

persons, were too small for the number that pressed into them, waiting for some chance of getting a peep at the wonderful machine.

All the parties were eager to carry back with them some copies of "the book;" and the usual question they asked when landing was, "When will the books be ready?"

The first copy that was finished was presented to the king, whose joy, on his getting it, knew no bounds. The Queen and the Chiefs were next supplied, but here the missionaries were nearly brought to a stand for want of proper materials for binding. Their stock of mill-board was soon done, and their leather speedily exhausted. The people, however, soon found a substitute for the first by beating pieces of bark-cloth together till they formed a good firm board; or cutting very thin pieces of wood of the size required to make the backs. To get the necessary quantity of leather, the missionaries taught the people how to tan skins. And now all set to work to make the leather. All kinds of animals were speedily killed for their skins; and old dogs, shaggy goats, wild kittens, every creature, in short, that could be spared, was thus robbed of its jacket, to find covers for the Word of God. The printing-office was almost like a tan-yard; and, as you passed through the village, almost every hut had a skin of some sort stretched on a board, and drying in the sun. So great was the eagerness of the people for the books that binders enough could not be procured till every chief sent one or more men to learn the art, and help to supply the wants. Most cheering was it to the missionaries to see the people thus employed; and, though the season was one of great toil, it was also one of great enjoyment. For many weeks and months this eagerness lasted, and the demand was so great that thirty or forty canoes were often seen in the bay, waiting five or six weeks for their supply. Each canoe would, generally, bring eight or ten persons, and these would hand to the missionaries a large roll of plantain leaves, each of which had an order on it for one or more copies from people that could not come.

One evening about sun-set a canoe arrived from Tahiti with five men to purchase Bibles. The moment they landed, they hastened to the missionary's dwelling, and asked for "the Word of Luke." No copies were ready, but they were told, if they would wait till the following morning, they should have as many as they needed, and were recommended to seek a lodging in a village. But they were afraid to go away lest some other person might come and take the copies they were so earnestly waiting for. So, gathering some dry cocoa-nut leaves for a bed, and wrapping themselves in their bark-cloth cloaks, they lay down upon the ground just outside the missionary's house, and there slept till the morning broke. There the missionary found them in the morning, and, seeing, their great anxiety, lost no time in supplying to each a copy, and one for a sister, and another for a mother of one of them. Each wrapped his book in a piece of white bark cloth, put it into his bosom, bade the missionary "good bye," and, without eating or drinking, hastened to the boat, hoisted the sail, and steered away full of joy towards home.

Young reader, does not this great eagerness of the poor South Sea islanders put many in this land of Bibles to the blush? Oh! let us follow their deep interest in God's Book; and, as it abounds in our dwellings, let us never be condemned for our neglect and carelessness respecting it.

PRAYER FOR OUR COUNTRY.

WHAT shall we ask for our country? That wisdom and knowledge may be the stability of our times and strength of salvation, and the fear of the Lord our treasure.

GLEANINGS FOR THE CHILDREN.

COAL MINES AND CHRISTIAN MISSIONS.

ONCE went to a singular missionary meeting. It was held in a little chapel in a village, where nearly all the men and boys worked in coal

mines: and, though some of them had washed their faces, and put on their best clothes before they came to the meeting, there were other black-faced people who looked more like dark Africans, or South Sea islanders, than like Englishmen. But, though some of them had their faces black, they had bright eyes, and appeared to have warm hearts in the good work of sending the Gospel to the wretched heathen. But there was one thing in this meeting which made it different from any other meeting I ever attended: it was this:—

Just a year before, when the first missionary meeting had been held in that village, one of the speakers told the people that, if they got missionary boxes, and put into them something every week, they might easily raise a good deal of money without missing what they gave. He then offered a box to every person who would promise to give five shillings in the course of the year. The people seemed pleased with the plan; and, when the meeting was over, so many came to ask for boxes that the minister had not enough for them, and was obliged to send up to London for more. Well, at the meeting where I was, these boxes were brought in. Most of them were heavy; and, before the speaking began, the people would have their boxes opened, and the money counted, that every one might know how much he had got for the good cause. And I am sure you would have smiled if you had been there, and had seen how busy the ministers on the platform were in shaking out the money from these boxes, and then counting it: you would have been delighted to have seen how bright and cheerful many a coal-digger's dark face became when it was announced how much money there was in his box. It took a long time to do all this work, for there were many boxes, and, therefore, the speaking did not begin until late in the evening; but it was one of the pleasantest parts of the meeting, for the poor people were full of joy when they found that they had, altogether, collected in their boxes between eight and nine pounds!

