Missionary Intelligence.

(From Wesleyan Notices Newspaper, Dec. 1850.)

Wesleyan Missions in Feejee.

FEEJEE.

Extract of a Letter from the Rev Richard B. Lyth, dated Lakemba, Jan. 31st, 1850.

PROFESSION OF CHRISTIANITY BY THE KING OF LAKEMBA, &C.

I HOPE an opportunity is near for forwarding you some account of the work of God in this Circuit, and important passing events. It is with feelings of pleasure and thankfulness that I report the conversion of the King of Lakemba to Christianity, and with him of several of his influential friends and people, who had long stood out against the calls of the Gospel. It was about ten days after the "Wesley's" leaving Feejee in October last, that this joyful event took place. By this event, so long prayed for and earnestly desired, the whole island, and those dependent on it, have become wholly Christian, at least in profession, and are all placed under religious instruction. We have now the happiness of seeing Tuinayau and his people bowing together "before Jehovah's awful throne."

It will be gratifying to you to know that his conversion to the profession of the Christian religion was not the result of a suddenly-formed resolution, but of a conviction of its truth, long resisted, but yielded to at last and therefore gives promise of leading to the best effects. It has at once removed a powerful hinderance to the success of the truth in producing a good influence on the minds of the whole population, and in establishing Christianity on a firmer basis. Its good effects in the better government of the people, and the union of the Chiefs and people on better principles, are already apparent. By God's blessing on the labours of his servants, we have the prospect of seeing the word of God grow and prevail. The King regularly attends the preaching every Sabbath morning, has family prayer conducted by a Local Preacher morning and evening, and has, moreover, manifested a strong desire to learn to read. We have given him a New Testament, which he values very much, and delights to hear it read.

On his embracing Christianity, one of his first measures was to establish the government of the land on a better foundation and to correct abuses. To accomplish these objects he called a public meeting, the result of which has been a decided improvement in the condition of the people.

A remarkable event in the history of Lakemba took place on the day following this meeting, which, but for the overruling providence of God, might have ended in very disastrous consequences. This was, the sudden appearance of a Bau Chief, closely connected with Lakemba, who, having taken umbrage, came with an army of three hundred fighting-men, with purposes of revenge. Six large canoes anchored at midday within musket-shot of the beach, filled with armed Heathens; and nothing but an interposition of Divine Providence prevented their landing, and at once commencing the work of destruction and murder. The hostile Chief, and one or two with him, were allowed to land without molestation, and to enter the town of Levuka He gave orders that his army should presently follow him; but in this he was disappointed. As they were attempting to land, a Tonguese Chief stepped forward, and ordered them back to their canoes at the peril of their lives. This threat was sufficient, a fear from God fell upon them, and they did not make a second attempt, but remained in their canoes all night; the beach being strongly guarded, in the mean time, by armed parties of Tonguese and Feejeeans.—At first fighting appeared inevitable. The Chief was very angry; but at length his eyes were opened to see his pitiful position, (separated as he was from his men,) he was glad to submit, and beg for his life, and his Heathen friends as glad to be allowed to depart in peace. After two days the Chief himself left the land, chagrined and disappointed. Since then three months have rolled over. Baffled and unable to gain assistance from Bau, he finds his only resort now is, to submit to the evils he has brought upon himself. Whatever grievances he had to complain of, (and they were less than he had given just cause to expect,) he has certainly been dealt with throughout with great forbearance and kindness

In all these events the hand of the Lord has evidently overruled, and the pacific disposition of Bau towards this place, when all looked for trouble and war, has tended greatly to confirm the King and his friends in the profession of faith in the true God — It is the "Lord's doing," and to him be the glory.

The seeing God's hand in these events, greatly confirms our own faith amidst the trials and difficulties we have to contend with. All these things make our path rough and our work difficult; but the consideration that the "Lord our God is with us to help us and to fight our battles," is very encouraging.

Since entering on the work of this Circuit, in October last, I have made two voyages to the neighbouring islands that occupied about a month.

We have divided the islands into Circuits, with our most experienced native Teachers for their Superintendents, who are to visit all the places under their pastoral care every quarter, in order to meet the classes, &c. This arrangement will tend greatly to strengthen the hands of our Teachers and people in places seldom visited. The most that we can hope to do in this extensive Circuit is, to visit each distant place once a year; and often then our stay must be necessarily short. We believe the plan adopted will prove a great blessing, and render our own occasional visits much more serviceable.

