

Missionary Intelligence.

(From Wes. Notices Newspaper, March 1851.)

Wesleyan Missions in British America.

NEWFOUNDLAND.—Extract of a Letter from the Rev. John Brewster, dated Twillingate, Green-Bay, Sept. 4th, 1850.

HISTORY OF THE MISSION AT TWILLINGATE.

I have visited a number of out-posts the last fortnight, and have found, upon the whole, a lively and interesting people. Surely God has done great things for this part of Newfoundland. Seven years ago we had not seven members in society. Darkness covered the land, and gross darkness the face of the people. Mr. Addy was requested, about eight years ago, to visit these shores, and report to the District the best opening for a Missionary. He wisely fixed upon Twillingate. The result of his visit was the appointment of Mr Marshall, who was a workman indeed. After breaking up the fallow-ground, and sowing the seed, he fell upon the field, and was buried amid the tears of many who had been brought to God by his ministry. Mr Peach succeeded him, and was very successful. God blessed his labours during his four years sojourn among them; and now I am as one "sent to reap that whereon I bestowed no labour."

REMARKABLE CONVERSION OF A FISHERMAN.

I held a love-feast in the chapel on September 24th, and was confirmed in a conviction previously formed, when listening to the several relations of Christian experience, during the renewal of the society's tickets, that the Spirit of God, by secret operations on the previously unenlightened mind, prepares the people for the reception of a Christian Missionary. How many testified that, long before Mr Addy or Mr Marshall visited them, they were convinced of sin, and their danger of eternal death, but knew not where to flee for refuge! To these awakened souls "how beautiful upon the mountains were the feet of" them that brought "glad tidings!" O that the friends of Missions in England could have heard their statements! Being struck with some observations uttered by one man, I asked him, yesterday, to relate to me the particulars of his conversion to God. The following is the substance: "There was no Gospel in those days. I sometimes heard a sermon from a Clergyman who lived in these parts, and, though he rebuked us for our sins, he left us there. We saw not the Scripture plan of justification by faith. I fell into the prevailing sin of the place, drunkenness, and lived in sinful ignorance until the death of my first-born child; for though I had a Bible given me by my Sister 'Molly,' before I left England, I never read it until God took away my child. He was very young when he died, and if my love could have been weighed, his share was the heaviest. I stood over his dying bed as one distracted; and, while watching him, he appeared to die. But while we were all weeping and wailing in suspense, he revived. I put my arm around him to kiss him, when he looked up so sweetly, and said, with a smile, 'O father! I have had a view of such a heavenly place; and it was full of such heavenly persons. And there was one in the midst of them all that was so glorious, that I could scarcely look upon him. But he seemed to look at me and smile. But father,' said he, with such a solemn look, 'you are not fit to be there yet.' O Sir, this cut me to the heart. I knew I was not ready to die. I felt the burden of my sins, and cried out for anguish. After the death of my child, I was enabled to abstain from intoxicating liquors, and was so far saved from the sin of drunkenness. My good resolutions were confirmed by an alarming dream I had then. I awoke in

great fear. I had recourse immediately to 'Molly's' Bible. But, Sir, when I opened it, you might have knocked me down with a feather. I felt such a trembling come over me, when the first words that met my eye were the eleventh verse of the 5th chapter of Isaiah: 'Woe unto them that rise up early in the morning, that they may follow strong drink; that continue until night, till wine inflame them!' But when I read the fourteenth verse: 'Therefore hell hath enlarged herself, and opened her mouth without measure,' I shut the book, exclaiming, 'God be merciful to me!' These words in Isaiah were a means of keeping me from slighting my convictions. From that time I began to read my Bible more, hoping to get a little comfort. But the more I studied the word of God, the more my sorrow increased. For I saw new evils in me every day. Bad as drunkenness was, I saw as many sins in my heart as bad as it; and there were times when my soul was so distressed, that I could scarcely eat or drink. How often did I wish, in those days, that the Lord would send into these parts some of 'Molly's' folks! She used to write to me such good letters, and did all she could to persuade me to turn to the Lord. In my distress I often wished to have instruction from her; but she died, and I wandered in darkness for years, no man caring for my soul. At length Mr Addy came into these parts. 'Now,' said I, 'here is one of the men I have longed to see, I will go and hear him.' He preached about the doom of the careless, prayerless sinner. While I listened, the tears flowed thick and fast from my eyes. When Mr Addy left, we seemed as a people abandoned to darkness. At length Mr Marshall came. 'Now,' said I, 'is salvation come.' And I made haste to hear him. He preached 'about a sinner being justified by faith only.' I said to myself, 'This will do for little sinners; but it is too easy for such as I.' I went again; it was the same thing over again,—"justified by faith." I felt rather angry this time, because I was sure faith only would not save me. So I determined not to hear him, but that I would set myself to the task of reading the Bible through, from Genesis to Revelation, I did it, except those very hard chapters in the middle of the Bible; and, as I knew God knew I was but a poor scholar, I thought he would excuse me slipping by them. I now fancied I was a good man,—very few better; and, during Mr Marshall's visit, I rested in this confidence. But soon after his death my convictions returned with double force. My vain confidence broke down under me, and I felt as a man sinking into the sea. In this state of soul I went to hear Mr Peach preach. He preached about the day of small and feeble things, how God would not despise it. From despair I rose to hope that God might not despise me. And while the congregation was singing the 365th hymn:—

