

Missionary Intelligence.

THE FEEJAK ISLANDS.*

August 31st.—This afternoon we were called upon by some of the Christian people to go and prevent the strangling of a woman at Nandyra, a heathen hamlet, about a mile and a half from the Mission premises. We took the boat, and got there as soon as we could; but we were too late. The demon-like beings had despatched their victim with all speed, lest we should be in time to snatch it from them. We entered the house where the awful deed had been perpetrated. There, stretched before us, was the strangled widow; she lay without a feature distorted, with a smile on her countenance, and as though she was asleep. We felt her pulse, hoping against hope; but it had ceased to beat. Our hearts warmed within us. We looked at the Pagan group around us with indignation and pity. We severely reprimanded them for the murder they had committed, and told them that they would be called by God to give an account of what they had done in the day of judgement. At this they hung down their heads. Among those we spoke to was a young man, the strangled woman's son. He had been assisting in drawing the cord to take away his mother's life. He had lately embraced Christianity, but had turned back again to Heathenism. We gave him a sharp rebuke, and told him not to forget, for he would not be long without his reward, a few weeks after he went to a fight, and was very soon brought back lifeless, with a good deal of his scalp torn off by a musket-bail. Many Feejeans took notice of this, and said it was a judgement of God upon him for killing his mother.

On the afternoon of November 5th, the sad tidings reached our ears that a man had died at Solevu, a Heathen settlement three miles away, and that his wife was to be strangled on the following morning. Knowing that we should have chiefs to deal with, we hastened to the Christian chief, being a man of considerable influence, to hear from him what had best be done. He seemed quite at a loss to know what to say. He declined going himself; but advised that we, the Missionaries, should go, and some suitable persons accompany us. He said, moreover, that he thought our going would be useless; that there was no possibility of preventing it. We set off, notwithstanding, putting our trust in the Lord, and soon arrived at the place of contest between ourselves and our Master, and the Heathen and their master. We approached the doorway of the large house where the strangling was to take place. We looked inside, and saw that it was filled with females, who were all sitting and crying aloud, except one, a tall graceful-looking woman, who was standing, but not crying, and occasionally walked to and fro, from one end of the room to the other. She was decently and well dressed, wearing a white cloth round her waist, a handsome gauzy white head-dress, falling half-way down her back, and a narrow native comb, eighteen inches long, standing out from her forehead. This was the personage upon whom the tragic deed of strangling was to be performed next morning. Her female friends had assembled around her, to weep over her, to console with her, to encourage her to die nobly, and to bid her good-bye. . . . We inquired for the chiefs, but none were at hand. We sent after them, but none could be found. Night drew near, and there was no alternative but to leave the poor woman at an awful risk, or to stay with her until her case was decided. We concluded that Mr. Waterhouse, who was a much younger recruit in the service than myself, should return home to our families: and that I, with the teacher of the place (for we have a teacher here, although but one or two have embraced Christianity), should remain and wait for the chiefs. At sunset the company of women cast off their crying, and commenced chanting merry songs, connected with loud clapping, after their Heathenish fashion. The object of this was to cheer and fortify her heart which might be inclined to sadness at the thought of losing her life and bidding farewell to the world next day. . . . After a while the women were either joined by, or exchanged for, a company of young men, who kept on the dismal chanting, with short intervals, during the whole night. That night I shall not easily forget. I could not sleep for the noise, and from fear lest they should strangle the woman before daylight; we dreaded the idea, too, of having to interfere with them while it was dark, thinking they might be enraged and club us. Hour after hour passed slowly away, but nothing was done. At about two o'clock the merry-making was broken by the loud, hoarse cry of the widow calling for her husband. Shortly afterwards her children and relatives came to bid her good-bye; their mutual cries

(* Concluded from last week.)

were distinctly heard. These doleful wailings were intermingled with, and partially drowned by, the demoniacal chanting and clapping of those who had been taught by Satan to rejoice over the monstrous doings. At day-break the singing ceased. One among us observed, "they are closing the house; it is time for us to be stirring." I immediately despatched Solomon, the teacher, in search of the ruling chief. Meantime I rapped across to the place of execution, to see what was going on. I saw the pitiable woman sitting down, embracing her nephew, and taking her farewell of him. She looked at me, but did not speak (glad enough, I believe, to find the Missionary at hand). A few females were spreading large new mats, on which she was to stand to be strangled, and afterwards laid out. These preparations were going forward while she was sitting in the room. Judging that they would not strangle her just yet, I went away a short distance. I was quickly called back by the cry, "They are shutting the doors; they are going to strangle the woman." I ran and entered the house, where, to my surprise, a large company of men had assembled, for the purpose of executing the dreadful deed. The widow, so near her fate, was standing erect on the mats which had been spread. She was fantastically painted from head to foot, attired in a new and handsome dress, and her head adorned with a fine plume of various colours. As soon as I was seen by those concerned in the woman's death, the contest began. Her friends presented a whale's tooth that she might die. I (her enemy) at once presented a noble tooth that she might live. Another large tooth was presented that she might die. This I met with a noble American axe, which preponderated and turned the scale. The chief could not withstand the temptation. When his eye caught sight of it, without further hesitation, he said to the pitiable woman, standing on the very brink of her doom, "Sit down," the meaning of which was, that our offering was accepted, and she was saved. At this moment there was considerable demurring among the Heathen, some approving, and others warmly on the opposite side; when Mr. Forbes, an American residing at Nandy, to make the matter doubly sure, presented another axe. This, with a few conciliatory words, silenced all objectors. . . . When she for whom we had pleaded, and prevailed, was told by her chief that she must live, she tore off her plume and head-dress piecemeal, as though she was sorely vexed that her dying was prevented. This, I am satisfied, was protest, knowing well that her Heathen friends would be greatly ashamed and mortified, for her to appear to wish to live. . . . We returned home with light hearts, praising the Lord for the help He had afforded; and by which, we felt ready and glad to acknowledge, the achievement we had witnessed had been wrought.

