendancy. They do not speak without reason, and it is particularly noticeable that these views are confirmed by frequent popular demonstrations against the Pontiff. Whether sincere or not, our hope is that the Pope has kindled a fire which he can neither extinguish nor control.]

The following article, (from an Italian newspaper, the *Indicatore*, published at Malta,) which is translated for our columns, is full of interest, as casting light upon the real policy of the Pope. He is entitled "Liberty of the Press in Rome," though that subject is not reached in the portion which we give this week.—*Ed. N. Y. Rec.*

A MAN of wit said, "Pius IX is not a liberal pope; because popery and liberalism are two contradictory and mutually destructive elements, like fire and water, light and darkness." "The liberties allowed by him," added the same person, "are only pretended, and show only the most refined policy, disguised to support the falling temporal powers and reduce his people to devotion the better to govern them." The pope was far from being deceived himself in this, because the people would take advantage of the shadow of legality thrown by him upon improvement, to form a more extensive plan of revolution, which would end in restoring Italy to Italy, and destroying Popery. It was added, finally, that the union of Italy and the expulsion of the Austrians was not desired by the Pope but really in opposition to his wishes. * * *

If it should be said, in honor of the Pope, that he has granted an amnesty to exiled persons, it might be answered, that this was absolutely necessary to prevent a bloody revolution. And, to the laudable words of the public edict, may be placed in contrast the infernal secret circular of Monsignor Corboli Bassi—published at the same time—in which, by order of the Pope, all public officers are instructed to vex the returning exiles in every possible manner; a circular which would forever have remained in darkness, but for the ingenious ignorance of Cardinal Vannicelli, then legate at Bologna, who published it—a step which cost him the loss of his place and the indignation of Pius IX.

An ardent young admirer of liberty, irritated on hearing such accusations as these against the Pope, said that Pius had given the first impulse to the political movement, which, but for him, would still have remained under the influence of the papal system. He was, therefore, the first step towards civilization. To this it was replied, that actions should be judged according to their motives; and that an effect being opposed to that desired by an agent, he does not deserve the credit of it. Pius IX had in mind something very different from the regeneration of Italy and the liberty of the people, as was proved by facts, if they were more to be depended upon than words. With his voice he permitted railroads, while he favored so many kinds of bad management in introducing them, that the people would never have them unless they made themselves. He allowed the free press, as was proved by facts, if they were more to be depended upon than words. 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