

Missionary Intelligence.

SOCIETY FOR THE PROPAGATION OF THE GOSPEL IN FOREIGN PARTS.

79, Pall Mall, Dec. 8, 1853.

The following letter has been recently received from the Rev. W. Chambers, giving an account of the prospects of the mission so recently commenced at Linga, a short distance from Sarawak, Borneo. Nothing but the want of means prevents the Society extending its operations in this promising field:—

"Sarawak, Borneo, Sept. 28, 1852.

"Rev. Sir,—The three months which have passed since my last note have been, excepting the last fortnight, spent as the previous at Linga. My endeavours in preparing the adult population there for the reception of the Gospel have been almost confined to the inculcation of the simple truths mentioned in my last. I fear I should be too sanguine did I feel that progress had been made. It is exceedingly difficult to arouse any spirit of inquiry which will furnish direct opportunity for our purpose. Occasionally an individual gives me hopes, during half a dozen conversations, that I may shortly lead him to the knowledge of Christ crucified: some trifle occurs to absorb his attention, and when he visits me, he has no longer ear for the word of God. So that, though I sometimes think a kind of recognition of God's providence is becoming general, there is not at the present a single person whom I can consider as an inquirer after the truth.

"Yet in this there is nothing surprising, consequently nothing (recollecting the shortness of the period) disheartening; and though it may cause us to turn our attention more earnestly to the children as a profitable occupation until God is pleased to open the hearts of their parents, yet this must be accompanied with no neglect—no despair of the latter—no feeling that the great need of this people is an indication to prepare their minds for the reception of the truth. I am convinced as ever, that the Dyaks have sufficient intelligence to comprehend all the facts on which the Creed is based, if we have but the gift to set these before them in an intelligible and interesting manner. The belief of them is not ours to bestow.

"Therefore though you shall have to wait long for results as it would gratify you to learn, I trust that you will strengthen, so far as the Society's means allow you, the Dyak Mission. If prolonged disturbance among some of the old piratical tribes does exclude them from our list of places for present action (as far as it respects the immediate employment of Missionaries) is more than compensated by the removal of obstacles to it which have hitherto existed amongst the peaceably disposed tribes."

The work of the Rev. H. W. Gomes at Lundu, Borneo, has been described in the following terms by a gentleman writing from Sarawak:—

"The Rev. W. Gomes' progress with the Sibuyows is most gratifying. He has nineteen Dyak boys in his school list; they are making great progress, and he has the highest opinion of their capabilities. 'They are,' he says, 'far quicker than the Chinese or Malay children, and so anxious to learn, that to miss a lesson is quite a disappointment; the little fellows are so attached to Mr. Gomes, they never leave him. The Chinese at Lundu are anxious too to have a school, and I have promised Mr. Gomes to assist in paying a teacher. I hope you will bring out a small corps of really good men for our Land Dyaks. There is an admirable field; and as we are about to take the whole of these tribes into our hands entirely, there will be no obstacles in the missionary's way, and their living on the mountains is an advantage; it cuts them off from the counteracting influence of the Islamites. I am very sanguine that a few years will make Sarawak a very model of a settlement, and that we shall be able to turn our Dyaks into good subjects, and good Christians too. The only fear is from without. The Dutch are showing a disposition to take advantage of the adverse gale that has set on us to bully and insult our flag, with the object, no doubt, of lowering our influence with the natives. They will not, I think, go further than this."

SOCIETY'S NEED OF FUNDS.—A statement has been prepared, which will accompany the Royal Letter, showing that an immediate addition of not less than £20,000 per annum to the Society's income is needed for the maintenance of additional clergymen and teachers in those fields of missionary labour to which the Society has been recently invited. Nothing is wanting but a voluntary resolution, on the part of those clergymen and parishes to whom the Roy-

al Letter is addressed, to grant the Society the benefit of an annual instead of a triennial sermon and collection in its behalf. This would at once realize the desired sum, and would relieve the Society from the painful expectation of being compelled to deny the spiritual aid so extensively and so urgently solicited. Surely the clergy of the Church of England will not fail to give a cordial response to the suggestion of his Grace the Archbishop of Canterbury, who thus expresses himself in a letter which is circulated with the Queen's Letter in the diocese of Canterbury:—

"I am informed that an additional annual sum of £20,000 would barely suffice to meet the demands which are made on the Society from various parts of the world. I trust therefore that you will feel it your duty, as a minister of Christ, to give full effect to Her Majesty's gracious intentions, by earnest exhortation from the pulpit, and to make known and enforce, as widely and as strongly as possible, the claims of the Society on all the members of our Church; and it would give me great pleasure to learn that you had determined to make a similar collection annually, if you have not done so hitherto."

Youth's Department.

MY MOTHER'S HAIR IS GRAY.

"One lamp—thy mother's love—amid the stars
Shall lift its pure flame changeless, and before
The throne of God burn through eternity—
Holy—as it was lit and lent thee here."

"Pardon me, Miss Edwards, I cannot agree with you. To me gray hair is beautiful. *My Mother's hair is gray.*"

A deep silence followed these words. The low, earnest, reverential tone in which they were spoken had impressed the gayest of that gay young group.

The speaker had numbered more than forty years. He was above the medium height, his frame indicating vigor and manly strength, rather than grace or beauty. The face though far from handsome, at once inspired both confidence and respect. Its ordinary expression was grave, smiles rarely visited it, but when they came, the effect was like a bright beam of sunshine in a shady place. Around the broad, high brow, clustered graceful curls of brown hair. The contour of the head was singularly beautiful and more than redeemed the plainness of the face. He was a man of great moral and mental power, to whom his acquaintances looked up with admiration that was little short of reverence. By the magic of his eloquence he could sway a listening multitude as the leaf-burdened branches of the forest trees are swayed by the winds of heaven. He had an enviable reputation as a man of learning, and he was one of the blessed few

—"Who gain the book to know,
Nor buy the knowledge with the heart."

