

## PASTOR AND PEOPLE.

### EXTRACTS FROM "THE LIFE OF DR. GEDDIE"—I.

A paragraph here and there from Dr. Patterson's new book, just issuing from the press, will probably be interesting to our readers. The following is from the "Missionary's Journal":

#### WAR AVERTED.

"19th.—An occurrence of more than usual interest has taken place to-day. The late hurricane has done much injury to the coconut, bread-fruit, and other trees on which the natives much depend for their subsistence. An impression prevails among the natives, that these destructive hurricanes are caused by a class of men who are supposed to possess the power of controlling the winds, and who are usually persons of great influence. A native called \_\_\_\_\_ was blamed for the hurricane which has just taken place. Nohoat, the chief, set off yesterday with a party of natives to seize the man and kill him. The supposed wind maker gathered a party of the people to oppose Nohoat. A skirmish ensued, when one man was wounded, but not seriously.

"To-day arrangements were made for a general fight. Natives came pouring in from all quarters, armed with clubs and spears. The report of the contemplated war having reached our ears, Mr. Powell and I resolved to interfere, and if we could not prevent it, at least give our solemn and public testimony against it. We accordingly set out for the field of battle, which was about a mile distant from our premises. We found Nohoat and his party encamped on a spot of level ground, while the others occupied the top of a hill about half a mile distant. At the time of our arrival, both parties were screaming and yelling at each other, throwing their bodies in various postures, and assuming all the attitudes of challenge and defiance. These are the usual preliminaries of battle among savages. As we knew there was some risk in going into the midst of an infuriated gang of savages, we took a circuitous route, which brought us on to the brow of the hill, nearly midway between the contending parties. Our presence seemed to have a paralyzing influence on both parties for the moment. Indeed, the natives have since told us that they were ready to rush on each other at the time, when we took up our position between them, but that they were afraid to fight lest we should be injured. Nohoat, the originator of the war, was the man we wanted to see, and as soon as we observed him, we descended to the spot where he was. We told him our errand—that we had come to stop the war—that God, and not \_\_\_\_\_, made the winds, and that if he persisted in the war, God would punish him for his wickedness. He did not say much, but left us abruptly, and walked up the hill, in the direction of the opposite party. As Nohoat left us ignorant of the impression which our words had made, we turned to the body of natives around us, in hopes that we might do something among them. To a large party we were evidently unwelcome visitors. As soon as we addressed them, they raised a kind of simultaneous yell, so that not a word could be heard. Some of our native friends, who had skulked into the rear to keep out of our view, evidently began to feel for us, and came out on our behalf. After a time we secured a hearing. As we spoke to them, some addressed very bad language to us, others said we were foolish men to interfere unarmed, for other foreigners would have brought guns with them, and have told them they would shoot them if the war was not ended. Others said, if Jehovah made the winds, then we must pray hard to Him and request Him not to send any more hurricanes, or else they would make war on us. Others again assented to all that we said, and acknowledged that war was bad and peace good. As it was evident that we were making some impression, the war party could not stand it any longer, but with a simultaneous shout they seized their clubs and spears, and rushed from the spot where we were. We now sat down to await the return of Nohoat, whom we saw descending the hill towards us. It appeared that after he left us he ascended the hill, and was met by the leading man of the opposite party, who said to him, 'Why don't you come on? We are ready to fight you.' 'How can I?' said Nohoat, 'for the *alaiakan* (new religion) makes it *tilaup* to fight.' 'True,' said the other, 'and to-morrow is the *ana-*

*thiat tilaup*.' Nohoat handed his spear and a strip of native cloth to the other, and his were received in return. Thus was peace concluded, and a war averted which might have involved the whole island, for the last general war is said to have originated from a similar circumstance. We had the satisfaction of returning to our homes, amid armed natives of both parties, who but a short time before were thirsting for each other's blood."

#### HELPERS IN ZION.

What the cause of God now demands, and ever demands, is helpers in Zion. This is true of the local Church, and not less true of the Church at large. Helpers, not hinderers, are summoned to swell and fill the ranks. Go into any given church. In the case is perhaps exceptional where the latter class do not outnumber the former. So as touching our educational interests and our leading benevolences, the same thing may be noted. The "complainers" and the "croakers"—who generally keep close company—everywhere abound. They help to create "spots" even in our "feasts" and offerings of "charity." Character, persona and official, is discussed, as are objects and enterprises presented for approval, with little, it may be, found in any of these to commend, but with much rather to object to, or to criticise.

Now, it is clear that along the lines of obnoxious criticism and censure, there can be little wrought in the way of any desirable upbuilding. Men never go successfully into any warfare or any enterprise, while charged with the spirit of croaking and of complaining. Had Christianity in the persons of its first disciples been possessed by such a spirit, failure would have been written on its banners. It was rather because the primitive followers of the Master were inspired by an altogether different spirit—"being knit together in love"—that they "put to flight the armies of the aliens." So ever since, whether it be in the local church, or in large movements for the advance of the Gospel, we fail not to note like phenomena. How much of eclipse has settled upon churches, communities, neighbourhoods, homes and households, because a spirit alien to that of Christ has borne sway; with the resulting consequences of tearing down, in room of building up.