Youths' Department.

LITTLE MARY

I.
FROM the group of little faces

One is gone—
In the old familiar places
Sad and lone,
Father, Mother, meek-eyed Brother,
Sit and moan.

II.
Sit and mourn for one departed,
Pure and mild,
Little Mary, gentle-hearted,
Sinless child—
And as nesting memories thicken,
Griefs grow wild.

III.
Home once bright how cold and dreary!
Shadows deep,
Fall on forms and hearts awery,
Eyes that weep—
Thought is in the churchyard seeking
One asleep.

IV.
Still the merry laugh deceiving
Fills the ear,
Tiny arms yet fondly cleaving
Dry the tear:
Foot-falls, silvery foot-falls, patter
Far and near.

V.
Ears instinctive, pause to hearken,
All in vain—
Days drag on and skies shall darken
O'er with pain,
But the heart will find its lost one
Ne'er again!

VI.
From the treasured fire-side faces
Here to-day,
From the tender warm embraces,
Dropp'd away,
Sleeps she 'mid forgotten sleepers
In the clay.

VII.

Ah! what weary numbers sighing
To be free,
Little Mary would be living
Low with thee!
Where no care nor eating sorrow
E'er shall be.

VIII.

Weep not when ye tell the story
Of the dead—
Tis a sunbeam joined the Glory
Overhead!
"For of such sweet babes is Heaven,"
Jesus said.

LITTLE KINDNESSES.

"Tis sweet to do something for those that we love,
Though the favor be ever so small."

Brothers, sisters, did you ever try the effect which little acts of kindness produce upon that charmed circle we call home? We love to receive little favors ourselves; and how pleasant the reception of them makes the circle! To draw up the arm chair and get the slippers for father, to watch if any little service can be rendered to mother, to help brother or assist sister, how pleasant it makes home!

A little boy has a hard lesson given him at School, and his teacher asks him if he thinks he can get it; for a moment the little fellow hangs down his head, but the next he looks brightly up, "I can get my sister to help me," he says. That is right, sister, help little brother and you are binding a tie round his heart that may save him in many an hour of dark temptation.

"I don't know how to do this sum, but brother will show me," said another little one.

"Sister, I've dropped a stitch in my knitting; I tried to pick it up, but it has run down, and I can't fix it."

"The little girl's face flushed, and she watches her sister with nervous anxiety while she replaces the "naughty stitch."

"Oh, I am so glad!" she says, as she receives it again from the hands of her sister all nicely arranged; "you are a good girl, Mary."

"Bring it to me sooner next time, and then it won't get so bad," says the gentle voice of Mary, and the little one bounds away with a light heart to finish her task.

If Mary had not helped her, she would have lost her walk in the Garden. Surely it is better to do as Mary did than to say, "Oh, go away, and don't trouble me;" or to scold the little one all the time you are performing the trifling favor.

Little acts of kindness, gentle words, loving smiles, they strew the path of life with flowers; they make the sunshine brighter and the green earth greener: and he who bade us "love one another," looks with favor upon the gentle and kind-hearted, and he pronounced the meek blessed.

Brothers, sisters, love one another, bear with one another. If one offend, forgive and love him still; and whatever may be the fault of others, we must remember that, in the sight of God, we have others as great and perhaps greater than theirs.

Be kind to the little ones; they will often be fretful and wayward. Be patient with them, and amuse them. How often a whole family of little ones are restored to good humor by an elder member proposing some new play, and perhaps joining in it, or gathering them round her while she relates some pleasant story!

And brothers, do not think because you are stronger, it is unmanly to be gentle to your little brothers and sisters. True nobleness of heart and true manliness of conduct are never coupled with pride and arrogance.

Nobility and gentleness go hand in hand; and when I see a young gentleman kind and respectful to his mother, and gentle and forbearing to his brothers and sisters, I think he has a noble heart.

Ah! many a mother's and many a sister's heart has been wrung by the cold neglect and stiff unkindness of those whom God has made their natural protectors.

Brothers, sisters, never be unkind to one another, never be ashamed to help one another, and you will find that though it is a pleasant thing to receive favors, yet it is more blessed to give than to receive.—*Sunday School Advocate.*

TREASURE SAVED.—Paulinus, when told that the Goths had sacked Nola and plundered him of all he had, fixed up his eyes to heaven and said, "Lord, thou knowest where I have laid up MY treasure."

WORTH REMEMBERING.—Modesty is a handsome dish cover which makes us fancy there must be something very good beneath it.