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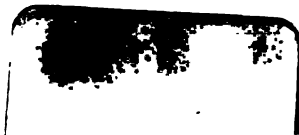
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THE GOSPEL IN CENTRAL AMERICA;

CONTAINING

A SKETCH OF THE COUNTRY,

PHYSICAL AND GEOGRAPHICAL—HISTORICAL AND POLITICAL—
MORAL AND RELIGIOUS:

A HISTORY OF THE BAPTIST MISSION IN BRITISH HONDURAS

AND OF THE

INTRODUCTION OF THE BIBLE INTO THE SPANISH AMERICAN REPUBLIC OF GUATEMALA.

"And when he had saluted them, he declared particularly what things God had wrought among the Gentiles by his ministry. And when they heard it, they glorified the Lord."—Acts xxi. 19-20.

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NOTE OF INTRODUCTION,

OR

EPISTLE GENERAL TO MY READERS.

BRITISH CHRISTIANS,

IN presenting the information and the thoughts contained in this volume, my object is to awaken interest in Central America as a field for Missionary enterprise, and also to restore to practical action, and add greater efficiency to the more than electric thread of Christian sympathy and fellowship, long imperfectly uniting the Church in British Honduras and the Churches of Great Britain; but which late events have attenuated, injured, and rendered inoperative in some important respects.

In pursuing these ends, I am simply executing a trust committed to me by the Baptist Church at Belize.*

By employing the press as a means of reaching the minds and hearts of British Christians, I have hoped to overcome some of the obstacles which prejudice, the divided state of the Churches, and other unholy influences have hitherto presented to my personal appeals; and also, being about

* See pp. 441 and 454.

shortly to return to Central America, I have designed to leave to the Churches and to my brethren, a permanent memorial of the labours and sufferings of their fellow disciples in British Honduras, and of the spiritual destitution of a country, and a class of countries hitherto greatly overlooked.

The fact that so little is generally known of the Central States of the new continent, or indeed of any of the vast countries comprised in what is termed Spanish America, has led me to dwell more than I had designed upon the historical, political, and moral characteristics of those Republics, well convinced that some measure of familiarity with these subjects was necessary to a correct appreciation of their wants and of their claims upon us, and under the impression that in describing one portion of the late Spanish Colonies, I was in fact giving the portraiture, in their most important features, of all those rich and extensive countries which, for the last three centuries and a half, have been the undisturbed seat of papal domination.

The manner in which I was gradually led, under adverse circumstances, to undertake this, to me, novel task, and the manifestly providential supply of the necessary materials to complete it, though documents which had for years been accumulating were unavoidably left behind me on my violent deportation from Guatemala, have, with other circumstances, fully satisfied my own mind that the good hand of God has been with me in its execution as it was in former undertakings; and this conviction greatly encourages me to hope that the advancement of the kingdom and the glory of my Lord and Saviour will be in some measure promoted by it.

In recording facts, both in the history of the country and of the mission, I have endeavoured to be faithful. Wherein these facts do not redound to the honour of some of the parties concerned, I yet trust that their exposure will tend to diminish rather than to increase existing evils, as light and ventilation alone are favourable to moral as well as physical cures, and I claim full credit for the sorrow and anguish of heart which such revelations ought to occasion to a man, an Anglo-Saxon, and a Christian.

The authorities which I have made use of, will generally be found cited at the foot of the page. I further gratefully acknowledge the kind assistance which has been afforded me by several disinterested friends, and also the permission courteously granted me by the heirs of the late Robert Glasgow Dunlop, Esq., to use his recently published book of travels in Central America, in compiling the historical sketch from the declaration of Independence downwards.

“Finally, Brethren, Pray for us, that the word of the Lord may have free course and be glorified, as it is with you.”

Your fellow servant in the Gospel,

FREDERICK CROWE,
Messenger of the Church at Belize.

64, *Nicholas Street, Horton,*
September 16, 1850.

ERRATA.

Page 6, line 19	...	for <i>agare</i>	read <i>agare</i> .
" 86 "	18	for <i>Halle aux/bis</i>	read <i>Halle aux bis</i> .
" 74 "	11	for <i>palace</i>	read <i>place</i> .
" 106 "	80	for <i>companions</i>	read <i>companion</i> .
" 130 "	80	for <i>emigrations</i>	read <i>immigration</i> .
" 136 "	80	for <i>Saugre</i>	read <i>Saugre</i> .
" 174 "	8	for <i>repealed</i>	read <i>repeated</i> .
" 180 last line	...	for <i>her spoils</i>	read <i>their spoils</i> .
" 343 line 31	...	for <i>faithlessness</i>	read <i>faithfulness</i> .
" 361 last line but one	...	for <i>bodied</i>	read <i>accompanied</i> .
" 406 line 88	...	for <i>have</i>	read <i>has</i> .

, Any profits that may arise from the sale of this work will be devoted to Missionary purposes in Central America.

Communications, remittances, &c., for the Native Missions will be kindly received and forwarded by the Trustees of the Honduras Mission Fund: viz. Messrs. W. NORTON, of Rother-hill, Murrey; W. BERWICK, of No. 7 Catherine-court, Trinity-square, Tower-hill; and JAMES OLIVER, No. 8 Newington-causeway, Southwark.

Boxes and parcels for shipment to Belize may be forwarded to Mr. C. H. HACKETT, Custom house and Commercial Agent, No. 8 Savage-gardens, London; addressed to Mr. ALEXANDER HENDERSON, Belize, Honduras, for the Native Missions.

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THE GOSPEL IN CENTRAL AMERICA.

PART I. CENTRAL AMERICA.

SECTION I. PHYSICAL AND GEOGRAPHICAL SKETCH.

CHAPTER I.

THE COUNTRY GENERALLY.

Extent—Climate—Seasons—Mountains—Elevated Plains—Volcanoes—Rivers and Lakes
—Natural Productions—Animal Creation—General Physical Advantages.

"The earth is Jehovah's, and the fulness thereof."—Ps. xxiv. 1.

CENTRAL AMERICA comprehends all the territory lying between Mexico on the north, and the Isthmus of Darien or Panama on the south. Its entire length is a thousand miles, and its breadth varies from upwards of one hundred miles to three hundred; giving an area of 200,000 square miles, or more than twice the extent of Great Britain.

Lying on the same parallel as Jamaica, or even nearer to the equator, and almost insular as to any influence of the continent on its temperature, the climate of the coasts and lowlands is hot and humid. That of the interior varies with the altitude, and is generally mild, equable, and salubrious. The two seasons, aptly designated the "wet" and "the dry," are well defined. They may be said equally to divide the year, though they vary considerably in different districts. The rains, everywhere copious, are more continual in some parts, and the drought is more severe in others, but the dry season is nowhere uninterrupted by refreshing showers, and the wet is everywhere relieved by an interval of dry weather, which perceptibly separates "the former" from "the latter rain."

In the highlands of the interior, the seasons are singularly regular. The dry weather commences about the close of October, and terminates on the 12th or 13th of May, rarely varying even a few hours. It is most frequently on the 12th that "the windows

of heaven are opened." The sky is then suddenly obscured with thick clouds, which burst simultaneously, often accompanied with thunder, and sometimes with hail. This is confined to the afternoon, and returns on the following days, or perhaps for successive weeks, at the same hour, or a little later. During the whole of the wet season, which is by far the most agreeable, the forenoon is almost invariably cloudless, and the atmosphere clear, elastic, and balmy. The rains are often confined to the evening and night, or to the night hours only. During the dry season, the mornings and evenings are often so cool and bracing as to predispose to active exercise, though fires are never resorted to. Through the day the sky is seldom obscured, and light clouds only are to be seen sweeping rapidly along the plains during the short twilight that ushers in the equinoctial day, thence they rise and hang in clusters round the tops of the mountains till the sun has gathered strength to dispel them: in the evening they return to attend its setting, and add inimitable beauty to the gorgeous scene. At all seasons the entire disc of the moon is distinctly visible through all its phases, but now it shines with such uninterrupted clearness as entirely to supersede, when above the horizon, the necessity of artificially lighting the streets; and even in the absence of the ruler of the night, the brilliancy of the stars dispels all gloom. In some districts on the eastern coasts, through local influences, it rains more or less all the year; which, however, adapts them for the growth of certain vegetable productions; while the districts where the dry weather lasts the longest are alone suitable for the cultivation of others. On the more elevated plains, such as those of Quesaltenango in the department of Los Altos, "the heat is never so great as during the summer months in England" * and though snow is said sometimes to fall in December and January, it immediately dissolves, and the thermometer never descends so low as the freezing point.

Not far from the Western or Pacific coast, the country is traversed from north-west to south-east by a continuous cordillera or unbroken chain of mountains (unbroken at least as far as the Lake of Nicaragua), which are covered with diversified vegetation. This forms a kind of connecting chain between the Rocky Mountains of the north, and the Andes of the South American continent.

* Dunlop's Central America, p. 256.

Some of the loftiest summits are 17,000 feet high. Frequent spurs or offsets from the "Sierra Madre",—the main ridge—intersect the plains at right angles, and sometimes extend to the sea-shore.

At various degrees of elevation along the sides and on the summits of the mountains are numerous plateaux or table lands, like so many natural terraces, some of them of great extent, and all delightfully temperate and luxuriantly fertile. Like the plain of Damascus, they are generally encircled by higher mountains or hills. These regions especially seem to invite the residence of man, and to await the culture of his hand. They constitute a distinguishing feature of this and some neighbouring countries. But no one of those countries, and probably no part of the earth, presents a greater diversity of level on a surface of equal extent than does Central America; consequently, no country possesses such variety of climate, or offers such facilities of adaptation to all kinds of productions and to all constitutions of men, from the sun-burnt inhabitant of a tropical plain, to the hardy mountaineer inured to perpetual snows.

Most of the highest peaks and isolated mountains are volcanoes. The rocks are of granite, gneiss, and basalt; but volcanic formations and ejections predominate. Not less than thirty volcanic vents are said to be still in activity. The traces of remote as well as of recent earthquakes are clearly discernible in the fissures and ravines that everywhere abound. Extinct craters, rent rocks, beds of lava, scorix, vitrified, charred, and pumice stones, together with hot and sulphurous springs, all mark it as the most volcanic region known. Indeed, shocks of earthquake, generally slight, are periodically felt at the opening and close of the wet season.

From the cloud-capped "sierra" and volcanic cone, descend copious streams and impetuous torrents. These, meeting on the plains below, expand into majestic lakes, sleeping in placid stillness, cradled by the hills; or, swelled to noble rivers, they leap the precipice in cataracts which foam with awful grandeur, and winding onwards, roll in nature's solemn pomp, canopied with lofty verdure, until they fall into the oceans, which on either hand wait to receive them.

A glance at the map will show how numerous are the rivers, and, though short from the narrowness of the continent, they are of no insignificant dimensions. The largest is the Usamasinta, or

Passion River, which both disembogues into the Gulf of Mexico, and communicates with the Laguna of Terminos. When least, it is about the size of the Elbe or the Garonne in Europe, or the Hudson of the United States. But it is the riches and convenience, not the size, of these fertilizing streams which constitute their real importance, while their beauties, at all seasons, are equalled by few other rivers, and are probably surpassed by none.

The Rio Dulce (true to its name, *sweet or fresh water river*) unites the Bay of Honduras with the lake or "Golfo Dulce." Its bold and gracefully wooded cliffs, its Golfete or lesser lake, studded with islands, and its stately waters, if accessible to European tourists, would doubtless draw as many lovers of the picturesque as the Rhine or the Lake of Geneva. The dark and bitter waters of the Hondo, or deep river, constitute the northern boundary of the present British territory. The banks of the Belize, or "Old River," are the most populous of any, and have already yielded vast treasures to Europe, in the timber of the "Cauba," or mahogany-tree. The Montagua and the Polochic, vie with each other as affording facilities for a better communication with the interior. The Black River, or Rio Tinto, in the Poyais territory, was the scene of the drama which proved fatal to so many of our adventurous countrymen under the direction of Gregor Mac Gregor, the self-styled Cacique of Poyais, who too hastily, alas! attempted to plant an empire on its banks. The San Juan del Norte, besides its size, is notable on account of the long-standing project for making it the channel of passage between the two oceans, when the necessary canal shall have been opened. It has also been the scene of more than one disastrous exploit of our navy; and even Nelson, in his younger days (in 1779), essayed his budding powers of destruction upon its forts. On the Atlantic, the Rio Paz (river of peace), which separates the states of Guatemala and Salvador, has often belied its name, being reddened with the blood shed in civil war. The deep and rapid Lempa is the largest on the western shore; taken at its lowest ebb, it exceeds 140 yards in breadth.* All the rivers are crossed by bars of sand at their mouths, formed by their deposits, or thrown up by the conflict of the breakers with the stream. These are at present a serious obstacle to their navigation, as they

* "History of the Kingdom of Guatemala, by Don Domingo Juarros (1811), translated by J. Bailly, Lieutenant R.N. London: 1833." p. 31.

prevent any but small craft, or flat-bottomed vessels, from entering the fine harbours formed by their estuaries. But it is probable that they may all be so removed or deepened by moles and with dredging-machines, as to make these ports available, and greatly facilitate inland communication.

The mysterious Lake of Atitlan, in the state of Guatemala, covers a space of more than 250 square miles; it is pronounced unfathomable, as a line 300 fathoms does not reach the bottom. It is surrounded by dark and precipitous rocks, which encircle it like walls; and, though it receives many rivers, no outlet has yet been discovered for its dark and benumbing waters,* in which only small fish like tittlebrats, and crabs are found, but both in exceeding abundance. El Golfo Dulce, or the lake of Yzabal, is about fifty miles in circuit. It is the port of Guatemala on the Atlantic, with which it communicates by the beautiful river of the same name already alluded to. Like the lake of Genessaret, it is subject to violent agitations, because occupying a similar position among mountains. The small lake of Amatitlan, notwithstanding its hot springs and brackish waters, furnishes abundance of moharras, a delicate fish, about one foot in length, together with pepescas and pescaditos (small fry), for the consumption of the capital, from which it is distant about twenty miles. It abounds also in wild fowl, and is a favourite resort of the 'Guatemaltecos'—the natives of the capital. There are, besides these, several other lagoons of considerable size, interest, and beauty.

The lake of Nicaragua, whose surplus waters descend to the Atlantic by the Rio San Juan del Norte, is an inland sea, larger than the island of Jamaica, being 180 miles long from east to west, and nearly 100 broad from north to south, and 150 Spanish leagues in circumference. It is ten fathoms deep in many places, and has few shallows. It contains a small archipelago, and on one fertile and populous island called Ometepe there is a bellowing Vesuvius. This lake is also connected with that called Managua, itself no inconsiderable body of water. The shores of these magnificent waters, which are likely to afford important facilities for drawing

* This is a peculiarity not confined to this lake. It is, however, probable, that in some such cases subterraneous outlets exist. The lakes of Guijar and Metapa, in the State of Salvador, rich in scenery and legendary lore, are naturally united together by a subterraneous communication; and in more than one spot a moderate-sized river makes a sudden appearance, as if issuing from the bowels of the earth.

together some of the most distant points of the earth, are of surpassing fertility, and as salubrious as they are beautiful, the climate being warm and dry.

The soil, everywhere prolific, is naturally clothed with an infinite variety of plants, from the minutest fungus to the stately monarchs of the forest. Among these are many of the exotics which are treasured in the hothouses and botanical gardens of Europe, here trodden down as common weeds. The lowlands are still covered with dense primeval shades, where the jaguar and the coujnar,—the lion and the tiger of America,—prowl undisturbed. Here grow together the tender herb, the prickly bush, the succulent cactus, the fibrous agave, the graceful and diversified palms and palmettos, with all varieties of gigantic trees, their branches groaning under the weight of parasitical plants, whose wax-like flowers assume every shape that fancy could imagine and taste execute. The whole promiscuous assemblage, and compact mass of vegetation, is bound together by a close net-work of innumerable vines, pendant 'bejuocos' (or tie-tie), and the tenacious tendrils of myriads of smaller creeping plants. From this thick jungle, the sun's rays are excluded. The rank mass of still life, varying from 150 to 200 feet in depth, is impenetrable to man, except as by means of his cutlass* he hews to himself a track which immediately closes after him, and is perceptible only to the sagacious bushman. The damp exhalations of the bush are baneful even to the sturdy native; whilst the recently-made clearance, in consequence of the rapid decomposition of vegetable matter, too frequently proves fatal to the newly-settled European. Further up, the open pine ridge presents clusters of fir trees interspersed with calabash and aloes, or diversified by occasional thickets and long vistas, surpassing in beauty the most exquisite park scenery. Here the antelopes roam, and numerous herds of half wild cattle browse. The more lofty plains are frequently savannahs, affording rich pasturage, at times gently wooded with trees of softer foliage, resembling the woods of Europe; or with gnarled oaks covered with Spanish moss, which, at once useful and elegant, is here a necessary protection from the keenness of the mountain air. It hangs from the branches in white flakes, which wave and glitter in the sun, and resemble the hoary beard of some Druidic sage.

* A short blade everywhere in use, and called "machette," a Greek word for fighter.

The natural productions of Central America are varied, rich, and almost inexhaustible. The forests, whether on plain or mountain-side, abound with valuable timber, among which the mahogany and logwood trees, the only kinds at present marketable, are the almost exclusive object of the trader's attention. Other woods of all grains, fitted for use or ornament, valuable fruits, spices, and medicinal plants, are suffered to flourish and decay unnoticed around them. The cedars grow to a prodigious size, and with other trees spread their spurs or protruding roots far around, often reaching twenty or thirty feet from the trunk, which is from 150 to 200 feet high. The Ceiba, or wild cotton tree, is surpassed by none. The trunk of this elegant, as well as giant vegetable, swells in a few years so as to require ten or twelve men to embrace it with their arms. It produces a downy substance like silk, whence it derives its name, which is used to stuff pillows; and the wood, though lighter and more perishable than deal, is often carved into huge barges, or Piraguas, by the natives, on account of the facility with which it is worked. The Guayacan, a sort of iron-wood, is considered indestructible. The Cacao, improperly called cocoa (the chocolate tree) is indigenous, and flourishes only under the shadow of larger trees called "Madre de Cacao."* The Sarsaparilla and Vanilla vines both grow wild in the bush, and shed their delicious fragrance around. The Drago yields the drug called dragon's blood. What has been erroneously called Balsam of Peru is found exclusively in Central America. The Palma Christi, or castor-oil plant, the Caoutchouc, or Ule (the Indian-rubber or elastic-gum tree), the Guaco, considered an antidote to the bite of the worst snakes, as well as a cure for hydrophobia, and many other plants from which valuable extracts are or might be made, grow wild and in great abundance.

Nor is the necessary aliment of man either scarce or of difficult production. Maize, or Indian corn, rice, and Frejole, a nutritious kind of pulse which is very much used, yield, with scarcely any cultivation, three, and often four crops a year, and that with five hundred fold, or even greater increase, each harvest. These are, for the natives, the most necessary fruits of the earth, but not the only staple food. The Plantain—substantial or luscious, as it is eaten green or ripe—the gelatinous Cassada or Yuca, the

* The mother of the cacao.

farinaceous yam, and other alimentary roots, are in general use, with very many vegetables peculiar to the tropics; and the bread-fruit and bread-nut trees, though but lately introduced, are found to thrive. But besides these, the temperate regions yield all, or nearly all, those productions which are raised in Europe. Wheat and barley are cultivated sometimes by the side of the sugar-cane, on the elevated plains; and the markets of the larger towns are supplied at once with the productions of torrid and of temperate climes: so that, at *all seasons*, the green pea, the cauliflower, and cos-lettuce are sold along with the Avocado-pear, sweet potato, okro, capsicum, or chillies, and many other productions of opposite climates, less delicate, perhaps, but more common and useful. Of edible fruits, those most common are the banana, pine-apple, orange, sweet lemon, lime, shaddock, forbidden fruit, water-melon, musk-melon, sapote, mango, guava, fig, tamarind, pomegranate, granadilla (fruit of the passion flower), sea-grape, papia, mammæ, star and custard-apples, and cocoa, cashew, and ground nuts. There are said to be in all "more than forty genera," including, probably, those introduced from Europe, such as the apple, pear, quince, cherry, &c., which, though they are found to thrive, are little appreciated, and none of any sort can be said to be cultivated with care. The same remark applies, though with frequent exceptions, to garden flowers, which are still more varied. Indeed the words applied by Goldsmith to Italy are even more applicable to Central America:

"Whatever fruits in different climes are found,
That proudly rise or humbly court the ground;
Whatever blooms in torrid tracts appear,
Whose bright succession decks the varied year;
Whatever sweets salute the northern sky,
With vernal lives, that blossom but to die:
These, here disporting, own the kindred soil,
Nor ask luxuriance from the planter's toil,
While sea-born gales their gelid wings expand,
To winnow fragrance round the smiling land."

Abundant materials for exchange with other nations are afforded in cotton, coffee, sugar-cane, arrow-root, ginger, tobacco, and even silk-worms, though but lately imported; but especially in "añil" (indigo) and "grana" (cochineal), which, because most lucrative, absorb almost all the attention of the planter. Other marketable productions are not wanting; but both known and unknown sources of wealth decay in the forests, or lie hid beneath the soil.

The precious metals, together with quicksilver, copper, lead, iron, talc, litharge, and most other minerals that are of use, only await the labour and ingenuity of man to extract them from the bowels of the earth, and convert them into objects of convenience and beauty; and seams of coal, ochre, gypsum, sal-ammoniac, and wells of naphtha, are also ready to yield their valuable stores. Jasper, opal, and other precious stones are also found, and pearl fisheries have long existed upon the coasts. In fine, there is no lack of anything that nature can bestow to sustain, to satisfy, and to delight. So abundant are the necessaries of life that none need want them: so profuse are the bounties of nature that they are suffered to decay through neglect. The peach tree and the rose run wild on the borders of the orange grove, whose flowers and fruits are alike simultaneous and perennial; and the pine-apple, the mango, and the water-melon are preferred to the almond, the olive, and the grape. Such is the nature of the soil, that the exuberance of that wealth which rots upon its surface in the less populous parts of Central America, would amply clothe and satisfy with bread thousands of the sons of want who fill our streets and unions, dispelling that squalid wretchedness which penury and destitution have produced, and mitigating some of the woes which embitter the lot of so many of our fellow-countrymen. It may be that the time is not far distant when many such will seek these fruitful shores, and, under wise direction, not only benefit themselves, but, while redeeming fertile valleys and plains from desolation, greatly bless the timid natives with higher arts of life, and with the example of morals purified by the sacred influence of evangelical truth.

Nor is the animal creation less multiform and prolific, though on a less gigantic scale. Earth, air, and water literally teem with life, and greatly extend the resources of man. The mountain's side and the river's bed are alike trodden by the Danta, or Tapir—the American elephant—which, though small, is both strong and fierce. The puma, the leopard, the panther, and the tiger-cat, with others of their kind, are destructive to cattle and to the numerous droves of warree, or wild boars, and herds of fallow deer, but not to man. Baboons and monkeys colonize the sycamore, or wild fig tree, on the borders of the streams. These bark in chorus at the dawn of day, and warn the boatman of approaching rain. Innumerable quadrupeds, some of them still

unknown to the naturalist, animate the wastes, and prey upon each other; among them, the Gibnet, or Tepequinete, which resembles a huge guinea pig, is the most esteemed for food. The peccary and the Indian rabbit, which are plentiful, also make savoury meat. The Armadilla, somewhat rare, is peculiarly delicate. The opossum, which in size, appearance, and habits, seems to be about the medium between the rat and the kangaroo, is more destructive to domestic fowls than even the fox; and sloths, weasels, ant-eaters, and squirrels, are plentiful, whilst snakes, serpents, scorpions, and tarantulas, with other reptiles, infest the thicket, or lie concealed in holes and among dead leaves and rotten wood.

The feathered tribes, from the wild turkey, gorgeous and superb beyond the peacock, to the minute and glittering humming-bird, though for the most part wanting song, are decked in brightest hues, and not a few of them are as good for food as they are pleasant to the eye. The Quetzal, one of the most beautiful of birds, is found only in the province of *Quetzaltenango*,* and is therefore peculiar to Central America. The red and blue macaws fly in pairs at giddy heights across the streams, and rend the air with their screams. Flocks of parrots and paroquets in clamorous feast devour the over-ripe fruit, or spoil the planter's corn. The ringdove's note re-echoes through the wood; the Whip-poor-will, Co-eli-co, Chul-pil-choc, Who-you, and Top-na-chic, startle by their strange cries the unaccustomed ear. The Orupendula, or yellow-tail, suspends her flask-like nests by hundreds from the branches of one giant tree, near which the Toucan (bill-bird), unconscious of his glories, sits demure. The stealthy bushman with his gun pursues the stately Curassow and the sober Quam—large birds and affording goodly fare—but he has carefully to secrete the bones of the former, which, if eaten, must prove fatal to his dog. The eagle, the hawk, and the Turkey buzzard, or Sopolote (a species of vulture—the unpaid scavenger of all the land), soar aloft, and sail in airy circles till they scent their prey, and give place only to the night-owl and the bat.

The streams, too, and the fresh and brackish lakes, abound with strange yet not unfrequently most graceful forms. The ponderous alligator stretches his lazy length upon some protruding trunk which the floods have borne down, and the amphibious

* Or, the mountain of Quetzal.

iguana, the largest of the Saurian or lizard tribe, basks in the sun on overhanging boughs. The finny myriads leap to catch the sportive flies, and are scarcely thinned by the many destroyers who prey upon them. These are storks, flamingoes, white and black curlews, pelicans, spoonbills, king-fishers, and flocks of ducks and teal, which, flying to and fro, seem to darken the surface of the waters.

The *Bucatera* and the *Hecatee*, the river turtle, lie to the sand-bank, and deposit there the dainty store of eggs which man, or some less subtle foe, directed by the ruffled surface, may rifle soon. The *Manatee*, or huge sea-cow, flounders in the lagoons and bays. The *Green* and the *Hawkbill Turtle*, the latter of which yields the tortoise shell, feed along the shores, or, with the *Snapper*, *Baracouta*, and *Jew-fish*, frequent the bars and mouths of rivers* and the reef, which, like a submarine parterre, is decked with corals and sea-fans, conch-shells, soft sponge, and grassy weeds of forms and hues unnumbered.

More abundant and formidable than all, the tiny insect constitutes one of the inconveniences of life, particularly in uncleared lands, the temperate regions alone being exempt from their annoyance. The mosquito, closely resembling the English summer gnat, is the most prevalent and hurtful, inflaming the skin, and goading to perpetual motion in order to escape its stings. *Sand-flies*, *Botlans*, and *Cantharides*, called *Tavano* or *Doctor fly*, all inflict wounds more or less severe and frequently repeated. The *Chinço*, called *Jigger* or *Negua*, the *Waree-tic* and the *Beef-worm* fasten upon the body or nestle beneath the skin. The woodlouse or white ant (*Termites*), the red or fire ant, the *Wee-wee*, the *Warrior-ants* or *Marching-army* and the *Sourpope*, are justly terrible, and many other kinds more diminutive and less effectually armed, are troublesome to all, and become a special scourge to the uncleanly.

But there are not wanting insects of a more agreeable kind. The honey of the common, and of the stingless bee, flows from the natural hive in the trunks and branches of trees, and some-

* "Of the *Baracouta* and *Jew-fish*—both exceedingly well flavoured and firm—the former is often caught of sixty pounds weight, and the latter of two hundred. The *Manati*, or sea-cow, is sometimes taken on the coast and in the neighbouring lagoons; its flesh, either fresh or salted, is considered a great delicacy. The weight of this sometimes exceeds one thousand pounds."—*Capt. Henderson's Account of Honduras*, page 46.

times intoxicates the woodcutter who freely indulges in the luscious draught. Butterflies of great size and beauty sport among the tropical plants: locusts and a kind of grasshopper, which unites in perfection the seven prismatic colours, luxuriate on the superabundant vegetation. The Chicharra, a beetle not so large as a cockchafer, spins round the branches of the trees, and by the motion of its wings produces a deafening sound which fills the air and is heard at the distance of hundreds of yards. Several varieties of the fire-fly illuminate the bushes, and flit through the air when the curtains of the night close in.

In short, this country, though not without its inconveniences, most of which recede before the culture of the soil and increase of population, is inferior to none in natural advantages, and in the variety and wealth of its animal, vegetable, and mineral productions.

" But though with lavish kindness,
The gifts of God are strewn "

upon this theatre of His goodness, it has hitherto been unblest by the appropriation of its resources to the uses of true piety or devotion, nor even, to any extent, to the purposes of that civilization which, while it refines, cannot really improve society. Hitherto, man has entailed only a curse upon its soil, and polluted its balmy atmosphere: hitherto, all its wealth has been abused and consumed upon his lusts and pleasures, and the Creator remains unacknowledged and unhonoured in its consecration to him. It waits, with other lands, to have "holiness to the Lord" inscribed upon it. And though, as a part of Christ's promised possession, its subjugation to Him must finally be accomplished, it depends instrumentally on the introduction of the Bible and the living preacher, whether it becomes an important outpost of the Christian camp, as affording the means of achieving other triumphs, and of lifting up its testimony like a beacon to other lands, or whether it must continue for some time to come one of the strongholds of the empire of darkness. Nor is this the least inviting field to which the servants of God are directed by His providence. The European missionary, or pious emigrant, whilst pursuing the holiest objects, might indeed sicken on its shores, but he would also find upon its temperate plains a climate more genial and salubrious than that he has left, and the reward of honest industry, if less refined, might be more easily procured, without excessive toil or heart-corroding care.

CHAPTER II.

LOCAL PARTICULARS.

Position, Divisions, and Boundaries—The Five States, Territories, &c.—GUATEMALA : Its Locality, Foundation, Calamities and Ruin—The New Capital, Plan, The "Plaza," Houses, Fountains, Streets and Street Passengers, "Mezcosas," Public Buildings, Municipal Arrangements, The Environs, Promenades, and General Aspect—SEA PORTS.—BELIZE : The Harbour, the Town, Supply of Provisions, Trade, &c.

"Go and walk through the land and describe it."—Joah. xviii. 8.

SITUATED in the torrid zone, between 8° and 18° north lat., and 80° and 90° west long., Central America at once separates the Atlantic from the Pacific Ocean, and unites the continents of North and South America—a position as important commercially, as it is geographically remarkable and unique.

It includes the five independent states of Guatemala, Salvador, Honduras, Nicaragua, and Costa Rica : and also British Honduras and the Mosquito Shore. It is bounded on the north by Mexico ; on the west and south by the Pacific ; and on the east by the Caribbean Sea and the Bay of Honduras.

The provinces now on its northernmost frontier once formed part of Central America. During the civil wars that followed upon the Declaration of Independence, Chiapas, an extensive territory, united itself to Mexico ; and Soconusco, a fertile country bordering on the Pacific, with palpable inconsistency, was arbitrarily annexed to that republic at the very time that the Mexicans were loudly complaining of injustice done to them by the incorporation of Texas with the United States of North America. Between Chiapas and Tabasco, the next province on the Mexican side, there exists a natural boundary, consisting of a chain of mountains passable only by one narrow defile, through which the communication between the cities of Mexico and Guatemala is kept up. Ciudad

Real, the capital of Chiapas, which lies on this line of road, is an inland town of magnitude and importance, but on account of its position, seldom visited and but little known.

The five States of Central America nearly correspond, at the present time, with the "Intendencias" as they existed under Spanish Colonial rule. Their boundaries are pretty clearly defined and vary but little. They are subdivided into Provinces, Departments, and Districts—the latter applying to the less peopled though often extensive tracts, covered with almost uninterrupted shade.

The state of Guatemala is by far the most extensive of the five. It includes a considerable and populous highland district to the north, called "Los Altos de Quesaltenango," and to the eastward, vast territories, such as those of Vera Paz and El Peten, which are but thinly inhabited. Altogether, it occupies full one-third of the whole country. It has also the largest population, and far surpasses the other states in importance. Its growing trade is even now considerable. It is principally carried on with the English. The chief export, which is cochineal, amounted in 1846 to 9,037 "surremas," or bales of 150 lbs. each, valued at 211,804*l.* 13*s.* 9*d.**

The state of Salvador is situated on the western coast. Its climate is hot, but more healthy than that of the eastern shores—perhaps because the land is better cleared and cultivated. The chief product of this state is indigo, which used to be extensively cultivated and at one time rivalled, in the number of seroons exported, the cochineal of Guatemala. But so much has it diminished, that in 1846 the number of bales exported did not exceed 1,500, in value about 10,000*l.* The city of San Salvador, its capital, is only a few miles distant from the Pacific Ocean. Its commerce still surpasses that of most towns in Central America. And its political influence, taking as it does the lead in all liberal movements, is considerable. During a certain period it was the seat of the Federal Government, and, like Washington, it had at that time a certain territory around the city, distinguished as the Federal District.

The state of Honduras takes its name from the Bay of *Honduras*, signifying *depths*, which forms its northernmost boundary. The first navigators so denominated it, because they with difficulty obtained any soundings in it. The surface of the ground is in this state even more generally uneven than elsewhere. Its popula-

* Dunlop's Central America, p. 308.

tion is scanty in comparison with the two former states; and, like Guatemala, it still comprises vast districts of virgin forests, partially peopled by wild Indians. The climate, like that of the other states, is varied, being generally temperate in the interior, which is notable for its mines, and hot near the coasts which abound with rivers, from the banks of which much mahogany and sarsaparilla are taken. Comayagua, the capital, is still a city of some importance, though said to have been much more so formerly. This state possesses two sea-port towns, Traxillo and Omas, which were active as military and commercial depôts of Spain, but they are now fallen into comparative decay.

The state of Nicaragua is exceedingly fertile, and generally salubrious. But, notwithstanding it possesses several advantages over Honduras, it is but little more populous. This may partly be accounted for by the absence of any leading branch of industry, or any considerable activity in its commerce, but still more by its frequent civil wars. In a land surpassingly volcanic, this state is pre-eminently so. The very roads in some parts sound hollow under the hoofs of the mules or horses. Leon, the capital, and Granada are large cities, and once enjoyed great wealth and commercial prosperity, but, like all chief towns in Central America, they have suffered much from crime and consequent internal disorganisation, as well as from civil wars, political commotions, and miracle. These cities, from the highest rank in repute and influence, are now reduced to little better than heaps of ruins, scantily inhabited, and, where best, affording abundant evidence of both earlier and more recent devastations. Leon, on the lake of Managua, often called the lake of Leon, is said to have contained at one time 32,000 people. It is now reduced to less than half that number. Granada may still have about 13,000 inhabitants. It is beautifully situated on the borders of the lake of Nicaragua, already referred to in the previous chapter. The town of Nicaragua, about thirty-six miles south-east of Granada, though inferior in size and importance, gives its name to the state and the lake. Like Granada, it is advantageously situated on its banks not far from the populous island of Ometepe, which is in the lake and contains an active volcano. Great interest at present attaches to this state and its waters, in connection with the long formed and often talked of project of connecting the two oceans at this point,

which is now about to be put to the test of experiment, if not actually to be realized.

The Central American state which at present enjoys the greatest measure of tranquillity and political prosperity is Costa Rica. Its isolated position on the narrower part of the Isthmus, making communication with the other states difficult, has preserved it in a great measure from participating in the wars that have desolated the rest of the country: a circumstance which, conjointly with a great accession of commercial vigour, arising out of the successful cultivation of coffee, has given it of late an impulse unknown to the sister states. More than 70,000 quintals (cwt.) of coffee, worth seven dollars and a half the quintal in the country (making a total of 105,000*l.*), is now annually exported. While other large cities were decaying, San José, its new capital, has risen into importance within a very few years. It already numbers upwards of 20,000 inhabitants. Cartago, the former capital, and two other towns of some magnitude (Heredia and Alajuela), occupy with the modern capital an extensive table-land stretching almost across the Isthmus. These towns, together with two or three small ports on each ocean, include almost the entire population of this compact and thriving state.

Besides the chief cities and towns referred to elsewhere, there are in the four other states many towns and large villages containing from ten to fifteen thousand inhabitants. The city of Quesaltenango, the cabezera, or head of the department of Los Altos, has probably not fewer than 20,000. Amatitlan, Chiquimula, and Salama, in Guatemala; San Miguel and Sonsonate in Salvador; and Tegucigalpa in Honduras, are all second-rate towns, and number from 13,000 to 20,000 souls. There are also some of exclusively Indian population which range about ten thousand. Coban, one of the largest as well as the most remote, contains full 12,000 Indians. Their townships are sometimes considerably removed from each other, but are mostly within the compass of a moderate day's journey, *i. e.*, from thirty to forty miles.

The British possessions in Central America have at different periods been considerably enlarged merely by laying claim to more remote boundaries. But lately they extended from the Rio Hondo on the North, to the Sarstoon River, a distance of nearly 250 miles southward, reaching almost to the extremity of the Bay of Honduras.

At present they are declared to reach yet a little further south, viz., to the Cocolee, a small river near the mouth of the Rio Dulce. The western limit, and, indeed, all the others, except the ocean, seem to depend very much upon the discretion of the occupants, who up to the present time have penetrated as far back as they have found it convenient for themselves. The entire territory, as now claimed, may include from thirty to forty thousand square miles.

To this must be added a number of islets, or kays, as they are called, scattered in small archipelagoes along the various reefs that line most of the British coast, and the large and beautiful island of Ruatan (pronounced Rattan), which, together with Utila and Banacca, lies off the southern shore of the bay.

The Mosquito Shore, or the territory peopled by the Waikna Indians, embraces about four hundred miles of sea-coast, and stretches from the neighbourhood of the port of Truxillo, in the state of Honduras, first eastward and then southward to the vicinity of San Juan de Nicaragua, the Atlantic port of the state of Nicaragua. Its exact limits are even less definable than those of British Honduras; and at the present time there are disputes pending between our own government on the part, or in the name of the Mosquito king, and the authorities of the bordering states at each extremity.

The city of Guatemala, which has given its name to the whole country, may be considered on many accounts the capital of Central America. It was first founded in 1524 by the conquerer Don Pedro de Alvarado. The locality then chosen for its site was a magnificent valley elevated from five to six thousand feet above the level of the sea, lying between two majestic volcanoes which rise at least 10,000 feet above the valley, and may well be ranked among the grandest objects in the physical world. The one called 'El Volcan de Aqua,' or the *water* volcano, is an almost perfect cone, of proportions at once vast and symmetrical. It is covered with verdant forests nearly to its summit. The other called 'El Volcan de Fuego,' or the *fire* volcano, consists of several irregular peaks, some of them covered with ashes and lava. From one of these a light column of smoke is invariably seen to ascend into the pure heavens above.

The valley lying between the bases of these gigantic volcanoes is flanked by lesser but bold ranges of mountains. To its un-

rivalled scenery it superadds a mild temperature, a serene sky, luxuriant and unfading vegetation, and abounding streams, some of them chalybeate, some very cold, some tepid, and others quite warm, constituting a whole so unusually beautiful and agreeable as almost to realize a dream of earthly paradise.

What wonder that the Spanish warriors, after the fatigues of protracted campaigns and recent sanguinary conflicts, while resting on the banks of the Rio Pensativo (the pensive stream), should gaze upon its varied beauties, framed as it were in the encircling and overhanging mountains, with an ecstasy of delight and romantic exultation! What marvel that they should overlook the sleeping dangers of the vicinity in consideration of its numerous advantages, and ultimately resolve to found in this alluring valley the capital of the new empire which their arms had given to the proud and mighty Charles the Fifth!

As usual with these adventurers, a church was the first thing built. With characteristic ostentation, before there was population enough to constitute a moderate village, civil, municipal, and ecclesiastical authorities were pompously inaugurated. Royal honours and privileges were soon after added by grant of the Emperor, and the city of "*Santiago de los Caballeros de Guatemala*"* gradually became one of the handsomest and most important cities of the New World.

For a long time the capital city continued to occupy its commanding position, but, in the midst of outward advantages, it was full of oppression, superstition, and licentiousness, and as a consequence, was repeatedly and terribly scourged. In 1526 an insurrection of the Kachiquel Indians, provoked by the exactions of an exorbitant covetousness, was most disastrous to the foreign inhabitants, and resulted in a second sanguinary subjugation of the Indians. On the 11th of September 1541, after violent and protracted rains, the city was laid waste by the sudden fall of an immense body of water issuing from the crater of the extinct volcano: ever since, from this circumstance, known as *the water volcano*. What had been a lake suspended ten or twelve thousand feet above the

* *i. e.* Saint James of the Knights of Guatemala. The derivation of the name Guatemala is variously given; the more common is from the Quiché word Quantemali, signifying a decayed log of wood; but the more likely origin would appear to be from Jiutemal, one of the three sons of Acxopil, the founder of the Quiché monarchy, who left to this his first-born son the kingdom of the Kachiqueles, or Guatemala.

city, bursting its barriers, impetuously dashed from the summit, carrying along with it trees, stones, and huge fragments of rocks, and sweeping away houses, churches, convents, and even whole streets, with the awful accompaniment of violent shocks of earthquake, and terrific subterraneous noises. Many of the guilty inhabitants were buried under the ruins, and among others who lost their lives was the female governor, the relict of the founder Alvarado.

After this event, the city was rebuilt about three miles further from the still volcano, and consequently just so much nearer to the active one. Here new calamities followed each other with fearful rapidity and continuity. The smallpox and other epidemic scourges decimated the population. Violent and repeated shocks of earthquake overthrew the houses, and especially the public buildings, crushing the inhabitants beneath them. No less than ten several epochs are enumerated in the history of the well nigh innumerable earthquakes with which this devoted city has been visited, as marking only the *most notable* shocks and devastations. The ruin wrought on these occasions defies description. Ashes and smoke from the volcano have at times obscured the atmosphere, so as to make lights necessary at noon-day, or worse still, the crater has vomited forth terrific flames day and night for weeks or even months together. The very crests of the mountains were torn off, and deep chasms rent in the surface of the plains. Fierce lions, as the historian calls them, issuing from the jungle on the mountain side, more than once preyed greedily upon the people, as well as on their cattle; and pestilence, tornadoes, earthquakes (but never famine), visited them again and again till the year 1773, when the ruin of the city was consummated by a series of vibrations and undulations of the earth that left but little standing erect, and that little irreparably injured. Thus manifestly was the hand of God stretched out against this city. Whether it was most on account of its superstitions, or of its oppressions and crimes, we have no evidence by which to determine; but the appalling facts themselves plainly indicate a moral object as well as a physical cause.

At the time of the ruin, there were, besides other public buildings, no less than thirty-eight ecclesiastical edifices, sixteen of which were convents and nunneries, and the valley contained thirty thriving

villages drawing their support from the capital, which they supplied with various provisions, wares, fruits, and flowers.

This awful catastrophe was followed by a division among the surviving inhabitants, many of whom thought it desirable to remove the city once more, rather than to rebuild it, whilst others, loth to abandon "the delightful clime, the fertile soil, the excellent water, and a thousand other advantages which they enjoyed,"^{*} urged the exposedness of all parts of the country to like calamities, and dwelt upon the greater facility of rebuilding the ruins. But the fears of the former agreeing well with the interests of the more influential, who had eligible lands to recommend, ultimately prevailed, and the authorities set the example by removing to the little village of La Hermita, about thirty miles from the ruined city in a south-easterly direction. The royal assent to this transfer was granted in 1775, and with it a munificent provision permitting the appropriation of the whole revenue arising from the customs for ten years to the execution of the new plans and erections.

In 1777 the inhabitants of the ruined city were required by proclamation to abandon it within a year. This was never fully accomplished; for in 1795, when, according to the official census, the population of the new capital amounted to 24,434, there were still several thousands of people remaining among the ruins. It has since assumed the standing of a considerable town—the chief, or *cabezera* of the department of Zacatepeques. It is known by the name of La Antigua (or the Ancient) Guatemala, and now contains at least from sixteen to eighteen thousand souls.

Guatemala la Nueva, or the *new* city, the present capital, is situated in 14° 46' north lat., and 91° 46' west long., on one of the elevated plateaux of the main Cordillera, known as 'Los Llanos de las Vacas,' or the valley of 'Harmita.' This plain is surrounded by bold ranges of mountains, among which stand prominent the two volcanoes of the Antigua, 'de Angua,' and 'de Fuego,' and a third called 'El Volcan de Pacaya,' which is scarcely if at all inferior to them. The plain is about 5,000 feet above the level of the sea, and is fifteen miles wide and eighteen broad. The climate, though considered inferior to that of La Antigua, is mild and salubrious. "The thermometer rarely rises above 70°, and still more

* *Juarros*, p. 155.

rarely descends below 64°^{00'}. The number of inhabitants—who are chiefly Ladinos, the mixed or Mestizo race, and pure Creole-Spaniards, the unadmixed descendants of Spanish Colonists, is estimated at thirty-six or even forty thousand, and in importance, wealth, and beauty, it is second, in Spanish America, only to the city of Mexico itself.

Erected at once, and according to a regular plan, the city, with the exception of a long straggling 'Barrio,' or suburb, forms a square, measuring about two miles on each side. It is subdivided into blocks of houses called 'Manzanas,' 150 or 300 yards square, by straight streets, 12 yards wide, intersecting each other at right angles. Occasional openings or public squares are formed by the omission of the block of buildings. Some of these are adorned with public fountains, and are planted with trees. The 'Plaza mayor,' or chief market-place, which is in the centre of the city, is four times the size of the others. Around it are located some of the principal buildings and most of the offices of Government. The cathedral, arch-episcopal palace, and a college of 'Seices' or choristers, occupies the east angle; on the west is the 'Palacio Nacional,' the 'Palacio de Justicia,' and a military barracks; on the north is the 'Cabildo,' or town-hall, the jail, and other buildings. The south is occupied by the patrimonial residence or palace of the Marquis of Aycinena—the only remaining remnant of titled nobility in the country. Most of these buildings are spacious, and, though low and massive, are in good taste and have an imposing appearance. The cathedral, which is still incomplete, is decidedly elegant. A handsome and uniform colonnade runs round three sides of this spacious quadrangle, and the northern gallery in particular contains the best shops, and is thronged with traders of all classes. The vast area of the square is paved throughout; a portion of it is encumbered with rows of permanent booths let out to dealers, which produce a considerable revenue to the municipality; but for this advantage they would long since have been removed, as they are unsightly, and mar the uniformity of the scene, detracting much from the imposing effect of this part of the city. The market groups, gathered under the shade of gigantic and picturesque umbrellas, covered with painted canvass, rather improve the place, which, though grand, looks bare without them. In the centre stands a stone fountain, curiously carved, over which

* Penny Cyclopaedia, art. Guatemala.

the blue and white flag of the republic waves on all ecclesiastical high days and national festivals.

Behind the cathedral, the back of which is more lofty than the front, is another smaller square, called 'El Sagrario,' which is amply sufficient to hold the market—and where it is held when the Plaza Mayor is occupied by troops—in the midst of this, which is not yet fully paved, or even levelled, stands a rough looking square erection, containing the clock and bells of the cathedral, which is itself still unprovided with a belfry, though surmounted by a handsome dome.

The houses, with few exceptions, are confined to the ground floor, and are generally built of stone and clay mingled together. The walls are six or even eight feet in thickness, on account of the frequent shocks of earthquake. Two, three, or four rows of spacious and lofty rooms built round a court, and cloistered inwardly with a flat-roofed gallery, called 'Azotea,' supported upon rows of pilasters, form the bulk of their dwellings, which are evidently Moorish in their plan and arrangements. A ponderous portico or 'Saguan,' with folding gates, is the only entrance into the first 'Patio,' or yard, formed by the rows of rooms. This generally contains a running fountain and a neat tank of water, and is often tastefully adorned with flowers, among which the rose, so seldom seen in tropical climates, holds a prominent place. The inner courts, to the number of two, three, or even four, are surrounded by the secondary rooms and outhouses, among which is the kitchen, the only part of a house needing a chimney. Beyond these are spacious stables, poultry-yards, and small orchards, where the fig, the orange, and the peach-tree grow side by side, or are intertwined with the tendrils of the passion flower, which mingles its delicious fruits (the Granadilla) with theirs, or hangs it upon the walls. These vast premises fill up the space enclosed by the 'Manzana,' which, in the case of the highest class, is entirely taken up by two or three such mansions. The appearance of the dwellings from the street is sombre. The surface of the long white walls is broken by few windows, and these are surrounded by a heavy iron balcony, the bars of which are secured above in the form of a cage, so as entirely to preclude ingress or egress; the whole presenting much the appearance of a convent, or the antiquated dwelling of some wealthy proprietor, in a district infested by banditti.

Private houses, squares, and fountains are all abundantly supplied with pure and exceedingly cool water. It is conveyed to the city by two well constructed aqueducts, which carry it over long ranges of arches, and through tunnels, a distance of six or eight miles. Several extensive and commodious public tanks adorn the city, and afford facilities for washing clothes; free accommodation being provided for scores of washerwomen, who stand to work in convenient stone niches, sheltered from the sun and rain. The water is conveyed from the twelve principal reservoirs in the city to different points, in *earthenware* tubes, which but ill supply the place of metal pipes, as they are very brittle, and an earthquake makes sad ravages among them. The use of them is the more extraordinary because metallic ores of all kinds are so plentiful, and the water-rates are an abundant source of revenue to the municipality. The water which continually overflows from the public and private tanks, cleanses the sewers, and in many of the less frequented thoroughfares it is suffered to run down an open channel in the centre of the street, which slopes in that direction, in the same manner as may still be seen in many continental towns. But, instead of a filthy kennel, it is here a clear and rapid stream, in which the "Sanate," (a kind of blackbird) sports and laves its glossy feathers. The grassy edges of these civic brooks, while they plainly indicate neglect, as well as the occasional bridges that cross them, add much to the picturesque appearance of the town, and detract considerably from the monotony of the straight and quiet streets.

Vehicles are by no means common, or these open channels would be less tolerable. An old family coach drawn by four mules, now ~~and~~ then rumbles heavily over the rather rough but regular pavements, and shakes the ground. These are, in form and ornament, such as are seen in paintings of the fourteenth century, or, with less carving and gilding, somewhat like the state equipage of the Lord Mayor of London. The few carts used are roughly made with massive wooden wheels, and not unfrequently drawn by oxen, yoked together by the horns. A light phaeton or chaise, imported from Europe, may occasionally be seen; but all wheeled vehicles are confined to the streets of the capital and the roads in its immediate vicinity, as the roads elsewhere, and the nature of the country, will not admit of their use.

Droves of mules and companies of muscular Indians bearing to

and fro, upon their backs, burdens, consisting of seroons of cochineal, bales of Manchester goods, cases of French silks, &c. &c. &c., through the principal thoroughfares. The foot passengers consist of Indians, native labourers, and artisans, in light and neat costume—native gentlemen, or ‘Caballeros,’ habited in the best European style—students and clerks, wrapped in Spanish cloaks on the hottest as on the coldest day—Doñas and Señoras, their heads covered with costly shawls, or with silken hoods and lace mantillas*—women of the middle and lower class, in costumes both graceful and stately, though of the gayest colours; their black hair often braided with the brightest and richest silken ribbons; they also wear no other covering to the head than mantillas of a less expensive but by no means a less becoming description—and, lastly, Indian women in their working garb, or in their grotesque gala costume, described elsewhere. Sometimes may be seen the black cassock and long shovel-hat of the ‘Padre’ (priests); the red and blue dresses of the ‘Seices’ (priests in embryo); the habit of the Dominican or Franciscan monks, and some few orders of nuns; more frequently the grey and brown dresses of the ‘Terceros’ and ‘Terceras,’ the brotherhoods and sisterhoods of *the third order*; and occasionally even the monkish beard, girdle, and bare-foot of the mendicant Capuchin friar.

The city of Guatemala has no hotels, but contains several extensive “Mesones” for the accommodation of travelling merchants and dealers. These are more like eastern caravansaries than inns, and much more attention is paid to the wants of the horses and mules than to the convenience of travellers. It is optional to use as a lodging the rooms provided apparently for the stowage of goods, of which there are long ranges opening upon a covered gallery, encumbered like a fair with traders and their wares; but these rooms are dark and unfurnished. The hospitality of the natives, however, makes this want but little felt.

The ecclesiastical buildings consist of the parish churches, convents, nunneries, chapels, and seminaries, and are by far the most prominent and extensive. They number from thirty to forty, if not more. Some of the churches are spacious, richly endowed, and sumptuously adorned, others are injured by earthquakes, and one or two are already in ruins.

* Bonnets are only worn to ride out with, and that is a custom of modern introduction.

The university of San Carlos numbers at its best times about a thousand students, licentiates, and doctors. The edifice is well adapted for the object, is in good taste, and even approaches to grandeur. It contains also the Hall of the Senate.

Besides the public edifices already enumerated, the custom-house, the Consulado, or court of commerce, and the mint, are large and handsome buildings; the two latter are near the great square. The public hospital, which was formerly one of the largest convents, is well attended by a medical staff, composed of talented practitioners and students. It has at different times received improvements of a modern and liberal character, so as to be a very creditable and useful institution. The cemetery which is attached to the hospital, is worthy of any European town. It covers a vast area, and is well laid out, the whole being surrounded by a high wall, itself full of niches, into which thousands of coffins may be introduced; these, after a certain term, are emptied, and the unwasted remains are transferred to a larger compartment, a hollow square column, which intersects the wall at regular distances, and is surmounted by an urn, itself the depository of some more favoured dust. The centre space and various adjacent yards are already more or less filled with handsome tombstones and sarcophagi. There is a spot set apart for the interment of such as are not papists; it already has a few occupants. The revenue of this place is considerable, and has been liberally laid out in improvements. In addition to these objects of interest, there are some of a different character which claim a mention among public buildings. A Fort, lately erected, stands on a prominent point, commanding most of the city. There are various extensive barracks, military store-houses, and prisons, a spacious amphitheatre called 'La Plaza de Torros,' or the bull-ring, and a theatre and cock-pit, the low and mean appearance of which are in keeping with the demoralizing effects they produce.

The central streets, and indeed all except the 'barrios,' or suburbs, are well lighted with tallow, in rather handsome lamps. The candles are particularly well made, and are calculated to burn only till the hour when the moon rises in all that splendour and uninterrupted brilliancy which here make her a trustworthy beacon, and the presiding guardian of the night. This part of the town is also protected from sunset till dawn, by a body of watchmen called

Serenos,' who call the hours and the state of the weather. These are both modern improvements, and greatly conduce to the safety of the inhabitants and the quiet of the city. They are under the direction of the Municipality, who, as it has been seen, also regulate the supply of water, for which, as for the 'Alumbrado' (lighting) and the Serenos, they levy a rate which is cheerfully paid by the citizens. This corporation also regulates the distribution among the bakers of the wheaten flour brought into the city from Quesaltenango and other places where wheat is produced, which are each bound to supply at least a certain quantity for the consumption of the capital. This is deposited at a kind of "Halle aux ébbs," called 'La Lombriga,' and the regularity and order of this department of the duties of the corporation is both curious and creditable to it.

The city is almost entirely surrounded by natural ravines, deep and irregular, their sides slightly wooded, and at the bottom, some hundred feet below the plain, the waters of the neighbouring springs are united into one bed, which for want of larger streams, are dignified with the name of rivers. Upon some of these there are bathing-houses, with convenient pools and shelter. The approaches to the city are by five roads, most of them descending and reascending the sides of these ravines, which are well paved where that is the case. There are also some well-constructed though small bridges, and at the distance of two or three miles from the 'Plaza,' there is a 'Guarda,' or gate upon each road, which serves for collecting the customs or duties on imports. In various parts of the plain, which is little cultivated and affords good pasturage only during the rainy season, are large 'Haciendas,' or cattle estates, with plantations attached, and several growing villages are scattered upon its surface. Two or three of these are becoming populous and important, being resorted to by the 'Guatemaltecos,' for bathing and recreation. Mixco, an ancient Indian town of eight or ten thousand inhabitants, occupies a prominent place on the side of a steep hill, and immediately adjoining the capital on its northern suburb is a flourishing Indian village called 'Jocotenango,' where most of the Indian labourers dwell in neat and even handsome houses amidst gardens of Jocotes or plum trees,—hence the name. Between the last-named village and the city is a public promenade, consisting of a wide and good road and

avenues of trees, supplied with seats of solid masonry. To this place the citizens resort, especially on certain given days. There is a still more fashionable walk at the southern extremity of the city, near the road to the Antigua; it is laid out in similar style, within sight of the volcanos; a portion of the 'Llano' or plain, and a long line of arches forming part of the aqueduct. Here promenaders and equestrians daily assemble, and the military bands exercise their skill, which is far above mediocrity.

As seen from the descent of the mountains over which the road from the Atlantic passes, or from some of the more approximate hills, Guatemala presents a grand and imposing aspect. Lying on the bosom of the gently-undulating plain, bounded by a bold outline of mountains, including the three volcanoes towering above the rest, and piercing the clouds; its domes and cupolas, its flat-roofed edifices and white houses with red tiled-roofs, symmetrically arranged and lined with 'Azoteas' or terraces, the whole interspersed with orange, jocote, and other trees, glittering in the bright rays of a tropical sun shining through an atmosphere of purest transparency, are calculated forcibly to strike the senses and delight the eye.

One feature especially predominates, and could hardly escape the least observant; it is the prodigious number, extent, and lordly character of the churches and convents. The rest of the city might easily be mistaken for their dependencies, and indeed, wide spread as it is, it appears scarcely to afford scope enough for the priestcraft and monkish enterprise of these hungry 'exploiteurs' of the people, and farmers of souls. But it may also be said, with respect to these convents, that "Noph is desolate, without an inhabitant." Their palaces are indeed forsaken so far as the builders are concerned, for a mere remnant now dwells in the few convents still used by them, and the Government of the city, already beginning to pass into the hands of its legitimate rulers, it is gradually resuming its proper rank and dignity with respect to these edifices, making them subservient to public utility as well as to its adornment.

The port nearest to the capital on the Pacific, is that of Istapa, sometimes called the port of Guatemala, though it is seventy-three miles from it. It is said to be capable of improvements which have been long in contemplation, but is actually little better than a roadstead. A few French ships and others that double

Cape Horn visit it yearly. The principal native port is Yzabal on the Lake of Dulce. It communicates with the Atlantic by the Rio Dulce, already mentioned as falling into the Bay of Honduras. This port is 216 miles from Guatemala, a distance which proves no small obstacle to the increase of the trade of the capital. Yzabal would be in every respect a fine harbour, and as a sea-port easily accessible, but for the bar at the mouth of the Dulce, upon which there are only eight or ten feet of water at the very most, thus permitting only small vessels, or such as are constructed for the express purpose to enter the river and lake. At the bar of the Dulce is a Carib settlement called Livingston, in honour of the distinguished United States legislator, whose code was adopted by the Republic in 1834. It is about forty miles distant from Yzabal, and promises to be an important place. At the 'Angostura,' or that narrow part where the Lake of Yzabal, as it is often called, and the 'Golfête,' or the lesser lake unite their waters, are the ruins of an old and isolated Spanish fort called the El Castillo de San Felipe, where convicts from the interior are kept in chains and at hard labour. Through the lake and port of Yzabal the great bulk of the trade of the state of Guatemala passes. From it is the only direct road to the capital, being the point where the 'Mico road' terminates, or rather, it might be said, where it begins, as the Mico mountain, from which this road takes its name, because it long offered the most formidable difficulty as to transit, is situated on the southern shore of the lake. On this mountain hundreds of mules have perished annually, and even some muleteers and travellers, by reason of the ruggedness of the way, which has only lately been rendered passable with a moderate degree of safety.

The little town of Yzabal, which lies between the Mico mountain and the lake, is stretched along the shore of a semicircular bay. It consists of a custom-house establishment, a garrison, a few commission houses, and five or six hundred Ladino, Sambo, and Indian families. The English and native schooners that frequent the port keep up a constant though irregular communication with Belize. Some of them sail to and from the Havannah, and French, Belgian, and Spanish vessels occasionally visit it.

The remaining ports of Central America are numerous, and some of them excellent. Commencing on the Western Coast, in the state of Salvador, we have Acajantla, near the town of Sonsonate,

and close to the active volcano of Isalco, which serves as a natural lighthouse and a magnificent beacon. 'La Libertad,' and 'La Union,' which is the best in that state, is the port nearest to the city of San Salvador, being only thirty-six miles distant. Honduras has one small port on this coast, called 'San Lorenzo,' which, like La Union, is in the spacious bay of Conchagua. On the same side, in Nicaragua, is, 'Realejo,' which is spoken of in the very highest terms as regards natural capabilities, safety, and convenience. 'San Juan del Sur,' in the Gulf of 'Popagayo' is, like Realejo, one of the points to which it is proposed to bring the canal from the lake. Costa Rica has the Gulf of Nicoya on the Pacific, and the port of Matina on the Atlantic. Further north, on the eastern shore, is San Juan del Norte, or San Juan de Nicaragua as it is generally called; it is the only port of that state on this side, and consequently the entrepôt of its commerce. It is situated on the river by which it is proposed to unite the two oceans, about sixty miles from its principal mouth. This important point has very lately been taken possession of by the British in the name of the Mosquito king, and has received the name of "Grey town." Blewfield's lagoon, in the Mosquito territory, is about sixty miles further north from the mouth of the San Juan del Norte. There are a few English settlers here, mostly Creoles from Jamaica and the Caymans. This place was the residence of the late British Consul-General on '*The Shore*,' who lost his life in an attack upon a native fort in the river San Juan. On the south side of the Bay of Honduras are Truxillo and Omaso, ports of the state of Honduras already alluded to. At the extremity of the bay, and but a few miles from the mouth of the Rio Dulce, is the beautiful harbour of Santo Thomas, one of the best in the world for safety and convenience, and said to be capable of affording anchorage for the entire British navy. It is now the site of an effort to colonize on the part of a Belgian Company, favoured by their government, and vessels are beginning to resort to it.

But of all these the port of Belize is decidedly the most frequented. As the principal mart of trade, as the chief settlement of British Honduras, and as the seat of the first mission station, it claims our particular attention.

Belize derives its name from a Scotch buccaneer, who first used the harbour as a hiding-place nearly a century ago, and strange as it may appear, the word Belize is a corruption of Wallace, the name of this freebooter, which by English writers was written

Wallis, and by the Spanish Valis, and then Balis, which was finally modified by the English to Belize (pronounced Beleeze). The town contains a mixed population amounting to 8,000 souls.* It is built of wood, upon a low flat shore, which is covered with mangrove bushes. This kind of coast extends many miles to the northward and to the southward, and a very distant view of the Coxcomb Hills in the neighbourhood of Manatee Lagoon is the only high ground to be seen. Inland are extensive swamps over-spread with thick jungle. The air, which would otherwise be insupportably hot,† is daily tempered by vigorous sea-breezes; but the land-wind frequently comes down during the night charged with miasma from the marshes. It is consequently insalubrious. Intermittent fevers and agues being the prevailing disorders, the first more especially during the height of dry weather, and the latter during the rainy season. The inhabitants are supplied with fresh water only from the clouds. The rain that falls upon the roofs of the houses is collected in brick and iron tanks, or by the poor in pipes and casks, and is often exhausted during the dry season, when fresh water must be brought from a distance up the river or along the shores at a great expense of labour. Such a locality would never have been selected for the habitations of men—much less for such a settlement, but for the facilities for trade offered by the harbour, and the fact that the banks of the river at whose mouth it is situated were, and still are, uncommonly prolific in the valuable woods, the cutting and shipping of which constitutes the chief employment of the settlers.

Thus the votaries of mammon, regardless of all convenience, are willing to risk life itself in the pursuit of the means of supporting it. And shall the servants of God hesitate to follow them with the tidings of salvation? Or shall they refuse to imitate their daring and self-denial in the service of Christ? And when enabled to do so, should they think that a great sacrifice which is so readily made by multitudes of men "wise in their generation," for objects so far inferior to theirs?

The natural disadvantages of the place, though considerable, are contended with and in a measure overcome. The ground upon which the town is built, with the exception of a narrow sand-

* Osborne's West India Guide, page 234.

† The average heat has been stated at 84° Fahrenheit. It is much oftener above than below that degree.

bank, is *made*, or artificially filled up, chiefly with the ballast of ships trading to the port. All the wharfs are redeemed from the empire of the ocean, by a lawful kind of *annexation*, being first staked in, and then filled up with mud, sand, shells, coral rock, and mahogany chips, i. e. the waste that occurs in squaring the wood for shipment. A small island in the midst of the harbour, just opposite the mouth of the river, was entirely made by deposits of ballast, as by law required, consisting of gravel from the bottoms of British rivers. It is dignified with the name of St. George's Fort. Under the shade of a grove of cocoanut trees, whose tall heads bow gracefully to the almost continual sea-breezes, it contains a few wooden erections, in which a handful of European artillerymen are quartered. Without walls or embrasures, the open pebbly shores of this artificial islet bristle with carronades and long pieces of artillery, which look as threatening towards those they are intended to protect as towards supposed enemies, who see them, if at all, far less frequently, and have greater facilities for keeping out of their deadly range. This is in truth the spot of all others to which a British claim could most easily be advanced, as it is undeniably British soil, and begirt, too, with that element which, like Neptune of old, she claims as her exclusive empire.

The town itself presents a most pleasing aspect from the harbour, notwithstanding the flatness of the land. The wooden houses, especially those in the front street which face the sea, are handsome, spacious, and commodious; standing apart from each other, most of them surrounded with neat verandahs, and thus at once well ventilated and shaded, they have an air of elegance and adaptation to the climate, which is particularly pleasing. The shingled roofs of the houses further back, the spire, and the signal-staffs interspersed with tamarind and other fruit-trees, above which the cocoanut and the cabbage palm* raise their stately stems, fill up a prospect that would charm others besides the wearied voyager and the surprised stranger. On both banks of the river the houses extend along shore for upwards of two miles, till lost to sight among the mangrove bushes. A light and well-constructed wooden bridge, slightly arched, spans the river's mouth, and affords an airy lounge for groups of coloured people, whose snow-white clothes,

* The *Arca Oleracea*, commonly called the Mountain Cabbage, or by the Spaniard, 'Palma Real.' The white heart of it is eaten as a vegetable. It is undoubtedly the most beautiful of western palms, and as such is justly distinguished by the natives as *Royal*.

broad brimmed straw hats, or kerchiefed heads of gaudiest colours, contrast strongly with their sable complexion. Here they resort in considerable numbers, and, as they sit upon or lean over the stout balustrade, and watch the shipping in the cool of the day, the fleet of gallant merchantmen, 'drogas,' (coasting vessels,) 'bungaya,' (native barges,) 'creaus,' (pleasure boats,) and 'dorees,' or canoes, they enjoy what appears to them an imposing and lively scene. The unaccustomed eye of the European would more readily be arrested by the large rafts of mahogany in logs, and piles of the purple log-wood floating upon the light trunks of the mountain cabbage—then called bark-logs; or perhaps it would be attracted by a well-manned 'pit-pan,' shooting under the bridge, or the picturesque appearance of some Spanish-Indian fishermen returning to dispose of their finny spoil, while the expectant purchasers hasten to meet the loaded *doree*, and contend with noisy volubility for a larger share of the living prize in exchange for their silver coin,* while others less prompt are disappointed of the meal of the day, often dependent on this somewhat precarious supply.

At both ends of the bridge stand the market-houses. The one on the river's bank at the southern extremity, in an irregular open space, is a light and handsome iron structure, lately erected at much cost, in which vegetables and fruits are vended. The other, on the north side, is a heavy wooden house, half overhanging the river, which serves for the shambles. On its floor the huge green turtle flounders heavily all night, being left there upon its back until it is killed in the morning.

The court-house and the gaol are large but awkward buildings, the latter having been enlarged since it was first erected. It is surmounted by a neat belvedere or look-out house, from which the approach of vessels is signalized, and the arrival of the European packet announced by a white signal flag, always hailed with joy. Both the court-house and the gaol are near the bridge. An inconsiderable open space or green lies between them. Here large sums of money have already been spent in fruitless, because misdirected, efforts to sink an artesian well, which, if it be ever effected, must prove an incalculable advantage to the community. Several executions have taken place on this spot. The Government House or Superintendent's

* The smallest in general use; it is called a 'Fippance' by the native-English, and a 'Medio Real' by the Spaniards, and in value is equal to threepence sterling.

residence, is a fine mansion at the southern extremity of the town, surrounded by grounds tastefully laid out, and planted with cocoa-nut trees, bamboo, &c. Near to it is the Episcopal parish church, a brick building with a wooden spire, occupying the centre of a square, on one side of which is a long range of ordnance stores, and on another side a still larger building used for the free schools connected with the establishment. This extremity of the town contains some handsome dwellings, and is by accommodation sometimes designated the West End. The burial-ground, called 'Yarborough,' and the parade ground lie back, westward of this square, and beyond them, over a canal bridge, is the small suburban village called Queen Charlotte's, which is peopled chiefly by discharged African soldiers.

The main business thoroughfare, called the back street, extends from the parish church to the bridge, running parallel with the front street; it is about a mile long, crooked, narrow, irregular, and crowded. Besides the Wesleyan chapel, this street includes some large stores and a few handsome houses. Further back from the shore is Eboe Town, consisting of numerous yards, flanked with long rows of what are called negro houses, being simply separate rooms under one long roof, which used to be appropriated to slaves, and now accommodate the poorer labourers. Behind this is a neighbourhood of small streets upon lots, but partially filled up, and aptly enough designated over pond.

The northern, though the smaller division of the town, is increasing far more rapidly than the south side. Several hundred houses, chiefly those of the better class of poor, have been built there within the last few years, and more are being built. The streets are even less regular, but the yards are more spacious, and are shaded by a greater number of fruit trees. On this side there is a second Episcopalian place of worship—an iron house, but just put up. The Baptist Mission premises occupied, for a quarter of a century, one of the most salubrious positions, bordering on the sea. The buildings were commodious and neat, and the water side, furnished with a long wharf for baptizing, was planted with cocoa-nut trees, and kept in excellent order; a fine garden was also attached; but this property has lately been sold, and is now a lunatic asylum. The public hospital is but a little further along this shore, and the commissariat and the old free-masons' lodge are a little beyond that.

Along the point of land to which the coast runs in this direction—towards the more northerly and now wider mouth of the river Belize—called The Haul-over,* at a distance of about two miles from the bridge, is a row of regular and commodious buildings of rather imposing aspect. They compose the Freetown Barracks, providing accommodation for a full regiment, with officers' quarters, storehouses, powder-magazine, military hospital, &c. &c. The Freetown Barracks are surrounded by a ditch and a hedge of prickly pear, the *Opuntia-Silvestre*; a kind of cactus, by the Spaniards called Tunas. Behind these barracks there is a larger village, inhabited, like Queen Charlotte's, by discharged pensioners from the coloured regiments. The houses, many of which are rude huts, stand upon a swamp, which is not clear from mangrove bushes. This straggling village extends to the banks of the river, and terminates in the slaughter-house. At this point the only road in British Honduras deserving the name commences, and taking a sweep of about three miles through the bush, it joins the barracks, making what is called the Circular Road, to which equestrians of necessity resort when they wish to leave the streets of the town.

Considering the size and population of Belize (8,000), the degree of activity and bustle is remarkable. The wharfs, at certain seasons, are covered with logs of mahogany, which numbers of muscular labourers are beating off, or squaring with long and with broad axes. At such times they present a lively scene. Cheerfulness characterizes the workmen. Groups of black children, scantily clad, when clad at all, may be seen bearing away the larger chips or fragments, in trays and bowls upon their heads, to be used as fuel at home. The streets, especially near the bridge, are pretty constantly thronged with a medley of passengers of many different races, among which may be recognised various tribes of Africans, the Carib, the Mosquitoman, and the Spanish Indian, as well as the European and the Belize Creole, as they style themselves. The latter are people of all shades of colour and admixture of race, but born in British Honduras. New buildings are in progress of erection in many parts of the town. In the enlargement of old houses, there

* A few years ago the river had no outlet here, but its banks approaching very near the sea-coast, the natives used to haul over their dorces and pitpans from the river to the sea in order to shorten the distance. By this means a channel was opened, which, the floods enlarging, is now the widest outlet of the waters of the river Belize.

are modes of proceeding that must astonish those unaccustomed to wooden dwellings. When, according to Belize fashion, a moderate-sized, or sometimes even a large house, is to be elevated a story higher, this is done by raising it, sometimes inmates and all, and building the new portion *underneath*. By means of jack-screws and ropes and tackle, large houses are also dragged several hundred yards along the streets, or moved from one side to the other. This is practicable, because they are substantially framed, and they frequently rest upon log ends of mahogany, or more commonly on slight brick foundations. Shipbuilding is also practised to a small extent, and carpenters and shipwrights are by far the most numerous class of artisans, and are well remunerated. Much business is done in the stores, as the shops are generally called. The contents of these are heterogeneous in their character, all sorts of wares, provisions, and commodities being intermingled. At the same counter are retailed haberdashery, hardware, perfumery, crockery ware, stationery, provisions, moist as well as dry, household furniture, sea-stores, drugs, &c., &c., &c. They are generally spacious and orderly, but make little or no outward show. The wholesale stores are, however, chiefly, though not altogether, confined to dry goods. There are from twenty to thirty licensed grog shops, where rum is the chief article of sale. It is at the close of the year, usually called the Christmas, that most activity prevails; at that period the mahogany gangs are disbanded, their term of agreement expiring, and the labourers flock to Belize from all quarters, to spend their earnings. After a few weeks' rest or dissipation, they contract new engagements—hiring themselves for another season's work. Many arts are then used by the employer to get the adequate number of suitable hands, advancing money and goods almost *ad libitum* to such as will sign an agreement, which not seldom results in the same individual pledging himself to serve two or even more masters, and being lodged in gaol for the offence.

The opportunity of this season is seized to enlist all classes in the local militia, which is turned out at no other time, and has to be drilled and paraded in a few short weeks enough to satisfy the fears of some and the vanity of others for the whole twelvemonth. All classes are supposed to take part in this military recreation, which to some proves a toilsome and vexatious impost, and to others the occasion of pains, penalties, and persecution, on account of their conscientious

objection to take part in it. It was instituted to overawe alike a slave population at home, and a dreaded invader from abroad.

During the height of dry weather, *i. e.*, from June to August, Belize is forsaken of a great part of its inhabitants. The excessive heat, the want of water, and the scarcity of provisions, drive those who can conveniently leave, to their distant plantations, up the various rivers and along the sea-coasts, where they can more easily procure necessaries, and enjoy a field or forest life. Some of the Kays, or wooded islets on the reefs are resorted to by the more wealthy as watering places, for change of air, or to feed upon shellfish, &c. Among these St. George's Kay is the most frequented. It has several commodious and elegant houses belonging to the wealthy in Belize, and is within a few hours' sail of the settlement. During the remainder of the year, copious rains temper the heat, and often deluge the streets of Belize, laying a vast majority of the lots, wharfs, and even streets under water. For none of these are many inches above the level of the sea, and a slight elevation in the tide, the rise of which is scarcely, if at all, perceptible on ordinary occasions, now and then produces the same effect.

Being dependent on the mahogany trade, the energies of the scanty population of Belize are almost entirely absorbed in cutting and shipping that commodity. As a consequence, labour is high in proportion as the mahogany trade is remunerative, and the cultivation of the soil, when attended to at all, is regarded as an inferior object. On this account provisions of all kinds are scarce and high priced. To such an extent is labour absorbed by this the staple trade, that the best and most durable kinds of wood are passed by in the same forest whence the mahogany is cut out at great pains and at an enormous expense, or are only used for the construction of the truck, and to supply axe handles wherewith to hew and transport that more marketable timber. The bulk of the wood used in building at Belize is imported from the United States, and that in no inconsiderable quantities. It is, of course, of very inferior quality and durability; but the expense of felling, transporting, and sawing up the native wood would be far greater than the price of the American light-pine timber, including the freight, &c., and, what has perhaps a still greater influence, it would divert labour and attention from the existing channel of the more lucrative and brisk mahogany trade. The effects of this artificial state of

things in the precarious rising and falling of the all-engrossing trade, may be readily imagined. The price of labour, though fluctuating, is unduly raised, and opportunity or will is wanting to direct it energetically to the pursuit of more natural and more permanent objects.

For the supply of the gangs of mahogany cutters, and in a great measure also for consumption in Belize, provisions of all kinds are imported from the United States and from Europe. Flour, salt-meats, dried fish, all kinds of preserved viands, and even vegetables and fruits, are constantly imported; and yet the supply is barely equal to the demand, and the community frequently suffer from the scarcity, or even absolute want, of certain articles of general use, which then become exorbitantly dear, and the traders amass considerable wealth, often in a very short space of time, at the expense, added to the inconvenience, of the consumer.

As an evidence of this, American flour imported from the United States, which generally ranges in value from 7½ to 9 dollars per barrel, in September 1849, was selling at 20 dollars, and though so essential an article, it has been known to exceed that price. Salt-butter was at the same time selling at 3s. sterling per pound, being more than double the usual price. At a time when camphor was particularly needed, it rose to the value of its weight in gold, being sold for a doubloon (one ounce of gold, sixteen dollars, or 3l. 6s. 8d.) per ounce. These are but examples of what frequently occurs in the entire round of imported necessaries. At ordinary times Irish-pork and salt-beef, whether American or English, varies in price from 13 to 20 dollars per barrel. Pilot-bread ranges from 4½ to 7 dollars per barrel. Rice, which is also imported, varies from 5½ to 6½ dollars per cwt., and maize, which is raised in the country or in Yucatan, sells for 2½ to 4 dollars per barrel.*

The meat market is supplied chiefly with green turtle; which is considered coarse food by the Europeans. The cattle slaughtered are those which are no longer serviceable in the mahogany works. During a short season, before they are brought to market, these worn-out steers are professedly put out to fatten: but the process is by no means generally successful, and the beef is not of the first quality. Game is not plentiful at Belize, though it abounds in the surrounding country, and even plantains, yams, maize, and other cereals and vegetables are supplied in insufficient quantities. Fish and fruit only are pretty regularly and abundantly supplied. The cost of living in

* Belize "Price Currents."

general is exceedingly high; most articles of constant consumption and household use are imported and sold at an exorbitant price, competition being to a certain extent precluded by a kind of monopoly of freights; several hundred per cent. profit is not considered extortionary. And the same goods which are purchased wholesale at Belize by the Spanish American merchant, are retailed at Guatemala, where an active competition exists, often at about the same, and sometimes *under* the same retail price at which they are sold in Belize; and this notwithstanding the freights to Yzabal, the difficult land carriage thence to the capital, which occupies a fortnight in the transport by mules,* and 20 per cent. *ad valorem* import duty, besides other charges which are by no means light.

Notwithstanding these drawbacks, Belize is a thriving town. Within the last twenty years, it has more than doubled its population.† Trade has passed into the hands of a greater number of persons. The abolition of slavery has enabled many to follow the occupation of their choice, and the result is that not a few prefer the planters' to the mahogany cutters' life, and choose an independent rather than a subservient condition. Other influences, to which we shall have occasion to refer more particularly, have combined in their measure to counteract the evils alluded to.

Finally, though "the Bay," as it is familiarly called, is generally spoken of disparagingly by non-residents and passing visitors, and, to tell the whole truth, few would choose it as a permanent place of abode whose interest and pursuits did not require it; yet the beauty of the climate, and the facility of earning an honest livelihood—or what is still more tempting to some—the rapidity with which wealth is frequently amassed, are such as to secure to it a constant influx of settlers, and when moral, political, and physical reforms shall have advanced somewhat further, even at their present pace, British Honduras, in accordance with the motto, "Sub umbra floreo," inscribed upon its coat of arms, will doubtless become a happy as well as a thriving colony.

* A mercantile visitor says, in 1825:—"The carriage of goods from Belize to Guatemala costs about £30 sterling per ton."—*Memoir of James Wilson*, p. 134. This is rather under than over-stated.

† Twenty years ago (in 1830), 18,000 tons of shipping, employing nearly 1,000 seamen annually, visited Belize. In 1840, it surpassed 20,000, "with imports amounting to nearly half a million sterling of British manufactures, placing it, among the western colonies, second only to Jamaica in the importance of its commerce."—*Petition from the Legislative Assembly of British Honduras to the British Parliament; Belize, Honduras, 2nd March, 1841*. In 1847 the amount of shipping was about 27,000 tons.

CHAPTER III.

THE PEOPLE.

Number of Inhabitants—Pure and Mixed Races—The Quiché Tribes; their Habits, Character, Dwellings, &c.—The Ladinos and other Races—The Mayas—The Caribs—The Waiknas—The Wild Tribes—Languages and Dialects—Religion, Government, and Commerce—Imperfect Means of Internal Communication—Claims of the People.

"And Jehovah said, These have no master."—1 Kings xiii. 17.

THE entire population of Central America is estimated at from two to two and a half millions. It is distributed, as nearly as can be ascertained, as follows:—

The state of Guatemala	1,000,000
" Salvador	350,000
" Honduras	250,000
" Nicaragua	300,000
" Costa Rica	86,000
British Honduras and Islands, say	25,000
Mosquito Shore, perhaps	100,000
Unconquered Indian Tribes	not known.

According to Humboldt, this country, together with the southern states of Mexico, is decidedly the most populous of any in Spanish America. Mr. James Thomson, late travelling agent of the British and Foreign Bible Society, and long a resident in South America, writing on these countries in "Evangelical Christendom" for 1847, estimates the population, as compared with the territory, in most of the republics, at *two, three, or four* persons to *one* square mile; that of the whole of Mexico at *five*, and that of southern Mexico and Guatemala, or Central America, at *fifteen* to a square mile. In England, we number about two hundred.

The races which make up the population are the aboriginal Indian, hitherto supposed to be of Mongolian origin; the African,

the European, and their various combinations, the less complicated of which are distinguished as follows:—

Ladinos, a term signifying gallant men, and applied to this class of *Mezizos* only in Central America. They are the descendants of the European and the Indian.

Mulattos, here understood to designate the offspring of the African and the European, and

Sambos, by which the issue of the Indian and the African are meant.

Their respective proportions are—of Indians three-fifths of the whole, of *Ladinos* one-fourth, of Europeans and *pure* Creoles one-fortieth, of Africans one-fiftieth, of *Mulattos* one-eighty-third, and of *Sambos* one-hundredth part.

The Indian tribes inhabiting the interior and the shores of the Pacific, irrespective of those peopling the eastern coast, are said to be upwards of thirty. These are frequently spoken of as separate nations. Among them the Quiché, Kachiquel, and Sutngil are considered the chief. Others are distinguished by the names of Mam, Pocomam, Pipil or Nahuate, Populuca, Sinca, Mexican, Chorti, Alaguilac, Caichi, Paconchi, Ijil, Zotzil, Tzendal, Chapaneca, Zoque, Cojoh, Chañabal, Chol, Uzpanteca, Lenca, Aguacateca, and Quechchi. On the eastern coast, Yucatan is peopled by the *Mayas*; the Mosquito Shore by the *Waiknas* or *Mosquitomen*, and both '*the Shore*' and the Bay of Honduras, are settled by the *Caribs* or *Karifunes* scattered at intervals along the sea-coast. The *Jicaques*, *Lacandones*, *Acalas*, *Mopans*, *Poyais*, and various others, remain still in a wild and unsubdued state in the fastnesses of the mountains, and the more remote vallies and plains.

The aborigines of Central America must not be confounded with the energetic and haughty red men of the north. If it be so that they originally sprang from a common stock, a tropical sun and other local influences have effected so great a change in complexion and character that they are now as dissimilar as they could be if they inhabited different continents. But it will be seen that there are actually in Central America, races as diverse, physiologically, as it is possible for them to be. Those tribes (by far the most numerous) who people the interior and the western coasts, and who have a general resemblance to each other, are of a bright copper colour. Their stature is short; their limbs well propor-

tioned, rather fleshy, and very muscular; their hair black, straight, and of a coarse texture, with little or no beard. In form of countenance and prominence of the cheek-bones, they resemble Asiatics; but their features are generally more distinctly marked. The nose, which is more prominent, is also sometimes aquiline, and the general expression more intelligent and pleasing. Their gait denotes somewhat of the degradation to which they have long been subjected, but it is, nevertheless, often graceful and sometimes dignified. They are peculiar for small, handsome feet, with a remarkably high instep, which adds much to their power in walking. Their constitution is delicate and susceptible, but their bodily diseases and infirmities are naturally few.

Their diet is exceedingly simple. They live chiefly on maize and 'frejoles,' a kind of bean, or 'Arico-rouge,' already mentioned, and they seldom taste animal food, though game is so abundant and accessible. Of the maize a paste is prepared, which is made into thin cakes as required, and warmed upon a 'comal'—an earthen or iron griddle. These cakes are called 'tortillas,' and when eaten by the Indians are dipped in a strong infusion of red peppers, called 'chili.' The frejoles are simply boiled, and by them but seldom fried in lard, though they are then most savoury. Seven ears of Indian corn, a tea-cupful of this pulse, and a few chilies, are the daily rations of a labourer. As a general beverage they use only water, but make cooling drinks of cacao and spices. Ardent spirits they use only with the express design of producing intoxication. Coarse rum made by the mixed races is consumed by the Indians, but very much more 'Chicha,' the liquor from which rum is distilled—an unsightly mixture of coarse brown sugar and water in a state of fermentation. Where these are not easily procured, they still manufacture small quantities of 'Pulque.' This is a strong spirituous liquor procured from the *Magnay* (the *Agave Americana*), quite clear and transparent, but in taste and smell most harsh, rank, and repulsive. Like all beverages of this class, it becomes tolerable only by degrees, and, when habit has vitiated the senses and created a desire for the unnatural stimulant, it is then sought to satisfy this craving. This is sufficiently proved by the use, or rather the abuse, which the Indians make of these nauseous draughts, which annually destroy hundreds or perhaps thousands of them. They are very soon inebriated, and with difficulty recover from its effects.

The dress of the Indians is generally simple and light, consisting of loose drawers and a shirt, often worn over all, like a blouse or light smock-frock. The material of which both are made is generally an unbleached cotton web, called *manta cruda*, or else it is white calico. To these are superadded, when in full dress, pantaloons and a braided vest, not open in front, but put on over the head. In the highlands and cooler regions, coarse woollen cloth, of native manufacture, is much used. This is generally striped or chequered, somewhat like Scotch tartan. A large woollen wrapper is generally worn, having a hole in the middle through which the head is passed. It is not altogether unlike a blanket, though closer woven, and coloured, figured, and fringed according to native taste. They are carried by all classes when on horseback, especially by travellers, as a protection from rain. The three different qualities are known, as 'mangas,' 'serapas,' or 'ponchos,' according to their style, and they cost from four dollars to a doubloon, or an ounce of gold. When worn round the person by a native, they are not inelegant, but somewhat resemble the Scotch highland scarf. The dress of the Indian women, when at work, is generally light. A thick cloth is often bound tightly round their persons from the waist downwards, so that it would hinder them from walking, but that it is left unfastened below. This is as ungraceful as it is indelicate; but when they are full dressed they appear as much overloaded with garments as they were deficient before. The most striking feature of their dress is their thick and ample cotton skirts, with bodies covered all over with embroidery, in which glaring colours predominate, chiefly blue and red (cochineal and indigo). Their coarse, black hair is plaited with red worsted in two long and heavy tresses, and hangs down nearly, if not quite, to their heels, or is twisted round the head like a turban. The whole constitutes a grotesque rather than a graceful costume, though somewhat picturesque. In some of the more remote parts, the Indians still wear round their loins only a narrow piece of cloth called 'Maztlate.'

In disposition, their leading characteristics are docility and timidity. When aroused, however, they are fierce, cruel, and implacable. Generally industrious, though not aspiring, they often amass wealth, and are not insensible to the charms of official authority among their fellows. In their dealings they are shrewd,

but not dishonest, and their word may generally be relied on. Long subjection has taught them a cringing servility and low cunning, probably foreign to their original character. And though extremely superstitious and sedate even in their mirth, they are by no means gloomy, nor are they wanting in natural capabilities. Indeed, their extreme teachableness, and, in spite of numerous individual cases of stupid brutality, their generally high appreciation of the art of reading, and other arts which they possess or earnestly desire, together with an evident thirst for information, seems to promise much for their future moral and intellectual culture. Though, naturally enough, distrustful of the Spaniard and his descendants, their confidence is yet to be won by kindness and fidelity, and once gained, their attachment appears to be both strong and enduring. In some districts they are far more industrious and well-disposed than in others, where the seeds of demoralization have fructified and reproduced themselves under the baneful shade of superstition, fostered by the hand of foreign oppressors, themselves more favoured and better taught. In all parts they are but the too ready slaves of their own bad propensities and passions, and the too easy tools of designing and selfish men.

As already noticed, the original tribes, hitherto preferring to live by themselves, have many towns and villages exclusively their own. Often subjected to indignities and oppression when residing in the towns of the Ladinos, they have sometimes been known to retaliate on solitary individuals who have come to reside among them, and in certain remote parts they have not spared even the priest, whom, in general, they venerate. But this vindictive feeling does not appear to be either strong or universal, as a proof of which, some few Ladino families are generally found residing in the midst of them even in remote villages.

The townships of the Indians are mostly scattered and irregular. They frequently occupy a whole valley or plain, or lie straggling for miles along the roadside, concealed from view among bushes and fruit trees. Their houses consist of a ground floor, with a loft at the most. They are plainly built of wooden posts and rafters, the sides stockaded with canes, and plastered over with red clay, or they are made of Adaub, a large kind of sun-burnt brick. They are mostly roofed with bright red tiles, in which case the eaves project far over the walls, and form a kind of piazza, or gallery, which gives

them a picturesque appearance. The 'Rancho' is a mere temporary shed thatched with palm or other leaves, and is used alike by Ladinos and Indians. Some of their larger towns assume more regularity, and follow the general plan introduced by the Spaniards, viz., straight streets crossing each other at right angles, leaving regular square blocks of houses. The market-place or plaza is in the centre, around which are the church, 'cabildo,' and other public buildings. Their cattle generally stray at large in the forests and pine ridges, or even in the roads and streets, and on this account the plantations of the Indians are mostly at some distance from their houses, or across a stream or some other natural barrier, which saves them the trouble of building walls or making fences.

When not engaged in cultivating the soil, which occupies but a small proportion of their time, the Indians make frequent journeys, carrying their wares and fruits to distant markets or fairs, travelling in companies, and marching in file: or they go in search of some of the more valuable productions of the forest. Inured to bearing burdens, they carry loads weighing four or five arrobas (one cwt. or one cwt. and a quarter), a distance of from twenty to thirty miles for several successive days, with ease and rapidity. Some few simple manufactures are still retained among them. The women spin with the hand the cotton grown in their own fields, and weave webs, which, if coarse, are also more durable than those imported. The red pottery of the Indians is still unsurpassed, as well as their mats, baskets, &c. Ropes are made of silk grass. The fibres of the agave are also twisted into the thread with which they sew, and into twine, which in its turn is worked into hammocks, saddle-bags, &c. &c. Various other articles of use and ornament are manufactured by them.

The Ladinos are swarthy, and in this respect vary from each other only in degree. Though not above the medium stature, yet as compared with the Indians, they appear tall, and less muscular; they are, nevertheless, athletic, and have far more activity and physical energy. The more favourable circumstances of their lot have also given them the advantage in freedom of thought and manners, as well as in information and enterprise. But their passions are even less under control, and they are no less superstitious and cruel, though somewhat more refined in the manner of its expression. There is a dash of sober romance about the Ladinos, which they appear to have

inherited from their Spanish ancestors. This shews itself in their gait and manners—in their love of poetry and song—in their gallantry and courtesy, and it may be observed to pervade all their tastes. Lamentably deficient in common honesty and conscientiousness, in amenity and hospitality, the Ladinos are more free and sincere than the Indians. But the warmth and extravagance of their professions and protestations,* when compared with the almost total want of principle in their actions, makes them appear deceitful even when the impulse is genuine and unfeigned. Their intellectual faculties, if not superior to those of the Indian, are at least better cultivated, and do not appear to be inferior to the best, though the want of that moral courage and energy of mind which conscious rectitude alone can give, makes them appear superficial, vacillating, and without perseverance.

At present the Ladinos are the dominant class. Theirs are the cities and chief towns. Their houses, in general like those of the capital, though of less extent, are for the most part constructed of unhewn stone mingled with clay and well plastered into walls four or five feet in thickness, which, as they have few doors and windows, produce a cooler temperature within, and secure the building from injury in ordinary shocks of earthquake. The rooms are spacious and lofty, the rafters above often being neatly or even elaborately wrought. The scanty furniture is old fashioned and massive, and though the internal arrangements have a bare appearance, when compared with the homes of Europe, they are suitable to the climate and to the habits of the people. There is also something pleasing in their simplicity.

“Tiendas,” or shops, are generally kept by this class. Here also are found all descriptions of wares, which is the case even in the wholesale merchants' stores. But there are besides a kind of grocers or general dealers in provisions, and a few others in the towns which are exclusive. Among these are wax-candle and rocket-makers, who supply the churches. Bread made of wheaten flour is used in such small quantities, that professional bakers are to be found only in the larger towns. Butchers are even more uncom-

* These are always extreme or hyperbolic. In their ordinary compliments, they congratulate themselves and their family the servants of the merest stranger, and place all that they possess at his disposal; and whatever any one may admire, immediately becomes his as well as theirs.

mon, and meat is frequently cut into long thin strips which are salted and hung up in the sun to dry. This is called 'tasaño,' and is sold by *the yard*. It may be kept a long time, and travellers soon become familiar with it.

The Mulattoes and Sambos are of course generally darker than either of the former, and may be known by their profuse curly and silken locks. Their limited numbers prevent either from assuming the appearance of a separate class, and they both fraternize most readily with the Ladinos, with whom their circumstances more nearly agree, nor do they appear to be in any respect inferior to them. Physically, the comparison is to the advantage of the African admixture, and if more vindictive and passionate in disposition, they are also more industrious and honest in their dealings. It is worthy of notice that they are chiefly the descendants of the slaves formerly owned by the Monks and Jesuits, who are to a great extent the *progenitors* (!) of the Mulattoes, a fact clearly traceable in those districts where the convents were situated, and where alone these castes now abound.

So much for a professed celibacy, and the paternal character of monastic institutions.

The Africans whose limited numbers make them unimportant as a class, are chiefly the unmixed descendants of slaves, or they are Maroon negroes who have sought and found protection in this free land. They are for the most part located upon the coasts.

The Europeans are very little more numerous than the Africans, but their influence is considerable, and the accession to their ranks of the Creoles, properly so called, who claim an unmixed European origin, greatly increases that influence. To this class belong most of the ecclesiastical dignitaries and priests. From it are chosen many of the rulers and officials, and the largest fortunes and estates are in their hands.

To the Metizo class, which includes Ladinos, Mulattos and Sambos, most of the artisans and operatives belong. They also constitute a large portion of the labourers and cultivators employed in the 'Nopals'—the fields of cactus on which the cochineal insect is nourished; the 'Trapiches'—sugar estates; and the 'Milpas,'—fields of maize, as well as the indigo works, coffee plantations, &c.

The Maya or Yucatecan Indians occupy the peninsula which forms the north-easterly limit of this part of the continent. It has

been hitherto united to the Mexican republic, though several times already separated from it, and declared Sovereign and Independent. The entire population amounts to about 500,000, and is of the same general character as that of the interior. The Indians, who are of like character, greatly predominating. The Ladinos of Yucatan are also much the same as those already described, or perhaps they have more affinity to the Mexican character. The almost insular position of the Yucatecan people has, however, separated them from the other tribes, and their greater contact with strangers has apparently fostered a bolder spirit in these Indians than is common with the rest. Late events have called their love of independence into action, and they are even now exemplifying it in a deadly warfare waged against the Ladinos and white population who have hitherto borne sway. This contest has already lasted above two years (1850), and though volunteers from the United States, probably the refuse of their late Mexican army, have united with the Ladinos to aid in the subjugation of the Indians, they continue unsubdued, and at the present moment the British authorities in Honduras are said to be about to intervene for the pacification of the peninsula, on condition that a portion of their territory be ceded to them: this is, that part of it which is situated on the northern boundary of that which the British already occupy.

Until the war broke out, the Maya Indians were given to agriculture and to fishing. They also traded by means of "bongos," large canoe barges, or coasting proas, in maize, poultry, and brizillete or logwood, from the Bay of Campechy to Belize, to different parts of the coast, and even to the Havanna and other ports of Cuba. Their land is generally low and flat, and consequently hot; but it is esteemed fertile and salubrious. Merida, the capital, is a fine city. The ports are, Sisal on the north, which is the port of Merida; Campeche to the westward; and Bacalar to the eastward. The latter, though at present the least important, if it should fall to the English, as appears possible, may ultimately become equal, if not superior, to the rest.

Along the shores of the Bay of Honduras, the Mosquito coast, and even the Spanish main as far as the mouths of the Orinoco, if not beyond them, are many small and scattered settlements of a black and woolly race, totally dissimilar from those we have already

endeavoured to describe. A race athletic and well proportioned—active and energetic—cheerful and highly excitable. Their features bear but little resemblance to the African, with whom at first sight they appear to assimilate in colour and in the texture of their hair. The existence of a race so different from all others on the American continent naturally calls for an inquiry as to their origin, &c., and gives rise to never-ending speculations, which, when the point shall be satisfactorily settled, may be found to run counter to many a favourite theory, and perhaps also to not a few long-cherished prejudices. May not the same causes which, in the lapse of ages, produced the woolly hair and black complexion in the same latitudes on the opposite continent, have superinduced them here? But, admitting this, there remain difficulties which it would be presumption even in the learned to attempt to solve, with no more light than that which is now possessed on the past history of the new world. And here we are forcibly reminded of the profound ignorance in which we still remain, after so many years of research, with respect to the history of several important branches of the human family; an ignorance which must have been still greater, and which would have extended to the whole race, leaving the past in impenetrable gloom, but for the revelations and records of the sacred scriptures.

The scattered remnant of which we are speaking are the descendants of the warlike aborigines, first found in possession of the Caribbean Islands. They may still be traced to belong to different tribes of that once great nation, and are called Caribs or Karifunes, and among themselves, Cherubs, Carrina, or Callinago.

Hunted down by the European colonists as if they had been wild beasts, they concealed themselves in their native forests, and for a long time offered the most determined resistance, in which they displayed great valour and fortitude.

They were, however, at length completely subjugated, and disposed of any portion of their native Archipelago, but not until they had been nearly extirpated. From the island of St. Vincent, where to the last they remained in greater numbers than elsewhere, they were finally expelled by the English in 1796, after long and sanguinary conflicts. Thence the residue were conveyed in British men-of-war, and abandoned on the then desert island of Ruatan in the bay of Honduras, whence they soon found their way to the adjacent shores.

Deeds such as this are generally kept out of our sight, or are slurred over by our own historians, but they are among the realities which are producing their unfailing effects upon us and upon others, and they go to make up the whole of our national character, as it appears before the world, and that God who rules the nations in righteousness.

Some thousands of the Carib race still remain in the bay of Honduras, living in small villages, supported by their plantations, fishing, &c. They are rapidly increasing in numbers. Now no longer molested, they hold friendly intercourse with their neighbours, whether Indian or European; and, though vain and conceited of their physical superiority, they are notable for a cheerful but light character, and for superior intelligence and adroitness. Some of their hoary-headed men, who appear to have attained a great age (probably to more than a hundred years), are said to have taken part in cannibal feasts in their more youthful days. At present the Caribs live peaceably under a kind of magisterial authority, which they respect, and with which they themselves have invested certain elders whom they call "captains." They still retain some of their national traditions and customs, among which polygamy is prominent. It is frequently indulged to the extent of four or five wives, or even more. A separate house, and a clearance for a plantation, is provided by the husband for each wife. They are then left to cultivate the ground with their own hands, and support themselves and their families. Meanwhile, the lordly husband divides his attention between his favourite wives, his light labours, and other more congenial pursuits, such as shooting game in the forests, or more frequently in his cedar or mahogany 'doree,' which he has hewn out for himself, striking fish upon the reef. This he does with great dexterity by means of a harpoon; they not uncommonly spend the day, the burden and the heat of which their wives and children bear at the plantation, in swirgling in their hammocks in indolent repose, or in noisy merriment, drinking, dancing, and drumming, to all of which they are much addicted, and in which they often spend whole nights as well as days. During some months of the year they not unfrequently leave their homes and hire themselves to the merchant or the mahogany cutter, by whom they are much sought after, as they make active and cheerful servants, and are most skilful in the use of the paddle and the axe.

