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Sandwich Islands.

LETTER FROM MR. COAN, APRIL 17,
1845.

Testimony to the good done by the Mission.

THE last communication of Mr. Coan, dated May 3, 1844, was published in the Herald for March, 1845. He has been prevented from writing more frequently by the great amount of labor thrown upon his hands. It is gratifying to find, however, that he is able to make so favorable a report concerning the progress of civilization and Christianity in his extensive field.

After advertng to the health of himself and family, and briefly describing a remarkable influenza which has prevailed as an epidemic in Hilo, Mr. Coan describes his acquaintance with an enlightened Englishman, who has visited his station, and also refers to the valuable testimony which this individual, with others of his countrymen, has borne to the benefits conferred upon the Sandwich Islands by the mission. General Miller, mentioned below, is the British Consul General; and R. C. Wyllie, Esquire, is at present Secretary for Foreign Affairs to his Hawaiian Majesty.

Shortly after the date of my last letter, we were visited by Major Law of the British army in India; his residence is now at Calcutta. This gentleman has, for many years, been actively engaged both in the civil and military service of the English in India, sometimes

acting as a magistrate, sometimes as a diplomatist, and sometimes as a general superintendent of education. We found him to be a man of a shrewd and penetrating mind, of much reading, of tenacious memory, of exhaustless knowledge of men and things, and of graphic and unrivalled conversational powers. He has also sound judgment, good sense, candor and courteousness. He spent about two weeks in our family, and made a handsome donation to Mrs. Coan's school. He also accompanied us on our visit to the last general meeting, and called on us daily while he remained at Honolulu.

He spoke highly and with decision of the blessings conferred on this nation by Christianity; indeed he was a known and bold advocate of the persons and policy of this mission, in face of all the scurrility and invective of its enemies. He was a guest and a special friend of General Miller, and of R. C. Wyllie, Esquire, whose full and excellent "Notes on the Sandwich Islands," &c. you have seen in the Friend and the Polynesian, published at Honolulu. And allow me to say, that the frank, friendly and fearless stand which these three English gentlemen, especially Mr. Wyllie, have taken on the side of the mission, have in a great measure silenced the tongue of slander, and turned the tide of popular remark in our favor. I do not, of course, forget the noble and generous course pursued by Admiral Thomas, Commodore

they are compelled to do by the laws of the land, which is to send their children to school and pay a very small sum to the teachers. And this latter duty they avoid whenever they can, much in the same way as they have avoided paying for their books, by neglecting it altogether, or by throwing it off upon their children. And when the children and youth are required to shoulder these burdens, they not unfrequently resort to dishonest means; such as secretly taking vegetables out of the small plantations of their parents or neighbors, wherever it may be most convenient, to pay the debts which more properly belong to their parents. These evils will continue until fathers and mothers are fully alive to the duties which they owe to their offspring, and acquire the habit of depending upon their own resources to train them up aright.

It is rather questionable whether the present plan of the government's sustaining the schools in part, is the wisest which might be adopted. There is a strong disposition in this people to throw off upon another those burdens and labors which they ought, for their own and their families' best interests, to assume themselves. Hence the laxity with which children are trained and educated for active life. If parents are afforded assistance from any quarter in this work, they are apt to depend upon that assistance, let it be more or less, without uniting their own strenuous efforts to make what is insufficient of itself, adequate to the accomplishment of the end in view. Were the government to require the people to support their own schools entirely; and, in order to enable them to do this, to relieve them of a considerable part of the taxes which they are now burdened with, it would, in my apprehension, conduce greatly to form those habits which are so essential to the prosperity and perpetuity of any nation. Both parental and filial affection exist in a very low degree among this people. It is this which engenders an inconceivable amount of evil; and its cause doubtless consists, in a great measure, in the fact that they have never made those sacrifices for the good of their offspring which the Creator designed that they should make. Unwearied attention on the part of parents to the wants of their children, augments parental affection; and parental affection prompts to increased measures for their good. They both mutually act and react on each other. Nor is the affection of children for their parents a

little influenced for good by this operation. If these things be so, then the training and educating of children should be sustained as much as possible by their own parents. But this cannot be accomplished to any proper extent, as long as the people are in such unfavorable circumstances for acquiring, by their own industry, the necessary amount of this world's goods.

The subject of education is supposed to be receiving the particular attention of the Sandwich Islands government at the present time. Some of the defects pointed out in the letters of Messrs. Conde and Whittlesey, are appreciated by the King and his advisers. It is also believed that the tenure of land, and the laws which impose various burdens upon the people, are undergoing a revision. Whatever improvement is made in these respects, must act favorably upon the general interests of the people.

