

ness, which it is well known was not the case. It does not appear that Caxton left any will, or at least, if he did, that will cannot be found. A discovery of this document would remove all doubts from this question, and enable us to know to whom he bequeathed his property.

As a merchant, Caxton appears to have been a man of strict integrity; and as a tradesman, when he established printing, he was duly attentive to his business. His signatures were placed where the catchword now stands in modern printing. His paper was good; and his ink has been found to retain its blackness, through the lapse of centuries.

So far as any memorials of Caxton's moral character have been preserved, the circumstances are much in his favour. He has uniformly been represented, as always having the fear of God, and a deep sense of religion resting upon his mind. It is not, however, to be expected, that he should have risen above those fogs and clouds, which, prior to the Reformation, involved the moral world in darkness. His attachment to the papal doctrine, and to the ceremonies of the Romish church, seemed always to partake of sincerity, even when it led him to advocate the absurdities which prevailed. In the crusades he found much to commend, and but little to blame; and was ready on most occasions to defend those fanatical expeditions, against all who presumed to question their propriety. To the pilgrimages of his day, and to those of his ancestors, he was much devoted, though it does not appear that he actually engaged in any of those painful journeys, which he seemed so much to admire in others. This, however, appears to have arisen from the circumstances of his situation in life; and it ought not to be considered as a proof of his insincerity. To the writings of Chaucer he was much attached; and such was his friendship for the poet, that he desired people to pray for his soul, in which exercises there can be no doubt that he also devoutly engaged. There is written in a very old hand, in a *Fructus Temporum* of Mr. Ballard's, of Camden in Gloucestershire, the following note. "Of your charity pray for the soul of Mayster Wyllyam Caxton, that in hys tyme was a man of moche ornate and moche renowned wysdome and counayg, and decessed full crystenly the year of our Lord M. cccc. lxxxvi.

"Moder of Merci shyld hym from thorrubil fynd.
And bryng him to lyff eternal that nouyr bath yud."

But these superstitions may rather be considered as characteristic of the age in which Caxton lived, than as peculiarities, exclusively applicable to himself. The books which he published were almost wholly of a moral tendency, and the prefaces to several, that he occasionally wrote, partook of the same spirit. His errors, therefore, were rather those of the judgment than of the heart; on which account they are more entitled to the sigh of pity than to the sneer of contempt. To draw a line between viable and invincible ignorance on all occasions, is not the province of mortals. This can be only done by that all-wise Being, who, without the possibility of error, can always distinguish between infirmity and vice; and whose goodness arranges those various dispensations under which his creatures are placed.

MISSIONARY INTELLIGENCE.

ANNUAL MEETING OF THE WESLEYAN-METHODIST MISSIONARY SOCIETY.

Continued.

JAMES HEALD, Esq., in moving the third Resolution.—"This Meeting is anxiously desirous that opportunities of instruction should be afforded to the adult and juvenile slave population of the British Colonies; and is therefore gratified by learning that the Wesleyan Missionaries in the West Indies and other Colonial Settlements direct their special attention to the children of Slaves, by sedulously endeavouring to teach them to read, and by a regular perusal of the Holy Scriptures in every school imbuing their minds with sacred and moral principles."—spoke to the following effect:—

My Lord,—Standing connected, as I do, with a district in the country, which has long taken an active part in this Society, I take this opportunity of assuring you, and this Christian assembly, that the county of Lancashire is ready to follow the ex-

ample of the parent Society, and is influenced by the same spirit. I feel, my Lord, that our obligations to promote the object of this Society, so far from diminishing, are increasing; for I am not one of those who conceive that the estimate of our future exertions is to be formed from any past proceedings. I think if there is one danger to which we are more exposed than any other, it is that of making our former efforts a standard for our future exertions. I congratulate myself and this assembly upon the increase of our Missionary collections in the past year; and I believe I speak the sentiments of a considerable number of this Society, when I say, that as we have already attained an increase, and have realized a sum which was once thought but problematical, the sum of £50,000; we ought not to retire from our post till it is swelled to twice that amount. I had the honour of attending a meeting of this Society's Committee last Saturday, when the amount of your subscriptions was announced, and the Chairman of a District Meeting said, "Now for a hundred thousand!" My Lord, I hesitate not to say, that our obligations to strive for this object, so far from being lessened, are increasing. The necessities of the world are not perceptibly diminished. It is true, indeed, that openings of Providence, which throw a light upon some distant Stations, are presenting themselves, and they disperse, in some measure, the gloom which hangs over them; but these are intimations to us that the set time to favour these distant portions of the globe is come. They call upon us to step forward to distribute the bread of life to the perishing millions of the human race. I think that justice to those who personally devote themselves to the Missionary work requires of us, that we press this subject till we have twice the number of Missionaries, in consequence of having the income. So far from going back, I am of opinion that justice also to the money raised requires that we go on. Many of our friends have doubled their subscriptions for this purpose; we have had the money, and we are responsible for its application; and no greater blot could fix itself upon our character, and nothing could more damp our prospects, than a relaxation of our efforts. Another reason for going forward is, that the blessing of God has favoured other Christian Societies. We are not alone in this respect; and I rejoice, as a member of the Church Missionary Society, that that, and other similar Societies, have yet greater success crowning their exertions. Other Societies are going forward; and I have no doubt we shall feel the same stimulus, and never relax our exertions, till, by the blessing of God, that object is accomplished which we propose to ourselves, and we are favoured with shouting the universal triumphs of the Prince of Peace.