The Mosquito men, or Waikna Indians inhabiting the Mosquito shore, are evidently another distinct race; differing both from the tribes of the interior, and from the Carib just described. In stature they are tall and bony, rather than muscular; their complexion is dark, but of an ashy black, and not at all like the glossy hue of the Carib, nor yet clear and bright like that of the Quiché races. Their dishevelled hair is black and curly. It generally stands erect several inches, and increases their apparent height, or hangs in profuse and effeminate ringlets. Their features and expression are forbidding and indicative of strong animal passions, and the *tout ensemble* is by no means prepossessing. Their numbers can only be matter of conjecture at present. Their habits, which are little known, are unsettled—almost nomadic. They have no permanent towns or villages, but shift their settlements with frequency. They live chiefly by fishing, and attend but little to the cultivation of the soil.

Dexterous in the management of their small canoes, they sometimes visit the distant British settlements, and are employed in the mahogany works, in which they are inferior to most other labourers. They nourish a fixed and implacable hatred to the Ladinós and to the Indians who speak Spanish. These they designate "little breeches," from the short loose drawers commonly worn by those living in the hot regions; and they seldom let slip an opportunity of assassinating one of them, if it can be done by stealth. They have as decided a favour to the English, by whom this feeling has been carefully cultivated, and with whom their chief trade and relationship exists. From Jamaica and from the United States, as well as occasionally from Belize, small vessels periodically visit the shore, and exchange rum, knives, fire-arms, powder and shot, coarse cotton webs, &c. &c. &c., for considerable quantities of tortoiseshell, of which the Waikna Indian despoils the hawksbill turtle that frequents 'the Shore.'

Mixed and varied as the inhabitants of Central America must appear to be to the reader, no part of it, and perhaps no place of the size anywhere, presents so great a medley as Belize, where are to be found representatives of each of the races, pure and mixed, already described, and almost of each tribe already mentioned, together with Congoes, Nangoes, Mongolas, Ashantees, Eboes, and other African tribes. Among the Belize Creoles are included every shade of

colour and admixture ; the Mulatto and the Sambo, as understood in the West Indies, and all the other degrees, such as Quadroon, Mustee, &c. &c. &c. There are also Creoles from Jamaica and the Bahamas, as well as from the French, Spanish, Dutch, and Danish Islands, New Englanders, South Americans, and a great variety of Europeans—among which the Scotch and English predominate—besides adventurers from almost every part of the world, and some few Jews.

Of the Indian tribes who are still in a wild state, little is known. They are sometimes met with in the forests armed with bow and arrow, and partially clad with a fibrous bark beaten till it is soft as wash-leather. On such occasions, they dart off into the thick shades like an affrighted antelope—sometimes previously discharging a poisoned arrow at the object of their terror. When their villages have been visited, they have been soon after abandoned, and the ‘Jicaques,’ as they are generally called, are known to have devastated remote plantations, and even to have killed those left in charge ; but such events are exceedingly rare, and are related as such by the natives, with much exaggeration and many incredible details.

Not only each of the different races named, but every one of the tribes mentioned at the beginning of this chapter, twenty-eight in number, speaks a dialect peculiar to itself, and generally called by the same name, the repetition of which the indulgent reader will no doubt readily excuse. Some of these languages are said to bear so strong an affinity to others of them, that the natives to whom they are vernacular can make themselves mutually understood ; and it is supposed that the Quiché, like the Sanscrit in Hindostan, will be found to be the parent of several if not of them all. They are of difficult acquisition, and to English ears of uncouth sound. In some of them, the enunciation of the same word with more or less force is said to convey a different and sometimes an opposite signification.

These various dialects seem to present a barrier to missionary enterprise in this field, and doubtless they constitute a difficulty ; though, when rightly viewed, that and every other obstacle should only stimulate to more strenuous exertion. But the dialect which is spoken generally, which is more or less understood by all, and which is exclusively the mother tongue of a large class, is the beautiful language of Castile ; a language easy of acquirement

because of its precision, correctness, and uniformity of structure ; a language at once rich, sonorous, energetic, and soft ; a language in which the sacred scriptures of truth recover some of that original force and beauty, which is lost by their translation into the less perfect idioms of the north ; and the language which Charlemagne, when characterizing the dialects of Europe, described as the most suitable of all wherewith to address the Deity : probably because of its simple dignity and solemn grandeur.

It may not be out of place to observe here, that the Spanish language is the only one which, like our own, is spoken in every part of the habitable globe ; so that it can be said of it with truth that the sun never sets upon those nations who use it. But while there is this resemblance, the author of the "Annals of the British Bible" notices a contrast as striking as the similarity which exists between the circumstances of both, viz., that whereas the *English Bible* is read, not "from the rising to the setting sun" merely, but all round the globe, and that ceaselessly for at least forty-eight hours during every week, the *Spanish Bible* has scarcely yet begun to be read in any country. Sabbath after Sabbath passes away, and sun after sun dawns and sets upon the millions who use the Spanish tongue, and the accents of adoration and of praise which it is so well adapted to express are either offered to images of the Virgin and of Saints, or the lips of those who should offer them are sealed in silence, or are opened but to blaspheme that Christianity of which they have seen only the most horrible and distorted effigy.

While the Spanish is the mother tongue of the Ladinós, and is used throughout Central America, the English and Creole-English languages are spoken in British Honduras.

As the religion professed will occupy a prominent place in future chapters, it will be sufficient at present to say, that the natives generally are Roman Catholics ; that those under British rule are, nominally at least, Protestants ; that the Caribs have no tangible profession ; that the Waikna or Mosquito men have not so much as a name in their language by which to designate a supreme Being ; and that the unconquered tribes are probably still gross idolators.

The form of government in the Central States is republican, after the model of the United States of North America, and consequently favourable in the spirit, and even in the letter, of the law

to religious liberty. This is due to the prevalence of ideas and principles politically antagonistic to Romanism, which cannot long maintain political ascendancy under republican forms, any more than it can morally co-exist with the spirit of democracy. But hitherto the power and influence of the priesthood has proved sufficient to counteract the free operations of these wise and good principles of government which, for all practical ends, have remained almost a dead letter on the statute-book.

The northernmost shore of the bay of Honduras, together with the island of Ruatan on its southern coast, are claimed by the British and ruled colonially as a dependency of Jamaica. The Mosquito nation has never been subjugated, and, though once so fierce and warlike, they have for years been pleased to admit the exercise of British influence, which now assumes the character of a *Protectorate*. Their chiefs or kings are crowned at Jamaica or at Belize; the charge of educating the present king and his predecessor was undertaken by our government, and the expense of ruling the Shore and of maintaining royalty there has been and is, at least partly, borne by the British nation.

The commerce of Central America, as already mentioned, is considerable and increasing, though on the decline in some of the cities and states. In 1825, it was estimated by Mr. Thompson, an envoy of the British Government, at 3,304,000*l.*, and is now probably near 6,000,000*l.* It is carried on chiefly with England, through the port of Belize.* There is also some trade with the United States, France, Spain, Belgium, and South America. A traffic of an unlawful or contraband character is pursued, to a pretty considerable extent, with Southern Mexico; by which the customs of that country are defrauded.

At present the exports are *mahogany, cochineal, indigo, logwood, brasielte, purple* (from the murex), *hides, coffee, cocoa, pimento, chiapa pepper, tobacco, sarsaparilla, vanilla, achiote, balsams, copal, mastic, almácigo, gums, oils, sulphur, saltpetre, sal-ammoniac, scammum, lac, turpentine, tar, and other resinous substances, amber, tortoiseshell, pearls, mother of pearl, gold and silver* (both in bullion and in *specie*), *cocoa-nuts, ginger, tamarinds, preserves, &c. &c.*

* The same writer estimates the trade of Belize alone at 4,695,000*l.*—*Thompson's Guatemala.*

tuted for these, and awake the sylvan echoes to the unaccustomed strain.

The Central States, as the most thickly-peopled portion of Spanish America, and occupying so peculiar a position among these deeply interesting but hitherto neglected countries, have a strong claim upon Christians of the present day. It is hoped that this will be made apparent to the reader, and also that this claim applies to none more forcibly than to the *British Christian*. If to what has been said concerning the influential position and probable future destiny of this country, be added the fact that God has so ordered events by his providence, that his gospel has been first preached in the midst of the densest populations, and that, under such circumstances, he has honoured it with signal success, it will weigh with those interested in the spread of the kingdom of Christ, in directing their attention towards a field which, in this respect as in many others, God has pointed out to them. If what is here said concerning the people, should have excited little sympathy on their behalf, it is hoped that due weight will be given to their moral and religious destitution, which will be the theme of future chapters.

That they are *men*, constitutes their chief claim upon our love; that they have not the gospel, makes every one "their debtor" who has it; that they are in any way accessible to us, is the strongest reason for our attempting an immediate discharge of the solemn obligation; and that they are perishing for lack of knowledge, is the awful reality best calculated to fix a holy purpose, and to steady a trembling hand in its execution. Nor are warrants, commands, and promises wanting to encourage the heart. "Say not ye, There are yet four months, and then cometh harvest? Behold, I say unto you, Lift up your eyes, and look on the fields, for they are white already to harvest." Nor will our obligations cease until

"One song employs all nations, and all cry,
 'Worthy the Lamb, for he was slain for us;'
 The dwellers in the vales, and on the rocks,
 Shout to each other, and the mountain tops
 From distant mountains catch the flying joy;
 Till, nation after nation taught the strain,
 Earth rolls the rapturous hosanna round."

SECTION II.

HISTORICAL AND POLITICAL SKETCH.

CHAPTER IV.

DISCOVERY.

Discovery of the Continent—The Landing of Cortes and Conquest of Mexico—Origin of the Aboriginal Races—Idolatry, and Mode of Sacrificing Human Victims—Wealth and Refinement of the Indians—Remains of Cities, Temples, &c.—Surmises respecting them—Dr. Bandinet's Theory—Ophir in America—The Remnant that Remains—Traditions—Quiché Dynasty and Wars, Ancient Cities, &c.; Utatlan, Xelahun, Patinamit, Palenque, Copan—Laws and Government—Opposite Character of the Aztecs and Tulteca.

"*Verily He is a God that judgeth in the earth.*"—Ps. lviii. 11.

DE SOLIS, in his romantic History of the Conquest of Mexico, states that the Island of Cozumel, in the Bay of Honduras, was the first land made by Columbus, after leaving Jamaica and Cuba, in search of the new world (in 1502). The contiguous shore of Yucatan was, consequently, the first part of the continent which his eyes beheld. From Cozumel we are informed that he crossed over to Truxillo, on the opposite side of the bay, and, being in search of a western passage, coasted Honduras (then and afterwards called Guaimura, or Las Hibueras), the Mosquito Shore, and Costa Rica, until he reached Veragua, on the Isthmus of Darien. Here he indulged his crews in that insatiate and ungovernable thirst for gold which cursed and stultified the enterprises of the period, and which entailed so great an amount of guilt and misery, and, in the sequel, even of squalid *poverty*, upon proud and magnificent Spain.

Another historian* says, that Bartholomew Columbus arrived on the coast of Honduras in the year 1502, and, landing at Point Casinas on the 17th day of August, took possession of the country

* Herrera—Dec. i. lib. 5, cap. 6.

in the name of the King of Castile ; by which it appears that the state of Honduras was the part of all the North American continent where the Spaniards first landed, though the territory of that state remained unexplored until twenty years after its discovery.

In 1522, Gil Gonzales Davila explored the coasts of Central America on the Pacific side, in pursuit of a channel of communication between the two oceans, when he discovered and named the Gulf of Fonseca, and the territories of the Caciques, Nicaragua, and Nicoya, which still retain the names of those chiefs.

It was in Yucatan—discovered by Dias de Solis y Pinzon, in 1508—that Hernan Cortes and his warlike companions first effected a landing (in 1519). Actuated by the lust of conquest and military glory, as well as by covetousness, they commenced the work of destruction by the taking of Tabasco.* Re-embarking here, after having obtained much information from the Indians, and some remarkable helps for the furtherance of their enterprise, especially one in the person of an Indian female, who henceforth accompanied Cortes, and was essentially useful to him as an interpreter, they proceeded to the neighbourhood of San Juan de Ullua, in the Gulf of Mexico. Near their landing-place, Cortes afterwards founded the town and port of Vera Cruz. From this point he spread his conquests westward, until he took the imperial city of Mexico, and placed its unhappy monarch, Montezuma, in chains.

Chivalrous and extraordinary as the records of these exploits now appear, there is a certain amount of credence which cannot be refused them ; indeed, such of the facts as are incontestible are those which at first sight appear to be the least credible. Nor can we suppose that the highest colouring which a fervid imagination could impart to events in themselves so surpassingly wonderful would equal, much less surpass, the vivid reality. All that can now be said is, that the more pleasing and the less dishonourable features are dwelt upon—often to the exclusion of the most harrowing and disgraceful—and that the whole is written in the false glare, and under the partial light, of depraved and defective views of human glory, moral rectitude, and religious truth.

* A chief Indian town, now the capital of the Mexican province of Tabasco in the Bay of Campeche. It was from this country that Sir Francis Drake first introduced potatoes and tobacco into Europe in 1587. The name tobacco is probably a corruption of *Tabasco*.

The success of Cortes, which at first sight appears so marvellous as almost to astound the reader, will, on closer consideration, reduce itself to only another illustration of the truth that knowledge is power. It was not the crucifix, the Virgin Mary, or Santiago de Compostella, or any other saint in the calendar, that drove the Indians before them, and crowned the Spaniard with almost constant victory: but it was the *gunpowder*, the well-tempered Toledo blades, and the muscles and sinews of the good Arab steeds which they had imported, together with the effects of these novelties upon the minds of the Indians, who never had till then beheld a white complexion. It is not surprising that a company of mounted knights in armour, accompanied by a body, though but a small one, of well-trained infantry, by the imposing though clumsy ordnance of the period, and by all that could give *éclat* to their appearance, not omitting the pomp of a sacerdotal train, should strike with awe and amazement natives who saw them disembark from ships which they supposed to be monsters of the deep, endued with life and voluntary motion.

Is it not rather natural that when they, who knew not the use of metals, and had never seen a quadruped larger than a tapir, beheld them parade their cavalry, use their arquebusses and cross-bows, their swords and spears, their battle-axes and poniards, and especially when they heard the roar of their fire-arms and artillery, and witnessed the effects which these produced afar off; is it not rather natural that they should be terrified and impressed with the idea of a superhuman power wielded by their mysterious visitors, and that they should conclude them invincible and immortal until time and experience proved that they were not? *

Well did their leader know how to make the most of the prestige which accompanied their first arrival. Great must have been the impression produced in the heart of the empire, and in the minds of Montezuma and his court, when they first received, by the hand of the "tzamabeles"—their swift couriers from the coast, the paintings upon cotton which represented the "children of the sun," and the mighty engines by which they hurled "the thunder," and

* The Itzaes Indians long preserved among their numerous idols the bones of one of the horses which Cortes left behind him, because it was diseased, whilst traversing Peten on his overland route to Honduras.—(Juarros, p. 43.) The natives also fall into the ancient African error of supposing the rider and the horse to be one animal.

slaw a distant foe; and deep indeed must have been the growing gloom as tidings after tidings reached them of their onward march, and of the successive overthrow of every opposing force, however great, as if by magic, till at last they stood upon the borders of the lake that surrounded Mexico, the beautiful but divinely doomed, because guilty, capital of the Aztecs.

No exploit of Cortes, no conception of his master-mind, surpasses in determined boldness the order for the destruction of the fleet which had conveyed his expedition to those shores. That one act, probably, more than any other, decided the success of his hazardous and difficult enterprise—an enterprise which involved the destinies of nations, and, by its results, affected the whole world. By the conflagration of the ten galleons which composed that fleet, he at once cut off the possibility of a retreat, secured the combined energies of less daring associates, and, humanly speaking, revealed to succeeding generations the moral cause of his success. He did more. He gave an example of faith and hope in merely earthly things, which, if it be not emulated, and as far surpassed by the true soldier of the Cross of Christ as that which is spiritual transcends that which is carnal, must remain a standing reproof upon his supineness and unbelief,—an example which, unless professing Protestants imitate, will make it more tolerable in the day of judgment for a Cortes and a Pizarro than for them.

The Indian tribes which fell before this little band of desperate adventurers comprised many nations, great and mighty, and not untrained to war; that art for which the least benignant are the best prepared. The accounts we have of their wealth, their refinement, and their numbers, as given by Spanish historians, are so glowing and surprising as to appear fabulous. But while there is abundant evidence to substantiate the leading facts, there is also enough of mystery to excite the most profound interest, and to afford scope for endless theories and suppositions.

How and when this continent was first peopled, and where the inhabitants learned the arts and sciences of which they had a knowledge, and which it is evident they possessed even in greater perfection long before the period of its discovery, were questions then; and now, after the lapse of three centuries and a half, they still remain questions to which no satisfactory answer can be returned.

Even though it had not been plainly declared in the Sacred Scriptures, that "God made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth," yet would there be sufficient grounds to attribute to these races a common origin with those of the old world. The traditions preserved by them, though in a somewhat distorted form, of the flood, the building of Babel, and of succeeding events, would alone suffice for this purpose.

"Nuñez de la Vega, bishop of Chiapa, in the preface to his *Diocesan Constitution*," as reported by Don Domingo Juarros—an ecclesiastic, historian, and native of Guatemala—"states that he met with certain calendars in the language of the Indians of his diocese, in which mention was made of twenty lords or heads of families from whom it appears this people derive their origin. Their names were Ninus or Mox, Ygh, Votan, Ghanan, Abagh, Tox, Moxie, Lambat, Mo'lo or Mulu, Elab, Batz, Evob, Been, Hix, Tziquin, Chabin, Chic, Chinax, Cahogh, and Aghual. Of all these magnates, Votan seems to have been the most celebrated personage, as a separate work is devoted to his peculiar history. In this he is said to have seen the great wall (by which the tower of Babel is meant) that was built by order of his grandfather Noe, from the earth to the sky; and that, at this place, to every people a different language was given. It further says that Votan was the first person whom God sent to this country to divide the lands, and apportion them among the Indians."*

There are, however, in addition to such as this, other professed traditions worthy of investigation, which appear to be borne out by monuments and memorials of past dynasties—by lists still preserved of mighty conquerors and kings who ruled for successive centuries—evidences which, to say the least, give an air of probability to the antiquity they claim.

The various aboriginal nations of America, however much they may have differed from each other in their objects and mode of worship, were all of them gross idolaters. And their idolatry, like that of the Canaanites of old, as regards the greater number, was of the most unnatural, cruel, and abominable kind. Human sacrifices were occasionally, nay frequently, offered up to their idols, and instances are on record of their having immolated as many as a thousand human beings on a single occasion to their sanguinary

* Juarros, p. 208.

gods. Like the Canaanites, too, they habitually offered up their children in sacrifice. Their manner of proceeding on such occasions has been left on record. Within the precincts of a sumptuous edifice the trembling victim was led forth and bound to a block of stone, upon the surface of which were groves to carry off the blood;* the officiating priest then proceeded deliberately to open the breast with a sharp instrument of stone or shell, and introducing his hand into the writhing body, seized hold of the heart, violently drew it forth, and presented it, while yet warm and quivering with vitality, to the cold dead image which they chose thus to honour. So frequent were these oblations that their temples were usually garnished with festoons composed of dried human hearts. Deeds such as these are alone sufficient to account for the providence which permitted the subjugation of the Aboriginal Americans by the Spaniards, notwithstanding the superstition and cruelty of the latter; who were little, if at all, inferior in these respects to the former, and their rapacious coveteousness was certainly unequalled in its disastrous effects by any, or perhaps by all, the iniquities of the Indians. But, while God in his providence used the unprincipled and licentious Cortes for the furtherance of his own great purposes, the ambition of the instrument was not a whit the less criminal. Nor was his professed concern for the *conversion* of the natives, and the pious horror which he manifested at their human sacrifices, any less hypocritical, while by his own hand and that of his soldiers he was hewing down hecatombs of human victims in honour of other idols, and especially to his own personal avarice and lust of power. But neither have these deeds been unvisited by the righteous retribution of God.

It is asserted by Robertson in his History of America, that the Spaniards destroyed about 16,000,000 of natives in their wars on this continent; this amazing number of human victims is more than equal to the entire population of Spanish America as estimated by Humboldt, and Cortes and Pizarro may be regarded as the executioners who officiated at the commission of this appalling national crime.

Difficult as it may now be unreservedly to credit the details recorded of the Aztec empire, and of the power and glory of the Mexican, Cholulan, and other nations, we are constrained to yield to the force of that evidence which is afforded in our own day by actual

* Many such stone altars remain among the vestiges of their former cities, &c.

remains of cities and monuments. A kind of evidence which leaves no room to doubt that at one time, a great people, possessing the knowledge of many arts, and arrived at a high degree of refinement, inhabited these regions. At Chalhuacan or Palenque, at Tulha or Quirigua, at Copan, Utatlan, and Patinamit in the Central states — at Uxmal in Yucatan, and at Cholula, Otamba, Paxaca, Mitlan, and Tlascala in different parts of southern Mexico, these witnesses are known to exist. Some of the later discoveries comprise the remains of cities covering a space equal in extent to that occupied by Rome or Paris, cities which were adorned with vast temples and palaces built upon massive pyramids of several hundred feet elevation, planned according to scientific rule, and abounding with sculptures and mysterious inscriptions, executed with artistic skill. Here the plumed warrior, the courtier, and the courtesan are strikingly portrayed. The speaking stone, carved, as we suppose, without iron, is encircled, as if in mockery of our curiosity, with a framework of characters which reveal what the world is so anxious to learn, but which remain as dumb as the handwriting on the wall of Belshazzar's festive court. Among other figures may be distinguished, as if to afford some clue to the desolation around, those of portly priests in sacerdotal robes—which are not to be mistaken, each treading upon the figure of a recumbent man, and in the act of offering, or presenting an infant to the grim idol in the centre. The bright hues which coloured the stucco and bas-reliefs are not yet entirely faded, though surrounded by the damp atmosphere of a tropical jungle, but the large trunks and roots of trees, probably the growth of centuries, protrude between the stones and heaps of rubbish, covering with their dark rank verdure, as with a pall, these mouldering tombs of human grandeur which silently proclaim, amidst a stillness more impressive than the trumpet's loudest blast, the holiness and justice of Jehovah.

Some of the ruins above mentioned, and others of like character, are particularly described by Mr. Stephens, the North American traveller, and drawings of them are given with the account of his visits to those places. His works on this subject awakened much interest only a few years ago. He and others have ventured many a surmise as to their founders, and in the fervent wish which in this instance was probably father to the thought, he dares to suggest the possibility of a solution of all doubts by the yet future

discovery of some such city in the inmost recesses of the mountains, not as these, in desolate ruins, but in all the activity of life, peopled with men such as those stones depict, and where the sage and prophet of his tribe, able to decipher the semi-hieroglyphic, yet preserves the lore of bygone days. There is little, except in a poetical imagination, upon which to rest such a supposition. What cities did exist at the time of the conquest were but too soon, alas! made the scene of Spanish carnage, cupidity, and oppression. Yet it is remarkable that there should be no evidence that the conquered nations knew anything of the origin, history, or even of the existence of these ruins, and scarcely less so that they should only now have been discovered by the descendants of the Spanish invader. Such is the intense mystery in which their origin is still shrouded.

Among the various theories which have been propounded by the learned respecting the American aborigines, there is one which deserves more than passing notice, not because anything like a conclusive amount of evidence can be adduced in support of it, but on account of the degree of verisimilitude which appears to attach to it on several important points, and especially because of its agreement with the professed traditions of the Quiché Indians, handed down from the time immediately following their subjugation. It was first put forth some forty years since by Dr. Baudinot of New Jersey, in a book entitled "The Star in the West." In this work he endeavours to prove that *the missing tribes of Israel* must be sought for among the Indians of America. Though little credited at the time, later discoveries have developed much that is confirmatory of this hypothesis, and nothing, we believe, to disprove it.

Its brief outline is as follows:—The nine and a half tribes of Israel who were led captive from Samaria, 721 years before the commencement of the present era, are spoken of in one of the apocryphal books,* where it is said that "Salamanzer carried them over the waters." They are also there described as having removed to "a further country, where never mankind dwelt," and where, "no longer surrounded by the multitude of the heathen, they might hope to keep their statutes, which they never kept in their own land." As they journeyed eastward some remained and settled in Turkey and China, where after 2,500 years they are

* 2 Esdra, xiii. 40.

still numerous. The main body, however, are supposed to have passed the straits from Eastern Asia, the more robust to have remained in North America, whilst the more cultivated sought the southern climes. In Mexico, Central America, and Peru, they are said to have unexpectedly found their old enemies the Phœnicians, who had discovered the country 500 years before, and had built Palenque, with its pyramids like those of Egypt, and the other cities already referred to, which it is asserted were evidently built by those who erected Tyre, Babylon, and Carthage.

This hypothesis is said to have gained the credence of many great men and literati, among whom is William Penn, who had a practical acquaintance with certain of the Indian tribes. It is supported by some resemblance of the Indians to the Jews, even after the lapse of 2,000 years, and though now divided into more than 300 nations, all of them still notable for their superior intelligence: some affinity is also traced between the religious rites of the Indians and those of the ancient Jews, as, for instance, in the use of temples, altars, sacrifices, priests, &c., and even some vestiges of circumcision, which is said to have been only lately discontinued among them. There is also some similarity in customs and in points of law. These evidences are, however, precisely the points which need to be made clear before a full assent can be yielded to the conclusions drawn from them. Not the least singular, and apparently probable conjecture is that Ophir or Tarshish, the country to which Solomon's fleets traded, and the gold of which was known even as early as the days of Job,* was in America, and possibly was no other than the modern California or some of the adjacent coasts. When due consideration is given to the different passages in which mention is made of this place or places, as well as the difficulties which commentators have found in fixing their position; to the fact that they were proverbial for remoteness, so that ships of Tarshish is a name applied generally to such as were adapted for long voyages:† when it is remembered that the fleets of Solomon returned only once every three years; when the navigation of the Pacific Ocean is compared with the route generally supposed to have been pursued, viz., by the Straits of Babelmandel along the south-eastern coasts of Africa, to the

* Job xii. 24.

† See Psalms xlviii. 7; Isaiah ii. 16, xxiii. 1, lx. 9; Ezekiel xxvii. 25.

Safala of the ancient orientals; and also, when the articles traded in are taken into account, viz., gold, silver, ivory, precious stones, algum or almug-trees, apes, and peacocks,* it will be seen that the supposition is not only possible, but appears probable enough to awaken curiosity and lead to investigation.

Notwithstanding the ingenious manner in which Mr. Bruce, the great traveller, accounts for the long delay of Solomon's fleets on the common hypothesis, attributing it to the influence of the monsoons; that would be more satisfactorily explained on the present supposition by the voyage across the Pacific, allowing for the imperfect navigation of the period, and time for rest and victualling at various intermediate islands of Oceania: though the greater part of this voyage, *i. e.*, from California to China, is now performed within six weeks. All the productions named in connection with Ophir or Tarshish, are precisely the most abundant of the western coast of America, from California to Peru, hard woods such as are suitable for the construction of musical instruments, or for the adornment of temple and palace, among which are mahogany, precious metals and stones, monkeys, and birds of gorgeous plumage. The only exception is *ivory*, which we must suppose was obtained during their sojourn at the ports of the nearer continent of India, or from the islands of the Eastern Archipelago.

But, be the origin and early history of these nations what they may, the interest thence to be derived, and the romance of Mr. Stephens's hopes, or the novelty of Dr. Baudinot's theory should weigh much less with either the philanthropist or the Christian, than the knowledge of the fact that a remnant of the descendants of these able architects, or it may be of the warlike devastators of those cities, still remains untaught amidst the mountain forests, in total estrangement, not only from God, but even from their fellow-men. Some of them occasionally perhaps traverse, bow in hand, the wide-spread vestiges of the past magnificence of their ancestors; and it were no flight of fancy to think of them gazing with vacant wonder at the gods of their fathers, and starting at the shaking of a leaf, lest they should be surprised by other men less wild and untutored than themselves.

Oh, that such a reality might provoke the thoughts, the emotions, the prayers, the missionary zeal and enterprise that it is

* 1 Kings ix. 28, x. 11, and Chron. viii. 18, ix. 10, 21.

calculated to awaken! Let each one lay it to heart. These poor timid creatures are gifted with powers and capabilities equal to our own: their immortal spirits are destined to contribute to the glory of God in time and eternity. Oh, let not their first contact with civilized man be the touch of pollution, the withering influence of vice, or the soul-destroying error of a lifeless creed! Let not the disciple of the compassionate Jesus stand by unmoved, and suffer his brother to perish for lack of that knowledge which it is in his power to communicate, and which he is charged to proclaim! No, let God rather be honoured in the obedience of his people, who are commanded to evangelize, and in the speedy conversion of these tribes to the faith of His Son; that they may be restored to God, to society, and to themselves, who have lost all by first forsaking Him in whom they live, and move, and have their being.

The historical materials relating to the aborigines of Central America, to which we have access, consist, chiefly, of such native records and traditions as have been handed down to us by their conquerors, the Spaniards. Some of these Spanish-American authors have written by the aid of those Indians who early acquired the Spanish language, and were able to communicate historical fragments. Others, having acquired a knowledge of the Indian languages, have been enabled to transmit verbal traditions of more or less importance. The greater part of these have been Roman Catholic ecclesiastics. Some of the Caiques (or chiefs) of the Pipil, Quiché, Kachiquel, and Pocomam Indians, were taught to write by the Spaniards, and compiled histories which still exist. To one of the Spanish dictionaries, among other things, the paintings used by the Indians instead of books or records of their history, are said to have been explained.*

Several curious MSS. remain to this day, and are quoted by native historians, of which some are written on the paper anciently made by the Indians from the stems of the *Maguey* (an aloe).

What has been published from these sources, as might be supposed, is much more deficient in quality than in quantity, and the whole would probably afford but very partial data upon which to form a correct opinion of their past condition. In the absence of any more satisfactory materials, we are reduced to the necessity of

* This was *Guzman*—Corregidor of *Guequetenango*. See *Juarros*, p. 100.

gleaning what we can of their history from a few brief notices of kings, and their pomp, from more ample details of their wars—which are far from conveying clear ideas—and from some particulars concerning their cities; but little, indeed, about the social and political state of their inhabitants.

From some of these sources, we are informed that the Quiché and Kachiquel kings, whose dominions extended over a great portion of Central America, were descended from the Toltec* Indians, who, in the opinion of Juarros, found this region already inhabited by people of different nations, and he adds that, “when these same Tultecas entered into the kingdom of Mexico, they discovered that the Chichimecas had previously got possession of it.” This he states as a conviction of his own, while desirous to avoid the vexed question of the original population of America, and he supports this view by referring to the fact of the great diversity of languages, which, he says, makes “the opinion in favour of a common origin untenable.” He next asserts, that “it appears from the MSS. of Don Juan Torres, the son, and Don Juan Macario, the grandson, of the king Chignaviucilut, and Don Francisco Gomez, the first Ahzib Kiché, that the Tultecas were descended from the house of Israel, and were released by Moses from the captivity in which Pharaoh held them. Having passed the Red Sea, they resigned themselves to the practice of idolatry, and persisted therein in spite of the admonitions of Moses; but to avoid his reproofs, or from the fear of his inflicting some chastisement, they chose to separate from him and his brethren, and to retire from that part of the country to a place which they called the seven caverns; that is, from the borders of the Red Sea to what is a part of the kingdom of Mexico, where they founded the celebrated city of Tula.

“The chief who commanded and conducted this multitude from one continent to the other, was Tanub, the stock from which sprang the families of the kings of Tula and Quiché, and the first monarch of the Tultecas. The second was Capichoch; the third, Cal-el-Ahus; the fourth, Ahpop; and the fifth, Nimaquiché (or the great Quiché), who being more beloved than any of his predecessors, was directed by an oracle to leave Tula with the people,

* Present, in his “History of the Conquest of Mexico,” writes *Toltec*, as agreeing best with English ears. Juarros, using the Spanish orthography, writes *Tultecas* and *Tultecans*, which agrees best with the probable origin of the name, from *Tula*.

who had by this time multiplied greatly, and conduct them from the kingdom of Mexico to that of Guatemala.

"In performing this journey they expended many years, suffered extraordinary hardships, and wandered over an immense tract of country, until they discovered a large lake (the lake of Atitlan), and resolved to fix their habitations in a convenient place at a short distance from it, which they called Quiché, in commemoration of their king Nimaquiché, who died during their peregrination."*

Juarros tells us in a note that this curious manuscript was possessed by Juan de Leon Cardona, who was appointed by Pedro de Alvarado, lieutenant of the Captain-General over the country of the Quichés: and he adds, "Fuentes assures us that he obtained it by means of Francisco Vasquez, the historian of the Order of St. Francis." If this document can be cleared from the suspicion of monkish fabrication, it would go far to establish the theory of Dr. Baudinot. We can, however, conceive of no object which the fabricator could have in view to induce him to commit such a forgery.

The same writer adds that "the MS. of Juan Torres, and another of Francisco Garcia Calel Tzumpan Xavila, a descendant from the kings of Quiché, written in 1544, relates that *thirteen armies left the old continent, headed by as many principal families, of which he names five who were more illustrious than the rest.*" "From Capichoch (one of these), the trunk of the genealogical tree of the family of Nimaquiché, all the royal progeny of the Indians of this kingdom derive their origin, and these princes of the blood royal are called Caciques. As the princes, or heads of families, were very nearly related to each other, it is clear that the emperors of Mexico were descendants of Belehebean (another of the five), a relative of Capichoch, the original stock from whom the monarchs of Quiché sprang: the kings of both countries are therefore of the same race."†

Axopil, the son and successor of Nimaquiché, was the first monarch who reigned in Utatlan. Under him the kingdom was greatly extended, and rose to a high degree of splendour. When advanced in years, he divided it into three kingdoms; namely, the Quiché, the Kachiquel, and the Sutugil; the first he retained for

* Juarros, p. 162-3.

† Juarros, p. 166.

himself, the second he gave to his eldest son Jiutemal, and the third to his youngest son Acxiquat. By this division Jiutemal, king of the Kachiquels, became second in dignity after Acxopil, his father. The degree of sovereignty was distinguished by the throne itself; that of Utatlan or Quiché, which was the first in rank, was placed under four canopies, formed of feathers, each of different colours, and of different sizes, fixed one within the other; the throne of Kachiquel, or Guatemala, had three canopies, and that of Atitan, or Sutugil, had but two.

The Toltec emperors, successors of Acxopil, who reigned in Utatlan, the capital of Quiché, whose names have reached posterity, were seventeen.* Thirteen of them, from Acxopil to Kicab IV., reigned prior to the invasion of Mexico by Cortés. Kicab Tanub, the fourteenth of the line, died while preparing to oppose the threatened invasion of his dominions. His son Tecum Umam, who occupied the throne when the Spaniards arrived, offered the resistance to their progress for which his father had made great preparations. He himself fell in battle by the hand of Pedro de Alvarado, the leader of the expedition, who, when victorious, placed his son Chignaviucelut on the throne of Utatlan; but soon after caused him to be hanged because he suspected him of treason. Sequechul, his successor, and the last of the Quiché kings, reigned only two years, and then, after an unsuccessful revolt, remained a prisoner during the rest of his life.

It must not be supposed that these Toltec nations were happy, or remained at peace among themselves from the time of their immigration to this country until its invasion by the Spaniards—we are rather led to conclude from the event, that all this while the measure of their iniquity was gradually filling up. From the very first, divisions and quarrels arose, and wars of conquest were waged one upon another. Acxiquat, king of the Sutugils, first invaded the territories of his brother Jiutemal, even during the lifetime of their father. Strong fortresses were then built, great

* The names of the kings are as follow:—

1 Acxopil.	7 Iquibalam.	13 Kicab IV.
2 Jiutemal.	8 Kicab I.	14 Kicab Tanub.
3 Hunahpa.	9 Cacabrachochin.	15 Tecum Umam.
4 Balam Kiché.	10 Kicab II.	16 Chignaviucelut.
5 Balam Acan.	11 Irimcha.	17 Sequechul, or
6 Manootah.	12 Kicab III.	Sequechil.

armies trained, and sanguinary conflicts waged, which continued through several succeeding generations.

In the reign of Balam Acan, the 5th king of the line of Acxopil, Zutugilepop, king of the Sutugils, and Iloacab, his near relative and favourite, abducted from the royal palace at Utatlan, Ixcunsoil, the daughter, and Escelixpua, the niece of the king Balam Acan, and afterwards married them. This offence so enraged the tyrant, that he tortured and slew several of his household, and then waged a war of revenge which lasted through the reigns of several succeeding monarchs, both of Quiché and Atitan, or with a few short intervals, till the arrival of the Spaniards.

In describing the first battle thus occasioned, it is said, "the fertile fields of Quiché groaned beneath the tread of 80,000 veteran soldiers, well-armed and provided with warlike stores; that division which directed its march towards the frontiers of Atitan, under the General Maucotah, had in the centre squadron Balam Acan himself, adorned with three diadems, and other regal ornaments, carried in a rich chair of state, splendidly ornamented with gold, emeralds, and other precious stones upon the shoulders of the nobles of his court." * The arms of these Indians consisted chiefly of missiles, poisoned arrows, and stones hurled by means of slings, as well as javelins and pikes, the ends of which were hardened by fire, and a kind of sword or instrument of wood called "macanós," into which pieces of a stone called "chay" were set close, like teeth, to constitute the cutting edge, which did great execution. They had also shields covered with the skin of the danta, and their heads were frequently guarded by bunches of feathers. Their contests were such that in one battle in which 90,000 of Balam Acan's men were opposed to 60,000 of Zutugilepop's, commanded by Iloacab, his chief general and accomplice in carrying off the princesses; a contest so desperate and bloody ensued, "and the field of battle was so deeply inundated with blood, that not a blade of grass could be seen." In this engagement Iloacab was slain.

In a subsequent battle little less bloody, Balam Acan mustered 120,000 men, and his adversary, 90,000. In a final action, in which Balam Acan perished in his turn, it is asserted that not less than 14,000 Indians were left dead on the field. These wars were

* Juarros, p. 174.

perpetuated both among principals and auxiliaries, at the cost of an enormous expenditure of lives, and prepared the way for their easier conquest by the Spaniards, not only by reason of their mutual divisions and consequent weakness, but even, as will be seen, by inducing Sinacan, the then reigning king of the Kachiquels, to sue for peace, and enter into an alliance with the strangers, in the hope of recovering by their means the possessions which had been wrested from him by some of his more successful neighbours.

Some idea of the magnitude of their cities, and of the state and luxury of their kings and nobles, may be formed by considering the descriptions given of the former, and of the larger buildings they contained, assisted by the more certain evidence of their actual remains.

The large and opulent city of Utatlan, the court of the native kings of Quiché, was indubitably the most sumptuous discovered by the Spaniards in that country. Fuentes, before quoted, went to Quiché for the express purpose of collecting information and viewing the antiquities that remained. He describes it at some length. It must have been exceedingly populous, as it furnished 72,000 combatants wherewith to oppose the Spaniards. It was so strong as to be deemed impregnable, being surrounded by a deep ravine that formed a natural fosse, leaving only two very narrow roads as entrances to the city, which were protected by two forts, called by the Spaniards the Resguardo and the Atalaya. These were, the one four, and the other five stories high, and the dimensions of the first were 188 paces in front, with a depth of 230. The description of the grand Alcazar, or palace of the kings of Quiché forcibly reminds one of the vivid pictures of the Alhambra sketched by the glowing pen of Washington Irving. It certainly surpasses every other edifice in these regions, and in the opinion of Torquemada, it could compete in opulence with the residence of Montezuma in Mexico, or with that in Cuzco which belonged to the Incas of Peru.

“The front of this building extended, from east to west, 376 geometrical paces, and in depth 728; it was constructed of stone of different colours; its form was elegant, and altogether most magnificent. There were six principal divisions; the first contained lodgings for a numerous troop of lancers, archers, and other well-disciplined troops, constituting the royal body guard; the second was devoted to the accommodation of the princes and relations of

the king, who dwelt in it, and were served with regal splendour as long as they remained unmarried; the third was appropriated to the use of the king, and contained distinct suits of apartments for the mornings, evenings, and nights. In one of the saloons stood the throne, under four canopies of plumage; the ascent to it was by several steps; in this part of the palace were the treasury, the tribunals of the judges, the armoury, the gardens, aviaries, and menageries, with all the requisite offices attached to each department. The fourth and fifth divisions were occupied by the queens and royal concubines; they were necessarily of great extent, from the immense number of apartments requisite for the accommodation of so many females, who were all maintained in a style of sumptuous magnificence: gardens for their recreation, baths, and proper places for breeding geese, that were kept for the sole purpose of furnishing feathers, with which hangings, coverings, and other similar ornamental articles were made. Contiguous to this division was the sixth and last; this was the residence of the king's daughters and other females of the blood royal, where they were educated, and attended to in a manner suitable to their rank."*

Next to Utatlan, the most considerable city in Quiché was Xelahun, which is now Quesaltenango. "The name of this place conveys a complete idea of its magnitude, the word Xelahun meaning 'under the government of ten,' that is, it was governed by ten principal captains; and, according to the ancient style of the natives, each captain presided over his respective xiquipil, or 8,000 dwellings. It, therefore, contained 80,000 houses, and, as Fuentes expresses himself, 'consequently more than 300,000 inhabitants.' It was so strongly fortified that it never was taken by the enemies of the king of Quiché, although it had been repeatedly besieged. The Spaniards obtained possession of it because the inhabitants were terrified by the fame of their exploits; this alarm was greatly increased by the defeat of a body of 24,000 Quesaltecos that had attempted to arrest their progress; and, in consequence, the greater part of the population retired to their ancient fortresses in the neighbouring volcano and on an adjoining mountain."†

The city of Patinamit (or *the city*), in the kingdom of Kachiquel, was also called Tecpan-Guatemala, which, according to Vasquez,

* Juarros, p. 87-88.

† Juarros, p. 879.

remains "the Royal Palace of Guatemala," whence he infers that it was the capital of the K'at'ik'um' king, on whom which is disputed, and supposed for the original city of Guatemala, the precise locality of which, however, is also a matter of dispute. But whether the name is Spanish, or only, as Spanish supposes, the arsenal of the Spaniards, & was originally a large and very strong city, of which there are interesting remains. "Casamit was seated on an eminence, and surrounded by a deep ditch or natural fosse; from the top of the city to the bottom of the ditch was a perpendicular precipitous descent 150 fathoms; this trench admitted but of one entrance into the palace, which was by a narrow causeway terminated by two great counterforts of the clay stone, one on the exterior and the other on the interior surface of the wall of the city. The walls of the Casamit extend about three miles in length from north to south, and about two in breadth from east to west. The soil is covered with a stiff clay, about three quarters of a mile long. On one side of the mountain may be seen the remains of a magnificent building, perfectly square, each side measuring 100 fathoms. The walls were constructed of brown stone, extremely well jointed together. In front of the building there is a large square, on one side of which stands the ruins of a magnificent palace, and near to it there are the foundations of several houses. A trench, three yards deep, runs from north to south through the city, having a breast-work of masonry rising above a foot high, on the eastern side of which stand some the houses of the nobles or citizens, and on the opposite the houses of the Merchants or commoners. The masonry walls on any side are very strong, and spacious, crossing each other in right angles.

In the neighbourhood of the city, there is a little monument that commands it, on this monument stands a small round building, about six or eight fathoms in the diameter, in which there is a pedestal formed in a solidly substance resembling glass, but the precise quality is a doubtful conjecture. Several around this building, the people have and dwellings upon the common brought before them, and have since their construction were erected. Previous, however, to the building a monument near which, it was necessary to have it questioned by the people; for which purpose those of the highest quality of the earth, and proceeded to a deep ravine where there was a place of necessity, wherein was placed a bank of stone

parent stone, of a substance much more valuable than the *chey*: on the surface of this tablet the deity was supposed to give a representation of the fate that awaited the criminal; if the decision of the judges was approved, the sentence was immediately inflicted; on the contrary, if nothing appeared on the stone, the accused was set at liberty; this oracle was also consulted in the affairs of war."^{*} This slab is now the top of the grand altar in the Roman Catholic church of Tecpanguatemala, a village about five miles from its ancient site.

Speaking of Chiapas, Juarros says,—“It is beyond controversy that this province was inhabited by a powerful and polished people, who maintained an intercourse with the Egyptians, as the sumptuous cities of Chalhuacan and Tulha, vestiges of which yet remain near the towns of Palenque and Ocosingo, evidently demonstrate. In the first, some remaining buildings are objects of admiration, and afford sufficient evidence that Chalhuacan once rivalled in magnificence the most celebrated capitals of the old world. Stately temples, in which many hieroglyphics, symbols, devices, and traces of fabulous mythology have resisted the effects of time, portions of superb palaces still remain, and an aqueduct of sufficient dimensions for a man to walk upright in yet exists almost entire. Previous, however, to the arrival of the Spaniards, this province had so much declined from its ancient splendour, that they found neither inhabited city nor building worthy of their attention, nor civilization or polity of the inhabitants.”†

Besides these remains, and others before referred to, there are some of smaller towns. Of many places only records or traditions now remain. Among the Indian fortresses, the most renowned were those of Mixco, Parraxquin, Socoleo, Uspantlan, Chalcitan, and several more, of which there are few and uncertain vestiges. But not the least curious among the wrecks of former grandeur are the great circus of Copán, the great stone hammock, and the cave of Tibulca, situated in the valley of Copán, once the site of an opulent city, the court of the cacique Copán-Calel. “Francisco de Fuentes, who wrote the chronicles of this kingdom, assures us that in his time, that is, in the year 1700, the great circus of Copán, still remained entire. This was a circular space surrounded by stone pyramids about six yards high, and very well constructed; at the

^{*} Juarros, p. 388-4.

† Juarros, p. 309.

basis of these pyramids were figures, both male and female, of very excellent sculpture, which then retained the colours they had been enamelled with ; and what was not less remarkable, the whole of them were habited in the Castilian costume. In the middle of this area, elevated above a flight of steps, was the place of sacrifice. The same author relates that, at a short distance from the circus, there was a portal constructed of stone, on the columns of which were the figures of men, likewise represented in Spanish habits, hose, ruff round the neck, sword, cap, and short cloak. On entering the gateway, there are two fine stone pyramids, moderately large and lofty, from which is suspended a hammock that contains two human figures, one of each sex, clothed in the Indian style. Astonishment is forcibly excited on viewing this structure, because, large as it is, there is no appearance of the component parts being joined together ; and although entirely of stone, and of an enormous weight, it may be put in motion by the slightest impulse of the hand. Not far from this hammock is the cave of Tibulca ; this appears like a temple of great size, hollowed out of the base of a hill, and adorned with columns, having bases, pedestals, capitals, and crowns, all accurately adjusted according to architectural principles ; at the sides are numerous windows, faced with stone exquisitely wrought. All these circumstances," adds Juarros, "lead to a belief that there must have been some intercourse between the inhabitants of the old and of the new world at very remote periods."*

As to the government and laws of the Indians, Juarros says,— "Commencing with that of succession to the throne, it was ordained that the eldest son of the king should inherit the crown ; upon the second son the title of *Elect* was conferred, as being the next heir to his elder brother ; the sons of the eldest son received the title of Captain senior, and those of the second, Captain junior. When the king died, his eldest son assumed the sceptre, and the elect became the immediate inheritor ; the Captain senior ascended to the rank of elect, the Captain junior to that of Captain senior, and the next nearest relative to that of Captain junior. Advancing thus by gradations to the throne, the monarchs began their reigns at mature age, in possession of many qualifications, and much experience both in civil and military government. But if any one

* Juarros, p. 66-7.

of these four personages was found to be incapable of governing, he remained in his first rank until his death, and the next nearest relation was raised to the superior dignity.

“The supreme council of the monarch of Quiché was composed of twenty-four grandees, with whom the king deliberated on all political and military affairs. These counsellors were invested with great distinctions and many privileges; they carried the emperor on their shoulders in his chair of state whenever he quitted his palace, but they were severely punished if they committed any crime. The administration of justice, and the collection of the royal revenues, were under their charge.

“The king appointed ten lieutenants in the principal towns of his empire, who enjoyed great honours, large emoluments, and supreme authority, except in cases that concerned the rights or privileges of the *abaus*, (heads of noble lineage), which were remitted to the supreme council. If these deputies neglected their duties, or committed offences, they were speedily removed, and severely chastised; but, on the contrary, when they governed with prudence and impartiality, without giving the subject cause of complaint, they were retained in their posts, distinguished by greater honours, and, as a mark of respect to their merits, their sons frequently succeeded to their offices.

“These lieutenants of the king, or *corregidores* of districts, had also their councils, to which, as well as in the supreme council, when any business of superior moment that concerned the public good was debated, the chiefs of the *calpuls* or nobles were invoked to declare their opinions; if the affair related to war, the most experienced commanders were consulted.

“To the offices of lieutenants and counsellors, and even down to the door-keepers of the council, none but those of noble race were admitted; and there was no instance of any person being appointed to a public office, high or low, who was not selected from the nobility; for which reason, great anxiety was felt by them to keep the purity of their lineage unsullied. To preserve this rank untainted in blood, it was decreed by the law that if any *cacique* or noble should marry a woman who was not of noble family, he should be degraded to the cast of *mazegual*, or plebeian, assume the name of his wife, be subject to all the duties and services imposed upon plebeians, and his estates be sequestrated to the king,

leaving him only a sufficiency for a decent maintenance in his sphere of mazegual.

“They had their penal laws also; the king was liable to be tried, and, if convicted of extreme cruelty and tyranny, was deposed by the ahaguas, who for this purpose assembled a council with great secrecy; the next in succession according to law was placed on the throne, and his ejected predecessor punished by confiscation of all his property, and, as some writers affirm, put to death by decapitation.—(Torquemada, part ii. chap. 8). If a queen was guilty of adultery with a noble person, both she and the accomplice were strangled; but if, forgetting her dignity, she had criminal intercourse with a commoner, they were thrown from a very high rock.

“If the ahaguas impeded the collection of the tributes, or were fomenters of any conspiracy, they were condemned to death, and all the members of their families sold as slaves.

“Whoever was guilty of crimes against the king or the liberties of the country, or convicted of homicide, was punished by death, the sequestration of property, and slavery of his relations.

“Robbers were sentenced to pay the value of the thing stolen, and a fine besides; for the second offence, the fine was doubled; and for the third, they were punished with death, unless the calpul would redeem them; but if they transgressed a fourth time, they were thrown from a rock.

“Rape was punished by death.

“Incendiaries were deemed enemies of their country; because, said the law, fire has no bounds, and by setting fire to one house, a whole town might be destroyed; and this would be public treason. Therefore death was the punishment awarded against the perpetrator, and his family was banished from the kingdom.

“A Simarron, or runaway from the authority of his master, paid a fine to his calpul of a certain quantity of blankets; but the second offence was punished by death.

“The stealing of things sacred, the profanation of the temples, and contumacy of the papas, or ministers of the idols, subjected the offender to the punishment of death, and all his family were declared infamous.

“They had a law, which is still in use, that whenever a young man wished to marry, he was bound to serve the parents of his in-

tended wife for a certain time, and make them stipulated presents ; but if they afterwards rejected his proposals, they were compelled to return the things received, and serve him an equal number of days.”*

In spite of the admiration which our historian expresses for the wisdom displayed in a certain portion of their laws, he admits that some of them are not so very reasonable, while others are even repugnant to nature, deserving to be branded for their cruelty. Among the last, he cites the manner of bringing an offender to trial, who in no case had the privilege of appeal. “When brought before the judge, if he confessed his crime, he was immediately taken from the tribunal to undergo the punishment awarded by the laws ; but if he denied the charge, he was cruelly tortured—he was stripped naked, suspended by the thumbs, and in that situation severely flogged, and then *smoked with chile*.”—(Torquemada, part ii. lib. 12, chap. 10.)

The worst feature of these institutions is, however, not the cruelty of their penal code, barbarous as that must appear to all, but rather the strongly marked aristocratic spirit to which the little wisdom that they embody is made subservient, and which must have placed them as a people in the position of mere serfs and vassals of the abbas or nobility. Nor can the splendour of their cities, and the magnificence of their courts, atone for the evils that domestic slavery must have occasioned, to say nothing of the ravages of war and the still more abominable concomitants of their God-dishonouring idolatry.

The best trait which we have been able to discover is one which redounds greatly to their credit. It is the evident importance they attached to the instruction of the young, such as it was. Remains of this practice we shall have occasion to refer to when treating of their present condition. The strong testimony of the historian on this subject is, that, “in the care and education of their children, they resembled the Lacedemonians, Spartans, Cretans, and the most polished nations of the world. They had schools in all their principal towns, both for boys and girls ; these were under the superintendence of elderly experienced persons.”†

It is, however, important and exceedingly interesting, as bearing upon the supposed Jewish origin of the Toltec or Quiché

* Juarros, p. 189 to 192. .

† Torquemada, part ii. chap. 28.

nations of whom we have been speaking, to observe that, after a careful investigation of their records, though the native historians do not appear to have noticed it, *it does not appear that human sacrifices were customary among them.* This horrid practice was almost, if not entirely, confined to the Aztec or Mexican nations; and where it did exist in the territories now comprised in Central America, it seems to have been confined to those tribes, not of the Toltec race, who had come from the countries further north. Some of these, like the Pipiles, who were settled along the shores of the Pacific, had been gradually introduced into the less populous lands under the pretext of commerce, with a view to prepare the way for the conquest of the Toltec nations by Autzol, the eighth king of Mexico, who, having been repulsed in more overt attempts to subdue them, thus endeavoured to accomplish his object by stratagem.* In the few places where Juarros speaks of human sacrifices having been offered to the idols *Camanelon* and *Esbalanquen*, they were evidently perpetrated in districts so peopled, and by other Indians than those of Toltec origin.

Juarros again unwittingly furnishes us with strong presumptive evidence that human sacrifices were not generally practised in Central America. Writing of these very Pipil Indians, he says, that, on account of their vast increase, "the Quichés and Kachiquels began to fear they would soon become formidable enough to assume the sovereignty of the territory they inhabited, and, therefore, sought every opportunity of oppressing them. The Pipiles, on the other hand, were not less determined to preserve their newly acquired possessions, and maintain the credit of their arms; accordingly they resolved (but as the Pipil MS., fol. 2, says, not without secret advice) to establish a military force in the same manner as had been prescribed by Autzol. It happened, however, that the chiefs of these troops, who held the supreme authority of the nation, exerted it tyrannically over the people, by exacting excessive tributes, and practising enormous extortions. These were rendered still more galling by the conduct of the principal cacique, Cuaucmichin, who attempted to introduce the practice of human sacrifices, according to the rites of the Mexican idolatry, and as an unequivocal proof of his intention, seized some men who were held in high estimation by the whole community, for his devoted victims. Exasperated by

* Juarros, p. 233.

an act so atrocious, the people suddenly attacked the residence of Cuaucmichin, and in their fury beat him to death with clubs and stones."*

It is also worthy of notice that the Aztecs were ever the most fierce and determined opponents of the Spaniards, and that the Toltecs, who were of a milder or tamer character, either sought their alliance, or sooner submitted to their sway; and when subjugated endured the yoke far more patiently than those Indians did who were not of the same stock.

Even in the conquest of Mexico this difference of disposition may be traced; as among the first and most faithful allies of the Spaniards are numbered the race who inhabited Tula, from which Nimaquiché emigrated with the swarm which founded the Quiché empire. This is fully corroborated by Juarros, when he says, that "the principal Indians, who came with the Spaniards from Mexico and Tlascala (to Guatemala), persuaded of the identity of their origin and that of the people of this country (Central America), declared themselves relations and friends, formed more intimate connections by intermarriages with the Quichés, and gave them a copy of the instrument by which they had received from the emperor, Charles the Fifth, the honour of a coat of arms, for the great services they had rendered to the Spanish army in the conquest of New Spain."†

But what was there in all or anything brought under our notice to turn away the sword of the avenger. Alas! nothing; therefore a captivity nearly as long as that which the children of Israel suffered in Egypt, was the discipline to which the God of providence saw fit to subject them.

* Juarros, p. 225.

† Juarros, p. 167.

CHAPTER V.

SUBJUGATION.

"And the fourth kingdom shall be strong as iron."—Dan. ii. 40.

The Instrument and the Resolve—Montezuma's Message to the King of Quiché—Diviners Consulted—Appointment of Alvarado's Expedition—Tecum Umam's Army and Defences—Progress of the Invaders—Xelahu entered—Treachery at Utatlan—Final Defeat of the Quichés—Submission of the Kachiquel Monarch—Conquest of the Sutugils and other Tribes—Cortés in Honduras—Revolt of the Quichés and Kachiquels—Second Subjugation—Foundation of the Capital—Expeditions against Uzpantaa, Copan, and Esteco's Invasion—Alvarado Governor.

THE ancient Iberian or Spanish race, tinged with Ishmaelitic blood, were, in the hand of God, the instrument with which he scourged the sanguinary idolaters and infanticides of Central and Southern America. The iron yoke was not, however, imposed without struggles and mighty throes on the part of the oppressed; nor were its restraints perpetuated without unremitting watchfulness and constantly renewed efforts on the part of the oppressor.

Scarcely had Cortés established this yoke of supremacy in Mexico, when reports reached him of other nations farther south upon whose necks it might be fastened. Forthwith he resolved upon their subjugation also, and in his fourth letter to his sovereign, Charles the Fifth, he informed him that he had even then directed an expedition to proceed to Guatemala, for which he assigned the following reasons:—"I have received information as well of the great riches of that country, as that in the opinion of many navigators there exists a strait leading from that bay [probably the Bay of Honduras, which he had visited] into the opposite sea, which is

the thing above all others in this world I am desirous of meeting with, on account of the immense utility which I am convinced would result from it to the advantage of your Imperial Majesty."

It is already apparent that there existed some degree of affinity between the reigning monarchs of Quiché and the Emperors of Mexico. That there was also a good understanding between the unfortunate Montezuma and Kicab-Tanub, the son of Kicab IV. who then filled the throne of Utatlan, appears from the fact that Montezuma, upon hearing of the proposed expedition directed against the south country, though himself narrowly watched, contrived to "send a private ambassador to Kicab-Tanub, king of Quiché, to inform him that some white men had arrived in his states, and made war upon him with such impetuosity that the whole strength of his people was unable to resist them; that he was himself a prisoner surrounded by guards; and hearing it was the intention of his invaders to pass on to the kingdom of Quiché, and subdue it, he sent notice of the design in order that Kicab-Tanub might be prepared to oppose them."*

This extract is taken from the fourth page of a MS. of 16 quarto folios, which was preserved by the Indians of the village of San Andres Xecul. The same manuscript also relates (at pages 5 and 6), "that as soon as the king of Quiché received this intelligence, he sent for four young diviners, whom he ordered to tell him what would be the result of the invasion. These persons requested time to give their answer, and, taking their bows, they discharged some arrows against a rock, but seeing that no impression was left upon it, they returned very sorrowfully, and told the king that there was no means of avoiding the disaster, for the white men would certainly conquer them. Kicab, not well satisfied with the reply, sent for the priests, and desired to have their opinions on this eventful subject; with great lamentations, they delivered a similar prognostic of disaster to their monarch, founding their conclusion upon the ominous circumstance of *a certain stone which had been brought by their forefathers from Egypt, and which was worshipped as a God, having suddenly split in two; an incident that portended the inevitable ruin of their empire.*"* These things did not deter the king from warlike preparations on a large scale, in making

* Juarros, p. 166, 167.

which, he expected and solicited the co-operation of the other branches of the Toltec nations; but in this he was disappointed, as the king of the Sutugils replied most contemptuously to his application, saying, that his people could defend themselves unassisted against the threatened danger; and Sinacan, actuated by displeasure at some assistance which the king of Quiché had rendered to his enemies, refused the alliance and openly declared himself a friend to the Teules (or gods), by whose means he hoped to be revenged. Galled at this treatment, and probably terror-stricken, as well as worn out with fatigue, arising out of the strenuous efforts he was making to maintain his independence, Kicab-Tanub sank into a premature grave. His son, Tecum Umam, on coming to the kingdom, had but little leisure to indulge in sorrow for the loss of his deceased parent, as the tzamaheles, or couriers, almost hourly brought him advice of the approach of the Spaniards, and called his attention to warlike dispositions.

The officer who had been chosen by Cortés to head this expedition was Don Pedro de Alvarado—one who, by former services, had proved himself worthy of his confidence, and well qualified for so important a command. If the Spaniards had by this time lost some of the prestige which at first was so greatly in their favour, they had also acquired no small experience in the peculiar kind of warfare by which they had so successfully overcome the Aztec nations; and now they added to their experience and undoubted valour, not only the peculiar advantage and novelty of their arms and tactics, but also great numbers of warlike followers—Tlascalans, Mexicans, and Cholultecans, who had become their allies, or rather their willing tools. These, under Spanish officers, they trained, directed, and encouraged by their own example, in a manner that must have rendered even natives more terrible to the assailed tribes than any foes they had ever yet encountered. But, notwithstanding all these advantages, it was not without great difficulty that these forces were enabled to advance into the enemy's country, not only for want of roads and bridges, but chiefly on account of the determined resistance offered by some of the hostile nations situated on their line of march.

The district of Soconusco, bordering on the Pacific and inhabited by the Pipil Indians, was the part of the country first entered (in 1524), but it does not appear that it was entirely subdued till after

the conquest of the Quichés. The fierce Indians of Tonola were, however, defeated in their resolute opposition to the invading army, which was composed at most of 250 Spanish infantry, 150 cavalry, 4,000 Mexican allies, and a few small pieces of artillery. Passing as rapidly over this district as the jungle, the numerous torrents and rivers, the deep ravines, and the intervening chains of lofty mountains which they had to pass, would permit, they directed their march upon "Xelahuh (or Quesaltenango), the largest, best fortified, and most important place in the kingdom of Quiché, which had at that time within its walls a force of 80,000 men for its defence."

Tecum Umam, though well prepared, through the providence of his father, to oppose Tonalteul (the sun of God) and his Teules, or divinities, for thus did the Indians designate Alvarado and his followers, was so affected by the fame of their exploits that his confidence began to waver. "He quitted his capital to meet them with great pomp, borne in his litter on the shoulders of the principal men in his kingdom, preceded by the music of flutes, cornets, and drums, and 70,000 men commanded by his principal general, Ahzol, his lieutenant, Ahzumanche, the grand shield-bearer, Ahpocob, many other officers of great dignity, and a great number of attendants bearing parasols and fans of feathers for the use of the royal person, all well armed and prepared for a vigorous resistance." This army, followed by an immense number of Tamames or bearers of burdens, moved but slowly. By the junction of several chiefs, bringing up their forces from eight strong towns and eighteen villages within their jurisdiction, it was soon increased to 90,000 fighting men. "He continued his march to Quesaltenango, where he was joined by ten more chiefs with magnificent trains, well armed and supplied with provisions; displaying all the gorgous insignia of their rank, and attended by 24,000 soldiers. At the same place he was reinforced by 46,000 more combatants, adorned with plumes of different colours, and provided with arms of every description; the chiefs were decorated with the skins of lions, tigers, and bears, as distinguished marks of their bravery and warlike prowess; this numerous squadron was commanded by eleven officers, all descendants of the renowned Capichoch. Tecum Umam, with all these reinforcements, now marshalled 232,000 warriors under his banners. The different divisions were posted on the

plain of Tzacaha, the field of battle of this first campaign. The monarch, at the head of this numerous army, had not sufficient reliance upon it to think himself secure. He fortified his camp with a wall of loose stones, which was so extensive as to enclose within its circuit several mountains; the wall was further strengthened by a deep ditch, lined with poisoned stakes, placed aslant in rows, one behind the other. All the country from Tzacaha to the pass leading to the coast, was occupied by the squadrons of Tecum Umam, besides which there were many well fortified towns; in the camp there were several military machines, or small portable castles, formed of beams and planks, which, being placed on rollers, were moved from one place to another by armed men; these were filled with great quantities of pikes, arrows, lances, shields, slings, and stones, and attended by chosen bodies of active soldiers, who distributed the munitions to the different divisions of the army.*

Notwithstanding the great advantages which the Spaniards possessed, this enormous army must have constituted a formidable opposition; and it appears that the utmost courage and perseverance of the invaders were called into action ere they could overcome it. Besides the difficulties presented by the nature of the country, the enemy, to retard their progress, cut many deep trenches in the way, and artfully covered them over. These at first occasioned some loss, and forced them to proceed with great caution, or to deviate from the direct line of march. Further on, the assailed placed a great number of what would now be called caltrops in the way. By these the feet of men and horses were grievously wounded, and many of these points being poisoned, in two or three days occasioned death in agonies of thirst. By means of ambuscades, the Indians also harassed their assailants, who, after taking the strong place and castle of Xetulul or Sapotitlan in the mountains, fought no less than ten or twelve actions with large bodies of Tecum Umam's forces ere they reached Xelahu.

Against the missiles, poisoned arrows, &c., which were showered in astonishing abundance by their opponents, the Spaniards were in a great measure protected by a kind of quilted jacket or loose coat, stuffed with cotton, which they wore. Their horses also were covered, and the riders wore breastplates and helmets, which sufficiently accounts for the comparative smallness of their losses.

* Juarros, p. 389, 390.

But their Mexican allies, not being so well provided, were slain in great numbers.

In the defile of the river Olinztepeque, the most desperate and bloody engagement took place. "The stream was reddened with the carnage of the wretched Indians, and from that time its name was changed for the significant one of Xiquigel, or the river of blood. The enemy retired, but soon formed again with fresh troops, and renewed the contest. They attacked the Castilians with such furious desperation, that three or four of them seized the tail of each horse, and endeavoured, by main force, to overthrow both it and the rider. This was one of the severest conflicts in which the Spaniards had hitherto been engaged; immense bodies of the enemy surrounded and pressed upon them in all directions, but their courage, superior to every danger, rescued them from this perilous situation; they pierced the solid squadrons of the Quichés, broke them, and totally routed the whole army. An immense number was left dead upon the field; amongst them were the generals Ahzumanche* and Ahzol, the latter of whom was the king's near kinsman; also the royal shield-bearer Ahpocob, who commanded a large division of the army."

This defeat was not final. It was, however, so serious a check that for some time the Spaniards remained unmolested in their march. On the fourth day after it they entered the city of Xelabuh, and found it deserted of its inhabitants. These were subsequently induced to return, and afterwards remained faithful to the Spaniards. Finding that all the forces of the surrounding country were collecting to make another attack upon them, and that the advanced body of the Indians consisted of two *xiquipiles*, or 16,000 men, the Spaniards quitted the city, and took up a favourable position on a plain. Here the Indians met them, led on by Tecum Umam himself, who thrice furiously attacked Alvarado in person, and once wounded his horse so severely that he was obliged to dismount and procure another. At length Alvarado inflicted upon the king a wound with his lance, from which he died almost immediately. Upon this event the infuriated Indians made a desperate onslaught; they were, however, finally repulsed by the close column of their better disciplined enemies, and they broke away in the most precipitate flight, leaving the Spaniards completely masters of the field.

* Juarros, p. 391.

But neither was this contest final. The Indians being now convinced of their inferiority to their assailants in battle, next resorted to an act of deep-laid treachery. In Utatlan, the capital city, Chignaviucelut, the son of Tecum Umam, had succeeded to the supreme authority of the kingdom. By the advice of his counselors, he sent an embassy to Alvarado with a handsome present of gold, suing for peace and forgiveness, offering submission, and inviting the victorious army to an entertainment in the capital. Alvarado received the embassy with caresses, and, returning some trifling presents to the king, unsuspectingly accepted the proffered invitation. The victorious army decamped on the following day for Utatlan in high spirits, greatly rejoicing at their success, and regarding the war as terminated. "But on entering the city, and observing the strength of the place, that it was well walled, and surrounded by a deep ravine, having but two approaches to it—the one by an ascent of twenty-five steps, and the other by a causeway, both of which were extremely narrow—that the streets were but of trifling breadth, and the houses very lofty; perceiving, also, that there were neither women nor children in the place, and that the Indians appeared greatly agitated, the soldiers began to suspect some deceit. Their apprehensions were soon confirmed by the Indians of Quesaltenango, who (already become friendly) accompanied the army; these had discovered that the people of Utatlan intended that night to set the town on fire, in order to destroy the Spaniards, and that large bodies of them lay concealed in the neighbouring defiles, who were, as soon as they saw the flames, to fall upon the Spaniards as they endeavoured to escape from the fire."^o

Upon this information they proceeded to examine the houses, and, instead of provisions wherewith to feast their guests, they found that abundance of light dry fuel and combustibles had been provided. Alvarado, no longer doubting, assembled a council, which resulted in the immediate withdrawal of the army to an open plain, without any appearance of alarm, and under the pretext of permitting their horses to graze at liberty. The king, with pretended courtesy, accompanied them to the plain, where he was at once made a prisoner, summarily tried, and forthwith executed. This act again provoked the rage of the Quichés, a general attack was made, and the Spaniards were assailed simultaneously on all

^o Juarros, p. 396.

sides by great numbers of infuriated Indians; but they were defeated once more. "The artillery was brought into action, and made dreadful havoc in the enemy's ranks, who, however, maintained the contest with desperate valour for a short time, but they were soon thrown into confusion; the leaders were unable to rally their hordes against the destructive fire of the guns, and they abandoned a field already covered with heaps of slain; some fled to their places of refuge, and others threw away their arms in token of submission, and surrendered themselves and their caciques to the generosity of their conquerors, who by this victory remained undisputed masters of the kingdom."*

The victors now ventured to re-enter Utatlan, and remained there during an entire week, examining the city, exploring the surrounding country, and completing the conquest by receiving the submission of adjacent villages. In this interval Alvarado also received ambassadors from Sinacan, † king of Guatemala, who brought him a present of gold, tendered the submission of their master, offered auxiliary troops, and gave him an invitation to their capital. Alvarado was pleased to receive them graciously, and accepting their submission and invitation, he requested that 2,000 men might be sent him to serve as guides, and to clear the roads for the further advance of his army.

With consummate policy the Spanish commander continued the semblance of Quiché royalty in the legitimate heir to the throne. Before Alvarado left Utatlan, Sequechul, the next in succession to Chignaviucelut, was proclaimed king. The command of the forces stationed in the province was deputed to Leon Cardona, and the required escort of 2,000 Kachiquel Indians having arrived, Alvarado and the main body of his forces moved on to Guatemala.

It was not without undissembled fears of treachery, and consequent precautions, that the Spaniards advanced into the territories, and soon after entered the capital of their new ally. Sinacaa, however, dispelled these feelings, and while feasting Alvarado he found little difficulty in persuading him at once to direct his arms against the third division of the Quiché empire, now become the next step necessary to the accomplishment of his purpose to subdue the whole country. This was the kingdom of Sutugil, the capital of which was Atitlan; it was also called Atziquinixai, which, in

* Juarros, p. 396.

† Francisco Vasquez calls this king, Apotsotzil.

the Quiché idiom, means "The Eagle's House," a name, says Juarros, "originating in the practice of their kings, who, when they took the field, wore, as a distinguishing device, a large plume of Quesal's feathers in the form of an eagle," but which more probably indicated the secure and lofty position of the place, among steep, hanging rocks, on the borders of the lake of the same name.

Offers of peace, on conditions of immediate submission to Spanish rule, were first tendered and three times rejected by the haughty Sutugils, who felt secure in their mountain fortresses and rock-encircled lake. Leaving a sufficient garrison for the protection of Guatemala, Alvarado marched against them with a force consisting of 40 horse, 100 infantry, and 2,000 Guatemalan Indians, and, as on the occasion previously described, he successfully overcame the forces sent against him, took their rocky fastnesses, their capital, and lake, and made himself master of this kingdom also. "From that period the Sutugils have remained faithful subjects of the Spaniards, even during the rebellion of the Quichés and Kachiquels, which took place two years afterwards."*

Thus, in the course of one year (1524), did the Spaniards, by a series of extraordinary exertions and successes, complete the conquest of the three principal nations of these realms. They had still to subdue a considerable number of the subjects of Sinacan who did not concur in his act of voluntary submission, but were in actual rebellion against him, in which they had been supported by the kings of Quiché and Sutugil. The number of these was considerably increased by his alliance with the Children of the Sun, and among them none gave more trouble than the warlike inhabitants of the valley of Zacatepequez. These Indians were the first to imitate the military movements of the invaders, forming their forces into squadrons of 1,000 men each, and attacking and retiring in succession, so as to maintain the fight without soon fatiguing the combatants. The subsequent reduction of the strong fortress of Mixco also proved an arduous undertaking even to the Teules. And besides these, there remained still unconquered numerous and resolute tribes of Pipiles, Mams, and others who inhabited the lowlands and warmer valleys bordering on either ocean.

* Juarros, p. 386 and 433.

While the contest was still pending with some of these unsubdued and fierce Indians, they retaliated upon those who had submitted to the Spaniards, by making inroads upon them, in which "they carried off many of the women and children that were employed in looking after their Milpas or fields of maize, and other plantations, and sacrificed the hearts of the latter to their idols." But, nevertheless, these and many other hazardous expeditions were terminated with the success which almost invariably attended the Spanish arms; and in October 1525 Alvarado, thinking his labours at an end, resolved to return to Spain to give an account of his conquests to his Imperial master; and he took a formal leave of the Cabildo or municipal corporation of Guatemala for that purpose.

In the mean time, Hernan Cortés, the commander-in-chief, had taken separate measures for the subjugation of that part of the country which borders on the Atlantic. Christoval de Olid, sent by him, had landed and founded cities on the shores of Guaimura, or Honduras. But being informed that Olid had revolted, Cortés had sent another officer named Las Casas to supersede him, against whom De Olid was at first victorious, but associating with him some of the men attached to his rival, he was soon after murdered by them, and Las Casas, obtaining quiet possession of authority, then founded the town and port of Truxillo. Cortés, receiving no information from Las Casas, and probably led on by the hope of discovering the much desired oceanic channel, was induced to undertake the journey *over land* from Mexico by the lake of Itza or Peten to Honduras. This enterprise, accomplished in 1525 at the greatest risks and with unwonted fatigues, is really more astonishing to those acquainted with the nature of the country than even all the victories gained over the Indians. During his stay in Honduras Cortés founded a town called Natividad at Porto Caballos, which was afterwards abandoned. He appointed another governor, and returned to Mexico after an absence of more than two years.

Pedro de Alvarado being informed that Cortés was in the province of Honduras, felt it necessary to suspend his own purpose of returning to Europe, and at once repaired thither to pay his respects to his superior Captain-General. He set out early in 1526 with this object, and while prosecuting his journey, met, at Choluteca, a company of officers and men who had arrived with Cortés at Honduras, but were now on their return to Mexico through the Quiché

territory. Being informed by them that the commander-in-chief had re-embarked at Truxillo and sailed for Mexico, Alvarado united himself with them, and returned towards Guatemala.

Great was the change and bitter the disappointment which awaited him as he retraced his steps. All the territories he had just passed through, and in which as governor and captain-general he had so very lately received the homage of the people, he now found in a state of rebellion and open warfare. This change had been brought about during his absence by the rapacious covetousness of his brother Gonzalo Alvarado, who had been left at Guatemala in the capacity of lieutenant-governor. Anxious to enrich himself in a short time, he had required that several hundred "Alabones," or children, should be employed at the different gold washings, and that each child should bring him 90 grains of gold every day, or, as Vasquez relates, that "they should deliver to him daily a reed as thick as their little fingers filled with grains of gold, under the penalty of being detained as slaves in case of default."* The required quantity not being obtained, some severities were resorted to, and even death was threatened in order to keep the Indians up to this unreasonable exaction, which naturally goaded them on to rebel.

As might be supposed, the king of the Kachiquels had ere this discovered his error in trusting to the good faith of the Teules. By this time he was exceedingly dissatisfied with their conduct towards him. When he made terms with their leader, and became a vassal to the crown of Spain, it was for selfish ends. These had not only been thwarted, but he found that his own authority in his kingdom was really taken from him by his new masters, nothing but the merest semblance of it being left. Sinacan was, therefore, prepared to shake off the yoke he had so incautiously imposed upon himself and upon his people. The circumstances above related afforded him a favourable opportunity. Finding that he readily obtained the co-operation of other caciques who were as dissatisfied as himself, he proceeded to release Sequechul, the king of Quiché, who had been a prisoner now about two years. The latter sent messengers to the chiefs of Utatlan and others, and in a short period the two kings assembled around them a body of upwards of 30,000 Indians.

* Juarros, p. 463.

At the same time "one of their papas, or priests of their idols, named Panaguani, persuaded the Indians of the valley of Zacatepequez, who had been conquered with so much difficulty, that their god Camanelon had appeared to him, and was much enraged that his friendly Zacatepequez, distrusting his power and protection, had surrendered to the Teules of Castile, who came for no other purpose than to take from them their lands and liberties; he exhorted them to take up arms again, promising to assist and give them the victory." So far and wide did the insurrection now spread, that in a few days almost the entire provinces of Quiché and Kachiquel were induced to revolt against Spanish authority; and those Spaniards who had remained in Guatemala had to put themselves in a posture of defence.

Alvarado, who had his escort most opportunely strengthened by the troops going to Mexico, met with immediate opposition, by which one Spaniard was killed and three were wounded. Nevertheless, he advanced by hasty marches towards Guatemala. At the defile of Jalpatagua, which he could not avoid, he was encountered by a numerous body of Indians, and then suffered a considerable loss and the detention of three days ere he could reconquer the rock fortress that commanded that pass. He was again attacked on the llanos (or plains) of Canales, and was delivered from overpowering numbers only by the timely succour of some friendly Indian forces, under the Cacique Cahaulan,* whose rebellious subjects formed the bulk of the assailants on this occasion. On descending a height called the ridge of Las Cañas, there happened so smart a shock of an earthquake, that the soldiers were unable to keep their feet.†

After dispersing another force led on by Sequechul, they made good their entry into Guatemala. The Spanish inhabitants of the capital, divided into three bodies under as many leaders, had taken the field and resisted four attacks made by Sinacan and his supporters, and two under Sequechul, and it required all their activity and military skill to support themselves against the Indians. Their forces were obliged to remain encamped during the months of June, July, and August, suffering great inconvenience from the violent heat and heavy rains.

* *Juanros*, on mentioning this friendly person, states that his name translated signifies, "the faithful will come;" and gravely adds, "rather a prophetic epithet, as in his time the Christians came to preach the Gospel."

† Bernal Diaz, chap. 169.

Alvarado, immediately on his arrival, sent embassies to Sinacan and Sequechul, offering them terms of peace. These they refused, withdrawing to the volcano of Quesaltenango, where, with a great number of their principal nobles and a large body of warriors, they fortified themselves very strongly. Alvarado also despatched an officer named Portocarrera, with a suitable force once more to reduce the Indians of the valley of Zacatepequez. In this expedition one of the Teules and three Tlascalans were made prisoners, and sacrificed together to the idol Camanelon. When victorious, the Spaniards retaliated by strangling Panaguai, the principal priest and promoter of the insurrection.

Notwithstanding the unsatisfactory state of affairs, Alvarado now felt it necessary to go to Mexico, and thence to Spain, in order to defend himself from certain attacks that had been made upon his character. He, therefore, appointed Portocarrera lieutenant-governor, and committed to him the reduction of the two revolted kings. This commander having returned victorious from Zacatepequez called a council of war, where it was agreed that the best mode of preventing the further spread of the insurrection would be the capture of the persons of Sinacan and Sequechul.

Portocarrera, therefore, leaving a deputy in the capital, set out for Quesaltenango with a force of 674 men, of which nearly one-half were Spaniards, and four pieces of artillery. With these he attacked the precipitous rock upon which the two kings had fortified themselves. After many engagements and more than two months siege, it was carried by assault, and both monarchs being made prisoners were afterwards retained in confinement for fifteen years. Thus was the insurrection quelled, and the final subjugation of the three nations completed. This last exploit was achieved on the 22nd November 1526, a day still observed in commemoration of the event throughout the country.

Though the Spaniards had for some time inhabited Guatemala, which was probably an Indian city occupying the site now called Almolonga, on the declivity of the "Volcan de Agua," it was not till the following year, 1527, that the Spanish capital was formally founded and built. In less than fourteen years it was ruined, as related in a previous chapter, by the falling of a great body of water from the crater of the volcano. After that event, while the council were solemnly deliberating in the dilapidated cathedral, on

the rebuilding or removal of the city, several shocks of earthquake were felt in quick succession, which rather summarily put a stop to business, on account of certain apprehensions entertained that the church would be thrown down, and crush the people assembled in it. In 1541 the city was rebuilt on the spot now occupied by the "Antigua," or old capital, which, though "a term of fifty years never elapsed without its sustaining some injury," retained its rank till the year 1776, when the desolation and ruin caused by repeated and successive earthquakes, especially those of 1773, occasioned its transfer to the valley of Las Vacas, where the city of New Guatemala now stands.

In the year 1529, an expedition was undertaken by Gaspar de Arias, Alcalde of Guatemala, for the purpose of subjugating the Indians of Uzpantan, inhabiting a mountainous district on the borders of the provinces Totonacapan and Vera Paz. These mountaineers were a fierce and warlike race, who had not yet been assailed, and who incessantly excited the Quichés to revolt. After a campaign of six months, during which only places of minor importance were taken, Arias returned to the capital on private business, and resigned the command. Pedro de Olmos, his successor, rashly attacked the stronghold of Uzpantan, and suffered a defeat. "To render this affair still more disastrous, many of the Indian allies were made prisoners, and sacrificed by those of Uzpantan, who (without previously killing them) tore out their hearts, which were presented as an offering to the idol Esbalanquen." This was followed by a retreat and temporary abandonment of the undertaking, which was afterwards resumed by one Francisco de Castellanos, who first took Nebah, and at length, in 1530, reduced Uzpantan, which was defended by 10,000 men besides auxiliaries from without. These Indians, when subdued, were the first who were openly branded and kept as slaves by the Spaniards.*

During the absence of Alvarado, when Orduña had arrived in Guatemala (in 1530) as provisional governor, and had thrown the capital into disorder by his oppressions and extraordinary proceedings, many of the Indians, and particularly those of Chiquimula and the districts bordering on Honduras, seized the opportunity of relieving themselves from the yoke of the Spaniards, and recovering their native independence. Another war ensued, in which the

* Juarros, p. 302 and 474.

... being all burned together. They
 ... of a hill, but removed about night-
 ... a more secure position, in a little valley
 ... had not been in this new situation above two
 ... company was alarmed by hearing tremen-
 ... they shortly saw the eminence whereon they had
 ... enveloped in flames."* The Cacique Copán-Calel,
 ... well fortified in the important city of Copán,
 ... himself, made a long and resolute resistance, and,
 ... retired to another town, and thence to the mountains.
 ... made his submission, and was kindly received at
 ... by Hernando de Chaves, the commander of that expe-
 ...

About the same period, Martin Estete made an inroad upon the
 province of Salvador. He was an adventurer connected with
 Pedrarias Davilla, who, with his brother Gonzales, conquered
 Nicaragua in 1523, and now wished to extend its territories.
 The expeditions in this the southern part of Central America
 were quite separate from the operations we have been following,
 and may in some respects be considered as rival. On this occasion
 forces were sent from Guatemala against Estete, and he was driven
 back into Nicaragua, leaving behind him his own men and 2,000
 Indians, whom he had taken prisoners. The deserted Spanish
 soldiers joined the victorious forces, and, by the restoration of the
 Indian prisoners to liberty, a favourable impression was produced
 upon their minds towards their liberators, which was taken advan-
 tage of to spread the dominion of the white man in this remote
 part of the kingdom. But numbers of Indians continued inimical
 to it, and committed frequent acts of hostility, severely harrassing
 those who remained friendly to the Spaniards. Expeditions were,
 therefore, sent against them both in 1533 and in 1535; but of
 these no authentic accounts remain.

"On the 11th of April (1530), Pedro de Alvarado arrived (in
 Honduras) with a commission as Governor and Captain-General of
 the kingdom of Guatemala; he came from Mexico with all possible
 expedition, having heard of the incursion of Martin Estete, and on
 that account bringing with him a reinforcement of 80 soldiers; but
 on reaching the capital he found Estete had retreated, and with the

* Juarros, p. 303-374.

90 of his men who were then in the city, and the 80 who had accompanied him from Mexico, he founded the town of Olanchito, in a remote part of Honduras, under the command of his brother Diego de Alvarado.

On reviewing the difficulties overcome, and the extent of country conquered by Pedro de Alvarado, Juarros remarks,—“ It must, indeed, remain a striking proof of extraordinary perseverance and courage, both in himself and his followers, that in so short a space of time he was enabled to subjugate so vast an extent of territory, defended, as it was, *by such multitudes of warlike natives : for at that period the population exceeded in numerical strength its present amount, which would be insignificant in the comparison.*”

In thus far tracing the leading features of the prowess of Alvarado's arms, we have arrived at the point where the power of Spain was fully established in Central America, and where the three Toltec kingdoms of Quiché, Kachiquel, and Sutugil, as well as the territories of many subordinate caciques and predatory tribes, were together constituted a colony of Spain, under the title of the “ Kingdom or Captain-Generalship of Guatemala,” which, while nominally subject to Mexico, or New Spain, was still separate and distinct from it. If, in following these military exploits, we have, for a time, lost sight of the so-called religious operations of the invaders, it was only that, being looked at separately from other matters, their character might be more clearly perceived. In the conquest, we cannot but recognise the wrath of God revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men ; who, because His eternal power and godhead are clearly seen in, and demonstrated by, the things that are made, are pronounced “ without excuse,” and especially so for the high crime of “ changing the glory of the incorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man.” And we adore the mercy, though mingled with terrific judgments, that interposed even the curse of such a conquest to save a remnant of these nations from that dissolution which must have followed as an inevitable consequence of their ignorance of God, their unthankfulness, their vain imaginations, their foolish and darkened hearts, and all the catalogue of fearful and unnatural sins of which these moral evils are the prolific and never-failing seeds.

CHAPTER VI.

PROPAGANDA.

Sanctified Gunpowder—*Popish Missions*—Bartholemew Las Casas—Vera Paz—Tolagalpa, or the Mosquito Shore—Honduras—Massacre of Priests and Escort—Legend of Taguzgalpa—Murder of Three Friars—'Precious Relics'—College de Propaganda Fide—Costa Rica—Expeditions to the Chols, Mopans and Lacandons—Total Failure.

"All they that take the sword shall perish with the sword."—Matth. xxvi. 52.

As the first act of Cortés and his followers, when they set foot upon the shores of Mexico, was an act of prostrate adoration to a crucifix planted in the sand, so, throughout their extensive campaigns, the unflinching accompaniment of the Spanish camp was a Popish priest, and a tent where mass was said or sung. In consistency with this, the very first building erected in every township that they founded was a church, generally dedicated to the Virgin Mary, to some favourite saint, or sometimes, and but rarely, to one of the three names of the Trinity. The most fertile valleys, and the more temperate plains, were no sooner subdued than they were infested with monastic establishments; and the conquests, so fiercely achieved by the sword and the mysterious fire-arms of the pale warrior, were retained in the more tenacious grasp, and consolidated by the subtler influence, of the crafty ecclesiastic.

By such means, under pretence of spreading the doctrines of the Crucified, the already degraded idolater was flattered and cajoled, or coerced and terrified, into the adoption of forms and fables only a little more refined and cunningly devised than those of his ancestors. Allured by the pomp of outward symbols, or actuated by the pride of a "voluntary humility" and devotecism congenial to the unregenerate heart, and at the same time forcibly restrained from indulging in those ruder observances which long

practice had endeared—his mind, meanwhile, bowed down beneath the weight of physical and moral wrong—what wonder that the dispirited idolater sullenly submitted to the hated imposition, and that the change, gradually becoming familiar, was permitted to assume the inveterate force of habit !

The mystery of iniquity, which assimilated with Druidism in Albion and Gaul, and with polytheism at Rome—which at one period raised crusades against Islamism, and at another insinuated itself into the heart of the Celestial Empire, among the votaries of Budd and Foh,—lost none of its characteristic flexibility and adaptation to circumstances, among the natives of tropical America. As the Jesuits acted in Paraguay, so did some of the same fraternity, in conjunction with Dominican, Franciscan, and Capuchin monks and friars in Central America, though perhaps with less union, and therefore with less decisive results. The Indian galas and festivities, their amusements and rude instruments of music, were early associated with the pomp of the Romish Church, and continue so to this day. Nor did she fail to avail herself of the advantages of position and superior knowledge which her sons enjoyed. If she could afford to dispense with the outward help to veneration and abject submission which the armed Teules possessed over the natives, she was not, it appears, willing to let pass the opportunity of sharing it with them. No; the appalling effect which fire-arms and gunpowder were sure to produce was made subservient to the ends of priestcraft and clerical exaltation; and the firing of guns and musketry, in conjunction with sky-rockets and other fireworks, were severally introduced, so as to form an important element in all the processions and most grave solemnities of "La Santa Madre Iglesia."*

This practice is still universal in Central America; and, as we are informed, in Mexico also; and, indeed, on all the southern continent. With every religious festival, and on each recurrence of jubilee or any notable saint's day, guns and muskets are fired, and sky-rockets are let off at all hours of the day, in great numbers, from the roofs of cathedrals, parish churches, and convents; and frequently a grand display of fireworks, accompanied with religious ceremonies, characteristically closes the pageants of the church.†

* The Holy mother church.

† So much are rockets and fireworks in demand in Central America, in consequence of

The din of detonation thus produced, the effect of which is now generally heightened by the clamour of many bells, is often deafening and overpowering. To the thoughtful mind it must be anything but devotional; to the weak and childish it is exciting, if not awful. But to the Indian, who had heard noises such as these for the first time on the field of battle, on the day when his people were vanquished, and his monarch, his cacique, and, it may be, his nearest kindred were slain—to the ignorant Indian, who perceived the results without knowing the cause which produced them, the effect must have been terrific in the extreme. No wonder that he was led to venerate, as superhuman, men possessed of such power! No wonder that he was led to extend to the sable Teules the feeling of awe which he entertained for their steel-clad brethren. And who will marvel that, under such influences as these, he became a ready, if not a willing, convert from his own idolatry to that of the Church of Rome?

The missionary monks of later date were at least zealous to proselytize the Indians. In their efforts to conquer (*conquistar* is the too appropriate term which they themselves employ to designate their labours), some of them gave proof of enthusiastic disinterestedness, if it was nothing more. One, at least, of their number has earned for himself the honourable title of *the Indian's friend*, and so many lovely traits are presented in his character as to lead to the supposition that he was indeed a true believer. This was Bartholomew Las Casas, who came, with others of his order, to settle in the city of Guatemala, in the year 1536. He was the Vicar of the Dominican convent there, and afterwards became the Bishop of Chiapas, in which character he is better known to the

this practice, that they are now prepared to great perfection throughout the country: and in Guatemala the places where they are sold are about as numerous as tobacconist-shops are in European towns. The manufacture of gunpowder was, till lately, a government monopoly, which yielded a considerable revenue. "The captain of a ship lately arrived in England from the Brazil, says,—'On the first few days after my arrival in Pernambuco, my attention was drawn to a number of sky-rockets, which were frequently discharged by day as well as by night. On inquiry, I found that they were fired off from the tops of certain cathedrals by the priests, and that prayers, written on slips of paper, were attached to them; that these prayers were addressed to particular saints, and that persons who wished to appeal to their favourite saints brought these papers to the priests, with a sum of money, in order that they might be sent off with the greatest possible speed by means of these sky-rockets.'"—*Christian Times*, 20th April 1849. The idea which the Brazilians are here said to attach to this practice is not prevalent in the Central States; but the facts have led us to conclude its origin to be as stated above.

world. Some years before this he had written a treatise, entitled "De unico vocationis modo," the object of which was to prove that the preaching of the Gospel was the only divinely instituted means of converting unbelievers to the Christian faith, and that the use of carnal weapons must always prove a real obstacle to the attainment of that end. Sincerely believing his own humane theory, he preached it at Guatemala both from the pulpit and in private assemblies, and, as a result, was generally ridiculed, and tauntingly challenged personally to try its application. To this challenge Las Casas at once assented, and chose to begin with the province of Tuzulutlán, which the Spaniards had called Tierra de Guerra (the land of war), from the failure of three attempts which had been made to conquer it. Charles V. afterwards named it Vera Paz (true peace), on account of the success of the peaceful measures taken under the direction of Las Casas.

The Dominicans having obtained a promise that they should not be interfered with for five years, the term of which was afterwards extended, first composed some hymns in the Quiché language, embracing the chief points of sacred history. These were sung by some of the friendly Indians who introduced themselves among the others in the character of traders, and they soon came to the ears of the chief cacique, afterwards called Don Juan. Anxious to know more of things so interesting and so new, the cacique was induced to send for one of the holy fathers, who soon persuaded him to burn his idols. In 1537, Las Casas himself, and another monk, set out for the abode of the Cacique Don Juan, and having visited the surrounding country, they induced many of the natives, who lived in scattered huts, to form villages. The present townships of Ravinal and Coban were then established, and subsequently, that of Cajabon and others. According to Juarros, "Las Casas affirms, in his 'Apologetical History' (of the aborigines), that in no part of the Indies did he find governments better ordered, or ruled by better laws, than those he met with in this district." *

But in order to the general application of the enlightened policy of Las Casas, men were required who had the faith and the benevolence that distinguished him. Such men were wanting; and as a consequence, his good example remained unfollowed, and, like a light in a dark place, it now serves only the better to expose the faults of his contemporaries and successors.

* Juarros, p. 267.

As a sample of these missions, or rather what is recorded concerning them, we take the following from Juarros, generally quoting his own words, and even where some are omitted for the sake of brevity, always preferring to use the expressions of the historian.

The missionaries appear to have early directed their attention to the wilds of Honduras, and parts of the Mosquito Shore. The province of Tologalpa, as it was called, included under the general appellations of Jicaques, or Indios Bravos (terms indiscriminately applied by the Spaniards), many unsubdued tribes, and among them Moscos, or Mosquito men, Lacandons, and Poyais, well known for their indomitable fierceness. At the beginning of the 17th century, Estevan Verdalete left Guatemala, at the head of a mission consisting of twenty-eight persons, to whom six more were afterwards added at Comayagua, the capital of Honduras. These were partly priests and partly warriors, some of whom were already acquainted with the country. Penetrating into the mountain district, after several days they reached some hovels of the natives. "The Indians advanced to meet them, bringing large quantities of flowers, which they strewed upon the ground, or threw upon the persons of the party; they were attended by a sort of music, to which they danced, and showed many other demonstrations of excessive joy. There were, however, some among them painted black, with plumes of feathers on their heads and lances in their hands, apparently more inclined for war than a peaceable interview; this made the visitants suspect treachery.

"The zealous missionaries commenced the work of regeneration without loss of time; a large cross was erected, around which they assembled as many Indians as they could collect, and explaining to them, as well as circumstances would permit, some of the sacred mysteries; made a brief recapitulation of the Holy Scriptures from the creation of the world to the coming of the Redeemer. Verdalete declared he would pass the remainder of his life among them, if necessary, to instruct them in the way of salvation."

A church and huts for the priests were now erected—adults were instructed—children baptized—and strenuous efforts made to obtain the good will of the natives. In a few weeks, "there were many whose conversion was so far completed that they received baptism. The season of Lent was passed in giving instruction to such of the

stragglers as came from the recesses of the mountains; processions were made, at which they assisted; Passion-week was celebrated; and some, who were thought sufficiently capable of understanding the nature of the rites, admitted as communicants; others attended the public worship with every appearance of sincere devotion. The exertions of the ministers were compensated by 130 converts, besides the baptism of many children."* Having ascertained that the tribes in this district were *very numerous*, reports were sent to Guatemala, and more assistants requested. Soon, however, the Indians forsook the new village, and returning at night set fire to it and the church, but did no injury to the priests, who, crucifix in hand, in the midst of the conflagration, threatened them with the vengeance of God. At daybreak the Spaniards found themselves alone, and determined upon returning to Guatemala to give an account of what had happened. Here they were received with joy. The Governor assigned them an escort of twenty-five soldiers, giving the command to one, Captain Daza, who had shared in their late dangers. In less than two years' time from their first departure, they started once more, and early in 1611 again reached the confines of Tologalpa. Here, by means of friendly Indians, they drew some others from their retreat in the mountains. Such of these as were still considered Pagans were admitted to baptism as fast as they acquired the requisite instruction, and all were settled in small villages.

Daza, finding it difficult to dissuade the priests from going in search of the escaped converts, proposed to precede them with his soldiers. The Indians, at first friendly, soon collected in force and attacked him, so that he effected his retreat with difficulty and with some loss. The hatred to the Christians was not appeased by this measure, but the contrary effect was produced, as one of the soldiers had killed an Indian who struck him. Nevertheless, "they sent to tell the fathers they were very sorry for the past disputes, and wished to be made Christians, if the Spaniards would come into the mountains to them, but hoped they would leave their fire-arms behind, as they desired to avoid war, wished for peace, and to become good friends."†

The captain once more restrained the ardour of the priests, and went himself with some of the soldiers, without arms, to negotiate

* Juarros, p. 348, 351.

† Juarros, p. 355.

with them. After four or five days, seven canoes descended the river, and the Indians said Daza desired the ministers would come to him; but they brought no letter. Against the persuasion of the remaining soldiers, "these infatuated men, full of apostolic zeal, and sighing for the crown of martyrdom, replied, that no time could be more propitious for obtaining what they so much desired, and with some of the soldiers entered the canoes;" they went far, till they saw the side of a hill covered with naked Indians, painted black, with helmets of feathers, and armed with lances. On the point of one long lance was the head of Daza, and upon others the hands of some of his soldiers. Verdalete, landing first, reproached them for their treachery, rebuked their idolatry, and threatened them with the vengeance of Heaven for their murderous acts. "These upbraidings infuriated them to the utmost; they gave a signal by sounding a sort of pipe, and immediately fell upon the defenceless priest, inflicted innumerable wounds, which he, like another St. Stephen, received upon his knees, praying for his murderers." They then killed the remainder of his party and mutilated their remains, portions of which, the historian says, they ate, drinking out of the skulls, &c., desecrating the vestments and dresses in their dances, and making pendants for the ears and nose of the chalices and other utensils of the altar, with many more excesses. He adds—"at least, such was the information given by the Indians to a missionary who in after times visited the country."

"For many years the Indians of Tologalpa saw nothing more of the Christians; not for want of zealous men who wished to continue their exertions, but because the prelates did not think proper to grant permission."

In 1774, however, a young man named Pedro Lagares entered upon this field, where he laboured five years, and died in 1779, at New Segovia. He made incursions into the mountains and brought to the villages more than 200 Indians, who came to confession, besides children, as appears from a certificate signed by two captains. Three Franciscans afterwards exerted themselves so greatly, that in two years more than 300 Indians were baptized. "For several years rapid progress was made in the conversion of the natives of this province, fresh assistance being occasionally sent from Guatemala. It is, however, now (1811) more than half a century since the Franciscans have abandoned the province of Tologalpa to its

idolatry. What occasioned the discontinuation of this work, at a time when it was proceeding under favourable circumstances, appears not to be accurately known.*

The northern coast of the Mosquito Shore, which was the province of Taguzgalpa, described by Juarros as "*populous in the extreme,*" was also the scene of one of the earliest missions. In 1622, Martinez, an Andalusian friar, and Vaena, a lay companion, landed at Cape Gracios à Dios. They had with them only four Indian interpreters taken from the island of Ruatan, and committed themselves to Providence on a desert shore, and in a country inhabited by barbarians—an act of heroism, says Juarros, that leaves far behind the boasted exploit of Cortés in ordering the destruction of the ships in which he arrived at Vera Cruz. "In this solitude they passed two days; on the morning of the third they observed a numerous body of the natives, both male and female, approaching; the men were naked, with the exception of a piece of cloth before them painted red, with plumes of feathers in their heads, and lances in their hands; the women were also painted red, had small aprons before them, and garlands of flowers on their heads; the last person of this company was a venerable old man with long white hair. On coming up to the missionaries he made a profound obeisance, said, in a language they could understand, that they were welcome, and asked why they had so long delayed coming, to the great risk of his dying before their arrival? He added, that he had long expected them with the greatest anxiety, and came to render his services; that he was not blameable for not having come before now to pay his respects, because he had understood they were to arrive by land, and had placed sentinels on the tops of the highest mountains to give him notice of their approach. Great, indeed, was the astonishment of Martinez and his companions at this unexpected address; and asking the old man who had given him information of their intended visit, he replied (*mirabile dictu!*),—That being one day at work in his plantation, there appeared to him a white child, more beautiful than anything he had before seen or could imagine; it looked at him with great tenderness, and said,—'know that you will not die before you become a Christian; there will come here some white men, with robes of the colour of this ground reaching to their feet; when they arrive, receive them kindly, and

* Juarros, p. 368.

do not permit any one to anger them, for they are ministers of God, who has granted thee this signal mark of His mercy, because thou hast done well, and hast supported those who wanted assistance !” The historian adds, that this old man, *even in his idolatry*, was an almsgiver and a peace-maker. Martinez greatly rejoiced, and promised to be a good pastor to the old man. A church and village were soon constructed, and crosses were raised in divers places by the side of the paths. The old man was baptized, and many of the Indians followed his example out of the respect they bore him, and because they understood these were the fathers long since announced to them by the god of the mountains.