If, instead, as touching individual character and the cause of God in general, "evil speakings" should become the exception rather than, as they are, so much the rule, how beneficent would be the result. Christians by thus putting themselves in the ranks of helpers, never hinderers, would contribute powerfully to build, not weaken. There would be healing and harmony in place of dissensions and divisions. There would be consequent advance in room of retrograde. Sweet waters instead of bitter would course their way through all the walks of the Church, and of society itself. Smitten and sorrowing hearts would be irradiated by a new sunshine.

We need not wait for the coming of a time when, under our perfected humanity, there will be no challenge to criticise or find fault. Such a time will never come on earth. If we delay to be builders until that day arrives, we shall never attain to the blessedness of Zion building in this world. The need is to build now; and to build all the more earnestly, the more we find to confront and oppose us. As men do not stop or pause in their worldly enterprises because of obstacles and difficulties, and are thus "wise in their generations," so it behoveith the "children of light" to act and accomplish. Helping not hindering, building not pulling down, is hence everywhere in order. Christ's command is, "Go work, not waste yourself, in My vineyard."

#### THE BAG OF PEARLS.

An Arab once lost his way in a desert. His provisions were soon exhausted. For two days and two nights he had not a morsel to eat. He began to fear that he should die of hunger. He looked eagerly, but in vain, along the level sand for some caravan of travellers from whom he might beg some bread.

At last he came to a place where there was a little water in a well, and around the well's mouth the marks of an encampment. Some people had lately pitched their tents there, and had gathered them up and gone away again. The starving Arab looked around in the hope of finding some food that the

travellers might have left behind. After searching a while, he came upon a little bag, tied at the mouth, and full of something that felt hard and round. He opened the bag with great joy, thinking it contained either dates or nuts, and expecting that with them he should be able to satisfy his hunger. But as soon as he saw what it contained, he threw it on the ground, and cried out in despair, "It is only pearls." He lay down in the desert to die.

Pearls are very precious. If the man had been at home, this bagful of pearls would have made his fortune. He would have received a large sum of money for them, and would have been a rich man. But pearls could not feed him when he was hungry. Although you had your house full of pearls, if you have not bread you will die. The Arab knew the value of the pearls that he found; but he would have given them all at that moment for one morsel of bread—would have given them, but could not, for there was no bread within his reach. So, although he was very rich, he was left to die of want.

Pearls and gold cannot preserve the life of the body, far less can they satisfy the soul. Bread is more precious to a hungry man than pearls; and the bread of life is more precious still. Christ has expressly said, "I am the bread of life." How foolish it is to spend ourselves in gathering things that cannot feed us if we are hungry, and cannot save us from our sin! "Seek first the kingdom of God, and His righteousness," and keep other things in a lower place. The chief thing for each of us is to make Christ the life of our souls forever; and then we may gladly accept whatever good things in this life God may be pleased to give us. "What is a man profited if he gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?"

He who is rich when he comes to die, but is still without Christ for his soul, is like the Arab in the desert with his bagful of pearls, but perishing for the want of bread.—*Rev. W. Arnot.*

#### DYING RICH.

What an awful thing it is for a Christian to die rich! Imagine the Master auditing the accounts of a servant who left behind a million! If that poor wretch who had but one talent was cast into outer darkness because he laid it up instead of using it in his Master's service, what will be the doom of those who, with their millions or half millions, have hoarded up, year after year, countless treasures which they could never use? Think of the poor saints pinched with cold and hunger. Think of the Redeemer's cause languishing for want of that filthy lucre which they hold with close fisted selfishness. Yet listen to their talk: "I am but a steward;" "I am not my own;" "Every believer in Jesus is my brother or sister." What a mockery! Will not this be the Master's language to many a professor, "Out of thine own mouth will I condemn thee?" All this applies in principle equally to those who do not possess such gigantic fortunes. A New York paper contains the following weighty remarks. Mr. A. has just died, worth \$10,000,000. When he meets God he will have two hard questions to answer, viz.: First, how did you get that money? Second, What did you do with it? Applying to all who acquire property, whether the amount is large or small, makes business a very serious matter.—*Baltimore Presbyterian.*

#### EVERY BIT OF IT.

One evening, at a prayer meeting, many newly converted persons, both old and young, arose to tell what God had done for their souls, and their determination to love and serve Him. Among the rest, a little girl about seven years old jumped up, her face beaming with happiness, and straining her childish voice to speak as loud as she could, she said, "I have given my heart to Jesus, every bit of it." Was not that a beautiful little speech? I wonder if all the elder people who had risen before could say what she did, "I have given my heart to Jesus, every bit of it." And is not that what Jesus wants? "My son, give Me thine heart," is the command of the Bible. And will He be satisfied with having only a part of it? No, indeed, He must have the whole, every bit of it.

MY witness both within and above me knows, and my pained breast upon the Lord's day at night, that my desire to have Christ awful and amiable and sweet to my people is now my joy; and it was my desire and aim to make Christ and them one.—*Rutherford in Prison, 1637.*