

LETTER FROM MR. GORDON.

On board the *John Williams*,
South lat. 34 36, East long. 13,
Sept. 27, 1856.

REV. MR. BAYNE—

Dear Sir—I wrote a few lines from Gravesend, on Tuesday evening, the 22nd of July, acquainting you with the departure of the *John Williams*, and now hasten to give you an account of our voyage thus far, by the good providence of God. We left Gravesend early on the following morning, before the friends of the mission in that town had time to give us a visit, and made slow progress through the Downs and English Channel, for the following Friday found our barque anchored at Deal, after which we were nearly a week clearing Landsend. Deal is a small English town, but memorable in connexion with British history for having been built by free sons of Britain on the very place where Cæsar first landed on the British shores 55 B. C., and met the fierce Britons who struck terror into the hearts of their armour-clad conquerors, although they were esteemed by the Romans for many years afterwards, stupid barbarians, incapable of improvement, as some Britainers believe certain heathen tribes to be in our time. Such would do well to consider how their fathers were once esteemed by the civilized, while unblesed by the gospel of true liberty—to hear the eloquent Cicero thus address his friend Atticus:—"Do not obtain your slaves from Britain, because they are so stupid and utterly incapable of being taught, that they are not fit to form a portion of the household of Atticus?" When the banner of the Cross took the place of the Roman eagles in Britain, the fallacy of this opinion was soon exposed, as it shall be in all similar cases where the heathen receive the imperishing blessings of the Gospel of the grace of God's dear son. What would Cicero now say if he were awaked from the slumbers of the tomb, to see in the Thames alone what the Gospel can do for slaves—the truth, for those whom it makes free?—to see the commerce of the world floating on one river of the little isle of the free and the brave, and on its banks a ship building, of the following dimensions:—each of her cylinders will weigh about 28 tons; her length will be 675 feet, and her height

60 feet,—built entirely of iron, and divided into water-tight compartments of 60 feet each. About 30,000 plates and 3,000,000 rivets, in all 10,000 tons of iron, are to be used in her construction. Both screw and propellers are to be used. The paddle engines are 1000 horse power, and require 60 furnaces. The paddle wheels are to be 60 feet in diameter. There will be seven masts. She is to accommodate 2600 passengers, and expects to make a voyage to Australia in 95 days. After we got out of the English channel, where nearly all the passengers came in for an ample share of sea-sickness, to which, passengers in the *John Williams* are almost certain to be treated in a rough sea, we did not make quick progress till we passed the Bay of Biscay and got into the north-east trade, which drove us rapidly as far as 16 N. lat., where we lost it, which is not common, and did not obtain the south-east trade till we got near to the Equator. I herewith send you a simple drawing of the track of our voyage thus far, by which you will see that the south-east trade drove us to nearly 35 W. long. in S. lat., which made our voyage from England as long as it would have been from Nova Scotia. Sailors count almost as confidently on these trades as on the return of day and night. I may add a few words in relation to their laws, for my juvenile friends. The heat produced in the Torrid zone or hot belt of the globe, by the great number of the sun's vertical rays which fall there, so expands the air that it becomes light and ascends like smoke, while cold air from the Frigid and Temperate zones rush in to fill up the space; but as it does not possess any greater velocity in the Torrid zone than it did from whence it came, it is left behind by the earth, which it follows, in its daily revolutions on its own axis from west to east, and two motions of the air are consequently produced, called the north-east and south-east trades. If the earth were not always turning round in this manner, there would be a constant wind blowing from north to south, north of the Equator, and from south to north, south of the Equator. A very simple diagram will show that the wind in passing round the globe in 24 hours requires much less velocity at the Frigid than at the Torrid zone, on account of the greater circumference of the globe at the latter. When mariners lose these