In three months time, a boat, sent by the curate of Truxillo, brought a promised supply of wine, biscuit, and consecrated bread for the service of the altar. The crew were much astonished how much had been done for Christianity (?) in so short a time. During their stay the old Indian died, and all the Spaniards assisted at the Christian rites of his funeral. Vaena returned with the boat, and went on to the capital to give the provincial a narrative of what had occurred, and requested the assistance of another priest. An account of the rapid progress already made was published at Guatemala, with an appeal for help. Lopez, a Franciscan and fellow-countryman of Martinez, offered to go, was accepted, and returned with Vaena. On his arrival he was exceedingly surprised to find how much had been done : in less than a year more than 700 adults, besides many children, had been baptized, and no less than seven villages had been formed. The kind attentions of the missionaries spread their fame, and every day brought whole families petitioning to be participators in them, with every demonstration of sincere conversion (at least such as satisfied the Papists) ; but as they could not easily abandon their original mode of living in wilds and forests, they soon capriciously returned, when least expected, to the recesses of the mountains. The pastors, much discouraged, had their attention directed to a tribe called Guabas, supposed to be the progeny of some shipwrecked Spaniards and Indian women. “As partaking of the blood of both species, and being in part Spaniards, it was supposed they would be more constant in the observance of Christianity, if they could be brought to profess it ; and this determined them to undertake their conversion.” A frigate opportunely arriving, conveyed them to Anavacas, the place where the Guabas

were supposed to dwell. They soon found this people, and were listened to by them and many other nations, who had heard of their kindness, not in spiritual matters only, but in attending the people in sickness and curing their maladies; they therefore came in troops to request the same good offices, so that in a few months the three fathers baptized more than 5,000 individuals, making with the former a total exceeding 6,000.

"In the midst of this plentiful harvest, these three indefatigable labourers were cut off by the Albutuinas, a neighbouring nation. Some of this treacherous and savage tribe visited them with a pretended desire to be converted, and begged they would accompany them to their dwellings to teach them. But while the missionaries prepared to do as they wished, the eagerness of the savages not permitting them to wait, they came in force to the Christian village, seized and bound the fathers, the new converts being too weak to defend them; they were then dragged through the different places where they had preached, and severely beaten with wooden swords and knives. The sufferers attempted to reprove them for the cruelties they were inflicting, and threatened them with Divine vengeance for their crimes; but this serving only to increase their fury, they seized Martinez and impaled him on a lance, cut off one of his hands, and afterwards broke his legs with their clubs, in the excruciating torments of which he expired. The two others were killed by wounds of lances and knives, their legs were also broken and their heads cut off."*

As soon as the Governor of Truxillo heard of this event, he equipped two vessels, and immediately embarked with soldiers and artillery "for the purpose of punishing the savages for the atrocities they had committed, and recovering the remains of the fathers." The Indians eluded his intended chastisement; but he recovered the bodies of the victims and removed them to Truxillo, where they were buried with great pomp on the 16th January 1624. A contest followed between the parish church and the Franciscan convent at that place, for the honour of the deposit, which the Governor settled by sharing the mutilated corpses between them. In 1643, "the precious relics" were removed to Guatemala, "where preparations were made for receiving them with great solemnity; but the provincial, wishing to avoid any violent demonstration of

* Juarros, p. 267-8.

popular feeling determined they should be admitted without any procession. They were deposited in the church of St. Francis, the Royal Audencia, Cabildos, and different religious orders attending the ceremony. The coffin was borne by the most distinguished persons in the city, and the funeral service performed with the greatest solemnity.

"After the death of these ministers, all further attempts to convert those Indians were suspended for some years." They were, however, revived in 1667 by two ecclesiastics, to whom others were afterwards added, and in eight years time they formed seven small villages, in which was settled a Christian population of 600 souls, four years later the number was 1,073, and in 1690 the number of Indians that had died in the faith (of Popery) exceeded 4,000, and there were then nine villages settled.

In 1694, some members of the college of missionaries, De Propaganda Fide, of the city of Queretaro, arrived at Guatemala, and while labouring for the establishment of a college of the same kind there, several of them engaged in missions in different parts of Central America. And when their college was completed in 1701, it took upon itself the charge of the civilization of Honduras, and up to the day when Juarros wrote (1811), he says,—they had there one mission in which there were never less than two persons employed. The Society of The Name of Jesus* (Nombre de Jesus) did not give up their endeavours in Honduras and on the Mosquito Shore. In 1740, they sent one Felix Figeroa, who continued instructing the converts until his death. "There is preserved in the church at the village of Santa Buenaventura, a very heavy cross, which this exemplary man took the pains to carry on his shoulders from Guatemala to that place," a distance of more than 400 miles of most uneven country.

Early in this the nineteenth century, an ecclesiastic of Guatemala went to Madrid, and returned with a mission consisting of forty-six persons, and as late as 1810 the supreme council of the Regency passed an edict that ministers should be provided for those missions, which, however, appear to have been abandoned in reality, if not officially, at the present day, and certainly so as respects the Mosquito Shore.

* Not the Jesuits, but possibly a form under which some of that body contrived to be tolerated in Central America when the Jesuits were banished from Spain and all its dominions.

The province now the state of Costa Rica was one of the first subdued by the Spaniards; its old capital Cartago having been in existence as early as 1522. The territory of Talamanca in that state is said to contain twenty-six different tribes of Indians, besides other neighbouring nations. It was also visited by the missionaries. In 1660, Melchor Lopez and Antonio Margil commenced their labours among them, and in five years (according to the chronicles of the college De Propaganda Fide, lib. v. chap. 1) the conversion of more than 40,000 souls had been accomplished, and fourteen villages founded. At the beginning of the last century, several missionaries and some soldiers who were employed as an escort of the missionaries, were cruelly used; some of them were killed. After these murders there remained only one village, in which two priests resided; and, for want of a military escort, they remained for several years without making any attempt to visit the natives in the mountains. The Governor was solicited to grant a troop of thirty soldiers for the protection of the fathers; and, after waiting long to obtain the king's permission for incurring this expense, the escort was provided in 1740, when several more ecclesiastics resumed this work.

That portion of the state of Guatemala which lies north of the capital and beyond the limits of Vera Paz is also peopled by many tribes of the Jicaques, or Indios Bravos, amongst which the Chols, Lacandons, and Mopans are most prominent. Missions were undertaken to these people in 1674, by a Dominican named Delgado, accompanied by Gallegos, who was the Provincial of that order. They penetrated about 70 miles beyond Cajabon—the most remote village in Vera Paz, and assembled some Chol Indians, in two or three villages. They next penetrated into the Sierras farther to the north, and beyond a very lofty mountain called by the natives, "The God of the Hills," they entered a thickly peopled country, where they were well received. Two years later the same missionaries revisited them, and the settlements were augmented to 2,346 persons who were baptized, besides many others; but in 1678, for what reason cannot now be discovered, the Chols returned to their native worship, abandoned the villages, blocked up the roads, and dispersed among the mountains.

Philip II. had, in 1594, commanded that a minute detail of all circumstances regarding the native inhabitants, and of the

best means of reconciling them to the Spanish government, should be transmitted to him. "In 1676, *fresh* orders were sent out from Spain to the Governor, the bishop, and the Alcalde mayor of Vera Paz, to increase their endeavours to effect the conversion of the natives of this district."* It was not, however, till eight years after this order, that the bishop and Governor of Guatemala united their efforts to obey it. They were assisted by the monks of La Merced (the order of Mercy) and the Dominicans. Messengers were sent to invite the Chols to celebrate the festival of Easter at Cajabon. These envoys were beaten with clubs and dismissed without a reply, which put an end to this expedition. Augustin Cano, the Provincial of St. Domingo, penetrated into the mountains, and met with some of the Chols, whom he persuaded to return and settle again in the village of St. Luke, where he also established some ministers; this, however, was insufficient to induce the neophytes to remain long in a permanent habitation; for about the end of the year 1688, they once more burned the village, and the missionaries who resided there narrowly escaped with their lives."

Diego Rivas, the Provincial of La Merced, with two others of his order, a Bethlehemite friar, the Corregidor (a military commander) of Gueguetenango, and ten Spaniards penetrated into the mountains, and, after several days march, met with some of the Lacandons, who, on perceiving them, immediately fled. Rivas and his companions supposed them to be spies, and fearing that if they should be attacked by the natives, there would not be sufficient force in their little party to repel the assailants, determined upon a retreat.

In 1686, the king's commands for the conversion of this nation were repeated, and in 1692, the Council of the Indies transmitted a despatch ordering the conquest of the Chols and the Lacandons to be undertaken simultaneously from the provinces of Vera Paz, Chiapa, and Gueguetenango. Two years afterwards, Barrios the President of the Royal Audiencia, who had been interdicted from the exercise of his official functions, having been restored, began to prepare for a fresh attempt at the instigation of the missionaries Melchor Lopez and Antonio Margil, who had laboured in Talamanca. "Contributions were demanded from the inhabitants of

* *Juanros*, p. 277.

the capital to defray the expenses of the campaign, men were raised, provisions and arms collected, as well as everything else required for the service." In 1695, all being ready, Barrios, in person, took the command—advancing by Chiapa. "The whole force was divided into nine companies, five consisting entirely of Spaniards and four of Indians. Several ecclesiastics attended each division."

At Ocozingo the Governor was joined by troops from Ciudad, Real, and Tabasco. He divided his forces into three detachments, ordering them to enter the hilly country on the last day of February, by the different routes previously determined upon. One of the detachments having advanced with great difficulty through swamps and thickets, and over broken ground the whole of the month of March, discovered, on the first of April, traces of naked feet, which following, in six days more, they came to a village of the Lacandons. Ere the troops could enter it, the inhabitants had fled. It was found to consist of 100 houses, two much larger than the rest, supposed to be appropriated to public business, and one larger still that was a place of worship. Here the priests took up their abode, burning all the idols they could find, and turning the principal room into a chapel. Scouts were sent in every direction after the fugitives, and to look for the governor and his detachment. In the latter object they succeeded on the 19th April. He was conducted with his troops to the village which they called Dolores, where he afterwards built a fort, and left a garrison of thirty Spanish soldiers and fifteen Indians. Most of the troops then returned to Guatemala, after which, some of the Indians having been taken, induced others to return with one of their Caciques, until the numbers amounted to 400, most of whom were baptized.

The third detachment, which had taken the route of Vera Paz, met with some of the Chols, who had already been domiciliated, and made arrangements to settle them again; 500 were soon collected. These gave information of the Mopans, a fierce and warlike tribe, spread over about thirty leagues of country, among whom neither Spaniards nor missionaries had ever yet ventured. Fired rather than discouraged by the description given of these people, the soldiers went in search of them, clearing their way with much difficulty over precipices, rocks, and ravines, until they came to some of their hovels. The number of families of which this nation was composed is stated at 10,000 or 12,000, dwelling in a

country of exquisite beauty and great fertility, in a climate the most agreeable of any that had yet been discovered. On the first sight of the Spaniards the natives were alarmed, and prepared to resist them stoutly, but the judicious measures of the missionaries and the prudence of the commander prevailed to open a friendly intercourse; and both caciques and people became willing to settle and to accept admission to the proffered benefits of Christianity.

Intelligence of this success was sent to the Governor at the village of Dolores, and a plan for the establishment of a Spanish town in the fine locality discovered, was submitted to him and to the Royal Audiencia. Here, also, a fort was built and garrisoned ere the troops returned to the capital.

Another expedition, under Amezquita, succeeded this in 1696, when two more villages were discovered, the one named Peta, containing 117 families, and Mop, the other, 105. Subsequently the Pagan place of worship at Dolores was pulled down to make room for a church. This so displeased the Indians that they retired to the mountains. The missionaries and the soldiers of the garrison, however, succeeded in persuading them to come back, and that in greater number; for, in pursuing the fugitives, they found four more small villages. An officer named Velasco, was so imprudent as to advance with his company as far as the lake of Itza, the Indian inhabitants of whose banks were numerous and warlike. Being attacked by them, he was killed; and all his men, about 100, shared the same fate. "At this time Don Gabriel Sanchez de Berrospe had succeeded to the Government, and communicated the despatches (from Amezquita), as soon as he received them, to a council of war, at which the bishop, and several others assisted;" when it was decided to recall the troops, suspend the fortifications then in progress, and to abandon Mopan entirely, removing as many of the Chols as they could induce to leave their country to the valley of Urran in Vera Paz.

So entirely have these expeditions come short of the end proposed, that Juarros, in the geographical part of his work, says that, by the navigation of the Passion river, "the conversion of the Lacandons might, in the first place, be accomplished; for by intercourse with the Christians, they would become domesticated, and inclined to adopt their religion; without this preparation, their reduction will be a matter of difficulty: for as soon as they are

visited in one place, to avoid further importunity, they remove their wives, children, canoes, and property to another, where they remain until they are again assailed with solicitations.”*

Thus does a Roman Catholic ecclesiastic of the present century supply a record of facts mingled with fictions, amply sufficient as a sample of Popish propagandism in Central America.

It has been seen that labours, commenced professedly with supernatural tokens for good, and extraordinary degrees of success, have suddenly come to destruction, or have gradually dwindled away. That some individuals laboured, endured fatigues, suffered privations, and at last fell sacrifices to the work in which they were engaged; and that no good effects followed their devotedness, but, on the contrary, that there resulted a greater estrangement of those nations whose civilization and conversion to Popery was sought. That by the help of armed men some few hundreds, or even thousands, of natives have at times been induced by the missionary priests to settle in aggregate communities, and have received the name and outward rites of Romanism; and that the Indians have invariably abandoned those villages and the Christian name, and quickly returned to their unsettled habits and their idolatrous practices. Nay, more, in the only instance where worse than “carnal weapons” were laid aside, at the suggestion of Las Casas, they were, in his absence, again resorted to, to keep the converts steadfast to their profession, and to reclaim backsliders from the faith.

This testimony is painfully suggestive both of the actual character of past efforts bearing the name of Christian missions, and of the present wants of the same field. Should it not lead us to the contemplation of future missionary enterprises to these tribes? If undertaken from higher motives, established in a different spirit, defended with entirely other weapons, and conducted in exclusive dependence upon the power and sovereignty of God, as well in his providence as in his grace; though commenced in the midst of opposition, and sustained under discouragement, such efforts must ultimately result in blessings to mankind, and will for ever redound to the glory of God, to whom belongeth mercy and salvation.

These missions were, however, the work of only a few of the more enterprising priests and monks, carried on, so to speak, without the confines of their camp; and though they have, upon their

* Juarros, p. 180.

own showing, entirely failed to reclaim, or even essentially to benefit, the more remote and fiercer tribes, there are others of a milder character over whom the regular clergy have exercised an unrestrained control during a period of more than three centuries. With so fair a field, it is important to inquire how much they have benefited them by their pastoral guidance and paternal discipline, as by the results we shall be enabled to judge of the efficacy of Apostolic succession and the power of the Keys. We are at least warranted here to require some evidences of the purifying, elevating, and blessed influences of religious truth on the mind, and in the social and physical condition of the people; in the entire absence of these fruits, on a careful examination, we shall be shut up to the conclusion that "the salt has lost its savour," and that the priests of Rome having "compassed sea and land to make one proselyte"—he is found, even where they have succeeded best, "to be twofold more the child of hell than themselves."

CHAPTER VII

INDEPENDENCE.

1820 to 1830.

Colonial Policy of Old Spain—The Inquisition—Monastic Estates—Oppression of the Indians—Progress of Mind—Declaration of Independence—Reforms—Iturbide—Federal Constitution—Enlightened Measures—Fair Prospects—First Commotions—Slavery Abolished—Further Reforms—Political Elements—Schools Established—Barriers to Progress—The 'Serviles'—The 'Liberals'—Sacerdotal Influence—Prelatical Ambition the Cause of Civil Wars—Arce First President—Arrest of Barrundia—Murder of Flores—Aycinena and the Serviles in Power—Further Commotions—General Morazan—Restoration of the Liberals—Acts of Congress—Expatriation of the Archbishop and Heads of Houses—Abolition of Monasteries—Correction of Ecclesiastical Abuses—Religious Freedom.

"Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is Liberty."—2 Cor. iii. 17.

THE colonial policy of old Spain, like that of all governments which have ruled their dependencies solely as a means of aggrandizing 'the mother country,' was characterized by selfish narrowness and ignorant despotism. In the case of her trans-Atlantic possessions she superadded to these elements of misrule a jealous exclusiveness, which was carried to a surprising extreme. To the world at large, all important and authentic information concerning the new countries was denied, and a secrecy comparable to that of the miser with respect to his hidden treasure was assumed. To its colonial subjects and adopted children, the government denied all communication with any part of the civilized world except Spain; and a system of watchfulness, equal to that of an eastern Sultan over his seraglio, was organized and strenuously maintained, in order, if possible, to shut out every ray of political, moral, or spiritual light which might threaten to penetrate the thick darkness in which these colonies were shrouded. Foreigners were

denied access to the Spanish Americas; even Castilians were not free to emigrate thither, except under severe restriction and a close surveillance. The few ideas conveyed to the natives respecting the power and influence of Spain over the rest of the world were false and excessive; and the spirit of blind bigotry so carefully fostered at home, and so much in unison with the institutions of the old country, was freely and sedulously introduced into New Spain. This was embodied in the persons of arrogant nobles and haughty officials and favourites of the court of Spain, as well as by the fawning priests and monks who, as we have already seen, like birds or beasts of prey, invariably followed the track of blood, in the wake of her desolating armies.

One of the instruments put into the hands of these priestly emissaries, in order to aid the purposes of the court, was the fearful agency of the unholy inquisition,—an institution which stands charged with the guilt of consuming in its fires no less than five millions of men.* A power so unlimited and irresponsible could not fail to be applied to the private objects and ends of the individuals and of the party who wielded it. This abominable tribunal had its usual accompaniments of secret dungeons, &c., some of which are still accessible to the curious in the city of Guatemala.

It has already been stated that monastic establishments were founded at an early period in all the most inviting localities where Spanish arms had prevailed. Some of the orders, especially the Dominicans and Franciscans, had many subordinate houses in different provinces, which partook more of the character of large estates than of monasticism. Rearing cattle, manufacturing sugar, distilling rum, and raising other articles of produce, were, at least, among the chief objects of attention. These 'Haciendas' (works or estates) were multiplied to such an extent that, though the two orders above named were the most numerous, they could spare but very few of the fraternity to superintend each one. Great numbers of African slaves were imported to assist the Indian labourers in working them, and their revenues, which were intrusted to the care of the provincial or head of the convent at Guatemala, were princely and ample in the extreme. The vast, massive, and commodious buildings, or remains of them, which are frequently

* Speech of Victor Hugo in the National Assembly of France on the Law of Public Instruction, January 1840.

met with, abundantly testify to the former wealth and industry of these communities, whose wisdom in their generation can hardly be impeached. Perhaps no better index could now be followed in selecting the best localities for the habitations of men than that which these remains supply. This being a point in which their instincts seem to have directed them with a precision bordering upon the marvellous.

None of these institutions were really intended to benefit the natives, and if they did so at all, it was only in that indirect way in which the worst calamities are often made useful.

The civil and military functionaries who composed the Royal Audiencia, by which the Captain Generalship was ruled, do not appear to have sought other ends than did the priests. But all united their influence to lower still further the already debased Indian; and, whether they intended it or not, they employed, with satanic sagacity, precisely the means best adapted to compass the complete physical and moral degradation of that unhappy people. The most overbearing and relentless tyranny was the universal rule of deportment towards the now defenceless and timid Indians. Perhaps a consciousness of the superior power which the Indians possessed in numbers over their oppressors, made the latter more cruel and regardless of the waste of life, which undoubtedly occurred so as to diminish the population many thousands, and perhaps some millions, in this the most populous part of their new empire. Among other things, a poll-tax was imposed upon the country, from which the Spaniard and his descendants were exempted, and the person, the property, and even the life of the natives were entirely at the disposal of the latter, who, by fines, or by less specious pretences, often despoiled them of their possessions and reduced them to slavery. At a later period, when horses and mules had been introduced, and had multiplied so that the natives possessed them, the proud conquerors enacted and enforced a law making it criminal for an Indian to ride upon his own beast, or to be seen mounted under any circumstances whatever. And, till within a very few years, the whipping post ('la picota') and the stocks ('el sepo') testified in every market-place to the cruel and brutalizing process of their daily oppression.

But notwithstanding all her vigilance, the efforts of imperious Spain to exclude from her colonies the light of truth and the influ-

... proved abortive, as in the end all such efforts ... cannot be stayed. It may meet with ... like the stately course of mighty waters, ... leave their level and overflow them; or the pent-up ... will burst at length, destroy the ... recently torn upon its ruffled surface the ... that which constituted the impediment to its ...

... natives of Central America, and those ... the Spanish functionaries and emi- ... every office of trust and emolument, ... caught the spirit of revolution which dis- ... the sixteenth century; and they were ... the ethereal state in which Spanish ... their soil had combined to retain their ... Mexico and some reports of similar revo- ... doubtless helped to enkindle a ... many wrongs had long fed a ... process of ignition quickened in ... climax.

... the Spanish monarch made to ... the Kingdom of Guatemala ... but the only return it ob- ... appetite for such indulgences, was the ... bestowed. The "Sociedad ... Reyna"—an institution for the ... and industrial objects, which had ... in 1795, was arbitrarily dissolved ... in 1799. Thus ... manifest weakness, or, at least, to ... disabuse the long-enthralled ... concerning Spain.

... of the present century, the fires of ... in different directions. A beacon ... city of Leon in 1815, and it sent ... through soon extinguished, had cast its ... After this event conspiracies and ... till the favourable opportunity arrived.

... of the Kingdom.

The struggle for freedom was not yet quite completed in Mexico when its emissaries were busily at work in Guatemala. At this juncture Gavino Gainza, a commissioner deputed by the Cortes, arrived at the capital from Spain. With him came the news of recent political changes in the peninsula, and of the establishment of the new constitution. The excitement now became general, the wealthier families and chief ecclesiastics taking the initiative, and Gainza evidently co-operating with them. After preliminary arrangements, a general meeting of the inhabitants of the city and provinces was convoked for the 15th September 1821, at the palace of the Audien-*cia*, where the independence of the country was proclaimed amid the acclamations of the populace assembled in the plaza, thus effecting at once a decisive and a bloodless revolution.

The servants of Fernando Septimo, ill prepared for such a contingency, made no attempt to maintain his authority. As many of them as had a real interest in the country were soon reconciled to the change. Not a few took part in the new government; and those only who were too closely united with royalty to endure the separation, returned to Spain, or withdrew to the island of Cuba.

The authorities of the province of Nicaragua under the influence of its bishop, and the priest-ridden city of Quesaltenango, both withheld their adhesion, and at an early period declared for the plan of Iguala, by which a party in Mexico had proposed that the government should be given to a Spanish prince who should rule New Spain monarchically but independently of the old country.

The provisional government of Guatemala had convoked a general congress, and was already starting in the career of reform, and rapidly unloosing the bands by which commerce and education had been so long enthralled, when Iturbide,* the ephemeral Emperor of Mexico, succeeded in checking its progress. By private intrigues he had raised a small faction among the nobles of Guatemala, to the support of which he now sent a body of Mexican troops; and for the first time since the conquest, the sword of civil war was unsheathed and stained with blood. Some engagements took place between the 30th November 1821 and the 5th January 1822, when the partisans of Iturbide so far prevailed against the republicans, that the supremacy of the Mexican government was proclaimed.

* Don Augustin Iturbide, "Generalissimo of the Empire, and President of the Provisional Junta."

Against this step the city of San Salvador protested, and offered a resolute but ultimately ineffectual resistance to the imperial troops. Granada and San José, the capitals of Nicaragua and Costa Rica, took the same position, and being less accessible to the influence of physical force, were enabled to persist in their refusal to acknowledge the pretender. All the rest of the country now actually formed part of the Mexican empire.

This state of things was but transient. Iturbide, already tottering to his fall, was unable to maintain sufficient forces in this distant part of his dominions, where his friends composed but a very small minority. Even these soon forsook him, and 'Pronunciamientos' in favour of independence succeeded each other, until no adherents were left to the Mexican cause but those of the border province of Chiapas, which has remained a part of Mexico ever since.

Thus relieved, the five Intendencias of Guatemala, Salvador, Honduras, Nicaragua, and Costa Rica agreed together in 1823 to constitute a Federal Republic, based on popular representation; each province enjoying a separate and independent state organization for its own internal government. It was proposed to frame the federation and local governments much after the form of the United States of North America; though, as will be seen, that model was surpassed in some important respects.

In the first election for President, General Arce, who had been a bitter enemy to Spanish rule, was preferred, by a rather dubious election, to Don José del Valle, a man of deep erudition and of democratic tendencies.

The first National Constituent Assembly at once decreed the abolition of all titles and privileges of nobility, forbade the sale of Papal bulls of indulgence, removed every hinderance to the emigration of strangers, gave full and complete guarantees for the security of the property, liberty, and lives of foreign residents, awarded them equal privileges in every respect with the citizens of the republic, and both set aside many of the abuses of Spanish government and passed a great number of wise and liberal laws. They also adopted a national flag of blue, white, and blue, placed horizontally; and for armorial bearings five volcanoes (one for each state), with the sun rising from behind them, and the inscription "Dios, Union, Libertad" (God, Union, Liberty).

A short season of general peace and of much promise to the young republic succeeded. But, as early as the commencement of 1824, its tranquillity was seriously disturbed by factious commotions among the ignorant populace and soldiery in the cities of Leon and Granada. These disorders, whether or not occasioned by private ambition, resulted in rapid changes of military and civil governors, and proved to be only the beginning of troubles, which (as already stated) have desolated the habitations and laid the glory of those cities in the dust. For about two years subsequent to this, such commotions frequently prevailed in the more remote parts of the republic, but the federal government and most of the states remained in comparative quiet, and made great strides in political and commercial prosperity.

The federal constitution, the bases of which were published on the 27th December 1823, was not decreed till the 22nd November 1824. But before that delicate task was accomplished, the national assembly had continued to promulgate liberal measures. A decree, abolishing slavery at once and absolutely, and providing against its re-introduction at any time or to any part of the republic, and laying heavy penalties on citizens who should engage in the slave-trade, was enacted on the 17th April 1824, so that to the Central American Republic belongs the honour of having led the van among those governments who have wiped this foul blot from their national escutcheons.* In this act of justice their enlightened statesmen and patriots evinced to the world the sincerity which animated them in the cause of freedom, and gave a noble proof of the absence of those prejudices and sordid motives which still disgrace more highly favoured states.

To this deed they have remained faithful even in the midst of reaction and revolution. As late as the year 1840, a claim was made by the British Government for the return to slavery of some Africans who had restored themselves to liberty by withdrawing from British Honduras, and settling under the protection of the

* "The 13th article of the Federal Constitution pronounces every man free in the Republic; and declares that he cannot be a slave who takes refuge under the laws, nor he a citizen who traffics in slaves."—Guatemala in 1837, by Henry Dunn, page 208.

"Central America has the honour to be the first country in the world to abolish Negro slavery; and its citizens have the farther credit of having refused pecuniary compensation, although such was provided and offered."—Mr. Young Anderson's Report, 1839, page 98.

republic. That claim was moved by the British Consul General seconded by British officers, both military and naval, who were sent to Guatemala to demand the persons of these poor Africans, and supported by the presence of a British man-of-war upon their coasts. But though the government of the republic was then weak and dismembered, there was moral rectitude and dignity enough in it to spurn the claim of a government to which on other matters they have long been accustomed to yield, and in their reply they faithfully declared that no slaves were or could be recognised within their territories, the inviolability of which they asserted, though conscious that they wanted the physical power to maintain it against such a foe. This matter went no farther, perhaps because of the state of the public mind in Britain on the subject of slavery at the time.

Ere the new government was well seated, and before the State had decreed its own constitution, it had entirely removed all the old restrictions upon foreign commerce and international intercourse imposed by Spain; in making the Pope's bulls contraband articles, it had even dared with unhallowed hands to touch and dry up what had for ages been a prolific source of revenue to the church; and by freeing the injured slave, it had despoiled the monastic orders of their share,—and it was the lion's share,—of property in human flesh and blood. Such a government was not likely to stop there. Nor did it.

The National Convention and the first Federal Congress, which met on the 6th February 1825, decreed the liberty of the press—the suppression of monopolies—trial by jury—a habeas corpus act—and other essential safeguards to the liberties of the people, which followed each other in such rapid succession that it would seem as if the sanguine and buoyant heart of the young legislature had glowed with delight as it glanced upon all that was best and most beautiful in the constitutions and laws of older states; and culling with a vigorous, liberal, and yet a discerning hand, it appeared resolved to bind them together in one glorious wreath with which to adorn the youthful and yet unsullied brow of their own free-born state.

The constitution of the state of Guatemala was decreed on the 11th of October 1825, that of Honduras on the 11th of December; both had been preceded in this work by Costa Rica on the 21st

January of the same year. Salvador was as usual the most prompt, having decreed hers on the 12th of June 1824, and Nicaragua, the most dilatory, did so on the 8th April 1826.

But alas! the patriots had neither within nor around them the most essential elements of success. Enamoured of liberty, and sincere believers in the truth, and therefore in the efficacy, of their principles of government, they knew not that there was a lack of principle in themselves to keep them faithful to their first love, and to fortify them against the snares to which their possession of power and their very success exposed them. Believers in politics, but infidels in heart, they were double-minded, and therefore unstable in their sentiments and conduct; the very literature which had been largely instrumental in making them reformers had transformed them from blind bigots and zealots of Romanism into deists and atheists of every shade. The writings of the school of Voltaire, which had penetrated to this secluded corner of the Pope's usurped dominions in spite of the vigilance of the Inquisition and the prohibitions and anathemas of the expurgatorial index, had taught them to reject evil, but not to choose that which is good; and consequently there was a mixture of strength and weakness—a combination of iron with clay, of which they were utterly unconscious. In the people they needed to find supporters, but in them they only found gross ignorance, unhappily blended with the same want of principle which constituted their own weakness.

The obstacles which the ignorance of the people interposed to the working of a system in which the popular voice had to be so largely consulted could not but be early seen and felt. A hasty remedy was applied. Lancasterian schools, so called, were established in many towns and villages. But though the people were willing, nay anxious, to be taught, teachers were wanting, and the few who in the capital were intrusted with the direction of the schools, had only a limited and theoretical knowledge of any method. Nevertheless, the project was more or less actively undertaken. The very barracks were converted into class-rooms; and the barefooted Indian soldiers were taught the rudiments of knowledge by their officers, who occupied the place of teachers.

But there were other barriers perhaps greater still, and certainly much more difficult to remove than these, namely, the positive and active opposition of priestcraft, and the evil influences of that system of deception, under the feigned name of religion, which had

failed to supply the principle of virtue in the heart, and had so long fostered ignorance with all its concomitant vices and immoralities among the people. That system, which is itself the embodiment of the most absolute despotism, and the ready handmaid of oppression, had introduced elements into society totally incompatible with the line of policy adopted by the new government, and as decidedly inimical to the institutions now so ardently desired by the more enlightened class of citizens. The priests, and those who were identified with them, soon felt it necessary to combine for the defence of their 'Holy Mother;' and they were enabled to make their opposition felt long before it was safe to array themselves in open hostility to public opinion, which, like a mighty surge, was still swelling and rolling onwards to the no small damage of their shrines and idols, and apparently to the destruction of their craft, ere the reflux tide of popular impulse could set in.

As might be expected, the priests drew around them the few self-styled nobles who had remained, and were not found among the truer nobility who sought the people's weal. These consisted of a small number of wealthy families of Spanish descent, called "*Sangre Azules*," or *blue-bloods*. They were for the most part intimately connected with the priests, some members of their houses being high dignitaries of the church. Their friends or supporters among the people were confined to the most grossly ignorant and fanatical, by no means a small, though a decreasing class, to those most closely allied to the priests in their temporal interests, and to the more attached dependants of the limited aristocracy. Together, they constituted a formidable political party, the tendencies of which were to oppose the education of the masses, to centralize and consolidate an unlimited civil power in the hands of a few among the wealthy, and to build up ecclesiastical domination like a Babel to the very skies. The acts of this party soon earned for its supporters the unenviable title of '*Serviles*'—a name as generally used as that of '*Liberales*,' or Liberals, by which the friends of progress are distinguished.

The liberal party included some few who had been distinguished men under the monarchy, the greater portion of the legal and medical professions, or, in other words, the élite of the university, who had preferred those studies to that of theology or canons, not so much as a means of support, as because they are almost the only careers open to those who reject the ecclesiastical vocation. It also

numbered many merchants and landed proprietors, supported by a numerous body composed of the more intelligent artisans and labourers. Their leaders were men of very decided democratical principles, of unquestionable ability, and, considering the school they were brought up in and the influences that surrounded them, they manifested no small amount of true patriotism and devotedness to their convictions; though, alas! in too many instances, stained with venality, and even with deeds of oppression and of blood. What they overthrew and what they accomplished for the state is honourable alike to their talents and to their sentiments; and though the limits of a sketch will scarcely admit of the due appreciation of it, a cursory view of their achievements, taking into consideration the circumstances of the people and of the times, will probably excite more wonder, and certainly merits higher praise, than the victories of Alvarado. But they were *men*, and, as already noticed, for the most part *infidel men*: their minds had but just escaped from the bondage of superstition, and only to be hurried into the labyrinth of infidelity, and become a prey to doubt; their light was limited and uncertain; their principles, even when sound, rested upon no firm foundation; they were not always faithful to themselves and to each other; and when in the possession of power, it was abused by them almost as much as by their opponents, and it was the more reprehensible in their case, inasmuch as they were *reformers*, and transgressed in the very glare of their own light.

Had the 'Liberales' been all that they ought or might have been, it must have proved a laborious and a hazardous task to rule a nation where the seeds of anarchy, and only such seeds, had been sown for centuries. But as it was, their opponents were as quick-sighted to detect, as they were able and willing to make the most of, their mistakes and crimes, as well as to take advantage of the unprepared state of the people generally to keep pace with their leaders. And thus the tide was often turned, and progress and reaction successively lashed the strand, till popular fury, subsiding from sheer exhaustion, ceased a while, but only to gather strength for new contests, which were again interrupted by short and deceitful calms.

The sacerdotal class suffered little immediate inconvenience by the sudden dismemberment of the late colony from Spain. It was, however, a preliminary to the overthrow of their influence, as it

effectually burst the flood-gates which had been kept closed, and let loose the spirit of inquiry and reform. The priests and monks doubtless deluded themselves with the hope, that, like "the strong man armed," they would still be enabled to "keep their goods in peace," even while the nations of Europe, and especially France, were demonstrating to the world the more than vulnerable character of their claims and objects. But "a stronger than they" was in their habitation; and even this remote part of the popedom felt the shock of the sturdy assaults it was receiving, till its entire framework was violently convulsed like the limbs of a giant in the agonies of approaching dissolution. Nor did they escape local inflictions from opponents who were neither scrupulous nor timid, and who were enabled to inflict deep wounds from which priestly influence has never yet recovered, and which appear still likely to prove mortal.

The Serviles, including the two extremes of society, the most refined and the most barbarous, linked together by their blind guides—the priests—were entirely led by the latter; among whom were many ignorant Spaniards and some few men of ability, though in this particular they were very far inferior to the Liberals. They have, however, proved themselves to be thoroughly imbued with the spirit of their order and the genius of their system. They have ever acted upon the maxim that all things were lawful which seemed to them expedient; and, notwithstanding their apparent oneness, they too had their divisions, their mutual jealousies, their private ambitions, and their individual immoralities, which, together with their common rapacity, were favourable to their opponents. And in general, if not universally, it will be found easy to trace to their intrigues the internal disorders of the social and political body in each of the several states composing the republic; and not a few of the past civil wars and existing animosities between state and state are also attributable to their influence as a class, or to the personal ambition and seditious conduct of individuals in it.

As early as 1825, a leading ecclesiastic contrived to excite the jealousy of the people of the state of Salvador, who were under the ecclesiastical jurisdiction of Guatemala, so as to induce them to elect him bishop. This act was decidedly opposed by the archbishop of Guatemala,—supported by the Pope. In the face of their united

denunciations, the Padre Delgado acted as bishop of San Salvador for about four years. Out of this circumstance arose serious disputes, bloody wars, and a rankling envy between the two states, which has never yet been healed; though the Liberals, who are numerically the stronger party in both states, earnestly desire to unite their energies for the advancement of their national prosperity.

Costa Rica with Nicaragua soon after repeated the same Episcopal scandal that Salvador and Guatemala had witnessed, but the results were far less disastrous.

A common resort of both parties, when reduced to extremities, has been prolific of evil consequences. It is that of allying themselves, by bribery or otherwise, with the most successful military commanders who were willing to become their tools. The power thus acquired has often been turned by the military despot against both parties; and when not so, the country has been involved in protracted warfare, and its real interests trodden down. The union in one person of civil and military offices of trust, which may be regarded as a consequence of this practice, has also been a fruitful source of violence and misrule.

General Arce, the first president of the republic, having sold himself to the Serviles, was instrumental in effecting the first complete reactionary movement, five years after the independence was declared. Under the pretext of having secret information that the state authorities of Guatemala were plotting rebellion against the Federal Government, he arrested the citizen Chief of the State, José Francisco Barrundia, one of the most able and active reformers, while discharging his functions in the national palace, and then proceeded to disarm the civic militia. To these acts no resistance was opposed; but from the 6th of September 1826, when Barrundia's arrest took place, must be dated all the commotions which have already resulted in so much ruin, and which are not yet terminated. During the following month, one of the worst scenes of this tragic history was enacted at Quesaltenango, whither the Congress and the liberal members of government had retired.

The Vice-President, the citizen Cerilio Flores, a man held in general esteem, in the exercise of his public duties levied a tax upon the inhabitants of Quesaltenango, in doing which he did not exempt the inmates of the convents, of which there were several

in that city. With no other provocation, a friar ascended the pulpit on a market-day, and by his harangue so infuriated the populace against Flores, that they immediately went in search of him, pursued him to this very church, to which he fled as to a sanctuary, and butchered him in the presence of the friar, bespattering the walls of the edifice with his blood and brains. In this deed the market-women were the principal actors, but the men also took up the cause of the monks, and vociferated "Viva Guatemala," "Muera el Congreso," (Long live Guatemala, Death to the Congress). Several other members of the government were then assassinated; and the rest, with the deputies only escaped by a flight, which left the state of Guatemala without either legislature or executive.

Upon this reverse, the Serviles came into power. Don Mariano Aycinena, one of the blue-bloods, was installed chief of the state on the 1st of March 1827. A tribunal for summarily disposing of political offenders was established at Guatemala, and sentences of proscription were passed against the citizen Dr. Molina, and eight others of the leaders of the liberal party. General Sachet, who had been a soldier of the French empire, and a Colonel Pierson, a West Indian creole, were also proscribed. The latter being taken, was shot at Guatemala under the wall of the cemetery. These were the first victims on account of which many more leading men and scions of the most respectable families—the élite of the land—belonging to both parties, have since been massacred in cold blood, sometimes even by scores.

At this period fresh insurrections convulsed the states of Nicaragua and Honduras, which partly resulted from the change in Guatemala. Salvador being in the hands of the Liberals, refused any longer to acknowledge Arce, and having unsuccessfully invaded Guatemala, was, in its turn, attacked by him with 2,000 federal troops, which were completely repulsed. Other battles were afterwards fought with various results, and several officers on both sides rose into importance. Among these was General Francisco Morazan, who for fifteen years was the military leader of the "Liberales," and at times their only support. In person handsome, of a fair complexion, in manners agreeable, and of rather superior powers of mind, he was an exception to the generality of the soldier chieftains of Central America. There was much that

was amiable and attractive in his disposition. He was born, in 1799, in the state of Honduras. His father was a French creole of the West Indies, and to this fact may, perhaps, be attributed that fire and energy of character which distinguished him. His mother was a lady of Tegucigalpa, and hence the impetuosity of his disposition was happily tempered by that amenity which belongs particularly to the Central Americans, by whom he was very generally beloved.

During the absence of General Arce on one of the warlike expeditions which resulted from the universal anarchy now prevalent in the five states, the citizen Mariano Beltranena, as vice-president of the republic, was for a time entrusted with the reins of government: on the President-General's return (in 1828) he refused to relinquish the power he held, and Arce was unable to compel him. The civil wars which continued to rage, and became even more general, now assumed features of cruelty which had been unknown before. Quarter was generally refused, and prisoners taken on both sides were indiscriminately massacred, sometimes by hundreds. The city of San Salvador was reduced, and filled with federal troops, which the insurgent inhabitants soon after made prisoners, with their leaders. General Morazan, now for the first time in command of the forces of Honduras, also defeated the troops of Guatemala on the banks of the Rio Lempa, and then pursued and obliged them to lay down their arms.

The federal government in the hands of the serviles of Guatemala, being incapable of contending much longer, now made overtures of peace. An insurrection against the same party broke out in Quetzaltenango, and their first short day of power was evidently passing away. Nevertheless, they manifested the spirit that animated them, by employing the eleventh hour in trying to undo some of the best legislative measures of the liberals, and in consigning to the flames all prohibited works, or those contained in the catalogue of books condemned by the Pope.

The insurrection against the serviles, which had been quelled at Quetzaltenango, soon broke out again in the Antigua, or the old capital, where the liberals have generally been in great strength and activity. It was also soon put down; but these facts encouraged Morazan, who was now in the ascendant, to invade Guatemala with 2,000 men. On the 5th Feb. 1829, he first attacked the

capital, and being repulsed with some loss, fell back upon the Antigua, where he was joyously received—the authorities of the place making their escape without striking a blow. From this point he directed his arms against the new city, generally with success. Concessions were tendered to him, offering that the proscribed liberals should be recalled, and the government shared with them. These overtures were declined; and, after more than two months of petty warfare, Morazan again attacked the capital on the 12th April, made good his entrance, finally drove out those public functionaries that he did not think it worth while to imprison, and restored the authorities who had been deposed and had escaped from Quesaltenango in October 1826.

The scattered liberals now returned to their homes, after an exile which had lasted two years and a half, during which some of them had visited Europe and the United States of America, and thus enjoyed opportunities of acquiring practical information, which they came prepared to devote to their beloved country, for whose liberties they had suffered so much. Great honours were now paid to Morazan, and general satisfaction prevailed; but for the serviles it was a time of deep waters, and the billows were not long in passing over them, and more especially over their frail and ruined political outworks.

The first acts of the restored federal congress, senate, and state congress, were to declare all the laws and acts of the serviles null and void; to stigmatize the late government as an unconstitutional usurpation, and to reinstate Barrundia, who had been arrested as president of the state, in the more honourable post of president of the republic. The next step was to visit upon their opponents the punishment of their crimes, or, at least, to put it out of their power immediately to repeat them. This was in part prepared by Morazan himself, with all the secrecy which the deed required, and was executed by virtue of his military authority. On the grounds that intrigues against the newly-restored government had been discovered, the archbishop, Ramon Casaus, and all the heads of the Dominicans, Franciscans, Bethlehemites, Capuchins, Mercedarians, and other orders of monkhood, were simultaneously seized in the dead of the night of the 10th to the 11th July, and escorted by soldiers to the port of Yzabal, where they were shipped to the Havannah, and to other places. The rest were summarily

ordered to leave the country. Legal proceedings were instituted against the murderers of Ceriño Flores and his fellow-victims. All the measures already decreed by the liberals were again sanctioned and enforced, and the unfinished work of reform was vigorously resumed.

The late president and ministers of state were also banished with all their officials, by a decree of the federal congress of the 22nd August 1829. They were made debtors to the amount of salary they had received, and their property was confiscated to pay the expenses of the war. This kind of reprisals, however covered with the semblance of justice, cannot be approved, and as it had been provoked, so it induced equal if not worse deeds of retaliation when the fallen party rose again on the ruins of its opponent.

Ecclesiastical abuses now enjoyed a larger share of the attention of the legislature than before, though other matters were by no means neglected. Ere the month of July had elapsed, the Congress of Guatemala decreed the suppression of all the convents for males, appropriating the buildings, estates, and revenues to the purposes of government. The nunneries were thrown open, and the inmates informed that they might go or remain at their own option; but any future professions of nuns were forbidden, so that their numbers could not be recruited.

The Federal Congress on the 7th September ratified this act, and declared all religious orders at an end throughout the republic. The sanction of the people was superadded, and it was actually carried into effect in all the states.

In the month of June of the following year, the assembly of Guatemala declared the archbishop a traitor, confiscated his property, and banished him for ever from the state. He continued to reside at the Havanna till his death in 1845.

Among other subsequent measures, the Inquisition was abolished. The acknowledged *children* of *priests* were permitted to inherit their fathers' property; even the celibacy of the clergy was legislatively set aside in one of the states (Honduras). The appointment of high dignitaries in the church, being declared to belong to the nation, was given into the hands of the president, and the very supremacy of the Pope was virtually repealed, by a law subjecting his bulls to the approval of the local governments. The climax appears to have been reached in 1832, when the state religion, which had been

adopted by the constitution to the exclusion of the public exercise of any other, was made to succumb to the most complete *religious liberty*—far above the insulting instalment of mere toleration. It was proclaimed by a decree of the Federal Congress, and accepted by the local assemblies—a decree which would do honour to any government and people; but which, alas! like many measures adopted by the liberals, was rather the promulgation of a principle than the enactment of a law, as there were none to take advantage of its provisions. Of course all these acts were stifled, and, as far as they could be, undone, when, ten years after, the serviles returned again to power. But not only had there been a breach made upon the customs and revenues of the church, and a salutary impression produced upon the public mind, which the priests could never obliterate; but, inasmuch as most of these statutes emanated from the Federal Congress, and were severally ratified by each of the state legislatures, they became the law of the republic in such a manner that no one state could afterwards disannul them, and though, since the dismemberment of the Federation, some of the local assemblies under servile influence, have endeavoured to repeal them, they still remain, properly speaking, the law of the land, and will, in all probability, be practically restored ere long.

But of what avail can even religious freedom (that greatest of national blessings and privileges) be to a people destitute of the Bible, and where no living testimony is lifted up in favour of the simple truths of the Gospel? True, alas! but if they have so early and so cheaply held out to them that which it has cost the saints of past generations, in our own and other lands, so much toil and endurance to obtain for their successors, in but an imperfect form, does it not constitute a powerful appeal to those who know its value, to do what in them lies to make the States of Central America “free indeed?” And may it not be that the tendered blessing will still be withheld till they all have learned from us in some measure to appreciate the boon?

CHAPTER VIII.

FACTIONS.

1830 TO 1840.

Temporary Peace—Renewed Civil Wars—Continued Reforms—Federal Government removed to San Salvador—Abolition of Saints' Days—Projects of Colonization—Effects of enlightened Legislation—Dulness of the People to admit of Reforms—The Cholera—Insurrection of the Mita Indians—Rafael Carrera—Servile Influence Reascendant—The State of Los Altos formed—Wars of Morazan and Carrera—Carrera made Governor of Mita—Dissolution of the Federation—The Serviles Return to Power—Morazan's Last Entry and Retreat from Guatemala—His Flight.

"The beginning of strife is as when one letteth out water."—Prov. xvii. 14.

THE year 1830, which is memorable for its convulsions in so many European states, was as remarkable for national tranquillity in Central America. The state of Costa Rica, it is true, dissevered itself from the confederation, and remained isolated for a time, but this was done without violence, and early in the following year it as quietly reunited itself to the republic. For the space of two years, considerable educational, industrial, legislative, and commercial advances were made. Two new universities were established by government in the cities of San Salvador and Leon. The cultivation of cochineal newly introduced into Guatemala, now began to be extended, and prospered greatly; the same result followed with regard to coffee in Costa Rica, and other branches of agriculture were successfully revived elsewhere. The troops of Morazan were employed in suppressing bands of mountain robbers, which had multiplied during the late civil wars, and the only notable breach upon peace and good order was the seizure of the Island of Ruatan, in the Bay of Honduras, by the authorities of the neighbouring British settlement. But upon complaint by the federal government, the act of the Superintendent of Belize was theoretically

disallowed by his government, though it has since been practically repealed in precisely the same quarter, and under the sanction of the same power.

The period just referred to is to this day the longest and most complete calm that the republic has enjoyed. But the elements of strife, though subdued, were silently working, and soon burst forth again. The government of the state of Salvador decreed that the federal compact was dissolved on the 7th of January 1832. General Morazan, who was now president of the republic, soon after marched against it, and, having prevailed, he assumed the presidency of that state also, imprisoned the former authorities, and put his own creatures in their places. Many commotions followed these steps. In December, Nicaragua separated itself; Salvador did so again in February 1833, Honduras in May, Costa Rica in September, leaving Guatemala to support alone the burden of the expenses of the federal government. Proposals were then made to elect a new federal congress; and when the terms had been with difficulty adjusted, private intrigues or public disorders prevented it from being carried into effect, a result which has attended similar efforts both before and since.

In Nicaragua, a faction calling itself the Reform Club occasioned much violence, and when put down with difficulty and great slaughter, it was found to have been excited by secret agents of Spain; some prints were discovered having on one side the portrait of the Spanish monarch, and on the other a priest in the attitude of preaching, with the words "God save Ferdinand VII., king of Spain and of the Indies." Similar plots had before partially disturbed some other districts of the republic, but they were easily put down, and gave occasion to more contempt than apprehension. This was the last, as well as the most disastrous, attempt of the kind.

This calamitous epoch was also the beginning of the wars of races, which have since occasioned many fears and some bitter animosities and feuds. The Indians, who bare so overwhelming a proportion to the Ladinos and the whites, have very often assumed a threatening posture, and sometimes they have actually risen in arms to demand relief from certain burdens, or to exact privileges and large sums of money, holding out the fearful alternative of a war of extermination and indiscriminate pillage of the cities, and

especially of the capital. The intemperate outcry first raised by the priests, and now become general against *Los Estrangeros* (strangers), raised out of opposition to the Liberals and against the privileges granted to foreigners, especially that of religious freedom, doubtless had their share of influence in provoking and encouraging these outrages; and on all similar demonstrations of feeling, the echo of that outcry is still heard.

Anastacio Aquino, a native of the Indian town of Santiago Nuumaleo, succeeded in establishing an aboriginal government in the state of Salvador on the 24th of July 1832, and was proceeding to subdue other towns, putting to death foreigners, creoles, and mestizoes. But he was met and vanquished by the government troops in an attack upon San Vicente, where he himself and his followers perished. A general hunting down of the Indians was ordered by way of retaliation, but happily it failed in the execution—probably because their superior numbers made the experiment hazardous.

Notwithstanding these and other lesser calamities, the federal congress continued its labours, and seems during this year to have reached the pinnacle of its legislative glory. On the 2nd of May an act already referred to was passed, providing for the entire religious freedom of all the citizens of the republic, and granting the right of private and public proselytism as well as of profession. On the 15th July, the state legislature of Guatemala decreed the abolition of all ecclesiastical tithes, which previous laws had already reduced one-half. The penal code of Spain, which as a whole is so much admired by lawyers, was still in a great measure in force, and has never been entirely superseded, but the exceedingly corrupt state of the tribunals of the country made it the more urgent that they should be reformed. The citizen José Francisco Barrundia, the late president, who had acquainted himself with both the English and the French languages, with his own hand translated the collection of enlightened laws which, in the United States, goes by the name of the Livingston code; the greater part of which were subsequently adopted. The introduction of trial by jury was one of the principal aims of this devoted patriot. In August of this year, it was first established in the more liberal state of Salvador, and then by Nicaragua and Guatemala in 1835. But it appears never to have been understood by the bulk of the people, and

therefore encountered great difficulties, and was at last abandoned. In the same month, the federal congress decreed a general mourning for Jeremy Bentham, in which they appear to have imitated an act of the French Chamber of Deputies with respect to Benjamin Franklin.

The Dominican convent in Guatemala was transformed into a model prison like those of the United States, and what had been the cells of the monks were altered to accommodate criminals. Another convent was occupied by the Lancasterian normal school; a third became the public hospital; several were turned into military barracks, and others remained without use.

The seat of the federal government, after ten years permanence in Guatemala, was removed in 1834 to the state of Salvador, first to Sonsonate one of its ports, and then to San Salvador the capital. A district extending ten leagues round the city was constituted a federal department. The advantages of this change consisted in the more central position with respect to the other states, and the comparative weakness of the servile party there. On the other hand, the greater influence of Guatemala was alienated, and the jealousy of its inhabitants aroused.

A constitution drawn up on the basis of the first one made ten years before, was now rejected by all the states except Costa Rica. Violent commotions again agitated Nicaragua, and at San Salvador between the state government and the federal authorities strife arose, and an appeal to arms decided the contest in favour of the federal troops. Proscriptions followed, and that state ceased to have a separate government. Even the quiet state of Costa Rica was now convulsed. This was occasioned by the priests, who were enraged at the abolition of their prerogative of taking tithes. The government party, however, prevailed, and in the following year the same congress, simultaneously with that of Guatemala, suppressed all the fetes and saints' days of the Romish ecclesiastical calendar, except Sundays and five holidays considered the most sacred. Under priestly influence, the saints' days averaged three or four a month, besides Sundays, and sometimes followed each other for several successive days, to the serious interruption of industry and public business. In a future chapter, the reader will be made aware of some of the demoralizing and murderous effects of the observance of these days in Central America. This was, however, one of the

measures against which the serviles were enabled to avail themselves of popular feeling, so as to direct it against the liberals. The cry of heresy and profanity had long been raised against their acts, but it never told so effectually, even upon the most fanatical, as when their own pleasures, or rather their vices and excesses, were interfered with.

Another short lull of repose, or a general cessation from strife, occurred during the entire year 1836. But it was only the precursor of storms more violent than any that had yet occurred.

One of the measures by which the liberals thought they could best benefit the people generally, was the establishment of foreign colonies in the less populous but fertile and salubrious plains with which their country abounds. By this means they expected to introduce many arts and manufactures which would draw out the latent riches of the land. They anticipated that European enterprise and capital would lend new energies to their commerce, and they hoped that intercourse with nations whom they supposed to be far before them in refinement and morality would exercise a happy influence upon their new-born social and political institutions. With such views as these, they not only removed all impediments, but held out every possible inducement to the foreign emigrant to share with them the blessings of their climate and soil. Legislative measures on this subject had been taken even by the national constituent assembly, and decrees on colonization were passed in 1831, 1834, and 1836. Their expectations from this source appear to have been as sanguine as their earnestness and sincerity in its promotion were great.

English enterprise and activity were first in the field. A charter of privileges conferring "unparalleled advantages,"* and accompanied with a grant of land including the entire department of Vera Paz, "a tract of upwards of fourteen millions of acres of virgin soil, affording every variety of climate,"† was bestowed upon a company in London, first formed out of, or at least originating from, the débris of the Poyaisian bubble. With the comprehensive name of "The Eastern Coast of Central America Commercial and Agricultural Company," some unprincipled speculators, with whom the

* Brief Statement of the Important Grants Conceded to the Eastern Coast of Central America Commercial and Agricultural Company by the State of Guatemala. London, 1839.

† Brief Statement, p. 116.

names of highly respectable individuals were associated, endeavoured to turn to private account the well-meant concessions of the Guatemala government. One of the conditions to be fulfilled in order to secure a title to the lands was, that two hundred families were to be located upon them within four years, and in ten years, a thousand (Art. iv. of Grant). In order to be able to dispose of these lands, some three hundred individuals, many of them from among the very refuse of the population of the great metropolis of England, were sent out without proper preparations and knowledge of the country, to places near the coasts, which, from excessive heat and recent clearance, must of necessity be insalubrious. While these poor creatures were suffering and wandering or dying on a foreign shore, the directors of the company were endeavouring to induce the home government to sanction their proceedings by holding out the hope of spreading British influence in the country, setting themselves forth as likely "to sustain for England all that she has got or could hope to get" in those regions, provoking the foreign minister to jealousy,* threatening to sell their charter to some other government, and advertising that "the Poyaisian securities held by the company would be made available to its resources when circumstances should permit."† Thus did the company make merchandise of their grant and of the people whom they deluded to emigrate for such ends. But ultimate failure attended all its objects. In their turn the directors were deceived where they had reposed most confidence, and after the waste of many lives, and much labour in vain, with the misappropriation of some 40,000*l.*—the loss of which has of course fallen on the shareholders—the charter was forfeited by the nonfulfilment of the stipulated conditions. The only tangible result, besides dear-bought experience, now remains in favour of Central America, where a part of the money referred to was spent in the importation and erection of an iron suspension bridge over the river Montagua, thereby removing the greatest obstacle that existed in the transit between Vera Paz and

* "We learn from our correspondents that the Dutch and the Americans are striving, and with every prospect of success, to obtain a footing in the provinces referred to. By means of the company to which I belong, Great Britain may secure a position far more prominent than any other nation can, except by the forfeiture or alienation of our grant, ever attain to."—Letter of Jeremiah Barret, Esq., to the Right Hon. Lord Palmerston, the 28th Oct. 1836. Brief Statement, p. 67.

† Prospectus of the Company.

the capital, at a point where many travellers have lost their lives and much cattle has annually perished.

Decrees on this and other subjects, such as the opening of the canal of Nicaragua, the improvement of ports, treaties of peace, commerce, and amity with other nations, and the remodelling or improvement of national universities, societies for the encouragement of arts and agriculture, &c. &c., filled up the interstices of legislative labour occurring between the more important acts of the various chambers, and though much of all this labour may now appear to have been fruitless, it must prove beneficial as well as honourable to the nation, because by so doing the government has traced, as upon a mighty tablet, lessons of solemn import, which, not only its own citizens of future generations must stand and meditate upon, but which even the most enlightened nations of the globe may now peruse with advantage to themselves. Nor can the truthful principles which they have recorded there remain inactive. Their day of triumph is at hand. Even now the leaven of those principles is diffusing itself in the public mind, and some future generation at least will do the men who left such fruits the justice to acknowledge, that, though their wisdom was imperfect and limited, the government they composed was to the nation not as a ponderous weight to lower its dignity, to suppress its energies, and to circumscribe its action, but with all its imperfections, and they were great, as a bright morning star announcing the dawn of national prosperity—the harbinger of future day. Their chief error, if error it may be called, was the advanced position and the rapid course they took—a course in which the people were but too unprepared to follow.

As an evidence of this, the late Mr. Dunlop,* a recent visitor, from whose historical summary many of the above dates and facts have been taken, relates,† that when the Livingston code of laws, which was adopted in 1834, was first put into execution in the state of Guatemala three years afterwards, “a serious disturbance took place in the town of San Juan Ostuncala, the people, who were nearly all aborigines, being provoked at being called to work at the construction of prisons, and excited against the new laws, rose,

* Robert Glasgow Dunlop, Esq., author of “Travels in Central America.” London, 1847. The heirs of this gentleman in the copyright of his book, have very kindly sanctioned the use made of it in the historical part of the present work.

† Page 183.

en masse, to attack the circuit judges, at that time holding their first court of justice in the town. The judges and the officers accompanying them were compelled to save themselves from the popular indignation by a precipitate flight. The magistrate of the district, escorted by a troop of dragoons, proceeded to remonstrate with the Indians; but he had no sooner begun to speak than they directed against him a shower of stones. An engagement took place between the mob and the dragoons, when the former was dispersed with considerable loss, after killing twenty-four of the dragoons. The Indians left behind them an idol and a jar filled with stones collected from the bed of a neighbouring river. It appears that they had been made to believe that the jar, if broken at the moment of the attack, would throw lightning upon the enemy, and, by enchantment, a number of venomous snakes were to rush out from a neighbouring wood and bite the soldiers; an event which was to be brought about by the assistance of the old gods of the country, which, though nominally discarded by the Indians, are always recurred to in times of necessity, as the Romish superstition is by those in Europe professing a purer creed. The idol was a monstrous figure of a man seated cross-legged, with the head reclining upon the back, and the arms encompassing an enormous belly, hanging down from the throat, being doubtless one of the old idols which had been concealed from the careful search of the Inquisition. The figure is still preserved in Guatemala."

Civil commotions were renewed in Nicaragua early in 1837. This state has been so constantly and so violently convulsed as to suggest a comparison between its political elements and its physical substrata, for it is subject to more frequent and terrible shocks of earthquake than are felt in any other state—though none are found wanting in this respect—a feature which is not removed even by the many active volcanic vents which are distributed over its surface. And, alas! how much more calamitous have been the corrupt ebullitions of the human heart, even in a few short years, than all the convulsions of nature during many ages!

In Guatemala, also, a new and violent crisis had arrived. The cholera, which made its appearance in the capital in the month of April 1837, became the exciting cause of the turbulence which soon followed. As mortality was rapidly spreading through all parts of the republic, the government at once took measures to mitigate, if

it could not stop, the ravages of the fearful pestilence. Not only all the medical staff in Guatemala, but most of the young students, were furnished with medicines and sent to those places where it was thought their presence was most urgently required. The poor Indians, who were dying in great numbers, are generally panic stricken when the least epidemic prevails. Their terror was now excessive. The priests, who had before learned to improve even such opportunities, were ready to foment their fears, and to awaken their resentment against the liberals, by insinuating that they had poisoned the waters with a view to destroy the Indians, intending to repeople the country with foreigners; and as a proof of this they pointed to the colony just established in Vera Paz. The too-credulous aborigines, who had so lately been excited against some of the reforms, and especially that of trial by jury, needed no more to rouse them to rebellion. Their cry was now directed against the poisoners and the foreign residents. Many of the doctors had to effect their escape as best they could. Some were seized and killed, being forced to swallow the whole contents of their medicine chests, or water was poured down their throats till they died, and the results were considered conclusive evidence of their guilt.

This insurrection soon became general in the district of Mita, where an attempt was made to disperse a great assembly of Indians at the town of Santa Rosa on the 9th of June. The Government official entrusted with the task was assailed, and the dragoons who accompanied him were beaten and put to flight. The ring-leader on this occasion was Rafael Carrera, since, and possibly even now, president of the state of Guatemala. He is a Ladino, in whom the Indian admixture greatly predominates—a man of a bold and irascible spirit, whose uncultivated abilities, united with the influence of circumstances, have raised him from the lowest rank to occupy the chief post of dignity in the state. The influence which his caste and character gave him among the Indians was soon greatly increased by the trickery of the priests, who surrounded Carrera with their adulations, and instigated him to further acts of sedition. They succeeded as readily in persuading the Indians that their *angel Rafael* was a messenger sent with a heavenly commission to be their deliverer from the liberals and foreigners, as they had done in ascribing the mortality occasioned by the cholera to the poisoning of the rivers and springs. To aid

the effect of this delusion, they contrived, in the presence of some leading Indians, to have a letter conveyed to their prophet, suspended from the roof of one of their churches, which purported to come from the Virgin Mary, and authorized him to act as the leader of the revolt.

Carrera soon organized guerilla bands, and on the approach of forces sent against him, generally retired to the mountain fastnesses, with which he was well acquainted, and, though repeatedly defeated by Morazan himself and other commanders, he invariably effected his escape, and continued to extend his influence and augment the number of his followers.

The inhabitants of Mataquesquintla, a rather large Indian town in the district of Mita, had long enjoyed the reputation of being marauders—a kind of sedentary banditti whose habitations all well-informed travellers tried to avoid, and when this was not practicable they expected to be robbed, unless well armed and uncommonly vigilant. Near this place the government troops dispersed a strong body of the insurgents, and slaughtered a great number; then, entering the town, they committed such atrocities as greatly incensed the Indians, who were driven to desperation, and, set on by the priests, who promised salvation to all who died in this cause, they now became reckless and irreconcilable. Their numbers as well as their fury continued to augment the more they were attacked, till their assailants were wearied with the interminable nature of the conflict, and worn out by the difficulty of following them in their mountainous retreats.

The government of Guatemala had for the last two years enjoyed the services of the citizen Dr. Mariano Galvez as chief of the state, one of the most talented and best informed of the liberal leaders. His proceedings were characterized by that moderation and lenity which only the wisest among rulers succeed in combining with a vigorous action and a just appreciation of the respect due to the law. His period of office is also memorable for improvements in the capital and throughout the state. To no one of the now fallen officials is there a more general testimony of respect in the minds of the better classes of people of every rank, and concerning none of the absentees of the last twelve years are regrets more deep and frequent than those which are expressed concerning Galvez.

The serviles of Guatemala were now concentrating their unsuspected energies for an effort to resume the ascendant. Unequivocal signs of debility became apparent in the ranks of the liberals, and that, too, in high places, by the forced resignation of Galvez and his friends, and the appointment of professedly moderate serviles (but real blue-bloods) to be ministers of state. This change took place on the 13th November 1837.

During this year, the last of its efficient action, the liberal government had concluded a treaty with the independent Indian tribe called Manché, occupying the north-easterly extremity of Central America. In it these Indians consented to subject themselves to the laws of the republic in six years time. Their idolatry and custom of polygamy were not to be interfered with. But the triumph of the servile party, which followed after a violent struggle of more than two years duration, has prevented any results from this treaty, which has been forgotten in the succeeding turmoil and disorder.

Insurrections, not of Indian origin, but directed against the now semi-servile government of Guatemala, became general in 1838. In two of the departments,* martial law was proclaimed. The old capital and the department of Sacatepequez, of which it is the 'Cabecera,' separated itself from the state and adhered to the federal government. Those of Chiquimula and Vera Paz followed. On the 26th of January, one of the battalions of troops in Guatemala rose against the government, demanding the restoration of Galvez and his ministers. In the extremity to which these movements reduced the serviles, they did not hesitate to call in Rafael Carrera and his guerilla bands to their assistance, and on the 30th of the same month, with the aid of some troops from the Antigua, they invested the capital, and driving out the garrison placed Don Pedro Velasquez at the head of the government.

Many of the leading liberals now retired from Guatemala to Quetzaltenango, and with the assistance of the federal government at San Salvador, they succeeded in erecting that and the two adjoining departments of Totonicapan and Solola into a separate and sixth

* It should have been stated in a previous chapter, that the state of Guatemala is divided into seven departments, viz., Vera Paz, Chiquimula, Guatemala, Sacatepequez, Solola, Quetzaltenango, and Totonicapan.

state, which was recognised by the federation as the state of Los Altos or the Highlands.

The ascendancy of the serviles was more and more confirmed in the chief state of the republic. Their arrogance and their outrages towards the liberals grew with their sense of security, and might soon have reached a greater pitch than they had ever done before, but for another check which they had not anticipated.

General Morazan who still retained the post of president of the republic, having been re-elected after filling it for the first legal term of four years, spent the early part of 1838 in a campaign directed against Carrera and the Indians of Mita. Though frequently victorious, he was utterly unsuccessful in the attainment of any important end, and retired to Guatemala with the federal troops. During this visit, Morazan so far effected a revolution, that he induced all the officials to resign their offices into his hands, while the people should proceed to elect a new house of representatives to which the task of reorganizing the government should be entrusted. The people rose in support of Morazan, and were only pacified with the resignation of the blue-bloods, and the promise of a new election. The citizen Mariano Rivera Paz, a *moderate* liberal, was appointed chief of the state. This new government, the character of which was conciliatory, proclaimed a general amnesty of all political offences committed since the day of independence.

In August of this year (1838), Francisco Malespin, a military chieftain of desperate character, provoked a revolt in Salvador, which required the presence of Morazan to quell it. The opportunity of this absence was seized by Carrera, who effectually defeated the federal troops left in Guatemala. Emboldened by this success, he advanced upon the capital with his hordes of Mita Indians. They took and partially sacked the Antigua, but were routed near Villa Victoria or Guadaloupe on their way thence to the capital by a force of nearly a thousand men, who, under cover of a cloud resting upon the surface of the table land, surprised them and killed great numbers. But quarrels among the officers prevented this advantage from being pursued farther, and Carrera was soon after found extending his incursions into the state of Salvador, exacting money and committing excesses in some of its larger towns.

So far from being checked, this faction, at the close of 1838, was in a sense recognised by the highest authorities, and the power of its chief made legal and extended by a treaty with the insurgents, in virtue of which they consented to lay down their arms and submit to the Government it is true, but on condition of their impunity and of the appointment of Carrera to the command of the district of Mita. This convention, which was ratified by Morazan as president of the republic, is a proof of the weakness of the Government, who thus became a party to its own ruin.

The Federal Congress closed its twelfth session—which proved to be its last—on the 20th of July. One of its latest acts would seem to indicate a presentiment of its end, as it empowered the several states to make laws (but not to repeal those already made) without its consent. In October, the state legislature of Guatemala dissolved itself; the government of Nicaragua declared itself separated from the federation in May; Honduras followed on the 5th November, and Costa Rica had already fallen under the most absolute military despotism, which soon after became general in all the states. The entire frame-work of nationality was now rapidly breaking up, and when, on the 1st February 1839, the second legal term of Morazan's presidency expired, the federal government may be considered as really at an end, though it was nominally continued for some time longer in the states of Salvador, Guatemala, and Los Altos, where its authority was recognised.

Nicaragua, first alone, and then assisted by the troops of Honduras, repeatedly invaded Salvador during 1839, for the express purpose of deposing Morazan, who still acted as president though he had not been re-elected the third time. In this war the bravery and ability of the federal leader enabled him successfully to sustain for some time a most unequal contest, but he was at length overcome in the commencement of 1840.

While Morazan was thus engaged, Rafael Carrera again invaded the city of Guatemala with five thousand armed Indians at the call of the servile party, who by his means deposed the existing authorities, and reinstated themselves in office. Rivera Paz, who in due course had been superseded, was now reinstated as *géfé* (chief) by the serviles, and 20,000 dollars were paid by the inhabitants as a ransom from the horrors of pillage by the Indian hordes. Carrera himself obtained the title and rank of general, and returned to his

district government with enlarged experience of his own power, the wealth of the capital, and the caresses of his servile friends.

The usual work of proscription and of undoing what the other party had done, was once more accompanied by the summary execution of those liberal leaders who did not make their escape or remain concealed. On the 17th April, the state of Guatemala also declared the federal compact dissolved, and asserted its own sovereignty and independence. As a natural result of this second reaction, priestly influence was again courted, and an attempt made to renew the power of the little horn. Among other institutions that were now restored, some of the suppressed convents for males were included. The few monks who returned were clamorous for the restoration of all their confiscated property, and the priests were not less eager to return to the enjoyment of the people's tithes. But these things had become impracticable, and they must even take what little they could get, and bide their time in hopes of the remainder.

The Indians of the new state of Los Altos had become discontented on account of the taxes levied for the support of government, and the complaints of their priests had so ill-disposed them towards their liberal rulers, that they wanted little encouragement from the serviles of Guatemala to induce them to rebel. Upon the first risings of insurrection, General Carrera, already become the commander-in-chief of the forces of the state, defeated the troops of the government of Los Altos, who were seeking a junction with Morazan in the state of Salvador, with a view to attack Guatemala. A party of Carrera's Indians, under Monte Rosa, treated some officers, who were taken prisoners, in a most brutal manner, and then put them to death. Carrera himself, entering Quesaltenango, secured the person of the president, Guzman, and a considerable number of officials, who were also cruelly murdered; some of them being put to death by slow torture. Geromino Pais, an officer of Carrera's, was chiefly concerned in these butcheries, which can never be forgotten by the liberals and the numerous families who lost talented relatives, full of promise to their country and to themselves.

From this time Los Altos ceased to exist as a separate state, and the three departments of which it was composed were reunited to Guatemala.

After this event, the state of Salvador remained the only adherent to the liberal interest, and of the now nominal federal government of which it had long been the stronghold.

Notwithstanding his recent defeat, and the desperate prospects of the liberal party, Morazan made a final attack upon the serviles in March 1840. Advancing with twelve hundred men upon Guatemala, evidently in the hope that its inhabitants would rise and assist him, on the 18th of the month he entered the city, and took possession of the Plaza Mayor, or great square. Here he soon found himself hemmed in by a host of Mita Indians and mountaineers, but remained quietly in that position till the next day at La Oracion, the hour of prayer, or sunset, when the Indians lifted up their voices to chant "Ave Maria"—a hymn of praise to the Virgin. The din of their united vociferations was such as to convince the federals that they were surrounded by overwhelming numbers, and Morazan at once resolved to cut his way through them, and effect a retreat. This he succeeded in doing, at the cost of nearly half his men and officers who were mercilessly smassacred. Some of the latter, to the number of twelve or fifteen, by escalading the walls and azoteas, secreted themselves in the patio of the British Consulate, which was then near the Plaza, and over which the British ensign waved. While there they were in safety, but Carrera being made aware of the fact, Frederick Chatfield, Esq., the British Consul-General, was induced to deliver them up to him on condition of their being legally tried; but they were no sooner in the hands of their enemies than they were shot in the street without further process. This act, as might be expected, did not increase the popularity of the British Consul, who is generally supposed to favour the aristocratic party. Either his sympathies or his instructions—or, it may be, both at once—brought him into closer relation with the serviles, with whom he was ever on better terms than with the liberals.

Morazan with the remnant of his men, effected a retreat upon San Salvador, where his want of success was improved by his enemies, and his friends being immediately put down, he found himself shut out and reduced to the necessity of embarking with a handful of partisans at the port of La Libertad on board a native schooner, in which the little band of exiles, the forlorn hope of the liberal party, arrived safely at Valparaiso, in Chili.

Thus, again, were the reformers crushed and dispersed; and thus, after sixteen years' duration, was the federal government suppressed. But the serviles, who doubtless dreamt of resuming the entire government of the country, were also doomed to suffer a bitter disappointment, and to remain for years at least, if not for ever, at as great a distance from the object of their desires and earnest efforts as they had been while the liberals ruled, and sometimes perhaps even somewhat more remote than at any previous period.

Mr. Henry Dunn, who visited Guatemala in 1827, when speaking of "the factious struggles of opposing parties" of which he became a witness, writes, with an accuracy almost prophetic,— "Happy will it be for the disputants on either side, if these dissensions shall have subsided before a third party, powerful enough to extirpate both, wash out their differences in mingled blood." Military despotism has now proved itself that third party, and it is sincerely hoped that this third phase of revolution is also fast drawing to its close. Happy will it be if the new epoch of their history, which is just now commencing, should be characterized by the introduction of the Gospel of Peace,—the imbuing of the national mind with those principles of truth, morality, and vital godliness, which shall qualify the Central Americans to enjoy, together with higher blessings, those of national peace and prosperity, as well as Independence and Religious Freedom.

CHAPTER IX.

DEMAGOGUES.

1840 to 1850.

Policy pursued by Carrera—The Covenant of Chinandega—Return and Fall of Morazan—Unanimity in the Council of State—A New Archbishop Elected—Ecclesiastical Extension—Military Despotism general—Civil Wars—Forced Loans and Levies—Don Santos Guardiola—The Coquimbo Faction—Siege of Leon—Changes in Guatemala—Insurrections of Troops—Carrera President—Monte Rosa—War between Salvador and Honduras—Excommunications—Mutual Slaughter—Peace Concluded—The Jesuits—University Reform—The Author's Extramission—Obsequies of Archbishop, and Conspiracy—Modified Condition of affairs in some of the States—Future Prospects.

"The princes of the Gentiles exercise dominion over them."—Matth. xx. 25.

RAFAEL CARRERA, late the ringleader of the Mita insurrection, and the willing tool of the priests, now general and commander-in-chief of the forces of the state of Guatemala, had by this time learned more fully to appreciate the power that was in his hands. In his new position he had been enabled to discover the real weakness of both the factions which had divided the land during the previous period of twenty years, and so small was his gratitude for the favours he had received, and so great was his cunning and self-confidence, that he contrived at once to exercise a considerable influence over his benefactors, and ultimately to reduce them, as well as their foes, to his supreme and arbitrary control. Though so untutored that he now first began to learn to read and to write, his natural aptitude for diplomacy was so great as to enable him practically to apply the Machiavelian policy of dividing to rule. Whether or not he understood the theory may indeed be doubted, but no sooner did he put forth his latent abilities than he adroitly divided his cuffs and favours, his smiles and frowns, between suitors of both the contending parties, and so effectually did he make them

serve as a mutual check upon each other, that for several years he himself contrived to maintain a precarious balance between the two.

On his return from Los Altos, where he overthrew the last outpost of the liberals of the north, Carrera directed his course southward to Salvador, under the pretext of pursuing his less successful rival, Morazan. On this occasion his troops committed such outrages as will not be soon forgotten, and which did not tend to promote his personal popularity with the Salvadoreños, who were already little disposed to favour his patrons. On his return to Guatemala, extraordinary honours were decreed to him by the congress elected under his own auspices. But when the serviles, who were proceeding rapidly in their work of restoration or rather of retrogression, eagerly proposed to take back the confiscated property of the Church from those who had lately purchased it of the state, without making them any compensation whatever, they were met with the veto of the general, who bluntly declared that those who wished for sacerdotal wares might pay for them themselves. Nor was this the only check which the priestly party received at his hands, making it apparent, even to the most sanguine among them, that their heavenly messenger, Rafael, had a mission to fulfil to which they could not now grant an unqualified approval. However, they could still afford to smile, as the work of public instruction was again suspended, and besides this, to them, vital point, they had gained some others, and doubtless they still hoped to gain more.

The serviles were now in possession of power, even in Salvador, which is decidedly the most liberal of all the states. That state, too, had been proclaimed "Sovereign and Independent," and thus was extinguished the last spark of federalism. But the regrets of the people were not long in following their late leader Morazan, in whom, as the serviles and other new factions strengthened, their hopes and expectations seemed to centre with redoubled force. Their representative assembly, elected under servile influence, was dissolved in 1841, *à la Cromwell*, because suspected of favouring the schemes which were already afloat in order to compass Morazan's return.

Salvador, Honduras, and Nicaragua made an effort to reorganize a federal government of their own devising, and assembled a

congress at Chinandega, in the last named state, on the 17th of March 1842. But though they covenanted a union among themselves, they soon found it opposed by Carrera in Guatemala, and by Carrillo in Costa Rica, with whose personal interests the existence of a federal government even in the neighbouring states did not consist.

Every similar attempt, and they have been frequent enough to evince the instinct of national preservation, has been effectually frustrated by the despotism of petty chieftains who have successively, and at times simultaneously, swayed the central states, and subjected the whole of the dismembered republic to their arbitrary and desolating rule.

Two full years had not elapsed from the flight of General Morazan, when he re-appeared in February 1842, accompanied by a choice staff of officers and a small body of mercenary troops. Of the two vessels that transported them, one was named the *Coquimbo*; they first touched at the port of La Union, but finding the liberals in Salvador not prepared for immediate action, they cautiously withdrew to the state of Costa Rica, and landed at the port of Calderas. The intelligence of Morazan's return soon gathered a considerable force around him, and once more rallied the scattered partisans of federalism under the banner of the *Coquimbo* faction, as it was subsequently called.

The returned exile and outlaw entered San José, the capital of Costa Rica, not only without opposition, but with manifest tokens of welcome. The majority in this, as in each of the other states, were anxious for the restoration of a federal government, as their only hope of order and their best safeguard against the worst of despotism. By acclamation of the people, Morazan was appointed provisional governor, and one of his first acts was to shield Carrillo, who had excited the detestation of the liberals, from a summary execution, and to provide him with an escort to conduct him safely out of the state.

Having assembled a legislature, all the acts of the previous government were nullified in due course, and especially the act of secession from the federation, so that this state was formally reunited to the republic of Central America, which had ceased to exist for some years. Morazan was next legally elected *géfe* (chief), and ample subsidies to enable him to reconquer the other

sovereign and independent states, and to re-establish their common nationality, were freely voted by the assembly.

The tragedy which almost immediately followed is still involved in considerable mystery as to some of the causes which brought it about. It appears more than probable that so soon as Morazan's return was known in Guatemala, secret plots and intrigues were resorted to by his enemies there in order to compass his ruin, even while at a distance. Whatever their plans may have been, they were doubtless facilitated by the severe exactions and imprudence of the general, and by the violence, insubordination, and crime of a subaltern in office. But these things, however provoking in themselves, would hardly suffice to account alone for the sudden change which so completely crushed the rising hopes of the still powerful though vanquished liberal party. Indeed, it is credibly reported that rumours of some such event as that which really transpired were afloat at Guatemala long before the intelligence from Costa Rica could possibly have arrived.

A levy of 2,000 men, and a forced contribution of 50,000 dollars, were certainly sufficient to moderate the enthusiasm of the people of this pacific state for their new military despot; and when these were exacted with rigour, and women and children were made hostages for the appearance of their fugitive relatives, it is no wonder they were incensed. If they had not a greater dislike to soldiering, the Costaricenses were certainly less inured to wars than the men of the other states, and even Carrillo had never required such services at their hands. At this critical period, Molina, one of Morazan's young officers, who belonged to a much-respected and highly-talented family, closely identified with the liberal interests, forcibly carried away a young lady of rank from her father's house, for which he was put under arrest by his superior officer. The influence young Molina possessed enabled him to excite an insurrection among the troops and put to death his commander, General Rivas; but he was himself again arrested, tried by a court-martial, and condemned to death, at the port of Calderas. The excitement which his execution occasioned, induced Morazan to send thither his confidential general, Sachet, with nearly all his troops, at a time when the discontent against himself ran high.

While the president was thus left unprotected, the inhabitants of the capital and of the two towns of Heridias and Alhajuela rose in

insurrection on the 11th September 1842. With a small body of troops, differently stated from 300 to 600, Morazan defended himself for two days and nights against 5,000 men, and then, being overcome, cut his way through the insurgents and fled to Cartago, where, not obtaining the assistance he perhaps hoped for, he was taken prisoner, together with his two sons and some other adherents, and brought back to the capital. On the 18th he was shot at San José, with another leading officer of his party named Villaseñor.

General Cabañas, a favourite officer, as soon as he heard of the capture of Morazan, hastened with a chosen band, resolved to relieve him or die in the attempt, but he was prevented till it was too late, being deceived by a professed friend of the president-general, who assured him that his banishment and not his death had been determined upon. This man's name is held in general execration, especially by the liberal party, by whom the memory of Morazan is cherished and surrounded with a halo of enthusiasm such as is generally conceded to partially successful, but ultimately unfortunate heroes. Miguel Saravia, Morazan's secretary, who is spoken of as a young man of promising abilities and of a lovely disposition, destroyed himself by poison, apparently in despair at the ruin of his master, as he was himself in no personal danger. The wreck of the Coquimbo party, after remaining on the coast in their ships a short time, was received and befriended by Malespin in Salvador.

From this event, which was the last and perhaps the most effectual blow to the hopes of the liberals, may be dated the unchecked sway of individual rather than of party domination. One of the uses which God in his providence may bring out of the apparently unpromising state of things which followed, is the partial, if not the entire destruction of those strong prejudices and rankling jealousies which have impeded the free development of the principles around which each party professedly rallied, but which were too often forgotten, and even violated in the conflicts of the partizans.

In Costa Rica, the destroyers of the Coquimbo faction organized yet another government, declaring the former illegal, and that little state soon returned to its accustomed quiet. One more season of comparative calm followed these more violent commotions which extended to the five dismembered states, and lasted till the end of 1843.

The supreme executive power of Guatemala was now vested in a kind of council of state composed of the highest functionaries, among whom were moderate liberals and ecclesiastical dignitaries. Mariano Rivera Paz, as *géfe*, filled the presidential chair; Don Juan José, Marquis of Aycinena, a priest of great influence, learning, and acquaintance with the world (of which he had seen something during long years of exile), as one of the ministers of state, also made part of the council; the commander-in-chief regularly attended the sittings of this board. It was generally understood that the opinions of Carrera had great weight in their deliberations, but it was not known precisely to what extent till the majority ventured to differ from him. On the first and only occasion of the kind that ever happened, the general quietly withdrew for a short space, and then returning as calmly resumed his seat. His colleagues, however, soon became aware that the government-house was entirely surrounded with soldiers, and that cannon were so planted as to command the doors of the room they occupied. This had the desired effect of entirely removing all their differences and making them unanimous, and indeed the council was never after known to swerve from the even tenor of its way.

Simultaneously with the fall of the liberal party and the rise of military despotism, there was also a partial restoration of the papal ascendancy. As soon as the priests were in a position to do so, they had taken steps in order to induce the exiled archbishop, already decrepit with age, to return to his vacant see.

This was the more anxiously desired, because, since his banishment, it had been impossible for graduates to obtain ordination without proceeding to Mexico, to the Havanna, or to some still more distant place; involving difficulties and expenses which few candidates were able and willing to encounter, and thus the increase of priests had been in a great measure prevented; their ranks being but sparingly recruited by expatriated Carlists from Spain and emigrants from other countries.

On the failure of these negotiations with the archbishop, the "Cabildo Eclesiastico" (ecclesiastical court) of Guatemala had entered into an arrangement with Rome for the appointment of a "Coadjutor" (coadjutor), who should enjoy the title of archbishop with the addition of that word, and be empowered to perform all the duties of the diocese. For this dignity there were of course a

few humble aspirants, and it was even whispered that certain well known persons had plunged deeply into intrigues, involving no inconsiderable pecuniary sacrifice, in order to obtain the mitre. A list of the clergy, with particulars of the qualifications of each, was forwarded to Rome, where, to the surprise of all, and to the special mortification of the aspiring few, the choice fell upon an aged and obscure but well reputed priest, said to be learned, who had probably never thought of the preferment. Francisco Garcia Pelaez, parish priest of the Antigua, a doctor of divinity and a reputed liberal, was nominated by the Pope, and at once dignified with the title of "Bishop *in partibus*," his bishoprick being an almost unknown spot in the wilds of Africa. The nominee was unable personally to undertake the voyage to Italy, it therefore became necessary that some one should proceed to Rome to be made the vehicle of communicating the Apostolical succession and benediction, so that it might be properly transmitted to him.

Don George Viteri, also a doctor of divinity, and though a native of San Salvador, a graduate at the university of Paris, had for some time taken a leading part in political affairs, as well in Guatemala as in his native place. In person he was handsome, portly, and considerably above the common stature; in mental endowments somewhat gifted; and in character very ambitious and unprincipled. His ceaseless intrigues seem to have centered around the interests of the class to which he belongs; and, though not the favoured one in the late contest, these soon led to his own promotion as an ecclesiastic.

Soon after the event related above, as occurring in the supreme council of Guatemala, in which Viteri was one of those who had ventured to differ with the commander-in-chief, he found it convenient to leave his official functions, and undertake the journey to Rome on the important mission just now alluded to.

About the middle of the year 1844, Viteri returned from Rome, the bearer of papal bulls, which were received at the capital with the ringing of bells and the firing of cannon. He had himself been made bishop of Salvador—a see now created for the purpose, though objected to when urged by the people and the Padre Delgado only a few years before. The ceremony of the consecration of the archbishop was solemnized in the usual form, and with considerable pomp, which was heightened by the additional

“sacre,” at the same time, of the bishop of Comayagua for the see of Honduras. Viteri officiated as the Pope’s nuncio.

This event was followed by the ordination of a number of graduates of all ages, who had been waiting for orders; and, perhaps, never before was there such a show of activity and apparent promise of ecclesiastical extension, as at that period when the three bishops were assembled at Guatemala, perambulating the streets in their violet robes and green hats, followed by a cortege of sable sycophants. Their consecration was accompanied by professions of nuns at different convents, and the solemnization with great pomp of the opening of La Recoleccion—a fine edifice which, having been ruined by an earthquake, was now rebuilt as the temple of the monastery of the “Recoletos.” But, under all these showy appearances, it was evident that the priests possessed but a very limited share of influence, if any, in the government of the state; for the work of clerical reconstruction was confined to their individual efforts, and did not extend beyond the pale of the *corps ecclesiastique*.

In the neighbouring state of Salvador, Francisco Malespin, who had figured in an insurrection against the federal government, and in the intrigues of the Padre Viteri, had been raised to the chief military command by Carrera, after the flight of General Morazan. He had risen into notice through deeds of violence, and with a reputation stained by excessive personal crimes; like Carrera, from being the mere tool of factions, he had acquired a love of power, and soon became their scourge; and he also showed no particular predilections for the party who had served him as a standing place to raise himself to power. Long before he assumed the style and title of president of the sovereign and independent state of Salvador, Malespin moved the secret springs of government.

In Honduras, General Ferrera, who had already been *gefe* since 1841, manifested the same tendencies, and was silently preparing to seize the unchecked control of affairs under the guise of the presidency of the state.

Nicaragua in its distractions had actually elected a Supreme Director whose power was superseded in 1843, by that of a “Gran Mariscal,” or Grand Marshal, in the person of General Fonseca, one in every respect worthy of a place by the side either of Malespin or Ferrera, to whom he was not inferior in immorality, but he probably surpassed them both in brutal ignorance.

The only state which, in 1843, was not ruled by a military despot was Costa Rica. By the short convulsion which made it the grave of the liberal party, and extinguished for a time at least all hopes of a nationality in the shape of a federal government, it secured its own tranquillity and gave itself to that industry which enabled it to be the first, and, till lately, the only state which paid its share of the loans contracted in Europe under the federation, and also materially to improve its roads and ports.

The position of affairs in the four principal states did not free them from civil war and mutual aggression. There was generally one, if not more than one, rival officer ready to contest the palm with the possessor of power, and one or the other of these obtaining countenance or help from the government of a rival state, involved them all in continual broils.

General Arce, who had been the first federal president, had sunk to a subordinate rank among military leaders at a time when the army had fallen into general disrepute, and was officered by the worst class of adventurers. He undertook to invade the state of Salvador in 1844, with a view to check the apparently liberal tendencies of Malespin, and, as was commonly reported, with arms and supplies furnished by Carrera. He met with little sympathy from the Salvadoreños, and being defeated, the act was disowned by the Guatemala government, and Arce and his associates were imprisoned.

Malespin, not deceived by this show of justice, raised an army, and entered the state of Guatemala, but ere he had marched a fourth of the distance towards the capital, an insurrection among his own troops in favour of General Cabafias, one of Marazan's favourite officers, averted his attention and excited his jealousy so much that he returned and disbanded a part of his forces. Carrera, who had collected the Mita hordes, retaliated by an inroad upon Salvador, but anxious not to leave his place at the council board long unoccupied, he soon returned to the capital without any great results.

To defray the expenses of this and similar wars, forced contributions were now habitually levied in the cities and larger towns. This was done simply by making a list of the more wealthy merchants and proprietors, and affixing to each name a figure considered to be proportionate to their supposed substance. This sum was collected ostensibly as a loan, by fair means if possible, but if the party

taxed refused to pay the quota assigned him, his goods or cattle to a much larger amount were seized and sold, or they were used for the benefit of the state. And in some cases even his entire estates were disposed of for a fraction of their actual value.

On all such occasions—and they have been more or less frequent since the independence—foreign merchants have been called upon to contribute as well as others: but all foreigners, and especially Englishmen, have hitherto enjoyed a great advantage over the natives, inasmuch as they have been enabled to recover their money by the aid of their respective consuls, sometimes backed with a blockading squadron, whilst those not so protected have suffered the loss of both principal and interest.

These repeated exactions of money fell heaviest upon the wealthy, but the labourer and the artisan were harassed by still more frequent levies of men. They were constantly exposed to be seized—even in the midst of seed time or harvest—and to be hurried to a distant and harassing campaign, or forced to spend month after month within the pestilential atmosphere of the barracks. The nation was impoverished—all classes of the people were burdened and oppressed—in the public mind there was a general alarm and feverish excitement produced by continual changes, which were only varied by the horrible outrages each army or commander was pleased to commit; and in which they seemed to vie with each other who should be the most diabolical. Some of these outrages are of such a character as absolutely to preclude the mention of their infamous details. Often have the midnight orgies to which the celebration of a victory gave occasion surpassed in cruelty and in unnatural excesses even the horrors of the battle-field, and long will the obscene tale continue to spread its contagion, and to occasion dismay in the minds of all classes, ages, and conditions of the people.

While the dispute concerning Arce's invasion was still pending, Fonseca, being urged by Malespin to assist him in overthrowing Carrera, soon raised a force, as if in compliance with his request, but immediately directed it against Ferrera in Honduras. He was defeated by the Hondureños, led on by Don Santos Guardiola, who now first began to make his name a terror, before which the inhabitants of towns and villages alike learned to flee, seeking shelter from his fury with wild beasts and venomous reptiles, creatures tame and beneficent by comparison with him. This man may serve as a type of the worst kind of military commanders. He is

described by Mr. Dunlop as a dark-coloured Metizo, stout built, and rather corpulent, his face expressing his fiendish temper; but well liked by the soldiers, whom he indulges in every way. To his habits of intoxication may be added every species of vice which can be named among the vicious inhabitants of Central America; and frequently in his drunken fits he orders people to be shot who have in nothing offended him, while at all times the most trifling expression, incautiously uttered, is sufficient to cause the babbler to be shot without mercy. In private life, he is as brutal as can well be imagined. In all the towns through which he passes, he makes a habit of calling in the best looking women he can see, and after subjecting them to infamous treatment, he drives them forth with the most insulting epithets. . . . Like Marius, the Roman leader, his brutal manners serve to terrify the enemy.”*

On the 25th August 1844, a treaty of peace was concluded between the states of Salvador and Guatemala. In the former state, General Cabañas, who bears a mild character, and who had refused to take advantage of an insurrection in his favour among Malespin's troops, because of the treachery it involved to his superior and benefactor, had now to flee from before the face of Malespin, and with a considerable number of adherents he passed over to the state of Nicaragua. Here the Grand-Marshal Fonseca lent himself to a project of first restoring the liberal party in Nicaragua, Salvador, and Honduras, and then, by uniting their forces, once more to overthrow the servile power in Guatemala, its stronghold. Their ultimate object was professedly the re-establishment of the Federal Government. Great precautions were taken, while collecting men and means, to keep their movements secret, but the illegal seizure of a vessel which managed to escape out of port, and carry the information to Salvador, disconcerted this part of their plan.

Ferrera and Guardiola readily united with Malespin to oppose Cabañas and Fonseca. Cabañas made the first inroad upon Honduras and was defeated, but shortly after, he in his turn defeated a much larger body of Hondureños. After various conflicts, with the usual results of forced loans and levies, and all the other accompaniments of war, Malespin and Guardiola with 3,000 men entered Nicaragua, and laid siege to Leon.

This beautiful city, which at one time threatened to rival Guate-

* Dunlop, p. 237

mala, was now the last stronghold of the Coquimbo party which had rallied round Cabafias. The besiegers were not numerous enough to invest it on all sides; but the enemies of Fonseca in the adjacent towns, taking advantage of the opportunity, rebelled against his authority, elected another leader, and uniting with Malespin and Guardiola, swelled the besieging army to double its original numbers. The besieged made the most desperate defence ever known in the history of Central American wars, and the horrors of this siege were so extreme and complicated, as forcibly to recall some of the accounts given by Josephus in his Wars of the Jews.

On the 18th December, about 800 of the besieged made a sally and were surprised and dispersed by an ambushment, which prevented the return of but few of them, besides their officers, to Leon. At the close of this month the city was invested on all sides, and the sufferings of the inhabitants from within began to exceed the cruelty of their enemies without. All suspected persons were murdered, by order of the grand-marshal, very many houses were plundered, and dead bodies lay unburied in all the streets. The besieged troops, reduced to extremity, and infuriated by many evil passions, now began to sack every part of the city which they could reach, slaying even their friends with unheard-of cruelties, and committing the worst of outrages on women and children. These deeds occasioned Cabafias, with Morazan's two sons and fifteen others of his party, to abandon the troops. They succeeded in effecting their escape on the 23rd of January 1845.

"On the following day, a general assault was made by Malespin and Guardiola, who placed loaded cannon behind their troops, to be fired upon them in case they turned back, and the two generals and most of the troops being intoxicated rushed forward with savage fury. The barricades were desperately defended by the Leonese troops for some time, but at last were all finally forced, and the defenders killed or driven out, after which the victors made a general massacre, no age or sex being spared, and no place respected. The women, who had taken refuge in the churches, were first violated and then bayoneted by the savage soldiery; and these sacred (?) edifices were literally filled with mangled bodies, and covered with blood."

Every house but one was sacked and completely gutted. Several

were razed to the ground ; but as this required great labour, the walls being six or more feet thick, attempts were made to burn the rest ; they succeeded but partially, on account of the detached position of the buildings and the little wood used in their construction. The house that was spared was occupied by an English merchant, the partner of the British vice-consul, to whom Malespin granted a guard of protection. In it the Grand-Marshal Fonseca lay concealed for two days ; but was finally taken while attempting an escape, and immediately put to death. As a climax to the desecration of the churches, as many as three or four priests were slain within them. And it may be asked, were there none who could recognise in their dying groans a note of retribution ?

Perhaps the reader is better qualified than those more immediately concerned to discern in these secondary circumstances a finger pointing to the source of all the horrors described, and all the woes, still more terrible, which the nation has endured, and is still enduring, from the most baneful of all curses, that of a corrupted form of godliness without the power.

In Guatemala, scenes of violence, though in a different form and vastly less in degree, were at the same time transpiring. The semblance of an executive council had till now been associated with the imposing appearance of a deliberative legislature composed of the *soi-disant* representatives of the people. It consisted of a majority of serviles, a large minority of liberals, and a sprinkling of military men, at whose head was Sotero Carrera, the brother of the commander-in-chief, and Corregidor (chief magistrate or prefect) of the Antigua—a man of the Guardiola stamp, without his reputed valour. This assembly was, of course, the arena where the remaining animosities and jealousies of factions not yet extinct were manifested, and little else was effected by it than to keep these alive. The commander-in-chief did not look complacently upon its labours, notwithstanding the power of the *veto* which was wielded by the council board at which he sat.

In June 1844, it was commonly reported that a large quantity of arms, amounting to 40 or 50 mules' burden, had clandestinely left the "Comandancia," the general's head-quarters, during the night, accompanied by officers and men, closely muffled. Carrera at the same period undertook a journey to visit one of his more remote estates. Subsequently, rumours were afloat that the Mita

Indians were assembling in arms, and in great numbers, at Pisula, about six miles from the capital, in a south-easterly direction. The alarmed inhabitants immediately sent for the general, who being indisposed in the highlands could not come so soon as they wished. Meantime, the Indian hordes increased rapidly, and assumed a threatening attitude towards the capital. In the hour of extremity Carrera, having suddenly recovered, arrived at Guatemala, and led out the garrison to attack his former supporters. A mock conflict of some hours ensued, in which two of Carrera's men were actually killed, and about as many wounded. The officer who, being really in earnest, had caused this mortality was, however, taken, and imprisoned in the capital. The victors very condescendingly entered into treaty with the defeated Indians, who presented a list of demands, among which the most prominent were that the Legislative Assembly should be dissolved; that no priest should in future be allowed to fill any office in the state, and that the military should enjoy exemption from the civil tribunals, being amenable only to a court-martial.

These and other requests were thought so very reasonable by the victorious general, that they were printed, circulated, and presented for adoption to the Legislative Assembly, which actually met, and pretended to discuss them, while the defeated Indians were awaiting a reply within two leagues of their angust representatives. At the second meeting of the Assembly, held with this exalted object in view, some few liberal members feebly lifted up their voices against the proceeding, but all, with one exception, concurred in signing and sealing at once their own infamy and dissolution. The victors having generously conceded *all that the vanquished required*, the latter were next marched into the city, to the number of six thousand men, and reviewed in the Plaza Mayor by Carrera.

