

THE SMOKING FLAX AND BRUISED REED.

'A bruised reed shall He not break, and smoking flax shall He not quench.'

WHEN evening choirs the praises hymned
In Zion's courts of old;
The high priest walked his rounds, and
trimmed
The shining lamps of gold;
And if, perchance, some flame burned low,
With fresh oil vainly drenched,
He cleansed it from its socket, so
The smoking flax was quenched.

But Thou who walkest, Priest most high!
Thy golden lamps among,
What things are weak, and near to die,
Thou makest fresh and strong;
Thou breathest on the trembling spark
That else must soon expire,
And swift it shoots up through the dark,
A brilliant spear of fire!

The shepherd that to streams and shade
Withdrew his flock at noon,
On reedy stop soft music made
In many a pastoral tune;
And if, perchance, the reed were crushed,
It could not more be used—
Its mellow music marred and hushed,
He brake it, when so bruised.

But Thou, Good Shepherd, who dost feed
Thy flock in pastures green,
Thou dost not break the bruised reed
That sorely crushed hath been;
The heart that dumb in anguish lies,
Or yields but notes of woe,
Thou dost retune to harmonies
More rich than angels know!

Lord, once my love was all ablaze,
But now it burns so dim!
My life was praise, but now my days
Make a poor, broken hymn;
Yet, ne'er by Thee am I forgot,
But helped in deepest need—
The smoking flax Thou quenchest not,
Nor break'st the bruised reed.

INCIDENTS AND ILLUSTRATIONS.

ROBERT YOUNG in his volume entitled "The Success of Christian Missions" makes the following concluding remarks:

"It is related of Hannibal that, when he had led his men to one of the higher ridges of the Alps, they began to murmur, and requested that they should be reconducted to their native country. Standing on an eminence and waving his hand, the intrepid Carthaginian general directed their attention to the plains of Piedmont below. 'Behold,' said he, 'these fruitful vineyards and luxuriant fields. A few more struggles and they are all your own.' These were inspiring words, and they had the desired effect. May we not apply them to the subject under consideration and say, Behold, from the mount of promise, the nations of the earth at the feet of the Church's exalted Head? A few more

struggles on the part of His followers, and voices shall be heard, not in heaven only, but from the innumerable and widely-scattered tongues of the earth, giving utterance to the joyous announcement. 'The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ.' Glorious day! The Lord hasten it in His time."—*The Spirit of Missions.*

ARE savages benefited by being taught the Christian religion? Thirty years ago R. H. Dana, Esq., according to the *Missionary Review of the World*, thus wrote regarding the inhabitants of the Sandwich Islands:—

"The missionaries have in less than forty years, taught this whole people to read, write, cipher, and sew, given them an alphabet, grammar and dictionary; preserved their language from extinction, given it a literature and translated into it the Bible and works of devotion, science and entertainment; have established schools, reared up native teachers, so that the proportion of the inhabitants who can read and write is greater than in New England. Whereas they found these people half-naked savages, living in the surf and in the sand, eating raw fish, fighting among themselves, tyrannized over by feudal chiefs, and abandoned to sensuality, we see them decently clothed, recognizing the law of marriage, knowing something of accounts, going to school and public worship with more regularity than people do at home, and the more elevated part of them aiding to conduct the affairs of the constitutional monarchy under which they are holding seats on the judicial bench and in the legislative chambers, and filling posts in the local magistracies!

"In every district are free schools for natives, where they are taught, by native teachers, reading, writing, singing by note, arithmetic, grammar, and geography, at Lahainaluna is the normal school for natives, in which the best scholars from the district schools, are carried to an advanced stage of education, or fitted for teachers. At Punahon is the college, now having 70 students, and the examinations in Greek, Latin and mathematics, which I attended, were particularly satisfactory. In no place that I have visited are the rules which control vice and regulate amusements, so strict, so reasonable, so fairly enforced. A man may travel in the interior alone, unarmed, even through wildest spots. I found no hut without its Bible and hymn-book in the native tongue, and the practise of family prayer and grace before meat."

ALL the Japanese law requires a man to do in order to put away his wife is to have her name erased from the official register of his family, and have it re-entered on the register of her family. Strong efforts are being made to amend this easy plan of divorce.