His influence was felt in the political world. Offices of honor and emolument were pressed upon him, and he had but to listen to the promptings of ambition to scale the dizzy heights of popular favor. He was the poor man's friend. The widow and the orphan never claimed his sympathy in vain. Kind words, which are the true measure of benevolence,

"Fell from him noiseless as the snow
And made glad the hearts of the needy"

He knew the "names of husband and of father." The brightest ornaments of the modest cottage, where he had set up his household gods, were his beautiful sweet-voiced wife, and a group of fair-haired children, who clustered like olive plants around his table. His absence from home was like the withdrawal of light from the loving household of which he was head; his presence when he returned seemed to them

—"to brighten light,
And give back sunshine with an added glow"

He was a Christian, not by profession only but in deed, and truth. His religion was not a dead letter; a matter of mere formal belief, and mere formal practice, but a living, active principle which regulated all his actions. He did not wear it like a Sunday coat, to be laid upon the shelf at the going down of the sun, but he wore it through the week, in the hurry of business, and the pursuit of pleasure, in the house and by the way.

That which more perhaps than anything else gave grace and beauty to his character, was the love he bore his mother, the watchful care with which he smoothed the path of her declining years, his unwearied devotion to her comfort, and the reverence with which he always spoke of her.

"To me gray hair is beautiful. *My mother's hair is gray.*" He could remember when that same gray

hair was dark and glossy as a raven's plume—when the calm pale brow it shaded was free from wrinkles—when the now colorless cheek was flushed with the rosy tint of health and happiness. He remembered how carefully she guarded his helpless infancy, cheerfully bearing privation, weariness and suffering for his sake—the gentle force with which she restrained him during the season of his impetuous youth—the proud affection with which she marked the noble development of his manhood—and the deep, strong, deathless love with which all his life long she had covered him as with a garment. And to him now, in the pride and vigor of his manhood, even her gray hairs were beautiful. Not hairs alone—but every head which age had silvered o'er was revered for her sake.

In this busy, bustling age of the world, when the accumulation of wealth and the passion for public honors engross so large a share of men's time and thoughts, reverence for the old is in danger of being accounted an old-fashioned duty, to be laid aside with hopes and surbelows, powdered wigs, and silver knee buckles. The command, "Honor thy father and mother," which to many minds savors too strongly of things beyond the flood to claim present obedience, is as binding now as on the day God uttered it from Sinai. Even in the absence of a direct command, every high and noble sentiment of man's nature prompts him to yield to his mother the homage of a love, if not as deep and tender, at least as pure and changeless as her own.

"To me gray hair is beautiful. *My mother's hair is gray.*" The words were few and simple enough, but they revealed much. I thought how it would have quickened the mother's languid pulse, and how the weary heart, now almost home, would have leaped with joy had they fallen on her ears. Involuntarily, as it were, the man whom the world called great had offered this tribute of filial affection, and expressed his reverence for the "Crown of glory" which gray hairs become to those who are found in the paths of righteousness.

Many a mother lives, whose gray hairs have so beauty in the eyes of their children, and claim no reverence from those for whose welfare she would cheerfully pour out her heart's blood. Many a mother's love is repaid by unkindness and ingratitude. Many an hour of wearisome toil and patient watching meets with no other recompense than deeds, the knowledge of which wring her faithful heart with anguish. Yet through all the misfortunes, even through the darkness of her children, her love knows no variability. Her sympathy is given, though unsought, it is not forced upon the attention but its soothing power is felt. In the silent night watches her tears flow for them, unbidden, and her voice goes up in supplication that she who never slumbers will watch over and comfort them. In their presence her heart is never weary of planning nor her hand of executing sweet offices of affection; and in their absence the arms of her love are ever around them, and the incense of her prayers for their behalf rises continually before the Eternal One. A mother's love!

"There is none
In all the cold and hollow world, no fount
Of deep, strong, deathless love, save that which
A mother's heart."

Selections.

INFANTICIDE IN INDIA.—The great Umrair meeting on infanticide on Nov. 15, 1853, was most splendid. Every civilian in the Punjab was there. The street of the camp was nearly a quarter of a mile long, and composed entirely of civilians' double poles, etc. It was calculated that more than 2,000 natives, independent of the usual inhabitants, were assembled at the holy city to listen to the Governor General's orders on the subject of infanticide. On Monday the 14th of November, all were invited to come to the Darbar at 11 o'clock. A small apartment with a fine bamboo screen was provided for the few ladies who were present that they might witness the scene. It was most magnificent. There were 3000 natives in the great shemena—300 were of sufficient rank to have chairs allowed them, which were placed in a semicircle at the end of the tent, at the end of this semicircle stood all the assembled civilians. All the old Sikh generals and rulers were there, and among them many hill chiefs who had never before been tempted out of their misty mountains. All those who were not entitled to chairs were seated on the ground, and presented one large compact mass of human heads.

There was the most profound silence in this brilliant assembly when Mr. Edmondstone, on whom Mr. J. Lawrence's absence, devolved the duty of opening the explaining the object of this important meeting, rose to speak. He made an excellent Hindoostanee address denouncing female infanticide as barbarous, cruel, and unholiness; and so powerfully did that address influence