Strangely inconsistent as it may appear, the commander-in-chief had now the friendship and assistance of a priest, whose significant name conveys a pretty correct idea of his character. The Padre Lobos, or Father *Wolves*, is a well-known guerilla leader, of reputed bravery, and a revolutionary partisan of the liberals of Salvador.

When the Indians had retired from the capital, the Assembly was no more. The Marquis of Aycinena, and other clergymen,

had resigned their several posts. The soldiery, like the priests, were privileged to commit crimes with more than common impunity; and in this military phase of the revolution it seems to have reached the culminating point of full-orbed despotism. Another assembly was of course convoked, though the deputies were some time in arriving from the provinces, and much longer still in preparing a new constitution, which, after it had been completed with much labour, was rejected by the executive, and the delicate process had to be recommenced.

During this year (1844) were manifested the first tokens of discontent and mutiny among the troops, which were now more numerous and better armed, and in some respects better trained, than they had been, though they were certainly not less filthy and ill-clad, nor one whit more orderly and moral in their conduct. Monte Rosa, one of Carrera's generals, was surprised in the act of collecting arms and ammunition, and preparing an insurrection at an estate within a few miles from Guatemala. He was imprisoned in the capital. On the 20th Sept., the "batallon permanente," composing an important part of the garrison of Guatemala, rose in rebellion, and began to pillage, but they were soon put down, and some of the ringleaders shot.

On the 1st of January 1845, Carrera openly assumed the government of the state of Guatemala, by taking upon himself the office and title of President. He also gradually introduced his own officers and favourites into every civil post of trust and dignity; not fearing to offend both the liberals and the serviles, whom he had alike flattered and cajoled.

Another revolt among the troops, which soon followed, wore a more serious aspect, and was calculated to moderate the confidence of the new president. Carrera had left the city on the 30th of January for the shores of the Pacific, where he was cultivating a large and rich estate: in the dead of the night of the third day after his departure (the 1st of Feb. 1844), some officers, who had gained over a part of the garrison, proceeded to the gaol, and, forcing open its doors, liberated Monte Rosa, and with him some three or four hundred malefactors then composing the chain-gang, all of them of the most desperate class of murderers. These they immediately armed, and then proceeded to proclaim a new order of things. This faction had all the *materielle* of war

in its hands; and the city, capitalists, mechanics, and labourers, lay completely at its mercy. But the leading citizens had little confidence in Monte Rosa and his friends, and anxious as all parties were to rid themselves of the yoke of Carrera, under which they writhed, and on account of which they burned with shame, none were found who were willing to exchange it for that of Monte Rosa and his assassins; so that, after committing some trifling depredations, chiefly confined to the residence of the president-general, and exacting 5,000 dollars, which was considered a very moderate sum as a ransom from the horrors of a general pillage, they retired from the city, upon which Sotero Carrera had already marched in support of his brother, with a small force from the Antigua.

Monte Rosa and his followers were pursued in their retreat towards Mexico, and most of them were shot or drowned at the passage of a river; he himself effected his escape. Mr. Dunlop attributes this insurrection to the secret intrigues of the servile leaders, who, he says, "in the most cowardly manner, barricaded their houses, and waited to see the result, before declaring for either party."*

The president-general returned to the capital after these events, having been taken ill at his estate, as the same writer says, from fright on receiving the disagreeable intelligence. He imprisoned many whom he suspected, and ordered several to be shot, but on the whole manifested a far more conciliatory disposition than was expected towards all parties, and, at this time, more particularly towards the liberals. Don Benedicto Mejia, one of this party, was, however, arrested, and that, too, while in the act of writing a scurrilous satire upon Carrera himself, in which he alluded to one of his former occupations, viz., that of a pig-driver, and to other far more disreputable things. This paper was produced and read at his trial, and so exasperated the president that he at once, and in person, inflicted corporeal chastisement upon the offender by cuffs and kicks, but that he was not the more disposed to pardon him after this infliction, was proved by his subsequent imprisonment lasting many months.

Don Juaquin Duran, a lawyer who enjoys a high reputation, and was considered liberal in his tendencies, was immediately

* Dunlop, p. 216.

elevated to the rank of minister of state, now become somewhat similar to that of prime minister to an absolute monarch. General Pais, who is regarded with terror where he does not excite abhorrence, was associated with him as minister of finance and war. The number of public functionaries was considerably reduced, and the collecting of the customs or import duties, which is almost the only important source of revenue, was better regulated, so that a great saving was effected to the public purse, enabling the state to satisfy the claims of some of the foreign merchants, for which their consuls had now become unusually clamorous.

At the close of 1844, and at the beginning of the following year, the remote state of Costa Rica presented the uncommon spectacle of a pacific contest between four political leaders for the privilege of *not ruling*, and José Maria Alfaro, anxious to retire from office, with difficulty obtained a successor. Don Rafael Gallegos was, however, elected *géfe* at the beginning of 1845, and continued in office till the 7th June 1846, when a bloodless revolution, in which the military were the chief actors, restored José Maria Alfaro, who resumed office very unwillingly. The only complaint of the people appears to have been the inefficiency of the legislature, which was fruitful in words and barren in deeds; and their professed object was the further promotion of the commercial prosperity of which they had already tasted the sweets. Like Issachar, they saw that rest was good and the land pleasant, and they were willing to bow the shoulder to bear, and to become servants unto tribute.

On the 2nd of February 1845, the very day upon which the Monte Rosa faction found itself in possession of Guatemala, a revolution of much greater importance took place in San Salvador, General Cabañas, and those who had escaped with him from the siege of Leon, hastened to Malespin's capital, and even while he and Guardiola were unitedly consummating their deeds of blood and rapine upon the unhappy inhabitants of that devoted city, the Coquimbos entered San Salvador at the head of nearly 1,000 men, who had adhered to them in their hasty march, and were enthusiastically received by the liberal Salvadoreños. The Vice-President Guzman, who had frequently been urged to usurp the government, but had evinced great timidity, consented to do so now that he was well supported, and saw Malespin at a distance. He was named provisional president, and all classes seemed to rejoice

in the change. The intelligence of this event also affected Malespin's troops to that extent that he was almost entirely deserted, and the new governors of Nicaragua, who had served themselves in helping the besiegers of Leon, now thanked and dismissed both Guardiola and Malespin, who, aware of their weakness, retired together quietly into Honduras.

Malespin, availing himself of the friendship of Ferrera and Guardiola, as well as of the wealth he had amassed while in power, made desperate struggles to recover it. He first entered the rebellious state from Honduras on the 2nd March, with a mere remnant of the army he had led to the walls of Leon, hoping to surprise the new government. Cabafias met him with a superior force at Quelapa near San Miguel, where Guardiola was victorious, and passing the Rio Lempa, they had another but undecisive encounter, at San Vicente. After this Cabafias, being strongly reinforced, drove Guardiola before him back into Honduras. Guardiola, nevertheless, plundered and devastated the country as he went.

Negotiations were now attempted between the belligerent states, by which it became apparent that Ferrera was resolved to support Malespin to the utmost, and they consequently proved ineffectual. War was again resumed. Cabafias, pretty well supported with men, though but scantily supplied with money or provisions, invaded Honduras, and took possession of Comayagua, the capital, on the 8th June 1845. Here he was left by his own government to pay and victual his troops as best he might. This can only be explained by a determination on the part of jealous rivals to ruin Cabafias, or, what is more probable, that the state was really as reduced by its previous wars with Guatemala and Nicaragua as to be totally unable to raise the necessary supplies. Upon his remonstrances the general was urged to support himself by plunder; but having exhausted "what money he could collect among his friends, for he himself was too honest ever to be possessed of any, the troops merely subsisted by what was sent them in charity by the inhabitants of Honduras, who were astonished at the moderation of their leader;"* but the unpaid troops fast deserted and returned to their homes. So that, when the approach of Guardiola was announced, the dispirited remnant refused to encounter him and fled, the greater part throwing away

* Dunlop, p. 238.

their arms. Cabañas was himself forced to flee with less than fifty men—the only remnant of the 3,000 whom he had brought with him. Pursued to San Miguel, where he was still unable to offer any resistance, he found himself obliged to abandon that town to the tender mercies of Guardiola, who completely sacked it, but wanting a sufficient force to attack the capital, though that also formed a part of his plan, he waited some time for reinforcements without crossing the Lempa. General Cabañas, on his return to San Salvador, resigned the command of the forces. Great terror prevailed among the inhabitants of the capital in consequence of this step, as they had no one else in whom to confide their protection.

Viteri, the new bishop of San Salvador, who had first assisted the rise of Malespin, had afterwards so seriously disagreed with him that subsequent to his return from Rome, he found it expedient to leave his diocese and take up his residence with the archbishop at Guatemala. On the occurrence of the revolution of February, he had returned to San Salvador, and now united with the friends of the late Morazan to help to crush his former ally. In pursuance of this object, the bishop preached up a crusade against the Honduras troops, and to give it additional force he publicly excommunicated, with bell, book, and candle, both Ferrera and Malespin. The bull of excommunication was also printed and widely circulated, enjoining upon all to flee from the spiritual contagion, and calling upon the priests to refuse the sacraments of the church to their soldiers.

The effect of the bishop's measure, however powerful it might have been at a previous period, was now, at best, of doubtful efficacy. It is commonly reported that when Malespin was informed of it, he ordered a piece of cannon to be pointed and fired in the direction of Rome, and when reminded of the futility of such a step, and the greatness of the distance, he replied that its ecclesiastical artillery was quite as impotent to affect or to harm him.

The people of the capital took other measures of defence by barricading the streets and preparing arms and ammunition; but they were already divided, and disagreeing among themselves, the Coquimbos, the Bishop and his friends, and the President Guzman's supporters, constituted three separate factions; the first stood highest in public opinion, but the two others, especially the bishop's party, excelled in intrigue, and even the

presence of the enemy could not prevent them from bickering and abusing each other in the most violent manner.*

When Guardiola had at length retired into Honduras, not having received the reinforcements he expected, negotiations were again resumed, which Honduras seemed willing to prolong in order to gain time to raise more forces. After an armistice of two months, Guardiola headed another army, which was to be assisted by a naval expedition, consisting of two merchant vessels, which Malespin had long before unjustifiably seized to act against Nicaragua, and of which he obstinately persisted in retaining possession. They had been transferred from La Union to San Lorenzo, the only port of Honduras on the Pacific. But Colonel Carvallo, who commanded the Salvador forces, having tampered with Colonel Barras, who commanded a part of the Honduras troops, suddenly fell upon them in a valley called Obrajuela, full of indigo plantations, and before they could put themselves in fighting order, defeated them with considerable loss, and took 120 prisoners, whom he massacred in cold blood. Afterwards marching upon La Union, he took part of the forces employed in the naval expedition prisoners, though the greater portion were enabled to get on board the vessels in time to escape.

“Guardiola, however, saved himself, with the greater part of his troops; and having put Barras to death, and received secret information that Colonel Carvallo was in La Union with about 250 men, silently marched thither by land, with a somewhat superior force, and unexpectedly entering the place, easily overcame all resistance. Colonel Carvallo and all his troops were immediately put to death, and every male in the place, except a few who were enabled to escape to the neighbouring woods, were put to the sword: afterwards, having plundered the government warehouse of the bonded goods, principally belonging to the San Miguel merchants (proceeding to the fair), and ransacked the town, he retired, leaving the place in utter desolation, the streets and houses being full of dead bodies, and no person left even to bury them. He returned without opposition to Honduras.”†

Again were negotiations resumed, but in the midst of them the people, who had assembled in fancied security at the great November fair of San Miguel, were terrified and suddenly dispersed in all

* Dunlop, p. 241.

† Dunlop, p. 248.

directions with their goods, by the announcement of the approach of Guardiola, but as barricades were thrown up, and a resolute posture of defence assumed by those who remained after the first panic, he did not attempt to enter the town, but confined his depredations to its vicinity. At length all parties being equally wearied and impoverished with the war, peace was agreed upon on the 20th December 1845. Malespin restored one of the vessels he had stolen, his relatives received back their confiscated property, prisoners on both sides were released, and a general oblivion of all offences promised.

In Guatemala the president-general had been giving so much encouragement to the liberals that they were led to suppose he was about to throw himself into the arms of their party. Don Juan Duran, at the end of three months, was succeeded in his office as minister of foreign affairs, by Don José Antonio Asmitia, a moderate liberal of great respectability. A most decided stand now made by Carrera against the united ecclesiastical and aristocratic influence still more encouraged these hopes.

The constituent assembly which succeeded the one dissolved in 1844, at the instance of the Indians assembled at Pinula, had decreed the formation of a small colony in the beautiful bay of Santo Tomas, on the eastern coast of Guatemala. A charter had been granted to a Belgian Company, who, with the help of their own government's influence, had already lavished many lives, and a considerable sum of money, in the attempt to colonize, with but small success. The same legislature now decreed the foundation of a college of Jesuits at Guatemala. This arose out of the former project. The directors of the colony, either themselves blinded by superstition, or, what is more probable, being willing to make use of the fanaticism which they supposed to prevail in the governments and people of Central America, sent out with their first colony a portable chapel, which had been put up and consecrated in the park at Brussels, in presence of the very devout queen of the Belgians. Three Jesuits had charge of this sacred bijou. There were also sent with them many gifts which Solomon says "the wicked taketh out of the bosom to pervert the ways of judgment."* To the cathedral at Guatemala, a richly adorned missal (the mass book) was presented; to Carrera, a heavy piece of artillery and

* Prov. xvii. 23.

a handsome uniform, &c. &c.; to the notables of the capital suitable *douceurs* were given, and among the common people a great number of pretty pictures of saints, and illustrations of professedly sacred subjects were distributed.

When the Padre Walle, the director of the three imported members of the company of Jesus, and himself a true Jesuit, visited Guatemala, he was so courteously and hospitably received as to be led to return again after a short interval, when he sang mass in one of the numerous churches. During these visits, it was insinuated to some of the influential serviles that an establishment of Jesuits would be a useful auxiliary to them. To the least informed moderates, and to the people, it was represented as desirable merely on the score of the instruction of youth. No less than thirteen languages would be taught in the new college, besides other branches of learning and science, of which the capital was deficient, notwithstanding the existence of the university. This was certainly a happy device, as no bait would be so eagerly swallowed by the unsuspecting multitude who hunger and thirst for instruction, and it could not possibly have succeeded better. The college was decreed. An empty convent was awarded for the purpose. Extensive repairs were commenced. A rich harvest of first fruits was gathered in from nobles and plebeians, in the shape of voluntary subscriptions for the college. And Padre Walle embarked for Rome, to arrange matters with the general of the company, no doubt in very good spirits. While there, he wrote to his expectant friends in Central America, reporting progress, and stating that he had been paying his devotions at the shrine of saint Ignatius de Loyola.

While the crafty Jesuit was thus employed, and during his subsequent journey to Belgium, where he soon after embarked with twelve of the erudite fraternity, some of the patriots in Guatemala, better aware of the danger that threatened their country, began to whisper their suspicions as to results of which others were so sanguine. An antique document published in Spain, at a time when efforts were made to revoke the sentence which banished the Jesuit order from all the Spanish dominions, was reprinted in Guatemala. It was followed by some original essays, in one of which the curious were invited to visit the remains of the Jesuit's college in the Antigua, where, on examination, they

would find a *subterraneous passage* now in ruins, connecting *that edifice with what had been the nursery of Santa Teresa*. The subject began to be agitated with considerable animation, and, as is usual in the capital on all similar occasions, it was the absorbing topic of conversation with every class.

At this juncture, the French newspapers, which are read by most of the leading men in Guatemala, were bringing over, by each succeeding mail, fragments of Eugene Sue's work, which was then first appearing,—“*Le Juif Errant*.”* The passages of that extraordinary novel, which so effectually expose the policy and tendencies of the Jesuits were read to the president-general, who, if he had vacillated before, now became decided, and as the Padre Walle and his troop were daily expected, he sent a peremptory order to the ports on the eastern coast not to suffer one of them to land, and to intimate that if they attempted it, it would be at the peril of their lives.

Though the legislative decree in their favour was then still unrevoked, yet the will of Carrera proved more binding than the law. While the serviles were endeavouring to rebut the charges brought against their new allies, and polemics ran high in the capital, the collegiate freight arrived at Santo Tomas in April 1845, and was met by Carrera's mandate. The Jesuits were too prudent to expose themselves, but they were also persevering enough to wait on board their vessel, and forward their remonstrances to the government. This endangered the peace of the capital and of the entire state. Rumours of revolution were rife, and gatherings of Indians were making ready to suppress them. The archbishop coadjutor, who had in vain memorialized the government for the removal of the interdict, published a *pastoral letter* to the clergy and people in the month of May, in which he furnishes them with copies of his official correspondence on the subject, and really incites them to rebellion. In one part of his remonstrances with the government, then made public, the archbishop alludes to the residence in the capital of a Protestant missionary, whom the government had been in vain solicited to banish, at the very time that they were spurning from their shores these holy fathers of the Catholic faith.

It is difficult to surmise how this controversy would have ended,

* The *Wandering Jew*, in which there is much documentary evidence concerning the deeds of the Company of Jesus.

had not one of the Jesuits died of the coast fever on board ship. This seems to have decided the rest to return to Europe. Subsequently the two who were chaplains to the Belgian colony, which continued to struggle into existence, were also glad to leave their charge. They embarked amidst the howls and jeers of the colonists, who assembled on the beach and united in singing a chorus equivalent to

" Fare thee well, and if for ever,
Then for ever, fare thee well."

Thus did God in his providence marvellously use the arbitrary power of one man, itself the offspring of priestly intrigue, to protect this suffering country from a fresh influx of the very worst element of political, social, and spiritual disorder.

These circumstances could not fail to encourage the liberals in precisely the same degree that they must have chagrined their opponents. In May 1845, the legislature enacted a measure got up by the liberals to restore the liberty of the press, which the serviles had revoked in 1841. The new law provided that a jury of ten *citizens* (not ecclesiastics) should be selected by lot out of one hundred nominated by the *municipality* (not the ecclesiastical court) of which a majority of two-thirds were necessary to the prohibition of any publication. As a result of the confidence thus inspired, a new periodical in addition to the "Gaceta Oficial," a mere bulletin of the government, was ushered into existence with the title of "La Aurora." It occasionally, though timidly, ventured to broach liberal views and sentiments, and the number for the 12th December 1845 contained an article entitled "The Aristocracy of Talent," a translation from the gifted pen of the Abbé de Lamennais, the truthful principles and oriental style of which are at once striking and beautiful. Some malicious person had the *mal-adresse* to persuade Carrera that this article was a personal attack upon him. The general sent for the responsible editor, violently abused him, and threatened to kick or shoot him on the first recurrence of a similar offence. The affrighted editor, not knowing how soon the most innocent remarks might be construed into a satire, expressed or implied, and not choosing to run the risk so pointedly alluded to, prudently refrained from publishing his journal, which was then scarcely eighteen months old.

In the month of July, Don Mariano Padilla, a doctor of medi-

chne, and an active reformer of considerable ability, being associated with Asmitia in the government as one of the ministers, was enabled to bring before the legislature a plan for the radical reform of the university, or, in other words, for its entire reorganization and removal from under the influence of the priests, who had stultified its efficiency and ruined its funds. This project was actually decreed and ratified by the executive, and Dr. Padilla was publicly serenaded by torch-light by the grateful and delighted students; but such was still the tenacious grasp of the sacerdotal vampire, that the legislative and the executive, backed as they were by public opinion, could not force it to loose its hold; and it still continues to suck the corrupted life's blood from this, in priestly hands, worse than useless institution.

Meanwhile, the president-general continued to manifest his determination to sway the destinies of the state, and even if he had modified some of the ruder features of his administration, his private character had developed itself in no comely outlines. Two attempts to assassinate him had been made before he assumed the presidency, both of them connected with the species of immorality to which he is, or was, most addicted. A blind "Marimbero," or player on an Indian musical instrument, had stabbed him in revenge for the ruin of his daughter, for which he was killed on the spot by the satellites of the general, and not contented with this, the priest Viteri, who was then a civil functionary, was zealous in ordering that the remains of the Marimbero should be quartered and exposed in different parts of the city. On a subsequent occasion Carrera was withdrawing at a late hour from the house of one of his acknowledged concubines—of whom, though married, he maintains upwards of a score—when he was fired at under cover of the darkness. His personal property had rapidly increased, and his favourites of course shared his opportunities of amassing wealth by more than questionable means. In the expansion of his military tastes he had erected a fort ostensibly for the protection of the city, which from its position appeared better calculated for its destruction.

One of the last civil offices into which a military man had yet to be introduced was thus filled, on the 28th March 1846. Don Dionicio Gatica, a civilian, was removed from the post of Corregidor of Guatemala, to make room for Don Pedro Velasquez, an ill-

reputed military commander. The very first act of this new functionary was one which his predecessor would not have willingly lent himself to. The author of this narrative—the person who was referred to by the archbishop in his correspondence concerning the Jesuits, as residing in the capital, in the character of a Protestant missionary—had, since 1842, been an eyesore to the clergy, and the object of frequent molestation from the local authorities at their instigation, first, for his labours in circulating the sacred Scriptures in the Spanish language, and then more especially on account of a school where the Bible was freely used, and which he had been repeatedly required to close by the interference of the municipality ; but it had been as often re-opened, and he was now supported in it by a considerable number of citizens, and among them by not a few of the more influential. At the period when Viteri had just arrived from Rome, and was at Guatemala with the archbishop and the bishop of Comayagua, these three prelates had used their united influence with Carrera to obtain the violent expulsion of this obnoxious person. They had intemperately declaimed against him from the pulpit and by means of the press, especially the former on the occasion of the dedication of the temple of La Recolectcion, but they had then failed as well with Carrera as with the people. Now, the archbishop having first absented himself from the capital on the eve of the so-called religious festivities of “La Semana Santa” (the holy week), had written to the supreme government declaring his determination to return to his functions only when “El Protestante” (the Protestant) should have left the state. Though by no means disposed to gratify the prelate in this particular, the president preferred to do so rather than risk the consequences at a time when his own seat was growing insecure ; and Velasquez was his tool for this purpose. On this occasion the supreme court of justice, by awarding the writ of habeas corpus to the threatened party, actually arrayed itself against the well-known determination of the president, and the *enlèvement* of the author was compassed only by trickery and illegal violence. He was seized on the 2nd April 1846 by an armed force, escorted to the coast, and shipped out of the country.*

The celebration of the season called Easter by Papists and those

* The particulars of this event, thus briefly stated, the reader will find more particularly detailed in the Third Part of this work, with other facts relating to the same subject.

who imitate them, though threatened with interruption, passed off as usual under the august presidency of the now-pacified archbishop. But these solemnities were immediately followed by others of a less common kind, which were actually made the occasion of a revolutionary plot.

The Archbishop *Proprietario* (proprietor) died at the Havana at the close of 1845. He had provided in his will that his remains should be brought to Guatemala and laid beside those of the *Madre Teresa*, a member of the Aycinena family, who had been lady-abbess of a convent there, and had obtained the reputation of great sanctity; she even professed to possess miraculous powers, and bids fair to be canonized when the necessary time shall have elapsed, if the prophesied destruction of Popery do not forestal her honour. This posthumous display of sentimentality on the part of the departed prelate, resuscitated some rather scandalous reminiscences in the minds of some of the cotemporaries of the late lady-abbess, but the archbishop's wishes were of course complied with, and his obsequies were celebrated in the month of May, with all the pomp and circumstance of his office, and of the ceremony-loving church which he and the lady-abbess had long adorned.

While the necessary preparations were making, it is said that some of the exasperated and unprincipled young men of the city formed a conspiracy to assassinate Carrera in the cathedral during the service. General Pais, however, having received some intimation of the plot, disconcerted it at the moment when it was to have been executed, by ordering the troops, present for the pageant, to load for the usual salute with *ball cartridges*. The guns in the great square were also shotted. The persons, who were prepared for the horrid deed with loaded pistols, were thus intimidated, and suffered the General to pass out of the cathedral unmolested. Two months afterwards a number of arrests were made among the ranks of the liberals, on the ground of secret information respecting this plot, which was never fairly unravelled. Some were banished, others were consigned to the subterraneous dungeons of the newly-erected fort, and, as is common in Central America, not a few of the suspected remained in precarious concealment.

From this time the author has had little opportunity of knowing what has transpired in the Central States, except as vague reports

and uncertain rumours have occasionally reached him, or through the medium of imperfect fragments which have appeared in the periodicals of the day, with an occasional glance at the internal disorganization of the country in his private correspondence. Part of the latter he has reason to believe has been intercepted, and the remainder is the less explicit and circumstantial, from the prudence and timidity which a knowledge of this danger is calculated to call forth.

Previous to the author's extramission, several attempts had been made to reorganize a federation, but even when the rulers professed to desire it, there was reason to doubt their sincerity. A congress, composed of two representatives from each state, was appointed to consider and elaborate a project of this kind, which should have met at Sonsonate on the 15th May 1846. On that day, says Mr. Dunlop, only the deputies from Salvador and Costa Rica were at the appointed place, those of Honduras and Nicaragua arrived a few days afterwards, but the deputies from Guatemala did not appear till the middle of July, when one of those from Costa Rica having died, the other refused to act alone, and the rest separated without even discussing the subject.

The same writer informs us that in Salvador a new president had been elected in the person of Don Eugenio Aguilar, a medical man of respectability. Against him and the liberals of that state, the intriguing prelate Viteri got up an insurrection on the 11th July, hoping to overturn this as he had helped to subvert the two preceding governments. His partisans, however, marred the plot under the influence of intoxication, by acting before the signal was given, and the faction was put down, with the slaughter of about thirty persons. The proofs that the bishop was at the head of the conspiracy were so decisive that he was banished from the state.

In Honduras the reign of Ferrera and Guardiola has been interrupted, if not superseded, by the election of a wealthy and respectable citizen named Gual, to the presidency. A similar change took place in Nicaragua in December 1835, by the election of Señor Sandoval, a civilian. These three states, viz., Salvador, Honduras, and Nicaragua, may therefore be said to possess popular governments legally elected, which is not the case in the other two. The latest accounts published (March 1850) indicate the reunion

of the three states just named under a federal constitution, probably based on the covenant of Chinandega, the object of which was frustrated by the influence of Carrera and Carrillo in 1842. In the close of 1847, Carrera put a price of 300 dollars upon the head of one of his enemies, and, horrible to relate, a human head was actually brought to him by an Indian, which proved to be another's, and not the one required, but the murderer remained without punishment.

For some time the president Carrera continued, though with difficulty, to hold his position and to enrich himself; but in so doing he gradually alienated the confidence and attachment of the Indians. He had frequently made them great promises from which they now reaped small advantages, and in their defection his ruin was involved. More than once they congregated as he had taught them to do, and threatened to sack the capital. All capable of carrying arms from eighteen to sixty years of age were enrolled for its defence. At length discontent reached its climax, and in April 1848 the Indians actually pillaged the general's estate of Palencia, which was at once a country residence, within a few hours' ride of Guatemala, and the chief depôt of arms, ammunition, and private resources, stored up against a justly dreaded time of danger. The enraged Indians committed many outrages, and even put a price upon the head of Carrera, who, with a few adherents, fled to Mexico doing at last by necessity what he had often threatened to do voluntarily, but had not the decision to effect. After his departure the liberals returned once more to power, but their rule was both short and agitated. Don Juan Antonio Martinez, a wealthy merchant, was named provisional géfe. But all efforts to reorganise a liberal government were interrupted by repeated insurrections of the Indians, probably instigated by the serviles and priests. In Sept. 1848, an immense body of Montagnards, under the guidance of Serapio Cruz, surrounded the capital and demanded 100,000 dollars, or four days' pillage. Half that sum was given to them, but they remained dissatisfied, and the greatest terror and consternation prevailed.

On the 30th April 1849, Carrera, who had raised mercenary troops in Mexico with the spoil he had amassed during his ascendancy, had again crossed the frontier, and was at Quesaltenango preparing to march upon Guatemala, the inhabitants of which

were in a dilemma whether or not to oppose his return. If they quietly received him they had reason to fear the resentment of the Indians, who had required his death, and if they offered resistance they feared that he would revenge himself by giving up the city to the pillage of his Mexican soldiers.

Letters up to the 8th of November, without unravelling the above, describe the roads as insecure. In the capital, terror reigned, the serviles being again in authority. The liberals were, as usual, scattered in exile, imprisoned, or shot. The Indians had actually entered the city and pillaged a part of it. And war was declared between the state of Guatemala and that of Salvador, where most of the escaped liberals had taken refuge.

From newspaper reports up to the 20th of November 1849, it is gathered that the ex-President Carrera re-entered the city of Guatemala on the 8th August, and that he was invested with full powers for the pacification of the country. It was this event that had once more occasioned the fall of the liberal party who were in power at the beginning of that year, and the restoration of the serviles. The legislative assembly, who had declared Carrera an outlaw, and had proscribed and imprisoned some of his adherents, had of course been dissolved. The Montagnards, including the Mita Indians, so long the supporters of Carrera, were determined in their hostility to him, and threatened the capital continually. Several of their chiefs had been slain, and the forces of the State, aided by Mexican auxiliaries, appeared likely to prevail against them. The neighbouring state of Salvador, or rather parties in it, had assisted the insurgent Indians. Commissioners from the Government of that State had twice been sent to Guatemala to negotiate peace, but as they sought the recognition of the new federation, their proposals were rejected.

Private correspondence to the 24th December shows that all travellers indiscriminately were in danger of their lives. An Englishman, and some companions, the bearers of a sum of money, had been murdered and robbed not far from the capital, and a courier had been strung up to a tree. Carrera had caused the village of Palencia, where his estate was pillaged by the Indians, with its neighbouring hamlets, to be burned to the ground. His soldiers were shooting all the Indians they could see, and the Indians were using cruel reprisals on the soldiers by tearing out their tongues, and cutting them limb from limb while yet alive.

The commencement of operations to open the Ship Canal between the two oceans by a company lately formed at New York, has brought about relations between the government of Nicaragua and that of the United States of North America, which appear likely to result in good to the Central States, as well as to the world at large. The United States government has guaranteed in an unequivocal manner the neutrality of this important enterprise, and stands pledged before the world to keep the territories of Central America free from foreign encroachments. It is probable that the federation now formed by the union of the states of Nicaragua, Salvador, and Honduras will acquire stability by this connection, and that the other two states will, sooner or later, unite with them in recognising a national government. It is probable that the torn and agitated state of Guatemala will be unwilling to exclude itself from participation in the commercial prosperity which the completion of this canal must confer on the adjacent states—an event which may now be looked forward to as likely to be realized in the course of a few years. It is not unlikely that the Montagnard insurgents will prove a scourge to their former leader and to the party who have made use of them and of him. It seems also more than probable that priestly and servile power are both approaching the term of their existence, as chief elements in the body politic. And it is at least possible that another and a better epoch in the history of Central America is about to commence.

But until other elements are introduced into the public mind, there is little warrant to expect anything more than a change in the outward manifestations of that turbulence and disquietude which reigns within the hearts of the people. Should the new and probably modified form which the revolution is about to assume leave any room for efforts to evangelize, and afford any means whereby to leaven these convulsed and weakened states with the ennobling and peaceful truths of the gospel, will it not constitute the loudest call to every pious heart to come in some way to their assistance? Oh, that the second half of the present century may be fraught with Heaven's best blessing to a land which, during the first portion of that period, has paid so dear for mere political freedom—a boon which, by the training of previous centuries, it had been so ill prepared to enjoy!

CHAPTER X.

BRITISH ENCROACHMENTS.

1600 TO 1800

National Influence—Its abuse by Spain—British responsibility—Pirates in Central America—First Seizure and Recovery of Roatan—Attacks on the River San Juan de Nicaragua, 1740 and 1780—Wallace—Character and Condition of the First Settlers in the Bay—Treaty of 1763—Burnaby's Code—Ruin of the First Settlements—Treaty and Convention of 1788 and 1786—The Right of Sovereignty—Evacuation of the Mosquito Shore in 1787—Internal Government of the Baymen—Visits of Spanish Commissioners—Pork-and-Doughboy War—Seizure of Roatan in 1742—Location of Caribs in 1796—Retaken in 1797—The Right of Conquest Claimed—Humbling and Stimulating Reflections.

"Righteousness exalteth a nation; but sin is a reproach to any people."—Prov. xiv. 34.

NATIONAL ascendancy, like personal genius, is a sacred deposit, confided to responsible agents for the furtherance of God's beneficent purposes towards the universal family of man, and its perversion to selfish ends has always been followed by national marks of the Divine displeasure.

Spain was the chosen instrument to subdue and lay prostrate in the dust the pride of many American nations, and cruelly did she abuse the power with which she was entrusted. That nation has also in its turn been checked and reduced by others, among whom most of its extensive dominions, accumulated wealth, and boasted glory, have been distributed as the hire of armies and reward of services against her. The perdition of numberless souls whose ruin she sealed, the slaughter of millions, amounting nearly to the depopulation of a continent—the reduction to bondage of the remnant which her sanguinary fury spared, and the perversion of her spoils to pamper her own luxury and pride, were crimes suffi-

cient to provoke the retributive curse. That curse and the brand of the oppressor are all that now cleave to Spain. Her power and wealth have long since left her. But her curse has been entailed as the baneful inheritance of the present generation. Their forefathers, who were appointed by the all-wise and just Creator for the correction and preservation of offending races, and not for their destruction, by a faithful discharge of their commission and trust, might have earned the gratitude of mankind, and their posterity would now have reaped the greatest advantage in multiplied blessings both at home and from those who would have been benefited. Now their policy is the execration of the world, now it is by their degradation and reproach that they glorify the God they then dishonoured, and tyrant Spain is made a warning to other nations who may be circumstanced as she once was.

One of the powers to which a share, and that the largest share, of what was Spanish influence has been committed, is Great Britain. In exaltation among the nations, in colonial dominion, in the navigation of the great deep, in prowess of arms, extent of commerce, prevalence of language, and even in moral and religious influence, the power once wielded by Greece and Rome, as well as that once possessed by Phœnicia and the Iberian Peninsula, has been committed to us.

As a nation and as British subjects, we owe to the world the consecration of our influence, power, wealth, information, knowledge of arts and sciences, and also of our example to the promotion of its best temporal interests. Among the nations, as among men, we should be a pattern of truth and justice, of readiness to succour the weak and the oppressed, and of whatever virtue would most promote the good of all mankind.

But in the character of our religion is involved the greatest amount of personal responsibility towards others. Has God in a peculiar manner privileged and enriched us, in the highest and best sense, with the uninterrupted possession for many centuries of his own blessed word? Has he shed the light of his Holy Spirit upon its pages and upon our hearts, and does he not hereby commission us in a signal manner to act as "stewards of that good word?" And does he not therein require a faithful discharge of the stewardship thus committed to us by endeavours to extend the boon to others, even to all our fellow-men?

Doubtless, if we have been blessed with faithful Paul, we are debtors, like him, to Greeks and to barbarians—to the wise and the unwise: and, like him, it is to be hoped, we are “not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ,” which is now, as it was in his time, “the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth.” But while we may be willing to admit the general debt, how little of it have we paid? Nay,—we have contracted new obligations to the same creditor, though of an inferior kind, and we have added an accumulating load of guilt to debts which have been increased every year by the material wrongs, injustice, and oppression which, as a nation, we are inflicting upon those whom we ought rather to have protected, and to whom we ought long since to have carried the Gospel. But, alas! our desolating armies and navies, and the vices and ungodly example of our countrymen, which are infinitely more contaminating than our arms are destructive, have long since reached and subdued countries where our missionaries and pious emigrants have never yet penetrated, or have but recently commenced their counteracting work of mercy.

Let these reflections serve as an apology, if apology be required, for narrating briefly the encroachments of our Government upon the territories of Central America, and for presenting them to the reader as one reason, among others, for undertaking the spiritual conquest of a country whose real welfare we might yet greatly promote, if our willingness did but equal the opportunities and power afforded us.

During the greater part of the three hundred years which elapsed from the discovery of America to the commencement of the nineteenth century, British, French, and Dutch pirates, and very possibly some others also, frequented the eastern shores of Spanish America, allured by the rich cargoes and golden freights of the Spanish galleons employed in transporting the spoil of America to Europe. During the whole of that period, the history of those shores abundantly testifies to the ravages of these maritime marauders. Their depredations were not confined to the watery element: many towns far into the interior have been pillaged at different times by the Corsair crews, and many more upon the coasts and navigable waters have been so repeatedly devastated, that some were strongly fortified at an enormous expense to protect them against these rovers; and others were abandoned on

their account even as early as 1549.* The Isthmus of Panama, the provinces of Veragua, and Costa Rica, and the fertile borders of the Lakes of Nicaragua and Leon, as well as the coasts of the Bay of Honduras, and the Gulf of Mexico, were, so to speak, *the provision grounds of the freebooters* who infested the Caribbean Sea, and the adjacent parts of the Atlantic Ocean. Here they found a kind of relaxation from their severer toils in the easy prey which the apathetic natives afforded them. Their plantations and stores were repeatedly stripped of the fruits of their scanty labour, and of the more abundant gifts of a teeming and prolific soil. The horrors of such periodical visitations, and their effects upon the districts subjected to them, can more easily be conceived than described.

The intricacies of the numerous reefs, islets, lagoons, and inlets of these seas, afforded great advantages to the buccaneers, who became acquainted with channels and hiding-places into which none dared to follow them, and from which they stealthily issued upon their unsuspecting prey. Nay, the reef itself too often served them as a huge drag-net, in whose fatal meshes the insidious current involved many a gallant ship. There, among its verdant islets, the callous and insatiate pirates lay concealed, like the relentless spider crouching beneath his web.

The great majority of these freebooters were our own countrymen—not Malays and Bornese. Their vessels were of British build, not awkward junks and open prahus. Nor was there any fleet or neighbouring Rajah ready with British officers and seamen to inflict a terrible chastisement upon them by wholesale butcheries, as in the recent case of the Saribas Dyaks. They continued their murderous depredations on sea and land unchecked save by the risks and dangers that constitute the very romance and fancied glory of their lawless, roving, venturesome career.

There are in the Bay of Honduras several islands, concerning which we are informed by Juarros, that “At the time of the con-

* Nueva Sevilla (New Seville), a Spanish town founded in 1544, on the banks of the Potochic, at the extreme limit of its navigation, was dismantled and abandoned in 1549, for this among other reasons, though the pirates must have toiled in small boats five or six days ere they could reach it from the sea. The cities of Leon and Granada were also frequently visited in this way from the Atlantic, though so much nearer to the Pacific, the shores of which were subject to the same calamities from the same cause, and during the same period.

quest they were well peopled; but the hostilities committed against them, first by the Spaniards and afterwards by pirates who infested these seas, either destroyed or drove them away, and only Roatan, Guanaja, and Utila remained inhabited.* These three islands, with some much smaller, lie nearly in a line along the southern shores of the bay. Guanaja, now called Bonacca, is about 80 miles in circumference: Utila is considerably less; but Rustan, which lies between them both, is decidedly the most important island in the bay, being larger than some of the cultivated Antilles, and as salubrious, fertile, and beautiful as any in those seas. These islands, while in the quiet possession of the Spaniards, were attacked by an English pirate in 1642. The Spanish historian adds with characteristic feeling and bigotry, "No resistance being made by the Indians, Roatan and Guanaja were taken possession of. The occupation of these spots was of great advantage to the English, consequently of proportionate injury to the Spaniards: for from being so near to the ports of the main land, the enemy were enabled to make attacks upon them whenever they pleased; or they could with equal facility, intercept the commerce between this kingdom (Guatemala) and Spain. This occupancy was also extremely pernicious to the inhabitants in a religious sense, as the heretics could not fail to pervert them by their detestable maxims.† This last circumstance, more than anything else, induced Luis de Canizares, bishop of Comayagua, and Juan de Veraza, keeper of the fort of San Felipe de Lara, to stimulate the president to regain possession of them.

"The governors of Guatemala and the Havannah, and the president of the audiencia of St. Domingo, were all interested, and joined in an expedition to expel the heretics. The Governor of the Havannah sent four ships of war, well equipped, under command of the General Francisco de Villalva y Toledo, who shaped his course to Roatan, without touching at any of the anchorages, in the hope of surprising the English: in this project he did not succeed; for although he arrived with his squadron in the harbour of Roatan an hour before daybreak, he was unable to effect a

* Juarros, p. 318.

† This Romish priest, the historian of their own missions to the Indians, here betrays a fear that even *pirates*, if Protestant, were likely to be more successful in propagating religion than their clergy had been even with miraculous assistance.

disembarkation unperceived by the sentinels, who gave an alarm, and the trenches were immediately manned with a respectable force. The Spaniards attacked, and a brisk action was maintained until daylight without any advantage. The General then observing a part of the entrenchment that was not defended, kept his main body in its position, and detached an officer, with thirty men, to attack the weak part, in order to turn the enemy's flank: the attempt was unsuccessful; for the detachment, in advancing, got into a swamp that was impassable. Villalva still continued his efforts against other parts of the works, without any other advantage than killing a few of the besieged. Nothing decisive was effected, and at sunset, having expended all his ammunition, he marched his troops to the beach, re-embarked, and sailed for Santo Tomas de Castilla to obtain a fresh supply. From that port he sent to the Captain-General an account of what had taken place at the island. Antonio de Lara Mogrobejo, then governor, assembled a council of war, and in compliance with its resolutions, despatched, on the 4th of March 1650, Captain Elias de Bulecia, with fifteen barrels of powder, and six quintals of balls, for the supply of the squadron. Captain Martin de Alvarado y Guzman was ordered from Guatemala, with fifty soldiers, and Captain Juan Bautista Chavarria, with fifty more, from the province of Chiquimala: these, when united to the squadron, increased its force to 450 men.

"They immediately sailed for the island; and as the General knew how well the first harbour he had entered was defended, he thought it expedient to try his fortune at another part of the island, where there was a smaller one. On landing, he was received by a body of troops who made an obstinate resistance; but having effected a breach in the entrenchment with two pieces of artillery, the Spaniards stormed it, and after a determined contest, the English were defeated. Subsequent to this victory, the assailants suffered a great deal before they could reach the town; for having no guides they missed their way, and wandered about nine days, exposed to the violence of the sun by day, and unhealthy vapours by night: their feet were lacerated by the thorns of the coyols, and they were tormented by innumerable swarms of mosquitos, ticks, and other venomous insects and reptiles. On reaching the town, or rather the village, they found it abandoned by the English, who had carried all property and provisions on

board their ships, and left the island entirely. Villalva collected the natives, and having burned the place, returned to Santo Tomas, in the neighbourhood of which the Indians had lands given to them: this expedition terminated in August 1650.**

From this circumstantial account we gather that the English pirates must have been in considerable numbers, and that their vicinity was for many reasons as distasteful to the Spaniards as it must have been injurious to the poor Indians, who were, alas! in little danger of being proselytized by them.

British encroachments were not, however, confined to piratical depredations and territorial occupation in the Bay of Honduras. In 1740, the first covert attempt was made by the English forcibly to obtain influence over certain districts, at the opposite extremity of Central America. British settlements had been formed on the Mosquito shore,† whence some English emissaries conducted an attack upon the points commanding the line of country where the junction of the two oceans was thought to be most practicable. Even at this early period, the project of a channel by the river San Juan and the lake of Nicaragua, had been conceived; and thus early and deeply was it appreciated in England, but the settlers on the shore having failed in their object, the attempt was disavowed by the British Government.

A more overt and formidable expedition was, however, sent thither in 1780, this was "a squadron composed of two frigates, two brigs of war, and a line-of-battle ship, carrying a number of flat boats, and 2000 men, under the command of Colonel J. Polson."

"On the 28th of March, the flotilla reached the port of Saint John of Nicaragua, but none of the vessels would venture to cross the bar, except the corvette *Henchinbrack*, commanded by the afterwards celebrated Nelson, who ascended the river for many leagues, as far as the island of Mico. The troops were, however, embarked in the flat boats, and ascended the river without opposition as far as the fort of San Carlos, which they took

* Juarros, pp. 319 to 321.

† See page 17. This vast tract of country which embraces more than one hundred Spanish leagues of sea-coast (or nearly 400 miles), includes the territories of the Poyer and the Towkas, as well as of the Waikua tribes. The two former, though more numerous and enterprising, are tributary to the latter, who are a little less barbarous and more friendly to the English.

after about a month's siege, making prisoners the garrison of 160 men; but, in the mean time, the Spanish government had collected large forces from San Miguel and other parts. Great difficulties also presented themselves to the British. The wet season set in with its accompanying sickness, and the Sambos (Waiknas or Mosquitomen) of the coast, who had been hired to track up the boats, went away, so that the soldiers were forced to walk in the water and mud to pull the boats forward, from which labour they suffered exceedingly, great numbers falling sick and dying daily. Meanwhile, reinforcements having been received under Captains Campbell, Dalrymple, and Leith, which increased the forces to 8,000 men, the expedition was persevered in; but the armed boat, called the *Lord Germain* was the only one which reached the Lake of Nicaragua, where it arrived in the end of May. The increase of sickness among the troops, to so alarming an extent that not a fourth part were fit for service, prevented the expedition from moving forward; they remained, however, till the commencement of November, expecting fresh reinforcements, till they received notice that those had disembarked at Jamaica, typhus fever having been discovered on board the squadron, so that it was judged necessary to abandon this mis-managed attempt. But not one-half of the men ever left the country, the remainder having died of tropical fevers."*

Such are some of the acts of the British nation in Central America, truly a fit accompaniment to the piratical deeds of its subjects, and calculated, with them, to cause the very name of Britain to be execrated by the indiscriminating natives, and yet this has been the case only in a limited degree.

It has already been stated, that the river and town of Belize were originally named from Wallace, one of the most renowned buccaneers, whose name, like those of Morgan and Lorenzillo, was long a terror to mariners and landmen for hundreds of miles around. The safe and well-concealed harbour of Belize was his retreat, and it was probably under his auspices that the Baymen (or foreign settlers of the Bay of Honduras), first acquired that unenviable notoriety which was long associated with the name, even by the slave-drivers of Jamaica and the neighbouring islands. It is sufficiently evident that unprincipled adventurers,

* Quoted by Mr. Dunlop from a pamphlet published in Guatemala.

persons of desperate fortune, outlaws, and even condemned criminals, were among the earlier inhabitants.

A mild and very guarded writer* says respecting the Bay, "It certainly was long after it had become a place of considerable resort, before anything like the customs of civilized life were known to it. But it will scarcely be expected that such could have been known, or at least assented to, by a description of persons, of whom, perhaps, the greater number had forfeited all pretensions of the kind by the irregularity of their conduct in the countries they had left. Those persons, it must also be remembered, were of various nations, and possibly bore little resemblance in any way to each other, but in the desperate state of their fortunes. And it may be very well believed, that the sole motive which first allured their steps to this coast, would be found in the temptation it then offered to repair their condition by plunder and rapine. When, however, their atrocities had grown into a system, and had become so formidable as to engage the attention of other quarters, and to require correction, they, no doubt, found it expedient in some degree to relinquish them for habits of a more regular and less lawless kind. Thus the path of industry was opened; new and more respectable sources of wealth discovered, which have led to consequences highly advantageous to commerce, and no less beneficial to the state that has encouraged and protected it."

Referring to their condition in the year 1765, the same writer speaks of the residents as "a description of persons who had before lived without respect to rules of any kind; and whose irregularities, murders, piracies, and atrocities of every sort, were continually perpetrated with a barbarous indifference, because punishment was unknown. Such, unquestionably, was the state of society in this remote quarter."[†]

Before the middle of the eighteenth century, or fully one hundred years ago, the British settlements in the Bay of Honduras and on the Mosquito shore had become "a bone of contention between the courts of London and Madrid." Many of the residents had turned their attention from piracy and lawless acts, to the cutting of dye-woods and valuable timber, which then abounded to

* Captain Henderson, 44th Regiment, in "An Account of the British Settlement of Honduras." P. 2-3. London, 1811.

† Captain Henderson's Account, p. 76.

the very verge of the shores and river-banks which they frequented. Repeated attempts were made by the Spaniards to destroy these nests of combined pirates, traders, smugglers, and planters, and to dislodge from their coasts those foreign intruders towards whom fanatical hatred, national envy, and characteristic jealousy, combined to keep alive their malice and hostility. Against such attacks, the settlers had to defend themselves as best they could, with the occasional assistance of British cruisers.

This violent state of things continued till 1763, when a treaty was concluded between Britain and Spain,* the seventeenth article of which is in the following terms:—

“His Britannic Majesty shall cause to be demolished all the fortifications which his subjects have erected in the Bay of Honduras, and other places in the territory of Spain, in that part of the world, four months after the ratification of the present treaty; and his Catholic Majesty shall not permit his Britannic Majesty’s subjects in their work to be disturbed or molested under any pretence whatsoever, in the said places, in their occupation of cutting, loading, and carrying away logwood; and for this purpose, they may build without hindrance, and occupy without interruption, the houses and magazines necessary for them and their families, and for their effects: and his Catholic Majesty assures to them, by this article, the full enjoyment of those advantages and powers on the Spanish coasts and territories, as above stipulated, immediately after the ratification of the present treaty.” By the reciprocal article (the 36th) of the treaty of Madrid, the King of Spain further engaged, “That in case of war, notice should be given to the respective subjects of the King of Great Britain, that six months would be granted them to remove their merchandize and effects without molestation.”†

For a time at least, the settlers now remained in tranquil possession of their mahogany and logwood works under the protection of the crown of Spain, and the settlements now first began to assume an appearance of regularity and order to which

* Previous treaties, dated as far back as the years 1670 and 1713, are alluded to in a memorial of the inhabitants of British Honduras, addressed to Lord Glenelg on the 7th of March 1839, and in their petition to Parliament in 1841, as vesting the sovereignty of that soil in the British Government; but whatever may have been the provisions of these compacta, they were completely set aside by the treaties afterwards mutually agreed upon.

† Wilson’s Memoir, p. 57. Captain Henderson’s Account, p. 5.

they had been strangers before. Two years after the treaty above quoted, a set of regulations—a crude digest of such laws as were more immediately needed—was drawn up for the government of the inhabitants of the Bay of Honduras by Sir William Burnaby, Knight, the commodore of the British squadron at Jamaica. It extends to twelve articles, dated the 9th of April 1765, and was signed by eighty-five principal inhabitants. These laws provide for the popular election, by a majority of the inhabitants, of the imposers of taxes, and also of justices of the peace. Seven of the latter, assisted by a jury of thirteen housekeepers similarly chosen, constituted a court, and in case of opposition to its decisions, the eighth article invests the officer in command of any ship-of-war which might be sent thither with full power to enforce its sentences. Profane swearing, theft, and harbouring runaway sailors, were punishable by various fines made payable in logwood. The justices were empowered to legislate, subject to the approval of the people; and where the law was silent, the *customs* of the Bay became authority and were to be acted upon. African slaves had already been imported, and the cutting of timber evidently occupied the chief attention of the people, who were consequently scattered along the coasts and up the various rivers. Key Casina,* which in the year following was by the settlers called St. George's Key, was evidently the chief resort, the residence of the leading inhabitants; or, at least, the place of convocation for public business and the principal anchoring place. The banks of the Belize and the Rio Hondo were the most frequented. The intercourse maintained with Jamaica, and the almost entire absence of any relation with the Spaniards, doubtless fostered a spirit of security in the settlers calculated to produce oblivion of the limited and precarious tenure upon which they held their position and means of subsistence. But they were soon forcibly reminded of both.

From whatever motives or inducements the concessions above alluded to were made to the British, it is pretty evident that it was in unison neither with the feelings nor the policy of Spain to foster British establishments so near "the secret sources of her own wealth." It therefore calls forth little surprise, that, notwithstanding the treaty of 1763, an expedition was secretly fitted out,

* Properly called by the Spaniards, Cayo Cocina or Kitchen Key. It is about three leagues from Belize, in a north-easterly direction.

and a sudden attack made upon the settlements in the Bay of Honduras in September 1779. It is remarkable that this treachery must have been contemplated at the very time that the English were secretly preparing their disastrous expedition against San Juan de Nicaragua. It does not, however, appear in the accounts of the British historians that any offence had been given to Spain during the sixteen years that had elapsed since the treaty was made which was calculated to provoke such an act, though it is at least possible that a cause existed, and even highly probable that the attack was grounded on some pretext of the kind.

The wood-cutters were treated with great and unnecessary severity. Having been surprised and easily overpowered by superior numbers, their property was materially injured, and their persons seized and very roughly handled. "Many were blindfolded and put closely in irons, and all of them, of different sexes and ages, were marched from their homes to Merida, the capital of Yucatan, afterwards countermarched to the coast, and thence shipped to the Havannah, where they were held in captivity until July 1782, when they were suffered to return to Jamaica."*

The liberated settlers made repeated applications to the British government for some indemnity for their losses, which they hoped would be exacted from the court of Spain. Their appeals proved ineffectual, but it was evident that the British government was determined not to relinquish this settlement; and a more explicit treaty concerning its occupation was accordingly made in the year 1783.

"Upon the termination of the American war, a treaty of peace between Great Britain and Spain was signed at Versailles on the 3rd September in that year. The sixth article of that treaty, as translated by Hertslet (vol. ii. p. 237) runs thus:—

"The intention of the two high contracting parties being to prevent, as much as possible, all causes of complaint and misunderstanding heretofore occasioned by the cutting of wood for dyeing, or logwood, and several English settlements having been formed, *under that pretence*, upon the Spanish continent, it is expressly agreed, that his Britannic Majesty's subjects shall have the right of cutting, loading, and carrying away logwood, in the district lying between the rivers Wallis or Belize, and Rio Hondo, taking the

* Captain Henderson's Account, p. 6.

course of the said two rivers for unalterable boundaries, so as that," &c.

"The article goes on to define the boundaries, and then proceeds to agree that,—

"The respective commissioners shall fix upon convenient places in the territory above marked out, in order that his Britannic Majesty's subjects, employed in the felling of logwood, may, without interruption, build thereon houses and magazines necessary for themselves, their families, and their effects; and his Catholic Majesty assures to them the enjoyment of all that is expressed in the present article; *provided that these stipulations should not be considered as derogating in any wise from his rights of sovereignty, &c.*"

Additional articles were added three years later in the convention entered into on the 14th July 1786, between Great Britain and Spain (Hertslet, vol. ii. p. 247), from which the following are quotations:—

"Article 2.—The Catholic king, to prove, on his side, to the king of Great Britain, the sincerity of his sentiments of friendship towards his Majesty and the British nation, will grant to the English more extensive limits than those specified in the last treaty of peace (1783), and the said limits of the lands added by the present convention shall in future be understood in the manner following:—The English line, beginning from the sea, shall take the centre of the river Sibun or Javon, and ascend up to the source of the said river; from thence it shall cross in a straight line the intermediate land, till it intersects the river Wallis; and by the centre of the said river the line shall descend to the point where it will meet the line already settled and marked out by the commissaries of the two crowns in 1783; which limit, following the continuation of the said line, shall be observed as formerly stipulated by the definitive treaty.

"Article 3.—Although no other advantages have hitherto been in question, except that of cutting wood for *dyeing*, yet his Catholic Majesty, as a greater proof of his disposition to oblige the king of Great Britain, will grant to the English the liberty of cutting all other woods, *without even excepting mahogany*, as well as gathering all the fruits and produce of the earth, purely natural and uncul-

tivated, which may, besides being carried away in their natural state, become an object of utility or commerce, whether for food or for manufactures; but it is expressly agreed, that this stipulation is never to be used as a pretext for establishing in that country any plantations of sugar, coffee, cocoa, or other like articles: or any fabric or manufacture by means of mills, or other machines whatsoever, since all lands in question being indisputably acknowledged to belong of right to the Crown of Spain, no settlements of that kind, or the population which would follow, can be allowed. The English shall be allowed to transport and convey all such wood and other produce of the place, in its natural and uncultivated state, down the rivers to the sea, but without ever going beyond the limits which are prescribed to them by the stipulations above granted, and without thereby taking an opportunity of ascending the said rivers, beyond their bounds, into the countries belonging to Spain.’”

“The seventh article of the same treaty again provides for the ‘entire preservation of the rights of the Spanish sovereignty over the country in which is granted to the English only the privilege of making use of the wood of various kinds:’ and it goes on to stipulate that the English ‘shall not meditate any more extensive settlements’ than the one defined.” *

It is sufficiently plain, from these extracts, that the legitimate nature of British occupation in Central America was at that time purely commercial, and the result of a restricted toleration on the part of the Spanish monarch, who was graciously pleased to grant certain favours to his royal ally of England, which he was particularly anxious should be recognised as such. But, while slightly enlarging the limits, and extending the privileges of the woodcutters in the Bay to all kinds of timber—privileges which they had not waited for, mahogany having been cut and exported as the chief staple long before the diplomatists on either side allowed it—the Spanish monarch had evidently a covert design to contract the general limits of the British settlements. This appears not only in the portion quoted, but more plainly in a stipulation of the last treaty, requiring England to evacuate her settlements on Black River and other parts of the Mosquito Shore. As a result of this, all the settlers from these places, with their

* Brief Statement, p. 5 to 9.

families, slaves, &c. &c., were brought to Belize by the British government in the year 1787. Among them were some of those who had been deported in 1779. They had spent nearly three years in the dungeons of the Havannah, and when liberated had preferred the localities further south to a return to Honduras, to which place, however, this treaty finally restored them after the lapse of five years more.

Upon the conclusion of the treaty in 1783, Major Richard Hoare acted apparently as the first Superintendent of his Britannic Majesty's subjects in the Bay of Honduras. This person authoritatively assembled the inhabitants, then greatly reduced in numbers, and reorganized them, so that this period may be regarded as the foundation or establishment of the present flourishing settlement of Belize. The first and following meetings of inhabitants were now no longer convened at St. George's Key, but at "the mouth of the river Belize." On the 12th of June 1784, Major Hoare laid before eleven principal inhabitants, documents which had passed between his Excellency the Governor of Yucatan and the commissioners appointed on the part of his Britannic Majesty to receive the lands allotted for the settlement, and to form regulations for the internal peace and security of the inhabitants and their property.

This meeting passed resolutions adopting "Burnaby's code" (as it was at once ostentatiously and familiarly called), and the old regulations and customs of the former settlers; to which they added the appointment of five magistrates until a new election, or till "*government* should think proper to nominate others in their stead." Providing also, that, on account of their reduced numbers, one magistrate and four jurors should constitute a court. They restored to some of the old settlers who had already returned, their property and privileges. They regulated money matters, fixed the price of mahogany (now first officially recognised), and appointed the next meeting for the 1st of October following at the Haulover—which had been one of the first settlements, where an old fort was dismantled by virtue of the treaty of 1763. Though the inhabitants were specially invited to sign these resolutions, only twenty-one names are found appended to them, including the twelve by whom they were passed under the presidency of Major Hoare.

After two years, on the 27th June 1786, another general meeting

of the inhabitants was held at Belise river's mouth, when Lieut.-Colonel Edward Marcus Despard presided. He was evidently the Superintendent, and resided at the Haulover. Twenty persons were then present. Their labours were confined to judicial arrangements, which were continued from time to time by a committee of seven, who regulated the customs and harbour dues. In 1787 the meetings were held at the "Court House, Belise Point." A number of laws were then added, and the town of Belise was planned, regulated, and enlarged.

This year the arrival of the settlers from the Mosquito Shore swelled the number of leading inhabitants, that a document dated the 4th of August is signed by 112 persons. Among its provisions is one, making the possession of at least four slaves a necessary qualification for the holding of a mahogany work, from which privilege all foreigners were, under any circumstances, excluded. In 1791 the African practices of Obeah were made punishable with death, chiefly, as it would appear, because it sometimes occasioned the loss of slaves, or, in some indirect way, facilitated their escape. It was found necessary, in 1795, to pass regulations appointing "a guard"* to overawe the slaves during their Christmas holidays, and it was forbidden to sell any gunpowder to them, firing after sunset was also prohibited, and the Gombeyes (or negro réunions) were to be closed at nine o'clock. The guard was ordered to see that all boats and small craft were hauled up and properly secured, the sails, rudders, &c. being carefully removed; precautions indicative of the violent and suspicious state of society produced by the existence of slavery in its bosom.

During this the eighteenth century, the eastern shores of Central America had more than once been devastated by that awful scourge—the tropical hurricane. In 1787 the most severe visitation of this kind occurred. Very extensive injury was done both to life and property in Belize. The wooden houses of the settlers were then mostly thatched with a kind of palm called the bay-leaf, from its frequent use here. Most of them were destroyed, and the whole coast was inundated by the sea, which rose to a height not known before or since.

From the conclusion of the treaty of 1783, the settlements had

* Probably the nucleus from which, in due time, sprang the "Prince Regent's Royal Honduras Militia."

been subjected to the periodical visits of Spanish commissioners, appointed to enforce a scrupulous observance of the stipulated conditions. They required that no defences should be constructed; that the limits should not be exceeded; and that no cultivation or manufactures should be engaged in for purposes of trade. These visits live in the memory of some of the old inhabitants of the Bay, who still retain vivid impressions of the repeated uprooting and destruction of their plantations of sugar-cane, tobacco, and other produce. There was, therefore, little danger of the tenure of the lands being again forgotten. But it is easy to believe that the Spaniards would not view with complacency the evidently flourishing establishments which, notwithstanding their jealous severity, grew like the timber so industriously sought in the forest, and were gradually striking deeper roots into the soil, and spreading vigorous branches in every direction. As in the former case, it does not now appear whether or not any provocation, besides this, was given to the Spaniards. Perhaps they felt that the presence of men-of-war, and it may be other military tendencies, were contrary to the spirit of the treaty. Be that as it may, it is manifest that the Spanish authorities acted with a degree of treachery which even the lax morality of the votaries of Mars would scarcely excuse in a friend, and which it invariably condemns in an enemy.

The Yucatecan ports of Campeche and Bacalar were enlivened during the year 1798 by the equipment of a small flotilla or expedition, secretly directed against the rival traders in the Bay of Honduras, whose British energy, while it had created the market, bade fair to overwhelm the sluggish competition of the wood-cutter in the Bay of Campeche. Don —— O'Neil, a field-marshal in the Spanish service, was entrusted with the command. The British account states that the squadron amounted to no less than fifteen sail, manned with nearly three thousand men. It appeared off St. George's Key in the month of September. At this place all the settlers who could bear arms assembled themselves, together with their slaves, upon whom they now mainly depended for defence. The houses on the island, which were then still numerous, were first destroyed by fire to prevent the enemy availing themselves of them, and a desperate resistance was offered, which lasted two days. During this time the success of the settlers was more than once doubtful. At length, on the evening of the

second day, the Spanish fleet gave up the enterprise and retired. Since that time, the settlements have been left in undisturbed tranquillity.

The slaves on this occasion manifested much courage and fidelity. Many of them had been armed only with long palmetto lances, the outside texture of which is exceedingly tough, and is capable of taking a point, if sharpened to one side, almost as hard and quite as mischievous as metal. This palmetto, which grows in marahes, and is thickly covered with large lance-like prickles, bears a pleasant fruit, the Spanish name of which is Coyal, but which the Bay-men call "Pork-and-dough-boys;" and, however undignified it may sound to martial ears, the circumstance of the use of these primitive spears, gave to this engagement the somewhat epicurean cognomen of the pork-and-dough-boy war, by which name alone it is still spoken of in the Bay.*

The importance attached to this event by the British Government, as well as the means of defence with which the settlers were found provided, though taken by surprise, appear in the following extract of a letter from his grace the Duke of Portland, to Lieutenant-General the Earl of Balcarres, dated Whitehall, 8th February 1799.

"MY LORD,—I had great pleasure in laying before his Majesty, the account you transmitted of the defeat of the Spanish flotilla, in its attack upon our settlement of Honduras.

"The able and judicious conduct of Lieutenant-colonel Barrow, and Captain Moss of the *Merlin* sloop, the bravery of the troops and seamen under their respective commands, and the spirited exertions of the settlement in general, on this occasion, have been such as to receive his Majesty's approbation, which your lordship is hereby directed to signify through Lieutenant-colonel Barrow together with the just sense his Majesty entertains of their gallant and meritorious conduct.

"A true extract."

(Signed) BALCARRES."†

But there is another event which, as it transpired less than two years before the date of the Pork-and-dough-boy war, must be considered as having had at least a share of influence in producing the sudden attack of the Spaniards.

* The Creole pronunciation of this name transforms it into Poke-and-doo-boy.

† Captain Henderson's Account, p. 9.

The island of Ruatan, which was taken from the English pirates, and the population of which had been removed by the Spaniards in 1650, remained in a desert state for nearly a whole century. In 1742, the English took possession of it again, and fortified it with materials which they had carried off from the neighbouring port of Truxillo. In 1780, they were again dislodged by forces sent from Guatemala for that purpose; but once more made themselves masters of the island in 1796, when they constituted it the penal settlement of the much injured Caribs, whom their cruel rapacity had spared in St. Vincent and the other Leeward Islands. Juarros states, that on this occasion two thousand Caribs were located upon Ruatan, and that "as soon as this invasion was known in the capital, the governor ordered the intendant of Comayagua to send Don José Rossi y Rubia to the island, in order to ascertain what state these negroes were in, so that, from his information, the necessary arrangements might be made for its re-conquest. On the 17th of May 1797, Rossi, with twelve officers, embarked at Truxillo on board a little vessel, armed with four small guns and twelve muskets, and reached the harbour of Ruatan the following day."* They found the Caribs not hostile to them, and after again hoisting the Spanish flag with the customary ceremonies, they quietly returned to Truxillo.

After the defeat of the Yucatecan flotilla, the settlements in the Bay continued to flourish, and the periodical visits of the commissioners being entirely discontinued, a sort of tacit concession on the part of the Spaniards seemed to sanction the idea partially entertained, and since often pleaded by the British settlers, that they now held these territories *by right of conquest*.

Thus, in 1799, were the encroachments of nearly two centuries brought to a critical point, of which the settlers and the Home Government were equally ready to take advantage. With the opening of the present century, we may date a new era in the history of our settlements in Central America: but though, from the increase of light and international good understanding, we might expect that the latter period would be characterized by a different spirit and more equitable results, yet the contrary has been the case; and in the face of the march of intellect,

* Juarros, p. 291.

and at the close of a thirty years' peace, we find that the growing appetite for conquest or annexation—whether by the actual use of arms or by the power which their possession confers—has increased four-fold more during the last fifty years than in the previous two hundred.

But without anticipating what remains to be told, there is enough in the present chapter to moderate any disposition which might be felt to indulge the pride of nationality. From the facts recorded, we must conclude that, whatever may be the moral advantages we have enjoyed over the Spanish monarchy, our fruits differ but little in quality from theirs, and though, in the amount, our national criminality may at first sight appear small by the comparison, yet our very advantages must considerably aggravate them. Oh! that it may be impressed upon every heart, in connection with a history such as this, that Great Britain has contracted a debt of national obligation which only her sons and daughters can discharge by first admitting its full extent and urgency, and then offering towards its liquidation personal supplications and intercessions at a throne of grace, and the hearty consecration of a sanctified influence and of steadily sustained efforts for the spiritual regeneration of tribes to whom our country must appear in the character of an aggressor. Our proximity to them has been the fertile source of vexations and calamities. Only lately has any disposition been shewn to regard them as brethren. Only lately have any efforts been made on the part of a few to extend to them some of our own best blessings and advantages. But though our reproach be glaringly apparent, our opportunities of removing it are not yet taken from us. "The riches of God's goodness, and forbearance and long suffering," still lead us to *repentance*, and it rests with us to bring forth its appropriate fruits.

CHAPTER XI.

BRITISH OCCUPATION.

1800 to 1850.

National Responsibility—The True Patriot—Expansive Limits—Belize Merchants—Their Influence—Internal Government and Development—Emancipation—British Law Proclaimed—Arbitrary Rule—Protectorate and Relations with the Mosquito Shore—Sir Gregor Macgregor, Cacique of Poyais—Coronations of the Waikua Kings—Captain Henderson's Mission—Historical Data on the Royal Family—Seizure of Rastan in 1841—Outrage upon Colonel Quijano—Affairs of the Shore—Blockade of the River San Juan del Norte—Consular Proceedings—Protests—The Port of San Juan taken and called Grey Town—Treaty between Nicaragua and the United States—Annexation of Tiger Island—Blockades and Seizures—Arming of the States—Confederation—President Taylor's Message—Negotiations between the United States and Great Britain—Naval Movements—Character of the English Nation—Recapitulation and Extent of Claims—Anglo-Saxon Ascendancy.

"Shall I not visit for these things? saith Jehovah."—Jer. v. 29.

If, because nations and bodies corporate will have no existence as such in a future state, the recompense of their doings must be meted out to them here, it follows that national acts of injustice and oppression are the exact measure of national calamities and disgrace to be experienced by the nations which inflict them, and to be entailed on the people of those nations, as their accursed inheritance, to the third and fourth generation; and it is equally plain that every individual act of justice, philanthropy, and piety, is fraught with mercy and blessing to thousands, by averting or mitigating the force of national judgments: it follows also, that he who does iniquity, however lofty his rank, is the greatest enemy to his country; and that the pious teacher of religion, however lowly his condition, is the truest patriot and the best benefactor of future generations.

He who really loves his country will not turn away his eye from

the exposure of evils that afflict and threaten it. Prepared himself to share the burden of deserved judgments, he is not only willing to know the worst, but he is even anxious to acquaint himself with the full extent of woes to be feared, that he may bear his share of humiliation and sorrow before God, and that he may take a part in the most suitable means both to avert further evils and to secure the greatest amount of present and future good. This is the object aimed at in pursuing the narrative of our dealings, as a nation, with our fellow-men in Central America; and it is hoped that the reader may be led to feel that he is personally interested in the past deeds of his fellow-countrymen, and also so closely identified with their present doings, whether good or evil, that both he and his posterity must assuredly be partakers in the results.

It has been seen how, in the face of Spanish jealousy, and in contravention of express treaties, as well as in violation of the principles of common justice, the British secured for themselves, during the last century, a permanent though a questionable footing on the eastern shores of the Central Continent. Our fellow-countrymen and our Government did not stop here.

The limits which were first assigned to the wood-cutters in 1763, were distinctly pointed out as reaching coastwise from the Rio Hondo to the Belize or Old river—an extent of less than sixty miles. The treaty of 1786 added about nine miles more to the line of coast, viz., as far south as the mouth of the Sibun; and the inland boundary was as clearly defined. Notwithstanding this, as the timber and other objects of pursuit became scarce within the assigned limits, or were less accessible by water, one river after another to the southward was practically taken possession of by the settlers, and when thus occupied, whether by mahogany and logwood works, or by plantations, the protection of the British flag was not only extended to the settlers, but its dominion was asserted over all such streams, and the intervening territories were incorporated into the British claim. Though the claim to these occupied lands was not at once officially made in a frank and honourable manner, the result was a growing Colonial empire, the recognised limits of which, in November 1836, we gather from an official declaration of the Colonial Secretary of State, in which they are stated to extend as follows:—"From the Rio Hondo on the north to the river Sarstoon on the south, and as far west as Gar-

both's falls on the river Belize, and a line on the same parallel to strike on the river Hondo on the north and on the river Sarstoon on the south, the British Crown claims, also, the waters, islands, and keys, lying between the coast above defined, and the meridian of the easternmost point of lighthouse reef."*

Since the time when this was promulgated, the expansive propensities of this settlement have by no means diminished, and it is, perhaps, difficult to predict at what time it may be expected to have reached its full growth, or whereunto its dimensions will ultimately extend.

No new treaty respecting Honduras was negotiated previous to the independence of Central America. The old treaties were, indeed, renewed by one concluded in 1814, but it does not appear that this in any way altered the then existing state of things, or the position in which the contracting parties previously stood towards each other. The very opposite inference must be drawn; for by simply *renewing* previous engagements, all idea of an altered footing or of enlarged claims was necessarily disowned in an official manner by the British Government.

Early in the present century, the inhabitants of Belize added to their other occupations that of traders in general merchandize. It is true that this commerce was at first no better than smuggling, as British produce, or indeed everything not Spanish, was contraband in the American colonies; but, notwithstanding legal restrictions, a brisk trade sprang up, which, after the independence, became lawful, though the merchants in the interior still took advantage of the fact that their own tariff of duties was much lower than that of Mexico, to smuggle large quantities of British goods through their territories into those of the neighbouring republic. Foreign manufactures soon superseded, to a great extent, the more costly industry of the country, and the Belize merchants became princes, who almost entirely absorbed what had so long been the exclusive commerce of Spain. So that this once piratical and smuggling settlement now exchanged a lawless for a legitimate commerce, and soon became to the Independent Central States what Cadiz had been to them as colonies.

Although, on the whole, there is but little contrast in the moral

* Letter from Sir George Grey to S. Cox, Esq. Downing-street, 25th of Nov. 1836. Brief Statement, p. 86.

influence exerted by the rival emporiums, upon the people in whose markets they trafficked, it will be seen further on that there is, in one respect at least, a notable exception. *One* of the commercial houses at Belize was foremost in seeking the spiritual enlightenment of the benighted inhabitants of the interior. Among chests of Birmingham muskets and bayonets, Sheffield knives, destined to be used as poniards, and Manchester dolls, of which Virginia Marys and Saints, or a kind of household gods, are frequently made; there began to be introduced cases of Spanish Bibles and other books, calculated to enlighten the simple and to counteract the intellectual poison which Spanish and French traders had already largely imported in the infidel literature of the period, boxes of which, it is not unlikely, travelled side by side with others containing this their only effectual antidote.

Among the various Superintendents (invariably military officers) who at different times were sent from England to direct the affairs of this little community, was *one* whose term of office was characterised by efforts to promote the moral and religious well-being of the settlers. Colonel Arthur, the late Sir George Arthur, afterwards Governor of Van Diemen's Land, and since then of Canada, was his Majesty's Superintendent in Honduras for several years. To the influence of this noble and Christian man, together with the efforts of the house of Angas and Co. as instruments in the hand of God, must be attributed the origin of the piety and evangelical light which now exists in Central America.

But though private influence and effort now began to be exerted to a limited extent for the best interests of the settlers, it does not appear that there was much moral advancement in the general and public character of their political establishments, though some improvements were gradually introduced. In 1799, the legislature, which was then first called "a public meeting," had provided that no persons under sentence of transportation should thereafter be introduced into the settlement. In 1800 the number of magistrates to be elected was restored to seven—one of them being a police-magistrate, and matters of form in the conduct of courts and inquests were regulated. Two years later it was enacted that no slaves, except *new negroes*, might be imported, under a penalty of one hundred pounds. The fines imposed by Burnaby's code were made payable in currency instead of logwood, and the clause

empowering the officer in command of any British man-of-war to execute the sentences of the courts, was subsequently repealed.

The sale of any kind of arms or ammunition to a Spaniard was prohibited, under the penalty of 500*l.*, or twelve months imprisonment. From a resolution of the public meeting held 31st October 1803, in which a duty was imposed on the importation of wines and spirits, and a licence required for their sale; it appears that there were separate tribunals for the oppressed Africans, which were denominated slave-courts. On the 23rd of December of the same year, a meeting of magistrates drew up a document which the reader will find equally wanting in liberality of sentiment and in grammatical correctness. It records a resolution, "That from and after the 25th of this present month, no French emigrant or emigrants, arrive in the harbour of Belize; after that day, they shall not be admitted to land, and shall be immediately ordered to depart this settlement, either in the vessel he came in, or by any earlier opportunity that may offer; and that from and after publication of this resolve in the Kingston papers, any master of a vessel presuming to bring into this settlement any person of the within description, shall be subjected to a fine of one hundred pounds for each person, and be compelled to carry them away again at his own expense," &c. &c. Mr. Thompson was directed to have "*the spirit of this law*" published in the proper newspapers.

A public meeting, held 29th October 1805, "resolved that no free person of colour be permitted to locate a logwood work on the English side of the river, unless he possesses, in his own right, four able negro men slaves, under the penalty of 100*l.*" And, also, that no slave be permitted "to hire himself to himself, as thereby such slave being under no control of his master, becomes subject to no authority but what results from his own will, which naturally tends to create insubordination, thereby diminishing respect to his proprietors, and destroying that spirit of industry which so strongly conduces to good order, regularity, and due obedience, under the penalty of 500*l.*"

The same public meeting wickedly imposed a tax of 25*l.* on all manumissions, which could not take place till this fine was paid; and ungratefully debarred any Spaniard from cutting logwood, or any other wood, in that settlement. In 1808 the law imposing a fine on manumissions was repealed, due provision being made that infirm slaves should not become a burden to the community.

The places most frequented in the Bay at this period were Belize, St. George's Key, the Haulover, Convention Town, the banks of the Old River, the Sibun (then called Sherboon), the Northern River, and the Rio Hondo.

Physically and commercially, there has been a gradual development and extension in the settlements of the Bay, which, as already hinted, was accompanied by moral improvement, associated with the rise and progress of vital religion among a few.

From the departure of Colonel Arthur, which took place in 1822, seven Superintendents came out from England in succession, none of whom followed in his footsteps; but some of their number distinguished themselves by active opposition and virulent enmity to the sacred objects he promoted and loved.

On the 1st of August 1840, the slaves of British Honduras were emancipated by an act of the inhabitants assembled in public meeting, and in conformity with official instructions sent out from England. The Africans and their descendants who were freed on this occasion amounted to several thousands, and formed a large, if not the largest, proportion of the entire population. The day of freedom was celebrated without disturbance, and this act was soon afterwards declared by the public meeting in a petition to parliament "to have been attended by the happiest results, inasmuch as neither diminution of labour, or the fruits of labour, nor increase of crime had obtained from the total abolition of slavery in the settlement."

During the period of office filled by Colonel, now General, Alexander M'Donald, "her Majesty's Superintendent and Commander-in-Chief in and over *her possessions* in Honduras," &c. &c., he issued a "proclamation" dated 2nd November 1840, (the preamble of which refers to the inconvenience and imperfections of the laws and customs of the Bay, which deprived the settlers of the benefit of the wise and wholesome laws which British subjects are entitled to claim as their birthright within *British territory*, and in which he declares and ordains that, from the date of the said proclamation, "the law of England is and shall be the law of this settlement or colony of British Honduras," and provides that all local customs and laws "which are repugnant to the spirit of the law of England, and opposed to the principles of equity and justice, are and shall be null and void."

In harmony with this alteration, the Superintendent appointed an Executive Council to assist him in the administration of the affairs of the Settlement. These persons were selected by himself from among the various government officers of state and church, and received, together with warrants of appointment from the Governor of Jamaica, the privilege of attaching the word Honourable to their names. Col. M'Donald also assumed the control of the finances of the settlement, the administration of which had before rested with the seven popularly elected magistrates, whom he now also superseded, reducing the number to four appointed by himself, who held office during his pleasure.

Not satisfied with the constitutional exercise of the Veto, he also exercised the right of legislating in his own person by means of proclamations, in one of which he assumed the power "of confining in the common gaol any individual acting against his authority, or obstructing his mandate; constituting himself at once legislative enactor, the magistrate to issue the warrant, and the judge and jury to convict and sentence."^{*}

To these usurpations the inhabitants offered a decided resistance, and obtained some trifling relaxation of the despotic system adopted, by petitioning the Government and Parliament at home. They also now petitioned that the right of sovereignty over the territories they occupied might be openly assumed by the British Government, so as to enable them to possess their lands without reservation in respect to Spain, and to cultivate and import their produce into Great Britain and Ireland at the same rate of duties as the British Colonies in the West Indies.

Similar petitions for the colonization of the settlements had been presented by the inhabitants in November 1833, in February 1835, and in March 1839. To none of them has there been any direct reply.

Another step was, however, taken in that direction, when a Chief Justice, a Queen's Advocate, and other judicial appendages were sent out in 1845.

Though the British Government had renounced and given up all its territorial claims on the Mosquito Shore, dismantling its forts and removing its subjects during 1784, an intercourse was continually maintained with the Waikna Indians through the

* The petition of the Public Meeting, 2nd March 1861.

island of Jamaica and from the Settlements in the Bay. The favourable disposition of this people towards the British, which had been sedulously cultivated from the first, was not suffered to languish, though, at the same time, their hatred to their Spanish neighbours was thereby quickened and perpetuated. The determination to keep up British influence on this important line of coast was manifested by a kind of patronage extended by our government to these rude barbarians, under the specious pretext of *Protection*. The chiefs and nobles were flattered and bribed, ideas of hereditary monarchy and primogeniture fostered, if they were not actually instilled into their minds, and the scions of Mosquito royalty were educated and crowned at Kingston or Belize. Their kings were pensioned during life, and provided with a private secretary—a kind of keeper—at the cost of the British people.

As one of the earlier results of this policy, Sir Gregor Macgregor ingratiated himself with the Waikna monarch, and was created Cacique of Poyais, by royal deed at the court of Cape Gracias a Dios on the 29th of April 1820. Upon this ground he claimed an absolute dominion over the Poyer district situated on the extreme west coast of the kingdom of Mosquitia, and including the Rio Tinto or Black River, where English settlements had before existed.

The project of transporting to these fertile but uncleared wilds a ready made city, or at least of planting on the banks of the Black River a full-grown community without any roots, was probably only a part of a more comprehensive but ill-conceived plan of national aggression and encroachment. The very first steps in its execution were so disastrous and suicidal as to make the "Poyais bubble" notorious, and for a time proverbial. It was the ridicule, where it was not the grief, of all who knew its history. After thirty years the scattered remnant of its exiled dupes are still occasionally met with in the Bay, and some wrecks of its military armament, which comprised well equipped regiments of cavalry and infantry, its theatre and theatrical company, its bank and paper currency, &c., are still now and then encountered, and afford materials for reflection on the wickedness, the folly, and the just miscarriage of a scheme in which everything seems to have been thought of except what should constitute the fun-

damental elements of all such enterprizes, viz. a worthy object, suitable time and place, and adequate religious, moral, and physical materials.

The Bay-men were prompt and efficient in rescuing many of the victims of this iniquitous scheme from the actual starvation and unavoidable disease to which His Highness the Cacique had mercilessly consigned them. The most helpless were removed in 1823 from the forests of Black River to Belize, and though the generosity of this act has been called in question, and a motive of rivalry attributed in its stead, the humane attentions and hospitality of the Belisians to their suffering fellow-countrymen are justly entitled to a meed of praise.

Nor is this the only national disgrace and absurd exposure which has resulted from the British protectorate on the Mosquito Shore. Several writers have already noticed the humiliating scenes to which the coronation of the present line of Waikna monarchs has given occasion; and all the witnesses, except perhaps some whose sense of decorum and moral rectitude were little or not at all superior to that of the poor deluded Indians themselves, concur in branding these ceremonies, not only as ridiculous in the extreme, but as disgusting exhibitions of human degradation, and impious profanations of the name of God, which has been wickedly associated with them. Indeed, it is not a little surprising that government officials,—civil, military, and ecclesiastical,—laying claim to reason and sensibility (to speak of no loftier endowments) could at any time be found willing to lend themselves to mockeries so puerile, and to deceptions so palpable and gross. But some such have ever been found ready to take a public part in the desecration of so-called religious forms, and in the name and on behalf of royalty, to place in the least imposing light imaginable,

"The low ambition and the pride of kings."

On such occasions, British men-of-war have been employed to convey the royal person and the naked and bare-footed nobles composing his court to and from Jamaica, or British Honduras. A titled colonial bishop has been in requisition to consecrate and anoint with holy oil the semi-savage, the tool of governmental schemes of national aggrandizement. The various native lords,

generals, admirals, and captains, have been clad for the occasion in gay regimentals which they wore shirtless on their tawny skins, and so caricatured the "soft raiment" that even the pencil of a Cruikshanks could scarcely do justice to their attitudes and grimaces while writhing under the confinement of braided coats, military stocks, tight boots, &c. &c.

The coronation of King Robert took place at Belize on the 23rd of April 1825. None of the above elements were then wanting, except that the part of the Archbishop of Canterbury was performed by the chaplain to the Settlement in the room of his superior, whose absence was more than atoned for by other details of the pageant. On this occasion it was deemed necessary to *qualify* the Waikna nobility for the part assigned them—viz. swearing allegiance to their king, by first placing them within the pale of the national establishment. Consequently the "Ministration of baptism to such as are of riper years" was superadded to the "Coronation service," and the poor savages having assented with becoming docility to all they were asked, were deemed capable of taking an oath, and their ecclesiastical disabilities were once for all removed. Mr. Henry Dunn informs us, upon the testimony of an eye-witness of this iniquitous imposture, that "they displayed a total ignorance of the meaning (!) of the ceremony; and when asked to give their names, took the titles of Lord Rodney, Lord Nelson, or some other celebrated officer, and seemed grievously disappointed when told they could only be baptized by simple Christian (?) names:" and he adds, that, "after this solemn mockery had been concluded, the whole assembly adjourned to a large school-room, to eat the coronation dinner, where the usual healths were drunk, and these poor creatures all intoxicated with rum; a suitable conclusion to a farce as blasphemous and wicked as ever disgraced a Christian country."(!)*

* Dunn's Guatemala, p. 24. From the private manuscript journal of a pious person (since deceased), who was present at the coronation of King Robert, the following account is copied:—"The smutty chiefs were all ranged in state at the court-house, and had undergone a complete metamorphosis; they were now attired in cast-off coats of artillery and infantry-officers, and their appearance was anything but imposing. The King, accompanied by British officers, went to fetch the General (Major-General Codd, his Majesty's Superintendent), who returned with them and joined the procession—as follows:—public officers (civil) mounted—officers of the garrison—a guard of soldiers—the priest—the King, with General Codd on his right, and Major Nicholls on his left—the crown—

Captain Henderson, an officer in garrison at Belize, whose work has been already quoted, was *honoured* with a special mission to the shore in 1804, the object of which, by his own shewing, was to convey in the schooner *Huntress* "a variety of presents ordered by government for the chiefs of the Mosquito nation." He does not say of what they consisted, but he distributed them at a settlement in Caratasca lagoon on the 9th October, where General Robinson and his staff came to receive them. "The general as well as most of his attendants, who were numerous, were dressed in British regimentals, with epaulettes, sword, sash, &c." The little information which he communicates as to their history is significant and suggestive.

"The late king, George, was murdered, and his death attributed to the designs of his brother, Prince Stephen. The former was unalterably attached to the English; the latter, it is confidently pronounced, has been seduced by bribery* to very opposite interests, and with which he had sedulously attempted to infect his countrymen. The schemes of Prince Stephen, however, have met with little success; which has principally arisen from the unremitted and active vigilance of General Robinson, one of the next persons in point of consequence to the royal family, and who contrives to preserve a *kind of regency* until the son and

merchants and inhabitants of Belize. On reaching the church, the band struck up, 'God save the King.' On entering, we were all provided with pews. The gallery had been reserved for ladies admitted by ticket or invitation. The service was not very long. The sermon preached was from, 'By me kings reign, and princes decree justice.' The sermon ended, the priest went to the communion table and read. The General standing on the other side of the table, the King, dressed as a British Major, in the front, the ceremony of anointing was gone through. (Here Mr. Dunn informs us, that the King repeatedly thrust his hand through his thick bushy hair, and, applying his fingers to his nose, in this expressive manner indicated his delight at this part of the service.) After which the crown was placed on his head, and, on a preconcerted signal being given by Major Baldwin, a salute was fired from the fort. Afterwards, Lord Nelson, Lord Rodney, and I know not how many more lords, were received into the visible church by sprinkling—poor creatures!—the minister thanking God that they were by this ordinance regenerated and made part of the body of Christ. It is an awful concern! They swore allegiance to their chief; and, on the minister pronouncing him king, the Mosquito lords shouted out, 'God save King Robert.' . . . I had some conversation with the King, who observed, 'I shall want to get away soon to-night.' I inquired, 'Why?' 'Because I don't want to get drunk; if I do, I shall get sick.' I am told he is rather fond of doing this occasionally. He is a little man, about 30 years of age I should suppose. He was educated at Jamaica."

* The writer's own mission was to make presents.

heir of the late king shall become of age to take upon himself the business of government. The present King [1804—probably king Robert, who was subsequently crowned as already related] is but a youth, and some years ago was sent to Jamaica to be educated under the direction and guidance of the governor of that island.”*

About twelve years since, or perhaps a year or two sooner, Frederick William, a son of King Robert, reigned on the Shore under British protection. He, too, had been educated and crowned at Jamaica, and was an occasional visitor at Belize, where a child of his was the plaything of the family and visitors at the government house, upon the piazzas of which he used to play and bask in the sun, or sleep in the shade like any other pet. King Frederick William was provided with an English secretary, and a pension to enable him to sustain his dignity. He died from the consequences of habitual intoxication before 1825, in the early part of which his little son, still a boy, was crowned king by the late Bishop Lipscombe, who came from Jamaica to Belize in a man-of-war for that purpose. On this occasion, a similar ceremony to the one which occurred twenty years before took place, followed by a somewhat similar banquet in the same schoolroom, during which the juvenile king was engaged in the yard beneath, in the more congenial diversion of graciously spinning his royal top.†

It has been noticed in a previous chapter,‡ that one violent seizure of the island of Ruatan by the commander-in-chief of

* Captain Henderson's Account, p. 220.

† The following is from an American paper. It is dated Hull, U. S., Sept. 23, 1849:—“Skipper Mudge, who arrived at this port from Honduras last week, in his smack *Nancy*, reports that he had an interview, before sailing, with his Majesty the King of the Mosquitoes. His Majesty wore a splendid cocked-hat and a red sash, and had very large gilt spurs buckled about his ankles; but I regret to say that the remainder was, as the painters say, without drapery. We must make allowance, however, for difference of customs and climate. His Majesty, who cannot be more than twenty years old, was slightly intoxicated. His suite consisted of a one-eyed drummer-boy, and two gentlemen with fies, one of whom acted as an interpreter. The King of the Mosquitoes received Skipper Mudge seated on an empty whisky-cask. He motioned to the skipper to take a seat on the ground or wherever he chose.” The writer then goes on to describe the further proceedings of the interview, in the course of which his Majesty's laughter having been excited, the cask rolled from under him, and he fell to the ground. This is the monarch whose coronation at Jamaica figured in last year's (English) estimates.—*Nonconformist*, Dec. 26, 1849.

‡ See page 133.

the garrison at Belize took place in 1830, and that on complaint of the federal authorities the act was officially disallowed by our government. Notwithstanding this, it was once more taken possession of in 1841 by Colonel Alexander MacDonald, C.B., then her Majesty's Superintendent in British Honduras, who proceeded thither with some few officers and men in the government schooner, a small yacht; and finding, as they expected, only a few inhabitants under the care of a sergeant and four or five Indian soldiers belonging to the state of Honduras, they hauled down the flag of the republic from a small signal staff, and hoisted that of Great Britain in its stead. No sooner had they re-embarked, than they had the mortification of seeing the Union Jack replaced by the blue and white stripes of Honduras, for which it had just before been substituted, and returning once more they completed the inglorious revolution by taking such precautions and making such threats as they thought necessary. Since this act of annexation, the island has been under British control, and a considerable number of settlers have been located upon it.

But the territorial conquests of Colonel MacDonald, a veteran of many campaigns, and a survivor of the slaughter of Waterloo, did not stop here; during the same year, he proceeded to the port of San Juan del Norte on the Mosquito Shore in her Majesty's frigate *Tweed*, as it would appear, for the mere purpose of keeping alive the British claim; though under cover of a pretext concerning the limits of the Waikna king's territories. On this occasion, the British hero took prisoner Colonel Quijano, the Nicaraguan Comandante of the port, who was brought away in the *Tweed*, and subjected to personal indignities ere he was landed at a distance from his official residence. "This farce," said Mr. Dunlop, "hardly seemed consistent with the dignity of a British officer, Governor of a Settlement." How much more infamous must it appear to the reader when contrasted with the moral dignity that should attach to a nation circumstanced as Great Britain is, and with the rectitude that should characterize a people who justly boast the pre-eminent possession of the word of God.

After this event the Waikna Protectorate, in the name of which the outrage on Colonel Quijano was committed, assumed a more decided aspect. A Board of Commissioners of the Mosquito Shore

was formed at Belize by direction of the home government. It was composed of a selection from among the civil and ecclesiastical functionaries of state, and was almost identical with the Honourable Executive Council. The public money usually devoted to the maintenance of British influence on the Shore was entrusted to their management, but this organization was of very short duration. A British Agent or Resident was soon after established at Blewfield's, a settlement not sixty miles from the river San Juan, a national flag differing very little from the Union Jack was assigned to the Mosquitians, a dispute for extended limits at each end of their territories was originated by our government in their name, and subsequently some paltry engagements were fought at both extremities of the shore.

As an indirect auxiliary to these movements a blockade of the river San Juan del Norte was instituted under a pretext of debt, the state of Nicaragua not having paid its share of the loan contracted in England under the Federation* which even when added to some other debts due to British subjects made but an inconsiderable amount. Patrick Walker, Esq., late private secretary of Colonel MacDonald, as agent of the consul-general of her Britannic Majesty on the Mosquito Shore, addressed a discourteous letter to the authorities of the state of Nicaragua, dated from the "Residence of the Consul-General of her Britannic Majesty, Blewfields, Mosquito Shore, 1st of Sept. 1847," in which he peremptorily requires the liberation of a foreign resident who was imprisoned, confessedly *not a British subject*. He says, "By adopting extreme measures against Mr. Barnel, you have drawn upon your government the resentment of one of the most powerful nations in the world; a nation the most sensitive in regard to the least insult offered to its subjects, for which, if it shall appear to have been unjustly offered, it will require an ample indemnification." He adds in concluding, "It is proper I should state to you, as you can scarcely have been otherwise informed of it, that *Mr. Chatsfield, her Majesty's Consul-General in Central America, has received instructions to point out to the states of Central America, the*

* This loan was originally contracted with the house of Barclay, Herring, Richardson and Co. of London, in the year 1835. It then amounted to 7,143,867 dollars, or less than a million and a half sterling.

limits which the British government is determined to maintain as the right of the king of the Mosquitoes, and that those limits comprehend the San Juan river."*

To this declared intention of occupying their only Atlantic port, the government of the state replied by a firm and well-grounded protest, dated Managua, 23rd of September 1847, in which it complains "that a tribe, with no recognised form of government, without civilization, and entirely abandoned to savage life, is suddenly made use of by enlightened England for the purpose of planting one of her feet upon the Atlantic coast of the state; or rather, for the purpose of taking possession of the port for communication between Europe, America, and Asia, and other important countries, at the point where the grand Oceanic canal is most practicable;" and further, that this had been done "at a time when Nicaragua was preparing to settle her liabilities in regard to the debt due in Great Britain." The local government also lifted up its voice and called upon the other states to support the inviolability of its territory. Mr. John Foster, British Vice-Consul in Nicaragua was at the same time respectfully addressed in a letter which expresses a doubt concerning the execution of this threat. Principally because it would not have been preceded by those formalities which nations always observe. And he is reminded that by the loss of this port, and consequently of the chief revenue of the state, arising from the duties on its import and export trade, "it would be deprived of one of the principal resources upon which it relies to pay the debt due in Great Britain, an arrangement for which was then under negotiation with the vice-consul."

In the protest of Nicaragua, the state of Salvador heartily united, declaring its cause to be that of all Central America.

The encroachments on the north-western extremity of the Shore drew forth also a protest from the state of Honduras against the occupation of a part of its territory on the northern boundary, which was actually occupied by British troops in behalf of "the so-called Mosquito nation." It complains that "the commander of the sloop of war, *Alarm*, of the royal navy of England, has taken possession of that portion of territory, extending to the river Roman; having afterwards committed, in the public square of

* *Honduras Observer*, Jan. 29, 1848.

Truxillo, acts of positive hostility, and aggravated the state by landing troops in the said port, with the object of compelling its Commandant, by forcible means, to order the guard situated at the Roman river, to evacuate that place immediately." And further, that the supposed right of the Mosquito chief had not even been examined, nor had any official remonstrances been made before proceeding to violence. To the solemn protest against this particular act of aggression, is added, in the name of the entire Republic, a general protest "that the confederation of Central America considers valid its rights to all the territory invaded, or that may be invaded, and of course any others that may appertain to it, by the rights of nations, and by treaties, celebrated between the monarchs of Spain and Great Britain, or other powers." To this document the signature of Don Santos Guardiola is appended as *president of the state*.*

The diplomacy of Patrick Walker, Esq., notwithstanding these protests, was soon followed up by an attack in the boats of a man-of-war upon one of the Nicaraguan forts in the river San Juan del Norte. In this affray, he and some British sailors lost their lives. The port in question was, however, shortly afterwards taken by a British squadron, and being ever since forcibly occupied, has received the name of Grey-town, doubtless in honour of the minister of state under whose auspices this gallant deed has been at length consummated.

Long before this decisive step on our part, negotiations had been pending between the government of Nicaragua and a company in the United States, which desired to undertake the opening of the grand Oceanic canal. Whatever influence this circumstance may have had on British movements, it is notable that the conclusion of a mutual agreement between the contracting parties was simultaneous with the occupation of Grey-town. In the prospect of this important undertaking, the United States' government appointed Mr. Squiers their consul in Central America, and concluded a treaty with Nicaragua, by which it guaranteed its territories from all foreign encroachment, and became responsible to the world for the strict neutrality and cosmopolite character of the contemplated channel of communication. By this treaty the island of Tigre (or Tiger) was ceded to the United States.

* *Honduras Observer*, Feb. 5, 1848.

This is one of many islets in the spacious and beautiful Gulf of Fonseca, or, as it is often called, the bay of Conchagua, on the Pacific side of the isthmus. It is a conical rock, covered with verdure, and little if at all inhabited. But its situation is important, both from its vicinity to the projected works and the easy communication it affords with the three states of Nicaragua, Salvador, and Honduras, whose several boundaries meet at this point.

Soon after Mr. Squiers had arrived, and simultaneously with the ratification of this treaty, a new and unexpected act of British aggression produced considerable excitement in all the Central American States. At one and the same time a British squadron, under Commodore Paynter, in the war-steamer *Gorgon*, appeared off Realejo, and the British consul-general, Frederick Chatfield, Esq., arrived at the gulf from Guatemala. On the 20th of October 1849, these two employés made a descent upon Tiger Island, and united to take possession of it in the name of Queen Victoria, notwithstanding it had just been ceded to the government of Washington. This new act of British sovereignty was duly solemnized within range of the floating batteries, and in the presence of a military force, who first proceeded to disarm the native guard of four soldiers and a corporal. The republican banner was then speedily lowered, and the British flag floating in its place was royally saluted with twenty-one guns. After this a British Superintendent (of its jungle and its reptile inhabitants?) was appointed by Mr. Chatfield, and the deed of annexation was complete.

On receipt of this astounding intelligence, Mr. Squiers officially informed Mr. Chatfield of the fact that the island of Tigre had been ceded to the United States, and that he, of course, expected that its evacuation would immediately be ordered. Mr. Chatfield's reply was that the state was not in a position to cede any part of its territories, because, in the first place, *it had no claim even to a national existence*; and, secondly, it could not exercise that right in the present case, because he, as British consul-general, had before intimated his intention of placing a lien on the island in question. After further negotiations, Mr. Chatfield refused to evacuate the island, which was put in a state of defence, but he engaged to refer the question to his own government.

These diplomatic arrangements of the British consul-general* were speedily followed up by the seizure of all the islands in the gulf belonging to the states of Honduras and Salvador.

To the last-named state, Mr. Chatfield forwarded certain peremptory demands, at the same time requiring payment of their share of the national debt (amounting to 29,000 dollars or 5,800*l.* sterling), to which he exacted a reply within twenty-four hours. Upon the rejection of his requirements as unjust, the ports of Acajantla and La Union belonging to that state, together with its entire coasts in the Gulf of Fonseca were strictly blockaded.

These movements on the Pacific were characteristically supported on the Atlantic side of the country, by the occupation of the ports of Truxillo and Omoa, thereby closing all the ports of the state of Honduras. As might be supposed, the alarmed natives flew to arms, and with exaggerated fears prepared to oppose the annexation of the entire country to the other British possessions in Central America. Nevertheless, the people of both states offered to submit all the claims of the British to commissioners, and pledged themselves to abide by the result. This peaceful overture was entirely disregarded; upon which Don Santos Guardiola issued a hostile proclamation, and soon put himself at the head of a considerable force of Hondureños. Cabañas and another general made similar preparations in Salvador. These leaders, however, remained in a waiting though a threatening posture.

