

THE HOME AND FOREIGN RECORD.

DECEMBER, 1861.

MARTYRDOM OF MR. AND MRS. GORDON:

SECOND ARTICLE.

IN our last we adverted to the facts connected with this sad and solemn event, reserving for our present number the consideration of those lessons which it was intended and fitted to teach the Church, and the duty to which we are now summoned. Viewing the event however as the early and, according to human ideas, the premature removal of a faithful and laborious servant of Christ, the remarks we have made in another part of our present number in regard to the death of Mr. Johnston are equally applicable to the death of Mr. and Mrs. Gordon. Indeed, when we consider that from the longer time which they had spent on the Mission field they had become more thoroughly equipped for their work—that from the want of another missionary on the island, their labours in acquiring the language and other preparatory work will be in a great measure lost—and that their removal is a second dispensation of the same kind treading upon the heels of the first, the event may be regarded as still more mysterious and as repeating the same lessons with even tenfold force. We shall therefore, in our present article, confine our attention to what is peculiar in the case. Mr. Johnston died peacefully in his bed, surrounded by the sympathetic attentions of tender and beloved friends. Mr. Gordon was cut off by the hand of violence and wickedness, and his spirit may be said to have ascended to heaven in a chariot of fire. He was called to seal his testimony with his blood, in short, to die a martyr's death. Such an event is, blessed be God, comparatively rare in the Church in modern times; but now that it has happened to us as a Church, we are the more urgently called to consider what may be the designs of God in such a dispensation. Without professing to be able completely to fathom the counsels of him whose ways are past finding out, we may yet see that the martyrdom of God's servants serves the following important designs.

Firstly. It *unfolds the awful depravity of human nature*. From the days of Cain, who slew his brother, (and wherefore slew him?—because his own works were evil and his brother righteous,) from that era, we say, he that is after the flesh hath persecuted him that is after the Spirit, and the history of the world exhibits no deeds of deeper cruelty than those in which Satan and his seed have manifested their enmity against the seed of the woman. Our earth has witnessed no scenes of darker depravity than, for example, the barbarities with which Pagan Rome endeavoured to extinguish Christianity, or