Our Institution for training young men is in active operation. We have an excellent house, in which they are met by myself and colleague three times a week, for instruction in reading, writing, and Christian theology. These young men, numbering between ten and twenty, are pious and devoted, ardent in their desire to be instructed and become useful,—the hope of our churches in Feejee.

General Miscellany.

The Gateway of the Oceans.

The forcing of the barrier which for three hundred years has defied and imperiled the commerce of the world seems now an event at hand. One half of the contract for the junction of the Atlantic and Pacific, obtained from the State of Nicaragua last year by the promptitude of the Americans, is to be held at the option of English capitalists; and an understanding is at length announced, that if the contemplated ship canal can be constructed on conditions that shall leave no uncertainty as to the profitableness of the enterprise, it is to be carried forward with the influence of our highest mercantile firms. The necessary surveys have been actually commenced and as a temporary route is at the same time being opened, an amount of information is likely soon to be collected which will familiarise us with each point regarding the capabilities of the entire region. It is understood, moreover, that when the canal surveys shall be completed, they are to be submitted to the rigid scrutiny of Government engineers both in England and the United States; so that before the public can be called upon to consider the expediency of embarking in the undertaking, every doubt in connection with it, as far as practical minds are concerned, will have been removed.

The immediate steps now in course of adoption may be explained in a few words. At present the transit across the Isthmus of Panama, occupies four days, and its inconveniences and dangers are notorious. At Nicaragua, it is represented, the transit may possibly be effected in one day, and this by a continuous steam route with the exception of fifteen miles by mule or omnibus. The passage would be up the San Juan, across Lake Nicaragua to the town of that name, and thence to the port of San Juan del Sur on the Pacific. On arriving at this terminus, (which is considerably south of the one contemplated for the permanent canal, namely Realejo,) the passenger would find himself some six or seven hundred miles nearer to California than if he had crossed the Isthmus of Panama; and as the rate of speed of the American steamers on this service is upward of three hundred miles a day, his saving of three days in crossing, coupled with the saving in sea distance, would be equivalent to a total of fifteen hundred miles, measured in relation to what is accomplished by those vessels. A lower charge for the transit, and a comparatively healthy climate, are also additional inducements; and under these circumstances, anticipations are entertained that the great tide of traffic will be turned in the new direction. This tide, according to the last accounts from Panama, was kept up at the rate of 70,000 persons a year; and it was expected to increase.

The navigability of the San Juan, however, in its present state, remains yet to be tested. The American company who have obtained the privilege of the route have sent down two vessels of light draught, the Nicaragua and the Director, for the purpose of forthwith placing the matter beyond doubt. At the last date, the Director had safely crossed the bar at its mouth, and was preparing to ascend; the Nicaragua had previously gone up to the Colorado, a branch river, where, it is said, through the carelessness of her engineer, she had run aground upon a sand-bank, though without sustaining any damage. The next accounts will possess great interest. Whatever may be the real capabilities of the river, accidents and delays must be anticipated in the first trial of a new method of navigating it; even in our own river, the Thames, the first steamer could scarcely have been expected to make a trip from London Bridge to Richmond without some mishap. Should, therefore, the present experiment show any clear indications of success, there will be reasonable ground for congratulation; and it forms so important a chapter in the history of enterprise, that all must regard it with goodwishes

If the results of this temporary transit should realize the expectations it seems to warrant, there can be little doubt the completion of the canal will soon be commenced with ardor. Supposing the surveys should show a cost not exceeding the sum estimated in 1837 by Lieutenant Baily, the prospect of the returns would, there is reason to believe, be much larger than the public have at any time been accustomed to suppose. There is also the fact that the increase of these returns can know no limit so long as the commerce of the world shall increase; and indeed, already the idea of the gains to accrue appears to have struck some minds with such force as to lead them to question if the privileges which have been granted are not of a kind so extraordinarily favourable that they will sooner or later be repudiated by the State of Nicaragua. No such danger however exists; as the company are guaranteed in the safe possession of all their rights by the treaty of protection which has been ratified between Great Britain and the United States.

One most important sign in favour of the quick completion of the ship-canal is now furnished in the circumstance that there are no rival routes. At Panama, a cheap wooden railway is to be constructed, which will prove serviceable for much of the passenger-traffic to Peru and Chili; but the project for a canal at that point has been entirely given up. The same is the case at Tehuantepec, where the difficulties are far greater than at Panama.