Under the pressure of these circumstances, the states of Nicaragua, Salvador, and Honduras, at once formed a confederation, binding themselves together in a manner they had long sought in vain to accomplish after the fall of federalism in 1839. The articles of this compact between the three states were signed early in the month of November 1849, and the speedy inauguration of the new federal government was looked forward to with general satisfaction and even with enthusiastic joy. Guatemala and Costa Rica were to be invited to join it, but it was feared that the influence of Carrera would prove an obstacle in the first, and the second was known to be unfriendly to the project. It was, however, confidently hoped that, sooner or later, the two extremities would unite with the republic of the centre, which had adopted the word 'Redivivus!' (Revived) for its armorial motto.

* This gentleman is styled in a late Belize newspaper, "the English *Chargé d'Affaires*."

The mild and dignified but firm and liberal tone of President Taylor's late message, at the opening of the congress of the United States in January 1850, concerning the tenure of the grand Oceanic canal, was well calculated to check the further development of British schemes in Central America, and to satisfy the world upon that point. Under the sanction of the United States of North America, the remotest nations, as well as the circumjacent republics, are assured of the world-wide freedom of that important passage. But though its universality and independence have been thus early guaranteed, the effects of this fair and noble declaration still remain to be proved, and, perhaps, to be contested. Subsequently to this new and important phase of the proceedings, declarations have appeared that the executive of Washington and the cabinet of St. James are both resolved amicably to arrange this interesting matter. No previous resolution could be more auspicious for the proper adjustment of the difference, as each is thus prepared for a calm investigation and a just decision, whilst a threat of defiance must have aroused evil passions, and would have blinded the vision of the national arbiters. Now, the only apparent danger is, that the two friendly powers, oblivious of the general interests of mankind, should arrange matters for their own convenience and advantage, and sacrifice the claims of others to their *entente cordiale*. But if better things may not be hoped for from the despoiler of Mexico and the father of annexation, another lesson may be learned, even a lesson of distrust in man; and confidence may yet be exercised in that overruling and all wise Providence which invariably brings good out of our unfaithfulness, and in which God glorifies himself by unfailing and equable retribution.

Subsequent to the visit of the *Alarm* on the coast of Honduras, Captain Nolloth, of her Majesty's ship *Plumper*, formally presented a claim, amounting to 111,061 dollars, or 22,230*l.*, to the Comandante of Truxillo; and, failing payment, took possession of the town and fort. The affrighted inhabitants having raised 1,200 dollars, the gallant captain left with the spoil for Jamaica. A proclamation was subsequently issued declaring the whole coast in a state of blockade, and warning all vessels to leave it. The reappearance of the British squadron was also expected.*

During the close of 1849 and the opening of 1850, considerable

* *New York Recorder*, August 23rd, 1850.

movements have been observable in the British navy stationed at Jamaica and in the neighbouring seas, and several ships of war have been ordered to the Mosquito Shore and to the Bay of Honduras.

It has been recently announced in the public prints that the state of Salvador has paid its quota of the debt claimed by us, and that the blockade of *its* ports has been raised. No intelligence has, however, appeared of the evacuation either of Grey-town or of the islands in the Gulf of Fonseca.

The *Honduras Watchman*, published at Belize on the 12th January 1850, reports a rumour "that the English packet was detained on account of some business of importance as connected with the Mosquito territory. It is said that ten sail of the line have been ordered down to San Juan de Nicaragua, now Grey-town. Whatever grounds there may be for such a report, it is certain that this *grand canal* question is assuming a most serious aspect. The English have gone too far to recede, and the Americans appear determined to push matters to extremities." The same paper contains a translation of a violent appeal to the citizens of the state of Honduras to arm in defence of their territories. It commences with the significant words, "The flag of that rapacious nation, Great Britain, is waving over Tiger Island; that nation of Vandals, whose conduct to those weaker than itself is notorious; its iron yoke is but too keenly felt!"

In order to judge of the truth or falsehood of the charge of rapacity, let the reader briefly review the facts upon which it is founded.

With no other claim than what is afforded by the treaties with Spain, we have possessed ourselves of the actual sovereignty of territories on the northern shore of the Bay of Honduras, extending over about 20,000 square miles, or 12,800,000 acres, exclusive of islands and keys.

We have taken and retaken the important island of Rustan no less than five times, and are now exercising the right of sovereignty over its fertile lands which extend at the least to 150 square miles, or 96,000 acres.

By virtue of a late treaty with one of the contending parties in Yucatan, and on the score of assistance afforded for the pacification of the peninsula during the war of races, which is still raging there, we have obtained an extension of limits on the northern boundary

of our Central American empire, extending from the Rio Hondo to the port and town of Salamanca de Bacalar, thus including about 3,600 square miles, or 2,304,000 acres of additional territory.

Altogether, making, on a moderate calculation, full 23,750 square miles, or 15,200,000 acres—which is nearly, if not quite, four times the extent of the island of Jamaica.

To the *occupation* of these extensive tracts of country must be added the *protection* of the Mosquito Shore, over which our government exercises as much control as over its own possessions, though in a somewhat less direct manner, or rather, by a more indirect course. In addition to 400 miles of sea-coast from the Roman river to the San Juan del Norte, we have lately put forth a claim, in the name of the Waikna monarch, to about 100 miles more of sea-coast to the southward of the San Juan, extending through the state of Costa Rica and part of the province of Veragua, as far as Chiriqui Lagoon; thus including altogether at least 37,000 square miles, or 23,680,000 acres of PROTECTORATE, including the occupation of Grey-town.

Thus, as the actual result up to the present time, exclusive of such smaller items as Ruanan and Tigre islands, *we have a sum total of 60,600 square miles, or 38,784,000 acres, over which we exercise full control*, being nearly a third of all Central America, and more than two-thirds the area of Great Britain.

Let the reader now decide whether or not we must appear to the natives in the light of "a rapacious nation." To them it matters little whether our encroachments and our occupation of their country be defended on the plea of a "right of conquest," founded on the successful defence of St. George's Key in 1798; or whether we are unprincipled and shameless enough openly to take advantage of circumstances, by replying to the remonstrances of the neighbouring republics, that our treaties were made with Spain and not with them; and to the claims of Spain, that they have no farther dominion over these territories since their late colony became independent.

The natives cannot but consider these territories as a part of their country, which ought to be as free from the dominion of European monarchical government as they are themselves. It must weigh little with them whether we ground our claim to the island

of Ruatan upon its first piratical seizure, or on the fact that some fifty years ago we located upon it the remnant of a nation which we had well nigh exterminated in despoiling them of their native isles. The Central States, as well as the British Government, know it to be, commercially, the key to the navigation of the Bay of Honduras, and must feel it inconveniently near to their own shores, while in the hands of a power so aggressive and so much their superior. In the magnanimous protection extended over the Mosquito Shore, and in the residence of Mr. Coates, as British Commissioner to the Waikna king, they can discover no benevolence or philanthropy. If they had been inclined to forget the former attacks made upon the river San Juan del Norte, they could not now be expected to view with placid indifference our occupation of its best port, which commands the line of oceanic communication, at the very time that this grand project is most likely to be realized.

In the occupation of British Honduras and Ruatan, the protectorate of the Mosquito Shore, the annexation of Tiger Island, the seizure of the ports and islets in the Gulf of Fonseca, the blockade of the Atlantic and Pacific coasts of Salvador and Honduras, in the bearing of British officials, and in the tone and tenure of diplomatic relations, the Central Americans can perceive little besides "*La loi et la raison du plus fort*"—the law and the logic of the stronger party—and what wonder that, writhing under the grasp of the iron hand of oppression, they should mutter in their torture, "Rapacious nation," "Vandals of the age!"

The benevolent reader, and especially the one in whose bosom the flame of divine love has been enkindled, will feel no disposition to resent this language. And though he might wish to extenuate the provoking cause, a sense of justice must forbid the least attempt at its defence.

It is a fact, calling for deep reflection, that "our Anglo-Saxon empire" completed its millennium in the month of October 1849. Dating from the birth of Alfred the Great, a fair landmark in history, the Anglo-Saxon race has already enjoyed an ascendancy of one thousand years. During that period we have spread ourselves over vast tracts of country, and have formed colonies in every part of the habitable globe; and at the beginning of the new period, more, perhaps, than at any previous time, questions connected with the character of our rule, and the nature

of our responsibilities, have been agitated, and in some cases forced upon us. Well would it be for Britain if her statesmen could now see as they are seen, and feel as for themselves for the numerous tribes and nations which are more or less affected by their policy, or subjected to their sway. But whatever may be their infatuated blindness and indifference, individual Christians will be found, who, alive to our true interests and responsibilities, as the disciples of the meek and lowly Jesus, will endeavour, by prayer and action—by prayerful efforts and effectual prayers—to carry the cross of Christ wherever the Anglo-Saxon Empire has extended, and far beyond those bounds. It is upon such that we would urge the duty, and with such we plead, as a powerful motive, our national sins and violence to others, and to Central America in particular.

SECTION III.

MORAL AND RELIGIOUS SKETCH.

CHAPTER XII.

THE INDIANS.

The vision of a Macedonian man—Popery useful in destroying the Native Idolatry—Indian observance of Romish Rites—Amount of Religious Instruction—Positive results—The Human Sacrifices of Popery—Las Casas and Indian Schools—Indian Education—Character and Promise of the *Quiché Tribes*—The wild Indians—*El Peten*, its History—Overland Road to the Pacific—Arizmendi's Expedition, 1696—Conquest of Peten—The Indians abandon it—New Expedition, 1699—Withdrawal of Troops—Present condition—Character of the *Peteneros*—*The Yucatecos*—*The Carifs*—The leaven of Romanism—Relics of old customs—Polygamy—Wesleyan Mission—Native Language, Character, and Village Scenes—*The Mosquitomen*—Demon worship—The *Sukias*—Female customs—Absence of natural affection—Intoxication—Tradition of the grey-eyed man—Mr. Pilley—What we have done.

"A vision appeared to Paul in the night; There stood a man of Macedonia."—Acts xvi. 9.

TROAS was a port on the Hellespont, situated on one of the headlands of Asia Minor, and, therefore, at once an extremity of the Asiatic Continent and one of the nearest points of proximity to the opposite European shore. Thrice had it been visited by Paul, the missionary, and his little company of fellow-labourers, previous to that occasion when the vision of a Macedonian appeared to him there.

Forbidden at that time to preach the word in Asia, "They essayed to go into Bithynia, but the Spirit (who directed their enterprise) suffered them not. And they, passing by Mysia, came down to Troas."

On the wharfs and in the bazaars of this busy mart, it is more than probable that the Evangelists noticed a race of men distinguishable among the rest by their foreign aspect and diversity of

language. They would doubtless see and hear evidences of their degraded and immoral condition, and learn that they came from the countries across the narrow channel that here separates Europe from Asia. They would derive but little consolation from glowing reports of the prosperity of the Roman colony of Philippi, or from vivid descriptions of the refinement and magnificence of Thessalonica, the capital, and of the reputed wealth and learning of their respective inhabitants; knowing, as they did, that "the gospel of the grace of God" had not yet penetrated beyond that arm of the sea.

It may be, too, that they obtained information of many distant nations further west and north; some of them in a state of savage wildness and rude barbarity. It is not impossible that some son of ancient Britain, perhaps a mariner or a slave, might have attracted their gaze, and drawn forth their compassion for the Druid-ridden worshippers of oaks and mistletoe.

It was the vision of "*a man*" that beckoned these heralds of salvation into Europe. It is in our character as men that the Word of God comes to us. It is on this broad footing that our fellow has a claim upon our Christian sympathy. For such, for all such, and only for such, is the Gospel specially adapted. "To every creature" of this fallen, ignorant, and corrupted race we are commanded to "preach the Gospel." Those among men who are privileged "to be called the sons of God," are so by the sovereign gift of him who humbled himself to the title and condition of "the Son of man." By using this distinction, he in nowise renounced his claim to be the Son of the Most High; and while a divine nature is conferred on us by union with him, our condition as men remains indelible. Even in the perfect state of glory, "the tabernacle of God is with men;" and the distinctive appellation of saved sinners throughout eternity will be "the redeemed from among men."

If the man of Macedonia represented Europe, then, as one of its most necessitous and destitute countries, *he represented us*.

The faithful band of primitive missionaries was not disobedient to the heavenly vision. The gospel was preached by them in Philippi, Thessalonica, Berea, Athens, and Corinth. Churches were founded in all those cities, and "The word of the Lord sounded out, not only in Macedonia and Achaia; but also in every place, their faith to God was spread abroad." Subse-

quently the laborious Paul extended his missionary excursions to the regions beyond them.

Whether by the mouth of the proto-missionary to the Gentiles himself or by that of some other disciple, whether at that period or somewhat later, the Gospel did ultimately reach the shores of Albion as a result of those labours; and He who directed Paul by the vision of "the man," was not unmindful of the spiritual destitution of the rude barbarians in our sea-girt land.

British Christians! are we not debtors to the nations who now stand to us as we then stood to those more highly favoured? What, if Asiatic Christians had disregarded our wants, and restrained their compassions from us? Those to whom the Gospel has proved indeed a blessing will not, cannot turn away from a serious consideration of their claims.

The claims of the people of Central America cannot be more forcibly pleaded, than by a review of the moral aspect which society in that country presents in its various ramifications. A meagre sketch is all that can be afforded to the reader. Yet it is hoped that the image presented to his mind, accompanied by the remembrance of what we once were in comparison to what we now are, may stimulate and quicken into action every benevolent and holy purpose.

Strangely and graciously does the God of heaven control the destinies of the earth, and "in the midst of wrath remember mercy." It has been seen that the invasion and subjugation of Central America by Spain, calamitous as it was and guilty as the agents were, proved the means of partial good to the remnant that remains, by arresting the tide of natural corruption, and forcing it into another channel. Popery had done little or nothing to humanize the cruel Spaniard, yet the introduction of it was in the same indirect way made useful. It is no unwarrantable conjecture that the Astecs, the Toltecs, and the other Indian tribes, had they continued in their idolatrous practices, would at this day have presented some of those obstacles to the reception of the Gospel which, like the Hindoo caste, are still in operation among most heathen nations. It is probable, at least, that their attachment to superstitions and rites handed down from their forefathers would have been, humanly speaking, difficult to overcome.

Such, however, is not now the case. Popery has removed this barrier. Its imposition by force and cunning, its flexibility and plastic character as a system of forms, its indulgence to its own votaries, and its severity towards others, have at once insured its outward profession, and prevented it from taking root in the affections of those upon whom it was thrust. The tyrannical oppressions of their conquerors—the sons of that church—and the rapacity and shameless immorality of their teachers—its *fathers*—had no small influence in repressing the ardour of the native proselytes. But the Papists fulfilled their mission of destruction. Before their pertinacious zeal almost every vestige of the Indian idolatry has long since been swept away, and but few traces of it now remain even in the minds of those who remember that little with a veneration and an interest which they never can attach to its supplanter. It is also owing to the efforts of the priests that polygamy has disappeared from among those tribes over whom they have borne sway.

It is commonly reported of some of the Indians who inhabit the more remote districts, that while they outwardly conform to Popish rituals, and stand in awe of the priest and his myrmidons, they still meet secretly in dark glens and at the bottom of deep ravines, to perpetuate the idolatry of their fathers; but evidence is wanting to substantiate the fact.

A few years since some travellers arrived at the city of Mexico, who obtained leave from the authorities to dislodge from their places in the foundation wall of the cathedral, some carved stones that had once been the objects of Indian adoration. They were carefully cleansed, and a drawing of them was taken; after which they were left for the night in the open square. On the following morning they were found adorned with garlands of flowers, evidently the result of a reminiscence of full three centuries in the minds of the Indians of that city. So long does it take to grind idolatry out of the human heart, even by the violent process which Spanish Papists have used. But this affecting example is but as the exception that proves the rule. The great mass of Indians who constitute the bulk of the population in Central America, have at present not even a faint tradition of the worship of their ancestors.

The conformity of the Indians to Popery, for the most part, consists in a mere physical compliance with a routine of outward forms,

in which their minds are perfectly vacant and uninformed. True, they seldom pass, without an act of outward veneration, the crosses and images which are erected by the roadside on every high hill, and under every green tree, and they frequently deposit before them a nosegay or chaplet of flowers as they travel past, but they are equally, if not more scrupulously, attentive to a somewhat opposite, and yet very similar, custom. Invariably, on passing the "Aguas Calientes" (hot springs) with which most districts abound, the Indians are accustomed to deposit some dry fuel on the bank, before they wade through the sulphureous and steaming current. If questioned respecting their custom of binding flowers upon an image or crucifix they might be at a loss to give a reason, but while offering this dry stick they have a definite object in their minds. It is to propitiate the Evil Spirit, that they in their intention furnish him with fuel wherewith to keep the water warm. And though, wherever the footpath crosses such streams, the numerous mounds of rotting and rotten wood attest that their deprecatory sacrifice has not been accepted, yet the practice is still rigorously observed, and is probably accompanied with more feeling than the adornment of an image of which they know nothing but the visible form, and, it may be, the name.

It is also true that the Indians attend mass in those places where they have a resident priest, or when, on some saint's day, they are favoured with a sacerdotal visitor. But here, as in the former case, no act of the mind takes place, except the passive one of its subjection. Their bodily presence for a few short minutes is all that is required. It may be that their natural faculties of wonder and veneration are in action while they follow with their eyes the gestures of the priest, to them at least most unmeaning; and while their ears are filled with sounds which convey no ideas; but this is probably a rare occurrence, and no particular concern is manifested to secure even such a result.

It is granted that the Indian takes an active part in the processions and festivities of the Apostate Church, but this part is precisely that which is least Romish in its character, and is in itself so flagrantly absurd, even in outward appearance, as to occasion a spectator to remark that it might fairly be mistaken for the burlesque of the pageant—the scoffer's mockery of the more sober pomp. Their drums and marimbas, their native costumes and ornaments,

their grotesque giants and other ridiculous figures, are tolerated in the processions merely to please them because they have not yet reached the degree of culture required to enjoy more refined music and imagery. But this activity on the part of the Indian is not spontaneous. Here the priests shew themselves anxious to secure his co-operation; and why? but because of the celebration of each "fiesta,"* is attached the payment of considerable sums of money to the officiating ecclesiastic, who in one day sweeps away the gifts that the natives have been months, or probably the whole year, in collecting. These are the only objects for which the Indians have been taught to associate. A sort of company is usually formed for the purpose of collecting and disbursing the finances of the saint. These are called "Cofradias," a name which may be significant of confraternity, but which naturally enough calls up the idea of *cofre*, a strong box.

It is further admitted that the Indians are obedient to their priests in the so-called sacraments of the Church. Their infants are oiled, salted, sprinkled, spit upon, and named. They themselves partake of the consecrated wafer, go to confession, are ecclesiastically married and buried, and receive extreme unction, for all which they pay exorbitantly, and most of which give occasion to the additional evils of revellings and riot. But it is still maintained that the chief and almost exclusive point of all this is the subjection of the mind to priestly rule and the subsidy for priestly maintenance. The poor Indians know little more about these matters than that the priest requires them to be done; and the priest is generally satisfied with their confiding docility, though not always content with the remuneration he extorts.

The repetition by rote of fragments of a Spanish catechism, and of a few Latin "oraciones," is a rare acquirement among the Indians, and is chiefly confined to those who have been used as subordinates of "La Parroquia" (the parish), such as El Sacristan (the beadle), and Los Ministros (the ministers or helps), and a few chorister boys who may have been taught to sing responses; but even these, unless more than commonly intelligent, do not rise

* Fête day—the anniversary of a certain saint, when honours are paid to his or her image, which is carried in procession and feasted. On such occasions, the Indians and others indulge in excesses after hearing a mass, for which they pay sums varying from ten to fifty dollars to the priest.

above the exercise of the memory and the voice in the knowledge of their religion, so that the ample regions of their minds and their hearts remain vacant, and wait to be occupied by some other guest, be it a form of infidelity or the gospel of the grace of God.

The negative evils that must result from such a condition of mind must be left to the appreciation of the reader; the positive results are that the Indian, given up to his animal impulses and propensities, without any other restraint than those which his ignorance and timidity supply, is generally at once vicious and lethargic, though, when aroused, his passions become fierce and ungovernable. Drunkenness, his most prevailing vice, licentiousness, the absence of natural affection, cruelty, avarice, and deceit, usurp dominion over his better dispositions, and keep him in a state of fearful debasement. Yet the social ties are not entirely dissolved, though the enjoyments of the family circle are exchanged for moral wretchedness and physical discomfort.

The visits of the Padre (father or priest) to the Indian village or dwelling do nothing to remove these evils, and often do much to increase them by the idleness and indulgence consequent upon his presence, or upon the days of his peculiar dominion. He comes like a prince well mounted, with a cavalcade of attendants, among whom are not unfrequently his concubines and his children. Sometimes he is carried in a hammock or in a kind of litter by relays of Indians whom he commands, and perhaps brutalizes, but whom he does not think of remunerating; and the company of his servants then follow or precede him to the Convento, as the residence of the padre is invariably styled. His chief object in visiting his parish, which often includes many wide-spread villages, is to gather up his dues, to exact the utmost for the numerous and hasty ceremonies which he performs, and to sustain his influence and that of his class by all the arts of which he is master.

One of the most diabolical of these devices affords a proof that Popery, like every system of unbelief, is cruel, and that among other abominations it is not wanting in human victims. When any Indian, supposed to be in a dying condition, has received the last sacrament, that of extreme unction, and he afterwards appears likely to recover, the attendants are directed to withhold from him all care and nourishment, so that the son of the church may

not desecrate the Holy Anointing, and disappoint the priest. If those directions are not followed, or if reviving nature prove stronger than fanatical cruelty, the relatives are then taught to hold no further intercourse with the convalescent one, whom they ever after shun and stigmatize as a "waster of oils."*

Destitute as the Indians are generally of any kind of useful instruction derived from their *authorized* teachers, there is one notable exception which it is delightful to record. Las Casas, before mentioned as the benevolent Bishop of Chiapa, the true friend of the Indians and the peaceful conqueror of Vera Paz, not only wrote extensively on their behalf, but himself proceeded to Spain, and about the year 1551 pleaded their cause in person at the feet of the fanatical Doña Isabella, the Queen of Spain, the consort of Ferdinand, and the patroness of the unholy Inquisition. He was so far successful as to obtain some relaxation for the oppressed, and he was authorized on his return to establish schools, by royal charter, for the instruction of Indian children. In them, some of the Indians learned to read the Spanish language, and such was the value they attached to this acquirement, that when the schools were suffered to fall into decay, they themselves taught their children, and continued the practice from generation to generation, so that after three hundred years, certain districts are still found, and especially some in the provinces of Los Altos—the highlands—where the otherwise rude and apparently untaught Indians are able to read fluently in the Spanish tongue.† This is a fact which does honour to the Indians, who have hitherto had access to no books but a limited supply of such as they could procure at extortionary prices from the priests and venders in the larger towns. They consisted exclusively of catechisms, of Popish legends, and idolatrous prayers and litanies to the Virgin and the Saints. It is also a fact of great interest, when viewed in connection with plans for their further improvement, as it not only shews their anxiety and ability to learn, but it enables hundreds and perhaps thousands, to acquaint themselves with the written word of God in a language into

* *Gastador de oleos.*

† The author is aware that travellers generally have reported that the Indians cannot read. This is a mistake into which he, like others, was led by their appearance, until he proved some of them, and heard them read the Scriptures which he put into their hands.

which it is already translated, as soon as it shall be put into their hands.

The care of the Indians for the education of their children is a trait already noticed as having distinguished them before their subjugation, and as being evidenced by the numerous and extensive colleges existing in their towns and cities. What the historian adds with respect to Indian education in his own times is equally applicable now:—"Their seminaries, indeed, no longer exist; but the fathers take great care of the education of their sons. The women suckle their children until they have completed the third year, without an instance being known of trusting them to the care of another person: they carry them slung at their backs; and wash, grind corn, or perform any other labours, with them in this situation: they never protect them from the inclemencies of the weather, air, sun, cold, or water; they seldom have any other cradle than the bare ground,* and, at the best, nothing more than a little hammock. As soon as they begin to run alone, they are made to carry little burdens proportioned to their strength. At five or six years of age, they are taken into the fields to cut forage, which they call *sacat*, or to carry home little bundles of wood. As they increase in years, the boys are taught by their father to hunt, fish, and till the ground, the use of the bow, and other similar arts; the mothers instruct the girls from their tenderest years to grind corn, procuring for them small rubbing-stones suitable to their management, and in the other employments peculiar to their sex, such as dressing and spinning cotton and *pita*,† and to weave the different sorts of cloth. They are accustomed to bathe very frequently, twice or even three times a day. The mothers are extremely suspicious, and will not suffer their daughters to be absent from them scarcely a minute. The young men live at the expense of their fathers; but whatever they gain by labour is delivered into the parent's hands. In this manner they are maintained until they marry."‡

A description of the condition of the Indians with some remarks

* They generally spread for them a mat or tanned skin on the clay floor of their houses or in the yard before their open doors.

† The fibre of the *Maguay* or American *Agave*.

‡ *Juarros*, p. 196.

§ Quoted by Mr. Young Anderson, p. 108 of his Report, from a MS. entitled "*Descripcion Topografica de la Provincia de Vera Paz*," written by a Friar.

upon it, also from the pen of a Popish ecclesiastic, written on the spot, is well worthy of consideration.

“There is a great difference between communities (pueblos) of pure Indians and Ladinos. A pueblo solely of Indians is very quiet, when ardent spirits and Chicha (fermented liquor) are not introduced among them; for intoxication brings about great disorder, so that those who but a few moments before were rational beings become ferocious. A pueblo of Ladinos is insolent and impudent, so that strong measures are required to keep them in good order. Not so the Indians; who are easily restrained by a shout from the *Alcalde* (magistrate) or the *curate*.

“But there is another difference between them; which is, that the pueblos of Indians are regularly occupied in working the lands to obtain *wheat*, *corn*, *cacao*, and *cotton*, which are all fruits not to be dispensed with; and that they carry them on their shoulders to sell them in the pueblos of Ladinos; which latter, in return for such noble fruits, give them in exchange, or sell to them, *chicha* and *aguardiente* (rum); which are the *powder* and *balls* which cause such destruction among the Indians, leaving not even the innocent child free from the results. This is *the only recompense* which the Indians receive for the sweat of their brows; and this is the *bread*, the *corn*, and the *clothes*, which they bring back to their wives and daughters. Does it appear we love the Indians, and wish for their conservation and augmentation? In reality, there is no more love than that which springs from our own interest. Let us reverse their fate, turn it upon ourselves, and then see whether it would be right in them to treat us in the same manner.—‘We ought to consider,’ says a learned *Englishman*, speaking of the Indians of Otaheite, ‘that these islanders would be very fortunate if, whilst they acquire our knowledge, they did not at the same time contract our vices, of which they were previously ignorant. At this price the favours we confer on them are dear indeed.’ These,” continues the friar, “are the sentiments even of an *Englishman* in favour of the Indians; what, therefore, should be those of a *Spaniard*? Much more compassionate and humane; because our religion and our laws have no other end than the love of God and our neighbour.”

However much we may pity the ignorance and bigotry of the monkish writer, his feelings and his object must command

our respect. If such are the sentiments of one so circumstanced, what should be those of the enlightened reader of the New Testament who is taught by the Spirit that "love is the fulfilling of the law," and that "Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth!"

The acknowledged character of the Indian for faithfulness as a messenger, or as the depository of a secret, is indicative of the possession of natural firmness, if not of higher qualities, and this, together with his docility and desire for knowledge, gives great promise of his future intellectual and moral elevation when education and religious principles shall be supplied. At present, political influences are tending to free him from the yoke of priestly dominion. The civil oppression of centuries has been almost entirely removed. The Indian is admitted to the privileges of citizenship and of self-government. An important part of his natural dignity as man has been restored to him. A more important still, in the emancipation of his mind from the thralldom of Popery, is probably at hand. The most desirable and paramount blessing may even now be placed within his reach. But, of course, we cannot expect real improvement to take place, and much less that spiritual benefit should result to the Indian, unless the adequate and appointed means be used in his behalf. Las Casas, Papist as he was, has set us the example. Shall we be slow to emulate his zeal? The mind of our fellow-man thirsts for instruction, his immortal soul is dead in trespasses and sins! Dare we withhold the water of life from the one, and refuse to implore the Giver of life to impart vitality to the other?

The wandering tribes,* which the propagandist monks of the past century in vain sought to settle, also afford a field for missionary efforts. The heart of a Brainerd and of an Elliott might

* "The barbarians, or unreclaimed Indians, of Guatemala, unlike those of Sinaloa, who go in a state of perfect nudity, wear a cloth round the middle and passing between the legs. This covering, among the chiefs, is of white cotton, but the common people make it of a piece of bark, which, after being soaked for some days in a river, and then well beaten, resembles fine chamois leather, of a buff colour. They always paint themselves black, rather for the purpose of defence against mosquitoes than for ornament; a strip of white cotton is bound round the head, and in it are stuck some red feathers. Green feathers are the distinguishing marks of their chiefs and nobles. The hair flows loose upon the shoulders; the lower lip and nose are decorated with rings; they carry a bow and arrow in their hands, and have a quiver suspended from the shoulder."—Juarros, p. 194.

even now find full scope for its sanctified benevolence amongst them, in fields as worthy and in some respects far less forbidding than those to which the Lord of the vineyard directed these honoured pioneers of missionary enterprise.

Could the Christian reader contemplate, as the secure retreat of wild and wandering hordes, an extensive and bold range of forest-clad mountains losing themselves in the distance, and peering into the light and sunny clouds; could he daily behold through the clear air their unchanging and yet diversified outline, and fix his eye upon their ever-varying shades, the darker hollows and the bright spots where a naked cliff or a foaming cascade reflect the glories of a radiant sun; could he watch their majestic forms when shrouded in heavy thunder-clouds, and smitten with the forked lightning—and on every repeated occasion remember that there, beneath the thick foliage, and in the threefold gloom of savage ignorance and spiritual death, dwell timid men who shun the society of their fellows; could he live amidst the moral darkness of the already settled tribes, and witness for himself the baneful effects of popish priestcraft and idolatry upon them;—then would he feel his bowels of compassion yearn for their salvation; then his pleadings at a throne of grace would assume the character of the effectual and fervent prayer of the righteous, which availeth much.

But there are Indians who live in closer proximity to the British settlements in the Bay of Honduras, and who therefore seem to be more accessible to us. The moral condition of some of these is in many respects similar to that already spoken of, though some other tribes on the coasts have marked points of difference.

Directly to the west of Belize, and upwards of one hundred miles back into the interior, there is a Spanish-Indian town called El Peten. It is situated on an island in the midst of the Lake of Itza, and is so remote from any other town as to be more like a colony than a part of the State of Guatemala, with which it is politically connected, though ecclesiastically it is within the diocese of the bishop of Merida in Yucatan. To this place is attached some historical interest, and though a digression from the subject of the present chapter, as very little else is known concerning its inhabitants, an outline of its past history, abbreviated from Juarros,* may be desirable here.

* Our Spanish historian acknowledges having made use of "The History of the Conquest of Itza," by Don Juan de Gutierrez y Sotomayor.

"The kingdom of Yucatan (comprising the peninsula to the north and west of British Honduras) was known by the name of Maya, and its capital was called Mayapan. It was subject to a single chief, but after paying obedience to one monarch for a great number of years, the principal caciques revolted, and each declared himself independent lord of his own territory: by this rebellion the supreme sovereign was deprived of all his dominions, with the exception of the province of Mani, whither he retired, after having destroyed the large city of Mayapan, about the year 1420. One of the rebellious caciques was Canek, who headed the revolt in the province of Chichen Itza, distant about twenty leagues from the village of Tinhoó, which is at present called Merida. Canek, not considering himself sufficiently secure in this situation, retired with all his party to the most concealed and impenetrable parts of the mountains: he also took possession of the islands in the Lake of Itza, and fixed his residence in Peten, or the great island."* Here the people under Canek increased so rapidly, that according to the computation of some Franciscan missionaries who went there more than a century later, the five islands in the lake alone contained from 24,000 to 25,000 inhabitants, and the Indians who dwelt upon its borders, in the villages around it, or among the adjacent mountains, were reported to be almost innumerable. Diego Delgado, a monk of that order, lost his life among this people. One of the objects of the combined military and popish expeditions to the Chols, Mopans, and Lacandons, already related, was the ultimate conquest of this populous district, and the zeal of the Spanish monarchs in commanding the *conversion* of the Indians appears to have been somewhat quickened by the hope of opening a road from Campeche in the Gulf of Mexico to Guatemala, through this interesting territory, by which the establishment of an overland route to the Pacific was contemplated.

This project, mooted in 1692, was undertaken by Don Martin de Ursua y Arizmendi, the Governor of Yucatan. It was commenced in 1695, and slowly progressed a distance of eighty-six leagues, accompanied by some attempts to settle the so-called converted Indians. In the following year negotiations were entered into by the Governor of Guatemala, with Canek the king of

* Juarros, p. 287.

Itza and his people, under the pretence of a desire for peace. But Arizmendi, during the same year, sent forces from Campeche to the borders of the Lake of Itza, with orders to construct a galliot of forty-five feet keel and a piragua (or barge) of smaller dimensions. This order was duly executed under cover of an entrenchment. While thus engaged, a relative of Canek's, who had been his ambassador to Merida, was inveigled by the Spaniards, and professing to become a Papist, he received the name of Martin Can.

Martin Can being flattered, became communicative, and related how the Indians of Alain (one of the smaller islands) had killed on the very spot where the Spanish camp then was, the persons who came from Yucatan, and in the Savannah, those from Guatemala, whom they had surprised while asleep. A little later the camp was visited by Chamaxzulù, the cacique of Alain, with several other principal persons. A squadron of canoes was also seen approaching, that of the chief bearing a white flag; in these boats came Quincanek, first cousin of the king Canek, accompanied by Kitcan, chief of another party: all these persons were feasted, but though they came as messengers of peace, declaring that they ardently desired the friendship of the Spaniards, and wished to be made Christians, yet they were suspected, or it was judged expedient to declare war against them, and enter their territories with fire and sword, on the pretext of punishing their deceit, and avenging the death of the Spaniards.

"As soon as the vessels were equipped, Arizmendi, with 108 Spanish soldiers, and Juan Pacheco, the ecclesiastical vicar, with his deputy, embarked, leaving the camp defended by 127 soldiers and many auxiliary Indians, with two pieces of artillery, two wall pieces, and eight falconets, under the command of Juan Francisco Cortés. At dawn of day, the galliot was under sail for the island of Peten." The Indians now attempted a defence; the lake was almost covered with canoes, all directing their course towards the vessels, and as soon as they came within reach, a plentiful discharge of arrows took place. The Spaniards attributed it to miraculous interposition that none of their number were killed; only two of them were wounded. They returned the attack of the Indians with musketry, and landing, drove them off the island, greatly terrified at the report of their fire-arms. Those of the island, as well as those from the canoes, leaped into the water in such

numbers, that from Peten to the main land there was nothing to be seen but the heads of Indians, endeavouring to save themselves by swimming. The Spaniards entered the great town, called Tayasál, which they found deserted, and hoisted the Spanish colours on the highest point in the island, taking possession of it in the name of their king. This action took place on the 13th March 1697.

The island was named by the Papists "Nuestra Señora de los Remedios y San Pablo."* Juan Pacheco, the vicar, took possession of the Pagan place of worship, and having purged it with holy water, mass was celebrated in it in the presence of the assembled soldiers. "So great was the number of idols found in the twenty-one places of worship that were in the island, as well as in the private houses, that the general, officers, and soldiers, were unremittingly employed from nine o'clock in the morning until five in the afternoon in destroying them."

The few Indians, who, with the aid of Martin Can, were prevailed upon to return, were made use of in the construction of the proposed road. Chamaxzulù, the cacique of Alain, was early persuaded to submit to the Spaniards, and in his turn he influenced the king Canek and the chief priest Quincanek to come back to Peten. These persons were first treated with great kindness till the inhabitants of the various islands had submitted themselves, *when crimes were clearly proved* against them, and they were made prisoners. Arizmendi, finding himself master of the country, obtained from Guatemala the necessary funds to maintain a garrison at Peten, which he fortified. A tribe called the Coboxes, who inhabited twelve villages on the borders of the lake, with their cacique and six other villages, submitted to the Spanish yoke. The chief island was partially re-peopled. A redoubt had been built and garrisoned, and the king, his son, and his cousin, the chief priest, were in captivity; when, the rainy season having set in, Arizmendi returned to Campeche.

Early in 1698, Arizmendi received accounts from Pacheco, the vicar of Itza, of the conversion of Canek, Quincanek, and many others: who had received the "sacrament" of baptism. About this period the road was completed from the lake to Vera Paz, but it was considered too circuitous. Another and shorter route was therefore attempted to the village of San Augustin. But just then

* Our Lady of Cures and St. Paul.

the Indians suddenly and secretly abandoned the island, leaving only the three prisoners and twelve women behind them. "A few days afterwards they came back again, but only the women consented to remain in it, most of whom became converts. On the 24th of January of this year (1698), orders were again received from Spain by the viceroy of Mexico, the Governor of Guatemala, and the Governor of Yucatan, for continuing all possible efforts to effect the conversion of the natives; and that they were to endeavour to settle some of them, by families, along the line of the new road, in order to insure, at convenient distances, sufficient accommodation for travellers." Arizmendi also received royal praise, honours, and promises.

Thus stimulated, the Spanish conqueror returned to Peten in February 1699. At the same period an expedition left Guatemala for Peten, consisting of a large military force accompanied by eight missionaries, several armourers, blacksmiths, carpenters, bricklayers, caulkers, and other artisans, many Indian labourers, twenty-five families to be settled on such lands as might be found convenient, and also upwards of 1,200 head of cattle and horses for the purpose of breeding.

Arizmendi went out with pomp to meet this company, and soon after held a council of war which fixed the locality of the new town, to be founded by royal order, placing it on the margin of the lake. They agreed that thirty men should be added to the garrison, because there still remained *fifteen nations of Indians* to the eastward of Peten, to be brought under subjection; that the new road should be completed, and huts, bridges, and canoes built; and they made arrangements for the cultivation of maize wherewith to supply the new settlers. Some people were located upon the Island of Alain, which had been deserted, and others were sent to the territories of the Coboxes. Every endeavour was used to bring in the Indians who had retired to the mountains, or to persuade them, if possible, to return to their villages; and with some success. But the health of the soldiers soon after began to be impaired, and a subsequent council determined to withdraw from the territory for the present. The various companies then marched for Guatemala, taking with them the prisoners Canek, now called after his conversion Don José Pablo Canek, his son, and his cousin, who had, as it was presumed, instigated the Indians to their

recent flight. These prisoners, on their arrival, excited much interest among the inhabitants of Guatemala. How they were finally disposed of is not known. Arizmendi, on his part, withdrew with his troops to Yucatan, the government of which he shortly afterwards added to that of Itza.

After these departures, when the grand object of the road to the Pacific appears to have been finally abandoned, there still remained a garrison, under Juan Francisco Cortés, who was also governor and judge, a captain of the galliott, a surgeon, armourer, carpenter, and other mechanics, the ecclesiastical vicar, and five other priests. The population consisted, besides these, of fourteen families of Spaniards, some Indian servants, and the Indian labourers employed in cultivating the Milpas (corn-fields).

The historian adds, that in the year 1759 there were in the district of Peten seven villages, besides the chief place, which were served by five curates. Since that time it has continued to be provided with rulers from Guatemala, though the difficulty of communication has enabled such to act very much like independent sovereigns. Not many years since one of their governors was arrested by the people, and entrusted to an escort to convey him to the capital, but he was murdered by his guards while on the road. El Peten has also served Guatemala during colonial rule as a place of banishment for a certain class of offenders. At present, though the population cannot be even approximately stated, it is inhabited by Indians and some few Ladinos. The town of Peten, on the island of that name, though not extensive, is prosperous. Much cattle is raised in the savannahs around the lake, and numbers are continually driven thence by a road beyond the British limits, and along the banks of the old river to Belize, where they are sold to the mahogany cutters. The Peteneros, some of whom are wealthy, carry back from Belize quantities of manufactured goods, which they sell at Peten. Most of their communications are, however, with the interior provinces of Yucatan.

From the paucity of priests, as well as from their general character, it is probable that the inhabitants of Peten and its neighbourhood are not better instructed than those of Vera Paz and other parts of Guatemala. Such of them as visit Belize are probably a rather superior class, but even they do not present any one feature that would place them morally above those

already described. The same mildness of disposition, the same addictedness to intoxication and other vices, the same blind submission to popish rites and forms, are all apparent. And here, again, there is offered to the Christian enterprise of Britain a field for its development, which is wanting in nothing that could constitute a claim to our legitimate occupation, and the proximity of this field to our settlements calls loudly to us to make at least an effort for its evangelization.

El Peten is not only in itself an interesting field, but its history and situation combine to prove it an important outpost for missionary efforts. The Indian tribes who fled from before the Spaniards have since been driven by the English from the neighbourhood of the coast,* and have retired westward to the mountain district lying between Peten and the banks of the Usumasinta. From Peten it is probable that they might be easily reached.

Parts of the peninsula of YUCATAN are equally near to Belize, and with it there is much more commerce than with Peten. The facility of access by water is also greater, and its population of 500,000 souls at once invest it with an importance vastly superior. Its political connection with Mexico, which is so often doubtful, does not separate it from Central America, with which its territorial configuration really unites it. At any rate, it is at our door or we are upon its threshold, and its noble capital Merida, its busy ports, and its extensive plains, are thronged with immortal beings to whom we are indebted.

The moral and religious condition of this people, as far as it is known, differs in nothing that is essential from that of the Indians of Guatemala, and the picture given further on

* Writing of these fugitive tribes, Captain Henderson says (p. 26), "Not many years past, numerous tribes of hostile Indians often left their recesses in the woods for the purpose of plunder. This they often accomplished; and, if resistance were offered, not unfrequently committed the most sanguinary murders. The habitations of these people have never been traced. Their dispositions are peculiarly ferocious (?), and they are always armed with bows and arrows of curious workmanship. The latter are generally thought to be poisoned. They are without clothing of any kind, and wander over an immense extent of country but little known. The Spaniards have given to these people the general appellation of *Indios bravos*. The Indians, however, of this part of America possess little resemblance to the tribes of the more northern parts of it, having neither their personal bravery nor characteristic hardihood; and the dread of the military, whom it has been found expedient frequently to despatch in pursuit of these fugitives, has lately operated as a very effectual check to their occasional visits." [i. e. To British Honduras.]

of the state of the mixed classes there, will probably convey a pretty correct representation of the same classes in Yucatan.

Revolutions and distractions, arising from similar causes with those of Guatemala, have agitated its governments. The same contest of principles and parties still convulses all the late colonies of Spain. But here, more perhaps than anywhere else in Spanish America, the influence of the Romish priesthood is now feeble and decayed. As a proof of this, the authorities at Merida, the capital, entered into a contract, in 1844, with Mr. James Thomson, the travelling agent of the British and Foreign Bible Society, by which they purchased two thousand New Testaments in the Spanish language, for the use of their public schools. And this they did in the face of determined opposition on the part of the bishop and his clergy.

The civil war now raging in Yucatan between the Indian and the Meztizo races, and our participation in it through the authorities at Belize, has been before referred to, as well as the addition to British territories which was to have resulted. This is one among other matters connected with the movements of our government in these parts, the full results of which cannot yet be predicted. In November 1849, Colonel Fancourt, the present Superintendent of the British settlement, paid a visit to the Bay of Ascension, and, while professing to act the part of a peacemaker, the Bacalareños were furnished with English muskets wherewith to carry on the war. The precise nature or object of his personal mission there has not yet been divulged. But the general policy now pursued is enough to intimate its tendency.

One result of their intestine commotions has been, that several thousands of Indians and Ladinós sought refuge within the British limits during the two past years, and that hundreds of them died in Belize of dysentery, and of the fevers peculiar to the climate.

The Carif, or Caribbean Indian, already described,* differs essentially from all the other aboriginal races, and has little in common with them, even in a moral point of view, except in the general features of ignorance, vice, and spiritual destitution. One great distinguishing point in the condition of the Carif is, that he is not under the dominion of the Popish priest. Not that as a people they are entirely free from this

* See pages 48 and 49.

influence; many of them live within Spanish limits, some of them are settled near to Spanish towns, and such is their wandering habit, that most of them have repeatedly visited and resided more or less time at settlements so situated. Of course, the intimacy resulting from such close proximity has produced its effects in familiarizing the mind of the Carif with the outward objects and customs of Popery. It is not unusual to see a crucifix and saintly images or pictures in their dwellings, and a passing priest will even be permitted to christen some of their children. Nay, a crowd of Carif women led by one or two female Ladino devotees, have been seen joining in the prostrate adoration of an image of the Virgin in one of their own Carif villages, and mingling their voices in the idolatrous chant—

“ Ave Maria, Llena de Gracia.” *

Already have some Romish chapels and altars been erected among them: but though this people are beginning to be infected with the leaven of Romanism, they are still free from its dominion. They have no priests resident among them. They are not necessarily subject to any of their sacraments, and they may yet be preserved from these calamities, but probably only by the faithlessness of those who are at present the depositories of the Word of God.

The greatest outward barrier to improvement in the social condition of the Carif nation is the prevalence of polygamy. This is one of their ancient customs which they have retained. Some remnants of their former ceremonial practices are traceable in their manner of proceeding on the occasion of a marriage. Relics of priestly ornaments or insignia, and the semblance of an altar and a sacrifice, are still preserved among their household furniture and domestic customs, even though there is no acknowledged representation of a Deity. There is, therefore, in their case, little or nothing to overcome of the character of educational prejudice in favour of any system of error and deceit.

A direct effort for the instruction of this people has been sustained during the last ten years by Wesleyan Methodist missionaries; several of whom have resided more or less time among them at Stann Creek, one of their principal settlements within the British limits. A school taught by a native was for some time in operation there.

* I salute thee, Mary, full of grace.

But the fruits of these labours have been less abundant and satisfactory than might have been expected. The want of greater success is, at least in part, attributable to the limited period of residence of the missionaries of this connection, which either prevents the labourer from ever becoming well acquainted with his field, or removes him soon after he has gained the experience required to insure success in it. As a result of this, the language of the people, if acquired at all, is learned imperfectly, and the term of four years introduces to the station one who needs to commence where his predecessor began, and not where he left off. The consequence is, that an effort has been made to teach the Carifs and their children in what is to them a foreign language, with which many of them are very little or not at all acquainted, and wherein they want the quick perception, the ready utterance, the correct appreciation, and the strong natural attachment, which always characterize the use of a mother tongue.

The Carifs, from their intercourse with the French in their native islands, and now with the Spanish and the English, frequently possess a smattering of all these languages, or of their creole corruptions; but while their travelled and more intelligent men can make a bargain, or ask a question in these acquired idioms, the language of their mothers and sisters, of their wives and children, of their own childhood and homes, in short, the language of the heart and the affections, and consequently that of religion, as far as it can be already known to them, can be expressed only in their native dialect.

There is in the natural disposition of the Carif a buoyancy that makes him both frivolous and cheerful, active as well as voluble, and at once versatile, enthusiastic, and deficient in perseverance. His intelligence, though considerable, is surpassed by his vanity, and his thoughtlessness and want of plan is counterbalanced by his ability, energy, and dexterous execution in all kinds of physical labour. The powers of his mind have so seldom been cultivated, that it is difficult to define them. But where circumstances have favoured their development, the Carif appears to come behind no other race in mental endowment.

The intercourse which the Carifs have long maintained with the English settlers in the Bay, has hitherto been of little general benefit to them, though even as a people it is probable that they

have gained something ; individuals who have lived as servants with merchants, government officials, and mechanics, have in some cases been improved and instructed in a way which is creditable alike to the teacher and to the taught. At the same time, the Caribs have acquired facilities for indulgence in drinking, which is also their most apparent failing, and with the exception of the effort above referred to, and some limited attempts now making for their salvation and instruction in the Word of God, this tribe is also still "perishing for lack of knowledge."

The Carib villages, which are not large, but pretty numerous, generally present an animated and picturesque scene. They are invariably located by the sea-side, and are composed of thatched but well-constructed cane-houses, placed with little regard to order on the border of the forest, and frequently straggling a considerable distance along shore. The beach or water-side is the most common resort of the inhabitants. Here in the cool of the day may be seen a few athletic boatmen, repairing, launching, or hauling-up their dorees under the shade of the cocoa-nut trees, as they may be going or returning from a fishing expedition, or a visit to the town of Belize. Groups of tawny women, but partially clad, are standing up to their ankles in the water, and busily engaged in washing clothes, while they keep up a shrill and incessant clatter of animated discourse with each other or with the more distant boatmen. Numbers of almost amphibious children of various shades, scarcely less noisy than their mothers, are playing about on the shore or in the water without distinction, most of them in a perfect state of nudity, and those about ten years of age wearing only a light garment resembling a long night-shirt. Some of the boys are amusing themselves by propelling at great speed a small pit-pan proportioned to their strength, with light mahogany paddles made expressly for them by their relatives and friends, during leisure time in the mahogany works. One more daring than the rest is perhaps standing erect upon a tiny doree, with his little legs apart, holding a slight setting-pole in his hands, and by means of it pushing his miniature skiff in the very face of the advancing billow, over which he rides triumphant as it rolls and breaks upon the strand : sometimes he is ungracefully upset and disappears, but only to dive beneath the wave, right his little craft, bale it out, and

resume his precarious position upon it, to repeat the feat with better success.

Lively as such a scene may be, there is nothing in it to satisfy the mind of the reflective and benevolent, much less of him who knows something of the value of the soul and the preciousness of time. True, there are no indications of poverty or disease, and the appearance of the inhabitants is in unison with the balmy climate and the prolific soil. But those apparently joyous hearts are void of virtue as of knowledge. A brutal instinct and perverted impulses are their only guides. And we must follow them into the domestic circle, and stand beside their dying bed, in order rightly to appreciate the destitution of their moral condition.

The most degraded class of Indians in Central America are those composing the Mosquito nation.* Under this name is included the Waikna, the Poyer, and the Towkas tribes. The two last, though more numerous, are in subjection to the first, to whom they pay an annual tribute consisting of a certain number of heads of cattle, and they are even more barbarous than the Waiknas.

Never having been completely under foreign yoke, the Mosquitomen, in common with the other wild Indians, have retained their independence, traditions, and customs. Consequently, polygamy prevails to a great extent among them, most men having from two to six wives, and the chiefs a greater number. But though it might be expected that some form of idol worship would also be retained by them, they are among the rare exceptions which savage life affords where an acknowledged deity is entirely wanting. Not even a name for God has yet been found in their language. There are, however, traces of demon worship, or rather of efforts to placate an evil spirit, whom they call *Wulasha*. There is, connected with this belief, an appropriate order of priesthood or sorcerers. The *Sukia*, a kind of Fetish, acts both the conjuror and the doctor, at the same time that he professes to derive all power from the Evil One, his acknowledged master. *Wulasha* professedly shares in the reward which the *Sukias* obtain for their cures and deceptions. His half of the stipulated price is exacted beforehand, the payment of the other half depending very much upon the *Sukia's* success. The first instalment is, however,

* See page 50.

absolutely necessary to the undertaking, so that the Sukias secure a fee whether successful or not. Their remedies consist of herbs which they select, probably with some practical knowledge of their virtues; for even among the Waiknas deception is not wholly separated from science and truth. The first application is somewhat homœopathic, the herbs being merely placed under the patient's pillow. If the mere odour does not effect a cure, the simples are then put into a bag and boiled, and a draught of the decoction is next administered. Fomentations of the diseased part with this liquid follow, and on the failure of all these means, a plentiful application of cold water douches, somewhat after the manner of Russian baths,* is the last resort. If still unrelieved, the complaint is declared incurable. The demon priesthood is regarded with profound veneration, and the Sukias necessarily possess considerable influence with the rest of the people, upon whose credulity they subsist.

The Mosquito women, who are considered delicate and handsome, though their lords have small pretensions to any distinction of the kind, are frequently espoused while infants, and are married at the early age of ten or twelve years. When about to give birth to their children, "a habitation is prepared for them in the deepest recesses of the woods, to which they retire with a female assistant, and where they remain secluded from every eye for a stated period. This past, a public lustration of themselves and offspring must take place previous to their being again admitted to the society of their friends and relatives."† Evidences of absence of natural affection common to the heathen are not wanting here. "It is a matter understood and constantly practised among the Mosquito women, that if a child be born with any defect, it may not live, lest the defect become a nick-name or a bye-word in their family."‡ Any person who is supposed to be dying, either from age or disease, is at once forsaken by all those relatives and friends whose presence might tend to soothe and alleviate the last struggle. They are left to die alone, untended, and even exposed to be devoured by wild beasts, reptiles, and vermin, before they can

* The Indians of the interior are accustomed in their maladies, first to provoke a profuse perspiration in a sort of oven, erected at the side of a stream, and then, when sufficiently baked, they suddenly rush out of the oven and immerse themselves in the cold water.

† Captain Henderson's Account, p. 244.

‡ Speech of Mr. Alexander Henderson, London, October 7, 1847.

expire of want or of disease. Thus the unnatural parent in his turn is requited by the child he has brought up, and in this way are the ties of relationship and the calls of humanity alike disregarded.

With the Mosquito men, as with the Indians generally, drunkenness is the most apparent vice. They are but too well supplied with the means of indulging in this fearful propensity, by the English and North American traders who frequent their coast, and who barter rum, &c. &c. for tortoiseshell and other articles. When, however, they cannot obtain the imported spirits, or when they assemble to celebrate a native feast, they have a method of preparing strong drink, which is peculiarly their own; a custom which is invested with all that veneration which attaches to antiquity. A large quantity of ripe fruit, consisting of pine-apples, sugar-cane, bananas, &c. &c. is first provided. A doree or canoe is then carefully cleaned out. A selection of six or eight women is next made, in which a good state of the teeth would appear to be one of the most necessary conditions. At least their powers of mastication are soon put to the test, for they are required to chew the fruit, and then empty it into the doree. Their saliva being a powerful dissolvent, an active fermentation immediately takes place, and before they have well done masticating the fruit, a boatful of strongly intoxicating drink is ready for the consumption of the party, nor does the revel cease till the boat is quite empty, and the liquor all consumed.

That the Mosquito men will readily take the life of a fellow-creature, is evinced by the frequency with which they murder the Spanish Indians who come in their way, and the little account they take of the deed. They are also known to be given to crimes referred to in the first chapter of Paul's Epistle to the Romans.

From these few details, the reader may be enabled to form some idea of the character and condition of the Mosquito tribes. Of this people our Government has thought proper to make use for political and selfish ends, without making the least effort for their moral or even for their physical improvement. Among their chiefs they have distributed commissions, with the uniforms belonging to the military rank conferred upon them; and besides the care taken of the royal family and notables, presents have annually been distributed among them, by direction from the higher autho-

rities, in the name of the British monarch, and at the expense of the British people,—presents consisting, in part, of spirits, and which, in their present state, could only inflame their vanity, minister to their bad passions, and facilitate the indulgence of their vices. These tribes are now under *our protection*. And it may be asked, what is the real benefit which they or we derive from the connection ?

Several travellers have recorded that there exists among the Mosquito Indians an old traditionary prophecy purporting that their deliverance from the dark-complexioned Spaniard was to come from "the *gray-eyed man*." Without any evidence as to the origin or even the prevalence of such a tradition, the circumstances of the Mosquito nation make it at least suspicious that this has originated with their gray-eyed protectors, and the more so that they are not, and never were, under the dominion of the dark-eyed Castilian.* By one writer, this tradition is referred to the subdued tribes of the interior, to whom it would certainly apply with more propriety. But be this as it may, the mysterious influence of a heathen oracle can add little of real interest, and less of obligation, to the work to which as Christians, and as British Christians, we are specially called, with respect to our degraded protégé.

The only English missionary, and probably the only missionary of the Gospel of any nation that ever yet visited the Mosquito Shore, was Mr. James Pilley, a Wesleyan, who, between the years 1830 and 1833, endured great sufferings among the Waiknas, and changed his residence three times. It is frequently related of this worthy man, that, when at Cape Gracias a Dios, he assembled the natives on several successive occasions, and addressed them on the best themes in the English language. Accustomed to pay deference to the gray-eyed man, they sat under Mr. Pilley's preaching with exemplary docility, and a decorum that would do honour to a more cultivated audience. At length, one of their leaders arose, in the midst of the sermon, and addressed the preacher in the name of the rest in broken English ; of which he possessed some knowledge,

* We would not be understood to insinuate that this prophecy has had anything to do with the new name recently given to the Port of San Juan de Nicaragua (*i. e.* Grey Town); but we would remind those who are disposed to attach any importance to the prognostic, that gray eyes are common to the entire Anglo-Saxon race, and that the fulfilment may be reserved for our trans-Atlantic descendants, who are even now taking a lively interest in Central America, and who may also step before us in occupying that mission field, unless we are found faithful.

though not enough to enable him to follow the thread of Mr. Pilley's discourse. The purport of this characteristic Waikna harangue was, that they had come repeatedly and sat patiently before Mr. Pilley, who had all the talk to himself, and he had never yet once offered them a glass of grog! upon which the indignant spokesman walked out of the house, followed by the entire native congregation. Thus terminated Mr. Pilley's mission at this place. He was afterwards made useful at Blewfields to a few English Creoles and a family of Poyesian emigrants. Thence he removed to Bragman's Bluff, where he suffered great privations with his family.*

It will be seen further on, that a missionary and his wife destined for the Mosquito Shore, both died at Belize in 1825. Also, that the Waikna language has now been reduced to writing, and the first portion of the New Testament translated. It remains with us to decide whether or not our efforts for this benighted people shall stop here. It remains for us to prove to all the Indian tribes that we regard them as brethren, as fellow-immortals, and as included in the commission of our Lord Jesus Christ.

* "The King's residence is in the interior; and, when on the coast, he is generally intoxicated. His subjects are a drunken, turbulent, dissatisfied race. After assassinating his father and his brother, whom he succeeds, they have lately laid a plot to despatch him also. It is generally reported by persons who have been acquainted with the Mosquito Shore for many years, that these Indians have degenerated much since they first knew them."

"The Gospel appears to be the only means of preventing the different tribes from becoming extinct, by destroying the licentious habits to which they are ever falling victims."

"The Indians stand in the greatest dread of the powers of darkness. An epidemic prevailed . . . nearly all were sick, and many died. They said it was *Devil-country*; they must all remove."

"There is scarcely an exception to a drunkard among the Indians in the whole country."—*Mr. J. Pilley's Letters*, 1833.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE MIXED CLASSES.

Opposite forms of Hypocrisy—Relative Proportions of Races—Rise and Separation of the Ladinos—Exclusiveness of the Whites—General Moral Gloom—*Infidelity*, its spread and prevalence—Its Mission in the Destruction of Popery—Advantageous Season for the Introduction of the Gospel—Priestly Unbelief and Enormities—Their Effects—Infidel Conformity—Fanatical Adherents of the Church of Rome—*Superstition*, its remaining forms—*Messes*—Simultaneous Adoration of the Wafer-god—"La Oracion"—Forms of Speech—Public Amusements—Processions—Corpus Christi—Night Scene—Periodical and occasional Observances—Domestic Ceremonies, Christenings, Confirmations, Marriages, Deaths, and Funerals—Domestic Altars—"Nacimientos"—"Novenas," occasions for mirth—More sedate Devotees—An Anecdote—Morbid Excitement—"Calvarios," or Golgothas—The Charnel-house of Taltic—Varieties of Images—Their Effects—The Remedy.

"Take heed and beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees."—Matth. xvi. 6.

HUMAN nature, though presented under an infinite variety of forms, is in every one, and under all circumstances, essentially the same. This is equally true of society as it is of individuals. In every region, under every degree of culture or barbarism, and during every epoch, the same general features of beauty and deformity have been developed in man. It is especially in the spirit and tendency of assimilated and sympathizing classes that the universal features of society may be traced.

At that period, when the remedial element was first practically introduced into the world—when Divine life and perfection were manifested in the person of Christ, and truth and holiness were permanently planted in human soil—the social body to which it was primarily applied was rent and divided by two opposing factions, professing antagonistic systems of belief. The Pharisees and the Sadducees of the Jewish people are a type of the superstitious and the sceptical classes of other nations and of other times,

which like them have arisen out of perversions and abuses of the truth.

So opposite and apparently different are the spirit and tendencies of these two sects, that many are ready to regard them as having no one point of affinity or contact; and had not the Saviour himself coupled them together, and pointed out the oneness of that leaven that ferments in both, few had dared to assert it.

Those who pretend to believe too little, and those who profess to believe too much, alike assume a garb that belongs not to them. Both are counterfeits of faith and virtue, and affect a name to cover inward disaffection to the truth. The spirit of hypocrisy is equally displayed in each of these extreme forms, and they still prove their identity and essential oneness by invariably joining to oppose the Gospel, as their Jewish representatives united to crucify the Lord of Glory when they could unite in nothing else.

Hypocrisy, under the twofold forms of Popish bigotry and Voltairian scepticism, will be found to have leavened Central American society, and more particularly those classes of it whose moral condition is about to be considered.

In addition to the natural consequences and moral effects of events now become matters of history, society in Central America has been, and still is, necessarily influenced by the mixed character of the materials that compose it. Three-fifths of the people consist of pure Indians, who have been described as only now about beginning to rise above their late physical oppression. The proportion which the Europeans and Africans (the only two remaining unmixed races) bear together to the whole population, is scarcely more than one-twentieth. Among the Mestizo races, the Ladinos have been estimated at one-fourth, while the Mulattoes and Sambos unitedly do not amount to one-fiftieth part. So that, while the Indians and the Ladinos comprise nearly seven-eighths, and the Europeans, Africans, Mulattoes, and Sambos little more than one-eighth of the entire population, the United Mestizos of every description, together with the Europeans and Africans, include only two-fifths, which are here treated of together, and as contradistinguished only from the aboriginal Indians.

From the above comparison, it is apparent that whatever may have been the influence of the white man over his red and black fellows, so soon as the coloured races, whether pure or mixed, shall have

become possessed of the superior knowledge which has hitherto distinguished only him, that influence must cease to be predominant. Should the tide of emigration shortly flow from the north to the south, as it may be expected to do, the whites will be supported by an influx of numbers for some time to come; though it is evident that the new world, where alone the several races of mankind are now in contact with each other, is destined to be the field where the various distinctions of the human family will first be fused and amalgamated, so as to form one common fraternity, in which diversity of caste and prejudices of colour shall be alike unknown.

Preponderating numbers in favour of the Indians still constitute them the substratum of society in Central America, and were it not for the peculiar position which the white man holds, all besides, though included in one division, could establish but a secondary claim in point of importance. But the moral degradation of the Indian, rather than the superiority of the European and his descendants, turns the scale, and the palm of predominance in power and influence must still be awarded to the latter. These mixed classes are at present the most accessible to missionary efforts. In other respects, it is questionable whether their condition offers any great advantages over that of the Indians, as respects the reception of the truth. Let the reader himself judge of the peculiar features in which they differ.

The haughty and oppressive bearing of the ancient Spaniards towards the Indians, must be taken into account in order to form a correct estimate of the kind of education and standing which their mutual children enjoyed. As a natural consequence of this hauteur, the Ladinos grew up more Indian than European in their manners, prejudices, and ideas. Such a result was also promoted by the supposed difference of rank, and by the existence of peculiar circumstances tending to separate the noble, the military, or the monkish progenitor and his half-Indian offspring. Thus, instead of drawing together the two races by their mutual connection, a third class was created, upon whom the unmixed and better educated descendant of the Spanish Don looked down with a feeling of superiority; and though children by one father, and sons of the same soil, there was little of real sympathy existing between them. As years rolled on, even the ties of consanguinity were almost en-

tirely lost sight of, and the division of the children of the Spaniard into two distinct classes was gradually confirmed.

This unhappy schism in the body politic has proved the scourge of Central America since its independence. These two classes, ranged under the political banners of the servile and liberal parties, have wasted their mutual energies in bitter and murderous hostilities, and unless some new element be introduced into the constitution of society there, it seems probable that the two exhausted factions will ere long be set aside by another composed of the Indian race, over whom both could agree to tyrannize, even while they disagreed in most other respects.

The Ladino class, exempt from the grosser kinds of oppression practised upon the Indian, was soon distinguished by a superior energy and intelligence, which is ever the parent of its own increase. Few, if any, facilities were afforded to them in the way of education. They, however, shared more largely than the Indians in the attentions of the priests, who, accustomed to view them as more troublesome and difficult to manage than the former, were not the less alive to the attractions which their greater enterprise and consequent influence and wealth conferred upon them. Much of the knowledge and skill in mechanical arts which was departing from the Indians was caught up and preserved by their Ladino descendants, who, vastly outnumbering their Spanish progenitors, soon filled the towns, or occupied a place in them analogous to that now filled by the middling classes in European cities. Under these circumstances, they were brought into closer contact with the still dominant families of their white ancestors. Individuals of the class were admitted into the universities, and in their progress soon manifested the extent of those talents with which God had liberally endowed them.

On the other hand, the Sangre Azules (blue-bloods), presuming upon their real and supposed advantages of wealth, rank, and colour, greatly neglected the superior opportunities for improvement which they enjoyed, and contented themselves with lording it over the rising Ladinos, and oppressing still more the down-trodden and dejected Indians.

To none of these classes were the moral and spiritual conquests of the rest of the world available, for they were at once the subjects of Spain and the vassals of Rome. But the day of political freedom

has already dawned upon them, and the hour of religious liberty cannot be remote.

It has been seen how the independence of Central America suddenly admitted some of that light which colonial policy would have excluded; and that with it came a flood of infidelity for the eager reception of which the minds of all who were not dormant had been long preparing. The more intelligent of every class drank freely into the new ideas, and all the active mind of the nation was more or less affected by the leaven of infidelity, not even excepting that of the priesthood itself.

Infidelity stands in the same relation to Popery which the most extravagant notions of socialism and communism sustain with respect to despotic power. And, though on a widely different scale, scepticism is to revealed religion what the wildest political theories are to right principles of government. The prevalence of either extreme may be regarded, not only as a presage to the overthrow of its opposite, but, if opportunities be duly improved, as a token of the triumph of that truth which is equally opposed to both.

The rejection of all religious faith, though so great an evil in itself, when let loose upon a thoroughly priest-ridden community, may, by the overruling providence of God, prove an instrument of good. It is destructive of the iron power with which it mingles, but with which it cannot combine, and the most subtly-devised system of priestcraft invariably falls before it. It restores to a natural action the dormant powers of the human mind, which priestly manipulations have mesmerized, and over which priestmen love to exercise control, by calling into activity only the passions and the faculties which can be made subservient to their own interests; and while it relieves the victims of fanaticism from the spell with which they were bound, it breaks up the prejudices of education, leads to thought and inquiry, and sometimes it has been known to end in a sincere and earnest search after truth. It is true that, influenced by the natural depravity of his heart, man immediately and invariably abuses his restored faculties; but though something more than human is required to counteract that depravity, to restore the equipoise of his disordered passions, to sanctify them, and to bring him back to God, yet by means of infidelity he may be brought back to the normal condition of his species, to a state that admits of his being reasoned with, and in

which the voice of conscience resumes its suspended functions. The Gospel of Jesus Christ brought home to the heart by the power of the Holy Spirit can alone regenerate the soul, and the operation of the Divine energy thus exercised is not limited to any condition of the mind; but, humanly speaking, there is more hope of a sceptic than of a bigot. The one is accessible to the proclamation of the truth, whilst the other is prepossessed against it, and will not open his outward ears, much less his mind and heart, to its reception. If unbelievers may be compared to stray sheep perversely wandering further and further from the fold, fanatical zealots are more like the same sheep already in the jaws of the destroyer. It is well known that Papists, having delivered up their consciences into the keeping of another, who may be a wolf in sheep's clothing, reduce themselves to think only by proxy in the great matters of their salvation, and are "like the deaf adder that stoppeth her ear, which will not hearken to the voice of charmers, be the charmer never so cunning." The change from Popery, or any analogous system, to the entire rejection of revealed religion, is one which believers in Divine Revelation may hail with satisfaction, if they be but prepared to take advantage of it; for an advantage is indubitably afforded to the friends of truth. It is a battle in which the faithful have no need to fight, but they do need to "set themselves, and stand still that they may see the salvation of Jehovah with them," for if found in such a posture Jehovah will be with them, and when opposing errors shall have neutralized each other, effectual doors of access to the mind will be opened, and, with the spiritual blessing from on high, the truth will be victorious, the human heart will be subdued, and their faithfulness will be rewarded with ample and enduring spoil.

In the contest that has actually been waged during more than a quarter of a century in Central America, infidelity has demonstrated the weakness of Popery. After being the instrument of destruction to the native idolatry, that system has in its turn been well nigh superseded by another, charged with the mission of its destruction—a mission now rapidly accomplishing in the annihilation of the faith of Rome. And inasmuch as infidelity directly attacks the moral structure, addressing itself to the mind, and leaving the outward forms to crumble in neglect, its work, though in itself more arduous, will be far more fully and rapidly accomplished than that

which Popery undertook by first destroying the idols and temples of the Indians, and then forcing upon them, at the point of the sword, an idolatry somewhat more refined, but so much the less adapted to their rude condition. If left to itself, there is little doubt that scepticism will ultimately destroy the foe with which it has grappled in Central America, at least as effectually as Popery has overcome the native superstitions there. But though the minds of the people must be emancipated by the change, that emancipation can be viewed only as a state of transition, for man cannot live without some form of religion, and human society requires some kind of faith as surely as the family circle supposes a bond of affection; it can, therefore, be regarded as a real good, only as the opportunity is improved for the substitution of a system that will build up as well as destroy—a faith that will prove a messenger of life as well as an angel of death—a religion that will produce fruits unto holiness, even the fruits of the Spirit, which are love, joy, peace, &c. Unless such a belief be substituted, the victory of infidelity over Popery will prove to be the transition only from one state of moral wretchedness and spiritual death to another, and will leave the unoccupied minds of the people a ready prey to the very next cunningly-devised system of falsehood which may be presented to them by the arch deceiver, who, returning to his former abode, will find it swept and garnished for his reception, and re-entering it with some other deceptions more ruinous than the former, the last state of that people will be worse than the first.

Of the fact that infidelity has spread extensively in Central America, and particularly so in the very classes upon which Romanism used to have the strongest hold, there can be no doubt. It is proved by the almost universal abandonment of the outward observances of Popery by the better educated among the Ladinos, and, in spite of their political tendencies, by the whites and the pure creoles also, when such omissions do not entail a greater sacrifice. With the exception of the more weak among the women and children, scarcely any of these classes are now to be seen attending mass and confession, and other requirements are generally neglected by them. The number of infidel works imported, and displayed in every book-case, are constantly found in the hands of men, women, and children, and afford another evidence of the fact that infidelity

prevails. So strongly are the minds of these classes imbued with deistical and even atheistical notions, that it becomes apparent in general conversation, and is unblushingly avowed even by mothers in the presence of their children. Nay, some of the more candid among the priests openly espouse these notions, and yet it interferes not with their offices in the church, nor in the least impedes the discharge of their sacerdotal functions. One of these, a native of the country, well known to the author, has frequently discussed such subjects with him, in the presence of others, and has even ridiculed the pretended authority of the Pope, exposed the dogmas and practices of his church, and rejoiced in the tokens of impatience manifested by the people under its intolerable burdens.*

Nor are the ecclesiastics who immigrate from other countries always free from this leaven. The author once presented a Spanish Bible to a priest lately from Spain, on his arrival at the port of Yzabal. The Padre expressed himself much gratified by the present, declared it was the first Bible he had ever seen in his native tongue (it is very doubtful if he knew any other), and to testify his gratitude, he drew out of his portmanteau a copy of Voltaire's *Candide*, of which he begged the author's acceptance. With such examples before them, it is not to be wondered at that the people are not afraid to read infidel books though strictly prohibited, and that they readily adopt their contents, which are so congenial to the natural corruption and depraved tastes of the unsanctified heart.

The sketch already given of the political acts of the Liberal party in Central America, is of itself proof sufficient of the prevalence of opinions inimical to fanaticism, and doubtless the amount of opposition to Popery implied in those acts must have increased during their operation, and in the period of political reaction which has followed.

It cannot be supposed that the insidious leaven of unbelief is confined to the better taught classes, though it is certainly most prevalent among them. Some of their ideas would of necessity

* An elderly female died at Guatemala who had absolutely refused to confess, to receive the last "sacrament," or even to see the padre, and she left the world obstinately *impénitente*. The same priest related the circumstance to the author, and, rubbing his hands with evident satisfaction, remarked, "See how the poor people are beginning to be awakened, and refuse to be imposed upon any more."

spread to the more intelligent artisans and labourers, and though less cultivated and informed, the people generally are placed in a position to see and feel, even better than their superiors in learning, the extortionary and licentious character of the priesthood of their own land. Those most gifted with common sense draw their conclusions from such practical premises even more unerringly than the others could do from the most logical arguments; and disaffection to the priests, and consequently to the system which supports them, has spread among the middling classes and even beyond them, though there is much less of positive, systematic, or professed infidelity with them. The chief counteracting elements in their case are the practical corruptions, excesses, and extortions of the system itself, which they have now learned to distrust, and will soon entirely repudiate.

How far this disaffection extends can be known only by a long residence, and even then in but an imperfect manner. Of its existence there is no want of evidence. The history of the past, the testimony of those who have lately visited the country, and events actually transpiring, shew that Roman Catholicism—whatever may be its prospects elsewhere—has even now lost its hold upon the great bulk of active minds in this part of Spanish America. Popery is here fast falling before the light of that civilization and those liberal institutions which have been borrowed from countries already somewhat leavened with Bible morality and truth. It is undermined by its own supporters and votaries, and the feeble attacks of an indiscriminating scepticism may suffice at any hour to complete its ruin. The first blows aimed at its political existence have been given, and given in an unequivocal manner, nor have they missed their aim. The subsequent and the last blows will be all the easier to inflict, and the infliction may not be far distant. Shall we wait till the ruin of one kind of error occurs, before we endeavour to impart the truth which alone can calm the agitated mind? Shall we stand aloof and refuse to pour in the wine and oil of the Gospel to heal its wounds, because errors are weakening each other, and a more decisive crisis may result? Or shall we at once use the influence that we possess, and step in between the dying and the dead to stay further contagion, and apply to the extent of our ability the means of God's appointed mercy. If encouragement is needed to stir up the disciple of the compassionate

Jesus to obey his Lord's command and to follow in his footsteps, that encouragement is to be found in the preparedness of all classes to throw off their allegiance to the spiritual Babylon, and, among other systems, to consider the claims of the Gospel of the Son of God.

The shameless immorality of the Romish clergy has been pointed out as a chief agent in bringing about the present state of things. On this subject a simple record of daily occurrences would revolt every sense of decency, and scarcely obtain the credence of the English reader. Let it suffice to say, generally, that there is no crime in the blackest catalogue which the Scriptures afford us, and no known extreme exhibition of human depravity, of which the clergy in Central America do not afford some examples; and that the habitual conduct they pursue—with but few exceptions—is such as would subject them to the heaviest penalties of the criminal laws of any other country. They are shielded from the deserved punishment of their crimes in Central America only by the existence of the “*Fuero Eclesiastico*,” which confers upon them the privilege of being tried by the Ecclesiastical Court, and exempts them from every other tribunal. The author has heard it openly asserted by a priest in the capital, that there was then (in 1846) scarcely a single vicar, curate, or priest of any kind, in all the Archbishopric of Guatemala, who had not one or more cases of a criminal nature filed against him in the “*Cabildo Eclesiastico*,” and not a few of them had eight or ten. The majority of these accusations are for offences of a libidinous character; rape, adultery, and unnatural crimes being among the number. Cases of seduction and of refusal to support illegitimate offspring are so common as to be thought quite venial. But these *religious* functionaries are not even suspended for such offences. Many of them, with little or no disguise, retain one or more concubines, often living, together with their children,* in the ‘*Cóvento*,’ the curate’s residence, generally attached to the church, and into which formerly no woman was allowed to enter. They indulge to excess in eating and drinking; they gamble, riot, revel, use blasphemous, profane,

* “About 1830, a law was passed declaring that the illegitimate children of all priests should succeed to their father’s property, in the same manner as if they were legitimate—a law which is still in force. By the laws of Spain, adopted by Central America, the whole of a man’s property must be equally divided among his family, and he can leave nothing to any other person, provided he has legitimate children. Thus it would appear that concubinage is legally authorized to the clergy, though marriage is prohibited.”—Dunlop’s Central America, p. 161.

and lewd language ; they extort exorbitant fees, exact unjust and excessive services, and grind the faces of the poor. All this they may do with impunity, but if they should shew the least symptom of independence of action with respect to the forms, doctrines, or authority of the Church, the offence is followed by their immediate suspension and speedy punishment. Some, however, as it has been shown, are permitted to acknowledge themselves utterly unbelieving, and are tolerated in the utmost license as far as mere words go. In such cases nothing is sacred, and little care is taken to secure privacy, but not a jot is bated of the most complete subjection in point of action, and the most servile submission to the power of "the Beast" is scrupulously enforced.

In the sacerdotal ranks are always to be found salient specimens of the different forms which character and position give to criminality. There may be seen the haughty intriguing prelate and his equally ambitious, but less successful rivals, strikingly exemplifying envy, hatred, malice, and all uncharitableness. There are also to be found ravening wolves sustaining the two-fold character of army chaplains and guerilla chieftains, who are not even careful to retain the clothing of the sheep—the Guardias and the Malespins of the Church—there are not wanting in almost infinite variety, the tyrannical, the avaricious, the licentious, and the intemperate curates, down to that poor drivelling sot in rusty cassock and long shovel-hat, become lustrous with use, who with staggering steps daily reels from door to door through the streets of the capital, craving an alms wherewith to purchase aguardiente (rum), in order to restore him from the horrors which the alms of the faithful, given on the previous day, have produced. This he asks for the sake of "Maria Santissima" (most holy Mary), and in the name of our holy mother church! Nor is the injurious pittance often withheld, though given probably more out of fear than love, or even the interested desire to acquire merit.

Who can wonder that both the untaught artisan, and the more polished descendant of a European race, have learned to execrate in their hearts the system that daily affords them such spectacles as these? To the more thoughtful among both these classes it has long been given to see the hideous deformity of Popery, which be it remembered, like its teachers and rulers, has never worn the mask in this remote region which is so indispensable in more refined so-

ciety.* Prompted by a natural curiosity, greatly stimulated by the authoritative prohibition of the Pope, all who could do so have procured precisely those books which most openly attack the Popedom—a catalogue of which is conveniently furnished them by the Holy See itself.† They have familiarized themselves with the works of Voltaire, Rousseau, Volney, La Place, and others of that class. They have studied their contents, till led step by step, with various degrees of progress, they have passed on from deism to atheism and a general scepticism, down to its last earthly stage of bitter misanthropy and gloomy despair. In them is fully verified the inspired description given in Romans i. 22,—“Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools.” Nor could their actual condition be described in few words in any way so suitably as by referring the reader to the remaining part of that humiliating chapter, which is especially applicable to the clergy.

It is a characteristic of which infidelity partakes in common with other systems of falsehood, that while the judgment is affected and the tastes are influenced, neither are decidedly changed. It is a distinguishing feature in truth, that it not only discovers error, but destroys it. Thus faith in falsehood is often inefficacious, while the belief of the truth can remove mountains. The true believer in Christ is at once brought under the sway of His principles; but the advocate of a false system—and especially the sceptic or the professor of doubt—remains unchanged by his opinions, and often conforms to and supports the practices that he professes to condemn. This is the case to some

* A Spanish Roman Catholic gentleman of education, and some acquaintance with European society, was sent to Guatemala on an important mission in the year 1843. He took with him a letter of recommendation from the Romish Bishop in London to the highest ecclesiastical dignitaries of Central America, and he had with him authenticated accounts of the spread of Popery in England, and of some modern miracles wrought in the highest circles of English, or perhaps Irish, nobility. Before passing the threshold of Central America, he was, to all appearance, a sincere and devoted adherent to the faith of his fathers. His mission lasted from three to four months. Before leaving its shores, his spontaneous declaration to the author was, “Do not speak to me any more of Roman Catholicism; you will never hear me take its defence again. *I have seen enough.*” He also added, not knowing that he used a Scriptural metaphor, “Popery is the heart of this people, and it is corrupted. Until they have it removed, and a new one substituted, there is no hope for them.” This testimony is the more weighty that the individual gave no evidence of being himself converted.

† The list of prohibited books and passages ordered to be expunged by “the Congregation of the Index,” bodied with the Pope’s sanction, has been reprinted at Guatemala and was included in an ecclesiastical edict fulminated against the Bible as late as 1843.

extent with the infidels of Central America. They are frequently to be found lending their countenance to Popery under the specious and hypocritical pretext, that, though not good for them, some sort of belief is requisite as a means whereby to control the more ignorant classes of the people. In this kind of insincerity the more simple-minded, who have rejected the claims of Popery from detestation of the conduct of its priesthood, participate to a much less extent. Yet they also frequently conform at least to some of its outward observances, because wanting in that firm principle and uncompromising integrity of heart which only a lively faith in Divine truth—which cannot be separated from the love of it—will produce in the naturally flexible and unfaithful heart of man.

Apart from the political and pecuniary influence which adheres to the Church as a sort of national establishment, its only remaining prop consists of a still large though rapidly decreasing class of blind bigots and fanatical zealots, whose reason for this subserviency—if reason may be once named in conjunction with such—it would be difficult indeed to define. But the attempt need not be made, as the same class exists in every society, and is well known by the same features that distinguish it here, viz., eagerness to vociferate to the echo any and every cry which an endangered craft may raise, and readiness tumultuously to come together at every call of evil, though the greater part are in general utterly ignorant of the cause, and it would often be difficult to assign one. The influence of the mass of minds buried in this class operates for the most part only passively. It is one of the mountain difficulties in the way of evangelizing the people. Every individual in that class is, however, capable of being transformed into an active agent for that evangelization. At present, under the direction and with the active co-operation of their priests, together with the supineness and indifference of their opponents, they keep their native country in a state of political turmoil and commotion; they sustain the delusion and snare of Popery, and they dishearten the friends of civil and religious liberty, who have so often been foiled by their means.

Thus, while the upheavings of society, and many significant indications upon its surface, point to the speedy overthrow of the system that has predominated for three centuries—a system that has tyrannised, morally and spiritually, far more than

even the Spanish monarchy could do in a physical sense—there is yet, to the superficial observer, a general submission and conformity to the Church of Rome, and a servile deference paid to its clergy. But while the exhibitions of unity and agreement are, in some particular instances, singularly general and constant, yet it is maintained that they are so only in outward form and appearance. And if it be urged that Popery asks no more,—it is replied, that under these appearances are actively at work all the elements of opposition before alluded to, and that it requires only some political change, and perhaps but one more vigorous blow, to precipitate the lofty scaffolding, and lay it level with the ground.

Perhaps no country still preserves on the face of society, or rather on the outward manners and language of the people, more complete and systematic forms of subjection to Popery, the universality of which in some measure compensates for the very general want of inward respect which is felt in their observance. Of course these are confined to brief and easy performances, which imply little or no sacrifice—at least the general submission is confined to such.

From four o'clock in the morning till noon of every day, mass is said or sung successively at different churches in a settled rotation. The most laborious classes, inferior household servants, and the most zealous devotees, may be seen at that early hour issuing from their habitations, devoutly crossing themselves, or rather their mouths, with the thumb of their right hand, as they step into the street. Fifteen or twenty minutes spent standing, kneeling, or squatting down upon the flag pavement of the church, the hand dipped in the stone vessel of holy-water near the door, and a few or a great many more crossings, according to the taste of each one, complete the devotional preparation for the duties of the day. Still, the attendance is but scanty. It is mostly composed of women and children; and the gray and brown habits of aged professed devotees, with gigantic scapulars covering their breasts and hanging below their waists, generally predominate. As the day advances, the *Doñas* and *Señoritas*, in their dark coloured "Pollieras" (silk dresses) and rich lace veils, followed by their waiting-maids, wearing black silk mantillas, succeed the former occupants of the cold pavement, and bow and count their beads before a gilded shrine, while the full-toned organ and the trained choristers do

their best to conjure up devotional feelings by means of sweet and solemn sounds. A few young men—students or clerks—wrapped in the ample folds of a Spanish cloak, may be seen standing aloof, but their attention is more frequently engrossed by the light and graceful forms that are bending before them, than by the motions of the priest at the altar, or the magnificent ornaments of the place. The mass which is attended by the troops with the military band is the most frequented, though many have a favourite priest, a father confessor, or one who gets rapidly through the ceremony, to whom they give the preference. Hitherto, but few of the people have been engaged. Perhaps not more than one-tenth of the population enter the thirty churches and chapels of the city of Guatemala, from early matins to the latest mass.

About ten in the morning, when high mass is sung at the cathedral, all the inhabitants of the capital give themselves to a simultaneous act of worship. At the moment when the priest at the altar lifts or waves the "Hostia" (the consecrated wafer called god, and about to be sacrificed by him), the persons present in the body of the edifice prostrate themselves in an attitude of adoration. A bell then tolls to announce the fact to those outside. As soon as its sound strikes upon their ears, the people in the streets immediately stop, uncover themselves, and turning towards the cathedral, mutter a short form of adoration to the wafer god. Every vehicle is arrested in its progress, and even the noisy muleteer refrains from driving and cursing his mules, to unite with the women and children of every rank who are already kneeling on the pavements around him. Persons in their own houses, buyers and sellers in the merchants' stores in the marketplace or at the Mezon, artizans at their work, and statesmen in their cabinet, all suspend their occupation for a moment, and having repeated the form, or appeared to do so, resume their avocations, or take up the thread of their discourse, with that unmoved indifference which shews it to be at once a habitual act and a mere outward form.*

* The following is an extract from the Journal of an English mercantile visitor:—"July 2, 1825.—Called this forenoon at the store of Souner —. Whilst there, the bell of the cathedral chimed. There were six or seven persons present besides ourselves; they all dropped most devoutly upon their knees, in which posture they remained two or three minutes; but, as an evidence that this is a mere mechanical operation—a sort of automaton evolution in which the mind has no share—one of the clerks, who was sitting at the desk on-

This custom is observed in every town and village where mass is daily celebrated ; and vain and puerile as it may appear in itself, it is a constantly recurring memorial of the subjection of the people's minds. It is a practical acknowledgment of a false and a material deity, and, as such, it is an open, an impious, and a daring provocation of the God of the spirits of all flesh.

Nonconformity to this custom has hitherto been considered dangerous. The foreigner who should refuse to stand and to remove his hat at least, if found in the street, must by so doing attract attention, and expose himself at any time to become the victim of the first murderous villain who might think proper to resent the insult. Yet it has been braved, and as the influence of the priesthood declines, and the number of foreigners to whom it may be distasteful is augmented, the imminence of this risk will, of course, also decrease.

A second daily act of simultaneous worship, though of a more domestic and less universal character, takes place at the hour of sunset, therefore called "La Oracion," or the hour of prayer. The more elderly women, the younger children, most of the domestics of each household, and sometimes some of the men, withdraw to an apartment, a sort of inner hall, or inferior sitting room, in which there are one or more crucifixes, and some images and pictures of the virgin and saints. Before one of these, which occupies a kind of altar, are arranged bouquets of flowers, and a lighted candle is kept burning, perhaps, during a part, or all of the day, but more particularly at this hour. The domestic group stand or kneel around in a semicircle. One of the dames generally leads off by rapidly repeating or chanting a kind of litany to which the rest respond at intervals, using vain repetitions, and addressing a multitude of supposed intercessors with "Ora pro nobis." The creed and other forms are repeated. The virgin is again and again saluted and addressed, and the usual number of empty sounds having been uttered, the family salute each other with a sonorous 'Buenas Noches' (good-night), the children approach their parents and any other elderly persons present, who place their hands upon the

gaged in writing, in place of quitting what he was about, got upon his knees upon the top of the stool, and continued his operations. This is not the only instance of the most disgusting levity displayed by persons whilst engaged in what they call prayer."—*Memoir of James Wilson*, p. 111.

crown of their heads in token of benediction, and the devotions of the day are concluded.

So prevalent is this practice, that while merely passing along the streets during the short tropical twilight, the murmur of united voices is heard to proceed from every house, and the hum of these misdirected prayers fills the whole city.

The servant who first brings lighted candles into the room occupied by the family, repeats as she enters with them, in a drawling tone, "Bendito y alabado sea el Santo Sacramento del altar" (blessed and praised be the holy sacrament of the altar), to which the inmates are supposed to make a characteristic response—now, however, generally discontinued.

Besides these daily observances, there are others less frequent or periodically regular in their occurrence, but no less fixed and recognised customs, which are significant only of the remaining power of the priests, or continue as mere vestiges of their former absolute and unlimited sway.

Many modes of speech which universally prevail are not less striking, and also demonstrate that the outward forms and profession of Popery have yet to be supplanted. The name of God is seldom long out of the mouth of any Central American, and is most frequent in all his exclamations. Among multiplied compliments the Divine protection and blessing is often invoked. The name of "*Jesus*," mostly united with that of "*Maria*," has become a common interjection, and is constantly reiterated. When any vexatious circumstance occurs, however trivial, it is usual to say "*Sea por Dios*," which is equivalent to *let it be for God's sake*, but really meaning no more than *it cannot be helped*. This saying probably had its origin in the idea of meritorious endurance, and used to be a sort of reminder to the recording angel to put down the passing pang to the credit side of the sufferer's running account. The most prevalent form of thanks is "*Dios se lo pague*," *God repay you*, and the first greeting as well as the last farewell is "*¡ Dios*," or (I commend you) *to God*. If an engagement is made, it is invariably "*Si Dios quiere*," *God willing*; and if a bond is entered into, there is always a verbal proviso expressed by the words "*Primero Dios*," meaning if my *previous duty to God* should permit. "*Dios sobre todo*," *God over all*, is one of the most frequently repeated proverbs, where proverbial sayings are by no means

sparingly used. In short, though their custom in these respects conveys a practical rebuke to many who really love and revere the name of the Most High, yet it cannot be questioned that on all these, and on many other occasions not enumerated here, they habitually and carelessly break the third commandment. And, as might be expected from such, we find the extreme of superstition accompanying this profaneness, for, at other times, they use the very same expressions as though they supposed them to possess virtue in themselves, and still more dishonour the sacred name of the Divinity, by employing it for a charm, or muttering it as an incantation.

Strong and conclusive as the evidence yielded by these facts must be as to the real condition of the people, it will be observed that it is far more decided on the score of impiety and formalism than on that of Popery; and those who have observed the force of long habit upon a people, and know the unwillingness with which such customs are abandoned, will attach no undue weight to their continued prevalence. It is an undeniable fact that some English customs and forms of speech, still in general use and acceptance, have their origin in the ancient Popery of Britain, and date further back than the Reformation of the 16th century.

It is not to be expected that these observances, any more than the galas, processions, and imagery of the system, should be among the first things to decay or to be thrown aside. On the contrary, they seem likely from their very nature to fall among its latest ruins.

The public diversions of the people have hitherto been confined to the feasts and celebrations of the Church; and even the few really national festivities have, by the cunning craftiness of the clergy, been mixed up with their ceremonies and closely associated with the Church of Rome.

The principal annual ecclesiastical feast is that of "Corpus Christi" (the body of Christ), occurring about the month of June. On this occasion a profane mimicry of the death and resurrection of our Lord is performed, and for several successive days, processions and pageants take place. In every town and village altars are erected, and gaily or richly adorned with images, vases, artificial flowers, and looking-glasses, at the corners of the streets and of the public squares. These are frequently connected by covered ways

or arched bowers, decorated with the luxuriant verdure peculiar to the country. The chief point of the diversion consists in a contest for the supposed body of our Lord, carried on between Jews, Moors, and Devils (with their faces blackened), on the one hand; and on the other by the three Marys, the twelve Apostles, and a company of Angels, who, personified by living persons (often chorister boys in appropriate disguise), or represented by decorated images, may be seen flying up and down the streets in hot pursuit, fighting with each other, and frolicking, to the great amusement of the spectators and to the special delight of little children. All finally unite in good harmony, and march with the priests,—sacred banners, crucifixes, wax candles, images of the saints, and other paraphernalia, succeeded by troops with a military band, and followed by the crowd. Thus they proceed along the canopied path from altar to altar, at each of which a short mass is sung. From the grated balconies of every house are hung large scarlet cloths, and pure white streamers interspersed with the national flag. Within the capacious windows are companies of wealthy citizens and their families, who devoutly kneel as the procession approaches. Others, less favourably placed, are gathered in companies at the corners of the intersecting streets. These also adore while the priestly train passes; and ladies, dressed in rich velvets and costly laces, are not the last to lift their gowns and kneel upon the pavements before this at once pompous and ridiculous puppet-show.*

* "On the day set apart for the festivity, the shops are closed and business suspended. About ten o'clock the procession commences from the cathedral. A troop of military, marching to a slow tune, lead the way; and are followed by six of the finest Indian girls that can be procured, bearing large wax candles, and dressed in the ancient costumes of their tribes, accompanied by the great drum, carried on the back of an Indian, and beaten by two others. These are succeeded by men bearing on their shoulders wooden platforms, on which are placed images of saints. Other representations of beatified cardinals and bishops follow, escorted by angels with spreading wings. Then succeeds an immense statue of St. Peter, bearing the keys, and supported by angels on each side. Other images pass forward in succession, and immediately precede the Host, which is carried under a splendid canopy, and accompanied by the archbishop and the dignified clergy. The various orders of friars, the priests, and the collegiate students, in their robes, follow; and fresh images of saints and angels, with a new troop of military, bring up the rear. . . . The setting out and return to the cathedral are notified by frequent discharges of sky-rockets."—Dunn's Guatemala, p. 114.

The colossal angels are dressed up in satins, &c., after a most tawdry manner, so as greatly to resemble ballet-dancers. This good work is undertaken by ladies of rank, who

Similar exhibitions take place, with sundry variations as to circumstances, at different times, but occurring frequently during the year. Unlike the former, they are mostly confined to one or two days, as before intimated, and all have the never-failing accompaniment of sky-rockets and ringing of bells. Sometimes a grand display of fireworks at night concludes the "fiesta." The appointed place, generally a large square, then presents much the appearance of an open fair, the assembled crowds attracting venders of refreshments, &c. There are also generally a few booths erected at the expense of the church, and decorated with a very primitive imitation of theatrical scenery. Around these the waiting crowds assemble till the curtain is drawn, and presents to view certain persons grotesquely disguised and painted or masked (generally, however, confined to a man and a woman), who immediately commence repeating in an awkward manner a dialogue, probably indited by a native priest, in which the merits of some particular saint are discussed with excessive eulogy. Sometimes this is done in verse which is not always above mediocrity, and it may be that notice is taken of some passing political event. These exhibitions are called "*Loas*," from *loar*, to praise, or "*Sainetes*," a name given to sacred dramas. The dialogue is generally soon ended, and the gaping crowd—composed of thousands of tawny Indians, and darker or lighter shaded Ladinos, Sambos, and Mulattoes, interspersed with white Doñas and Dons—turn to the more lively and less injurious display of artificial fireworks. The tawdry procession, with its lofty banners, &c., moves slowly amid innumerable lights, and the military bands lend their charms to a scene which is well calculated to intoxicate the mind and to deceive an ignorant populace, or even their better instructed rulers themselves. But the voice of conscience within must sometimes speak and testify that all this is vanity, and that, politically and religiously, it is but a means of deception and a badge of servitude. The very moon in the pure firmament, as it shines placidly and clearly, or struggles upwards amidst the snow-white clouds, enters a dignified protest against the noisy and frivolous scene below. On such occasions, the great Creator leaves not Himself without a witness; for, though all else were without significance, "the heavens declare the

expend large sums in clothing the naked block, if it be but to save their own credit, as these destitute angels are known while the fête lasts by the names of their respective Dorences.

glory of God," and though the language of the celestial bodies is little heeded, "their words go out to the end of the world," and their untiring witness cannot be perverted.

There is also a profane imitation of the Saviour riding upon an ass, on Palm Sunday, and many other like observances of days and events. But besides these more stated occasions, there are constantly recurring jubilees and missions at different parish churches, or the processions of nuns at some of the convents, and other occasional pretexts for ceremonies, with their consequent idleness and dissipation. Only at such times, and on certain specified Sundays, is there any *preaching*, which is confined to one place at a time, and generally draws together some of the wealthy classes. The orators tax themselves to produce extravagant panegyrics and coarse adulation of the particular saint whose day it is, and they freely dispense unfounded legends of the wildest character, mixed up with distorted scripture facts, and uncertain traditions. The various churches take it in turn to exhibit the consecrated wafer upon the high altar on the Sunday afternoon, which being duly announced in the almanacks, as well as by the clangour of many bells and the sharp report of sky-rockets, is the occasion of an evening lounge, and gives an opportunity of meeting acquaintances. It is common to hear persons say, "Let us go and visit *Nuestro Amo*" (our Master), meaning the wafer—and having bent the knee before the altar, they retire outside and walk about, or converse with others who have done likewise.

The missions, which are preachings of the monks or emissaries of the Propaganda, are more particularly directed to the grossly criminal, and the theme most insisted upon is, repentance, or rather *penance*. The result sometimes is, that a crowd of professing penitents is assembled, which frequently includes the same individuals year after year; and they are marched bare-footed in a sort of triumphal procession led by their teachers, bearing upon their shoulders heavy wooden crosses or large stones, with which they ascend some eminence, and otherwise exhibit their meritorious contrition and powers of endurance.

Domestic occasions for religious ceremonies and feasts are not few. Christenings are made the occasion of much display and indulgence. The sponsors, who according to their sex are called *Padrinos* and *Madrinas*, contract a singular kind of relationship, which is considered indissoluble, and stronger than consanguinity

itself. According to canon law, they are precluded from ever intermarrying. They are therefore allowed the familiarity of near relations, and always designate each other *Compadre* and *Comadre*. They are really considered as a sort of guardian to the child they undertake to answer for; but in a temporal sense. If the child become an orphan, they will almost universally take it as their own. If wealthy, they are expected to make it handsome presents. Any other obligations are purely nominal or imaginary.

Confirmation, with singular consistency, is here conferred or practised upon *infants*, or at least little children. Indeed, it may be done at any time after the christening that the parents think fit to carry their offspring to the bishop, and give the usual fees and offerings—in which a large wax candle—more or less refined and ornamented, according to the rank of the offerer—occupies a conspicuous place. This alone is a considerable source of revenue to the Cathedral, as the same candles, when accumulated, are again sold to the persons who deal in them, who resell them and purchase them back again from the Church, so as to suggest the idea of a perpetual circulation of unlighted wax candles, but that they are probably at last lit, and at least partially consumed at some procession or funeral. First-communion, marriages, and funerals, are here attended with nearly the same religious rites and observances as in other Popish countries. *Civil* marriage has indeed been instituted by law, but very few have had the moral courage to avail themselves of it, as it is generally looked upon with an evil eye. The cases that have occurred are almost exclusively those of foreigners, mostly Protestants—moving in the higher circles—who have married native ladies. When the servile government has been in power, it has been impossible to take advantage of the liberal provisions of the law, and the only resource of persons so circumstanced has been to contract marriage under the auspices of some other country, having the ceremony performed and recorded at the Consular office by its national representative. Great inconvenience has already arisen, for want of a decided and permanent rule of action in this respect. Some nominal Protestants have been known to profess Romanism to obviate the difficulties, some in the lower ranks of society have lived in the entire neglect of a recognised marriage, others of more principle have been debarred from marrying with a native, and some native ladies have suffered materially for their union with worthy foreigners who refused to apostatise.

The customs of the country with respect to the burial of the dead are somewhat singular. In most parts, except the larger cities and British Honduras, coffins are dispensed with, and the corpse is carried upon an open litter. If it be that of a child, the cortège assumes the appearance of merriment and rejoicing. The body is decked with gay clothing and adorned with flowers, and the company in their best attire march at a brisk pace, preceded by violins and other musical instruments, and not unfrequently by a *feu-de-joie*, so as to resemble a village bridal party rather than a funeral. This apparent want of feeling and manifest departure from good taste, is a consequence of the Romish doctrine of baptismal regeneration, and is defended on the plea that the departed soul being in heaven, there is more cause for happiness than for grief. It is one of those methods by which the arch-deceiver would drown the voice of God speaking to survivors in a solemn Providence, assisting the careless to put away all serious thoughts of death by affording them an opportunity to indulge in frivolities, if not in dissipation.