West Africa.

LETTER FROM MR. WILSON, NOVEMBER 9, 1845.

Prospects of the Mission.

THE latest intelligence respecting the proceedings of the French in the Gaboon River, is contained in the extract which follows:

None of our American cruisers have been here since the departure of the *Truxton*; and our relations to the French remain as they were. The French Commodore left this morning, after having remained nearly three months, without having taken any notice of us, or manifesting any desire to give up our property which was seized during the blockade. To the natives he has said that it was perfectly immaterial to the French whether we go or stay; and as to the boat and other property seized, he affects to believe that it belongs to *Toko*, a native in respect to whom they all entertain feelings of great dislike. I presume he has modified his intentions toward us, from an apprehension, perhaps not altogether without foundation, that our expulsion would be followed by the dispersion of *King Glass's* people. I have held myself in readiness to meet with civility any advances on the part of the Commodore; and should have been glad of an opportunity of vindicating myself from the absurd and puerile charges which have been put in circulation in re-

gard to us; but that opportunity was not afforded.

My present impression is, that the French will offer no more violence to the members of the mission, at least just now; and that so long as the people continue together, we ought to preach the gospel to them. What course things will take hereafter, I cannot, of course, foresee. The people returned to their towns about ten days ago, having been driven in by the heavy rains; but they are still unsettled and undecided in relation to what they shall do. They have secreted their property beyond the reach of the French; and they did make preparations to seek new homes. Independence and resolution, however, are not prominent features in African character; and unless the French bear down too sternly upon them, it is probable that they will bow their necks to the yoke, and remain where they are.

Most of our schools have been resumed, and preaching in this neighborhood is well attended; but for want of a boat, I find it necessary to confine myself to the few towns which I can reach on foot.

Under date of November 14, Mr. Wilson writes, "A large reinforcement of Jesuits is daily expected in the river; and as they come out under the special patronage of the Queen of the French, it is probable that the local authorities here will not be wanting in zeal to oblige them, even at the expense of our expulsion. It will be enough for us, however, to keep our consciences void of offence and put our confidence in God. These dark clouds may disperse, and we may see better times; but our present prospects are exceedingly gloomy."

South Africa.

LETTERS FROM MR. GROUT.

Simultaneous Meeting.

THE proposition made to the missionaries, in different parts of the world, to assemble for devotional purposes, while the last annual meeting of the Board should be convened at Brooklyn, has met with a prompt and cordial response. If these simultaneous meetings shall continue to be held from year to year, as they probably will be, their influence cannot fail to be happy both upon the churches and their representatives in foreign lands. In the letter from which the following extract is taken, dated September 13, Mr. Grout describes a meeting of this character at the

Umvoto station; Doct. Adams and himself, with their wives, were present. "The great burden of our business while together," he writes, "was prayer, the intervals between our seasons of devotion being spent in free conversation upon such topics as seemed most intimately connected with your and our object."

On Thursday evening, nearly at the moment when the emblems of Christ's great work of love and mercy were passed around your great collection of disciples, and the Master of the feast was heard saying, "Do this in remembrance of me," we had the same memorials spread out before us;—we, who were but two or three, not in a spacious church surrounded by a host of believers, but in a private room, surrounded by a little company of heathen, some of whom beheld those solemnities for the first time;—we, not in a Christian land, but in these ends of the earth, in sight of the place where Chaka, the great conqueror of this region, has left his bones, and where the bleached bones of some of his people are yet lying in sight, but a short distance from our door. Surrounded thus with dry bones, dead and alive, when Christ said to us, "Do this in remembrance of me," our hearts replied, "Yes, dear Savior, we will remember thee, not only in thine ordinances, but we will preach, we will prophesy upon these bones, and say to them, 'O ye dry bones, hear the word of the Lord;' and by thy grace may we soon see 'bone coming to his bone,' and spiritual life breathed into them."

We dwelt, with deep interest, upon the thought and belief, that these simultaneous meetings were designed of God to give a new impulse to every department of our instrumentality. We have received hints enough from home to justify a belief, that pastors would solicit the prayers of their churches for God's special presence at your convocation, and that they would feel a deep interest on their return from the meeting, to communicate the interesting facts and occurrences to their people for their edification, thus kindling up an interest, and inspiring fervor in prayer, among the mass of God's people for the spread of the gospel.

At our meeting we felt a strong desire that every selfish or minor consideration might be entirely obliterated from the minds of all Christians, by the one great, unanimous, harmonious and unquenchable desire to make known the gospel of peace to every creature in the shortest possible time; that pastors might be seen,