It is true, the question naturally arises, whether if an exploration were made of other parts of Central America or New Grenada, some route might not be discovered which might admit of the construction of a canal even at a less cost than will be necessary at Nicaragua. But in a matter which concerns the commerce of the whole world for ages, there are other points to be considered besides mere cheapness; and those who have studied the advantages of Nicaragua maintain that enough is known of the whole country both north and south of that State, to establish the fact that she possesses intrinsic capabilities essential to the perfectness of the entire work, which are not to be found in any other quarter, and for the absence of which no saving of any immediate sum would compensate. In the first place, it is nearer to California by several hundred miles than any other route that could be pointed out except Tehuantepec, while at the same time it is so central as duly to combine the interests both of the northern and southern countries of the Pacific; in the next place, it contains two magnificent natural docks, where all the vessels in the world might refresh and refit; thirdly it abounds in natural products of all kinds, and is besides comparatively well-peopled; fourthly, it possesses a temperature which is relatively mild, while it is in most parts undoubtedly healthy; and finally, it has a harbour on the Pacific, which, to use the words of Dunlop in his book on Central America, is as good as any port in the known world, and decidedly superior even to Portsmouth, Rio Janeiro, Port Jackson, Talcujana, Callao, and Guayaquil. The proximity to California moreover settles the question as to American co-operation; which, it may be believed, would certainly not be afforded to any route farther south, and without which it would be idle to contemplate the undertaking.

At the same time, however, it must be admitted, that if any body of persons would adopt the example now set by the American company, and commence a survey of any new route at their own expense, they would be entitled to every consideration, and to rank as benefactors of the community, whatever might be the result of their endeavours. There are none who can help forward the enterprise, either directly or indirectly, upon whom it will not shed honour. That honour, too, will not be distant. The progress of the work will unite for the first time in a direct manner the two great nations upon whose mutual friendship the welfare of the world depends; and its completion will cause a revolution in commerce more extensive and beneficent than any that has yet occurred, and which may still be so rapid as to be witnessed by many who even now are old. —*Spectator.*

Duelling Discouraged.

The law of the land is better able to vindicate really outraged character and honour than may be imagined by many foolish hot-blooded persons, who give or accept "hostile messages" It is armed with ample powers of compensation and punishment, as may easily be ascertained by those who can satisfy it that they have been the victims of deliberate and wanton insult and injury. Little more than a year ago, one gentleman thought proper to write to some naval and military friends of another, most offensive imputations upon his honour. When apprised of this, he instantly wrote to demand that his traducer should either prove the truth of his assertions, or unequivocally retract and apologize for them. Both alternatives were very contemptuously refused, on which the injured party brought an action for libel against his traducer; who, unable to justify, and unwilling to apologise, allowed the case to go before a jury. On their learning the true nature of the affair, and being reminded that they were appealed to as a jury of twelve gentlemen, to vindicate the honour of an unoffending gentleman, they gave such heavy damages (£560) as soon brought his infuriate opponent to his senses, and elicited an unequivocal retractation, and as ample an apology as could have been desired. A few instances of this kind would soon satisfy the most sceptical of the potency of the law in cases too often deemed beyond its reach, and of the effective reality of its redress in cases of wounded honour. Who could lightly esteem being solemnly and publicly branded by its *fiat* as a liar and a slanderer—its blighting sentence remaining permanently on record? He who would regard such a circumstance with indifference surely is not worth shooting, or running the risk of being shot by, or of being hanged or transported for shooting or attempting to shoot! If a person of distinguished station or character receive an insult or an injury of such a nature, as not to admit of being treated with silent contempt, it becomes his duty to society to set an example of magnanimous reliance on the protection of the laws of his country, and pious reverence for the laws of God.—*Blackwood's Magazine.*

A Mother's Influence.

For myself I am sure that a different mother would have made me a different man. When a boy, I was too much like the self-willed, excitable Clarence; but the tenderness with which my mother always treated me, and the unimpassioned but earnest manner in which she reproved and corrected my faults, subdued my unruly temper. When I became restless or impatient, she always had a book to read to me, or a story to tell, or had some device to save me from myself. My father was neither harsh nor indulgent towards me; I cherish his memory with respect and love. But I have different feelings when I think of my mother. I often feel, even now, as if she were near me—as if her cheek were laid to mine. My father would *place his hand upon my head*, carelessingly, but my mother would *lay her cheek against mine*. I did not expect my father to do more—I do not know that I would have loved him better had he done more; for him it was a natural expression of affection. But no act is too tender for a mother. Her kiss upon my cheek, her warm embrace, are all felt now, and the older I grow, the more holy seem the influences that surrounded me in childhood.—"*The Mother,*" by T. S *Arthur.*

Temperance

Intemperance.

Intemperance is a barrier, not only to the progress of the Gospel, but every other movement for the substantial good of the masses, is retarded, or rendered void by its agency.