In the case of adult persons, if a priest can be procured, the Viaticum is sent for as soon as danger is apparent; an altar is then quickly erected in the sick chamber and dressed with images, crucifix, lighted candles, and flowers, a place being left to be occupied by the "Costodia," the vessel (generally of gold, and richly jewelled) in which the consecrated wafer is exhibited. The Padre then makes his way to the house, bearing this idolized object, preceded by a bell, and accompanied by ministers and chorister boys with lighted tapers in their hands. As he passes along the streets, various signs of adoration are paid to the wafer god.

The bed of the dying is generally surrounded by mistaken friends, who, without regard to the state of mind or even to the total unconsciousness of the expiring one, repeat at short intervals sentences in which the names of the Saviour or of the Virgin occur, such as "Jesus te ampara," "Jesus te auxilie," "Maria te favoresca,"* and then, as they suppose the spirit to be taking its flight, reiterate close to the perhaps unconscious ear—"Jesus Jesus, Jesus," till they indicate their knowledge that the struggle is over, by a loud burst of wailing and protracted shrieks of unrestrained and boisterous grief.

* Jesus protect thee—Jesus help thee—Mary favour thee.

In the more rural districts, something very similar to an Irish wake follows, when the wildest demonstrations of mirth and sorrow intermingled with the greatest excesses of every kind, are freely indulged in.

Among the more refined inhabitants of the capital, there is one custom accompanying funerals which is worthy of record. When the unadorned coffin, covered with black velvet, has been removed from between the gigantic tapers which cast a pale glare upon it in the sombre apartment, it is followed by a long train of friends on foot, bearing lighted tapers in their hands from the house to the church, and thence to the cemetery. Many join the cortège while on its way, some stand without the church, while the priests chant their requiem, which, if the family is able to pay for it, may be done by the Archbishop himself, whose clumsy carriage, drawn by four white mules, is in that case seen standing near the church, attracting a group of children, and fixing the gaze of passing Indians. When the corpse has been deposited in its niche or vault, and the half consumed wax-tapers have been carefully collected by the thrifty sacristan (beadle), the friends return slowly and in groups to the house of mourning, where the chief mourner has remained, and is now awaiting to receive them in a large room or hall hung with black cloth, at one end of which he sits, supported on his right and left by two near kinsmen or special friends. The guests silently sit before him for a few minutes on seats which are placed for them on either side of the room, and having thus manifested their participation in the grief of the family, they rise one after another, gently press the hand of the chief-mourner, and, if they are intimate friends, they perhaps add a word or two of condolence. They then retire, and are succeeded by others in like manner, till all the attendants at the funeral have thus expressed their sympathy with the bereaved.

There are two periods of the popish year, viz., Easter and Christmas, when the houses of many of all classes are thrown open to the public for the display of domestic altars. These are erected in one of the larger halls of the spacious mansions of the rich, or in the best room of the humbler cottages of the poor. They are, of course, richly and gorgeously, if not tastefully adorned, often at a great expense. The images and candlesticks are sometimes of massive plate; the former are frequently placed under glass

globes or shades, with artificial flowers and other ornaments. The whole is generally richly embossed in a living frame of luxuriant verdure, where the exotic (there the European) and native flowers blend their sweets, and contrast their beautiful forms and tints. Among these are intertwined garlands and clusters of rich fruits; golden oranges strung together; pine-apples, pomegranates, coyols, and both the flower and the elegant and luscious fruit of the graceful granadilla (the passion flower).

When the supposed natal day of the Lord Jesus is the occasion, the altar assumes a somewhat different character, and takes the name of a "Nacimiento," or *birth*. The images then introduced are those of "the Virgin Mary" and "Saint Joseph," and not unfrequently of "our Lord Saint Juaquin" and "our Lady Saint Ana," who, as the accredited grandfather and grandmother of our Lord, are entitled to be present at this event. The centre is occupied by the image of a babe, to which the other personages, and sometimes the Three Eastern Kings (as they are called), are paying adoration. The rest of the altar, which sometimes extends many square yards, affords scope for the imagination and taste of the designer, and presents every variety of landscape—hill and dale, water, forests, flocks, shepherds, &c. &c.; in short, anything or everything. Sometimes a huge but beautiful model of the well laid out city of Guatemala has been introduced, and the expense of this pseudo-ecclesiastical panorama has in many cases run up to hundreds of dollars. The framework of leaves, fruits, and flowers, is seldom omitted, as the fruits at least have a part assigned them in the closing scene. The less occupied and the more curious at such times spend whole days in going from house to house to visit "Los Altares," to gaze at the arrangements and criticise the taste or the want of it, and the wealth or the tinselled poverty displayed, perhaps, with equal vanity, and certainly with very little devotion.

In the evening, when the gaze of the public has been excluded, the family, mostly the female part of it, and a company of privileged friends assemble before the altar, and spend about twenty minutes in chanting prayers and litanies with responses, perhaps accompanied by a young Don upon his guitar, and by another, or one of the young ladies, at the pianoforte. The music to which they sing their devotions is sometimes that of quadrilles or operas—This over, they rise from their knees, or a recumbent posture, to

spend the remaining hours of the evening in youthful games—cards, chess, forfeits, music and dancing, or a general romp, occupy them till it is time to retire. In these “pasatiempos” (pastimes) some favourite priest or monkish visitor not unfrequently takes an active part. These mingled devotions and amusements are repeated for *nine* successive evenings, and from this circumstance the whole is called a “Novena.” On the last evening a greater degree of festivity is indulged in: wine, liqueurs, orgeat, and other refreshments are provided, and the altar is then dismantled of its garlands and rows and clusters of fruit which are religiously consumed by the devotees.

Novenas like these are more or less frequent on other occasions in professedly devout families, especially where there are many young ladies. In this manner do they try to dissipate the *ennui* and remorse which novel reading, a life without an object, and a heart without God, invariably produce.

Some who cannot be taken, or are already cloyed with trifles such as these, or being of a naturally sedate or melancholy turn, make an effort to appease the voice of conscience, and to sustain a self-righteous hope, by scrupulous attention to the requirements of the Church, by a parsimonious hoarding of merit, and by an eager pursuit of plenary indulgences, which are promised to those who attend certain ceremonies, inflict certain penances upon themselves, or perform certain good offices. Not a few have been led to hope well of their condition, because of the morbid excitement of their feelings, produced by their own works or by outward and sensible objects. An example of the latter description, related of a devout lady in Guatemala, also points out one of the distinguishing phases of Central American popery. In all the metropolitan parish churches there are images of the Saviour upon the cross, as large as life, which, by the skill of the sculptor, and with the aid of red paint, are unsightly objects, calculated to excite feelings of horror and of disgust. To one of these, which was pre-eminently hideous, would this lady frequently repair, and place herself before the image, gazing upon it, for a shorter or a longer time, till such feelings were aroused, when she would rise and depart, satisfied with herself and inwardly complacent, imagining that, because she felt thus, she must indeed be very religious, and consequently acceptable to God. On one occasion, while returning home in this



self-satisfied mood, she met a drove of unladen mules, the back of one of these poor creatures was laid open by a large, irritated, and suppurating sore, produced by the friction of its burden, by no means an uncommon sight in Guatemala. This object suddenly renewed, in the most lively manner, all the emotions that had so lately been experienced at the foot of the Cross, and by so doing at once dispelled the pleasing illusion under which the self-righteous devotee had long nourished her false confidence. She could no longer believe that to be a meritorious religious feeling, which was more readily excited by the sufferings of a brute than by the contemplation of the image of the crucified.

This anecdote lays bare one of the leading snares of this cunningly-devised system, which has doubtless proved fatal to many. There are, in the adornments of every popish church, as well as in its ceremonies, some things calculated to excite the animal or natural feelings independently of the heart and mind, or which reach the mind, if at all, only through the avenues of the natural sensibilities. The religion of Heaven, as it is revealed in the sacred Scriptures, has this distinctive character, that it touches the feelings by first convincing the understanding and enlisting the affections of the heart, and never appeals to the mind through the inferior channel of the mere animal feelings. That cannot be otherwise than spiritually common and unclean which is made a moral ailment, without first undergoing this complicated process of mental digestion. The animals which were denominated *clean* under the Levitical law were such as "chewed the cud" and "divided the hoof." The spiritual worshipper needs to beware of an unclean reception of his nourishment, at the same time that he takes heed to his footprints that they be those of the flock.

No one can glance, however cursorily, at the images and paintings common in Central America, but they must be struck with their horrifying character. Even those exposed in the public thoroughfares are frequently of this stamp. Every town and village has a church or chapel somewhere in its neighbourhood, generally situated upon an eminence, which is called "El Calvario" (the Calvary). Here the most hideous images are kept, blasphemous imitations of the Saviour's passion are occasionally performed, and the very architectural adornments of the building consist of the instruments of torture and death which are either

mentioned in the record of the Saviour's passion, or have been imagined by some gloomy and fanatical mind, fertile only in horrors, itself the appropriate nursing of the system it supports.

These Calvarios certainly have some affinities with the spot once designated Golgotha, or the "place of a skull," though they cannot be further removed than they are from the hallowed associations of the closing scene of the Redeemer's sufferings—that scene which reveals at once the consummation of human depravity in the perpetration of the greatest crime, and the concentration of Divine love in the bestowment of a full free pardon upon his repentant murderers, and that, too, by the imputed merits of him who expiated their guilt by the very means and in the very act that constituted its climax.

Wandering one evening in the outskirts of a large village scattered along one of the temperate valleys of Vera Paz, the author followed a broad and well kept path which led him to an inconsiderable hill, around which the road wound in a spiral form. On its summit, from which there was an extensive prospect, stood a large barnlike building, well thatched and stockaded. After reviewing the long rows of neat Indian houses composing the straggling township, and gazing at the valley, its majestic boundaries, and its serene sky, he turned to ascertain what this place might be upon which much care had evidently been bestowed. The door of the building was imperfectly fastened, with a slight push it was partially opened, and by the light thus admitted he was enabled to perceive a number of large crosses, amounting to at least a score, reclining against the sides of the house. Upon each cross was a wooden figure imperfectly sculptured, and as large, if not larger, than the human form. They were all inexpressibly shocking to behold, representing the distorted state of a crucified body, and abundantly besmeared with red paint. A hasty glance into this charnel-house produced a thrill of horror. This was the Calvario of Taltic, to which frequent processions from the parish church are made, and these images, alas! are the only manifestation of the cross of Christ which is exhibited to the unhappy inhabitants of that beautiful valley.

But such things are not confined to the churches. Unnatural, shocking, and ludicrous images are often met with in the houses of the people, especially those of the poorer classes. The paintings and

carved images everywhere encountered are sometimes fine specimens of art, but they are far more frequently rude, uncouth, and ridiculous objects. Now and then, as already hinted, a gaudily dressed doll of European manufacture, precisely such as the children of the wealthy play with in England, is stuck up upon an altar, or placed under a glass case, and having received one of the names applied to the deified woman, has prayers addressed to it, and is styled the most Holy Virgin, the Mother of God, the Saviour of Sinners, the Patroness of the Faithful, and receives many more such blasphemous and extravagant titles. A lighted candle generally burns before it, especially in times of tribulation or drought, or when something has been lost, in the hope that the Virgin may cause it speedily to be found. So that these dolls and images occupy precisely the same place in the houses and minds of the Central American papists, that the rice idols and the deformed images of Krishnu and the thousands of other idols worshipped in the East, occupy in the minds of the poor Hindoos or of the pagoda-loving Birmans.

Notwithstanding this variety, the horrible is still found to predominate in the popish imagery and paintings of Central America, and together with other things, more practical, yet to be related, prove it to be a system of cruelty which seeks to cultivate in man the basest and most malignant of his earth-born passions. And even where the degree of refinement may be supposed to place the devotee above this influence, we have seen that it is calculated to deceive by exciting mere natural feelings, and producing a morbid sensibility subversive of reason, and equally destructive to the soul.

Who can compute the amount of positive evil which must result from familiarizing the eye of a whole people, from childhood to old age, with objects such as these? Who can estimate the no less positive as well as negative evils caused by the absence in these communities of the simple-minded, cheerful, wise, holy, and loving disciples of Christ, who bear his moral image; his only representatives and authorized witnesses? Who can sum up all the accursed influences which flow from these united causes, together with all the other baneful effects of popish superstition, infidel licence, and uncorrected natural depravity?

We cannot fully appreciate the extent of the moral disease of

which we recognise the symptoms ; but we do know of a remedy, and it is in our power to apply it at once. In what has already passed under the notice of the reader, there is enough to stir up, not the mere animal sensibilities of his nature, but, if rightly viewed and felt, to awaken, so that they shall never slumber again, the deeper sympathies of his heart and the nobler energies of his mind. If his bowels of compassion already yearn in some degree, as the Saviour's pity wept over a world lying in the wicked one, let him draw encouragement to turn his well-grounded feelings into prayers and into action, from the fact that the mind of the people for whom he is concerned is already in a moral condition analogous to that which the Jewish nation manifested when their Messiah came. A fact in which the finger of God may be seen clearly pointing to it as a field already ripe unto the harvest.

Jesus Christ is God's Messiah to the Indians, the Meztizos, the white and the African population of Central America, as well as to the Jews. The disease from which they are suffering is the same that afflicted that more highly favoured nation. Their minds are even now in a transition state, and must once more receive a right or a wrong impulse. It rests with the reader to decide whether or not *he* will make an effort—an effort which cannot be lost—to deliver them from the power of Satan, to win them to God, to arrest and correct that unholy ferment of mind and evil passions which springs from conflicting errors, to rescue them from the mazes of doubt, and from gloomy superstitions, the exact counterpart of "the leaven of the Pharisees, which is hypocrisy."

CHAPTER XIV.

GENERAL ASPECT.

Cruelty connected with Error—Its prevalence and cure—*Education* withheld—The people thirst for it—Spanish learning—A point of *Theology*—Female Education—*Literati*—Primary Schools—Amount and manner of instruction—Barbarity of Teachers—Statistics of Schools in the Capital (1824)—Attempted Reform—Present condition and effects—Prevailing desire for Teachers—Prospects of success—Out-door Education—Sabbath instructions—The Bull-ring—*Cruelty of Popery*—Effects of Absolution—Amusements—Juvenile training to the knife—Annual loss by murder—Venality of Judges—"Lamas"—General licentiousness—Inefficacy of Popery to correct it—Encouragements to introduce the Gospel—Danger of Nonconformity—Nunneries—The Manic Nun—Miracle-working image of Esquipulas—Earth eating—Prevalence of Madness and Idiotcy—Ideas of Protestantism—Theatricals—Papal Bulls and Indulgences at a discount—Conclusion.

"The dark places of the earth are full of the habitations of cruelty."—Psalm lxxiv. 20.

If benignity is the most appropriate expression of delight in that Being who is light and love, cruelty must be the form of worship and the badge of servitude most congenial to the demons of darkness. Who, then, can wonder at the fact that the precincts of their peculiar dominion are "full of the habitations of cruelty?"

That cruelty was a distinguishing characteristic in the condition of the Indian tribes in Central America before its subjugation, is sufficiently manifest from the sanguinary nature of their idolatry, the slavish condition of their teeming millions, and the haughty aristocratic spirit pervading their ruling classes, their social institutions, and their laws. That cruelty marked the Spanish conquest, rule, and policy in that land, few will gainsay. That the history of its independence from a foreign yoke has largely participated in the same hideous feature of moral deformity exemplified in the conduct of the natives towards each other, is but too apparent, and, together with much that has been already related of the present condition of the people, leads to the conclusion that Satan reigns with undiminished power in Central America. But it is only on viewing as a whole its social, moral, and spiritual condition in the light of the Bible, that the mind can be prepared to admit its full claim to the melancholy

designation of one among the pre-eminently "dark places of the earth."

In the facts yet to be brought before the reader's notice in this closing chapter, he will perceive that the moral gloom still brooding over that hitherto uncleared field of missionary enterprise, is far deeper than the shades which cover vast portions of its virgin soil; that the cruelty of man towards his fellow is there found to surpass that of the most ferocious beasts of prey or of the most deadly reptiles of its impenetrable jungles; while the spiritual death that reigns is infinitely deeper and more horrifying still. The only assignable reason is, that the powers of darkness have there held undisturbed possession from time immemorial, as if in an impregnable stronghold. Let the reader decide whether or not this state of things shall continue, or rather, whether he will contribute to the blessedness that shall be realized, when, according to the word of Jehovah, "they shall not hurt nor destroy in all his holy mountain,"—when "the mountains and the hills shall break forth into singing, and all the trees of the field shall clap their hands;"—when, "instead of the thorn shall come up the fir-tree, and instead of the briar shall come up the myrtle tree: and it shall be to Jehovah for a name, for an everlasting sign that shall not be cut off."*

In contemplating as a whole the various races and classes composing Central American society, the education of youth naturally presents itself as a primary topic. The exemplary attention of the ancient Indians to this important branch of domestic and social duty, doubtless arose from a high appreciation of what little science they possessed. This feature still characterizes them in their degradation, and a general love of learning prevails to a surprising extent among all ranks and conditions of the community. The obstacles that have hitherto existed to the spread of useful knowledge, have been chiefly such as the people in general did not control, and their progress in these matters has been retarded, and the means of promoting it circumscribed, by those who should have stimulated the desire, facilitated the opportunity, and supplied the requisite materials. Instead of promoting study and importing books, the Spaniards did all they could do to confine literary advantages to the privileged few, and the Inquisition was ever vigilant to prevent the introduction or circulation of any scientific works whatever. It is

* Isaiah lv. 12, 13.

therefore no marvel that the people are generally ignorant, notwithstanding the estimation in which they hold that knowledge which has been withheld from them; and when the reader is apprised of the quality and character of that education which has been put within the reach of only a few, he will rather wonder that any portion of the people ever attained to what they are, and he will probably be led to regard it as strong corroborative proof of the ardour of that thirst after information which distinguishes them.

Under the Spanish régime the education of the most highly favoured was confined to a few ill-selected subjects, in which they were imperfectly instructed by monks and friars, at private houses, in their own cells, or under the auspices of the more ostentatious university of San Carlos. From such teachers, the sons of the Spanish Dons, who were probably the least eager to be taught, received that amount of tuition which would entitle them to the degrees of "Bachiller," "Licenciado," or "Doctor," in philosophy, in laws, in theology, and in canons.

The only professions open to them were the ecclesiastical, the legal, or the medical. All their studies were, of course, more or less tinged with the gloom of the cloister, and infested with the leaven of hypocrisy. The great majority of students were wholly taken up with ecclesiastical topics, and the larger proportion of the time of all was wasted in the dark mazes of mysticism. There was at times a class in which the sacred Scriptures were professedly examined; in it the Latin text was read, but discussion was, of course, out of the question, and the comments of the learned "Catedratico," or professor—mostly a friar or priest—must be received without examination. One of the subtleties of the canon law, discussed in this university as late as the year 1844, has engaged much attention in the Church of Rome, and is still among disputed points, though involving a practical difficulty likely from its nature to be of frequent recurrence. It at once affords a specimen of the disgusting puerilities to which the wise of this world will condescend, an example of the grovelling tendency of so-called theological studies, and a proof of the folly which is involved in the idolatry of the wafer. The difficulty which popes, cardinals, prelates, and councils, have been unable to solve, and which is therefore set before the student as an open matter for his pious inquiry, is the following:—When the consecrated wafer has been administered to a sick or dying person, in the sacra-

ment of extreme unction, and the stomach of the patient happens to reject the deified morsel, what is to be done with it? Of course, their God must not be profaned; and the expedient usual in the other cases, where the priest himself is bound to swallow the holy thing, is not palatable in this instance. The Church in its infallibility is unable to provide for this very natural contingency, and thus, to any sane mind, the folly, the wickedness, and the deceit of the whole system are strikingly exposed.

Notwithstanding the unpromising nature of their studies, there have sprung up from among the privileged classes, many men of talent and general information, and even a few of learning and genius, whose names are known to Central America, though not to the world. Some of the leading statesmen and principal actors in the late revolutions, Ladinos as well as pure creoles, were men of no ordinary ability and acquirements.

The female branches of the same families have been hitherto almost entirely excluded from any participation in the knowledge of letters. Formerly it was a rarity that any of them should be initiated even in the art of reading, but writing was systematically denied them, to prevent its abuse, and even to this day there are not wanting in Guatemala examples of the same prudential line of policy, and specimens of antique "Chapetones,"* who openly admit and defend it, on the plea that their daughters are thereby prevented from writing *billets-doux* to favoured admirers and nocturnal serenaders. The wife and daughters of the wealthy have therefore been shut up to the practical study of domestic economy, embroidery, making artificial flowers, and latterly, playing upon the pianoforte, an instrument which is already found in the house of almost every thriving citizen in the capital.

Many of these ladies, and, indeed, some of their more favoured lords and brothers, are utterly unconscious of the grammatical rules of their own beautiful language; and so grossly ignorant are they of the geography of the earth, that the more learned visitor has often been astounded by questions in which Spain was confounded with all Europe, or the latter regarded as a province of the former. Capitals and countries, with the names of which they are necessarily familiar, they frequently interchange and confuse, and the relative distances between Central America and other lands, the configura-

* A local name applied to Spanish immigrants.

tion of their native country, of the American continent, or even the shape of the earth itself, are often utterly ignored.

Notions equally vague, and assertions quite as crude, are unblushingly put forth on historical subjects—sacred as well as profane. In matters of taste they frequently excel, and in lineal drawing, and even in painting, some of the ladies have attained to considerable proficiency.* The want of intellectual culture does not prevent them from assuming somewhat refined manners. They mostly have a music master, and are not wanting either in vocal or in instrumental powers. They dress elegantly, talk politely, smoke their *cigarito*† gracefully, and it may be, read novels, and cultivate romantic notions, during a great part of the day, or at least at the hour of “La Siesta.” They are animated, intelligent, and con-

* Cabrera, a native artist, is universally acknowledged to be a first-rate portrait and miniature painter. There are other masters of less note, and also some able sculptors and carvers in wood.

† The habit of smoking, though universally recognised and designated a vice, or rather *the vice* (*El Vicio*) prevails, without exception, in every class of society, and is practised from childhood to old age. The use of *purros* or cigars, is mostly confined to the males, but the greater number, and *almost* all the females, prefer the *cigarito*. This is made of a small quantity of tobacco, cut very small, and neatly rolled up in a piece of *ansa*, the envelope or outside husk of the ear of Indian corn (a few use unsized paper). The manufacture of the *cigarito* is a domestic affair. Mothers, wives, sisters, and even cousins, when well disposed, make them with their own hands, and supply them in small bundles of fifties or hundreds to the honoured consumers. Every lady, while sitting at work, has by her side a painted calabash or small basket, both of Indian workmanship, containing the requisite tobacco and prepared tusas, which she rolls up with dexterity as she needs the stimulus of the narcotic weed. Where a child or servant cannot be kept constantly employed in bringing a burning piece of charcoal from the kitchen as often as it is needed, a brazier of silver, bronze, or earthenware, as the case may be, is kept filled with live embers, and placed within reach, to facilitate the operation. When going abroad, the ladies are careful to provide themselves with a sufficient stock of *cigaritos*, though dependent upon the hospitality of their friends, or the gallantry of the other sex, for a light. They frequently wear a golden holder suspended round their necks, in order to avoid scorching, and thereby blackening their fingers, and the better to economise the small ends. The gentlemen are always provided with a flint, steel, and cotton match, encased in silver and chained together, which they wield with peculiar grace, and obtain a light in a remarkably quick time. Having handed round their cigar case to every lady present, whether seated within doors or standing in the street, they next ignite one *cigarito*, which is also handed round, that each one may take a light from it. It is then returned to the offerer, who devoutly consumes it till he or some other gallant begins the process again. Much time is, of course, wasted in these manoeuvres, in which a great part of good breeding is made to consist, and which produce a singular effect upon the uninitiated observer. It is considered an additional accomplishment in the ladies when they are able to force the smoke through their nostrils in a double column, somewhat resembling the *jet d'eau* thrown up by the whale, only it is in an inverse direction.

scious of their ignorance, which, though it is general, is of course not without exceptions. One Guatemala lady, in particular, is highly reputed for literary tastes and talents. She possesses a poetical and satirical genius, and is of course regarded as a great prodigy.

So defective an education under the influence of the religious and moral atmosphere of the country is not calculated to preserve untainted the delicate bloom of that modesty which is natural to the female sex. Under their circumstances, it is indeed wonderful that their standard of morality is not lower than it is, and that the amenities of life, and the duties and graces of social relationships, are not more generally and flagrantly violated than they are. Very few of the ladies of Central America have enjoyed the somewhat questionable advantages of an education in Spain and France; but few of the other sex have travelled to Europe or the United States; and fewer still have received their education in those more favoured portions of the globe.

At present, the only accessible education for the class of females spoken of, or, indeed, for any other, is that which is imparted at the different convents by nuns, who are as untutored as the persons already described, and who confine their instructions to their dark superstitions, together with household occupations, fine needlework, making artificial flowers, and, perhaps, some other similar branches of the *fine arts*, which they cultivate, and in which they excel. In these places unwary young women are often induced to take the veil, or seeds are sown in their minds which result in this deplorable self-sacrifice. Now and then, small schools for girls have been attempted by needy persons, sometimes foreigners, who have been little qualified for the important task of moral training, and have set a high price upon their labours; but such instances have been rare; and their failure cannot be attributed to indifference or even to prejudice on the part of the natives. No want is, perhaps, more generally and deeply felt than that of suitable female teachers for girls of every class. *Among the 40,000 inhabitants of the capital, with the exceptions above stated, there is not a single schoolmistress or private female teacher.*

Not a few Central American ladies, as well as gentlemen, have acquired the ability of perusing or translating French books with ease. This arises from the scarcity of accessible Spanish literature, and is facilitated by the affinity which exists in the construction of

sentences, and between many of the words, of the two languages. It is mostly the result of a persevering habit, seldom assisted by any rules, or even, to any extent, by the use of a dictionary. The consequence is, that they can neither speak nor understand that language when spoken; nor, indeed, can they *read it audibly*.

This is, unquestionably, a proof of their intelligence and of their desire to learn. The acquisition of languages—especially the French and the English—is very generally coveted, and sacrifices would be made to this end if teachers could be procured.

Some few lovers of books have given themselves wholly to literary pursuits; but their reading has been mostly confined to their private libraries and a musty collection connected with the University, composed of monkish MSS., ponderous folios on jurisprudence, and a mass of works on ecclesiastical subjects, originally the property of the convents. The fruits of learned industry have not yet been remarkable. With the exception of Don José del Valle, and, perhaps, two or three historians, the names of native literati do not appear likely to reach far beyond their own country and times.

For the middling classes of society—namely, the Mestizos of every kind—some boys' schools, called "Escuelas de primeras letras,"* have been in existence since those classes came into being, or rather, since they became numerous enough to demand that much attention at the hands of their Spanish progenitors. And though it is probable that very little of the past character of those schools could now be ascertained from any authentic sources, the want will scarcely be felt, as their condition at the present day furnishes abundant internal evidence that they are still what they ever have been—the stereotyped productions of a dark and tyrannical age, calculated to create a distaste for learning, or a positive hatred of instruction, rather than to cultivate the love of it.

It is only in the larger cities and towns of Spanish foundation that such schools are to be met with. Most of them are endowed and are controlled by the municipalities, which have generally been more or less under the influence of the clergy. They are invariably in a lamentable state of corruption, disorder, and neglect. The conditions of the endowment, or the instructions of the patrons, generally limit what is taught to *El Catecismo, la Doctrina*

* Schools of first letters—or primary schools.

(the catechism, doctrine), reading, writing, and the four first rules of arithmetic, which are dignified by the name of mathematics. Beyond these, though the master should be able and willing, he is not permitted to go. Their methods of proceeding are such as must surprise and grieve an European almost as much as the first insight into a more enlightened system astonishes and delights the people there.

Their children do not begin to attend school till they are eight or ten years of age, and it being conceived that they can learn only *one thing at a time*, they are first put to *reading*, in which they have probably already made some progress at home. Notwithstanding the general intelligence, docility, and aptitude of the children, this branch alone almost always drags its weary length through a period of several *years*. The books employed, besides the gloomy character of their contents, are in bulk sufficient to discourage the most enterprising child. They are four or five in number, consisting of heavy volumes, which when put together assume the aspect of an antique collection, and look formidable enough to deter many well taught adults from undertaking to wade through their dry contents. They are distinguished and ordered as follows:—first, “*La Cartilla*,” containing the alphabet, followed at once by forms of prayer and commandments of the Church, in the wording of which there is no attempt at gradation. This book alone is large enough for all the purposes of a first reading book. The second is “*El Caton*,” the third, “*El Catecismo*,” and the fourth, “*El Ramillete*.” All these, which are much larger than the first, contain theological definitions, digests of popish doctrines, creeds, fabulous legends, and devotional formularies addressed to saints, angels, and Virgin Marys. Through every one of these each unhappy scholar is doomed to wade from beginning to end, and so deep is their aversion to the task, and so great is the triumph felt when a child has overcome each one of these obstacles to its progress, that the event is actually celebrated in the family as an occasion for feasting. Not till the whole of this twice tedious process is terminated is anything else undertaken. The same exclusiveness is afterwards observed while the boy is taught to read all kinds of *handwriting*, which also occupies a long period, and for which rough MSS., old letters, law papers, or

other documents, often in crabbed and illegible hands, are procured, and conned over till some facility in the habit is acquired.

The next step is *writing*, which begins with "straight strokes," "pot-hooks, and hangers," whatever may be the age of the boy, who is generally twelve or thirteen before he gets to this stage, and frequently six months, or even more, are spent in this preparatory exercise, during which nothing else can be attempted, except it be committing to memory the catechism which he can now read. When a fair hand has been attained, the first rule of arithmetic is commenced, if nothing happens to remove the now big boy from school before he has advanced thus far.

The cruelty of most of the professional teachers is such, that few parents will trust their children with them, and still fewer children can be induced to attend the schools, except by equal cruelty on the part of their parents. The tyrannical bearing of the masters is systematic, and is expressed by a maxim, universally admitted, equivalent to *without shedding of blood there is no tuition* ("La letra por sangre entra"). Nor is this barbarous precept a dead letter in their hands. Their practice making blood and bruises the invariable penalty and accompaniment of initiation into the belles-lettres.

Among other acts of cruelty practised by schoolmasters in Guatemala, which came to the knowledge of the author during his residence there, was the following:—A boy about nine years old, the illegitimate but acknowledged son of an ex-president, attending what had been considered the best school in the capital, on one occasion had his ears boxed so continuously and with such violence that it caused a profuse bleeding at the nose. Upon this, the savage pedagogue diverted himself and his scholars by painting a moustache upon the child's face with his own blood. This boy's chief offence was an impediment in his speech.

One consequence of this kind of treatment, which is but too general, is, that the boys from choice, as well as the girls from necessity, are frequently taught at home what little knowledge they ever acquire. Not unfrequently the task of teaching them to read is deputed to the nearest barber, or to some poor artisan, in whose shop the children sit the livelong day upon low stools, appearing to study their books hour after hour, objects worthy of commiseration. The attention of passers in the streets is often attracted by the hum

of voices proceeding from such places whilst they are spelling over or repeating their monotonous tasks.

When the subject of education for the first time occupied the serious attention of the local government during the predominance of the liberal party, the returns required by the President, and made by the Municipality of Guatemala, shew that, in 1824, the principal school patronized by St. Joseph Calazans and the Municipality contained one hundred and eighty-seven pupils. Another, under the auspices of St. Casiano and the Ecclesiastical Court, had sixty-eight. Five more attached to the convents of Belen, Santo Domingo, San Francisco, La Recoleccion, and La Merced, numbered together three hundred and five. In three private establishments, there were one hundred and twelve. Making a total of six hundred and seventy-two in a population of about 36,000 souls.

So great a disproportion of numbers, as well as the preponderance of priestly influence in this department, was lamented over by the Government, who wrote to their *chargé d'affaires* in the United States, to procure for them a person capable of superintending schools of mutual instruction, on the Lancasterian system, which was then already adopted in Mexico.* The same Government encouraged those who were qualified to institute adult classes, and schools of design, and for the study of chemistry, botany, mineralogy, agriculture, &c., were opened. But the person so much desired to organize and direct the elementary schools was not procured, perhaps from the difficulty of finding one at once qualified, willing, and sufficiently acquainted with the Spanish language. These improved plans, as already stated, were essayed by the natives themselves, and a normal school opened in the capital; but they were interrupted by the revolutions which soon followed and have continued to this day.

At present there are fewer schools in Guatemala, and fewer children attending them than the official returns of 1824 assigned to them then, notwithstanding that some impulse was given the municipal schools from 1833 to 1836 by the existence of the private school conducted by the author with which the others were particularly anxious to vie. The chief means then employed were domiciliary visitation, the exercise of priestly influence, and the be-

* See *Gaceta del Gobierno*, Nos. 28 and 31.

stowment of rewards in order to increase the attendance. But little or nothing was done to improve the manner of teaching, or the quantity and quality of the information imparted.

In the provincial towns, and even in the Indian villages, Lancasterian schools (so called) were established under the liberal Government, though they had no suitable teachers. These have since been abandoned, and the few schools that remain in the larger places are of the character before described. In them, far more pains are bestowed to drill the poor children into religious forms, to make them learn catechisms and repeat popish prayers, than even to teach them to read, or to write.

From these united causes, the schools of Central America are worse than inefficient. The injury done to the flexible minds and tender hearts of the children who are subjected to such a process must be great indeed, and in some respects irreparable. The cruelty which is most apparent is far surpassed by that which does violence to the moral susceptibilities, and refuses aliment to the soul. The sight of such a school in activity, instead of being pleasing and full of promise, is one of the most melancholy exhibitions which the country affords, at least to one at all alive to the importance of early culture, or aware of the progress made in this department during the last half-century. So long as blind prejudices are instilled, mysticism cultivated, and the memory stored with fables and corrupt legends, the teachers are satisfied, and obtain the complacent smiles of the priests. It is from these nurseries that society receives the burden of a self-confident and deeply ignorant class of citizens, whose minds are prejudiced and whose natural depravity has obtained as full and rapid a development as the pupil's powers and the vitiated system could unitedly produce. And this is the only substitute for moral and intellectual discipline, and the salutary influences of preceptive truth and of a pure and benevolent example. This evil has long been, and is now intensely felt by the Central Americans. Let it be reiterated until due weight is attached to the assertion, that the natives of all classes thirst for instruction. That rulers and heads of families are anxious to have the people and their children taught, and that nothing is wanting to the complete gratification of this their praiseworthy solicitude, but the qualified teacher.

Persons able to undertake the education of youth, or to teach

elementary branches, possessing a sufficient knowledge of the Spanish language—the easiest to acquire of all modern tongues—would find their hands fully occupied and their labour well bestowed and remunerated in any of the populous parts of Central America, and more especially in the larger towns, or in the capitals of the various States.

Such enterprises at present imply no inconsiderable amount of risk, arising from the remains of priestly influence and popular fanaticism. They are, of course, most practicable where a liberal or anti-ecclesiastical government is already established, as now in the state of Salvador, and possibly in Nicaragua and Honduras. If mere secular education were the object, all the risks and most of the difficulties would be removed at once, as no open opposition would be likely to follow, but, on the contrary, very much encouragement would be held out, and that in appearance at least, even by aristocrats and ecclesiastics. But the danger of Biblical teaching has already been braved in Guatemala—the stronghold of servility and priestcraft—and that during a period of popish and aristocratic reaction, with what results will be seen further on. In 1835, while the author's school was in activity, it was visited by two political Commissioners from the state of Salvador. One of them invited the author to accompany him to San Salvador, with a view to his removal to that city, offering to defray all his expenses. This offer was declined. On the return of the Commissioners to their government, private proposals of the same nature were renewed with the sanction of the ruling authorities, and adding the guarantee of a large school and a public building to keep it in; but neither could this proposal be complied with. This is here adduced as corroborative of the assertion just made, and as a proof that the use of the Bible is not an insuperable impediment; and it may be added, that a suitable person occupying a position of this kind, might reasonably expect to exercise a salutary influence on the education of the people of an extensive district, perhaps upon all the schools within the state, or even, it might be, over those of the entire Republic.

It is not, however, in the schools that the people of Central America have received their education—most of their moral training has been derived directly from the papistical Spaniard and the popish priest.

A people without schools and literature, without a history or

significant monuments of the past, excluded from intercourse with other nations, and willingly led by their self-constituted guides, must have been confined to the lessons that popery teaches, and could not but receive its impress. The condition of such a people must answer to the spirit of Romanism as the seal to the signet.

It is not only admitted, but even strenuously enforced by papists, that images are the *books* of the people. Before the practical lessons which they have learned from these dumb instructors are further noticed, it may be well to give some attention to another order of tuition, which may very properly be designated *Popish Sunday Schools*, or Satanic training institutions. The desecration of the Sabbath-day is a well-known feature of all Roman Catholic countries. Its leading peculiarities in Central America consist chiefly in the *kind* of public amusements which the popular taste requires, the authorities supply, and the Church patronizes.

After the morning's attendance at mass, a part of the day is spent in friendly or ceremonial visits, when priests and people openly indulge in small talk, cards, wine, songs, accompanied by the guitar or the piano; and any other amusements reputed innocent. The siesta, the cigarito, and an occasional cup of chocolate, help to kill some more of its hours. At length the afternoon arrives, and in the capital city, the military band is heard traversing the streets in the direction of a large octangular amphitheatre, enclosing a spacious uncovered arena. Soon the citizens of all classes, from the first officers of state and municipal functionaries, wearing badges of office, to the bare-footed Indian labourer, issue from their houses; merchants, professionals, military men, aristocrats, and artisans, with their families all attired in their Sunday's best, mingle in the streets, and flock in the same direction. The graduated seats of the amphitheatre are soon filled with a brilliant company, among which ladies and women of every rank are prominent. Occasionally the sombre garb of some gay ecclesiastic may be detected; perhaps it is a certain well-known Canonigo, a canon who is quite a lady's man—or some other dignitary, who has both the spirit and the power to brave public prejudice, but who by his willingness to conceal himself behind his company, manifests that he feels rather out of place.

Soon the approving murmur announces that the first bull that is about to be baited for the amusement of this gay concourse has

made its appearance. This is the Plaza de Torros (the bull-ring), and the devout citizens are met to gloat their eyes upon the sufferings of poor brutes goaded into madness by men more brutal and savage than the fiercest denizen of the savannah. The satanic ingenuity of cruelty is tasked to devise means of torturing a creature that unwillingly defends itself from assaults from which it cannot flee. Wounds are inflicted, fireworks are fastened with a barb upon its flesh, and as the explosion at once terrifies and scorches the poor creature, the shouts and laughter of the lookers-on increase its fury; till, perhaps, bellowing and foaming, it plunges headlong upon the nearest of its fantastically-dressed tormentors, who, unable to escape the attack with sufficient promptitude, or failing to turn it off with the usual dexterity, is tossed into the air, to the height of several yards, and falls heavily to the ground. When not seriously wounded or killed, which sometimes happens, he is generally placed *hors de combat*—for that day at least—so as to be removed, and succeeded by others. Upon an event like this, a shout of pleasure rings through the arena, and many a fair hand is seen waving a white kerchief, as it were to encourage the bull, who has, perhaps, enlisted some sympathy. Should the entertainment pass off without anything of this kind occurring, the general complaint would be that "Los Torros" were dull and insipid.

When several bulls have been baited in succession, the last one that is brought in is reserved, as a peculiar treat, to be tormented by the boys who volunteer from among the people. This victim is fastened to a stake, but it has happened that he has broken loose, and on one occasion at least, the mangled corpse of her dead son was put into the arms of a distracted mother as the result of this juvenile sport—this diabolical training!

The best, *i. e.* the fiercest bulls are supplied to this institution from an estate belonging to the nuns of the convent of Santa Clara; and those animals are distinguished by the name of the nuns. The revenue arising from the bull-ring is *charitably*, and but too appropriately, applied to the support of the public hospital.

The reader does not need to be told what lessons the people learn from exhibitions such as these. It is an *amusement*; therefore in accordance with their state of mind, and not opposed to their religious feelings. Here the hearts of all classes and ages are hardened and inured to sights of blood and cruelty—nay,

they are led to delight in such scenes, and the basest propensities of a corrupt nature are cultivated, and must expand. It is not surprising that from the bull-ring the more dissipated and vicious resort to the cock-pit, where they may have spent a part of the morning, or that they disperse to the different Pulquerias and Chicherias, low drinking shops, in the barrios or suburbs, or that the whole night is spent by many in debauch, followed by every species of crime and ruin : some of the worst features of which are referred to further on.

In country places, where bull-baiting is not practicable, cock-fighting is substituted, or rather, the latter universally prevails ; because while less expensive it both gratifies the taste for cruelty, and affords an opportunity for gaming.

In a general survey of the moral condition of Central America, the mental eye is unavoidably brought into continual contact with Romanism—its putrescent heart. Its influence upon the aborigines, whose tribes it has either conquered or scared, and upon the mixed races and their political contentions ; its varied manifestations in forms, pomps, gaieties, austerities, and image worship, have all been imperfectly glanced at. Some of its more palpable fruits have been seen in the accumulated enormities of its licentious priesthood. The exposure of the actual state of the few schools withering beneath its shade, and the fact of the general ignorance and cruelty of a people so long and so completely under its sway, were not needed to prove that knowledge is abhorrent to that system which has coined for itself the detestable maxim that "ignorance is the mother of devotion." Central America in its actual state, and in its history, is an unimpeachable witness that popery is the prolific mother of ignorance, superstition, and crime ; or, in other words, the crater from which moral darkness, cruelty, and death are continually belched forth upon all within its reach. The truth of this will be most clearly perceived both in the amount and in the species of criminality that prevails.

One of the greatest curses that Popery entails is, doubtless, the servile bondage to which it reduces the nobler powers of the mind. Another scarcely inferior injury which it inflicts, lies in the false liberty which it pampers in the unrenewed mind,—a liberty more cruel and destructive, perhaps, than even its bondage, and certainly more manifestly evil in its licentious and corrupting effects.

The subtlety of the deceiver is singularly apparent in the devices by which he aids his popish subjects to stifle the voice of conscience, and in a measure frees them from its wholesome restraints. The chief agency by which this end is accomplished is priestly absolution, with its adjuncts, confession and penance. The belief that sin can be pardoned while the love of it is retained, or that it may be stoned for by the sinner himself who indulges in it, must blunt the point of every scruple, and cannot but degenerate into the practical toleration of every species of iniquity and vice. It is subversive of the justice of God, and therefore destructive to honesty in man. And precisely to that extent to which it prevails, it produces moral and physical death. Its fearful effects are legible in colossal and blood-red characters upon the face of Central American society.

The general prevalence of crime in Central America, while it corroborates what has been said of its religion, affords the best criterion of the real state of the people, and supplies superabundant reasons for commiserating it.

Where the restraints of public opinion, the arm of the law, and the voice of conscience are so weak, it need scarcely be said that crime luxuriates in profuse variety, and that its deadly fruits abound. There are, however, some forms of criminality which prevail more than others, and foremost among these are murders and assassinations, which are matters of daily occurrence in Central America. They are so frequent as to excite scarcely any attention, and no signs of feeling whatever, where there is not a special interest in the parties concerned. Taught by the example of the Spaniard, every native wears in his belt a large sharp-pointed knife—most frequently of British manufacture—which is encased in a leathern sheath, more or less ornamented. Though the law imposes a penalty upon all who carry deadly weapons, it is seldom concealed; and the practice of going armed, especially at night or when travelling, is universally allowed. Caballeros (gentlemen) carry sabres (sabres) in their hands under their cloaks, and frequently pistols in their pockets. No saddle is complete without its holsters. Doñas and Señoras sometimes carry their jewelled poi-guardians, and the market women of San Salvador are famed for wearing knives like the men, only girded in their garters, the naked blade or the sheath being lodged between the stocking and the skin.

On the most trivial occasions, and at the least provocation, the knife is drawn and wielded with fearful skill, nor does it often return to its sheath until it has drunk the vital stream of one of the combatants. Men are trained from their very infancy to the art of stabbing. It is common to see boys of all ages in the streets and at their play stabbing at each other with their extended right-hand, or with a piece of wood in it, and warding off the stabs of their playfellows, with their hats clenched in the other hand, or a garment thrown over their left arm in imitation of the men. Indeed, this sight is more frequent in Central America than it now is to see English boys sparring with their fists. In the case of Central American children their contest is a mere diversion, and it is by no means common to see them fight. Their mild disposition is doubtless one reason for this, and when quarrels occur they generally avoid each other, or vent their malice in some other way.

The great bulk of all the murders that take place are confined to the lower order of Ladinos and Indians, mostly such as are or have been soldiers, and they occur almost without exception in the brawls and quarrels consequent upon their carousals, or arising out of gambling transactions, or jealous intrigues.

Such scenes occur, especially after the solemnities of the church, on Sunday evenings, and during the idle *días de dos cruces*.^{*} These periods are invariably marked by revelries, followed by midnight brawls, and the day after each fiesta and every other festival, not omitting the Sabbath-day, the sun rises upon the corpses of the slain, or the mangled bodies of the wounded. In the city of Guatemala alone, every such occasion furnishes from four to eight cases of this description. The bodies are conveyed to the hospital to be claimed or dissected, and when life is not extinct, to receive the attentions of the surgeons, who have so much practice in this line as to ensure more than ordinary skill. The awful and heartrending consequences of these facts may be imagined, but not described. It must not be forgotten that, as the fiestas of the Church are more than half as many as the Sundays, there are full eighty feast-days and Sundays in the course of one year. Taking the number of killed at the average of six for

^{*} Days of two crosses, so called because thus distinguished in the calendars, which declare them to be equally binding with the Lord's day, for hearing mass and abstaining from work. There are about twenty of them in the year, besides those of only one cross.

each fiesta—which is not too much if the murders of the *Vispera* (the night before, when these disorders begin) be included—the result for the capital alone is 480 lives annually sacrificed. And there is probably a greater number of wounded who recover.*

In addition to this enormous amount of idle time, every town and remote village has its peculiar days in honour of its patron-saint, and even then all the opportunities which the Church furnishes for deeds of blood have not been enumerated. It will, therefore, appear the less surprising, though not a whit the less horrifying, as the result of these murders, together with those more isolated cases which occur on ordinary days, and the numbers slain in civil wars and revolutions, that *the proportion of females to males* in the entire population of the five States is, at the present day, *as four or five to one!* This fact, which is generally acknowledged throughout the country, speaks volumes in support of the views here taken of popery. It speaks, also, to the mere philanthropist, and how much more to the enlightened Christian, of duties yet to be performed towards this people. Shall we continue to supply them only with the instruments of their deadly cruelty, and not make an effort to communicate the Gospel, which is alone adequate to implant the fear of Him whose law proclaims, "Thou shalt not kill," and whose Gospel at once inculcates the love of God and love to one another?

That the general standard of morality is so low, and that the appreciation of the enormity of murder, in particular, is so defective, can only be accounted for by the peculiar genius of Central American religion, and by the character of the education which is

* In a journal, already quoted, the following entry occurs:—"July 25, 1835.—The day of Santiago, and according to the phraseology of the Catholics, 'a double cross day,' or one of particular sanctity. These crosses are observed more strictly than the Sabbath itself. It is reported that there were three murders yesterday; one of the perpetrators was a female, and the object of her vengeance one of the same sex. Mr. ——— stated that an individual of his acquaintance asked this poor creature what had induced her to accomplish such an awful deed. She said that the woman had provoked her. It was urged that that was no reason for depriving a fellow-creature of life. She added, with an air of callous indifference but she *loves my skin*. The annual average of individuals received into the hospitals, who have received injuries from lethal weapons unlawfully used, is stated to amount to 475; and this, I conjecture, exclusive of those murdered outright. Individuals guilty of this most heinous crime are merely punished by a short imprisonment. One person is said to be going at large who has committed seven murders. There has been another murder committed to-night; a woman in a state of pregnancy is stated to have been the unfortunate object, and a soldier the perpetrator."—*Wheaton's Memoir*, p. 136.

carried on both in its schools and in its amusements—for the mild disposition of the people is decidedly opposed to such deeds.

This laxity of morals and prevalence of crime, are sustained by the venality of those rulers who are entrusted with the detection and the punishment of offences, as well as by the priests. Either the Alcalde or Juez (Judge) is himself comparatively unimpressed with its heinousness and with the sanctity of the law, or, intimidated by threats, he is afraid of falling by the knife of the relatives or accomplices of the criminal: in many cases, his hand has been weakened by receiving a bribe. These causes, together with the inefficiency of the police force, the imperfect state of the prisons, and the facilities which the country and the people afford for concealment, all tend to deprive human justice of its victims, and criminals of every kind are at large, whilst comparatively trivial offences only are adequately punished, and political partisans are mercilessly shot.

A murderer frequently escapes merely by absenting himself for some time from the scene of his guilt. If taken, and not suffered to escape from prison, his severest punishment for a first offence is, perhaps, two or three years of hard labour in the chain-gang. For a repetition of the crime, it may be banishment to one of the penal-fortresses; most of which are on the coasts, and within the deadly influence of uncleared swamps and excessive heat. If they outlive the term of their sentence, or have not liberated themselves by some new act of rebellion and blood, they return to society, after a few years, judicially cleansed, but only to perpetrate fresh enormities. Thus, one man is often known to have committed several murders, and still remains at liberty. A class of desperadoes, distinguished by the name of *lanas*, and composed of such individuals, of robbers, and of the most abandoned of every description, infest the country, and sometimes they form themselves into bands, and rob and murder at their discretion—extending their crimes and terror far and wide. The capital and other large towns are perambulated by such human monsters as freely as London is with pickpockets and thieves—only in the former they are almost entirely unwatched by police. The Serenos, or watchmen, have considerably checked their midnight depredations in the capital; but their daring deeds are still the terror of the inhabitants. With individuals among the *lanas*, the lust of blood at length assumes the character of a passion that must be gratified for its own sake.

Of some of the more notorious—the Jack Shepherds and Dick Turpins of their class—the most diabolical deeds are related. Not many years ago one of them, standing at noon-day with another in the streets of Guatemala, upon seeing a gentleman approaching who was wholly dressed in white, prefaced his wanton atrocity by exclaiming to his companion, “Would you like to see how pretty blood looks upon white garments?” and with no other provocative at once plunged his large knife into the body of the unfortunate victim and made his escape. Another, when arrested for the murder of one female, in the same wanton way plunged his knife into the bosom of a young girl who was near him, and when asked the reason, said he did it *to keep his hand in*, or in order not to lose the habit. It would be easy to multiply instances like these. Let it suffice to state that a public execution of such criminals seldom takes place, though their crimes are so frequent. Only two murderers were condemned to death, and shot at Guatemala, from 1833 to 1836. Each of them had been judicially convicted of more than a score of murders, besides others that were not proved. During the same period, many were executed for political offences. Capital punishments were summarily abolished by the liberals, but no suitable substitute has been carried into operation since. From such data an idea may be formed of the state of morals in general, and it is only necessary to add that all sorts of licentiousness and spoliation, as well as murder, remain comparatively or entirely unpunished (especially in times of civil war), through the venality and pusillanimity of the judicial authorities, as well as for want of greater stability in the executive power.

These are some of the consequences of absolution; for the worst of criminals may, at any time, obtain it from the priest without danger to himself. These are the fruits which, even if popery had done nothing to produce them, it has been unable to correct or to modify by all its agencies, exercised without restraint or extraneous interference during the space of three hundred and forty-eight years. Thus it is palpable that “the salt has lost its savour,” and that it is “henceforth good for nothing, but to be cast forth and trodden under foot of men.”

The insecurity of life and property, and other evils necessarily implied, while they are calculated to draw forth feelings of compassion for the people, are also of a somewhat repulsive nature, and the mind dwelling on the more isolated cases may exaggerate

the danger attendant upon any personal effort to improve such a condition, and is apt to shrink from the undertaking.

Not to dwell upon any reasons founded on the providence of God, and the advantages, in point of security, which a peaceful and beneficent person possesses over others under such circumstances, it must not be forgotten that mildness of disposition, amenity of manners, and a general respect for man as such, are among the leading traits in the national character of the Central American. It is particularly worthy of notice, that what may be called the social virtues are far from being disregarded. The kindest feelings exist and are cultivated in the mutual intercourse of members of families to a surprising degree. Hospitality is unbounded, especially to foreigners. Instances of generosity are not unfrequent, and considerateness and liberality towards the poor are very marked. Often docile to supineness, or polite to servility, the Central American does not display that vindictive pride, haughty bearing, and bluntness of manners observable in the European-Spanish immigrant. In these respects, as well as others before noticed, there is much to encourage every attempt for their improvement, and even to command respect in the midst of their degradation. Considering its past history and political state, it really appears a marvel that society is not more generally disorganised and corrupt than it is, and it must be regarded as a proof of the general mildness of character which, in spite of adverse influences, still distinguishes the people. Nay, it is highly probable that the disorders which prevail to so awful an extent in Central America would be fully realized, and, it may be, surpassed, in more favoured communities, if placed under no greater restraints. Whatever may be the present desolations, future prospects are gloomy only so long as the appointed means of regenerating the country are withheld.

Risks must, however, be encountered, and particularly when the ignorance of the people is openly assailed, their superstitions exposed, and their crimes denounced. In proportion to the conscientious determination not to bow to their idols or conform to their idolatrous and superstitious customs, the danger will be increased; and a corresponding amount of prudence and wisdom will be found necessary in order to escape the occasion, or to out-ride the storm. It is not, however, always practicable to avoid coming into collision with their prejudices. A cautious person,

conscious of scruples, will not thrust himself in the way of the public homage paid to the host and to images. But, as these observances are so frequent and general, it is not possible to avoid giving offence. One cannot walk the streets without passing open church doors, crosses, paintings, and effigies of the Virgin, which are set up at the corners of the streets and in the market-places, and to all of which the natives take off their hats. Meeting the host and processions may generally be avoided with a little care, as they may be heard afar off; and even when unexpectedly met, a retreat is mostly practicable, and is preferable to provoking the crowd by a refusal to bend the knee. But when disbelief in their dogmas is not only avowed, but is consistently maintained, and especially when their superstitious idolatries and immoralities are faithfully rebuked, the risk of assassination or insult has been considered imminent. Formerly, as in the case of the Vice-President Flores, it was enough for a priest or a monk to point out an obnoxious individual to the populace, and his assassination was compassed; but now even this has failed of its effect, and all the dangers alluded to have been braved with impunity in the city of Guatemala itself.

Occasionally, some foreigners have imprudently entered the churches or gazed at the processions while refusing to conform to the customary modes of worship, and insult and violence have ensued. Latterly sceptical natives of the better educated classes have been implicated in similar scenes.

The forms under which the cruelty of the religion of Rome is displayed in Central America are almost innumerable. The difficulty lies in the selection of examples. The evil may be traced to its source in some that remain to be glanced at even more directly than in those already referred to.

The cruelty of incarcerating men and women—often youths of both sexes—in a living tomb, under the guise of a convent or monastery, is more readily admitted than it is generally appreciated. In Guatemala, where these institutions have been numerous and powerful, and where they are still struggling to maintain their influence, especially those appropriated to nuns, their injurious effects have been palpable to the more thoughtful natives themselves. Many stories illustrative of their cruelty are in the mouths both of the infidel and of the devout. And on hearing them one cannot but picture to oneself many more victims whose

cases were never known out of doors, pining in the seclusion of the cloister, writhing beneath the oppression of a system as unnatural as it is delusive, and only escaping by death from the power of human cruelty, to find the hopes that were built upon these very sufferings and sacrifices groundless and irretrievable.

It is still no rare occurrence for an heiress, the joy of a parent's heart, and the hope of a family, to devote herself in the flower of her youth to this life without an object—this death without a cause. They are, of course, the special subjects of enticement by those who are interested in the wealth and credit of the various orders. Such are the false appearances that these houses maintain before the world, and such is the simplicity of their dupes, that they have no difficulty in recruiting their numbers, and they are even able to exact a *dota*, or marriage portion, with every person, however poor, whom they receive. The prospect they hold out is that of a life of quiet and security, of competence and respectability, of supposed sanctity and merit, and to these strong inducements are added the often feigned enthusiasm of the older nuns—the decoy-ducks of the convent—the false heroism and excitement of the dedication, and the empty but brilliant display of the ceremonies attendant upon taking the veil. These and other allurements operate upon the poor as well as upon the rich, and not a few obtain admittance after having sold their all, and begged at the doors of the wealthy in order to make up the required premium—the price of their purchased bondage.

An intelligent, high-spirited, and naturally cheerful young woman, probably under the influence of some such motives, or actuated by a passing disappointment, which over-indulgence had ill prepared her to brook, entered one of these professed abodes of peace. The excitement over, the novelty worn off, she began to repent her rashness. The broken ties of relationship, the love of life, the want of change, and the void of her own joyous heart, soon made her prison-house intolerable. Her efforts to procure the annulling of her vows proved unavailing, and only drew down increased severities upon her. The shock proved too much—her reason was dethroned. From a raving maniac she became a senseless idiot. Thus only was her spirit broken, and a tame docility succeeded. The rest of her days were quietly spent in the cloisters. But how?

From the elegant basin in the midst of the patio of the convent,

runs the clear and rapid stream of its constantly overflowing waters. The channel is an open one, and at the end of the yard it suddenly disappears under the massive masonry to burst forth into the sunny street without, and join the streams that issue from other houses, which, together, leave the stony thoroughfares for the wild ravine, and that for the foaming torrent, the mighty river, and then the boundless ocean. Just where the water, in the beginning of its course, passes through the foundation of the dead convent-wall, the maniac nun, now a poor wreck of humanity, still clad in her monastic garb—still a “religious”—used to pass the tedious hours day after day, till death removed her, bending over the channel, gazing upon the water, occasionally dropping pieces of straw or other fragments into the playful stream, and watching them as they glided onwards and disappeared. If disturbed or questioned, with a melancholy smile and an almost animated tone, her invariable exclamation was, “They are free, they are free.”

After hearing this heart-rending story, related by a native lady, *who* could behold the lofty and blank walls of the numerous nunneries of the capital, or from an eminence look down upon their thickly shaded gardens, without a sensation of gloom, or a thrill of compassion? Who would deny that they are living sepulchres “full of the habitations of cruelty?”

The want of facilities for inland communication has been given as a reason why there are provincial periodical fairs, at which thousands assemble.* Combined with their business is the worship of the patron saints of the place, or rather of his or her image, some of which are supposed to possess healing virtue. One of the most attractive and important of these central points is that of Esquipulas in the province of Chiquimula, a frontier town of the States of Guatemala and Honduras. At this place there is an image of the Crucified, which enjoys the highest reputation of any in the country for performing miracles, and is called, “Our Lord of Esquipulas.” † It was carved in ebony in 1596 by Quirio Cataño, an artist of great repute. To this diminutive black image pilgrimages are made often from great distances—its fame having spread even to the Mexican States; and on the 15th January there are still from ten to twenty thousand votaries assembled at its shrine, many of whom are maimed or sick, and are brought with the hope of

* See page 55.

† Nuestro Señor de Esquipulas.

being cured. The building where it is kept is considered a sumptuous one, and is distinguished as "El Sanctuario,"—the sanctuary. On the walls of this edifice are coarse representations of the miracles that have professedly been wrought there, the number of which is increased every season. It is richly adorned with the gifts of the Faithful, consisting of models of limbs, &c., in the precious metals, and other tokens of gratitude, from those who fancy they have received benefits from the image.

During the entire year, but especially at three marked periods, companies of pilgrims, said to amount together to 100,000 persons, travel on foot from all parts towards this wonder-working piece of ebony. At some distance from the Sanctuario, there is a rock called *the dancing-stone*,* upon which the pilgrims fancy there is some advantage in capering more or less before they proceed any further. The lying wonders of the place have been exposed by several travellers.† One of the results of the worship of the Esquipulas idol

* La Piedra de Bailar.

† "The following account of one of the pretended miracles wrought by the image was given me by Don Manuel Zapata, as trustworthy a gentleman as any in Central America, and well known to all persons who have resided in the State of Salvador. Having gone, with others, to the great annual fair, held on one of the saint's festivals, on the 6th Jan. 1824, and having got into the body of the church amidst an immense crowd of people, after he had waited some time, and seen some minor miracles of rather an equivocal character performed, he saw a man brought in who appeared to be a most wretched object, his legs and arms being twisted upwards, and his whole body distorted in a most horrible manner. He was placed before the image, and exclaimed in a hollow voice,— "I have come upwards of a hundred leagues to see our Lord of Esquipulas, and will never leave till he has cured me." This he repeated several times, when suddenly he gave a spring, and appeared healed in a moment; his body became straight, his legs and arms resumed their former [natural] position, and he stood before the image a stout hale man. Upon the completion of this wonderful miracle, the musicians in attendance struck up a dancing tune; large sums of money were collected for the saint and the subject of the miracle, and the painters in attendance commenced painting copies of it for sale. Don Manuel told me, that though he had before had strong doubts about the authenticity of the miracles, and everything else pertaining to priestcraft, he could not contradict or deny what appeared, without doubt, to be a miraculous cure. The next morning he had to leave Esquipulas; and in the suburbs of the town he met a gentleman mounted on a very fine mule, with handsome Mexican saddle and trappings. Saluting each other according to the custom of the country, they entered into conversation. The stranger told him that he had been present at the disgraceful farce of the preceding day; that he well knew the man on whom the pretended miracle had been wrought; that he was a noted robber who lived near the river Paz; and that he had wished to apprehend him as a criminal and impostor, but that the priests would not permit it, as they said that all he had done was for the glory of God; and that to apprehend him would injure the fame of our Lord of Esquipulas."—Dunlop's Travels, p. 346.

has not hitherto been noticed. Most of the visitors to this fair are induced to purchase, as a kind of memorial of the image, some small and rude medallions made of clay, and bearing its impress and suitable inscriptions, which have been blessed by the curate of the place. On returning to their homes, these are put into the hands of their children as something sacred, and, strange to say, are frequently eaten by them. The consequence is, that an extraordinary but incurable propensity of *eating earth* is provoked, which gradually assumes the character of a habit, and is continued till it produces death. It is not uncommon to see children, and even adults, of a bloated appearance, their bellies much swollen, and their complexion of a sallow or ashey hue, who are the victims of this depravity. The unnatural appetite thus created is often fed by picking plaster from the walls of the houses, and devouring articles made of pipe-clay, soft bricks, or even crockery-ware. In time, dysentery and other disorders are thus produced, which hurry the victims of superstition to an untimely grave. Cases of this kind are by no means rare. They occur among the wealthy as well as among the poor. The superstitious origin to which this calamity is here traced, was supplied to the author by a native lady who had lost a relative from this cause. A specimen of the *Equipulas* earth, by means of which their idolatry is turned into a physical as well as a moral curse, was at the same time given to him. The appellation "Come tierra," or *earth-eater*, is among the popular forms of abuse which children address to each other.

The fact that madness and idiocy prevail to a surprising extent, is one that must strike every foreign resident, and which naturally leads to an inquiry into the cause. In the city of Guatemala, the unusually large number of such cases is palpable to the least observant. The wealthy are the most subject to these calamities. Scarcely a year passes but some of the most notable residents, merchants and others, are visited with temporary and often with confirmed derangement. As there are no asylums or madhouses they are kept at home, and together with idiots are constantly encountered. There is scarcely a family of note, but have the humiliating exhibition and the painful burden of one or more such objects in their own houses. Some of the most pitiable and repulsive cases have come under the author's own notice, the indelicate character of which precludes the publication of their sicken-

ing details. More than once he has been led to doubt whether the disorganized mass of mortality before him were indeed the habitation of a human soul. The vestiges of mind—even of a mind in ruins—were to him undiscernible; and animal functions, without either intelligence or instinct, were all that could be traced. There is little doubt but that most cases of madness or idiocy, could their causes be discovered, would be found to originate in immorality, or the want of that stability and peace which only true religion can yield to the mind. It is not denied that some cases, and perhaps all of them, may be attributed to physical causes. But who will venture to decide how much these have been affected by moral and religious influences? The impression upon the mind of the author, on seeing the luxury and irreligion that frequently surround the pitiable objects referred to, has been that the Creator thus manifestly marks with His disapprobation the denial of Himself and the abuse of His bounties, and at once lays a withering hand upon the pride, the natural affections, and the temporal enjoyments of creatures who systematically turn His glory into shame. Whatever objections may be taken to this view, none who believe the Bible will doubt that when Central America is Christianized in the proper sense of the term, these domestic tokens of the Divine displeasure will give place to social blessings. “For godliness is profitable unto all things, having the promise of the life that now is,” as well as “of that which is to come.”

Suicide is little known in Central America. In 1825, a Spanish gentleman who had fled from Spain on the fall of the constitutional party there, and who was disappointed both in his political and commercial interests in Guatemala, laid violent hands upon himself. When the fact became known, a crowd assembled round the door of his house, where, under the excitement of the moment, the exclamation of a native Caballero to another was, “*Hombre! es una cosa horrorosa—es hecho de un Protestante.*” *Sir, it is a horrid case—it is a deed worthy of a Protestant.*

Notwithstanding the proximity of British Honduras, the impression hitherto entertained of a Protestant, which is, of course, derived from their religious teachers, is of the most extravagant and ridiculous character. A Jew, in the minds of the ignorant people, is something akin to a demon, if not even more to be feared; and a Protestant is something lower and more dangerous than a Jew. Bodily deformity, as well as moral delinquency, has been attributed to

them, and serious doubts were once entertained whether or not a *Protestant* could eat salt. They have also been represented as marrying only for short periods, after the example of their worthy founder, King Henry VIII. Since 1825, when a greater number of strangers visited Guatemala than had ever been seen there before, the number of foreigners has greatly increased, and, as a result, very much ignorant prejudice on this subject has been removed. The general deportment of Anglo-Saxon visitors, or residents, has not, however, been such as greatly to raise the respect of the inhabitants for the Protestantism which they profess, however much they may have corrected their more absurd notions.

Some of the usages of what is called refined society are gradually being introduced into Guatemala—among these it has been attempted to cultivate a taste for theatricals. The liberal Government in their zeal to *educate* the people, were led to favour this pretended means of popular instruction. During their administration, a play called "La Inquisicion por dentro," A Peep into the Inquisition, was frequently performed. Its object was to expose the spirit and deeds of Romish priests, and it was one of the phenomena of the period that such an exposure should be even practicable. Since then, other efforts to establish the stage have been made with lower aims; but though the managers have as usual pandered to the vitiated tastes of the public, and thereby renounced their professed mission of utility, yet they have not succeeded in fomenting the love of such amusements sufficiently to make it profitable to themselves.

Among the tokens that all classes are freeing themselves from the influence of Romanism without such aid, are the following:—In Guatemala, Papal bulls of indulgence, which used to be as much valued as an accredited paper currency is in other countries, are now made available by the *Tienderos*, or shopkeepers, as waste paper to enfold the value of a *quartillo** of chocolate, or a *mediot* of *man-tequilla*. † In San Salvador, the now expatriated Bishop Viteri offered first *twenty* and then *forty days* of plenary indulgence, to be deducted from the period of purgatorial sufferings after death, to all who should aid in removing an unsightly mound of earth which disgraced one of the squares of that city, and took from the imposing.

* The smallest coin in use, being a diminutive piece of silver, value three halfpence sterling. Copper coin is nowhere current in Central America.

† Half a real, or two *quartillos*.

‡ Fresh butter.

effect of its cathedral. But the mound of earth remained, and though the number of days was again doubled, the bishop's drafts upon the infernal bank, or rather upon public credulity and private remorse, were openly dishonoured.

These facts, together with what may be gathered from previous chapters, will suffice to show the degree of influence which Popery has over the popular mind. Of its fruits the reader has had specimens which will enable him to pronounce the tree good or evil, if he can distinguish between a bramble and a vine. Should he have tasted for himself of the sweet grapes of Eshecol, he can also compare the spiritual and mental condition of individuals in Central America with his own goodly heritage.

The mere moralist should weep while he contrasts the state of society described with that of more favoured nations. The lover of mankind must feel some interest in a people so much wronged and oppressed, now just rising to a knowledge of the rights and liberties which have been so long denied them. The British patriot, with feelings of shame for the past, may nourish generous desires to repair the injuries which his countrymen have inflicted, and may yet hope to make the influence of his beloved nationality a blessing instead of a curse. The Anglo-Saxon Christian, in whom all these impulses unite with the sanctifying and constraining influence of love to Christ, cannot but glow with the conflicting emotions; and with quickened zeal for the kingdom of Heaven, he will carry them, while yet warm, to the mercy-seat where they will mingle with the incense of his prayers, and enter into the ears of Jehovah, the God of Sabaoth.

Should this happy result not be obtained—should the information here given come short of its object—God in His providence may perhaps employ other instrumentality to arouse the energies of His people, and to direct their efforts to the vast Spanish-American fields which claim to be occupied, some of which are already white unto the harvest.

While attention has been directed to one part of a Continent, it has been under the strong impression that the general outline on all essential points is applicable to the spiritual, moral, social, political, and even to some extent to the physical condition of all Spanish and Portuguese America; that is, from California and the northernmost limits of New Spain to the Tierra del Fuego.

With the exception of some very limited efforts in British

Guiana and in British Honduras, our missionaries have not yet ventured to enter upon any part of this extensive and important field.* The Spanish and Portuguese ports and maritime cities in either ocean, the Indian tribes inhabiting the Pampas and the Cordillera of the interior, have been regarded as inaccessible to our efforts. And wherefore? Is it because they are under the intolerant oppression of the Papal apostacy? Would such a reason have *excluded* the first missionaries of the Cross? Let the reader decide. Is it that the Spirit *suffers us not*, or that the Providence of God has closed these doors upon us? Before we can plead this we must have supplicated the Divine direction and been denied. We must have "essayed to go" thither, and been directed otherwise. If not, these excuses are of less than no avail. Is it that we have spent all our energies elsewhere, and have not room for another effort, no, nor even a throb of sympathy for these new fields? Let conscience answer!

Perhaps, in the case of the reader, the wants of these people were never before pressed upon his attention. This is now no longer the case. Oh! that the claim of a continent to be made partakers of the Gospel—the cry of millions of Papists and of heathenish Indian tribes—the special wants of Central America and its more accessible inhabitants, may reach the Christian's heart, and produce its legitimate result.

The cruelties which priests and people practise and suffer, bring to our ears the cry "Come over and help us." Their ignorance, their very depravity, and their thirst after knowledge repeat the touching petition. It is vehemently reiterated by the madness that embitters their spirits, and deeply re-echoed in the inward groans of every suffering heart. Would that the inspired appeal, together with the Saviour's authoritative commission, might ring in the ears of every supine Christian till they arouse him to action! Oh! that the impression might follow each one, while enjoying the blessings of his country, the sweets of home, and the privileges of the sanctuary, until softened to sympathy by the appeal, and impelled to obedience by the command, he shall devote himself, body, soul, and spirit to the accomplishment of the blessed duty, that in due time he may reap the eternal reward.

* Some of the missionary societies in the United States have directed their attention to a few of the principal South American ports. At Buenos Ayres an American missionary is or has been labouring, and it may be that there are some other commencements made. This is enough to show that more extended efforts are practicable.

CHAPTER XV.

LATEST INTELLIGENCE.

1850.

The Grand Oceanic Canal—Sir H. L. Bulwer's Treaty—His new Policy and letter to Mr. Chatfield—Temporary mode of transit—The Panama Railroad—Isthmus of Tehuantepec—Railroad through Mexico—Growing interest in Central America—The Yucatecan War—Treaty between England and the State of Guatemala—Santo Tomas constituted the chief port—Insurrection in Honduras—Remains of the late British Policy—Prospects of the Republic.—Importance of the Canal of Nicaragua—Reasons for occupying the field—A commencement made at Belize.

"But can ye not discern the signs of the times?"—Matth. xvi. 3.

WHILE the foregoing sheets have been passing through the press, important political intelligence from Central America has reached Europe.

The topic of most absorbing and general interest is the project of opening the ship-canal between the two oceans—its apparent prospects, and the light in which it is viewed by the various powers concerned. A new and a happy turn has been given to the entire question, and to all the conflicting interests involved, by the conclusion of the treaty between Great Britain and the United States, negotiated on the 19th of April 1850, by Sir H. L. Bulwer and Mr. Clayton, and ratified by the United States Congress on the 27th of May. By this agreement, the principles laid down in the late President's message* concerning the Nicaragua canal are to be fully carried out.

The treaty which has been published is of a strictly just and becoming character. By it both powers give up for ever all

* "I have directed the negotiation of a treaty with Nicaragua, pledging both governments to protect those who shall engage in and perfect the work. All other nations are invited by the State of Nicaragua to enter into the same treaty-stipulations with her; and the benefits to be derived by each from such an arrangement will be the protection of this great inter-oceanic communication against any power which might seek to obstruct it, or to monopolize its advantages. All States entering into such a treaty will enjoy the right of passage through the canal on the payment of the same tolls.

*The work, if constructed under these guarantees, will become a bond of peace instead of a contention and strife, between the nations of the earth. Should the great maritime

claims to "occupy, or colonize, or assume, or exercise any dominion over Nicaragua, Costa Rica, the Mosquito coast, or any part of Central America," &c. The plea of a Protectorate is also distinctly renounced, and provisions are made to preserve the neutrality of the canal itself, its neighbouring ports, and all ships, within a given distance of its termini. The protection of the Company* engaged in the work, and other minor points, are also stipulated.

The American newspapers speak of this treaty as "a triumph of good sense and magnanimity—an era in diplomatic transactions—and as establishing new and broad principles of international relations."

"The spectacle of the two great Anglo-Saxon nations of the Old and New World, respectively uniting to secure the opening of a new and most advantageous highway to the commerce of the world, by making it general for the benefit of *all nations*, is one we may justly be proud of, and is an honour to the nineteenth century.†"

The principles of this national compact are declared also to extend to all other passages that may be made across any part of Central America. A similar treaty has already been concluded between the governments of the United States and of France.

So unexpected a conclusion, upon principles so new, in official circles, seems to have taken the diplomatic agents on the spot somewhat by surprise, and to have disconcerted their little plans of national aggrandisement. This has been exposed by the professedly accidental publication of a private and confidential letter from Sir H. L. Bulwer to Mr. Chatfield, dated Washington, Feb. 26. The tenor of this apparently frank but really astute communication is to check our agent from carrying out the aggressive spirit hitherto pursued by his Government, to acquaint him with the new policy

states of Europe consent to this arrangement (and we have no reason to suppose that a proposition so fair and honourable will be opposed by any), the energies of their people and ours will co-operate in promoting the success of the enterprise.

"Should such a work be constructed, under the common protection of all nations, for equal benefits to all, it would be neither just nor expedient that any great maritime state should command the communication. The territory through which the canal may be opened ought to be freed from the claims of any foreign power. No such power should occupy a position that would enable it hereafter to exercise so controlling an influence over the commerce of the world, or to obstruct a highway which ought to be dedicated to the common uses of mankind.

"The routes across the Isthmus of Tehuantepec and Panama, are also worthy of our serious consideration."—*President E. Taylor's Message*, Washington, Dec. 4, 1849.

* The Atlantic and Pacific Canal Company of New York.

† *New York Tribune*, May 8, 1850.

adopted, and to break the force of any disappointment it might occasion, by casting greater blame on Mr. Squiera, the American *chargé d'affaires*, who is distinctly said to be disapproved of by his own Government. There is in it a declaration that we "will not permit the Nicaraguans, whom we have expelled therefrom, to be again masters of the San Juan." Some expressions attributing weakness to the present United States Government would lead to a doubt whether it was ever intended to see the light of publicity. It may have been put forth to relieve the Governments of both countries from the by-play of their respective agents; but whether intentional or not, its publication is a real exposure, which proves that the advance made by the treaty is a triumph of justice, only ascribable to the growing integrity of the age, which has happily wrought a most important change of policy in the parties more immediately concerned in negotiating this treaty.

The present extraordinary flow of emigration to California has given an impetus to everything connected with the transit of the isthmus, and is likely to produce great results in a marvellously short space of time.

"The Company by whom the canal contract has been obtained from the Government of Nicaragua were, by the last accounts, taking active steps for the immediate establishment of the route through that country, by the temporary means of steamboats and coaches. An order is said to have been given for a light draught steamer and barge capable of carrying together 500 passengers, for the navigation of the San Juan, and post-coaches are contemplated for the short distance [less than sixteen miles] at the other end of the line, between the lakes and the Pacific."* Two months' hence the Company expect to convey passengers over land, *via* the lake and the river, about 220 geographical or 250 statute miles, in less than twenty-four hours, and from New York to San Francisco in not more than three weeks. Reckoning upon an average of 2,000 passengers per month, which is less than half the number now crossing the Isthmus at Chagres, and fixing the charge from Grey Town to San Juan of the south, at forty dollars, the company expect to clear at the least a million of dollars, or about 200,000*l.* annually for this item only, "and as the saving effected by the choice of this line is too palpable to admit of competition in any other part of the Isthmus, and they possess a monopoly as far as

* *The Times*, May 2, 1840.

Nicaragua is concerned, there is apparently no reason to distrust in any important degree these favourable conclusions."^a It is even anticipated by the sanguine undertakers that the canal may be completed in 1851.

This project has been preferred as the most practicable and desirable by Jeremy Bentham, Michel Chevalier, and others, and its superiority over all its rivals may now be regarded as a settled point.

The construction of a ship canal over the narrower part of the Isthmus from Chagres to Panama, within the territories of New Granada, was a favourite project of the younger Pitt, and was supported by Monsieur Guizot during his administration in 1843. The distance straight across the Isthmus at this point, according to a survey ordered by General Bolivar previous to 1830, was stated at twenty-nine geographical, or thirty-four statute miles. This project, the cost of which has been estimated as high as eight millions sterling, if not abandoned, has for the present given place to the easier undertaking of a railroad, which is now actually being made, and is proceeding as rapidly as North American energy can drive it, in the face of the natural obstacles and in spite of the insalubrity of the climate, a disadvantage to which the Nicaraguan line will probably be found much less exposed. More than forty-eight thousand persons, *en route* for San Francisco, passed over the Isthmus at this point during the year 1849, notwithstanding the difficulties of the transit by the river Chagres, and the swampy and broken road through the jungle to Panama, which is passed with difficulty even upon the sure-footed mule.

At the Isthmus of Tehuantepec, which is divided between the Mexican States of Oajaca and Vera Cruz, a road and even a canal have also been projected, by which to connect the river Coatzacoalcos with some small and swampy lagoons on the Pacific coast. Here the entire width from the Gulf of Mexico to the Pacific is nearly 140 statute miles, and the cost of a water communication calculated upon that of the Caledonian canal, which is taken as a model, is estimated by the projector at 2,400,000*l*. The Mexican Government by a decree of the 2nd March 1842, granted to Don José de Garay the exclusive privilege of executing this work with the right of tolls for fifty years, and the proprietorship of all the unoccupied territories extending over more than

^a From the *Times*, quoted by the *Nonconformist*, June 26, 1850.

thirty miles on either side of the line of communication. The Mexican legislature also provided that the transit should be open to all nations, and that the entire passage should be considered neutral territory. A survey was made between the years 1842 and 1843 by a scientific commission appointed by the projector and under the direction of Don Gaetano Moro, an account of which was published in London in June 1844.*

General Almonte and other parties in Mexico lately petitioned the Mexican congress to give them a charter of incorporation to enable them to connect the Gulf of Mexico with the Pacific Ocean by means of a railroad to commence at Vera Cruz, to be carried thence to the capital in fifteen years, and on to the Pacific in ten years more. † To which the Mexican senate have already responded by a decree for its construction. ‡

Thus it appears that no less than four lines of communication between the two oceans have been projected, and two of them, at least, are actually in process of formation.

These projects have already excited some degree of interest on behalf of Central America, and it can scarcely be questioned that that interest will ere long be greatly increased. The political and moral condition of the country already rises in importance, in the eyes of the statesman, the merchant, and the worldling; revolutions of states, which for years have been inquired into only on 'change, and which were seldom noticed by the periodical press, now occupy their earnest attention. The Christian has higher and more powerful motives to induce him to consider the position and the wants of its inhabitants; nor can it be anticipated that his knowledge and feelings will produce less results than the enterprise of the gold-seeker.

In April last, the war of races in Yucatan, which had ceased for a time, and which, it was hoped, had terminated, was recommenced by the Indians, who were apparently determined to carry it on with renewed activity. Benancio Pec, one of the native leaders, addressed a letter to the *Honduras Watchman*, dated from Cacao, 14th March, 1850, and published in that paper on the 11th of May, in which he speaks of a meeting he had with the Superintendent of Belize on the 23rd of the previous November at the port of Ascension, where, by treaties, he was led to expect British intervention to

* Survey of the Isthmus of Tehuantepec. London, Ackerman & Co. 1844.

† *The Times*, April 28, 1850.

‡ *New York Tribune*, May 29, 1850.

procure a reconciliation with the Government, and a suspension of hostilities for four months. The British mediator had then promised to send a schooner, in three weeks, to convey the Indian chief where he might ratify the said transaction with the Government commissioners. Benancio Pec had ordered a cessation of hostilities on the part of the Indians, and waited, with a number of officers, at the appointed place for the schooner. About a month after the time fixed, while he was yet at the port, where no schooner had arrived, the Government troops attacked his headquarters, committed many excesses, killing women, hanging children, and pillaging the property of the chief to the value of from ten to eleven thousand dollars. He closes his simple but touching protest by saying, "All this I have made known to the said Superintendent upwards of two months [ago], and until now I have received no answer. Thus I suppose that he came merely with the intention of imposing on me; for this reason I have addressed you this letter, in order to make it known." Thus it is plain that British interference and the supply of British muskets and gunpowder from Belize have not brought about the pacification of the Peninsula.

The commerce of British Honduras had suffered extensively from the late agitations in the States situated to the south, as well as in the country to the north of it.

On the 20th February 1849, Mr. Chatfield, on the part of Great Britain, negotiated a treaty of peace, commerce, and navigation, with Don José Maria Rodriguez on the part of the State of Guatemala, then under the Presidency of General Mariano Paredes.* This treaty declares the mutual friendship of the two governments, fixes the bounds of their trade, customs, and tonnage duties, &c., stipulates for the freedom, security, and equal rights of their respective peoples, exempts them from forced loans or military services, regulates the standing of diplomatic agents, the inheritance of property, &c., and provides that timely notice be given to residents in case of war.

The 13th article, after defining the civil liberty to be enjoyed respectively by the citizens of the republic, or the subjects of the monarchy in each other's dominions, adds, that "they shall

* A military commander of liberal tendencies and of good repute. This was before the return of General Carrera from his flight to Mexico, and during the short interval of power which the liberals then enjoyed.

not be disturbed, molested, or disquieted in any way on account of their religious creed, nor in the proper exercise of their religion in their own houses, or in places of worship destined for that purpose, conformably to the system of toleration established in the territories, dominions, and establishments of the two above contracting parties, inasmuch as they respect the religion of the nation in which they reside, as also the constitution, laws, and customs established." This is followed by a provision that each shall be at liberty to bury their dead in their own cemeteries which they shall have permission freely to establish.

By a subsequent decree of the Government of Guatemala, the port of Santo Tomas is constituted the only port of deposit and customs of that State from the 15th of April 1850. The revenue officials were to be removed to that place from Yzabal, on the Lake of Dulce, which has hitherto been the port of deposit. Santo Tomas is one of the finest harbours on the continent of America, and for several years has been settled by Belgian emigrants. Future settlers at this port are declared free from all general contributions, direct and indirect, and from all duties on articles of personal consumption for ten years.*

There has been no intimation hitherto of the actual evacuation of Grey-town or of Tiger Island; but, of course, this intelligence may be shortly expected. In the state of Honduras, an insurrection, arising out of the seizure of Tiger Island, and headed by Guardiola, has been successfully quelled. Its leader, who fled to San Salvador, has been banished, and others were imprisoned and shot. There are notices of troubles in the other states, and that General Carrera, late president and military ruler of the state of Guatemala, has lost his life in a guerilla engagement.

Every successive mail brings intelligence of a diplomatic warfare still carried on by Vice-Admiral Phipps Hornby on the Pacific coast, with the various Republican States, in which the menacing and insulting tone hitherto adopted by British agents is responded to by a calm and dignified moral attitude on the weaker side, which does great honour to the rulers of the Central States. Their respectful and firm replies are fully corroborative of the statements before made as to their general liberality of sentiment and ability as statesmen. It is probable that all the bluster so freely indulged in on the Vice-Admiral's part will be entirely thrown away, as he

* *The Times*, April 2, 1850.

too must soon be made acquainted with the altered policy of our Government with respect to these countries.

The settlement of the Nicaraguan treaty is of great promise, as it respects the future peace and prosperity of the long dismembered Central American republic. The treaty of peace between Great Britain and Guatemala is also encouraging. The announced death of Carrera, the late restorer of servile and sacerdotal power, is another event which would appear to facilitate the establishment of order and good government, and the much desired reunion of the five States under one federal head. The cessation of diplomatic intrigues which may be expected to follow upon the acknowledged neutrality of all the roads or canals which may be opened across Central America, is of itself fraught with advantages and hope.

The interest which now attaches to Central America on account of these contemplated lines of communication, is of the deepest kind. The importance of its influence on the whole world cannot be over estimated. It is, as yet, far from being duly appreciated or generally understood. "Not since the discovery of America has any event occurred of equal commercial importance with the construction of the Nicaraguan ship canal."* It will not only shorten the passage of vessels bound from Europe and the Atlantic ports of America to the shores of the Pacific about one-half, but it will bring India, China, Australia, all Eastern Asia and Oceania within the compass of a three or four months voyage from the western ports of Europe, and will draw closer together all the most remote regions of our globe. Nor are the benefits resulting from increased intercourse and proximity the only advantages which may be hoped for. The safety of life and property will be exceedingly increased—the hardships of thousands of our mariners will be lessened to an incalculable extent—but, above all, the facilities for benefiting our fellow-creatures and evangelizing the whole earth, will be greatly multiplied. With their increase, our responsibilities will be augmented. The triumphs of science, art, and human industry are designed to further the establishment of the kingdom of Heaven. Even now we may avail ourselves of them, and soon they will all be laid at the feet of Heaven's Anointed King.

Ere long Central America must become the great inter-oceanic portal—the entrepôt of the world—the storehouse of nations—the

* *New York Tribune*, April 30, 1850.

grand terminus of commerce—and the way-house of the busy multitudes who shall perambulate the earth at that rapidly approaching period, when “many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased.”

The labours of a few short years, dating from the absorbing and exciting present—a period fraught with the most intense interest and responsibility to every individual who lives—may tell upon future generations to an extent which we are little able to realize, but which we may be the means of effecting nevertheless. The influx of Anglo-Saxons to the various works about to be accomplished will be considerable. The amount of emigration that will probably follow to Central America and to the shores of the Pacific is incalculable. A little influence exercised betimes upon those of our fellow-countrymen who will thus become the founders of cities and of nations, may, with the blessing of God, produce a rich harvest of future good. A speedy occupation of the regions to which they are hastening, and of the minds of the aborigines and natives who thinly people them, may, with the same blessing, prevent much injury, which they must otherwise receive from their unsanctified visitors. The pre-occupation of the soil with the gospel of peace cannot but be followed with the tokens of the Divine approbation, and with incalculable blessings to the native, to the immigrant, and to future generations.

That God, who is Lord of the great harvest of human souls which he is preparing for himself, has in his Providence scattered a few of the vitalizing seeds of His kingdom upon the shores of this important country. At Belize, in British Honduras, a native church has been raised up. From this central nursery some amount of active native agency has already been thrust forth into the fields around it, and more of its pious vigour is preparing to follow. To the Christian reader this fact cannot but be matter of deep interest; if of Anglo-Saxon race, that interest must be much increased. If the vast territories of Spanish America, and the widespread dominion of the man of sin over its population, are of any importance in his view, the beginning which God has already made by raising up for himself a native church anxious to benefit their fellow-men in those benighted regions, will certainly fix his attention, arouse his sympathies, and, it is hoped, will call forth his cheerful aid for their encouragement and support.

PART II.

THE GOSPEL IN BRITISH HONDURAS.

CHAPTER I.

THE MISSION.—THE CHURCH FORMED.

1820-1840.

Divine Providence and Revelation—The Sword a hinderance to the Gospel—Belize at once a Colony and a *point d'appuis* for further enterprise—Its former moral state; Slavery, General Demoralization, Ignorance, Creole Wakes and Funeral Customs—Testimony of the Messrs. Angas—Their Religious Efforts—Colonel Arthur and the Friends of the Gospel—Good Results of their Labours—Mr. Bourne, the first Missionary—Benefits conferred by the house of Angas & Co.—The Mission House built—The Mosquito Mission—Death of Mr. and Mrs. Fleming—R. J. Andrew, Esq.—Mr. Wilson, his death—Mrs. Bourne's School—Mr. Bourne's labours, his fall—Efforts of Capt. Whittle and others—Arrival of Mr. Alexander Henderson—Preliminary Labours and first Success—A Church formed—Congregation and Schools—The Cholera—Increase and zeal of the Church—Opposition at the Barracks—Children of the garrison at the Mission School—The Black Corporal—The want of help—The Author's conversion—Mr. Henry Philpot sent out—His Labours and Death—The Day of Emancipation—Mr. Henderson's illness—Episcopal Influence exerted—Refusals to take an Oath—Trial for Murder—Commitment of Brother Davies—Exposures of the Trial—Systematic Military Dissoluteness—Slavery of the Soldiers—Militia Law and Penalties—General Order from Lord Hill—Death of Mr. W. Whetherall—Mr. Henderson's health and prospects.

"The beginning of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God."—Mark i. 1.

In the providential government of our world evil is set against evil, and the powers of darkness are neutralized and held in abeyance. The elements of destruction are, however, abroad, and though, by the exercise of Divine control, mankind is preserved in a probationary state, it is not possible that out of it alone any positive good can ever result.

Heavenly fruits have, however, at all times been produced in the corrupted soil of human depravity through the separate introduction of positive good in the form of a Divine Revelation—that good seed of the kingdom, which is at once the outward manifestation of truth and holiness, and the mean appointed of God to

implant a Divine principle of new life in the inner man, giving spiritual perception, enjoyment, and power to individual minds.

It is the glory of the Gospel that it *overcomes evil with good*. It transforms the depraved, ignorant, cruel, and rebellious creature, and altogether subdues, melts, raises, and ennobles him by the Divine influence of love, which, assimilating everything to itself with an irresistible power, is appointed, not only to people heaven with redeemed souls, but to restore guilty man to innocence, and a polluted world to purity and happiness, such as will approach to, if it may not equal, the bliss of the terrestrial paradise of God.

In the Divine economy, all political, scientific, and commercial developments are made subordinate to the interests of the Kingdom of Heaven, to the promotion of which they already contribute in proportion to the faithfulness of the disciples of Christ, God's chosen instruments, in turning them to the real because the eternal advantage of mankind. Not that the Christian may rejoice in injustice, or think that he can really profit by that "human wrath" which has broken down some apparent barriers to the evangelization of a country, such, for instance, as China or Mexico. Every Christian must condemn all deeds of blood, and ought to wash his hands of any participation in them. He knows, or should know, that these very circumstances are calculated to operate against his success. But while protesting against human oppression, the mandate of his heavenly King makes it incumbent upon him to preach the gospel to *every creature*—to the oppressed as well as to the oppressor. He may, therefore, or, rather, he must avail himself of such openings as the ruthless hand of violence may have made, although *his* conquests are those of love and peace. He knows that it is not under such auspices that the Gospel is most likely to be received, and he feels that it would bring little credit to the King of kings, if, as His servants, engaged in His spiritual warfare, he should imitate those Romish priests who followed the trail of the Spanish armies, and acted in alliance with them. No. The soldier of Christ is superior alike to outward discouragements or to apparent but false helps. He knows no animosities, no jealousies, no compromise with evil. Impelled by love, he says to every one who perpetrates a wrong, "Wherefore smitest thou thy fellow?" And if the providence of God permits, he addresses himself to his national or personal foe in the character of a friend and as a messenger of peace.

While British colonies, settlements, and military stations appear to have, in some respects, a peculiar claim upon the attention of the churches of Christ not only as fields of missionary labour, but as outposts of the Christian camp, they ought not wholly to absorb attention; and their occupation cannot in the least detract from the further obligation laid upon us to carry the gospel into the regions beyond them.

It is in this twofold aspect that the existence of such a community as that of British Honduras, on the borders of the central continent, is interesting and important to the churches. That God has there collected a people for His name, and is already using them in the work of His kingdom, is besides indicative of His purposes of mercy to that community, and to the people upon whose coasts they dwell. To the faithful disciple of the Son of God, their past vicissitudes, their condition and prospects, cannot be matters of indifference.

Till lately, "the Bay" was proverbial for licentiousness, dishonesty, and every kind of excess. Unlike the Pilgrim Fathers, who formed the northern settlements about the same period, the founders of Belize entailed no blessings upon their posterity. With the violence and spoliation in which they indulged, their successors inherited their impiety and immoral customs. Among the worst legacies thus received was the curse of slavery, with all its accompanying abominations. The only circumstances which modified some of its grossest features, as to the corporal severities inflicted by the woodcutters of the Bay upon their stolen property, were the facilities which there existed for the slaves' escape beyond British limits,* and the refusal of the Republican

* In a letter on slave labour, written by George Hyde, Esq., a leading merchant-mahogany-cutter, and slave-owner of Belize, dated at New River, 4th of March 1835, he says: "As for punishments or ill usage, you are aware (if ever so deserved) we dare not inflict it, so easy is their retreat to the Spaniards; in fact, we have just to put up with what work they choose to do. . . . Making money by negroes is impossible, nor do I think a man in this settlement, for many years, has done much more than pay his expenses." Further on, he says: "Now, if the Spaniards of these New Republics are actuated by motives of philanthropy in dispossessing people (who are in profound peace with them) of their *property*, and if the British Government do not wish to argue the matter of the negro restitution in a hostile way, surely two such persons (or parties), actuated by motives purely philanthropic, would not hesitate, as a compensation to slave proprietors, to indent them for a term of years—say 4 to 6—giving a valuation of 180*l.* currency, and manumit them. To do this with the whole Settlement would not

Government to restore to bondage those who had fled for refuge to its Free Institutions. It is probable that nothing but this prevented the full exhibition of the cruelties commonly practised by the West Indian planter; nor were there wanting examples of wrongs and of tortures inflicted, that could vie with those endured by the injured negroes in any other place. Once inured to the crime of man-stealing, and alive to the supposed advantage of growing rich on the labour of others, the British settlers in the Bay were not particular to a shade what might be the colour or the race of their victims. They soon learned to set as high a value upon the blood and sinews of the Red Aborigines or Wild Indians whom they could kidnap, as upon those of the darker skinned race of Ham, falsely alleged to have been accursed, only to give the pretext of a Divine sanction to human cupidity and wrong.* Thus were Spanish Indians and traders encouraged to entrap the *Indios Bravos*, and to sell them to the inhabitants of the Bay.

To the demoralizing effects of slavery must be added those resulting from the presence of an idle military force. Not only were the people of the Bay subject to the contaminating influence which the men-of-war sailors and officers occasionally exercised upon them, during their protracted sojourns in the harbour of Belize, but a regularly organized garrison was maintained, and military debauchery was superadded to the other baneful elements which polluted their moral atmosphere. The garrison of Belize has hitherto consisted of two or three companies of the West India regiments (generally the 2nd), which are composed of African soldiers officered by white men; and a small number of European artillerymen occupying St. George's Fort. Some of the consequences of the presence of this body of men will be referred to farther on.

Forty years ago there was not a place of worship in all the British territory, though it had been previously frequented by professed Protestants for about a century and a half. At that time, and for some time afterwards, the Sabbath-day could not be dis-

cost them more than 300,000*l.* each Government, they securing the time of indenture. The loss to proprietors would be great, as negroes here of late averaged nearly 300*l.* But I suspect most part would agree to it. It would be the means of setting at large from 3000 to 4000 people; but I am afraid the Guatemalians are aiming at something else."

* *Canaan*, not *Ham*, was accursed. See Gen. ix. 22, 25.

tinguished from the other days of the week by any outward tokens of respect, though, perhaps, it might be by visibly increased dissipation. The market was in full activity, the stores were unobscured, the wharfs and barradoers were covered with labourers beating off and squaring the mahogany, or chipping logwood; the shipping in the harbour, which had probably never yet displayed a Bethel flag, were loading or discharging their cargoes. The gregarious were filled with sailors and negroes; and the government chaplain, after reading the Anglican liturgy in the court-house to a few more or less sedate hearers, might be seen deliberately superintending his own negroes at work by the waterside. In short, ignorance, intemperance, profanity, and the lust of gain openly triumphed over decorum as well as religion.

The looseness of morals then common to the West Indies was, perhaps, surpassed in the Bay. Marriage was the exception, and concubinage the rule, in all ranks of the community.* Merchants, planters, clerks, mechanics, and even the *chaplain*, openly outraged the laws of God and man in this respect, and publicly acknowledged and gloried in the violation; and to the infamy of slavery be it recorded that up to a much later date, "*property* was kept about the premises of the slave-owner for the purpose of breeding and raising stock!"†

Hospitality, or rather conviviality, was unbounded. Every sideboard in the houses of the privileged class was furnished with large decanters of spirits, and every one belonging to that class felt at liberty to help themselves unasked. To the present day, though this freedom has happily disappeared, excess of drinking prevails to a very great extent, notwithstanding that the progress of the drunkard and of the habitual dram-drinker is awfully rapid in such a climate, and in the face of continually recurring examples of its fatal consequences.

The ignorance and superstition which reigned undisturbed in the minds of the people, whether bond or free, must in a great measure be left for the reader's own imagination to portray. Of course there were no schools; no books of any kind were accessible to any but the few whose time and attention were absorbed by their mahogany and logwood works, the management of their slaves, or

* "Few married men, yet each a wife."—Native rhymes, entitled "The Creole."

† Private MS. Journal, 1836.

the sale of their merchandise. They were too eagerly bent on acquiring wealth, to cultivate even their own intellects or those of their illegitimate children; and when the appetite for accumulation was satisfied, they left the country to spend their gains elsewhere. By far the greater number of the people being slaves and Africans, even their masters and mistresses were somewhat infected by the delusions, and drawn into the crimes of Obeahism.* The Belize creole, whatever his parentage, was left a prey to every temptation, and his mind was occupied only with vague superstitions learned from heathenish Africans, dissolute Europeans, papistical Spaniards, and other creoles from the West India Islands, equally ignorant and depraved with himself. The intervals of labour were devoted to noisy merriment, and, as is the case with the Ladinós of the interior, even funerals afforded them opportunities for revelry.

If a slave-owner died, all his dependants and friends came together to be feasted; and the wife or mistress and her children prepared the house and provided provisions and plenty of ardent spirits. The corpse, dressed in its best clothes, was laid upon a bed and *waked* during the whole night. Cards, dice, back-gammon, with strong drink and spiced wine, helped to beguile its watches, during which the loud laugh and the profane oath were unrestrained. In the negro yard below, "the sheek'ka" and the drum "proclaimed the sport, the song, the dance, and various dream." † Sometimes a tent was erected, where rum, coffee, and ginger-tea were dispensed to all who chose to come and make free. After a night thus spent, the corpse was carried in the morning to the churchyard, the coffin being borne by labourers, who in their progress used to run up and down the streets and lanes with their burden, knocking at some door or doors, perhaps visiting some of the friends of the deceased, professing to be impelled by him, or to be contending with the spirit who opposed the interment of the body. At length some well known friend came forward, speaking soothingly to the dead, and calling him Brother, urged him to go home, and promised him rest and blessing. They then moved all together towards the grave, and

* Miss Clarissa Farlow, a proprietress of land, houses, and slaves, who died about 1841, is to this day popularly regarded as having been possessed of supernatural powers; and whether by the practices of Obeah, or by other means, she is believed to have exercised control over the lives of several of her numerous suitors and enemies.

† The different African nations and creoles, each in parties.—Creole rhymes.

the sheek'ka's jingle, the voice of song, and latterly, the funeral service of the Established Church were mingled together in the closing scene.

