

RELIGIOUS INTELLIGENCE.

WEST INDIES.

At the Anniversary Meeting of the Wesleyan Missionary Society, held in London on the 29th April last, the following missionary intelligence was given by the Rev. Robert Young, who lately returned from Jamaica:—

Twenty-three years ago, I entered upon the work of a Missionary in Jamaica: and, after labouring there for several years, the state of my family's health required my removal to a more congenial climate in America, where I continued for some time, and then returned to this country. At the commencement of the last winter, I was deputed by our Missionary Committee to visit the scene of my early labours; and, as their representative, I arrived on the 31st of December, in the city of Kingston, after an absence of more than seventeen years. It was the holy Sabbath, and I went straightway from the vessel to one of our large chapels, where I found the people had just assembled for worship. I had not been many minutes in the place before I was recognized; and one person, with peculiar emotion, exclaimed, "O, my spiritual father!" In a moment I was surrounded. Some grasped my hands, others embraced my feet, some stroked my head, others patted my back, some stood upon their seats, others fell upon their knees, some wept, and others literally shouted for joy. As the excitement increased, and the whole congregation caught the contagion, I found it necessary, in self-defence, to get into the pulpit. I accordingly entered, and commenced the public service; and a more interesting occasion I do not expect to witness whilst in this probationary state. To see what I then saw, and to hear what I then heard, was an ample compensation for the risk of health, and the sacrifice of domestic comfort, which my mission to that country necessarily involved. The next day my lodgings were beset, from morning till night. Many of my old friends, with whom I had formerly taken sweet counsel, came to see me. Time had altered their appearance, but not their principles. I had not long been in the country before I was much impressed with the delightful change which had been effected in the circumstances of the Negro population. The holidays of Christmas and the New Year, which were formerly spent in noisy revelry; drumming, dancing, drunkenness, and debauchery of almost every kind, now passed off with the utmost quiet and good order. Scarcely was a drum heard in any part of the city, and not a solitary dancer was seen parading the streets. It is true that, at the termination of the old year, many songs were heard in different parts of the city, but they were the sweet songs of Zion; and crowds were seen moving along the streets, but they were not turbulent Negroes in midnight revels, but servants of the Lord with grateful hearts, returning from their respective places of worship. According to the testimony of the "Morning Journal," a most respectable newspaper of Kingston, not a solitary individual was seen drunk in that city during the Christmas holidays. Other changes equally delighted me. The holy Sabbath, formerly so much desecrated there, is now observed with as much Christian decorum as it is in any city or town of Europe. The tone of moral feeling among the Negro population, too, is greatly elevated; as their conversation, style of dress, and general deportment, abundantly testify. The great experiment of Negro emancipation has, as a whole, worked well, and much better than its most ardent advocates dared to anticipate; and I assert this, not merely as the conviction of my own mind, but as the opinion of the most respectable planters who were formerly opposed to the measure. If the Negroes do not perform the same amount of labour as when they were goaded to it by the cruel lash, it is only what might be expected. Besides, many of them now wish to save their wives from the severe and wasting toils of the field; and what Christian husband, who is bound to "love his wife even as Christ also loved the Church," can blame them for so doing? The boon of emancipation is unquestionably a great one, and they are not insensible of the blessings which they have received from the bestowment of that boon. Whilst I was passing through the country, I met a Negro, who told me he had

now no owner at the "great house," but that God, the Missionary, and the Queen had made him free; that he had thanked God and the Missionary for what they had done for him; and he wished me to be so good as to inform Her gracious Majesty the Queen that his heart was "grateful too much;" that is to say, it was grateful in the superlative degree. I very much rejoice that Queen Victoria is loudly and deservedly cheered at home wherever she presents herself; but such a loud acclaim as our popular Sovereign never heard before would burst from a grateful population were she to visit that beautiful isle of the West. She is so great a favourite with the Negro peasantry that, though they are not generally obtrusive, yet their joy would be so unbounded, had they the opportunity of seeing her, that they would break through every form of courtly etiquette, and, I verily believe, endanger her precious life by their very caresses. Nor are the names of individuals who have distinguished themselves by their advocacy of Negro claims allowed to be forgotten. In a mountain district, where I had engaged to preach, I was also requested to publish the bans of marriage between "Joseph Gurney" and Ellen Gordon, between "Joseph Sturge" and Jane Gordon, between "Fowel Buxton" and Emma Burton.—Thus are these illustrious names gratefully transmitted to posterity, in connexion with the noble scheme of Negro emancipation. Another happy change has taken place in the state of society in that country; I was greatly delighted to find the prejudice arising from colour almost entirely removed. A few days after my arrival, I was invited to dine with the Admiral, the Receiver-General, and other distinguished individuals, at the house of a coloured gentleman; and, before I left, I had the honour of being invited by Lord Elgin, the Governor, to meet at the Government House, a dinner-party, composed partly of gentlemen of colour; and frequently did I meet, in the social circle, the deep-shaded African, and the light European, as well as all the intermediate shades of colour. During the period of my former residence in that country, persons of different hues never met in the social circle, and in many places of worship they never mingled at the table of the Lord. In my visit to St. Andrew's Mountain, I was greatly impressed with the change which had been effected since I commenced that Mission twenty years before. It is true, the hills and dales about this Jerusalem were still the same; but their silence was no longer broken by the shrieks of the tortured Negro. The seeds deposited by the hand of my wife had vegetated into large and beautiful trees, whilst many a lovely shrub, just emblem of human life, had survived its beauty, or entirely disappeared. At the appointed time, the bell was rung, and the tribes came up to worship; amongst whom I at once recognized several as the first-fruits of that Mission. The chapel was crowded to excess, and many could not get admittance. After I had finished the service, many of the people rushed forward to shake hands with me assigning several reasons for so doing;—some, because I had baptized them; others, because I had married them; some, because I had settled differences between them as husbands and wives; and others, because I had saved them from severe floggings when they were in a state of slavery; some because I visited them in sickness, and gave them medicines; and others because I had committed some dear relative of theirs to the tomb; some because I had counselled them in seasons of perplexity; and many because, as they said, I had made them see. I am certainly not soon excited; but I should have suspected the genuineness of Christianity if I could have passed through that scene without emotion. . . . I would, Sir, recommend to this Society, that, as soon as possible, a Theological Institution be established on the island of Jamaica, for the training of Native Missionaries. This measure would be a great benefit to that country, as well as to Africa. Perhaps religion in Jamaica has most to fear, at the present period, from ignorant teachers. . . . It is true, as yet, we have not many candidates for the ministry among the natives of Jamaica. We had two last year, and we have not a larger number this year; but I am sure the Meeting will be delighted to learn, that there is a prospect of several excellent young men being speedily raised up in that district for this important service; and as some of the other West India districts would doubtless supply candidates, I