'O God of my salvation, hear,
And help a sinner to draw near,
With boldness, to the throne of grace.'
suddenly my heart was lightened of its load; the Spirit of God filled me with joy and gladness. I felt it next to an impossibility to withhold myself from declaring, 'I do believe in Jesus! I do believe his blood cleanses me!' O, Sir, that light and joy of the Spirit were as the morning-star to my soul! I have been exposed to death in stormy nights at sea; I have known the sorrows of men expecting to see their vessel founder in the dead of night; I have lashed up my helm, laid-to with reefed sail, and cast myself on deck, anxiously waiting the morning-light to come; and I have sprung up with joy the moment I saw the morning star, confident that we should soon make the harbour. But the joy of pardoning grace was unspeakably greater, when the light of the Spirit of God was as the morning-star to my soul."

Correspondence.

JUDGE MARSHALL'S LETTERS.

(Continued from Athenaeum of the 16th instant.)

A Report made to the Prison Board for the County of Aberdeen, by their Committee, assigns the following as principal sources or causes of crime. Flash houses,—Brothels,—

cheap theatres, balls, and other places of resort,—Pawnbroking, Drunkenness, Sabbath breaking,—Ignorance, and want of education—The want of proper, even decent accommodation, in the form of Lodging houses for the lower classes, especially for strangers, and lastly—Poverty. As to this last cause, they justly say,—"Poverty, in itself, is no crime; it may often be the result of unforeseen and unavoidable misfortune; but poverty and crime mutually produce each other."

The same causes specified in this Report, are also in operation, in all the other large towns of the Kingdom; as well as in many of the smaller ones, and, doubtless, produce criminal results in about the same degree.

Having treated so fully of crime, in general, and its principal causes, the other subject proposed; that of Juvenile Crime and Depravity, in particular, will now be introduced and discussed. Among the numerous evils which at present embarrass and afflict the social condition of the United Kingdom, this one, will, on examination, be seen to hold a distressing prominence; and for many reasons may well be considered the most ominous and alarming, with reference to national corruption and decay. When the numerous and powerful causes in operation, tending directly to originate and increase youthful depravity, are particularly set forth and explained, it will not seem surprising, that such depravity should be so very extensive among the labouring classes; and be so difficult of prevention or cure. Some of those causes have already been incidentally and partially exhibited, while describing the impoverished and degraded condition of the great body of these classes; and their generally intemperate and dissolute habits and character. It is somewhat encouraging, that there are few subjects, which at the present time, are exciting more anxious alarm and attention; and commanding more active exertions than this one, among the truly patriotic and benevolent throughout the Kingdom. Prizes have been offered for the best Essays on the subject, suggesting the most adequate or effectual remedies for the evil; and schools and other promising agencies have been put into operation, but as yet, it would seem, with but little of permanently beneficial effect. In the nature of things, such will be the case, until more effectual means are devised and brought into energetic operation, for the removal of the primary and deep-seated causes of the evil. Before proceeding to treat of those causes, in a detailed, or expository manner, it will be most appropriate, to describe the various aspects and forms of the evil; and its extensive existence. To any person who looks at the state of society in the present day, in a moral point of view, either in the United Kingdom or elsewhere, it will be obvious, at the very first glance, even from what is constantly occurring in the public streets, and thoroughfares, that vice and hardened recklessness, as to every thing virtuous, orderly, and becoming, generally characterize the youthful male generation of every class, but especially, those of the labouring orders. Their profaneness, and vulgarity of language; and frequent sallies of violence and fierceness, while associating together, or transiently meeting on the streets, abundantly declare their neglected and depraved condition. But on closer investigation, this will appear far more deplorably apparent, as well as to be most abundantly prevalent. While residing and travelling in the Kingdom, I had no opportunities, it is true, of acquiring any personal intimate knowledge of this subject of youthful depravity, otherwise than from observing the open and daily exhibitions of it in language and behaviour, not thinking it right, or expedient to visit any of their depraved and corrupting scenes, or places of vicious resort. This deficiency, however, if such it may be called, will be abundantly or sorrowfully supplied, by the testimonies and statements which it is in my power to offer, from truthful authorities, perfectly informed on the subject; and from sources entitled to the highest credibility. Such of them as I shall at present submit, will go to exhibit the various modes and forms of that depravity; and its corrupting and extensive prevalence. This evil, indeed, and its foreboding ruinous consequences and prospects, have, of late years, become so extensive and alarming, that they have engaged the attention and deliberations of the Legislature and the Government, though by no means to a