In all the particulars enumerated, and in many other less palpable evils, a great change has taken place in the tone and manners of society at Belize. This change, which will be further alluded to, is attributable only to the direct and indirect influence of the Gospel, as it has been introduced by individuals more or less imbued with its principles.

In the years 1802 and 1803, the Messrs. Angas, pious merchants of Newcastle, already traded to Belize. The testimony of their captains as to its condition then is, that there was probably not a more wicked place under heaven. During one of his visits, Capt. W. H. Angas was obliged to perform the burial-service over the grave of one of his deceased seamen, because the clergyman was drunk, and could not do his duty.

During the Superintendence of Colonel John Nugent Smith, the first episcopal place of worship was erected (in 1812), and Mr. John Armstrong, the first evangelical clergyman, arrived in the Settlement during the same year.

As it cannot be denied that the mercantile influence of our countrymen, as well as that of our public functionaries, soldiers, sailors, or emigrants, is, in the aggregate, anything but promotive of the best interests of the people where Providence may have cast them, it is refreshing to notice, and a privilege to record, any exceptions to the general rule.

The house of Angas and Co. blended with their mercantile objects the more elevated and enduring interests of the Kingdom of Heaven. They were not only mindful of the moral destitution of the inhabitants of Central America, but they took great pains to inform themselves of its details and peculiar features; and by the employment of godly commanders in their ships, and pious agents and clerks in their stores; by the introduction of good books, and by their general readiness to help forward every good work, they consecrated their influence to God, and became a blessing to the country. Interested themselves in the spread of the Gospel in this dark land, they made it their business to enlist the sympathies of others; and in 1820 they called the attention of several of the then existing missionary societies to British Honduras and the

Mosquito Shore, as suitable fields for their benevolent efforts, at the same time offering a free passage in their traders, and local countenance and assistance to any missionaries or teachers who might be sent.

Colonel George Arthur* at that time Superintendent of the Settlement, was decidedly interested in its moral and religious improvement, in which he was seconded by Captain Brown Willis, his secretary, and Mr. John Armstrong, his chaplain: their united efforts were supported by the disinterested labours of the Superintendent's esteemed lady, and two other English ladies, Mrs. Bennett and Mrs. Hyde, the wives of two of the leading merchants in the place. These three "chief women" did something for the moral elevation of the negroes, whilst they endeavoured to ameliorate the class in which they themselves moved; and together with the gentlemen before named, the pious captains and agents of the house of Angas and Co., Mr. Henry Moore, the church school-master, and one or two private individuals, they were the only persons who made a decided profession of godliness in this most corrupt community.

During this period the first assault upon the impiety and ignorance of the Settlers was made. Some efforts to elevate the minds of the poorer classes were at least partially successful. The free school was first opened, and there were some few adults and children, who were benefited by the instructions given, and others who gave evidence of saving faith.

Robert, king of the Mosquito nation, having frequently expressed himself favourable to the residence of teachers among his subjects, applications were made by Mr. Armstrong to the Church Missionary Society, and by G. F. Angas, Esq., of the house of Angas and Co., to the Wesleyan Methodist, and to the Baptist Missionary Societies, to send some of their agents to those shores. As a result of these appeals the Baptist Missionary Society determined to send a missionary to British Honduras. The communication kept up between Belize and the interior, induced the committee of that society to speak of their proposed station there, as one of "peculiar importance," and as "presenting a post from which at no very distant period the light of Divine truth might probably be dispersed through these distant

* See page 308.

regions." In accepting the liberal tender of a free passage, made by the Messrs. Angas, they add, that they feel it to be "their duty to embrace it;" and consequently, in March 1822, Mr. Joseph Bourne, of Bradford Academy, was designated at New Court chapel, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, and with Mrs. Bourne sailed for Honduras in the course of the following month.*

In the month of June 1822, Mr. and Mrs. Bourne arrived at Belise, and on the 3rd of December of the same year the latter was removed by the hand of death.†

Shortly after the arrival of Mr. Bourne, Colonel Arthur, and with him almost all the persons composing the little band of religiously disposed and influential residents before-named, finally left the Settlement. General Pye then became Superintendent until the 15th January 1823, when General Codd arrived to succeed him. The former, with some of the magistrates, who had not sympathised in the evangelical labours of Colonel Arthur and his friends, united in active measures to oppose Mr. Bourne and the agents of the house of Angas, who were almost the only friends of religion then remaining. Mr. John Armstrong was succeeded by Mr. Matthew Newport as chaplain. From that time Dissenters ceased to receive any encouragement from those in authority, or any co-operation from the Established Church.

The agents of the house of Angas and Co., assisted by only one or two more pious persons, continued their support and active exertions in favour of the Gospel. Besides the other and far greater benefits conferred by that firm, they devoted the sum of 30*l.* annually from their house at Belise, for the promotion of the mission there. In England the influence of the house was also exerted for the cause, and for the general welfare and real prosperity of the settlement. G. F. Angas, Esq., assisted by Colonel Arthur after his return to England, was instrumental in getting an act of Parliament passed for the liberation of the aboriginal slaves who were kept in unlawful bondage in British Honduras. In the year 1824 some 200 or 300 Indians were set free as the result of these efforts, and, subsequently, during Colonel MacDonald's Superintendance,

* Dr. Cox's "History of the Baptist Missionary Society," vol. i. p. 43. "History of the Baptist Churches in the North of England," p. 269; and "Baptist Magazine," 1822, p. 22.

† "Missionary Herald" for May 1823.

the like justice was extended to some who were held in the same condition by British subjects on the Mosquito Shore. Whatever odium the oppressor and the enemies of the Gospel may have heaped upon the instruments of these benefits, there are already those in Belize who honour their faithfulness, and give glory to God for the happy results.

In the spring of 1824 Mr. Bourne, who had already met with strenuous opposition, visited the southern ports of Omoa and Yzabal. On his return to Belize he superintended the erection of a meeting-house and missionary residence there, towards which the committee thought it probable that considerable aid would be furnished on the spot. Belize having been selected as the central or chief station of the society's operations, a second station, in connection with it, was projected on the Mosquito Shore.

On Mr. Deakin, of Birmingham, presenting the society with 150*l.* towards the Mosquito mission, Mr. and Mrs. Fleming, and an infant child, sailed on the 12th May in the *Ocean*, Captain Whittle, in the employ of Messrs. Angas and Co., and arrived at Belize after a passage of seven weeks, intending to proceed to "the Shore."

Mr. John Fleming had been an itinerant preacher in Wiltshire, and was set apart for Central America at Mr. Upton's meeting-house, Church-street, Blackfriars. From Belize he wrote an interesting letter to Mr. Dyer, the secretary of the society, dated the 9th August 1824, which appeared in the *Missionary Herald* of the following November. In it he gives an affecting account of the state of the people in British Honduras, describes an interview with some of the Mosquito Indians, and relates his first impressions. But, alas! two short months only were permitted to elapse before he fell a victim to the climate. He died on the 13th of September, after an illness of five days only; in four days more his widow was also numbered with the dead, and their infant child followed her soon after.*

Early in the next year (1825) R. J. Andrew, Esq., arrived at Belize as the partner and representative of the house of Angas and Co. Soon afterwards Mr. Bourne completed the mission-house and residence, the plan of which he had ably designed, and

* "Baptist Magazine," 1824, pp. 226, 266, 269, 498, 544. Annual Reports of the Baptist Missionary Society for 1824, pp. 26, 30, and 1825, p. 20; and private journals and letters.

being a carpenter by trade, he also diligently directed and assisted in its erection. The building was at once commodious, handsome, and well situated by the sea-shore on the north side of Belize. On the 12th of April, Mr. Andrew states that the church, then newly formed, consisted of Mr. and Mrs. Potts and two black men, and that on the previous Sabbath their number at the Lord's table was swelled to "seven, by the addition of Captain Whittle, Mr. Wilson, and himself." During the same month the entire congregation was about twenty persons. In a letter from Mr. Bourne himself, dated the 24th of that month, he says, "Last ordinance-day we had twelve in number, including whites, blacks, and browns."

On the 1st of May, "the ordinance of believers' baptism was administered for the first time in Belize, to Eleanor Leaver and another woman of colour. They were immersed near the chapel, in the sea, in the presence of but few spectators." During this month Mr. Andrew and Mr. Wilson went to Guatemala on the business of their house. They were absent about four months, during which they collected interesting information concerning the moral state of the interior, and by their conduct and conversation probably bore the first living testimony to the Gospel which had ever penetrated into that dark land.

Mr. James Wilson, in writing from Belize to a lady in England, on the 6th September 1826, complains of the want of outward privileges, and says, "This place, in a moral and religious point of view, is truly a dry and barren land...my soul has been famished for want of spiritual food—for lack of those means of grace which I enjoyed in such rich plenty in dear Scotland." With a few more well-disposed young men Mr. Wilson assisted to conduct prayer-meetings at the houses of the poor black people, and a small Sunday-school at Freetown. He died at Belize in the peace of the Gospel, on the 24th of November of the same year.*

The largest number of communicants ever reported by Mr. Bourne to the society was twenty-one, in a letter of the 7th of June 1826. In the following year he visited New York, and formed a second matrimonial connection, by which the mission was decidedly benefited, as Mrs. Bourne laboured among the coloured women, meeting with them for prayer. She also con-

* See "Memoir of James Wilson. London, 1839."

ducted a school, in which some young ladies received good impressions, which were subsequently confirmed. The number of her scholars was from twenty-five to thirty, and not being of the poorer class they proved a source of considerable emolument.*

In a letter, dated the 30th July 1830, Mr. Bourne refers to the great changes that had taken place in the state of Guatemala. He says, "Some time since thirty ecclesiastics, including the archbishop, were escorted by a guard of soldiers from the capital to a seaport near us (Yzabal), from whence they were brought here, and afterwards taken to the Havanna. Twelve of them asked to be permitted to see the interior of the chapel. Numbers of others besides left the country through fright and came here. One aged man, a vicar, came all the way by land (through Peten) to this place, and died the following night."

During the year 1831 there was a scarcity of provisions in Belize. Wheaten flour rose to from 8*l.* to 10*l.* per barrel, and salt butter was sold at two dollars (or 8*s.* 4*d.*) per pound. In the following year the Settlement was desolated by a hurricane, which did much damage to property, and produced a famine.

From 1830 to the close of 1834, Mr. Bourne paid occasional visits to Mullin's River, Stann Creek, and other small settlements along shore. He also ascended some of the rivers, and preached at certain mahogany works. In the society's report many earnest desires are expressed, that "these fine and extensive countries, so long the seat of Popery in its lowest and most degraded forms, might be blessed with the diffusion of that sacred light which shall guide them in the road to happiness and God." There is, however, no record of any material progress in mission work during this period. When Mr. Bourne had been twelve years and a half in British Honduras, some unfavourable reports concerning him induced the committee to remove him to their station in the Bahama Islands, where he continued in connection with their other missionaries for a short time. In the society's report for the year 1837 (p. 29), the committee say, "We deeply regret to add that a subsequent letter states, that charges had been made against Mr. Bourne, seriously implicating his moral character. Investigation was immediately made, and as there appeared too much reason to believe they were true, it was notified that Mr.

* "Baptist Magazine," 1834, p. 466; 1836, p. 399; and 1830, p. 637.

Bourne's connection with the society had ceased, and he has since left the colony.*

Subsequently Mr. Bourne returned to British Honduras, and fixed his residence there. He soon after fully justified the committee in the steps they had taken, by living in open immorality. He also laid claim (in 1840) to the ground upon which the mission-house was built, and tried to enforce it by law. It was then made apparent by his own correspondence with the secretary, that he had purchased the lot with the society's money, though the bill of sale was in his own name. Soon after the trial the Superintendent seeing him on the parade-ground during a review, publicly spurned him from the place, and he remains to this day a blighted monument of the withering power of sin, and a gloomy beacon to all unstable professors.

During this period the Bethel flag was occasionally seen floating in the harbour, and the efforts of Captain Whittle, and of others in the same employ, to benefit their fellow-creatures, were not confined to seamen. They frequently preached among the coloured people, and their visits were refreshing to the few whose hearts were set upon "the consolation of Israel." A Wesleyan mission was also established at Belize. The education of the children of the poor was, however, still neglected, and there was little or no change in the general aspect of society. The pious and active agents of the house of Angas and Co. had died or left the Settlement, and their places were supplied by others less devoted to the Gospel. For several years the prospects of the mission were dreary in the extreme,† though the readiness of the people to be taught seemed to call more loudly than ever for the efforts of the faithful. It was in this position that Mr. Alexander Henderson found the mission interest when he arrived at Belize with his wife and first child, on the 20th of November 1834.‡

* See "Baptist Magazine" for 1830, p. 587; 1832, p. 230; 1831, p. 218. Report for 1834, p. 26.

† Dr. Cox, in his "History of the Baptist Mission," vol. ii. p. 269, says that the church under Mr. Bourne's care was "undistinguished by great enlargement." The "Missionary Herald" for July 1840, p. 108, says, "The history of the station during his (Mr. Bourne's) residence, was fraught with disappointment."

‡ Alexander Henderson was born at Carnbee, in Fifeshire, on the 14th of October, 1803: the 27th son of Mr. Thomas Henderson, for many years a well-known general

Mr. Henderson who had left a little church, which was the fruit of his own labours, at Hemyock in Devonshire, was at that time in the full vigour of manhood. To a lively piety, simple and comprehensive views of Scripture truth, and unflinching dealer, and a respected elder of that parish. He was educated chiefly at the parochial school, and was an advanced scholar. At the age of fifteen he was apprenticed to a nurseryman, in which capacity he afterwards spent two years at Edinburgh. When twenty years of age he went to reside at Anstruther (in the house in which Dr. Chalmers was born), where he followed the occupation of a clothier. In November 1834, he resumed his former business, and went to London as a gardener. Sent to France by a metropolitan house he resided at Rouen in Normandy, as a propagator of young hot-house plants for a nursery establishment. Here he remained as foreman from December 1835 to July 1839. During the interval he was sent to London to supply the trade with roses, which at that time were extensively imported from those nursery-grounds. All this while Mr. Henderson was destitute of the Divine life, or light in his soul. It was at Rouen, in a land of papal darkness, that he was first enlightened. The desecration of the Sabbath which prevailed there being distasteful to him, he made an effort to assemble the few professing Protestants for the purpose of worship. Into their little assembly the providence of God directed a Mr. Page, who spoke to them of a Saviour, and seemed as an angel sent of God. Mr. Henderson's mind was made the subject of conviction, and the instrument of his awakening kindly remained with him for several weeks, till his doubts and fears being chased away, he obtained peace by believing in Jesus.

On returning to England he spent six months in preparing himself for the duties of a teacher at the Borough-road School. Having afterwards settled in Devonshire as a schoolmaster, he was encouraged by some persons of wealth and influence connected with the Established Church. Here his mind was more fully opened to receive the truths of the Scriptures. Writing to his friends in Scotland he says, "I trust I have not only learned theoretically, but experienced truly and happily, that religion is a thing of Heaven's gift, and not acquired by education, inherited from parents, nor yet to be taken up when we choose."

About two years after his return to England his attention was directed to the subject of believers' baptism. He studied the Scriptures on this point, together with Mr. W. Barnes, now pastor at Trowbridge, in Wiltshire. Both of them came to the conclusion that they ought to follow Christ by a public profession in this ordinance, and they were immersed together at the Baptist chapel at Prescott, in March or April, 1832. By this act Mr. Henderson forfeited the countenance of his influential patrons; but his labours had already commended themselves to the poor people of the retired village of Hemyock, and he retained his scholars, though under circumstances of poverty and opposition. Nevertheless, a little church sprang up under his scriptural instructions. In March 1833, he was married to Mary Anne Lovell, of Taunton. A daughter born to them while they were yet in England was named Page, after his spiritual father. A parish apprentice afflicted with partial blindness, whom he found breaking stones on the road, was prevailed upon to become one of his scholars. Subsequently this young man was converted, and made so much progress that some time after Mr. Henderson's departure he was chosen pastor of the little flock, and continued in that office many years with credit, until he exchanged it for another similar charge.

Animated with zeal for Christ, and a love to perishing souls, Mr. Henderson determined to give himself to the work of foreign missions. Having offered himself, he was

tegrity, he united independence and originality of thought, and the enterprise and perseverance common to his countrymen.

In the condition of the mission church, as well as in the unbroken field around it, there was ample scope for all the energy of mind which the newly-arrived missionary could bring to bear upon it. On looking back to this period, Mr. Henderson says that he found the mission "a wreck." Such was the want of evidences of piety in those who were accounted members, so great was their ignorance, and such were the irregularities in their mode of proceeding as a church, that Mr. Henderson, whom they were prepared to receive as their pastor, felt it his duty to renounce the connection, and to prepare to lay anew the foundation of the spiritual house.

Among other changes which had crept into the church since its formation, was that of a professed willingness to admit the unbaptized to the Lord's table.

Mr. Henderson commenced his labours by preaching the Gospel and expounding the Scriptures. In doing this he addressed himself to all; but more particularly to the most degraded classes of the people. African slaves, soldiers, and discharged pensioners, shared largely in his attentions and solicitude. The two suburban districts of Freetown and Queen Charlotte's were frequently visited. Occasionally he ascended the Belize river, and preached to the labourers upon its banks. He also immediately opened schools on the mission premises, himself taking charge of the older boys and girls, and Mrs. Henderson teaching the infants. In these schools no kind of catechism was used, and though the instructions were decidedly biblical and religious, the particular tenets of no one sect were inculcated there. By such efforts the attention of the people was arrested, their confidence was in many instances gained, and God was soon pleased to influence the hearts of a few by his all-subduing grace.*

accepted by the Baptist Missionary Society, and sailed for Belize with his wife and child, in the *Caleb Angus*, on the 3rd of October 1834.

It may be added, that about the time he was in Anstruther, Mr. Henderson told his father that he had an impression on his mind that at some period of his life he would become a *preacher*, although he could not perceive how it was to be accomplished. Until this presentiment was realized, his heart and mind were not in the work that filled his hands. The first serious impression made upon him was by a sermon he heard in Leith Walk, Edinburgh.

* See "Baptist Magazine," 1835, pp. 119 and 499.

Mr. Edward Adams, a native of the state of Ohio, in North America, by profession an Independent and by trade a carpenter, had lately come to settle at Belise. After some intercourse with Mr. Henderson, he felt it his duty to follow the Lord in the ordinance of baptism. He and his wife were among the first who were baptized by Mr. Henderson in Honduras.

Finding that they were of one heart and mind in things pertaining to Christ's kingdom, Mr. Henderson and Mr. Adams deliberately and prayerfully constituted themselves a church of Christ, having a special regard to the promise of the King of Zion recorded in Matthew xviii. 18 to 20; upon which they acted, looking for the guidance of the Holy Spirit as members together of the visible body of Christ. These two disciples then united to receive the first applicant for church fellowship upon a profession of his faith. Those three then received the next, and they were soon blessed with greater increase. In all matters of doctrine, church government, discipline, or order, the Bible, and the Bible alone, was regarded as the all sufficient rule and authority. No human creed or code whatever was recognised by the church, which regarded the power committed to it as purely executive, and not legislative. In the application of the Divine law, the church sought and expected the guidance of the Holy Spirit, the Comforter, as promised to the church in its collective capacity.

No candidate for the ordinance of baptism was directed to apply to the church in the first instance; but after that ordinance had been fulfilled upon the personal responsibility of the parties administering and receiving it, they were directed to apply for admission to the household of God, when every member of that family was considered as participating in the act of reception, and consequently in the privileges, duties, and responsibilities implied.

The church having been formed upon the principle of agreement,* they felt it their duty to "endeavour to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace;" and being "one body" they desired to eschew divisions, and to obey the apostolical injunction to "be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment."† As the Scriptures gave them neither warrant nor example (except such as should be reprobated) of a church divided

* "If two of you shall agree on earth as touching anything that they shall ask, &c." —Matth. xviii. 19.

† 1 Cor. i. 10.

either in heart or in appearance, they adopted from the first the scriptural practice of terminating their deliberations and taking action as a body only, by the unanimous consent of all the members. No church business of any kind has, therefore, ever been put to the vote, nor any division taken on any one occasion, since its formation in 1835.*

A few of the members of the church formed by Mr. Bourne afterwards united themselves to the new church. Some who offered themselves were rejected, and others never applied for admission.

Eight months after his arrival, Mr. Henderson, writing to the Committee (on the 15th of June 1835), stated that the congregation was already more than doubled, and the Sabbath school, which when he came might consist of seven or eight scholars, had risen to upwards of a hundred. There were then three candidates for baptism. In the infant school, consisting already of more than seventy children, Mrs. Henderson was in future to be assisted by Miss Margaret Smith, a Wesleyan sister, one of the survivors of the Poyesian emigration, who had been converted by Mr. Pilley's instrumentality. This aid had become the more necessary as Mrs. Henderson's family had now increased, and her health began to be affected by the climate. Thirty boys already attended the day-school, while more than fifty apprentices, no longer slaves in name, were taught gratuitously in an evening school opened expressly for them. In this adult school, many of the freed negroes qualified themselves to receive the grant of a New Testament and psalter, made by the British and Foreign Bible Society to all apprenticed labourers who should be able to read it.

In another letter of the 1st of August of the same year, two hundred day scholars are reported. The congregation, though improving, was not overflowing; but the exposition of the Word of God was attracting attention, and especially that of the young men.

Early in 1836, Mr. Henderson visited the Yucatecan post of Bacalar, and distributed some Spanish Bibles and tracts, which were gladly received. The Society's report for that year testifies

* During the first fifteen years of its existence, as will be seen, the church has had trials and afflictions. It is now composed of about 200 members, and continues to be both peaceable and prosperous in itself, and in some measure useful to those around it.

† See "Baptist Magazine," 1836, p. 66.

that "Mr. Henderson had been most diligently engaged in publishing the Word of Life, and in efforts to promote the cause of education. The state of the church had required much patient and judicious attention to Gospel discipline; a few had been added, and the spirit of concern for the eternal welfare of those around them began to prevail among the members. Mr. Henderson had made repeated excursions into the interior [of British Honduras, by the river Belize]: he was heard with grateful attention in various places, where he proclaimed the Gospel."*

Belize was now visited by the cholera, and numbers were swept away by it, but in many cases it produced a salutary effect. Mr. Henderson writes concerning it,—“I do hope that the visitation has been blessed to the souls of many. Our place of worship is now beginning to be too strait for us.” It produced, however, an opposite effect upon the schools, for in consequence of the removal of many families to the keys and rivers, the attendance suffered considerable diminution. Seven or eight of the scholars died, some of whom gave a pleasing testimony to the blessed effects of the instructions they had received. From this time the ordinance of baptism was administered about once a month, or oftener, to numbers varying from two to ten. Another wooden building was erected by the side of the meeting-house, for the accommodation of the schools, at a considerable expense to the Society.†

A letter from Mr. Henderson to the Society, of the 6th of July 1837, is said to contain “gratifying evidence of his success in the very necessary work of education, and of the zeal evinced by the church under his care (now consisting of forty-one members) to help in raising funds for the support of the mission. From these local resources, nearly 200*l.* were furnished towards the expenses of the station in the eleven months preceding.”‡ On the occasion of a visit which Mr. Henderson received from a Central American gentleman, who was desirous of having his son educated, the committee say, “It would be of incalculable importance to introduce truly Christian and competent teachers into the vast provinces of what was Spanish America; and it may be hoped that ere long something will be done to accomplish this.”§ The Society’s report for this year|| states that, “the mission at Belize has

* See Report for 1836, p. 25.

† “Baptist Magazine,” 1837, p. 516.

‡ See “Baptist Magazine,” 1837, p. 138.

§ *Ibid.*

|| Report for 1837, p. 29.

been favoured with considerable prosperity: the congregation continues to increase, and several additions have been made to the church; while a growing concern for the welfare of their ignorant neighbours proves that the members are advancing in the knowledge and spirit of the Gospel."

The African soldiers composing the garrison, and their families, located at Freetown barracks, were frequently visited by Mr. Henderson, and God had been graciously pleased so to bless his labours there that several of both sexes had become members of the church. On one occasion, the pastor went to the married men's quarters to converse with a sick sister, who was a soldier's wife. While engaged in prayer, a dashing young officer intruded upon him, ordered him to desist, and to leave the barracks forthwith. Finding that he was utterly disregarded, he went off in search of sufficient physical force to drag the recusant from his knees and expel him with violence; but ere he returned Mr. Henderson had ended his visit and retired. A report of this outrage was forwarded through the Society to the Horse Guards, and some months after the missionary received an unexpected visit from the Commander-in-Chief, then Colonel McDonald, who had been directed by order of the Duke of Wellington to inform Mr. Henderson in person that he was at full liberty to visit the barracks, and to distribute tracts and instruct the people, as he had been wont to do.

The schools, which were conducted on the British system, so far eclipsed any other attempts that were made in the Settlement, that Mr. Henderson was soon after officially appointed schoolmaster to the regiment, with a sergeant's pay. Consequently, some thirty or forty black children were daily driven from the barracks to the mission school, a distance of about two miles, by an African corporal carrying a long white wand in his hand. Among this noisy band were about a dozen recruits. These were African boys who had but just been rescued by British cruisers from slavers during the middle passage, or on the coasts of Cuba. They had been enlisted professedly as *volunteers*, and were, of course, bound to the service for a period of twenty or thirty years. At first they could not speak even the creole English, but they were fine steady youths, and their progress was so rapid, and their improvement so marked, as to elicit the unqualified approbation of the superior

officers, who sent their writing books to head-quarters as specimens of what raw African boys might be taught to do.

The black corporal who acted as shepherd to this sable flock was in the habit of leaving his charge at the schoolhouse door, and spending the time till school was ended at a "grog-shop," whence he would return to fetch them, by no means improved by his pastime. Mr. Henderson made several unsuccessful attempts to persuade him to remain with the children and share in their instructions, which he needed as much as any of his charge. He was at length prevailed upon to do so, and took his seat at the head of a form entirely occupied by the African recruits, dressed in their white military jackets.

Though the advanced age and intellectual obtuseness of the corporal made the acquisition of the alphabet a work of great labour and much time, the kind attention which he received, and the sober pleasure of acquiring knowledge, induced him to persevere and to abandon his former habits. Besides the more mechanical processes of reading and writing, he was taught, together with the children, many Scripture facts and evangelical doctrines. And, though to all appearance as unpromising a scholar as could have been selected, his profiting after many months became apparent to all. Subsequently, the corporal joined a class of inquirers to whom Mr. Henderson devoted some evening hours, and continued to attend it for years. At length he made a public confession of godliness, became a member of the church, and has walked in the ways of the Lord ever since. He has now obtained his discharge from the army with a pension for long service, and is a regular attendant at the public worship of the church.

About this period the increased labours of the station appeared to demand an augmented agency, and Mr. Henderson laid the matter before the Committee, in a letter dated September the 6th 1837. In it he states that there were upwards of 200 scholars present daily. The services of a second female teacher had also been engaged. She was a sister of colour, who generously renounced her small pittance for the benefit of the mission, though at the same time supporting herself and child by washing clothes and baking bread. Ten persons had been immersed on the Lord's day previous. In a subsequent letter he adds, that on the 1st of October, six more followed their Lord in that ordinance. Among

them was an European youth of nineteen, who had been assisting in the school for a few weeks. "At that time," says Mr. Henderson, "his infidel views and hostility to godliness made me rather pleased when he found another employ. Soon after I found him combating his companions with the very weapons which, but a little before, I had used against him. As they could not silence him, he was compelled to bear the epithets 'cracked,' 'fool,' &c. He has become even 'more foolish in their eyes' by baptism.* Thus you will perceive our number is increasing, although we do not make this ordinance synonymous with membership. The congregation is also improving, still there is room, but this cannot be the case much longer."

To these extracts the committee add an announcement that Mr. Henry Philpot, a member of the church at Canterbury, under the care of Mr. W. Matthews, was about leaving for Belize to assist "their indefatigable friend, Mr. Henderson, in the varied and important labours in progress at the station." On this occasion the Messrs. Angas and Co. acted with their usual liberality with regard to the passage. Mr. Philpot arrived at Belize on the 30th of April 1838, and "was received by Mr. and Mrs. Henderson with most affectionate cordiality."†

On Mr. Philpot's arrival, Mr. Adams, now become a deacon of the church, and a house-builder in an extensive way, opened, as a preaching station, his spacious residence, situated at the south end of the town, nearly the opposite extremity to that where the mission premises are situated. Here, after the opening, Mr. Philpot preached regularly on the Sabbath afternoon for some weeks. He also assisted in the schools, for which he had been trained at the Borough Road Institution. By his gentle and unassuming bearing he soon endeared himself to many, and his services, which were thought to be much needed, were generally acceptable. But the hopes raised by his arrival were soon, alas! to be turned into sorrow.

The seeds of a pulmonary complaint which Mr. Philpot had brought with him from England, instead of disappearing, as had

* The author, who is here alluded to, had arrived in the Settlement eleven months before with a body of emigrants, who had mutinied and changed the destination of the vessel in which they had embarked for the projected settlement in Vera Paz, taking her to Belize. See page 137.

† "Baptist Magazine," 1838, pp. 84, 406; Report for 1838, p. 80.

been fondly hoped, were stimulated into more rapid action by the fervours of a tropical climate at the most trying season of the year; and in four months after his arrival, on the 7th of September, his departure to a better world took place. He was interred on the same day in the presence of a numerous and deeply affected company. The spot chosen for his grave was on the mission premises, close under one of the school-room windows, where he had been accustomed to meet for prayer with a brother, who had hoped to find and to retain in him a confidential Christian friend. He was the first in Belize who was interred according to the newly conceded rights of Dissenters (respecting births, deaths, and marriages). A plain but neat piece of masonry was erected over his grave by an English workman at his own charge.

Thus did the undivided labours of the station, together with the pastoral care of a church of about sixty members, once more devolve upon Mr. Henderson, "whose own health," say the committee, "has been impaired of late, and who is very importunate that help should be sent him without delay."*

Only a short time before this afflictive stroke, the little community of Belize was variously agitated by that ever memorable event—the emancipation of the much-injured slaves on the 1st of August 1838. While the ungodly negroes were celebrating the day in riotous mirth—though without violence—and the late slaveholder was probably solacing himself with thoughts of *compensation*, the mission church had its method of noticing this important victory of right over might, and of principle over covetousness. The liberated Christians desired to recognise the hand of their God in their deliverance. "At the quiet hour of midnight," writes Mr. Henderson, "the wide folding doors of our place of worship sent forth their blaze of illumination, and, as the last particles were dropping from slavery's glass, the victims of injustice sought the house of God, to render praise, and to spend the first hour of freedom in His worship. Oh, it was a solemn season! A little before twelve I went down and found the place full, almost all blacks, and the greater proportion must have been slaves. I laid my watch on the table, sitting down silently till twelve, when I rose telling them that slavery was no more with them. Then we all fell on our knees, and afterwards rose to sing. Oh, what hearty

* "Baptist Magazine," 1839, p. 39; Report for 1838, p. 26.

singing! A member, lately a slave, prayed. Again we sang. Another member prayed; again we sang, and closed about one. All seemed seriously cheerful, and gladness dwelt on every countenance."^o

In the afternoon of that auspicious day, the scholars were regaled with tea and cake by the liberated Africans, who alone were permitted to contribute to the expense. More than 200 children were assembled, feasted, and suitably addressed. In the evening there was a meeting for worship, which was numerously attended. Mr. Henderson preached an appropriate sermon, and afterwards entertained the teachers and some of the friends of the mission at his own house.

More than a twelvemonth elapsed after Mr. Philpot's demise, before intelligence of further help from England was received at Belize, and the apparent need of it was becoming every month more pressing. Mr. Crowe, the young infidel whose baptism was referred to by Mr. Henderson, as occurring in 1837, had since then resided on the mission premises, and was daily engaged in the schools, at once learning and assisting to teach the children. Mr. Henderson's health now suffered very seriously from the amount of labour which devolved upon him, and though he was enabled to continue his daily duties in the schools and his regular ministrations, with little interruption, it was, as he wrote to the committee, "not without alarming symptoms of disease and bodily suffering." "I feel happy," said he, "in being able to go thus far, from a consciousness that my dear friends at home are employing themselves to afford me respite speedily; the cause of the Redeemer and of immortal souls is worth enduring not a little for.

"It has been my custom for the last six weeks [a custom which he continued for several months in succession] to apply a blister to my chest the day after preaching, to cool the burning inward pain which is caused by the exertion of public speaking. By the close of the week I am again healed, both outwardly and inwardly. I long for the arrival of a dear ministering brother to relieve me a little. My medical friend cautions me, and all but insists on my desisting altogether from labour and exertion. I wish to be faithful according to the spirit of the valedictory address delivered at Hackney, on my designation, by Dr. Newman. I hope I am

^o "Baptist Magazine" for 1839, p. 63.

actuated by no unworthy motive, as if regardless of any just reason for ceasing from my labours. The Lord is consulted, I trust, with a sincere desire to know his will."*

This painful state of things was protracted, and was not the only dark cloud which appeared to hang over the mission at that period.

While God was pleased to make his word in the mouth of his servant efficacious to the conversion of many among the poor, weak, ignorant, and despised people; Mr. Henderson's preaching and style of life found little acceptance with the wealthy and influential in the Settlement. Many of the white population attended his ministry for a time, and especially the new comers from Scotland, who generally preferred the simplicity of the outward forms used in the Baptist place of worship; but very few of this class became permanent hearers, either on account of Mr. Henderson's faithful preaching, which they could not brook, or because they were soon drawn aside by the dissoluteness and profanity prevalent at Belize. Mr. Henderson had few friends among them, nor did he deem it his duty to cultivate an intimacy except where he was sought for the sake of his religious principles and beneficent objects.

The established clergyman and his supporters, jealous of the spread of Baptist principles, now made a strenuous effort to counteract their operation. The free school, which is connected with the Establishment and the public treasury, was entirely remodelled, and put upon the best possible footing, so that it might compete with Mr. Henderson's, which it had not yet been able to do. As a consequence, the garrison children, and all those whose parents could be influenced, were transferred to it. Some of the barrack children frequently evaded the new arrangement, and returned to their old quarters. The parents of those who insisted on keeping them with the teacher of their choice, were deprived of the rations which had been allowed them for those children. Many times ere this had the military brethren been denied the right of attending their own worship, and had been forced to march with a noisy band to the Episcopal church. Sometimes they had been designedly put upon duty on the Lord's day to prevent them from going anywhere. But now their liberty was even more restricted than before, and they were subjected to greater severities. The visits of

* "Baptist Magazine" for 1839, p. 516.

the missionary to the public hospital and to the jail were objected to and interfered with by the official chaplain, and it was made apparent in many ways that the Baptists and their minister were viewed with disaffection by the magistrate as well as by the clergyman, who were evidently leagued against them.

Previously to this, some cases had occurred wherein members of the church had declined to be sworn in the Courts of the Settlement. They had, however, never refused to give their evidence or to serve upon juries and inquests, and were willing to suffer the penalties attached to perjury if found guilty of giving false evidence. Their scruples were purely conscientious, and arose from taking literally the words, "Swear not at all."* For this scruple some had already suffered penalties and loss, and on account of it many were laid under legal disabilities, the consequences of which in some cases amounted to being outlawed. This faithfulness to their convictions, which ought to have commanded the admiration and respect of all, may have excited the angry passions of proud and unscrupulous men, and thus have contributed to the growing ill-feeling towards the Baptists.

One case in particular which now occurred, served to draw attention to this point. It was that of a beloved brother, Samuel Matthew Davies, a Sergeant-major of the garrison, who, though an African, had by his good conduct, intelligence, and somewhat superior education risen to a rank seldom filled by any but a white man. He was called upon as a witness in a trial for murder, the facts of which are briefly these.—A practice, calling for the severest reprobation, has hitherto prevailed in the garrison of Belize, and it is believed is also sanctioned at Jamaica, in the Bahamas, and elsewhere in the West Indies. It is that of permitting a number of dissolute women to pass the night in the barracks, from which they are driven, like a herd of swine, before daybreak in the morning. On the occasion in question, an African private of the 2nd West India Regiment, in a fit of jealous revenge, discharged his musket into one of the beds and killed the unhappy woman, instead of his rival. Brother Davies being Serjeant-major of the Company, and the person entrusted with the care of that dormitory, was required to give evidence upon oath. The oath he respectfully declined. All efforts to intimidate or persuade him having proved

* Matth. v. 33, and James v. 12.

fruitless, he was sent from the court-house to the civil jail.* A punishment far more severe than any that had yet been inflicted. The presiding judge, who was also the Superintendent, and the Commander-in-Chief (Colonel Alexander M'Donald), soon afterwards transferred the prisoner to the military power—a proceeding of at least doubtful legality—and retained him under arrest in the dark-hole. He was then tried by a court-martial, and sentenced to a month's confinement in the barracks. After being limited for some days to his own quarters, he was permitted to be at large within the limits assigned to the garrison. To the sophistries, entreaties, and threats of his superior officers he was alike insensible. The least penalty which they had held up to his mind was degradation to the ranks. But by God's sustaining grace he was enabled to retain his integrity, and risk all for a good conscience. When reminded by a self-conceited officer that he had not the knowledge to constitute him a critic of the sacred text, not having been bred at college as he had been, he meekly replied, that possibly his more learned adviser had never asked of God that wisdom which cometh from above, or humbly and diligently sought for the knowledge of His ways. Not only was he gradually restored to his usual liberty before the term of his unjust sentence expired, but he was also reinstated in his office, no other so capable or trustworthy being found to fill it.

Brother Davies has for some years been a respected deacon of the church; his wife also has long been a member. Having obtained his discharge from the army, they now together occupy a post of great usefulness and trust as keeper and nurse at the public hospital.

This trial, while it manifested the faithfulness of a weak and

* In this trial, Sergeant Davies, and five other African soldiers, were brought forward by the defence. "How he was disposed of we have seen, and the other five were rejected because they had not been baptized! Whether they were believers in the Bible and its Divine sanctions was a matter of no consequence:—

'A few calm words of faith and prayer,
A few bright drops of holy dew,'

had not wrought

'A wonder there,
Earth's charmers never know.'

And so, sooner than it should be supposed that these unbaptized could tell the truth, the prisoner, even if innocent, might be hung."—*New York Recorder*, August 12, 1846.

unlearned man, and demonstrated the power of Christian principle, served to exemplify the absurdity, futility, and danger of enforcing judicial swearing by coercive measures; and also to expose the demoralizing tendency and existing corruptions of the military system as it is. Some of the grosser evils arising out of it have long been felt by the inhabitants of Belize. Formerly the slaves, and now the servants of some, and of course the sisters and the daughters of others, are seduced by the soldiers, and debauched after this promiscuous and wholesale manner; so that a numerous class of the most reckless and abandoned is formed and festered in the bosom of the community. Who can set a limit to the injuries which are thus inflicted! Only a few of the soldiers are permitted to marry, even when they desire it. In many respects their condition is little better than that of the plantation slave.* It loudly calls for redress, and should that call fail to be heeded, its cry to God, which has already entered into His ears, cannot fail to produce a certain and a just retribution.

The local militia, already referred to,† also contributed in its measure to increase the ill-feeling indulged in towards the Baptists. At the close of the year, and during the first two weeks in January, the inhabitants of British Honduras are required by law to "turn out," to disguise themselves as soldiers, and to relieve the regular troops of the duty of mounting guard at Government-house, and at the jail. As to the lawfulness of this duty to a follower of the Prince of Peace, some of the church had serious doubts. A member of the Society of Friends had already suffered some indignities at the hands of the pseudo-military for refusing to identify himself with this annual demonstration. A young brother, being fully convinced in his own mind that the step, though enjoined by law, was in itself improper, refrained from

* The privilege of marrying was perseveringly refused to a young soldier who was a member of the church, though his conduct was exemplary, and he was selected as one of the most trustworthy to be an orderly in the officers' quarters, as, indeed, most of the Baptist soldiers were. The most painful results followed this cruel refusal. On the 30th of May 1849, Mr. Henderson, among several other deaths, reports that of "Brother Sharpe, 2nd West India Regiment. He was discharged, and lost his reason, apparently from having been discharged without a pension, after twenty-five years' service, under the pretence that, according to a late Act, he requested his discharge." Thus, when by long service entitled for any other occupation, if they wish to be free, at the option of their superior officer they may be cast off to perish for want.

† See page 26.

enrolling himself in the artillery, or *white* corps. He was dragged from his home by an escort, and confronted with Colonel Frank, of that division, who first fined him in thirty dollars for refusing to enrol, and then placed his name on the muster-roll without his consent. Being still unwilling to bear arms, he was, on a subsequent occasion, dragged to the guard-room at the court-house, placed under arrest, and after spending two nights and three days in that situation, he was publicly reprimanded, coarsely abused, and threatened with increased severities by the Colonel commanding. Determined never to take the life of a fellow-creature under any circumstances, he refused either to learn how to handle a musket, or in any way to appear as if he were willing to break the sixth commandment, as he felt he would, by taking the life of a fellow-creature even in self-defence. The private entreaties of the Colonel to induce him to consent to be drilled for a short time, accompanied with a promise that he would then be released, having failed to alter his conscientious determination, he was committed to the common jail. The efforts of Mr. Henderson, who applied to the Superintendent on his behalf, soon obtained his release and future exemption from such service, on the ground that he was employed as a teacher in the mission schools. This exemption was disputed by the militia Colonel, but as the Superintendent's signature had been given, and was tenaciously held, he was never again required to perform militia duty. Other members of the church suffered repeated fines, and several were afterwards imprisoned for their non-payment.

It was not long before the Lord was pleased to grant relief to the brethren belonging to the regular troops* from some of the severities and annoyances to which they had been subjected. This was by means of a general order issued by Lord Hill, July 10th, 1839, purporting that Dissenters should not be compelled

* The minds of the pastor and some of the brethren were exercised concerning the apparent inconsistency of sanctioning some members, who were civilians, in refusing to bear arms, and yet retaining several regular soldiers in the church; but they were satisfied by 1 Cor. vii. 20, 21. The military brethren were, in general, if not universally, anxious to "be free." In the mean time they were taught to keep all God's commandments, and that at the sacrifice of their own lives, should they be called to it. They cannot, however, always obtain a discharge when they apply for it, even though willing to renounce all hopes of a pension.

to attend the Anglican Church, but should be at liberty to go to their own places of worship.*

While the church and Mr. Henderson were thus exercised by outward suffering, another disappointment of their hopes greatly humbled them before God, and struck them with a momentary amazement. Again the committee in England made choice of a missionary for their station at Belize, in the person of Mr. W. Weatherall, a young member of the church at Bury St. Edmunds, under the care of Mr. Cornelius Elvey. He had been residing at Halstead, pursuing his studies under the direction of Mr. Clements, and there he was designated on the 25th of June 1839. He embarked at Gravesend with a young bride on the 29th of the same month.

It was with unusual delight that the church at Belize received the intelligence, and looked forward in hope of the speedy arrival of Mr. and Mrs. Weatherall. But this second attempt to supply Mr. Henderson with a coadjutor was destined to fail even more signally than the first. The *Favourite*, Capt. Blenkinsop, in which they sailed, arrived at Trinidad on the 8th of August, for there the ship was to unload a part of her burden. Hence, Mr. Weatherall wrote to the secretary, at once commencing and closing his correspondence as a missionary; and as they were detained nearly a month, the young couple resided on shore. Mr. Weatherall preached frequently, and attended three missionary meetings, besides engaging in other active exertions, in which he exposed himself to the rays of the vertical sun, which is then most powerful, and especially injurious to those not yet acclimated. He began to be affected with violent headaches during the last week of their stay in the island, and the day after their re-embarkation he was seized with brain fever. On the tenth day, during a paroxysm of delirium, being left alone in the cabin for a short time, he plunged from the open window into the sea. The steward, perceiving his intention, rushed forward only in time to seize hold of his shirt, part of which remained in his hand. The alarm was instantly given. The ship lay-to, and a boat was lowered so rapidly, that in about three minutes, as the captain affirmed, his body was picked up. The usual means proved ineffectual for his recovery. His spirit had fled. At midnight, to spare the feelings of his

* "Baptist Magazine," 1839, p. 438.

youthful partner, his remains were consigned to the watery deep, until "the sea shall give up its dead."

Only eight days after this sad event, the *Favourite* reached Belize. Never will that day be forgotten by many of the members of the church, and more especially by those composing the family circle at the mission-house. It was on the 17th of August 1839, that the anxiously-expected vessel was signalized. The brethren, on the tip-toe of expectation, were watching for the first glimpse of their expected brother and sister, ready to hail them with joy, as labourers in the Lord, when the gloomy tidings reached them, and overwhelmed them with grief. Mr. and Mrs. Henderson went on board to receive the youthful widow, and many were the tears and sobs with which she was greeted by the distressed members, and sorrowful, indeed, were the embraces that she received from her more matronly coloured sisters. Consternation mingled with submission in the hearts of the brethren on reviewing the mysterious dealings of their God, whose way is in the deep.

Mrs. Weatherall remained nine months in Mr. Henderson's family, waiting for a female companion with whom to recross the Atlantic. At times she assisted Mrs. Henderson in the infant school, and was otherwise useful, till she sailed for New York, on her way home, on the 13th of May following.

After referring to Mr. Weatherall's mysterious removal, the Committee say that "it is their anxious desire to send some other brother to this important post with the least possible delay."*

After this new trial, Mr. Henderson writes, on the 23rd of November 1839, "My own health is yet precarious. I have been enabled to go on without interruption in the public means since I last wrote, though with increased bodily suffering, and quite opposed to the opinion of medical advisers. . . . I thankfully receive the measure of strength given, and put it forth again, in His name, from day to day, endeavouring to prepare my mind, should it be the Divine will, for the worst, though still cheered with the hope that, after a season's rest, after the coming of a missionary, I shall be permitted again to labour for Christ, with

* See "Baptist Magazine," 1839, pp. 400 and 440; *ibid.* 1840, pp. 43 and 494; and Report for 1840, p. 33.

renewed zeal." He states that six persons had recently been admitted to the ordinance of baptism, that others were applying, and adds, "The congregation is steady; with us it is chiefly to the poor that the Gospel is preached. We propose, as soon as convenient after the arrival of a missionary, to attempt the formation of an Auxiliary Missionary Society. Mr. Crowe is in the school, and has been of use to me, when indisposed, to read a sermon, and so keep the congregation together; he has just recovered from a severe attack of fever, the first sickness he has had since he came to the country."

Thus, in the face of many difficulties, in the midst of spiritual infirmities, bodily disease, and with some persecution and evil report, God was graciously pleased to bless and prosper Mr. Henderson's labours, though He manifestly frowned upon the Society's efforts to supply him with fellow-labourers from England, for which Mr. Henderson was so anxious and importunate. Deeply impressed with the importance of the station, he longed to see its efficiency increased; and finding his own hands full and his strength inadequate to greater enterprise and extension, he looked for foreign aid, when the Lord of the harvest had designed that native agency should here be employed to carry on the work of his kingdom.

CHAPTER II.

NATIVE AGENCY—THE CHURCH NURSED.

1840 to 1845.

Prayer-meetings—Sister Elizabeth—River Excursions—The Boom—Baker's Bank—Rehoboth Station—Conversion of Mr. George Braddick—Mr. Crowe set apart as an Evangelist—Arrival and departure of Mr. C. H. Hosken and family—The disappointment to the Church—Mr. Henderson begins to learn the Carif language—Conversion of William Michael—Translation of the Scriptures—Brother Michael trained for a Teacher—Conversion of John Warner—His training—Soldiers added to the Church—Death of Jabez Henderson—Improvement of the Society's property—Prayer made by the Church for the conversion of the Scholars—Several Teachers in training—Jubilee offerings—Study of the Walkna language commenced—Brother Warner's progress—His imprisonment, marriage, and first station—General progress of the mission—Visit of a Catholic Priest—Station at Tilletton formed—Circulation of the Scriptures—Honduras Auxiliary Bible Society—Mr. James Thompson's visit—A Missionary Printer sent out—Disagreements between him and Mr. Henderson—Mr. Kingdon's appointment—Brother Warner's sufferings and labours—His house burned down and second imprisonment—Visit of Bishop Lipacombe to Belize—Mr. Henderson's first imprisonment—His second commitment, for refusing to swear—Position of the Church.

"The same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also."—3 Tim. ii. 2.

Among the means which Mr. Henderson had employed and encouraged since he had first come to Belize, *prayer-meetings* had occupied a prominent place. The monthly concerted prayer for a blessing on missionary efforts throughout the world, had been regularly held at the meeting-house on the evening of the first Monday of every month. Extracts were then generally read from printed reports, and thus the minds of the congregation were familiarised, and the church was interested in various fields of missionary labour, for which they united their fervent prayers to God.

For some time, there was an early prayer meeting at the public place of worship every Sabbath morning, and it was given up only when, for convenience and less publicity, it was divided into several

meetings, one for each locality in the private houses of the brethren then become able to conduct them among themselves. These social meetings have continued ever since, and have proved a blessed preparation for the more public engagements of that sacred day.

A prayer-meeting was opened at the house of Mr. Adams, as soon as the church was formed, where several of the brethren first learned to open their lips to God as the organ of an assembly. Ere long a kind of emulation was manifested by many to have prayer-meetings in their own houses on certain set nights. Nothing but the want of persons able to conduct them prevented them from being much more common than they were; and when any brother who could read was found able and willing to devote his time to it, there was not a night in the week but he would be thus engaged.

Before native brethren were raised up to lead these little assemblies in which the Scriptures are read and hymns sung, Mr. Henderson himself frequently conducted them. The rude and narrow cottages of the married soldiers and of aged pensioners have ever since frequently resounded with the voice of social prayer and praise. The no less gifted sisters are here encouraged to engage in prayer as well as the brethren, and they are accustomed to do so, to the manifest profit of all.

At the period of emancipation (in August 1838), the church were contemplating the formation of an auxiliary to the so-called parent society, but determined first to seek direction and blessing in special prayer. The evening of the third Monday of every month was appointed for *the native missionary prayer-meeting*, which was held at the meeting-house. At that meeting, which is still continued, the wants of the people around were spread before the mercy-seat, and the Lord of the harvest was supplicated to raise up and to send forth from among themselves labourers for British Honduras and the circumjacent countries. This step was evidently made the means of preparing the hearts of the people to receive more abundant tokens of God's blessing upon themselves. Those tokens soon followed, and, though mingled with tribulations, they were not the less direct and striking answers to their earnest and believing prayers.

Writing to the society on the 13th March 1840, Mr. Henderson remarks, "We have much to admire and to be thankful for in the Divine Providence towards us. The church has nothing in it

remarkable; we have some awakenings amongst sinners, enough to answer the question whether the Lord be amongst us or not. Piety is by no means of a shining kind, neither are we without cause for discipline here; yet it is gratifying to observe the genuine fruits of the Spirit where Satan lately reigned.

“One of our aged female members [a black sister named Elizabeth] is in the frequent habit of sitting in the very midst of the market with a basket of tracts, Scriptures, and useful books to sell. I find more access to the Spaniards [Central Americans] by her than by all other means. Her patience in the midst of much scorn is often admirable; and some of the more respectable who know her are in the habit of casting a five-penny piece (our smallest current coin) into her basket on passing, as they know she has no profit by her sales, and she is not above accepting it.”

The visits which Mr. Henderson occasionally made to the banks of the river Belize, would have been more frequent had his hands been less occupied in ministering to the church, conducting the day-schools and other important duties in Belize, or even had his health been more robust. Nevertheless, the good seed sown among the labourers at the nearer plantations, or *banks*, began to spring up. In this department of labour, he had suffered a disappointment at the largest and most accessible village called Burrell's Bank, or the Boom. When led to hope that he was about to reap the first-fruits of those efforts by the formation of a little church there, the Wesleyan missionaries, with a wide field before them, chose to tread close upon his heels, and obtaining some influence over a few of the leading people, they at once erected a place of worship, from which their Baptist brother was virtually excluded. Upon this turn of affairs, Mr. Henderson directed his attention more particularly to a smaller place called Bakers' Bank, some miles further up the stream, where “there was room,” still occasionally calling at the Boom as he passed. George Tillett, Esq., a Belize creole, and the proprietor of Bakers', used to assemble his family and the persons in his employ to hear the word preached, and always gave a cordial reception and a ready attention to the missionary himself. After a few such visits, Mr. Tillett proposed that a building should be erected for the meetings, for which purpose he generously gave “an ample space of ground, the frame of a house, 30 feet by 20, with a roof, and kindly afforded every

possible facility." The people also joined their smaller contributions. "Another friend gave four glass windows; a third, 500 feet of boards and 50 lbs. weight of nails, and others, who could give nothing else, freely contributed their labour, so that soon a neat wooden structure, covered with Bay thatch, was erected on a high natural embankment of the river. On account of the tacit strife which had driven him to this more remote station, and to signalize the enlargement which God had granted him at this place, "for which they strove not," Mr. Henderson called it Rehoboth.* It has, indeed, already proved a well of living waters, and at the hours of meeting on the Lord's day, when a small bell summones the people together, it is now usual to see them setting out in their boats from the opposite bank, the whole surface of the stream being soon dotted with dorees and pitpans full of people and their children, who have come from above and from below the bend of the river at which Rehoboth is seen. All gradually ascend the sloping bank, to mingle in the unadorned house with the inhabitants of Baker's and the pine ridge, and to hear the Word of God from the lips of a native teacher, or the foreign missionary.

The opening of this building on the 1st July 1840, was for several reasons a joyful occasion to many present, and the memory of it is embalmed with pleasurable recollections. Though at that time a balance of about 100*l.* currency remained on the erection, it was subsequently all cleared off by the church and the friends on the spot, and the only charge it occasioned to the society by its erection, was a fee of ten shillings for legally placing Mr. Tillett's grant on the records of the Settlement, in the society's name.†

A circumstance attended the building of Rehoboth which is worthy of record. The carpenter employed in its erection was the ungodly husband of a dear disciple, who had suffered greatly on account of his confirmed habits of intoxication. More than once he had been found lying in ditches and about the streets of Belize in a state of brutal insensibility, and though he could earn high wages at his trade, his wife and numerous family frequently felt the pinch of poverty, in addition to the disgrace which his conduct

* "And he removed from thence, and digged another well; and for that they strove not; and he called the name of it Rehoboth (margin—that is, *Room*); and he said, for now Jehovah hath made room for us, and we shall be fruitful in the land."—Gen. xxvi. 22.

† "Baptist Magazine" for 1840, p. 493.

brought upon them. It was but a few months before, that he had passed a night in confinement in the militia guard-room together with the brother who refused to be trained, but Corporal Braddick was under arrest, not for any conscientious scruple, but for drunkenness and for deserting his post, for which he was deprived of his stripes. Even in a place where intoxication is, alas! so common, this man was known by the name of "drunken Braddick." It was chiefly out of consideration for his wife and family that Mr. Henderson had employed him.

At Baker's the intemperate carpenter could not freely obtain the liquor which was destroying him, and he had to spend many a long night with only one of his children in the lonely house which he was erecting. In the hours of calm reflection which were thus forced upon him, the wrongs, the example, and the admonitions of his wife were vividly brought home to his mind, and in answer to her prayers, these thoughts produced so deep an impression, that after the opening of Rehoboth meeting, he returned to Belize, seeking the salvation of his soul. Jesus as the sinner's substitute; Christ as the great atoning sacrifice for sin; Jesus Christ as the procuring cause and medium of God's favour and eternal life, was trusted in and received by him as his only hope. He was an altered man. Not only did he at once forsake his former courses, but he gave himself up to the people of God, and to the work of the kingdom, and gradually learned to exemplify the very virtues and duties most directly opposite to his former vices and disorders. He also experienced the contrast between the perfect freedom of the service of Christ and the cruel bondage of Satan's slavery, and he became a monument to others of the power of the Gospel, of the mercy and goodness of God, and even of the temporal advantages of a holy life. After ten years of sober industry, Mr. George Braddick has become a useful and a much respected member of the community; his large family has been brought up with credit to himself and his wife, and with comfort and blessing to their children. His business has prospered and extended, so that he has taken a place among the very first master carpenters and house-builders, and executes the most extensive public and private contracts, and the crazy old house in which he himself resided has given place to a substantial and commodious dwelling.

In the church, Brother Braddick has been a consistent and an ac-

tive member. Long before God granted him the temporal prosperity which he now enjoys, he was elected a deacon; having been first "proved" and "found blameless" as to the requisite qualifications for that office; being "grave, not double-tongued, not given to much wine, not greedy of filthy lucre, and holding the mystery of the faith in a pure conscience." In his own house, at the garrison, and elsewhere, he has for years conducted social meetings for prayer. And it will be seen further on, that he shared largely and cheerfully in the sufferings which the church was called to pass through; being imprisoned, fined, and reproached for a good conscience; and when the church was left without a ministering brother in the furnace of affliction, God was pleased to use this dear brother as an instrument to edify and to strengthen the much-trying members. Before the world and in the household of God, this brand plucked from the burning enjoys the good report and commands the love or the respect of friends and foes in a degree surpassed by no one in the community. His gentle deportment, honest industry, cheerful zeal and disinterestedness, but above all, his prayerful and subdued spirit, redound to the honour of God, and to the glory of his grace.

In the course of 1840, her Majesty's Superintendent presented the Baptists with a piece of ground at Freetown, "for a possession of a burial-place." A similar provision was also made for the Wesleyans at Queen Charlotte's.

The church at Belize now, for the first time, set apart one of its members to do the work of an evangelist. Many reasons concurred to make it desirable that a station out of Belize should be found for Brother Crowe, whose bodily health had long been broken. The emigration scheme, which had brought him to the country more than four years before, was now renewed in an attempt to form an English settlement within the State of Guatemala, on the banks of the Boca Nueva, a mountain torrent tributary to the Polochic, in the department of Vera Paz. The agent of the Company visited Belize, and had some intercourse with Mr. Crowe. While there he received intelligence from Abbottsville, the newly-formed Colony, that a German Lutheran minister, who had come out with the settlers as chaplain, had abandoned his charge. Mr. Henderson was applied to, and an arrangement concluded, accord-

ing to which Mr. Crowe was subsequently appointed as school-master to the Company. Preparatory to his departure, the church met on the 1st of Jan. 1841, and, having received from Brother Crowe a statement of his views and motives—of what he was anxious to teach, and of the ends he had in view—the church gave him the right hand of fellowship in the work of an Evangelist, and prayerfully commended him to God. One of the deacons, Brother Cain—a man of colour, a discharged sergeant in the British service, and, by birth, a French creole of La Martinique—added an earnest exhortation to the impressive address of his pastor and spiritual father. The brethren then severally ratified their united act by a hearty pressure of the hand (the form of salutation prevalent in the church). Many tokens of brotherly love were interchanged, and in a few days he embarked to visit the scene of his future labours, previous to removing his wife, and fixing his abode there. This providential opening was regarded with the more interest by the church, as it promised to afford access to the interior of the Spanish provinces which, under other circumstances, must be difficult, if not impracticable.

A third unsuccessful effort was made at the commencement of this year to supply the Society's station at Belize with labourers from England. On the 22nd of January 1841, Mr. C. H. Hosken, who had been pastor of the Baptist church at Clonmel, Ireland, together with Mrs. Hosken, and their infant child, embarked in the *William Henry Angas*, Captain David Thomas, for Belize, where they arrived on the 20th of March. The Society's Report expresses the satisfaction of the committee in this arrangement, in the following terms: "The station at Belize has at length been supplied with a second missionary. . . . This reinforcement has become the more necessary, not only from the bodily weakness of our esteemed brother, Mr. Henderson, but from the growing enlargement of the mission itself. Successive additions have been made to the church, which now comprises more than 100 members, and from it the Word of the Lord is beginning to sound forth into the regions round about."

Mr. Hosken's coming was hailed by the church with great joy, and his ministry was attractive to the people generally. But the climate somewhat affected his own and his partner's health as soon as they landed, and the characteristics of the field did not arrange

to meet Mr. Hosken's expectations. He removed his family to New York, leaving Belize in June, that is, about three months after their arrival, notwithstanding the remonstrances of Mr. Henderson, and the earnest entreaties of the brethren, who went in companies to inquire his reasons, and to use their influence to retain him among them. The Committee say, concerning this step, "they had both been ill, and Mr. Hosken considered it to be their duty to remove to a climate more congenial with their constitutions."^o

This third disappointment was keenly felt by the church and labourers at Honduras; and at the time, the series of apparently adverse dispensations, which did not stop here, was profoundly mysterious and humbling. God, in His providence, has since shewn that a part of His design, in thus proving His people, was that they might learn to lean more entirely upon infinite sufficiency and less upon an arm of flesh. By continuing to them as a church the tokens of His presence, and granting an encouraging measure of prosperity in other more vital matters, and, especially, by raising up from among themselves, in answer to their prayers, humble but faithful instruments whereby to carry on the work of His kingdom, God has spoken encouragement and hope to their hearts in a manner to which they are not now insensible.

Previous to this event, additions had been made to the church which were not at the time thought worthy of special notice, but which the subsequent development of God's designs have shewn to be of the utmost interest in the history of the mission church. They did not promise much, but they yielded more, whilst those events which had long fixed the attention of the church, and were expected to increase their strength and outward prosperity, invariably ended, as will be seen, in disappointment, or were followed by consequences even more humiliating.

The evangelization of the neighbouring Indian tribes had long had a place in the thoughts and near the heart of the lone missionary. The desire to devote more of his time and energies to them was one of the causes of his earnest solicitude to obtain a fellow-labourer. After the third denial from God, Mr. Henderson felt it his duty to commence a mission to these tribes, unaided; and he suffered not his bodily weakness, nor the burdens already

^o See Report for 1822, p. 21, and "Baptist Magazine," 1841, pp. 151, 478.

laid upon him in the church, the schools, and in his increased and increasing family, to deter him from the attempt.

What efforts had been made by the Wesleyan missionaries among the Caribs and on the Mosquito Shore had failed to produce any permanent results. One reason evidently lay in the fact that the English language had been employed as the medium of communication. The acquisition of the native dialects, therefore, appeared to Mr. Henderson to be an indispensable preliminary. The Caribbean Indians, as the most immediately accessible, seemed to claim his first efforts, and he resolved to acquaint himself with their language. Books to assist his purpose, there were none, not even a manuscript, or a single written sentence of any kind, could be obtained: and as for a suitable teacher, the idea was utopian. The difficulties of the enterprise were, therefore, by no means small. Mr. Henderson's first device was to lay hold of every Carib who came within his reach, and to glean what he could from him. He then discovered that their dulness in such matters, added to his own utter ignorance, the contradictory accounts they gave, and the impatience they manifested under the number and variety of his questions, were such as to amount to an insuperable obstacle. Just as this impression was fastening itself upon his mind, the hand of God appeared, leading him on, and saying, in an unequivocal manner, "Be strong and of good courage, and do it; fear not, nor be dismayed."

A Carib labourer, already past the meridian of life, had "hired himself as a waiting boy" to the master of the free school at Belize, having left his wife, according to the native custom, to provide for herself and children, as best she might, by cultivating her plantation. In this situation, without any assignable cause, unless it were the immediate influence of the Holy Spirit upon his heart, he was disquieted, and had an indistinct idea that it was on account of sin. In his perplexity he applied to his master, who recommended some attention to his outward conduct, going to church, and diverting his thoughts from the subject. These remedies he tried, but his trouble only increased. On repeating his applications to his master, he was told that he was probably going mad, and had better try to forget it, and indulge in a little strong drink. From this snare he was mercifully kept, and, beginning to understand the nature of his wants somewhat better, he wandered from the Episcopal to the

Wealeyan place of worship, but still found no rest. One week-night, during the year 1840, Mr. Henderson was expounding the scriptures, as he is wont to do, endeavouring to adapt his explanations to the humblest capacity. He was pointing sinners to "the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world," when Billy (as the Carif servant was called) strolled in in a disconsolate mood. His attention was at once arrested, his mind enlightened, and his heart relieved by the Gospel message. It was indeed "glad tidings of great joy" to this sin-stricken wanderer. From that time he became a joyful believer, and soon after made a public profession of the name of Christ. Utterly uncultivated, as well as uncontrolled, the intellectual faculties of William Michael had yet to be developed, and the promise, in this respect, seemed far less than the hopes which were engendered by the simplicity of his character and the cheerfulness of his natural disposition. Having been received into the church, and being encouraged by Mr. Henderson, Brother William seemed disposed to give himself to study. He, therefore, left his former master, and came to the mission school.

Among the first duties which claimed the attention of the new convert was that of "setting his house in order." He felt, as the Scriptures teach, that he was bound to provide for his own family, and that he ought to cherish and to protect the wife of his bosom, and not to leave her to bear the undivided burden of her own and their children's support. Happily, he had but one wife. He soon brought her and her children from the Carif village to Belize, installed them in a modest dwelling, and allotted to his partner the household cares, himself engaging to supply her maintenance. In this step God blessed the faithfulness of his servant. After attending the instructions of the church, she also was converted, baptised, and became a happy and contented member of the household of God. Their children attended the mission-schools, and were among its most intelligent and lively scholars. Thus was an entire family brought under the influence of the Gospel; and its head, as the first-fruits of his nation, was placed under training to be the instrument of conveying the Gospel to his fellow-countrymen. Nor was this all.

The intelligent reader will already have perceived that in this convert God graciously raised up, just when most needed, an in-

strument to enable Mr. Henderson to carry out his purpose of learning the Carif tongue.

Brother Michael was no sooner called than he had work to do, as well as lessons to learn. At the same time that he humbly took his seat beside his own children on the forms of the school, and began to learn his A, B, C, he was in his turn the best and only substitute that could be had for a learned pundit in the missionary's study, where he sat at stated hours teaching Mr. Henderson, enriching his vocabulary, familiarizing his ear with the sounds and intonations, and directing him how to articulate the words, of the rich and harmonious Carif or Calinago. After some preparation, Mr. Henderson undertook the important work of translating the Scriptures into that idiom with the assistance of William Michael—well convinced that this must be the foundation of any permanent missionary labours. The Carif language has now not only been reduced to writing, and in a measure to rule, but after the labour of years in translating, correcting, and revising, the Gospel of Matthew has been printed in it, as the result of these unimposing efforts.

The progress of Brother William in his English studies, which were perseveringly pursued in order to fit him to become a teacher, was very slow. It was, perhaps, retarded by the imperious necessity of occasionally labouring with his own hands in order to support his family—his allowance as a pundit being very small. But whether paddling or sailing his doree, learning to spell and to write on a form in the school, filling his professor's chair in Mr. Henderson's study, or beating off logs of mahogany on the wharfs, he ever appeared cheerful and contented, and spoke with anticipated delight and ardent desire of the time when, as he frequently expressed it, he should be sent to teach "My own nation."*

The Lord was graciously pleased to send another labourer into His harvest during the year 1841, in a manner that bears the stamp of His own sovereign hand, and brings glory to His grace.

An aged fisherman, familiarly called Charlie Adams, originally from Scotland, was, and probably still is, the sole inhabitant of one of the keys or wooded islets on Turneff Reef, where he then pursued his calling and reared swine. Occasionally he visited

* This phrase he so often repeated that it is identified with the man in the minds of those who know him.

Belize to sell turtle and other proceeds of his industry, and to purchase necessary stores. Having received favours from Mr. Henderson, his fellow-countryman, he would at such times visit the mission-house, and have a familiar *crack* with the missionary. One evening on which he had procured some books, tracts, &c., and was about pushing off from the mission wharf to return to his island domain, Mr. Henderson perceived something moving at the bottom of his boat. On inquiring, he was informed that it was a sick English sailor upon whom the fisherman, like a good Samaritan, had taken compassion, and intended to try the effects of sea air and a change of diet. There lay, indeed, a poor emaciated creature, who was paying the natural penalty of that reckless life which so many of our seamen indulge in, and which is so rapidly followed by debility, disease, and death on the shores of tropical countries. This sailor afterwards told Mr. Henderson, that when Mr. Henderson drew near and beheld him in that plight, he was ashamed to look up and meet his gaze. The missionary, who was accustomed to see many such in his visits to the public hospital, spoke a few words of seriousness and kindness to the homeless outcast, ere the sail was spread and the little skiff was wafted away.

Little did Mr. Henderson then suppose that this was his first introduction to a fellow-helper in the Gospel, whom God had sent in answer to his prayers, and whom He designed to honour and to bless as an instrument in the conversion of many precious souls!

Old Charlie's benevolence was not without its reward. John Warner, the sick sailor, soon showed symptoms of recovery under his care; and after a little time was able to do a turn of work about the key, if it was only to open and break the shells of the coconuts in order to feed the fisherman's pigs, with their oily contents. During his convalescence, the afflicted mariner found amusement in reading the Pilgrim's Progress, which Mr. Henderson had lent to his weather-beaten host. He read it again and again till he found profit as well as pleasure in the exercise, and by the Divine blessing on this simple means, he was awakened to see his real state as a sinner before God. This led him to read old Charlie's Bible too, where he found the only way of salvation fully set forth, but though he was enabled partially to discern it, and found a measure of peace by coming to God in Christ, who is "the way, the truth, and the life," yet the scales of unbelief had not yet entirely fallen

from his eyes, and his heart was not yet established in the truth. When quite recovered he went to the island of Ruxtan, and maintained himself for a short time by working a plantation. It was about a year later than the conversion of William Michael, and some months after his first interview with the missionary, that John Warner returned to Belize and visited Mr. Henderson, anxious to be further instructed in the way of life. This second meeting took place in Mr. Henderson's study, in the presence of the author, and it was not a little affecting. John Warner had evidently been taught by the Spirit, and had forsaken his former sinful courses, but inwardly he wanted a more complete reliance upon the merits of his Saviour, and outwardly he required that boldness and decision which a public profession imparts to the conduct. On these points he was affectionately directed, and as others had done before him, the white sailor soon took his place in the school among the coloured children, as he was anxious to learn all he could, and Mr. Henderson was as willing to assist him. He had already passed the age of five and thirty, and yet needed to begin at some of the first rudiments of an ordinary education. But though his diffidence was great, his earnestness and perseverance overcame every other obstacle, and his progress in learning was encouraging, while his advances in Divine things were rapid. Ere long, being established in the faith, he was baptized with others and added to the church. He also supported himself by occasional labour, sometimes about the mission premises, while he continued to pursue his studies. Though he scarcely dared to hope that he ever should attain to it, he was encouraged to submit to a course of training with a view to future usefulness as a teacher.

Mr. Henderson's health, though not entirely re-established, was now improving, and the various branches of mission work had gradually advanced, and were severally crowned with an encouraging degree of success. On the 27th of July 1841, he made the following communication to the society:—"On the 27th of June, we baptized eleven persons, seven of whom were soldiers; from this department the church has now considerable numbers. We have lately nominated one of them, Matthew Davies, to the office of deacon, together with George Braddick, a native of one of the Bahama Islands, and a white man, so that we have now four deacons, two black and two white men." It was anticipated that

the 2nd West India Regiment, in which we had "about thirty members," would exchange with the 3rd, then at Sierra Leone. In the prospect of this event, it was proposed that these members should be advised to form themselves into a church, under the pastoral charge of Brother Davies, "who," Mr. Henderson says, "though not remarkable for ministerial gifts, adorns his Christian profession by great discretion and judgment, and has, by his prudent and upright conduct, already gained the confidence of the brethren of the garrison." This event was not, however, realized, and some companies only were subsequently removed to Jamaica, to the Bahamas and elsewhere. Some of the brethren who were thus separated, afterwards obtained a discharge at those places, and returned to Belize, whither they were drawn chiefly by their attachment to the church, and a strong affection for their brethren.

Mr. Henderson, whose family consisted of four charming children, now suffered the loss of one of them, a most engaging and amiable child. On this subject he writes: "We have been called to endure a trial, the nature and severity of which is only known to parents, and to such parents as set a due value upon the souls of their offspring. Yesterday the spirit left the mortal part of our dear boy, Jabez. Six years ago he was born, when we were both laid up with a severe fever: his departure makes him again 'a son of sorrow,' though he gave evidence sufficient for the sorrowing parents to hope that he has obtained mercy of God to believe in an Almighty Saviour." His remains were deposited by the side of Mr. H. Philpot, on the mission premises, where a small grass mound still marks the spot, by the side of the plain stone monument of the young missionary.*

The society's lot, which was well situated, spacious, and open to the sea-breeze, had by this time been so improved by the care and the labour of Mr. Henderson's own hands, that it was confessedly "the most inviting of any in the town." On his arrival, by far the greater part of it was under water, and what was now a large open green, planted with rows of graceful cocoa-nut palms, already twice as tall as he who planted them, had been a muddy strand covered with but a few inches of salt water. Mr. Henderson had excluded the sea by means of an embankment lined with glowing conch shells, such as are placed on many a mantel-piece, and are

* "Baptist Magazine" for 1841, p. 672.

highly ornamental there. Of these shells, brethren and others had brought hundreds from the reef in their boats, being encouraged to do so. This space was now well filled in with soil; and if any part of Belize deserves the term it had become *terra firma*. Here the school children were accustomed to frolic during their recreations. Many availed themselves of the mission wharf as a convenient landing-place; and when a baptizing occurred, as it was always administered in the sea, this space afforded standing room to crowds of spectators, who came to witness what at first was a strange sight, and one which, when grown familiar, was only the more impressive. Nor was the mixed multitude that assembled there on such occasions, crowding the steps and the verandahs of the meeting-house and the missionary's residence above it, without its effect, when viewed from the water, where others were looking on in their dorees and pitpans, and where a heavy bungay full of astonished Spanish fishermen might sometimes be seen among the rest.

That part of the ground nearest the street, which had been a fetid swamp covered with rank grass and low bushes, was now also filled up, and transformed by Mr. Henderson's own labour into decidedly the best cultivated garden in British Honduras, where some experiments in growing cotton and mulberry trees, and in breeding cochineal had already been made, which promised to be of importance to the well-being of the Settlement. All this had not been accomplished without considerable expense as well as painstaking, in a place where the natural difficulties were so great, and labour so dear. But it was so managed by Mr. Henderson that the sale of the surplus produce of the garden itself covered the outlay. The garden also provided occasional employment for William Michael, John Warner, and others, while they were under training in the school. It remunerated a poor creole widowed sister, who sold the rare vegetables which Mr. Henderson raised, in the market; and after some years, her little savings from this source enabled her to erect a small wooden house, or rather a neat little box, which constitutes the only place she has in which to lay her blanched and woolly head. In time, the clear profits of the garden paid the expense of surrounding it on two sides with a dwarf wall surmounted by a mahogany fence, economically put up by a brother, thus protecting the garden from the incursions of the neighbours' goats, improving the appearance

and convenience of the mission lot, and considerably enhancing the value of the whole property.*

During this year Mr. Adams presented the mission with an additional lot of ground not far from the original one, in prospect of the arrival of another missionary and his family, who might require a separate residence. Mr. Henderson also made an advantageous purchase of the adjoining lot, which was in a neglected and therefore in a marshy condition. It had long been occupied by a rich Campechano, a well-known Spanish Indian fisherman, named Salines, who was at once a sort of Nabal, and the chief supporter of the papists in Belize, who at certain seasons came together in small numbers to worship his idols, and remained to indulge in excesses. It was an advantage, even physically, to purify this unclean nest. The house was repaired, painted, and moved nearer to the sea and to the schools. Part of the ground was advantageously sold to the public to form a street and a much needed landing-place at Mr. Henderson's suggestion, which was a public benefit; part was added to the garden, and the rest was being gradually filled up and improved.

Toward the close of 1840, Mr. Henderson, feeling that his labours in the schools had not yet been blessed to the chief object for which they had been opened, brought the matter before the church for its consideration; and special prayer for the conversion of the *young* was resorted to and persevered in. Almost as soon as this resolution was taken, some of the foremost scholars, and others who had already left the school, were found among the *inquirers*, and were shortly afterwards baptized and added to the church. Several of them appeared to Mr. Henderson to give promise that they would in their turn become teachers; and he prevailed upon some to return to the school with a view to being trained. Among four young persons thus enlisted was Joseph Kelly, the son of African parents, who were members of the church, and a young woman of colour, who became a second teacher in the infant school. Miss Margaret Smith, who had profited under Mr. Henderson's direction, had now a school of her own connected with the Wesleyan body. Thus were the schools of the Settlement already increased and improved in their character by Mr. Henderson's educational labours.

* Views of the premises will be found in the "Missionary Herald" for May 1843, and December 1844.

Writing to the society, on the 10th of January 1842, Mr. Henderson says, "The feature of the Belize mission, which we think most denotes its progress, is that of having four young men, members of the church, in a course of training for native teachers. One of them, at least, we expect to settle at Baker's (Rehoboth station) next week.

"We have had at the close of last year some trying work to do, in cutting off some of the members for loose walking: five were so dealt with at our last church meeting. I trust those that remain will be more healthy for this excision."*

The Baptist Missionary Society's Report for 1842† announces that forty-four had been baptized during the year; the number then in communion being 132.

On the 4th of June Mr. Henderson wrote: "We have this year erected a small house, 25 feet by 18, on the burial-ground at Freetown, at an expense of 75*l.* Jamaica currency, the greater part of which has been paid for, and that exclusively by the members of the church. It was considered as a kind of jubilee offering, though since the receipt of your printed circular we shall comply with that too. The first week in July is appointed to receive gifts from the church." The Report adds: "The result of this effort is the sum of 60*l.*, which the committee have received as the jubilee offering of their brethren at Belize."‡

In this building, prayer-meetings and a Sunday-school were opened for the pensioners and others inhabiting Freetown, whose own cottages were incommodious, though they had long been used for the former of these objects.

Mr. Henderson, now much improved in health, and greatly encouraged by his success in the acquisition of the Carif language, in which he was progressing, was labouring in the translations as much as his other engagements would permit. Though already overburdened, he yet felt it his duty to undertake to learn the Mosquito dialect also. Here, again, he could have no assistance from books, but must himself reduce the language to writing and to grammatical rule. He was, however, enabled at different times, and for broken periods, to procure the assistance of some English and French persons who had long resided on the Shore, for purposes of traffic, who therefore had some practical acquaintance with the

* "Baptist Magazine" for 1842, p. 210.

† Page 40.

‡ Report for 1842, p. 52.

Waikna language, but his progress was slow and unsatisfactory to himself. His attention was more particularly directed to that people during 1843, by the visit to Belize of a Mr. Howell, a coloured native of British North America, who had long resided at Blewfields, where he professed to have exercised a religious influence. The object of his visit was to obtain the release of certain Indian and other slaves who were kept in bondage on the Mosquito Shore, and at Corn Island. Some of these slaves were closely related to their pretended owners. He was warmly received, earnestly supported, and liberally supplied with books, tracts, &c. On his return he was to have acted in connection with the society, through Mr. Henderson, who had obtained a gift of land for the mission at Blewfields, from a merchant at Belize; but by his subsequent conduct, ere he again reached the Shore, he proved himself unworthy of the confidence placed in him.

The progress of Brother Warner in preparing for usefulness had been gradual but very encouraging. He conducted prayer-meetings among the natives, visited the shipping in the harbour, and the hospital, with a view to the benefit of seamen, and he had, among others, been called to suffer for a good conscience. For refusing to serve in the militia, he was more than once seriously molested and fined. At one period, when the fines imposed upon him for absence had not yet been called for, he was suddenly imprisoned under the following circumstances:—The fast-day by Papists and Anglicans called Good-Friday having deterred most of the children from attending the school, Brother Warner was improving the time by painting the outside of the mission-house, for which purpose he had rigged a sort of scaffolding, and, seated upon it, was industriously plying his brush. From this exalted position he could overlook the adjacent yard and mansion, which was the residence of a respected magistrate, sometimes a church-warden, and also at that time the Colonel commanding the militia forces. The sight of our brother thus engaged in making dissent look respectable somewhat disturbed the Episcopalian prejudices of the worthy neighbour, who at once sent for the provost-marshal and required him to *do his duty* with the daring nonconformist. Not being prepared to meet a somewhat heavy fine, Brother Warner was lodged in gaol in a cell appropriated to criminals. He was soon after released by the efforts of his brethren, who paid

the noxious impost. The unbiassed reader will have no difficulty in deciding whether the dissenter or the churchman most honoured the day.

Brother Warner now united himself in marriage to the sister already mentioned as labouring disinterestedly in the infant school, and shortly afterwards they were sent to occupy a new station far up on the Belize River, at a place called Spanish Creek. Wanting confidence in himself, Brother Warner subsequently returned to Belize, and resumed his studies and labours under Mr. Henderson's direction for some few months.

After removing to Vera Paz, Mr. Crowe also visited Belize several times. He was still suffering from the effects of climate, but had made some progress in acquiring the Spanish language. The new colony was far from being established. The European settlers gave him little encouragement, but the Ladinos and Indians received his instructions gladly, and he had several of their children in his little school. Two hundred Spanish Bibles, besides tracts, &c., had been circulated among them, and in the neighbouring towns, during that year.

Mr. Henderson, writing in 1843, says:—"My heavenly Father is favouring us with bodily health—the mission work engages us fully; indeed, it has arrived at that pitch that I cannot attend to all even within the Belize station, much less without. It has become quite requisite to have liberty to travel, to visit the out-stations, and, as occasion favours, to extend them; but being alone, I am fixed at Belize. Shall I remind you that this is not an insular but a continental station, and therefore capable of vast extension. I should like to answer a few questions from the committee relative to this field of missionary enterprise. I am persuaded I should not be long afterwards without help. One missionary on the border of a country inhabited by millions! Enough light to show their darkness, but totally insufficient to aid them. Hear, consider, help, my dear brethren. Let us dare difficulties; collect the scattered and peeled people. After Jamaica, nothing short of the continent ought to satisfy us.*

The Report for that year says, "The labours of Mr. Henderson at Belize are carried on under circumstances of considerable encouragement. The station has become a place of much im-

* "Baptist Magazine" for 1843, p. 274.

portance in the estimation of the native Indian population, many of whom are under missionary instruction in different parts of the coast and in the interior. Aided by seven teachers and preachers, the Gospel is preached with more or less regularity at four important places, at each of which schools have been commenced for the training of children."

After the defection of the barrack children, the infant school had still 102 on the books, and the British or juvenile school 87. The schools at Rehoboth and at Spanish Creek numbered about 20 scholars each. In all 229. The Gospel of Matthew was already completed in the Carif language, though needing revision.*

Reports of the persecutions endured by the faithful brethren in Denmark having been read and prayed over at the monthly concerted meeting, the church was much concerned for them, and determined to send the sum of sixty dollars (12*l.* sterling), to help to defray their fines, with a letter of fraternal encouragement addressed to Brother Oncken of Hamburg.

The departure of some of the brethren connected with the garrison, which had been expected in 1841, took place this year. A few were removed to Sierra Leone, and others to Barbadoes. Fourteen members were thus drafted off, leaving the church with the late additions at the same number as in 1842, viz. 132 members.

The Settlement being visited by an Irish priest, an effort was made to establish a Popish place of worship. The number of Spaniards and Spanish Indians in Belize was even then considerable, and is now much greater. Their only attempts at public worship had hitherto been confined to such as have already been alluded to as practised in the house of the fisherman Salines, to whose household images they bowed down. But though Spanish priests had often visited them, they never before made so decided an attempt to use the religious liberty which they may enjoy in the British Settlement. A temporary chapel was fitted up and mass regularly said. Mr. Henderson paid hospitable attentions to Mr. Lee the new comer.† At the same time both he

* Report for 1843, p. 50.

† When Dr. Viteri, afterwards Bishop of San Salvador, passed through Belize, Mr. Henderson thought it nothing but kindness to offer him the use of his school-room to meet the Roman Catholics in; it was politely declined.

and the members were seriously impressed with the calamity which threatened the community, and made it a subject of special and solemn prayer. The priest very soon finally left British Honduras.

On the 11th of August 1843, Mr. Henderson wrote, "A Roman Catholic priest has a second time been sent from Jamaica to settle at Belize; but not meeting with sufficient encouragement has left for Truxillo, where he waits for instructions, and may yet return here. Perverse as they are, Catholics, being unsupported by the secular arm, are not the objects of dread that the Established missionaries would be. When I think of the hostility of the Establishment to missionary operations, all others are lost sight of in this place. Yet an evil permitted must result in ultimate glory to the Most High.

"My schools prosper and are very attractive, so that I am much engaged. The native teachers in course of tuition, namely, Brethren Warner, Woods, and Michael, give me much pleasure both in their attainments in school, and their consistent walk out of doors. Still, they rather add to my engagements than relieve me; but I hope shortly to be able to leave the school more in one of their hands, that I may devote more time to the Carib. As to the Mosquito language, I see no way at present of attaining a knowledge of it without a residence amongst those who speak it, say for a year at least. This I can only talk of until you send me a coadjutor."*

Writing again on the 9th of May 1844, Mr. Henderson speaks of the need of a *printing press*, in order to carry out the work already accomplished in translations; and he leaves it to the committee to send out a *printer* or not, if they should determine that the work requiring to be done would justify them in sending such a person. He said that a neat house to dwell in and a hearty welcome awaited him. An entire printing establishment was soon after offered for sale at Belize, and it was bought for the society. Mr. Henderson also mentions that John Warner had not long before been removed from Spanish Creek and stationed at Crooked-Tree, a place which he had just returned from visiting, and which he describes as a collection of about twenty houses belonging to mahogany and logwood cutters,

* "Baptist Magazine" for 1843, p. 604.

situated on an island in the midst of a beautiful lake called Northern Lagoon. It is open to the sea-breeze, and was evidently the site of an ancient Indian settlement. It is about fifty miles north-west of Belize, surrounded by extensive plains of open pine ridge, and is reached by ascending the river Belize, which has some falls rather dangerous to pass, and then paddling up a tributary stream called Black Creek. At that time it was the residence of William Tillett, Esq., whose family alone consisted of fifteen children, besides numerous dependants. This gentleman, brother to the generous friend of Baker's, was also an extensive proprietor of land, and favoured the formation of a station on his property. As was commonly the case in his excursions, Mr. Henderson was on this occasion requested to marry several couple. This is often the first outward step towards a profession of religion, the parties frequently making a tardy reparation for their neglect in this matter, sometimes in the presence of their children. Being requested to lay down a plan for the future town and to give it a name, he did so,—calling it *Tilletton*. He says—“At Tilletton two of our members already have their residence, two more have houses in which they occasionally reside, and four from Spanish Creek about ten miles off [where Brother Warner's labours had already been blessed] speak of removing thither. Two families, the elder branches of which had been seriously impressed under the means of grace at Baker's, have lately taken up their residence at Tilletton. Things, therefore, carry a prospect of church order being established amongst them.

“That I might know what progress the children had made in the school during the period it had been open, I released Brother Warner for one day, and took charge of it myself. I found it encouraging; all were beginners, but some gave promise of ability. The number present, about thirty boys and girls. It is kept in the meeting-house. This is of such materials as the place affords, and, with the exception of windows and jalousies [a large Venetian blind put in the place of a window], was erected at the expense of the people. It is capable of holding about 100 persons, and was well filled during my stay. It is not expected to be large enough long. The spirit of hearing is good, and being open to settlers the place is expected to increase.”*

* “Baptist Magazine” for 1844, p. 436.

Rehoboth, the station at Baker's, which had been irregularly supplied, shortly after this received an additional impulse by the appointment of Brother Joseph Kelly to labour there. This interesting young man had given much satisfaction while under training; at the same time that others who had started with him drew back. Though still very young, he was able to teach a little school and to conduct worship, but was not then required to administer the ordinances. His labours were acceptable, and he endeared himself to the people.

One of the matters to which Mr. Henderson had all along given much attention, and to which he ever attached great importance, was the circulation of the written Word of God. On his arrival in Belize, he had inquired what Scriptures there were in the Settlement, and learned that there had been a small stock; but that *the whole of it* had been given to the Wesleyan missionary. Hoping that this might suffice for both, he applied to that gentleman, when he discovered that this whole stock amounted to *eleven* copies, which were all needed. He at once wrote to the British and Foreign Bible Society, and received 200 copies. Shortly afterwards Mr. Henderson discovered in a merchant's store a case of Spanish Scriptures, open and exposed to the destructive attacks of cockroaches, &c. On searching farther, a second, a third, and several more, were successively found, amounting altogether to seven cases, the existence of which had been utterly unknown to Baptist, Wesleyan, or Episcopal ministers. This was esteemed a prize. The warehouse rent, amounting to 8*l.* *stg.*, was cheerfully paid, and efforts were at once put forth to circulate them. A small number of copies was put into the hands of travellers and visitors. Some dozens were deposited at the stores most visited by Spaniards, and were often introduced into their cases of merchandise, even when unsolicited by themselves, by which means they reached Truxillo, Esquipulas, Zacapa, Guatemala, Sisal, Merida, and other surrounding places. Spanish tracts and religious publications were soon after added in great numbers, and from this good seed a harvest of the best fruits was confidently expected.*

With a view to promote these objects, Mr. Henderson enlisted the co-operation of his fellow-missionaries, and some of the autho-

* Mr. Henderson's speech, London, October 7, 1847.

rities and merchants of Belize, in the formation of an Auxiliary Bible Society. A Branch Bible Society had had an ephemeral existence, and was at least talked of during the residence of R. J. Andrew, Esq.; but neither records nor evidences of its usefulness are known to the author, though it may be that the cases above referred to were a vestige of its existence. In 1836 a committee was formed, with the name of "The Honduras Auxiliary Bible Society." It received a patron in the Superintendent, a president in W. H. Coffin, Esq. (a magistrate), and other honours. Associations among the young were organized and encouraged, and the Settlement was canvassed with a view to supply every house with a Bible, by which that object was partially attained; and the donations of some whose zeal for the Bible was more than questionable were also elicited. But soon Mr. Henderson found that his labours in Bible circulation were trammelled rather than aided by this organization, out of which there resulted contention, jealousy, and ill-feeling. The committee meetings were especially fruitful in mortifications to himself. The majority of the members of the committee were Churchmen, Wesleyans, and persons making no decided religious profession. He soon found himself reduced to leave the entire management of its affairs to them, contenting himself with doing an overwhelming proportion of the sales and distributions, as the printed Reports abundantly testify. But even thus he was not permitted to proceed unmolested. His house was the depôt for the sacred Scriptures; but these books were at one time wrested from him by his *colleagues*, and by means of a threat from the Superintendent, were all but violently taken out of his hands, and carted from the Baptist mission-house to the rectory.

Mr. Henderson could not afford to turn aside from his great work to contend about trifles. He, therefore, soon procured other supplies of Scriptures from the parent society, and from kindred institutions in the United States. For more than twelve years, on an average between 500 and 600 copies of the Spanish Scriptures have annually passed through his hands, by far the greater proportion of which have been paid for at their full value. Ultimately, the stock of Bibles in the hands of the languishing auxiliary was restored to the custody of Mr. Henderson, and rapidly melted

away under his management. Some experience at least was gained by these events.

A considerable number of Spanish Scriptures were distributed in the interior through the agency of Mr. Crowe, who, on the failure of the colony at Abbottsville, had travelled for this express object in the state of Guatemala, by direction from the auxiliary at Belize. Being opposed through the influence of the priests, he had repaired to the capital, and applied to the supreme authorities of the Republic to remove the obstructions that had been placed in his way. Though led to hope for success, his claims were ultimately met by the publication of an ecclesiastical edict against the reading of the Bible, as the reader will find more fully related further on. The report of this disappointment, which seemed to close that field to Bible circulation, induced the committee of the auxiliary to suspend their agency there.

The arrival at Belize of Mr. James Thomson, travelling agent of the parent society, which took place in June 1844, had for its object the revival of the auxiliary, and the extension of its labours. A public meeting was held on the 14th of that month, at the Baptist Meeting-house, when Mr. Thomson gave an address, and more than 20*l.* was collected. As much more was afterwards given by the various merchants upon whom the agent called, in company with Mr. Henderson. By the Report for 1844, during which the circulation exceeded that of any previous year, 1,177 copies were disposed of, 612 were Spanish, 557 English, and eight were Latin, French, Catalonian, Swedish, and Portuguese. The amount received for sales by Mr. Henderson was more than seven times all the rest of the sales put together.* The sum total raised was upwards of 100*l.* sterling.

Mr. Thomson,† who had intended to proceed to Guatemala,

* " Sales by Mr. Stanton.....	24	13	4
" by Mr. Weddall	1	15	0
" by Mr. Armstrong	3	13	9
" by Mr. A. Henderson	73	11	8"

—*Eighth Report.*

† This gentleman had sojourned in the city of Mexico from 1837 to 1830, and had introduced and partially circulated 3,000 Scriptures there, till an edict was published against them, and he was induced to leave. In 1843 he had returned to Mexico, and found that during his absence three editions of the Bible had been printed by the booksellers there on account of the demand for it. A new Spanish translation, with notes (Romish, of course),

having seen the edict and the reports sent thence, determined to return directly to Europe, but recommended the auxiliary to continue to avail themselves of Mr. Crowe's agency for another year. A quantity of scriptures, chiefly Spanish, left by Mr. Thomson at Belize, swelled the stock at the depôt to more than 5,000 copies.

Again, this year fifteen members are reported as drafted off in companies from the garrison at Belize, to the coast of Africa and to the West Indies. Eleven were cut off by the discipline of the church. Eighteen were received, of whom eight only were baptized during the year. The total number of members was therefore 131. The children in four day schools amounted to 337, being 110 more scholars than were reported the previous year.

By the close of 1844, the committee being once more prepared to respond to Mr. Henderson's frequent appeals* for more labourers, made the following announcement : †—" Mr. Henderson, our laborious missionary at this station (Belize, Honduras), having long wished for a colleague, and especially one practically acquainted with the art of printing, is about, we hope, to see the fulfilment of his desire. Mr. J. P. Buttfield was set apart for this purpose on the 23rd of September, at the Baptist chapel, Boxmoor, Herts. The services were conducted by Mr. Fraser, of Lambeth, Mr. Gould, of Dunstable, and Mr. Gotch, who had been Mr. Buttfield's pastor. Mrs. Buttfield is grand-daughter of Dr. Carey, being the daughter of Mr. Jonathan Carey, late of Calcutta. They sailed on the 18th of November, in the *Echo*, Capt. De Quettville."

In a letter dated the 20th of January, Mr. Buttfield announces his arrival at Honduras, in the following terms :—" After a pleasant passage of nearly seven weeks from the Downs, my dear Mrs. Buttfield, with myself, landed safely at Belize, on Tuesday, Dec. 31, 1844.

had been prepared and published, at the expense of 100,000 dollars, by the clergy of Mexico. This was the first Bible printed in Spanish America. More than an equal sum was expended in the other two versions. Mr. Thomson had attempted to reprint their own version of the New Testament, *without the notes*, to adapt it for schools and popular reading; but this brought down renewed opposition, and he left for Yucatan, where he was eminently successful, as already related, and whence he came to Belize.

* Report for 1844, p. 68.

† See the "Missionary Herald" for December 1844.

"On arriving at Belize we were welcomed by Mr. Henderson, who came down to the landing-place to meet us. On entering the mission-house we were greeted by Mrs. Henderson and several of the natives. The next day several of the native members welcomed us in a very warm manner."

Mr. Buttfield's arrival, which like the former promises of help had been anticipated with joyful hope, like them proved a bitter disappointment, and the introduction of a new phase in the history of the mission.* He was a young man of little education and of less experience; and whether or not his mind had been biassed before leaving England, it soon became evident that he was not disposed to work harmoniously with Mr. Henderson, if, indeed, he were much disposed to work at all; and that he was in no respect the person required to forward the interests of the station at Belize. Three weeks after their arrival, and while good harmony yet prevailed, neither of them having referred to the subject, Mr. Henderson ventured to suggest that they should unite themselves to the church; when it was distinctly stated by Mr. Buttfield that he could not conscientiously become a member of a church holding strict communion, but that it was his intention to continue his connection with the church at Boxmoor, which he had unfortunately left in England. He was therefore willing to be only an occasional communicant with the mission church. Mr. Henderson utterly disapproved of this determination, and thought that if application for communion without membership were made to the church, it would probably be met by the objection, that, as Mr. Buttfield had come to reside permanently among them in the character of a missionary, they would expect him to become one of themselves. The distinction between communion and membership is one which the church do not recognise, as they do not find

* The disagreements which soon originated with Mr. Buttfield, as will be seen, were further developed by additional agency, and by subsequent events, till they became of sufficient importance to draw from the society a pamphlet entitled "Belize, ordered by the Committee of the Baptist Missionary Society, at their meeting, held June 15, 1848, to be printed for private circulation, 33, Moorgate-street, 1848." To which a reply appeared, entitled "Honduras: a Record of Facts, and reply to a pamphlet entitled 'Belize,' &c. &c., by William Norton, of Egham, Surrey, and Frederick Crowe, of Guatemala,—for private circulation. London: Printed and sold by Stewart and Murray, Old Bailey, 1848." Other particulars were published from time to time in the "Primitive Church Magazine," and in the "Missionary Herald," in which are many details not entered into here.

it in the New Testament. The Captains employed by the house of Angas and Co., when members of Baptist churches in England, were regarded as members while sojourning at Belise, and have been accustomed to take some part in the business of the church, as well as to sit at the Lord's table when occasionally present. After this painful difference, other disagreements followed as to the part which Mr. Buttfield should take in the business of the station. Mr. Henderson thought it desirable that he should take charge of the school for a time, and thus release him whilst the translations received a last revision before going to press. To this Mr. Buttfield objected, on the grounds that he had come out to print, and not to keep school. When he at length consented, Mr. Henderson discovered that he was utterly unqualified for the task; some of the boys being far before him in writing, arithmetic, and other branches; and that he both wanted application, and a disposition to qualify himself as others had done, under Mr. Henderson's direction. The latter he positively refused, though admitting his ignorance, because he would not owe his improvement to Mr. Henderson. Having had the boys' schools under his care for two or three months, the attendance of the most advanced scholars was rapidly falling off, and Mr. Henderson felt bound to resume it, to prevent further decrease.

An effort was then made by Mr. Henderson to procure for Mr. Buttfield occupation more congenial to his tastes. A contract to print a local newspaper offering at the time, Mr. Henderson thought that the proceeds would alleviate the pecuniary burden on the society occasioned by the accession of the new mission family, and that time might be gained for a better understanding to take place. Mr. Buttfield, still dissatisfied, required a journeyman to do the work, as he had come to direct the printing establishment. In this also he was indulged; but Mr. Henderson felt it his duty to acquaint the committee with the opinion he had formed of Mr. Buttfield, six months after his arrival, stating that he considered him unqualified for the work, and essentially deficient in missionary spirit. Before sending this letter, he was careful to furnish Mr. Buttfield with a copy of it.

Ere this, it had become manifest that harmonious co-operation was impracticable. Now, the differences assumed a still more decided form. Mr. Buttfield, without communicating them to Mr.

Henderson, sent long and bitter complaints, detractions, and slanders concerning him to the committee, in which, among other things, he alluded to "*his exclusive system*," unquestionably with reference to communion. He also busied himself with tale-bearing among the members, by many of whom his complaints were frankly taken up and sifted in the presence of both parties, which always resulted in his being seriously reasoned with and kindly rebuked. A few, however, who were already disaffected from other causes, among whom were some cast off members, gave him secret encouragement. Mr. Henderson having failed in several efforts to induce Mr. Buttfield to put aside all their differences, and to fall to work with a good will, feeling that his good report was assailed, requested the church to take up the matter, and to satisfy every member of the merits of the case: no one would move in it, because all were satisfied that Mr. Henderson was not to blame; but after having waited six months without an application for membership from Mr. and Mrs. B., the church, notwithstanding they felt that they had no right to interfere with Mr. Buttfield, as he had refused to become a member, kindly appointed brethren to wait upon him (one of whom was Mr. Braddick) and sisters to wait upon Mrs. Buttfield, as the messengers of the church, to inquire what were their reasons for refraining from uniting themselves in fellowship with the church. Mr. Buttfield's reasons, as reported by the messengers, and recorded in the church book, were, That before quitting England he had been cautioned not to take such a step hastily; also, that on account of the cruel and abusive treatment which they had received at Mr. Henderson's hands, they could not join the church until they had received an answer to letters sent to England, and especially to the church at Boxmoor; or till another missionary, of whose coming there had been notice, should arrive at Belize.

"As to cruelty and abuse, the only way in which the pastor confessed himself guilty was in reproaching Mr. Buttfield with neglecting the interests of the society, by abstaining from the proper labour of the station, in which Mr. Buttfield had at last consented to take a more liberal share henceforward."*

Here the church felt compelled to leave the matter, with the

* Church-book, 26th July 1845.

conviction that Mr. Buttfield was acting wrong; but as *they* had no control, that he must be dealt with from home.