beginning might at once be made on a humble scale. At all events, it is worth serious consideration. There are men in the West Indies burning with zeal for Africa, and exclaiming, "Here are we,—send us." Perhaps the chief, if not the only difficulty, in the way of accomplishing this object, resolves itself into a question of finance. . . . I had intended saying much more, but my time is gone. I will therefore conclude by merely stating, that in the course of fourteen weeks, I visited Madeira, Barbadoes, Grenada, Bermuda, St. Thomas's, Porto-Rico, St. Domingo, and Jamaica; that I travelled upwards of ten thousand miles; that I saw much, suffered much, enjoyed much; and, by "strength made perfect in weakness," was enabled not only to accomplish every object for which I was sent out, but many others, also tending to the saving of our funds, and the spread of our glorious Christianity.

IRELAND.

At the late anniversary of the Colonial Society, Mr. King, of Cork, presented the ensuing delineation of his labours in Ireland:—

Whatever may be the doubts and apprehensions of some, and whatever may be the fears of others, however timidity may calculate upon discomfiture, and however unbelief may prepare itself for defeat, I hold that all who recognise the truth, and the faithfulness of that God who has given us his promise of success, need not fear for the eventual triumph of those principles, in the belief and reception of which we look forward with confidence to the salvation of the world. I was first asked to support the resolution that is to be presented in the latter stage of the proceedings,—one that speaks of the colonies and the dependencies of Britain; and you may be sure that I was anxious to know how I could slip in Ireland. I began to think whether Ireland is one of those colonies; but I quieted my own mind, by remembering, that if I could not tell you what it is, or where it is, yet I could tell you something about how it is. . . . I had been engaged with much encouragement in a peculiar sort of missionary work in Ireland, and had preached in the open air in most of the large Roman Catholic towns in the south-western and midland districts of Ireland. Having returned from one of these missionary tours, I mentioned, to a considerable assembly in Dublin, the acceptance and usefulness that had marked these outdoor itinerating labours. One lady in the audience was peculiarly struck with the mention of some things connected with the distribution of tracts, and wished to speak with me after the meeting. She inquired whether I had seen a tract consisting of a portion of one of the Epistles of Peter? to which I replied in the negative. She said that she had seen it recently, and it had struck her as being suitable for distribution in Roman Catholic districts in connexion with open-air preaching; and she offered me a bundle of them. I took them with me on my next missionary trip. On the Sunday, I preached in a Roman Catholic town to a large number of Irish; and I may mention for your encouragement, that while so engaged a number of Roman priests and a Roman bishop passed by sufficiently near to be within the sound of my voice. Not one of the people flinched from their standing, but turned round and listened to the proclamation of the Gospel from my lips. The time was, when, at the sight of a Roman priest, Paddy would have taken leg-bail, and have been off—(laughter)—or would have felt the lash of the priest's whip for listening to a Protestant preacher. But that is not the case now. These men stood their ground, and listened with great interest. On the following day I proposed preaching in the open air in a small town at some distance off, intending afterwards to go to a still further distant town in the evening. I took with me a large number of the tracts, stuffed them in all my pockets, and was truly an interesting figure. When ascending the steps of the Court-house—for it was market-day—the people were leaving, and I saw several very uninteresting looking fellows gathered around the rails, who had furnished themselves, not with cards and pencils to take notes, but cabbage-leaves and brick-bats, which they had picked up in the streets, and with which they seemed to be prepared for adding notes of emphasis of a very peculiar character. I looked at them with both my eyes. I said; "Now, boys, some of you know, I dare say—and if you don't