But, while I am writing about coal mines and missionary boxes, I will tell you a little story which will please you, and I hope do you good:

There was a gentleman who lived in a part of the country where coal is dug, and one day he thought he should like to see a mine, and he was lowered down into one many hundred feet deep. When he got to the bottom, the people there looked very dark and dirty, and he did not know who they were. But there was one of them who knew him, and who ran up to the place where he was standing with great glee, and said, "Oh, sir, I never expected to see you here!" It was one of the boys of his class in the Sabbath school. Having got permission to show the gentleman over the mine, the little fellow set out and took his teacher to every part worth seeing. But he was so overjoyed at the job, and skipped along so fast that now and then he left the visitor in darkness till he came back to him again with the little safety-lamp which was hanging from his hand. He showed the gentleman where the miners were at work, and pointed out the thick pillars of coal which were left for a time to keep the roof from falling in. It is very likely that he took him to the stables where the horses were kept, and told him how many of them there were, and how long they had been down in that deep, dark place, and how blind they had become from not having had any use for their eyes. But at last the teacher and his little-guide came to the bottom of the shaft,—that is, the deep pit up and down which the coal and the work people are drawn,—and the gentleman was glad enough to see the light of day glimmering once more from the top, and had no wish to go back again through the dark diggings which he had left. But the boy had not yet shown everything in the mine. "There is," he said to his teacher, "one place more that I must show you;" but the gentleman told him he was tired, and did not care about seeing any thing else; yet the boy was so earnest that he consented to go. In a short time he found himself in a large

gloomy-looking cavern, where there was a single candle burning very dimly in that dark place.

"Here," said the boy, "we have our prayer-meetings;" and then he showed the visitor several seats cut out in the coal, upon which they were accustomed to sit while the Bible was read. And then, pointing to a box also cut out of a solid block of coal, he said with evident pleasure, "Here, sir, is our missionary box!"

Now who does not think that such prayer meetings and that missionary box were the best things in the coal mine; that God smiled upon them, that he blessed those dear boys who by these means sought to get good for themselves, and to do good to others; and that in that deep, dark place there was more real happiness than in many of the mansions of the rich, or the palaces of princes?—*Juvenile Missionary Magazine.*

A PILGRIM TO MECCA BROUGHT TO CHRIST.

The followers of the false prophet Mahomet deem a pilgrimage to his tomb at Mecca, in Arabia, to be a most pious work indeed, obtaining for those who perform it a large stock of merit. Hence very many of the more zealous among them make very long and difficult journeys for this purpose. From India, and from countries more distant still, numbers go to Mecca every year, and the effect of the pilgrimage too generally is, to increase their pride, and confirm them in their wretched delusion. It often tends, also, to excite a taste for roving; so that the pilgrim cannot settle quietly at home after the pilgrimage is ended. It was thus we believe that Mir Khan, of whose conversion we shall now speak, was led, about three years ago, to set off, with some companions whom he had persuaded to accompany him, on a second pilgrimage to Mecca. His home was amongst the mountains on the borders of Kashmir. His profession had been that of a soldier. He had once held the rank of a sergeant in the army of one of the bold wild chieftains who dwell in those regions. Happily for him he did not on this second occasion take the most direct route to Mecca, but varied his road by coming through Peshawar, a large city in the north-west corner of our possessions in India. He entered that city a haughty Mussulman, full of self-righteous pride; he left it a humble, earnest, anxious Christian.

How was this change effected? By hearing that blessed Gospel which is "the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth." That gracious God, who, by His providence, directed his steps to Peshawar, by His Almighty Spirit opened his heart to attend to the words which he heard there. Who was the preacher? There were then no missionaries there. We believe that by this time a missionary has arrived there; and we expect Peshawar will prove a very interesting and important station. The glad tidings of a full and free salvation in Jesus Christ first reached the ears of Mir Khan from the lips of an English officer, in command of one of the regiments at Peshawar. His custom is to testify of Christ to the natives in the Bazaars, or wherever he could obtain a quiet hearing. One day, when thus engaged near one of the mosques, when those pilgrims to Mecca were here performing their worship, they drew near to hear him. Indignant at the insult offered to their prophet by setting forth Jesus Christ as the only all-sufficient Saviour of the world, the Mussulman reviled the gallant Colonel, who replied with the meekness of the Christian, and invited him to his quarters to discuss the respective merits of the false prophet Mahomet and of the Divine Redeemer. For twenty days did Mir Khan meet this officer for instructions of this kind; and it was soon apparent that he had a better teacher, even the Spirit of Truth, enlightening his mind, and drawing his heart to Jesus. On the twenty-first day after their first intercourse he asked for baptism. There was no minister there to administer the rites, and he was advised to go to the American missionaries at Lahore for that purpose. He did not resort thither, however,