The Rev. ROBERT NEWTON seconded this Resolution in the following address:—

My Lord, I find in this Society an argument for the divinity of that religion which it is our duty to circulate to the boundaries of the habitable globe. If we had met to propagate error, we could not have these delightful feelings; but the religion we circulate is truth, and nothing but the truth, as it is in Jesus Christ; and it is because the religion which we wish to make known to the utmost parts of the earth is divine, that those divine feelings are in our hearts when we combine our efforts to give it the widest circulation. You remarked, my Lord, that though we met within these walls as the friends of Missions; and perhaps there are none under this roof who do not deserve that denomination, as we seem to be of one heart and of one mind, yet still there are those without who are of a different opinion. This we regret; but again and again, while we have been listening to the addresses which we have heard, I could not but desire that some of them might be induced to come in: and I almost fancied that I saw some of them looking in at the window; and when they heard such manly sentiments as were uttered by the proposer of the first Resolution, and the enchanting and overflowing eloquence of the Rev. Gentleman who seconded it; and listened to the still mellifluous tones of the liberator of his species, with whose presence we have been favoured this morning, and with the sight of whom, those who could not hear his voice have been delighted; these feelings found their way to their hearts; and I fancied I saw one of them coming in at the door, with the fetters of prejudice on him; but as he came near to this holy fire, it melted

down his fetters, and he is now set at liberty, and exclaims, "I will go with you, for I have heard that God is with you." Though there are many causes of Christian and devout thankfulness to the Author of all good, still there was one fact in the Report which rests on my mind with very serious weight.—That the Committee have determined to send forth twelve additional Missionaries in the course of the year. Now I think the doctrine of consequences ought to be taken into the account here, and I see, or think I see, on the one hand, consequences the most important, consequences the most animating and cheering; twelve additional labourers sent forth to cultivate the foreign field, to employ the ploughshare of the Gospel, and to scatter the seed of divine truth. And though they may go forth weeping, yet they will go bearing precious seed; and I look forward to the time of harvest, when they will come forth with rejoicing, bringing their sheaves with them. These are prospects most cheering, and I trust they will be fully realized. But there is a consequence of another kind; and I hope this large assembly, and all the District and Branch Societies, will be awake to it,—that is, the accession to the Funds of the Society, which must be obtained to support twelve additional Missionaries. I feel this to be an important consideration; yet I would be the last man to say that the Committee have done wrong. I would reiterate the sentiments of my excellent friend from Lancashire, in which he says, we are looking to London for an example, and will do our best to follow it. The letter from a friend to the Secretaries contained many important hints, and we took it into special consideration at a meeting at Liverpool, when several of our friends resolved, there and then, to double their subscriptions; and at the last Anniversary we found that many more of our friends were determined to do the same, and we had an increase of about £150. We told the people assembled on that occasion the pressing necessity there was for increased exertions; the loud call there was from different parts of the world for Missionaries; and that Missionaries were ready to go at any risk, to preach the Gospel of salvation. We told them what we had done, and called on them to do likewise; and the consequence was, that at Pitt-Street where the usual Collections have been about £40, £140 were collected. I state this to the honour of my excellent friends there, whom I may be considered on this occasion, however unworthy, as representing. When I heard the remarks respecting the claims which the natives had made to some of the Missionaries, it brought to my mind an incident attending a statement of circumstances at a late Meeting. The two Kings, or Chiefs, in Africa, had contended who should have the first Missionary who arrived in their country; one said, he was descended from an English female, who had been rescued from shipwreck off their coast, and, therefore, he had the first claim; the other Chief got up and said, it was my father who rescued your mother from the deep, and, therefore, I have the strongest claim. Well, my Lord, the present speaker put it to the Meeting then assembled, "Which, think you, had the chief claim; he who was descended from an English female, or he whose father rescued that female from a watery grave?" There were several honest tars in the body of the chapel, who, as well as the assembly in general, seemed to feel great interest in the question. Their eyes were filled with tears; and one of them exclaimed, in the honesty and simplicity of his heart "Both, Sir! both, Sir! Both, to be sure!" and the voices of all above, and all below, immediately repeated the decision. We had ample proof, in the Collection that was made, that it was not more idle talk. I will only add, my Lord, that I have received a five-pound note from an excellent friend in the North, desiring that it may be considered as his contribution for Ireland, your Lordship's native country.

ANNIVERSARY.

BRITISH AND FOREIGN SEAMEN'S AND SOLDIERS' SOCIETY.

The Fourth Anniversary of this Society was held on Friday evening the 8th of May last, at the City of London Tavern, and was attended by a most numerous and highly respectable assemblage of Ladies and Gentlemen.

Letters were read from the Marquis of Anglesea, Lord Farnham, Earl of Rodon, Admirals Gambier