needful or adequate extent. That truly patriotic and benevolent nobleman, Lord Ashley, has brought the subject in an express and detailed manner, before the House of Commons; and in one of his speeches, there, regarding it, stated that in London alone, as many as 30,000 ragged children, were sent out by drunken parents to beg or steal. In the Report already cited, made to the Prison Board in Aberdeen, by their Committee on juvenile Depravity, in November 1848, it is stated, that of the 96 criminal offenders, then in confinement, 20 of them were under 18 years of age.

The Commissioner for enquiring into the social condition of the working classes in Hull, states in his Report in December 1849, "I found in-reference to the borough criminal returns, for the last year, that of the 3,700 prisoners, taken before the magistrates, 2,080 were under 25 years of age. Notwithstanding all that is being done in the way of education, I am perfectly convinced, that there does not exist in Hull, any adequate means for the prevention of juvenile crime, and of the growth and multiplication of juvenile criminals." In the second part of his Report, the Commissioner further says, regarding juvenile crime,— "I have spoken with many shopkeepers on this subject. One told me he had six dishonest lads in succession. Another said, 'I have for the last twelve months, been blessed with a slow and sure youth, whose only merit is, that what he is set to do he can be depended on for doing; but for a long time before, I was continually changing lads. Depend upon it, the lads, now a days, are a bad set.' Another said, 'I should have had to prosecute at the sessions, many times since I have been in business, if I had thought it would have made the lads any better to send them to goal.' Another—a very shrewd man—said, 'When I kept lads, I was robbed at all ends and sides, and could never get my work done after all; but for two years back, instead of giving two lads, one 3s. 6d. and the other 2s. 6d., I have given a man 12s.; and I am sure I gain by it.'"

The London Journal, "The News of the World" in March 1850, gives the following statements, abridged from the "Morning Chronicle" of the same month.—"The increase of the number of Ragged Schools in the Metropolis, since 1844, has been 62; of Ragged School teachers 853, of pupils in those Schools, 15,249, and of Ragged School funds, upwards of £4000. And yet, in spite of all this vast educational machinery, the number of offenders, under 20 years of age, has increased in the same period, to no less than 3,317—or very nearly one for each guinea that had been subscribed, in the hope of diminishing juvenile depravity."—These statements are introduced here, merely in proof of the general points of the increase and extent of Juvenile depravity.—In a subsequent letter, which will treat of the subject of education, or literary instruction, generally, facts and statements from the same authority will be given, to show, that such instruction in Ragged or other Schools, will not avail to remove or even lessen Juvenile depravity, without simultaneous and continued moral training; and the removal of the principal causes and means of enticing and tempting to Juvenile crime and depravity, and of cherishing and extending the evil.

In the Report of the Coroner of Bolton, elsewhere cited, which states the increase of summary convictions for criminal offences, in seven years, from 1843 to 1849, to be from about 52,000, to 61,000, or about 9,000 over the previous 7 years, it is mentioned, that 47 per cent of the 61,000 or nearly 30,000 of such convictions, were of persons between 15 and 35 years of age."

Another authentic publication in 1850, gives the following statements, as to the extent of Juvenile crime—"Of the entire number (125,452) of criminals committed to the prisons of England and Wales, 15,726 were under seventeen, of which 13,444 were males and 2282 females. In 1847 there were taken into custody by the metropolitan police, 62,181 offenders, or disorderly characters; of which number, 15,698 were under twenty years of age."

Mr. Beggs states in his Essay on Juvenile Depravity, that at the sessions in Middlesex, the third quarter in 1847, Mr. Sergeant Adams drew the attention of the Grand Jury to the fact, that there were no less

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