

Christian Mirror

AND GENERAL MISSIONARY REGISTER.

"MANY SHALL RUN TO AND FRO, AND KNOWLEDGE SHALL BE INCREASED."—DANIEL xii. 4.

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POETRY.

TWILIGHT MUSINGS.

NO. 1.

A BROTHER'S MOTTO FOR THE TIME OF TROUBLE.

"Hitherto the Lord has helped us; let us both then give our fears to the winds, for brighter days yet await us."—*Letter from England.*

Give to the wind thy fears—

Nor ever be dismay'd:

Thy God!—He hears thy prayers—

Why shouldst thou be afraid?

Give to the wind thy fears—

Omnipotent, thy Friend!

Dash, dash away the pearly tear,

On Him, implicitly, depend.

Give to the wind thy fears—

With childlike confidence rely:

Is there a sigh he does not hear—

Deliv'rance may be nigh!

Give to the wind thy fears—

In sunshine, or in storm:

The darkened cloud, while it appears,

A "bow of promise" still may form.

Give to the wind thy fears—

The Eternal God is near:

In life or death a smile he wears—

And what hast thou to fear?

JUNIRS.

M'Gill Street, Montreal, 10th March, 1843.

THE wisest man may be wiser to-day than he was yesterday, and to-morrow, than he is to-day. Total freedom from change, would imply total freedom from error; but this is the prerogative of Omniscience alone.

Sensibility would be a good portress, if she had but one hand; with her right she opens the door to pleasure, but with her left to pain.

Pride, like the magnet, constantly points to one object, self; but unlike the magnet, it has no attractive pole, but at all points repels.

GENERAL LITERATURE.

RARELY has there been given to the Christian world a more interesting and valuable work than the Rev. John Williams' "Missionary Enterprises in the South Seas." It will be recollected that this deeply lamented Missionary was most cruelly butchered by the natives of Erromanga, one of the islands of the South Seas. The following account of the prevalence of Infanticide in those "dark places of the earth," previous to the introduction of the Gospel, will be read with interest. We intend, in future numbers, to continue our extracts from this excellent work:—

INFANTICIDE IN THE SOUTH SEA ISLANDS.

THIS practice did not prevail either at the Navigators or Harvey groups; but the extent to which it was carried at the Tahitian and Society Islands almost exceed credibility. Of this, however, I may enable the reader to form some estimate by selecting a few out of numberless circumstances which have come within my own knowledge. Generally, I may state that, in the last mentioned group, I never conversed with a female that had borne children prior to the introduction of Christianity, who had not destroyed some of them, and frequently the visit of the Deputation, our respected friend, G. Bennet, Esq., was our guest for 3 or 4 months; and, on one occasion, while conversing on the subject, he expressed a wish to obtain accurate knowledge of the extent to which this cruel system had prevailed. Three women were sitting in the room at the time, making European garments, under Mrs. W.'s direction; and after replying to Mr. Bennet's inquiries, I said, "I have no doubt but that each of these women have destroyed some of their children." Looking at them with an expression of surprise and incredulity, Mr. B. exclaimed, "Impossible! such motherly respectable women" could never have been guilty of so great an atrocity." "Well," I added, "we'll ask them." Addressing the first, I said to her, "Friend, how many children have you destroyed?" She was startled at my question, and at first charged me with unkindness, in harrowing up her feelings by bringing the destruction of her babes to her remembrance; but, upon hearing the object of my inquiry, she replied, with a faltering voice, "I have destroyed nine." The second, with eyes suffused with tears, said "I have destroyed seven;" and the third informed us that she had destroyed five. Thus three individuals, casually selected, had killed one-and-twenty children!—but I am happy to add, that these mothers were, at the time of this conversation, and continued to be so long as I knew them, consistent members of my church.

* It is a fact, which I have often observed, and one worthy of special notice, that the influence of religion is manifested, not only in the character, but even in the countenance, by changing the wild and vacant stare of the savage into the mild expressions of the Christian.

On another occasion, I was called to visit the wife of a chief in dying circumstances. She had professed Christianity for many years, had learnt to read when nearly sixty, and was a very active teacher in our adult school. In the prospect of death, she sent a pressing request that I would visit her immediately; and on entering her apartment she exclaimed, "O, servant of God! come and tell me what I must do." Perceiving that she was suffering great mental distress, I inquired the cause of it; when she replied, "I am about to die, I am about to die." "Well," I rejoined, "if it be so, what creates this agony of mind?" "Oh, my sins, my sins," she cried; "I am about to die." I then inquired what the particular sins were which greatly distressed her, when she exclaimed, "Oh my children, my murdered children! I am about to die, and I shall meet them all at the judgement-seat of Christ." Upon this I inquired how many children she had destroyed; and, to my astonishment, she replied, "I have destroyed sixteen! and now am about to die." As soon as my feelings would allow, I began to reason with her, and urged the consideration that she had done this when a heathen, and during "the times of ignorance which God winked at;" but this afforded her no consolation, she exclaiming, "Oh, my children, my children!" I then directed her to "the faithful saying, which is worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners." This imparted a little comfort; and after visiting her frequently, and directing her thoughts to that blood which cleanseth from all sin, I succeeded, by the blessing of God, in tranquilizing her troubled spirit; and she died, about eight days after my first interview, animated with the hope, "that her sins, though many, would all be forgiven her." And what, but the Gospel, could have brought such consolation? I believe that, without the grand truth of pardon by the blood of Christ, I might have reasoned with her from that time to the present in vain. But I forbear all comment; for if such facts fail to demonstrate the value of Missions, no observations of mine will do so.

Frequently have our feelings been most powerfully excited, at the examination of our school children; and scenes more affecting than some which have been witnessed on such occasions it is scarcely possible to conceive. One of these, which occurred at my own station at Raiatea, I will briefly describe. Upwards of six hundred children were present. A feast was prepared for them, and they walked through the settlement in procession, most of them dressed in European garments, with little hats and bonnets made by those very parents who would have destroyed them, had not Christianity come to their rescue. The children added much to the interests of the day, by preparing flags with such mottos as the following: "What a blessing the Gospel is!" "The Christians of England sent us the Gospel." "Had it not been for the Gospel, we should have been destroyed as soon