So far from fulfilling the engagement to labour more devotedly, Mr. Buttfield continued discontented. Mr. Henderson's doctrinal views did not meet his approbation; the doctrine of predestination being made too prominent to suit his taste. The small house allotted to him on the mission premises was not found good enough, and he removed with the printing-press, &c. &c. to a large house at some distance. On the plea that Mr. Henderson's preaching was personal, he and Mrs. Buttfield absented themselves for several weeks from the public worship of the church, preferring to attend occasionally at the Wesleyan chapel. Matters had come to a painful extreme; and the expected arrival of another missionary, or, failing that, the decision of the committee at home, was looked forward to by all parties.

It was at the recommendation of his brother missionaries in Jamaica, that the committee in England made arrangements to send Mr. Kingdon to Belize. He had laboured thirteen years in that island, and preparatory to his removal to Honduras he visited England with Mrs. Kingdon for some months.

Their departure is thus announced: "Mr. and Mrs. Kingdon, late of Jamaica, sailed for Honduras in the *Medway*, from Southampton, on the 18th of August. Mr. Kingdon will be united with Mr. Henderson at Belize, in the work which openings for usefulness at that station demand." On the 18th of September, Mr. Kingdon wrote from Jamaica, announcing his safe arrival there; and he finally reached Belize with Mrs. Kingdon and a niece, in the month of November. They took up their abode for the first fortnight in Mr. Henderson's family, and were most cordially received by all.*

The Report for 1845, published in June, speaks of Mr. Kingdon as if he were already on the spot, though he did not arrive at Belize till near the end of that year. It states that Mr. Henderson had suffered great disappointment in the fact that several of the native teachers under training had proved themselves unworthy of his confidence, or unsuitable for their work. Two of them, however, continued to labour, and proved faithful to their trust. These were John Warner and William Michael. Mr. Crowe is also

* See "Missionary Herald" for September 1845.

mentioned as engaged at Guatemala in teaching and preaching with encouraging success.

Five persons only had been added to the church that year. From various causes, fourteen had been removed, leaving the total number reduced to 122. The committee say,—“In connection with this station, recent communications from the South American continent, forwarded through a friend of our mission, give the committee reason to believe that the providence of God is preparing the way for more general missionary operations in that country; and the committee trust that the recent establishment of a mission-press at Belize, and the arrival of Mr. Buttfield and Mr. Kingdon, will enable our brethren to enter upon any field which may be made accessible to them.

“In the important work of biblical translation, Mr. Henderson continues to make some progress, though much interrupted by his various other labours. He is proceeding with the Gospel in Carib and Mosquito, and it is hoped will be enabled, by the arrival of Mr. Buttfield and Mr. Kingdon, to make more rapid progress, and, ere long, to give the word of life in their own tongue to these Indian tribes.”* A grammar of the Mosquito language had by this time been prepared by Mr. Henderson, and was sent to the United States to be printed.

After Mr. Henderson's visit to Tilletton, Brother Warner continued his efforts there in the midst of much discouragement and mental and bodily suffering. Having become a marked man in the militia, his removal from Belize did not save him from vexations. He was fined every year for absence, and exposed to be hunted by the Provost-Marshal, and to be taken to jail whenever he came to see his brethren at Belize. On the spot where he laboured he was at first heard gladly; but the people soon took offence at his faithful rebukes; and some who had favoured his coming amongst them now strove hard to drive him from the place.

Besides suffering from ill health, our brother and his rising family had to contend with poverty. His allowance from the society was inadequate to their wants, and his time being taken up in the work of the mission, added to his bodily weakness, he could not cultivate a plantation of his own. While the people were friendly

* Report for 1846, p. 42.

this inconvenience was little felt, as they made him a sharer of the abundance with which the soil rewarded their own labour. But now, even the pittance which had been given him for teaching their children was often withheld; and though both himself and his wife were industrious and frugal, their wants were but scantily supplied. Mr. W. Tillett permitted Brother Warner to cut plantains for his own use in a remote plantation; but in order to get at this excellent substitute for bread, he had to traverse the lake and an extensive swamp for a considerable distance, wading through the water, his clothes and skin lacerated with *cutting grass*, his face and hands stung by mosquitoes, &c., and in danger of putting his foot upon the scaly back of an alligator at every step he took. He had of course to return by the same way with a load of plantains upon his back. These laborious expeditions were generally followed by a fit of fever and ague, which interfered with his more important labours in teaching: yet the converted sailor was enabled to hold on his way.

On one occasion, while returning across the morass with a bunch of plantains upon his back, he perceived the horizon lighted up in the direction of Tilletton, and suspecting a conflagration, he threw down his burden and ran home. It was his own house that was consuming; the rafters and the thatched roof were one pyramid of flame, but his family were safe. He came just in time to force open the back door, and was enabled to draw out his old sailor's chest, upon which lay his Bible and "Cruden's Concordance," just as he had laid them by after using them that morning. This was all he saved. The clothing of the family, their entire stock of provisions, their little treasures and their toys, all were consumed. How it happened could not be discovered. It may have been the work of an enemy; but however that might be, God was praised for their deliverance from danger. The family were lodged in the little meeting-house, which was also the school-room; and Brother Warner getting a passage down the river, started for Belize with the report, and in the hope of obtaining supplies. When modestly telling his tale to the brethren there, he manifested so much genuine satisfaction at the circumstance of his dear old Bible and his useful Concordance being preserved to him, that it seemed far to overbalance all the grief which other losses might have occasioned, and one might have supposed

that a blessing rather than a calamity had befallen him.* During this visit, and while hastily getting together some provisions, with the assistance of Mr. Henderson and the brethren, that he might return to relieve his family without delay, the Provost-Marshal heard of his arrival, and committed him once more to the common jail. Here he was quickly visited by some of the brethren, who found him seated upon the floor of a narrow cell, nothing daunted; but confident in the overruling providence of God, and in the tender mercies of Him who has declared that "*all things shall work together for good to those who love and fear Him.*"

Again the brethren released the prisoner of peace and the valiant soldier of the cross from confinement, by paying the fines imposed. He immediately returned, full of gratitude, to his station, carrying with him a better library than he had ever possessed before. Another place of worship, larger and better than the first, was erected at Tilletton, and the former one became the teacher's dwelling-house. The expense of this second erection was again borne by the friends of the object and the church at Belize, with the exception of a balance of 39*l.* which was supplied out of the funds of the Society. Matters at Tilletton seemed to be improved by this trial; but Brother Warner, who abated nothing of his faithfulness, had much to contend with in the enmity of the natural heart and the outward opposition of sinners to the word of truth and the life of holiness. But his God preserved, sustained, and made use of him, and at the worst times he was not left without encouragement and hope.

Mr. Henderson continued to visit at intervals, though less frequently, by reason of his many engagements, the banks of the Old River. Marriages and some baptisms generally occurred during these journeys, but additions to the church at Belize had grown less frequent, and the missionary's mind was necessarily diverted, and his heart wounded, by the sad contentions which had followed on Mr. Buttfield's arrival, instead of the relief and additional vigour which he had anticipated. The opposition of the avowed enemies of the Gospel, which had never entirely slumbered, was now revived with increased vigour. But that was to be expected as the result of Christian faithfulness, and it was much easier to bear.

* Had he lost his "Concordance," he might have remained without one for many months, or even years; for, besides the expense, the difficulty of procuring one from Europe or the United States was considerable, and the prospect remote.

Christopher Lipscomb, the first bishop of Jamaica, under whose ecclesiastical control the civil power has placed the cure of souls in British Honduras, now, for the second time, came to the Settlement, in a man-of-war, and a great number of persons, of all classes and characters, were by him solemnly confirmed (alas, how many of them *in their sins*!). Mr. Henderson felt called upon to expose the anti-christian character of this Anglican rite, and the entire absence of any scriptural foundation for it, and he faithfully warned his hearers of the delusive snare. This offence against "spiritual wickedness in high places" was neither forgotten nor forgiven. What Mr. Henderson did say was misrepresented and exaggerated. Soon afterwards, Mr. Adams lost a little daughter, and was anxious that she should be interred on the mission lot, by the side of Jabez Henderson, to whom the child had been attached. Permission having been obtained of the magistrates on previous occasions, Mr. Henderson had no objection to offer, but charged the bereaved parent to see that the legal authorisation was obtained. This Mr. Adams omitted to do, and after the child was buried, Mr. Henderson was summoned to appear before a Summary Court for the neglect, was reminded by one of the sitting magistrates of his denunciations of established errors and abuses, and, by virtue of a law made expressly to meet certain cases under the apprenticeship system, and conferring the power—abused in this case—upon the stipendiary magistrate, Mr. Henderson was committed to jail. A few days found him again at liberty and at work, but the animosity of opposers was not satisfied with this effort to fasten disgrace upon the benefactor of the community—a disgrace which even at the time recoiled upon themselves.

Penalties for non-juring had been repeatedly inflicted upon members of the church, most of whom held that any form of oath is contrary to the spirit and the letter of the Gospel dispensation. All who held this view were exposed to suffer injuries in their persons and properties, because it was known that they could not take the law, nor legally attest an account. But this was not deemed sufficient proof of their sincerity, and additional burdens and severe penalties were designedly laid upon them.

There soon arose, indirectly, out of the contract to print the newspaper, which Mr. Henderson was induced to take up in order to find occupation for Mr. Buttfield, another opportunity for the

infliction of severities upon him. A charge of libel against the editors of that paper was tried in the Grand Court of the Settlement, and though Mr. Henderson had no other connection with it, but that it was printed at the mission press, and though the parties who dragged him into Court well knew that his evidence would tell against them, if he should be permitted to give it, he was subpoenaed as a witness, and sent to jail for declining to swear.

The chief instigator and executor of this wanton mischief was a dashing young Irish Lieutenant of Artillery, at that time the private secretary of the Superintendent, and the Captain of the Fort. Lieut. C., whoever may have been his aiders and abettors, was doubtless animated by a private feeling of revenge; for he had but a short time before been sternly reprov'd by Mr. Henderson for the seduction of the daughter of one of the members, and a scholar in the Mission School. An undue countenance given to this sin had also occasioned the exclusion of the mother from the church, which had added to its public exposure.

The feeling of sympathy with Mr. Henderson was so strong and so general on this occasion, and the doors and precincts of the jail were so beset by visitors and people desirous to see him through the bars, that after four days the authorities thought proper to release him, though the term of his sentence had not yet expired. Still, the determination to continue to molest was made manifest by Mr. Henderson's name being now placed on the venire (the list of jurors), for the first time after a residence of twelve years. By this means he would be exposed to serve once a month, and his presence would be required at every Court, where it was well known that he could be of no use whatever while the law concerning oaths remains as it is. In the mean time, his scholars, amounting to more than two hundred, would be deprived of his instructions, and left to run about the streets. Somewhat to cloak the design of this step, which no one doubted to be aimed at Mr. Henderson personally, or, rather, at the principles which he faithfully maintained, the names of the other *dissenting* ministers in the Settlement were also added to the venire list. In the month of April, 1846, both Mr. Henderson and Mr. Braddick were fined for absence from Court, and the assaults in this quarter became systematic.

During the five years, some of the leading events of which have

been briefly narrated in this chapter, God was pleased to bless the church at Belize, so that the number of its members was about doubled; many of these additions were as remarkable and interesting as those which have been noticed. But neither numbers nor isolated cases are sufficient to convey an adequate idea of the real progress of the church—of its influence upon the community—of the moral and intellectual as well as spiritual development of its members, whose previous degradation must be fully comprehended before the extent of its growth can be realized. By means of native teachers and out-stations, the church had spread forth visible branches. It had also extended its unseen roots, and the occasional rough and chilling blasts of persecution which had swept over it had made them strike deeper, so that the young plant, now no longer a sapling, was prepared for the ruder tempest which was manifestly gathering around it. The pruning knife had been freely used upon its tainted twigs. Some of its buds of promise had been blighted, some of its blossoms had fallen off without being succeeded by anything more enduring. But its first fruits had ripened under the smiles of heaven's King, and had been gently gathered by the hand of Jehovah, who had created and preserved them, into His eternal garner above. Some of its vigorous shoots had been cut off and transplanted to the far distant shores of Africa, and on the nearer islands of the Western Archipelago; and here, in an unfriendly soil, it yet remained a goodly tree—a plant of God's own right hand planting, still giving evidence of life and promise of fruitfulness. And that which invests it with peculiar interest over and above all other circumstances, is, that it is probably destined to become the seed-plant of the tree of life, upon the border of a continent now covered with briars and thorns.

CHAPTER III.

DISRUPTION—THE CHURCH WRANED.

1845-1846.

Diversity of feeling towards Mr. Henderson—Threats—His burdens—Projects and hopes of Relief—*Mr. Kingdon*, his first steps—He forms a new station—His supporters—Conduct to the Church—*Mr. Henderson's* forbearance—He asks the support of the Committee, and tenders his resignation if refused—Delay of letters by the Secretary—Slanders—*Mr. Henderson's* resignation accepted—The intelligence received at Belize—*Mr. Crowe's* arrival from Guatemala—Church Meetings—The Church request their Pastor to remain—Apply for the use of the Mission premises—*Mr. Kingdon's* efforts to banish *Mr. Henderson*—Charge of dishonesty—Open rupture—The premises refused to the Church—*Mr. Henderson* resolves to remain—The Church's Letter to the Society—*Mr. Kingdon's* claims—Provocations—Application to the law to eject *Mr. Henderson* and the Church—Prevented by a Power of Attorney—Further claims—Interruption to Mission work—The Church meets frequently—Resolutions of the Native Teachers—*Mr. Henderson* fined for Non-juring—Accounts—Difficulties of the Church—Purchase of a house for its use—*Mr. Henderson's* reasons for wishing to visit England—Evacuation of the Mission-house by *Mr. Henderson*, and the place of Worship by the Church—Spontaneous assistance of the inhabitants of Belize—*Mr. Henderson's* departure for New York—Schools opened in the Church's own house—*Mr. Crowe* imprisoned—Protest and Appeal.

"I know thy works, and thy labour, and thy patience," &c.—*Rev. H. S.*

At the period at which this narrative has arrived, the labours of *Mr. Henderson* had endeared him to many. The members of the church, who were almost all his spiritual children, and in whose instruction in the Word of God he had toiled assiduously, placed a high value on his ministrations. The scholars, many of whom had grown up under his eye, were singularly attached to him, and the poorer classes of the community had learned to regard him as their friend in temporal matters, even when they rejected his instructions and withstood his reproofs. Enemies,

indeed, were not wanting, as has been shown; and if his faithful exhibitions of truth and holiness were not alone sufficient to create them, the love which the poor and ignorant people bore to him was.

Never before had the enmity of the proud and unscrupulous possessors of power manifested itself so violently towards him as it did at this period. Not contented with having twice imprisoned him, in which they were really foiled, they now laid a permanent snare to entrap him in matters pertaining to the law of his God. He had been made a juryman in *spite* of his scruples, and rumours were afloat that greater severities were in store for him. In the very next penalty which the Courts held over his head, it was said that hard labour on the public works would be coupled with imprisonment, a threat which involved nothing less than his martyrdom. For had he been subjected to such a punishment, those who know its nature and the character of the climate, would not hesitate to conclude that his speedy death must follow as a mere physical result, and such would assuredly regard his escape with life as something approaching to a miracle.* The effect that such treatment would have had upon his mind can only be conjectured.

To the uncertainty and danger of his position in this respect, must be added a precarious state of health, the result of overwrought energies in a climate uncongenial to Europeans; the care of a church of about 130 members, many of whom were exposed to suffer with him; the unalleviated burdens and responsibility of a mission, including the direction of a large establishment in Belize, out-stations, schools, translations, and the training of several teachers; the vexations which Mr. Buttfield was still occasioning him; and the anxieties of a family only too much alive to the critical nature of his position, and to the injurious threats which had been uttered against him. What wonder that Mr. Henderson again looked forward with hope and great expectations to the arrival of a brother missionary, and that he had entertained the

* Criminals sentenced to hard labour in Belize are often made to work in filling up the public lots, wharfs, &c., with the slimy deposits which they dig or scoop up along the marshy shore. In this occupation they have to stand for hours, with their lower extremities under water or buried in the mud, and their heads and shoulders exposed to the rays of a vertical sun. Few Europeans can survive it long. Mr. Henderson's constitution could not be expected to withstand the exposure even for a day.

thought of availing himself of the presence of such a coadjutor to recruit his strength by a visit to his native land, where he might expect to obtain some relief at least from his threatened dangers. But other trials, greater than all those which had preceded, were yet in store for him. The assault of the enemy was now to be pressed closer both from within and from without, and the church, as well as the missionary, were to be simultaneously assailed.

It has been seen how little alleviation of his burdens the coming of a young brother from England had brought with it. The arrival of an elderly missionary, in the person of Mr. Kingdon, far from realising the pleasing anticipations it had given rise to, only tended to widen the breach that existed. It soon brought about a violent disruption of the mission in British Honduras from the society in England, and ultimately occasioned the abandonment of Central America as a field of labour by that society, leaving the church there to struggle unaided by any human power against its accumulated difficulties.

During the first fortnight which Mr. Kingdon spent under Mr. Henderson's roof, and in close intimacy with his family, though outward harmony was maintained, Mr. Kingdon appears to have observed much that was opposed to his own spirit and tastes. Like Mr. Buttfield, with whom he sympathized in many respects, he was not anxious permanently to unite himself with the church. He also refused to labour in the school, and took an early opportunity of informing Mr. Henderson that he wished to open a separate station in Belize, instead of strengthening the one which was thought to need his services so much; thus at once nullifying one professed object of his coming, which was to help Mr. Henderson and to afford him relief and liberty, either to travel or to translate. Instead of acting the part of a peace-maker, and endeavouring to convince Mr. Buttfield of the faults which his inexperience had permitted him to fall into, he at once, and without hearing Mr. Henderson's explanations, took the part of that young man (with whom he was agreed on the communion question,) against the judgment of the entire church, as well as of its pastor, and that, too, at a time when it was thought that their united conduct was beginning to produce a salutary effect upon Mr. Buttfield's mind. The first open manifestation of ill-feeling which took place between Mr. Kingdon and Mr. Henderson was an offence

which the former took at the public ministrations of the latter. On a week-day evening, after hearing Mr. Henderson preach from the 1st John ii. 3, 4, Mr. and Mrs. Kingdon hastened up-stairs, shut themselves up in their room, and, finally, quitted the house the next morning (the 11th December), without seeing Mr. Henderson or seeking for any explanation. Under these inauspicious circumstances, arrangements were rapidly made by Mr. Kingdon to open his own station the very next Lord's day, without at all communicating with the church on the subject. With Mr. Buttfield and his evil-advisers, there was all the cordiality of a warm fellow-feeling.

Anxious not to increase the difficulties of his position, and probably still hoping for a better understanding, or looking for the Divine interposition in Providence, Mr. Henderson consented to sanction by his presence the opening of the new station as a place for preaching, which took place on the second Lord's day after Mr. Kingdon's arrival, though it was contrary to his wishes and subversive of his plans. The place selected was a private house, with a spacious store, facing the harbour, and at the most genteel end of the town, being near the Government House and the Rectory.*

* Some extracts from a letter addressed by Mr. Kingdon from Belize on the 1st April 1846 (three months and a half after the opening of their station) to Mr. Crowe, whom he supposed to be still labouring successfully at Guatemala, shows what were the views and feelings with which he came to Belize. This was the first letter that had ever passed between them. Having stated what he had heard of Mr. Crowe's labours, he gives an account of his own removal from Jamaica to Belize, and says, "But before coming on (to Honduras) we went home for a few months; and arriving here in November, we took up our abode with Mr. and Mrs. Henderson for a fortnight. Having heard enough of Mr. H.'s crotchets, I had told the committee, that willing as I should be to work with Mr. H. in the translations, I must have a preaching station of my own; and I lost no time on my arrival before asking him if there were room here for a second Baptist cause, and he at once assured me that there was. So I opened a room, 40 by 48 feet, here in Front-street, where Mr. Banks lived, and we have now a church of eight members, with a respectable congregation for the time. Mrs. K. has a good Sunday-school, in which Mrs. Buttfield is of the greatest service. Mr. Buttfield has opened a station at Mullin's River to spend his Sundays at; and my Sunday afternoon I spend portions of in reading the Spanish Scriptures to the Spaniards in their yards." (A full twelvemonth after that, the Spanish Indians could not understand what Mr. Kingdon read to them, on account of his ignorance of the Spanish language.) No mention is made of any assistance given to Mr. Henderson; but having spoken of his intended labours in translating, he says further,—“Mr. H. is not at all friendly, because from the first I gave him to understand that I was officially his equal here. The serious differences between him and Mr. Buttfield are before the committee; and my views of them likewise: in a packet or so, they may be with us.”

One of the most influential female partisans of Messrs. Kingdon and Buttfield—influential because a Mulatto lady of wealth—was the wife of a leading merchant and magistrate, who at times had been himself the patron of religion, and at others, the persecutor of its professors. She had been excluded from the church, and had manifested an arrogant spirit towards her darker coloured brethren. Together with a few more of the discontented, she gave her countenance to the new station. It was not, however, till after he had consented to preach at the opening that Mr. Henderson discovered the object to be the formation of a new and separate church upon open communion principles. This was attempted by the junction of the families of Messrs. Kingdon and Buttfield with the lady above referred to, and two or three more excluded members of the church, which was neither informed of the intention, nor inquired of concerning the reasons which led to the expulsion of those who had before been connected with it.

Mr. Adams, long a deacon, who had been one of the pillars of the church during its earlier history, and who was then, in a worldly sense, the most influential person in it, having also united himself to the new body without withdrawing or giving notice to the church to which he belonged, was consequently cut off for non-attendance. Thus had a church, almost exclusively composed of coloured people, been obliged in faithfulness to cut off some of their most prominent and wealthy members, whose worldly influence and countenance were at once given to the cause which aspired to become the more popular, and which had relaxed the wholesome discipline of the household of God.

The fact that Mr. Kingdon had formed a church upon different principles from the first church, was faithfully stated by Mr. Henderson to the people of his charge; but no intimation of it was given to them by Mr. Kingdon or his friends. An opportunity to join the new communion was afforded to any who might wish to do so, by the tender of their dismissal. Two members availed themselves of it; the one, a young man already in Mr. Kingdon's employ as door-keeper, &c., in his new place of meeting, and the other, an infirm sister, who found it more convenient to attend Mr. Kingdon's place, on account of distance, but who soon after forsook it and returned.

Mr. Henderson acted with forbearance towards Mr. Kingdon

and Mr. Buttfield, whose united influence was secretly exerted against himself and the church; but he did not hesitate strenuously and openly to oppose the step they had taken as soon as he understood its nature, and was fully convinced that it must prove subversive of the real interests of the mission, destructive of the growing influence of dissent, and, above all, that it must tend to counteract and retard the progress of the Gospel and its principles; he deliberately addressed the committee in London on the subject, on the 18th December 1846, expressing his views of the conduct of the other missionaries, though avoiding any allusion to the communion controversy, knowing that it is professedly a *neutral* point with the society, and quite convinced that his case was strong enough in the mere facts of it. He also freely expressed his feelings in decided but temperate language, and called upon the society to support him, and to remove Mr. Buttfield, or if they could not do so, to accept his resignation, and enable him to remove with his family to New York. To this step he felt impelled by a sense of duty. He did not think it required of him that he should stand by and suffer the destruction of his hitherto successful labours to be perpetrated with his tacit consent. He would not allow that ruin which he foresaw, to take place under his own hand; and from his intercourse with the new comers, as well as from the want of any adequate expressions of sympathy on the part of the society at home in his sufferings and those of the church, but especially by their suppression of the facts and the absence of any measures taken for their relief, which he had noticed for some years and more particularly now that those sufferings had greatly increased, he did not feel entire confidence in the cordiality of the committee towards himself. He was now at least willing to prove their confidence in him, quite satisfied that if, under the circumstances, the committee could support Mr. Buttfield's conduct, and prefer the plans of the new comers to his own, he would not really be a loser by dissolving his connection with the society, however painful that step might be.

The letter which Mr. Henderson had written to the society, after full six months' trial, reporting the *unfitness and unwillingness* of Mr. Buttfield to assist in the work of the station, was dated the 19th of July 1846, and yet it was not laid before the committee till the letter just referred to arrived on the 10th of February 1846. This unnecessary delay of six months had been occasioned by the

secretary, who withheld from the committee that letter, and others from Mr. Buttfield, in which he bitterly complained of Mr. Henderson, till he, the secretary, had written to them both, requesting them to withdraw their mutual charges, and to make up their unseemly differences. Mr. Henderson, who did not regard the charges which he felt bound to prefer as matters of personal difference, disapproved of this delay, and could not accede to the remonstrances of the secretary; but felt that the judgment and authority of the committee ought to have been brought to bear at once upon a question of so much importance. He still wished his letter to be laid before the committee, in whom he placed much confidence, and felt that a compromise, or a request to hush up the matter, was not doing justice to the case, or to himself.

When, therefore, these letters were at last laid before the committee, they consisted of a voluminous correspondence,* extending over full six months, and including a letter from Mr. Kingdon, the first and only one he had written to the society, about a month after his arrival at Belize. In this single epistle, the aged missionary far outstripped all Mr. Buttfield's more lengthy and numerous efforts at detraction. Mr. Kingdon distorted and misrepresented Mr. Henderson's proceedings in the church; he reiterated the exaggerated reports to which his faithfulness had given rise; by relating a pretended rumour, he artfully imputed dishonesty to him; he charged him with extravagance, angry passions, and wrongs towards Mr. Buttfield; he basely insinuated crime and denounced imaginary disorders in his family; he even maliciously prognosticated future abominations which had no other foundation than his own thoughts—thoughts at which decency itself is revolted, and in which even the morality of Mr. Henderson's little children is implicated. From beginning to end, this letter breathed a spirit of malevolence but seldom surpassed, never, perhaps, equalled in the annals of missionary correspondence. All the united misrepresentations and slanders of the new comers were unsupported by evidence, and rested upon their bare assertion. Nevertheless, the committee, at that one sitting, without informing Mr. Henderson of the charges brought against him, and without referring to the church or any other parties, decided against Mr. Henderson, accepted his resignation, and in-

* An outline of these letters, and of the evidence laid before the committee on this occasion, will be found in "Honduras"—the reply to the Society's printed defence.

structed their secretary to direct Mr. Kingdon to take charge of all their property, and to act for them in closing Mr. Henderson's accounts. Thus did the committee without a sufficient cause virtually censure a faithful brother whom they had long tried, and in whom they had found a laborious and successful agent, and at the same time countenanced and upheld his calumniators and detractors, who had also been tried and had given worse than no proofs of their efficiency.

The decision of the committee, for which all parties were anxiously waiting, reached Belize late on the evening of the 13th of April. Mr. Henderson's first thought was of his departure, to begin life anew in another field. Already the mournful intelligence that their beloved minister was going to leave them began to spread among the members, and was felt as a climax to the trials and vexations which the church had been called to endure.

With the dawn of the following day, a small coasting schooner came to its moorings in the harbour, and landed an exiled brother, who was brought back just in time to share in the anxieties and duties of this eventful crisis. Mr. Crowe, whose success in Guatemala had all along excited the virulent opposition of the Popish clergy, had been seized in the midst of his labours, escorted to the coast, and, without being consulted in the matter, was sent to Belize. Long had he languished in the total deprivation of Christian fellowship, while surrounded only by unbelievers during nearly five years. And sad, indeed, was his first meeting with one of the members (Sister Braddick), who immediately burst into tears, and informed him that Mr. Henderson was going to leave the Settlement.

During that day the members flocked to the mission-house in small companies to ascertain the truth, and that evening the church came together in much consternation at Brother Braddick's house for consultation and for prayer, when a more regular church meeting was appointed for the next evening, the pastor being requested kindly to absent himself from it.

On the following morning Mr. Henderson, accompanied by Mr. Crowe, called upon Mr. Kingdon to arrange preliminaries concerning the settlement of accounts, and the transfer of the society's property. Mr. Henderson, determined, if possible, not to revive any past grievance, and, anxious for a peaceful termination of their

mutual intercourse, stated that he would give up the mission-house by the 1st of June, that he would be guided by Mr. Kingdon's decision in all matters affecting material interests, and only requested to be allowed to retain his manuscript translations till he should have time to transcribe them, to which Mr. Kingdon gave his unqualified assent. On the following day, the titles of mission property, accounts, &c., were duly handed over to Mr. Kingdon. Mr. Henderson was afterwards informed that, on the morning of the 14th (that is, as soon as possible after getting his letters), Mr. Kingdon had been at the pains to visit the various merchants' stores with which Mr. Henderson had accounts, informing them of the transfer of the agency of the society, and requesting copies of Mr. Henderson's accounts to date, a request which, in one case, was refused with a well-merited rebuff.

The church, at its meeting on the evening of the 16th, with one accord, resolved to send a deputation to their pastor, inviting him to continue with them, and undertaking to do their utmost for his support. Mr. Henderson, much affected by this decided and unexpected step on the part of the church, and by the demonstrations of Christian principle, sorrow, and personal attachment to himself on the part of the people, took a week to pray over and consider of the matter. The church continued to meet for several evenings at Mr. Braddick's for prayer and consultation till they should receive the decision of their pastor. On the 17th, the deacons addressed Mr. Kingdon on behalf of the church, by whom they had been directed to do so, informing him of the step they had taken with respect to their pastor, and requesting to be allowed to continue in the use of the mission premises till they could hear from the Society, and offering to pay a reasonable rent should it be required. This they were emboldened to do, because they imagined that the place of worship was originally erected for their accommodation, and they well knew that they had contributed to the funds of the Society; and also, because Mr. Kingdon had lately rented a large house for twelve months, and fitted it up at some expense for a separate place of meeting—the abandonment of which must occasion great loss to the Society, and break off his own plans.

On the same day, Mr. Kingdon took the trouble to go on board a vessel in the harbour, which was about to sail for New York, to

make arrangements for a passage for Mr. Henderson and his family, and then waited upon him at the mission-house, in company with Captain Thomas, the pious commander of one of Messrs. Angus's vessels, Mr. Crowe being also present.

During this visit, Mr. Kingdon first endeavoured to persuade Mr. Henderson to avail himself of the sailing of the vessel he had visited, insisting upon it very strenuously. This Mr. Henderson declined, as the time was too short, and they had already agreed upon a day to which he preferred to adhere. Evidently chagrined at his failure, Mr. Kingdon then endeavoured to dissuade Mr. Henderson from acceding to the proposal of the church to remain with them, holding up to him the failure of a native pastor in Jamaica, who, under somewhat similar circumstances, had been unable to support himself, or to bear up against adverse influences.* Upon this point Mr. Henderson said he had yet to make up his mind. Mr. Kingdon next took an aggressive tone, and drawing from his pocket one of Mr. Henderson's accounts, he objected to the magnitude of two or three items, on the ground that the goods, in his opinion, could not have been consumed in the family, and, without waiting for an explanation, he proceeded to accuse Mr. Henderson of foreseeing the acceptance of his resignation, and having dishonestly laid in an extravagant supply to provide for the future, and added, that he had heard it said that Mr. Henderson had "well feathered his nest." For repeating this slander and for his insulting imputation, Mr. Kingdon was at once sternly rebuked by those present. The quantity of coffee, sugar, and flour to which Mr. Kingdon objected, had been in part supplied to Mr. Warner and others, on account of their salaries, from the society. Every item was fairly accounted for. Mr. Kingdon had already made similar remarks to several individuals, and that in no reserved manner; thus aspersing Mr. Henderson, whose fair fame had never before been thus ruthlessly assailed even by his enemies.

From this time Mr. Kingdon commenced a series of petty annoyances and bitter complaints against Mr. Henderson, which entirely precluded the possibility of a peaceful settlement of their affairs. He at once stated that the allowance which the society had granted for the support of Mr. Henderson and his family, till they left Belize, would cease on the day that the vessel Mr. Kingdon had chosen

* This was Mr. Whitehorn, a strict Baptist, since a bearer at Mr. Oughton's chapel in Kingston.

should leave the port, and told Mr. Henderson that when he did leave he would require from him a written promise that he would not return to the Settlement, which must be given before he paid into his hands the sum which the society had voted for his support while he should be determining upon his future course. Greatly moved by these speeches, Mr. Henderson requested him to return to him his accounts. He felt that Mr. Kingdon was not worthy to be trusted with them, and resolved to settle his pecuniary matters with the committee direct, without other intervention. Upon which Mr. Kingdon positively refused to pay the debts which Mr. Henderson had incurred in the Settlement as the society's agent, and an unlovely exhibition to the world, with other most painful consequences, were the immediate results.

Captain Thomas had accompanied Mr. Kingdon as a friend, and his mind had been somewhat prejudiced against Mr. Henderson, but after this interview he utterly disapproved of Mr. Kingdon's proceedings, and strengthened Mr. Henderson's hands. On the following day, Mr. Kingdon wrote a discourteous letter to the deacons, not only refusing the church the continued use of their place of worship till they heard from the Society, but taking the liberty to intimate his displeasure at their proposal to retain their pastor, whom he described as willing to "wrest both the school and the church from connection with the Society"—a step which in his opinion would be viewed by them (the Society) "no otherwise than as full of selfishness and treachery as well as ingratitude." He also warns the church, making them answerable for "the great distress" in which Mr. Henderson and his family might be involved. He repeats his former threats to Mr. Henderson, in case he remains, and concludes by requiring that the premises, including the place of meeting, should be given up in less than a fortnight, on the 27th or 28th of April instead of the 1st of June as he had first agreed. Thus did Mr. Kingdon, by means of the power with which the committee had invested him, attempt to separate the church and their pastor, and even to exile the latter for ever from the field of his successful labours.

Mr. Henderson, after a week's consideration, returned a favourable answer to the church's proposals, agreeing to cast in his lot with them, though threatened in so many quarters, being convinced that it was his duty not to abandon the church in its extremity, nor to sacrifice the real interests of the Saviour's kingdom and the

salvation of the perishing souls around, either to his own feelings or the private ends of any other person.

The church immediately took measures to provide for the support of their pastor, by the "free-will offerings" of the members, who agreed to put by, on the first day of the week, as the Lord had prospered them, for this object, and the deacons were authorized to receive the sums that should be brought to them.

By the very earliest opportunity the church for the first time directly addressed the committee in the following terms:—

“The First Baptist Church in Belize’ to the brethren composing the Committee of the Baptist Missionary Society.—Greeting,

“Grace be to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.’

“DEAR BRETHREN,—The undersigned as commissioned by the aforesaid church, and in the name of all our brethren, now address you, impressed with the importance and delicacy of the duty, on the subject of the separation of our beloved pastor and brother, Alexander Henderson, from your Society, at which we are both surprised and pained.

“The brethren in a meeting held on Friday, the 17th inst., have with one accord directed us to lay before you the following particulars, viz. :—

“That your late agent, Alexander Henderson, after twelve years’ experience and intimacy with him, has had and still has our full confidence, as well in the character of a Christian man as in the office of pastor, or as a zealous and active missionary labourer. We also coincide with him in views of doctrine, church government, discipline, &c. ; and have no wish to lose his labours among us, nor to exchange them for those of any other.

“We have hitherto seen and rejoiced in the success of his efforts in and out of the church, never perhaps more abundantly so than at the present time ; and therefore are much concerned at the prospect of his labours among us being at all interrupted. We do not mean by this that we think our pastor faultless, or that God cannot carry on his work by other hands ; but we expressly declare that, on the whole, we approve of his conduct and measures ; and feel that, in the midst of much imperfection, which we cannot but deplore, the Lord has blessed our connection with him hitherto ;

and we are not at all convinced that we are called of God to separate from him. And further, that, whilst we are aware that some have represented to you what they consider to be the faulty part of his character, we esteem and love him for what we take to be the image of our faithful and condescending Saviour reflected in him.

“After the little knowledge which we have personally had of the Brethren Buttfield and Kingdon, and of their views of church government (which are open communion), we do not feel that we could accept of either of them as our pastor; and though we have no wish nor authority to prevent them from gathering a church or churches on these principles, we cannot view with indifference any attempt on their part to deprive us of our pastor, nor willingly expose ourselves to the temptations which might accompany such a loss, while we have it in our power to prevent it by the use of lawful means.

“As a church, and individually, we are deeply sensible of the favours which, under God, we have received from the brethren in England by your instrumentality. We trust we shall always feel grateful for the same (though we fear being represented as forgetful of them), we therefore thank you for the sacrifices which you have made for us, believing that the love of God in Christ and the salvation of souls have been your objects, and that you ‘Seek us, not ours.’ We gladly acknowledge our large debt of love, and that we owe you even our own selves besides.

“We hope then, beloved brethren, ‘as it has seemed good to the Holy Ghost and to us’ to retain our much loved pastor among us, supplying his wants at our own charge and on our own responsibility, as far as the Lord shall enable us, that you will admit our right to do so, which we found on Matt. xvi. 19, and xviii. 18; and that you will be pleased to view our separation from you in the same light as that of the churches in Jamaica, and to stand towards us, as regards the mission premises and future help, as you lately stood with regard to them.

“As our dear pastor intends, should the Lord permit it, still to devote a considerable proportion of his time to missionary work, viz., schools, translations, evangelising the surrounding country, &c.; as he will in all probability continue his useful correspondence with the native agents whom the Lord has raised up, and with the

Bible, Tract, and other societies; and as we trust his influence will rather be increased by the feeling which late events have stirred up, we think it our duty to express our readiness to receive from you whatever Christian sympathy and advice you may feel disposed to afford us, which we will regard as the fruits of love, and esteem and rejoice in accordingly.

“Having, as to means, been so long fostered by the care of your generous Society, we feel our unpreparedness to take the first steps alone, and therefore applied to your present agent here (Mr. Kingdon) for the use, at least for a time, of our accustomed place of worship, school-house, and mission dwelling-house. (We subjoin copies of our letter to him (No. 1) and his answers (Nos. 2 and 3). Our present necessity has made us sensible of our fault with respect to the past, in not doing more in this way to alleviate your burdens. But though we should still doubt our ability to continue the work unhelped, our duty being plain, we cannot but confide in God, and whilst we endeavour to do our utmost, we would humbly leave the result to Him.

“The brethren salute you in Christ, and desire your prayers to God on our behalf, hoping to receive a loving answer from you as soon as convenient.—‘Peace be with you.’

“In behalf of the church,

(Signed)

GEORGE BRADDICK,
SAMUEL MATT. DAVIES, } Deacons.
FREDERICK CROWE.

“Belize, 21st April, 1846.

“P.S.—We have sent a copy of this to Mr. Kingdon.”

Mr. Kingdon being fully apprised of Mr. Henderson's determination to remain with the church, proceeded to the mission-house, accompanied by Mr. Buttfield, on the 26th of April. The object of this visit was professedly to take an inventory of the furniture and property in the house. Mr. Kingdon also now desired that the manuscript translations should be given up to him without delay, though he had before allowed that they might be copied. He demanded that the stock of bibles, tracts, &c., which Mr. Henderson had on hand for various societies with which he corresponded should be given up to him, and he even inquired for the church books. All these unreasonable claims Mr. Henderson disallowed; and con-

cerning the last, he begged to refer Mr. Kingdon to the church, who only could dispose of its records.

Among other declarations authoritatively made by Mr. Kingdon on this occasion, was that no household furniture or bedding whatever that had at any time been purchased with the Society's money, should be considered as Mr. Henderson's property, by which rule Mr. Henderson said that Mr. Kingdon could also claim the very shirt upon his back.*

In bringing Mr. Buttfield with him on this occasion, Mr. Kingdon transgressed an express understanding which he and Mr. Henderson had mutually agreed upon, that all their business transactions were to be decided between themselves alone. After what had happened, his choice of a witness, if one were required, was certainly not a happy one, but he positively refused to accede to Mr. Henderson's request that his friend should withdraw. Many circumstances unite to show that this step was in every respect calculated to try Mr. Henderson to the utmost; and if he had any feelings, to sting them to the quick.

Assailed in this unmanly manner, alas! by two *brethren* who were to

* When Mr. Henderson left England as the Society's missionary, he felt that he went out as "a brother to carry out the purpose of brethren" and as a servant of the Lord—not of the Society. He had no fixed salary, but was left at liberty to draw on the Society's funds as he might require for the mission-work or for his own necessities. What little furniture he had in England he sold, and absorbed the proceeds in his outfit. When he succeeded Mr. Bourne at Belize, the latter had considerable personal property accumulated from his savings and the proceeds of Mrs. Bourne's school. Much of it was removed by Mr. Bourne to New York, and was there soon after consumed in the great fire which occurred at that time. The rest was put up to auction, though Mr. Bourne was only removing to another station of the Society's. Mr. Henderson purchased some, but the mission-house remained scantily furnished during the whole of his residence. All he ever laid out, even to purchase the shirt on his back, was the Society's money, but the whole of his labour, the proceeds of his school, garden, and even the profits on sales of medicine and stationery, which were not inconsiderable, but which the wants of the people had led him to make, were all considered as the Society's property. Not having had a separate purse to call his own for twelve years, Mr. Henderson must now, according to Mr. Kingdon's hard rule, leave the Society, stripped of all necessaries, and without the least provision for his family. This was actually put in force, and was confirmed by the committee, and that because he had determined to remain with his persecuted flock, and not to abandon the interests entrusted to him from above as one who cared not for them. The injustice of such a proceeding was the more keenly felt, as Mr. Henderson had unreservedly bestowed the energies of some of the best years of his life in advancing the interests of the Society. Its property had been materially benefitted by his care and assiduity, and he was sent empty away by the committee, at a time when he had to begin to make provision for his own house, and to supply his large family with every household necessary.

have alleviated his burdens, Mr. Henderson sent for a friend to be a witness on his behalf, and bore their foul imputations and fruitless wrangling for above two long hours, during which he repeatedly entreated them to break off so unprofitable an interview, and to cease their provocations. They, however, coolly and deliberately persisted in saying the most offensive things, till Mr. Henderson's feelings overcame him. He rose from his seat, wrung his hands like one distracted, and quickly left the room, but returning almost immediately, he addressed them angrily as "cruel wretches," and Mr. Kingdon as a "brutal man," and peremptorily ordered them to leave the house. At this they both laughed, as though they had gained their object, and retiring, went directly from the mission-house to the police magistrate, laid a complaint against Mr. Henderson, and sought advice how to eject him and the church from the mission-house by force of law.

After this parting, Mr. Henderson remained greatly humbled at the exhibition of his own weakness, but more than ever convinced that these brethren, if brethren they may be called, were animated by no benevolent feelings towards himself. He was, of course, ignorant of the malicious slanders and misrepresentations which they had addressed to the committee in London, and he did not yet know to what lengths they were prepared to go, in order, if possible, publicly to disgrace him and drive him from the place. An exaggerated report of Mr. Henderson's violence, in which they greatly triumphed, was soon spread abroad, and a handbill was directly after issued from the mission-press, and circulated in the town, declaring that Mr. Kingdon had not claimed the shirt upon Mr. Henderson's back.*

Matters had now become officially public through Mr. Kingdon's appeal to the civil power, and there was every appearance that litigation would lead to violence and to greater wrong in the state of feeling which existed against Mr. Henderson. Well convinced himself of the injustice done him, and persuaded that the committee at home had been misled, and that they would not sanction the steps which their agents were now taking, Mr. Henderson, in order to arrest the progress of legal proceedings, availed himself of a power of attorney which had been sent to him by the

* A copy of this official manifesto was at the time sent by the author to the Society at Moorgate-street, together with some other details, which are doubtless preserved in its archives.

Society some years before, to enable him to resist Mr. Bourne's claim upon the mission lot. By merely recording that power, his end was effectually answered. No ejection could take place till another power of attorney should be procured; time was afforded for an appeal to the committee itself,* and Mr. Kingdon was forced to be satisfied with less violent means. Mr. Henderson felt himself quite free, in honour, to act upon the first arrangement which they had mutually agreed to, and having protected himself against violence, he again assumed a passive position. An ample and humble apology was made by him for his rudeness in ordering them to leave his house, and more pacific *negotiations* on the part of Mr. Kingdon were soon renewed.

All the unfair claims which Mr. Kingdon had already set up were by him strenuously maintained. He further took occasion to dispute the right of Mr. W. Tillett to present Mr. Henderson with a pitpan for his river excursions; and that of a sister, who had given a small house and lot to the church of which she was still a living member, though both the donors asserted that their gifts were not made to the Society. The houses at the out-stations at Baker's and at Tilletton, erected by the people, and occupied by the native teachers, Mr. Kingdon persisted in claiming from Mr. Henderson, who had delivered up all title-deeds, and who was neither the occupier nor the holder of the property. The very burying-ground, which had been given for the use of the denomination, was taken into Mr. Kingdon's safe keeping, and though granted by the representative of the Crown to the Baptists, and not to the Society, who could have little expectation of ever needing a place of sepulture in Belize, Mr. Kingdon claimed the key, and shut up the "Prayers'-house" which the people had built upon it, thus precluding the continuance of the Sunday-school, and driving the people's meetings back to the inconvenient cottages of the locality.

Besides all this, Mr. Kingdon still persisted in refusing to dis-

* Though the Committee upon the whole have ratified all that Mr. Kingdon did; by granting Mr. Henderson's allowance for support up to the 1st of June, they virtually disallowed Mr. Kingdon's effort to eject him by force, and therefore approved practically of his resistance to it; though they have since endeavoured to throw blame upon Mr. Henderson for availing himself of the power of attorney, the only known means which he could employ, because he was no longer their agent. The emergency, and Mr. Kingdon's faithlessness, satisfied Mr. Henderson on this point.

charge Mr. Henderson's accounts for supplies with the various merchants, which he did not any longer dispute, and which the committee had directed him to pay; he refused to admit Mr. Henderson's right to dispose of a remnant of stationery and drugs, the cost of which to the Society had been repaid over and over again by the profits on sales; and he declined to receive the first edition of Mr. Henderson's "Mosquito Grammar," which had been printed at New York, and had only now arrived, because accompanied by the risk of a trifling expense, at the same time that he claimed every scrap of the MS. labours of the translator.

A sharp correspondence upon these and other petty claims, equally unreasonable, was industriously maintained by Mr. Kingdon during the interval between his appeal to Cæsar and the evacuation of the premises by the church and pastor on the 1st of June. In the mean time, the schools had been dismissed, and much of the active missionary operation of the station was interrupted, if not entirely suspended.

The church, though deeply affected by all that was transpiring, maintained a dignified and tranquil position in the midst of the storm. The only departures from its usual course were the greater frequency of meetings for prayer and for the transaction of business; and the weekly celebration of the ordinance of the Lord's supper, which had previously been brought before the attention of the church as a scriptural practice demanding its consideration and adoption. It was resorted to at this crisis, on account of the want which was felt of close and frequent communion with God and with each other. Subsequently, the former practice of monthly communion was restored, because the mind of the church had not been definitely taken on the question, and the events which followed, and in a great measure suspended the ministry of the word, also interrupted any progress that might have been made in matters requiring deliberation, and affecting the permanent practice of the church.

The native teachers who were assembled in Belize on the 4th of May met together in the school-room (where they then frequently united in devotional exercises), and after prayer, they solemnly agreed to four resolutions, by which they expressed, I. Their opinion that the resolution of the Baptist Missionary Society accepting Mr. Henderson's resignation was hasty, and arose from

some serious misunderstanding of the true state and interests of the mission there; II. Their cordial concurrence in the resolution of the church to retain and support their pastor; III. Their undiminished confidence in Mr. Henderson as their pastor and preceptor, and their determination to co-operate with him; and, IV. Their purpose to unite all their efforts, each in his sphere, in all kinds of missionary operations, relying upon the prayerful consideration, sympathy, and encouragement of their Christian brethren in more favoured lands. These resolutions were signed at once by John Warner, of Tilleton, Francis Curran, assistant teacher at Belize, William Michael, Carif teacher, and Frederick Crowe, of Guatemala. Joseph Kelly, of Baker's, who was not present, afterwards added his signature, and Mr. Henderson also pledged himself to union with the little band of teachers in their common work.

On the same day, Mr. Henderson being obliged to attend Court as a juror, Mr. Crowe accompanied him. His name being called, he took his seat, and was chosen foreman of the jury. The clerk of Courts came next to administer the form of oath. The foreman declined it. He was called to the bar, and after consultation, a magistrate said, "The Court fine you 5*l.* for refusing to be sworn." Mr. Henderson drew out a doubloon, paid the money, received the change, and without remark left the court-room with Mr. Crowe, rejoicing that he was counted worthy to pay for his principles. On that day, Mr. Crowe's name was added to the venire, though not a fixed resident, but a mere refugee, and not possessed of any property in the Settlement, which is the legal qualification. His remonstrances made in the proper quarter were ineffectual to obtain the removal of his name. The animus that placed it there was but too apparent.

As Mr. Kingdon persisted in refusing to pay the debts which Mr. Henderson had contracted on behalf of the Society, Mr. Henderson himself offered to discharge one of them by drawing a bill upon the treasurer, as he had been accustomed to do, and which he could not believe they would dishonour under the circumstances. This drew from Mr. Kingdon a public notice by advertisement in "*The Honduras Observer*," dated the 16th of May, stating that Mr. Henderson had no power or authority to act for the Society, or to draw bills in their name; another step which was calculated to

blast Mr. Henderson's reputation, had it not been too firmly established to be shaken by Mr. Kingdon's hand.

After this injurious notice, one of the merchants concerned, the agent of the house of Angas, Bevan and Co. accepted Mr. Henderson's bill on the Society in liquidation of his account. This bill was dishonoured by the committee in London; but being referred to arbitration, five of the leading merchants in Belize decided the question, as a mere matter of business, against the Society, who ultimately paid this bill and their other debts.* Thus it was made apparent that a Society of religious men, seeking a benevolent object, were blind to the mere equity of a transaction in which men of the world found no difficulty in awarding a just decision. Was this the result of personal prejudice, or is it that "the children of this world are wiser in their generation than the children of light?"

The church was now well aware that no concessions were to be expected from Mr. Kingdon, who had so bitterly manifested his disapproval of the exercise of its right to prefer Mr. Henderson to him, or another stranger, and to being left without a pastor at all. The members also understood that as a church they would not be allowed to use their place of worship after the 1st of June, when Mr. Kingdon and his friends were to take possession of it. They, therefore, sought to provide as best they might for their future wants in this respect, and also to procure a shelter for Mr. Henderson and his family. This, in their position, was no small difficulty. They consisted almost entirely of the very poorest of the people. Some of the few wealthier members had been excluded, and were supporting Mr. Kingdon's cause. Their scanty resources were just then being drained to pay their own and their minister's repeated fines for non-juring, which were growing increasingly burdensome, and they had undertaken to support their pastor. The out-stations and native teachers, too, by their adherence to the church, were more than likely to need its support, if they were still to be continued in operation. How all this should be done was a problem which the church could not solve. Still, the path of duty was clear. It could not be the will of God that His people should give up their principles, and they

* This affair, and other pecuniary matters, will be found more fully explained in "Honduras," the reply to the Society's charges.

were prepared to give up everything else for them. Their work, too, was not to be abandoned. God had given them some success, and now added the will and the men to push that success still further, though they were for the moment placed under a cloud of perplexing trials and difficulties. The Lord now united their hearts in this purpose as the heart of one man, and if they were but faithful to use the means and opportunities set before them, they felt fully assured that He would not withhold the pecuniary assistance that they might need. He in whose hands are the hearts of all men, could move the committee in London to respect the opinion of the church, to accede to their just and reasonable request, and prevent the Society from abandoning the work they had so long fostered; or if this were not His will, He could raise up other instrumentality, through which to help them. Already the church began to foresee that it would perhaps be more desirable to receive help directly from kindred churches themselves, than to obtain it through the intermediate agency of a managing committee so very far off, so little considerate of *the Church*, and so really ignorant of their true state and wants.

The resolution once prayerfully come to, Divine Providence was not slow in opening a way, and facilitating the purpose of the church. An old wooden structure, of moderate size and in pretty good condition, was for sale. The agent of the property, who was a friend of Mr. Henderson's, and well disposed towards the church, offered advantageous terms.* It must prove strait for only one of the purposes required; for both together, it would be very inconvenient. Its situation, however, was favourable, though it wanted a "waterside," where the baptisms could take place, and the ground was low and swampy. In point of appearance, and as contrasted with the mission property, it was like an ordinary meeting-house compared with a cathedral. But there was evidently the hand of God facilitating its acquisition when no other so suitable offered, and arrangements were made for its purchase by the church, who also made an effort to raise the necessary sum for the first instalment.

Mr. Henderson, who had escaped with a fine at the two last Courts, was still led to believe that future penalties would in his

* *Viz.* 300*l.* Jamaica currency (or 150*l.* sterling) one-third of which was to be cash, and the other two-thirds were made payable at convenient intervals.

case at least be more serious, as there was much personal enmity expressed towards himself. His mind had been harassed by the conduct of the Society and that of their agents on the spot. And though the committee had previously discouraged the idea of his paying a visit to England, and were evidently not anxious for an interview with him, he had become more and more desirous to meet them, and was still persuaded that a better understanding would be the result. He, therefore, meditated a voyage to Europe in order to compass this end, and also to obtain relief from the Home Government for all recusants in the matter of oath-taking, the penalties of which were not only pushed to an undue extreme, but under cover of law the Courts of the Settlement were prostituted to the basest of purposes, being made the vehicles of private pique and animosity, and the tools of the Episcopal party in order to crush dissent and drive its boldest champion from the field. His health, his spirits, his wounded feelings, all seemed to demand change and repose, and the interruption which his labours had sustained, the transition which the church was undergoing, and the private interests of his family, united to favour the design. Here, again, means were wanting. Mr. Kingdon had withheld the fair provision which the committee had made for such a time, and a voluntary but perpetual exile from the scene of his labours, was the only condition upon which he would fulfil this act of justice to one whose services were no longer desired, and before he would obey the committee's express instructions.*

At length the 1st of June arrived. On the previous day, which was the Sabbath, the ordinance of baptism had been administered for the last time in the convenient place so long used for that purpose, and on that Monday morning, Brother Joseph Kelly, of Baker's, was united in marriage to a young sister of colour, which was the last act Mr. Henderson performed in the old place of meeting. During that day he removed his family from the mission premises, where he had spent so many laborious, happy, and sorrowful hours. The place of worship, the schools, his study, his garden, and his child's grave, were all unwillingly left for the church's newly-acquired property. The house had

* The committee sanctioned this act of disobedience on the part of Mr. Kingdon, by refusing to grant to Mr. Henderson the sum they had voted for his use, on the supposition that he would remove with his family to the United States.

been slightly repaired. The partitions in the lower story were all taken down so as to make one large room, which was barely sufficient to hold the usual number of members, without any congregation. The upper story was inconveniently small for so large a family. A small negro house that stood in the yard had been put in order for the infant-school, and the larger school was to occupy the same place that was appropriated for meetings. The members who were able to do so, brought of their own furniture for the use of their pastor and his children, to whom Mr. Kingdon, on behalf of the Society, still refused even a bed to lie on. Some of the ladies of Mr. Henderson's congregation, not connected with the church, having noticed Mr. Kingdon's rigorous exactions in these respects, went of their own accord from house to house, to collect from the merchants and more wealthy inhabitants, with a view to supply what was most immediately wanted by the family. As the result of this kind and spontaneous effort, those ladies placed in Mr. Henderson's hands, on the day of his removing, the sum of 235 dollars (or 47*l.* sterling), out of which he at once generously invested 200 in the church's recent purchase, for the first instalment of which they had then to raise only 100 dollars more.

Painful as must have been the sense of injustice done him by those who should have been his friends, the unexpected demonstrations of kindness, liberality, and sympathy which Mr. Henderson and his family received on this occasion, from the people of Belize, must have been most grateful to their feelings. On the same day, ere Mr. Henderson had well left the Society's roof, Mr. Kingdon, with indecent haste, but in perfect harmony with the eagerness which he had all along manifested to become the controller of the mission property, entered the house and received it with its entire furniture, books, stationery, &c. &c. One of his first acts was to drive from the mission tank some of the schoolboys, who were drawing a last pail of water for Mr. Henderson's use. Thus making the expelled family feel, as early as possible, one of the physical inconveniences to which they would henceforth be subjected—their new house being unprovided with that very essential convenience. But that act only drew forth another token of good feeling. A wealthy neighbour, and a friend of Mr. Kingdon's, who had a large tank attached to his dwelling, immediately sent a

message to Mr. Henderson that he should be happy to supply his wants in this respect.

On the same day Mr. Crowe had been obliged to attend the Summary Court. On the list of jurors being read, he repeated his objections to serve, not being a duly qualified resident. He was told by the sitting magistrate that he might appeal to the Grand Court, but he must serve in the mean time. It was so ordered that his name was not drawn out of the urn on that day, and he remained at liberty, but with an intimation from the Provoost-Marshal that, instead of being struck out, his name should now be placed on the list of grand jurors also.

On the day after the removal of his family, Mr. Henderson had arranged to take his departure for New York, trusting to Providence to supply him when there with the means of continuing his voyage to England, and leaving his wife and children under the care of the brethren and friends. Up to the last moment of his embarkation, there were ominous appearances which seemed to indicate that his departure would be prevented. On the evening of the 1st, being the first Monday of the month, the church came together in *their own place*. The prayers of the brethren were more than usually fervent. Mr. Henderson's parting address was deeply affecting. A letter which had been prepared to give to Mr. Henderson, addressed to the churches in the United States and in England, was read and adopted, and a collection was made towards his travelling expenses. In the midst of their poverty the church and pastor could confidently look forward, and even anticipate the time when, through the liberality of their better circumstanced fellow-disciples, they should be restored to the more commodious place they had left, or be enabled to erect one as convenient, and so give up the entire house they now filled to their pastor for his private residence. Abundance of fruits, vegetables, fowls, and other live-stock were sent in from all quarters for Mr. Henderson's use during his passage, and the moving demonstrations of affection towards him, which were at once sorrowful and pleasing, constituted an eloquent refutation of all the slanders of his enemies.

Early the next morning (the 2nd), Mr. Henderson was to embark. Before he could do so, one of the unsettled accounts, which Mr. Kingdon refused to pay, was sent in. A friendly messenger then came to inform Mr. Henderson that Mr. Kingdon would be

willing to pay it, and remove this obstacle to his departure, *if Mr. Henderson would give up the power of attorney which he held, into his (Mr. K.'s) hands.* Mr. Henderson declined doing so, but the kind friend who had consented to bear this message, generously offered to become answerable for the account. Mr. Henderson now prepared to leave, and was about giving a parting embrace to his family, when the Provost-Marshal rode up. He had come to collect a fine for absence from Court, which Mr. Henderson paid. This unexpected demand left his little stock of cash almost exhausted. Two of the brethren then accompanied him on board, and having prayed with him in the narrow cabin, returned to the bereaved and afflicted members and friends, some of whom were following the ship with an eye-glass, and observed him standing on the deck and waving his hand in token of farewell.

On the following Lord's-day (the 7th), the congregation first met in the new place of worship, and though Mr. Henderson was absent it was inconveniently filled. While but a few hundred yards off—within sight and almost within hearing—the deserted meeting-house was for the first time occupied by Mr. Kingdon and his little company, where the contrast was as great with respect to numbers as in point of accommodation. The next day the schools were opened by Mr. Crowe, Mr. Henderson's eldest daughter, under her mother's direction, having charge of the infant department. The number of children who attended was more than equal to their conveniences or to the strength of the teachers.

This state of things continued nearly to the end of the month without interruption. At the mission-house, a young man, not a professor of religion, was appointed schoolmaster with a good salary: Mr. Kingdon and Mr. Buttfield not having yet overcome their antipathy to school-keeping. Efforts were made by those gentlemen and their wives to increase both their congregation and their school by domiciliary visitation, which was attended with but small success.

The excitement occasioned by late events had scarcely yet subsided when the Grand Court opened its sessions on the 29th of June. Mr. Crowe was obliged to leave his school and be in attendance. When the list of jurors was read, he stepped up and claimed exemption, on the ground that he was not a qualified resident. His objection was overruled by the Court, which was presided over by

Chief-Justice Robert Temple, assisted by George Nicholson, Esq., and Dr. John Young, a professional gentleman of colour. After some hours, a second jury being called, Mr. Crowe's name was drawn. He took his seat in the jury-box, but when the book was presented to be kissed, he objected, and was called to the bar. The judge, then addressing him, said, "You object to swear?" He replied in the affirmative. "What denomination of Christians do you belong to?" Answer: "To the Baptist." The judge, turning to the Clerk of Courts, said, "You hear, put that down;" and then added, to the recusant, "On what grounds do you object?" Answer: "I believe it to be forbidden in scripture." A long consultation, in a whisper, followed, but the words "They will refuse to give evidence on any case," were audible. The judge again addressed Mr. Crowe: "Are you aware that the law is, that you must swear or be punished?" Answer: "I am ready to bear any punishment rather than do what I believe to be contrary to the commands of God." The judge: "Is your mind made up?" Answer: "Certainly." The judge then made a speech of some length, addressed to Mr. Crowe, saying, in substance, that he deemed it quite useless to argue with a person of his sort: it would be a waste of words, and both unprofitable and out of place: that non-juring was a growing evil which was spreading rapidly among the common people, of which Mr. Crowe and others like him were the cause, and it must now be put a stop to. He imputed unworthy motives to Mr. Crowe, charging him with coming there to make a public display of himself, and adding, "The sentence of the court is, that you are condemned to pay a fine of twenty pounds, and to be confined for the space of one calendar month in the common jail." Mr. Crowe begged to be allowed to answer as to the evil imputations which had been made respecting his motives, but this was rudely refused, when he bowed in submission, and, being taken into custody, was at once removed from the Court-house to the jail.

By this event, Mr. Henderson's school was broken up, and the congregation deprived of Mr. Crowe's services. The church, too, was again wounded in one of its members, and was made to feel more deeply the enmity of the world and its own exposedness as a flock having no shepherd. But the penalty imposed on integrity was cheerfully borne, and, at the expiration of the first month's

imprisonment, the sufferer refused to permit his brethren to make an effort to pay his fine and obtain his release, which they very kindly offered to do, well knowing their poverty, the many burdens of this kind which they had lately borne, and the heavy responsibilities which were then pressing upon them. He was also persuaded that the same penalty, or, perhaps, a heavier one, would be imposed again at the first opportunity. He was perfectly satisfied of the illegality as well as the injustice of the sentence of the Court. He was willing to let the enemies of the Gospel expend their malevolence upon him, if such were the Lord's will. He felt somewhat curious to observe how far their blind animosities would carry them. At the same time, he confided only in an omnipotent arm for his support and defence, and esteemed it an honour to be called to make the inconsiderable sacrifice of his liberty in defence of the smallest portion of truth.

In this case there was not only evidence of the existing ill-will towards the Baptists, by requiring the services of a person who was known to object to take an oath—that person at the time engaged in partially supplying the vacancy caused by Mr. Henderson's absence; but there was a positive infraction of the law of the Settlement concerning the qualifications of jurors, requiring that they should be housekeepers, and either possessed or in receipt of a certain amount of property.* There was a manifest impropriety in calling the disability of the sufferer a "Contempt of Court;" and more especially, in the injurious imputation of unworthy motives by the Chief-Justice; for Mr. Crowe well knew that if he had chosen to disregard the authority of the Court, he could, by absenting himself, have incurred only a comparatively small fine, as many other jurors systematically do. But, in his estimation, that would have been an infringement of another precept of the Word of God which enjoins obedience to magistrates and submission to "the powers that be," which he felt equally bound in

* This is distinctly stated in various laws and acts of Public Meetings, passed in Belize both before and since this commitment.—(See "Burnaby's Code," Art. 7, p. 13; Resolution of Public Meeting, June 25, 1799, p. 71, and an Act of the Public Meeting, March 3, 1847.) The panel of jurors, or venire, by which so much mischief was done to the conscientious non-jurists in Belize, was declared illegal by the Grand Court, in its sitting of February 26, 1847. Besides which, Mr. Crowe was actually exempted from serving as a juror, his legal disqualification being fully admitted by the Summary Court, April 7, 1847, after having been imprisoned during 156 days, and fined 30*l.* currency.

conscience to obey. His presence there was an act of submission, and of respect to the Court, and the conscientious scruple which he entertained, even if a mistaken one, was in no sense contemptuous. The sentence of the Court was also excessive, in the twofold penalty which it imposed, besides being wanting in that charity which "thinketh no evil," and in the common courtesy which is due even to a criminal.

Mr. Crowe protested against this sentence, and declared his intention to appeal to a higher authority, by a written document which was sent into the Court, before the session closed, through the governor of the jail. During the first month, being prostrated by fever, one of his judges attended him as the public doctor, and he was soon mercifully restored to health. At the expiration of the term of imprisonment specified in the sentence, the fine being claimed, Mr. Crowe declared his utter inability to pay it, and pointed out that his confinement must preclude the hope of his ever being able to do so, as it prevented him from following his lawful calling. He was then detained as a debtor to the public till it should be paid, the jail fees and charges daily increasing the debt, thus really transforming the penalty into *imprisonment for life*. As soon as the Superintendent of the Settlement, who was absent, returned from Jamaica, on the 18th of September, Mr. Crowe, who had then been confined nearly three months, addressed a petition to his Excellency, putting himself under his protection, as the representative of the Crown, and claiming the benefit of the Habeas Corpus Act; to which he received a reply, on the 29th, that his Excellency was *of opinion* that "there was no room for the interference of the Executive in the case."

CHAPTER IV.

TRIBULATION.—THE CHURCH EXERCISED.

1846—1847.

Union of the Church—Mr. Henderson's difficulties in New York—His resolution to withdraw from Belize for a time, and reasons for it—Conduct of the Church—The Society refuses the requests of the Church—The Church resolves to remain separate—Mr. Crowe's treatment and company in jail—Retribution—Trial of Lieut. C—— and Mr. S——. —Its consequences—Uproar in the jail—Mr. Henderson returns to Belize—Mission-work resumed—Mr. Crowe's liberation—A second place of worship opened—Open-air preaching and Baptism—Mr. Kingdon's missionary meeting—Native Society formed by the Church—Public meeting—Success of Brother Warner at Tilleton—Encouraging prospects—Mr. Kingdon's administration of the Society's station—Trial of Ross—Petition to the Legislative Assembly—A persecuting act passed—Its deceitful working—Steps taken by the Church—Petition to the Superintendent—Project of a Mission to England—Timely arrival of a French Schooner—A Church formed at Tilleton—Summons for preaching the Gospel—Discussions with the Magistrate—Mr. Henderson and Mr. Crowe appointed to seek relief in England—The Church's Letter sent with them—Grief at parting—Testimonial to Mr. Henderson—Engagements of the last Lord's day—Embarkation and parting scene—Sailing of the Deputation.

"Behold, the devil shall cast some of you into prison."—Rev. ii. 10.

THE church, which had been charged with being influenced by Mr. Henderson and Mr. Crowe in choosing the course it had adopted, was so situated now as to preclude even the possibility of such an influence being felt, Mr. Henderson being absent, and Mr. Crowe in confinement. But the brethren continued to meet together to break bread and to edify one another, and Brother Braddick, in the absence of any one better qualified, overcame his natural diffidence, and in a simple manner expounded the word of God to the congregation which continued to attend, and heard him gladly and to profit. The absence of its recognised servants (ministers) did not deter the family from its regular meals, and all the essential busi-

ness of the church was uninterrupted. But a further trial of the faith and patience of the saints, and a stronger proof of their independence of action and of the soundness of their principles, was appointed them.

Mr. Henderson's reception by the churches at New York was not such as he or the church at Belize had anticipated. An application to the committee in London to assist him to accomplish his purpose of meeting them, was rejected by a resolution stating that they had accepted his former proposal, and must adhere to their decision; and consequently he remained in poverty, perplexity, and ill-health in that city. In addition to his other mental sufferings, he was now harassed with doubts as to the course the Lord would have him take. He questioned whether his usefulness in Belize were not blighted; he feared that his presence there drew down additional sufferings on the church; and knowing their poverty, and suspecting that their affection for him might have blinded their judgment, he was at least willing to give them an opportunity to reconsider their step without the impulse and excitement which events and feelings might have imparted. He therefore resolved to leave them for a time, and wrote to his family to join him at New York. He wrote also to Mr. Braddick and to Mr. Crowe, informing them of this determination. In his letter to the latter, which is dated New York, 26th June, he says:—"As you will see Brother Braddick's letter, and know from it the resolution I have come to relative to my future proceedings, it is unnecessary to repeat what I have there stated as to my determination to remain in this country for a time at least. If afterwards the way to return shall be opened, I shall return to the work—a work compared with which every other appears insignificant." As reasons for this decision, he mentions the alleviation of the burdens of the church in pecuniary matters; the hope that the persecuting authorities would relent; the desire to give the Society's chosen agents full scope for their plans; "and lastly," he adds, "the shock my mind has sustained from the unchristian behaviour of Mr. Kingdon and Mr. Buttfield, is such that I cannot overcome it. Oh, brutal man! cruel wretches! That moment when these words were uttered was an era in my life, much more so in my Christian profession. What fresh trials the Lord may see meet to try me with on this side eternity, it is not for me to know. I pray that I may be kept from such excess of feeling

as then tried me." After requesting Mr. Crowe to assist his family to depart, he adds, "But the church, oh, the church, the church! my beloved brethren and sisters in the Lord, they are my grief! I did not think I had bid them farewell when I left Belize. The hand of the Lord has gone out against me, and they, the sheep, what have they done? Arm of the Lord awake, awake on their behalf! To you, my dear brother, under the great shepherd, I must commend them for a season. Feed the flock of Christ.

"The simple fact of my standing unconnected with the London Society closes up all sympathy for us. A complete aristocracy of feeling exists. Union, union, union! For what? Not to build up truth, but party views. Not to defend the oppressed, but to shut out the oppressed from aid. Not to support the weak, but to uphold the strong. Exceptions there are, but the rule is as above stated. As yet, I have resolved on nothing, but to bring my family here. There is ample opportunity for exertion on behalf of truth and holiness."

When these letters reached Belize on the 27th of July, they once more overwhelmed the minds of all Mr. Henderson's friends with grief and consternation. His resolution was generally disapproved of, and probably more decidedly so where he was most beloved and respected. The church, not having been directly addressed, resolved to await a communication from their pastor, which was promised in one of his letters. The grief of the members was as general as it was profound, and it was not unmingled with disapprobation of the step proposed. Several persons wrote to Mr. Henderson, strongly dissuading him from his purpose, and urging his return. Mrs. Henderson, being far advanced in pregnancy, determined not to go till after her confinement, and wrote also expressing her wish for his return.

On the 1st of August, Mr. Henderson wrote again to Mr. Crowe, of whose situation he had then heard, and said, "You have had the many sad communications long ere this of my changed plans. My spirits are so broken with the persecutions of the authorities towards myself and my dear brethren, the neglect of the Society, and the malice and injury experienced, that I felt I wanted rest. My health is poorly indeed, and must recover a little." He states that an interest was beginning to be felt by brethren in New York, and a letter to the Superintendent of British

Honduras on the subject of the persecutions, was being signed by the leading Baptist ministers in that city. He had written strongly on the subject to the committee in London, adding "my plans are very much deranged at the present time. I cannot make up my mind to remain in this country but for a time. How long I know not. Having written for my family, I have noticed this to the Society, and wait with much anxiety their reply.

"Offers have been made me here, but I cannot settle my mind, neither do I find myself in possession of strength of body to undergo the labour of preaching. I began to regain strength and calmness, until the report of your situation reached me, since which I have had all my anxieties wakened up afresh. And again I say, Oh, Lord, how long ?

"I quite approve of your resolution to remain where you are, I have reported this to the Society, and asked them how they will like to see the fact recorded that we die in a jail—while, 'I was in prison, and ye visited me not.'

"The steady conduct of the dear brethren is just like them. The Lord reward and keep them. I must again express my admiration of dear Brother Braddick. It is a season of trial, of severe trial indeed. I have told the Society, in case my family do not come, 'I have no prospect but to return to a jail, and if I die, here am I.' We shall see the answer. I have told them also, that if they will exert themselves to the utmost to protect the church against our enemies, that I am prepared to return and be as before, unless in salary. This you need not publish but with prudence." He then adds many affectionate salutations, words of encouragement, and prayer for various individuals.

Again the church, which met frequently during this period, deliberated as to the course to be pursued, and though it was proposed to send funds to Mr. Henderson and request him to go on to London, as he originally designed, the church still resolved to wait till a direct communication should be received from him.

On the 12th of August the church received the committee's reply* to their application (given at page 397). By it all the hopes that had been entertained of kindness or of help from that quarter were blighted. At the time it was received, it was considered by the

* A small portion of this letter is given by the Committee in "Belize," p. 5, and remarks on it in "Honduras," p. 107.

leading members as a mere business-like letter, both cold and stiff, and concealing under a form of civility a latent bitterness harder to be borne than open abuse. It seemed to set forth the presumption of the church in asking for the mission premises; it rejoiced that the members were willing and able to support their own pastor—which it declared to be the New Testament plan; but it decidedly stated that the committee could not take any step that would have the effect of inducing Mr. Henderson to remain at Belize; that there appeared no hope of his living peaceably with *their* brethren, and it improperly expressed an opinion that his remaining would not be to the advantage of the church itself, concerning which the hope was intimated that at some future time it would return to a connection with the Society and its agents, and so enjoy the privileges now denied it; and concludes with a God-speed, which grated sadly upon the good sense and feelings of the church.

The church met again on the 15th of August. They had now no hopes of help from the Society, and it seemed probable that Mr. Henderson would not return; but the utmost unanimity of feeling prevailed among the members, who, under these peculiar circumstances, confirmed all that they had before determined upon, by deciding to remain a separate church; and that, under no circumstances, would they unite themselves to Mr. Kingdon and his church, though strenuous efforts were then making to induce them to do so, and every possible influence was exerted over individuals to draw them away, which had well nigh succeeded in one or two cases. Among other reasons given during their deliberations in support of this decision, was the constitution of that church, in which persons were admitted to the Lord's table who had been put out of their own communion for faults, to all appearance, still unrepented of. Also that several points of principle which the church held dear as parts of divine truth must be abandoned, among which was non-juring, and the stand already made in its defence. When the difficulties of the church, which were now being *felt*, are duly considered, and the apparent advantages of joining Mr. Kingdon are taken into account, this alone demonstrates that the members acted from an enlightened principle, and with entire freedom in what they had before done, and now deliberately ratified. The meetings of the congregation continued to be attended as well as the place would allow, and there were abundant tokens of the Lord's presence with his people. The first of September was set apart by the church as a day for humiliation and

prayer, on account of the persecution and peculiar trials of the church, and that a blessing might accompany them to the members and to the world. It was a solemn occasion.

Mr. Crowe's confinement, though accompanied with rigour on the part of the authorities, was not without many alleviations. If his limits were narrow, and the conduct of officials harsh, there were many hours through the day when his brethren and friends were permitted to see him. At first, the number of visitors was inconveniently great, so that, to avoid magisterial interference, the members were restrained from coming. The usual jail allowance was served out for his use, but his friends were emulous to supply his wants, and he often had a threefold meal to share among his fellow-prisoners. One dear sister, who was long an industrious slave, but now a trustworthy servant, regularly sent him three meals a day month after month till he was liberated, at her own expense, and was jealous of any interference. This excessive liberality was vainly remonstrated against, and though its acceptance was made the subject of reproach by those who could neither appreciate the motives nor the feelings of either the donor or the recipient, it was doubtless well accepted of Him who will reward even a cup of cold water when given to a disciple in his name. At first the prisoner was freed from the restraint of his debtor's room, from six in the morning till six in the evening. But the latter hour was afterwards changed to four, and before his liberation he was closely shut up during most of the day, and his usual visitors were excluded. So graciously was his mind supported during the whole period, that his cheerfulness never left him, and as severities increased his inward comforts and contentment augmented in more than an equal proportion. Many of his hours were spent in study and in prayer for the much-trying church, and for its misguided enemies.

As there was then no mad-house in the Settlement, some of Mr. Crowe's companions were of this character. Peter Pot, an African, who was chained to a ring in the floor, and who sometimes spent the whole or a part of the night in shaking his chain, and humming monotonous African airs, was an occupant of the cell immediately beneath him. And, as the flooring was somewhat decayed, he was perceptible by more than one of the senses. Thomas, an idiot boy, was confined in a cell under his grated window, and might be heard

at all hours drumming upon the door, or upon the tinned platter in which his food was given him. The rest of the inmates were such as may be imagined to occupy a colonial house of correction, in a community so degraded and so mixed.

The jailer's wife was a member of the church, and often availed herself of Mr. Crowe's services in conducting family worship, or in teaching her children, and until the period of her husband's removal from office, she did all in her power to soften his confinement, and attended him like a mother during his sickness. He also frequently enjoyed opportunities of conversing with his fellow-prisoners on the best themes, and of reading the Scriptures to them, especially to some Ladinos and Spanish-Indians, who had never heard the gospel before.

Several events transpired during Mr. Crowe's imprisonment, which greatly excited the inhabitants of the Bay, and in which some have perceived the finger of God in righteous but terrible retribution. Lieutenant C., already spoken of as the willing cause of Mr. Henderson's imprisonment, and, therefore, the ringleader in the recent persecutions against the Baptists, was committed to the jail on a charge of murder, on the 2nd of August, and occupied a room opposite to the non-jurist, who was in a measure thrown into his company. The circumstances of the case were briefly these:— Lieutenant C— and Mr. S—, the Clerk of the Courts, had been dining together at the house of an acquaintance. On their retiring late at night, "their table" having been made "a snare" to them, they first beat a poor woman whom they met in the street, and then had an affray with some Spanish-Indian fishermen who were asleep in their boat, waiting for the hour of their toil. In this encounter one of the Spaniards was severely beaten about the head with a setting pole, and the white gentlemen having called in the aid of the police, he was removed to the black-hole, where he was shut up with another till the dawn of the next day. On re-opening their cell the one who had been injured was found in a dying condition, and on being removed to the hospital shortly after expired. During the inquest a black brother, who was an attendant at the hospital, was sent to jail for refusing to swear. The verdict criminated Lieutenant C. only, and though high bail was offered, he was imprisoned, to the great consternation of civil as well as military officials, and indeed of all that privileged class of which he was considered an ornament, numbers of whom flocked to the jail to

condole with him. After three days, Lieutenant C. was bailed in the sum of 20,000*l.*, and set at liberty.

Almost immediately after this, a deliberate murder was committed by James Hume, a creole of Belize, who shot a Spaniard* in a drunken quarrel, and was at once imprisoned in a criminal cell. This circumstance greatly exasperated the Spaniards generally, as their countrymen had been victims in both cases, and they threatened to burn down the Settlement because the white Lieutenant was at liberty. On the other hand, the Creoles were not unobservant of the different mode of treating the man of colour, and were jealously watchful of the result in both trials. That of James Hume was quickly brought to an issue, and he was publicly executed before the jail on the 29th of October. The other gentlemen had two trials, and were acquitted at last on the 4th of December. The Lieutenant being immediately ordered to Jamaica by his military superiors, intelligence was shortly after received in Belize that, in company with another officer, Lieutenant C. had been precipitated over the edge of a steep cliff, by the breaking of a hand-rail; that his companion falling upon him had escaped with little hurt, but Lieutenant C. was much injured, his face disfigured, and in case of recovery, which was considered doubtful, he would be mutilated for life. Thus, in this instance, was the Divine sentence, "He who sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed," literally fulfilled in Providence—a sentence, the execution of which God has reserved to himself, † though it is often pleaded in excuse for the legalized manslaughter of capital punishments.

The other party concerned in this trial, Mr. S., proceeded to England with the express design of ruining the judge who tried him. A letter said to be from the Chief-Justice, couched in disrespectful terms, and describing the jurors at Belize as unworthy of confidence, fell into his hands, was communicated to the parties complained of, and was published in Belize. This was followed by the refusal on the part of a great number of jurors to serve while the Chief-Justice should be on the bench, and resulted in the commitment of refractory jurors early in 1848 in considerable numbers,

* The white Spaniards, Ladinos, and Indians speaking the Spanish language, are all indiscriminately comprehended under this familiar designation by the English Settlers and Creoles of Belize.

† Should the reader doubt the correctness of this assertion, let him search the Scriptures, and then say *who* among the Gentiles is distinctly authorized of God to execute the penalty.

including many leading inhabitants, and such commitments of jurors for "Contempt of Court" became more frequent than the imprisonment of non-jurors had ever been. The ex-jailer, who had shown unnecessary severity to the Baptists, among whom he was once numbered, was now himself a prisoner. An editor of a local paper, who had personally injured Mr. Crowe during his confinement, now occupied the very room which had been his, and subsequently the magistrate already spoken of as a persecutor on several occasions connected with the militia, was himself subjected to a long imprisonment on the plea of "Contempt of Court," but as most of his fellow-settlers believe, only for opposing injustice. All these and other events arose out of the trial of Lieutenant C., the ringleader of the persecution against the Baptists.

The determined enmity to godliness of Mr. S. the Clerk of Courts, and of Lieutenant C., was frequently manifested during their confinement in jail from the 12th of October, when a true bill was found against them both, to the 4th of December, when they were acquitted; and more especially in their bitter animosity to Mr. Crowe their fellow-prisoner. One Lord's-day morning (the 8th of December) the jailer's family being at worship in Mr. Crowe's room, Mr. S. strove to interrupt them, first by groaning and then by drumming perseveringly upon the wooden partition which separated the two rooms. The next day he sent out and purchased a violin, and Lieutenant C. procured a drum, in order to drown the psalm-singing in future, or to accompany Mr. Crowe at his devotions. The first night after they had procured these instruments, when all the prisoners had been locked up according to custom, they began by responding to each other in discordant sounds, which were gradually increased till a kind of phrenzy seemed to possess them, which in the case of Mr. S. was continued without intermission till after four in the morning. He evidently continued to scrape his fiddle, without the least regard to concord or harmony, till his arm ached so that he could do so no longer, when he diversified the entertainment by howling and barking through the iron bars of his window, till all the dogs in the vicinity were roused to emulation. His shouts and vociferations in calling fire, &c., spread alarm, and drew forth the reproofs of the neighbours, who called to him to desist. The jailer's re-

quest that he would be still and let the prisoners sleep was disregarded, and fears were entertained that his reason was overthrown.

The next day the town was filled with the report, which reached the Superintendent's ears, and an investigation by the magistrates was ordered, which gave occasion to high words and to exciting scenes. An unsuccessful effort was made to fasten the blame upon Mr. Crowe. All were laid under severer restrictions, and the jailer was shortly afterwards removed from his situation. These changes, and the vicinity of Messrs. S. and C., greatly aggravated the burden of Mr. Crowe's confinement. At one time he was led to expect that still greater severities would be resorted to, in order to subdue his tacit resistance. Hard labour on the public works had been spoken of, and also his banishment from the Settlement, which seemed highly probable to many. No signs of relenting appeared on the part of his oppressors; and while sympathy and many indulgences were freely granted to his gentlemanly companions, an opposite feeling and practice were unequivocally displayed towards him.

While these minor events were transpiring, Mr. Henderson returned to Belize on Lord's-day evening the 11th of October, and was most joyfully received by the church. During his absence of four months and a half not one of the members had forsaken its communion. Some persons had been added to it, and the only event of importance, besides their persecutions, which had occasioned sorrow to the church, had been the pastor's resolution to withdraw from Belize, though only for a season. A sixth child had been born to him, and if the world, the Baptist Missionary Society, and outward things generally, still frowned upon the little flock and upon his personal interests, it was evident that the Great Shepherd of the sheep had not withdrawn His countenance from them, and that a patient perseverance in well-doing would ultimately secure the triumph of the Redeemer's cause. He now came determined to pursue the work in which the Lord had so evidently blessed him, and to leave with Him that which he held dearest upon earth, next to that work, namely, his reputation as a man and a Christian, which had been assailed in so unprincipled a manner by those who should have been his fellow-helpers and his friends. His safety, and support, were left also with God. The

conduct of the church had entirely removed his doubts and fears respecting them, and had proved to opponents as well as to friends that they were not swayed by the will of any man, nor even influenced by a mere personal attachment.

Mr. Henderson's school and translations were immediately resumed, and, as far as practicable, he returned to his usual routine of missionary labour. The congregations were now such as the building could not hold, every portion of it was inconveniently crowded, and numbers stood round the doors and under the windows on the shady side of the house listening to the word, many of the members choosing a place outside, in order to make room for others.

At the public auction of a wreck which took place at this time, the ship's bell was bidden for by Mr. Braddick, who, finding that it ran higher than he had expected, ceased bidding. He, however, stated to one who stood near, that it was for Mr. Henderson's school that he had desired to purchase it. On hearing this the assembled merchants and traders bought in the bell for Mr. Henderson, and agreed to pay for it among them; but two of the number insisted upon sharing that privilege to the exclusion of the rest. A token of sympathy and respect from this class of persons so publicly given, and at such a time, was not a little cheering to the persecuted Baptists.

Mr. Crowe having been again indisposed in his confinement, which had become much more rigorous, the concern of the brethren on his account was greatly increased. Letters had more than once been addressed to the judges, explaining his inability to pay the fine imposed, and requesting that he might be set at liberty, but with no effect. One person, not connected with the church, who had offered the Chief-Justice the half of the amount of the fine, had also failed. The church met on the 3rd of December, and appointed the hour of noon of every day for concerted prayer on behalf of their suffering brother. At noon, on the following day (the 4th), Mr. George Tillett, of Baker's, not then a member, who was himself suffering from fever, rose from his bed, where he had been contrasting his own comforts with the inconveniences of a prison-house, and without informing any one of his purpose, went out before it was thought prudent for him to do so, and obtained an order to see the prisoner, who was not then so easily

accessible as he had been before. He kindly proposed to Mr. Crowe to pay his fine, and liberate him at once. The prisoner, though grateful for the favour, strongly objected, regarding it as a premium to the oppressor, and feeling most unwilling to be released in that manner after having suffered so long, well knowing that his persecutors were already anxious to get rid of him, and were only puzzled how to effect it without humbling themselves. Mr. Tillett, notwithstanding these remonstrances, went and generously paid the fine; the jail-fees were not exacted; but the magistrate, on seeing the gold, expressed his surprise at Mr. Tillett's generosity towards "that fellow," adding, "for my part, I would let him lie and rot in the jail before I would pay for him." One hour after the first appointed season of united prayer on his behalf, the prisoner was set free. The same day, Lieut. C. and Mr. S., who had long been his tormentors in the jail, were also set at liberty; an event which was celebrated by sky-rockets fired from the fort, and a carousing among their friends.

The church, at its meeting on the 7th December, united in an act of thanksgiving to God for this speedy answer to their prayers, which was expressed by the Brethren Braddick and David Thomas, captain of the *W. H. Angas*, who was again in Belize. At this meeting it was agreed to prepare petitions for the relief of non-jurors, both to the Public Meeting of the Settlement, and to the British Parliament, and also to forward statements of the facts for publication in England.

Mr. G. Tillett now generously offered his house in Belize for the use of the church, the people being exceedingly inconvenienced for want of room. It was then arranged that the congregation should be divided, Mr. Henderson and Mr. Crowe alternately ministering in the two places. The school, which suffered from the same cause, was also relieved in January following by the removal of the younger children to Mr. Tillett's house, under Mr. Crowe's care.

This place, which was conveniently situated on the border of the river, at the western extremity of the town, was opened on the 13th of December, when Mr. Henderson and Capt. Thomas addressed a large audience crowded in two rooms, and round the doors and windows. On the following day, Mr. Henderson received letters from the Society, in which they still persisted in

offering him a premium to leave the place, but refused to do him justice otherwise.

On the occasion of the holidays, which bring together in Belize a great part of the population of British Honduras, including the disbanded mahogany gangs, thus filling the town with idlers, Mr. Henderson and Mr. Crowe preached repeatedly in the market-place;* the latter to the Spanish labourers, who assembled in considerable numbers to hear him, and were most eager to receive the Spanish tracts which were distributed. At the same period an application was made to Mr. Kingdon to permit Mr. Henderson to use the mission-wharf for a baptism, which being refused, the ordinance was administered in the Belize river at "Mr. Tillet's water-side." This change of place gave it much more publicity, and brought it under the notice of many who had never witnessed such a scene before. The neighbouring houses, wharfs, and the bridge, were crowded with spectators. There were four candidates; one of them was Mr. Alexander Kerr, a Belize Creole, who had been converted through the instrumentality of Brother Warner, of Tilletton. He was a hunter of deer or antelopes in the pine ridges of the old river, and excelled in making moccasins, a kind of buckakin boots, from their hides, which he prepared with his own hands. He had, in his youth, enjoyed the advantage of some education at the free-school, and seemed likely, both by natural gifts and a sanctified disposition, to be an instrument of usefulness in evangelizing the country. He was then in the full vigour of manhood, and at once a husband and a father. The eyes of his brethren were upon him from that time, as one whom God had called to teach others; nor has their expectation been disappointed. Another of the candidates on this interesting occasion was an elderly lady, one of the oldest living inhabitants of the Bay, who had been the mistress of the first Episcopal chaplain to the Settlement. In an impressive address at the water-side, Mr. Henderson referred, in stern and faithful condemnation, to the persecutions which were being inflicted upon the Baptists whom God was pleased to honour with increase, notwithstanding the hatred of men.

* On a previous occasion of the same kind, Mr. Crowe was addressing a crowd from the steps of a merchant's store, who was himself at an open window above. Perceiving an officer of the militia riding by, the merchant (who was also a magistrate) shouted to him,—“I say, So and So, can't you send us some drummers to drown this noise?”

On the following evening, the 28th of December, a missionary meeting was held at the Baptist chapel, under the auspices of Mr. Kingdon. Mr. Henderson was not invited to take a part, but the meeting was spontaneously announced by him; he also attended it, together with a number of the members of the first church, who appeared to form the bulk of the assembly.

The native teachers who had banded together by their resolutions on the 4th of May, feeling that they had something of a missionary character of interest and importance to report, were desirous also to hold a public meeting at this season. Application was made to Mr. Kingdon for the use of the Baptist chapel for this purpose, but it was refused. A similar application was kindly responded to by the Wesleyan missionary, and the matter was then laid before the church. At a business meeting, held on the 3rd of January 1847, it was recognised that the church is in itself a missionary society; seven brethren were therefore appointed by the church, with the assistance of the pastor and any of the native teachers who might be present in Belize, to conduct business connected with evangelizing. It was particularly specified that this working committee should always be under the absolute control of the church, and accountable only to it, not having power to add to its numbers, and no provision was made for any changes; but as future necessities might require them, and as the church should see fit. Upon these brethren was devolved the care of providing and administering the funds necessary for the support of the native teachers and the out-stations, and they were authorized to prepare for an annual meeting, to which Christian friends and the public should be invited, and where contributions would be received for the church's missionary objects; but it was specified that no control whatever should be given to the meeting in the management of "The Honduras Baptist Missionary Society," which was, in reality, only an integral branch of the church's operations.

In the first public meeting, which was held on the 4th of January, all the ministers—Episcopal, Wesleyan, and Baptist—in the Settlement were invited to take a part: but not one of them all attended. Mr. Kingdon and Mr. Buttfield first accepted, and afterwards declined the church's invitation. The printed notices were issued in the name of the church, and respectfully invited its friends to countenance, by their presence and contributions, its

efforts to extend religious knowledge in the vicinity. The meeting was numerously attended, some interest was excited in the good work undertaken by the church, and a much larger collection than had been made at any of the three preceding public meetings which had just been held, testified to the zeal of *the people* towards a cause upon which the influential and the wealthy were more disposed to frown than to smile. On the same day, Mr. Crowe attended the Court, and the lot drawn from the urn decided whether he should return to jail or attend the meeting in favour of the latter alternative, as he was not required to serve on a jury for that day.

A new station on the island of Ruatan had already been undertaken by the church before Mr. Henderson had left for New York; and, in the midst of its poverty and perplexity, it was supplied for a time by Brother Curran, an English mariner, who had been previously assisting Mr. Henderson in the schools in Belize, and supplying, for a short time, the station at Baker's.

At Tilletton, Brother Warner's trials and discouragements had been followed by a season of abundant blessing. The little meetings began to be well attended. The faithfulness of the preacher, which had drawn down so much hatred and opposition before, now seemed to melt the hearts of his hearers, and the falling tear and the suppressed sigh betokened the deep feeling that accompanied his simple exhibition of the Gospel of salvation. A good work was evidently progressing, and already several hardened sinners were converted to God. The church now determined to give their fullest sanction to the labours of Brother Warner, and on the 8th of February, during a visit which he paid to Belize, he was publicly set apart as an evangelist. Upon this occasion, the joy of the brethren was great, and their hopes of a Divine enlargement, in the church's special work of extending the Gospel, were quickened and upheld.

Notwithstanding all the interruptions which had arisen from the church's rejection, from the denial of further assistance by the Society, and from outward persecutions, the prospects of the native church were most encouraging, especially when the blessing of the Lord upon its labours and sufferings are considered. There was, however, mingled, with some faith and confidence, a painful degree of uncertainty in the minds of many of the members, arising from the threatening posture of the authorities, and the scarcity of pecu-

niary resources; and it was contemplated, as a possible result of these united causes, but especially of the first, that at least a portion of the members would be forced to emigrate, and would perhaps remove in a body, and form a small colony beyond the British limits.

The sessions of Court, at the beginning of each month, were regularly looked forward to as epochs, full of important results to the struggling cause. Each one brought with it an amount of fines, and often the imprisonment of one or more members, and every inquest that was held was a cause of alarm to those who entertained scruples to be sworn. In the mean time, the schools were rapidly increasing, and the preaching of the Word, in two congregations at Belize, and at the out-stations, was attended with manifest tokens of the Divine presence and approbation.

With Mr. Kingdon and Mr. Buttfield efforts had been made to bring about a better feeling, as the extent of their misrepresentations to the committee in England was still unknown in Belize. From these attempts, it became more apparent that the minds of those gentlemen were fully set in them to frown upon Mr. Henderson and his friends, whom they represented as having *robbed* the Society of the church and of the scholars. They were wholly unsuccessful in raising a congregation or exciting an interest in their own labours, but continued quietly to enjoy the possession of the mission premises, the printing establishment, and the favour and support of the Society at home. A desolate stillness seemed to reign over the once active and bustling mission, the garden was already covered with weeds and bushes several feet in height, and the only visible improvement was the more elegant furniture and style of the mission dwelling-house, and the classic stillness and contemplative gloom of the missionary's study and its approaches.

One of the excluded members, who had joined Mr. Kingdon's communion, now forsook it, acknowledged her fault, and was restored to her place in the church. Another, who had been dismissed from a mission church in the Bahamas to Mr. Kingdon, afterwards wishing to unite with the native church, was refused a dismissal to it, and, after sending a deputation to Mr. Kingdon to inquire his reasons for this refusal, which were not deemed sufficient, the church received her on her own profession. Thus was the little communication which the church had with Mr. Kingdon of a painful and unsatisfactory character.

Rumours of continued persecutions, and the approach of the February Grand Court, prepared the brethren for a new crisis. On the first day of its session (the 22nd), the reiterated objection of a want of the legal qualification in Mr. Crowe's case, was met this time by the declaration of the Court that he could be exempted only if he had taken "the oath of allegiance." The trial of an aged pensioner named Ross, for rape, on the next day, gave occasion for the commitment of Mrs. Morgan, a member of the church, who was the principal witness for the defence, which was conducted by Mr. Crowe.* In this trial the most intelligent and credible, as well as best-informed witness was prevented from giving her evidence by the interposition of the oath. Mr. Crowe, finding the Court would not receive her testimony on affirmation, and that she entertained this conscientious scruple, which he did not know till then, endeavoured to relieve her by not insisting upon her testimony being taken, though he thought it important to the accused. The judge, however, insisted that she should swear or go to jail, to which the worthy woman replied, with a courtesy, and said, "What you please, massa," meaning any punishment that you may please to inflict. This poor sister, the industrious mother and the only support of six children, was sent to jail for a week, and Ross was sentenced to three years' imprisonment and three months' hard labour in each year, whereas, if Mrs. Morgan's evidence had been taken, he might have been acquitted.

During this trial, the Chief-Justice thought it worth while to interrupt the proceedings, in order to lecture Mr. Crowe on the supposed inconsistency of his non-juring principles; but he would allow of no reply. The local paper also made comments upon the same theme. But while compelled by a sense of duty to act as he did, Mr. Crowe felt no responsibility arising out of the exaction of oaths by the Court, or the infliction of unnecessary severities upon Mrs. Morgan. The obligation to defend a man who could

* Legal assistance was at that time refused to the accused in all cases, and there was no accredited advocate in the Settlement. Professional skill was employed only against the accused by the Attorney-general, who had recently arrived; consequently, any one was at liberty to plead, and, in this case, a poor African, who was thought to be innocent, would have been without assistance had not Mr. Crowe volunteered his services. In the trial of Lieut. C. and Mr. S., already referred to, this rule was set aside, and a lawyer was sent for to Jamaica expressly to plead their cause. There is now a professional gentleman residing in Belize, who is allowed to plead in certain cases.

not speak for himself, was not, in his opinion, weakened by the bad state of the law of evidence, nor by his own critical position.

On a subsequent trial, during the same day, Mr Crowe's name was drawn as a juror, but the Attorney-general, by the exercise of his prerogative, kindly exempted him from serving, on the ground that he had already endured much fatigue in the trial of Ross. Thus again was he prevented from returning to confinement in the jail, which he fully expected would take place that day. Mr. Henderson, Mr. Braddick, and other brethren were fined. Antony Potts, one of the coloured brethren, having the choice left him of a fine of 5*l.* or ten days' hard labour, preferred the former.

The following petition from the church had been prepared for the so-called Public Meeting, which was held at Belize on the 1st of March.

To the Honourable, the Members of the Legislative Assembly.

The Petition of ALEXANDER HENDERSON, and others.

“ HUMBLY SHEWETH :

“ That the undersigned, on behalf of the *first Baptist church, Belize*, beg leave to lay before this honourable Assembly of their fellow-settlers a brief statement of the sufferings that they have of late years, from time to time, endured ; as well as respectfully to call your candid attention to the civil disabilities under which they actually lie by reason of their adherence to their religious belief in the matter of *oath-taking*. And further, submissively to sue for that relief at your hands, to which, as orderly and faithful subjects, they consider themselves entitled.

“ It is their conscientious conviction that the scriptural injunction to ‘swear not at all’ is binding upon them, as a Divine precept, without any limitation whatsoever. In consequence of this their belief, they have been under the painful necessity to decline being sworn when it has been urged upon them, though at the same time they have shown themselves ready cheerfully to perform their duty, and faithfully give evidence as by law required of them, under an affirmation, willing to subject themselves to the full penalty attached to perjury, should they at any time be found guilty of wilfully perverting the ends of truth and justice.

“For this cause alone they have since the year 1838 paid into the public treasury of this Settlement, *finés* amounting together to 78*l.* 13*s.* 4*d.* currency.*

“Several of their number, though otherwise unobnoxious to the penal laws of the land, have suffered repeated *imprisonments* in the common gaol, to the imminent jeopardy of their bodily health, the prejudice of their unsullied reputation, the injury of their temporal concerns, the suspension of their lawful callings, and the scandal of the whole community.

“One of the latest examples of this kind was in the person of a recognised preacher and schoolmaster, whose confinement was protracted over a period of one hundred and fifty-eight days, because of his inability to pay a fine of 20*l.*, which was added to the sentence of imprisonment; and it might have been indefinitely prolonged, and his labours still further suspended, but for the disinterested generosity of an individual. A poor and very worthy woman, the mother of six unprotected children, lies at the present moment incarcerated in our jail for simply declining to be sworn, though otherwise willing to give her evidence, which the Court declared itself not at liberty to receive unless upon oath,—a testimony the want of which is thought to have materially affected the sentence of the unhappy man in whose defence she appeared.

“It is not the least injury under which your petitioners groan, that they are by the Courts accounted of as *contumacious*, and their names recorded as disobedient to magistrates, and as guilty of the crime of ‘Contempt of Court.’ They consider it their duty and privilege to ‘submit themselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord’s sake,’ and are as solicitous to comply with this precept of their Divine Master, as that one which forbids the use of any kind of imprecation. They only decline doing so when human legislation is unhappily at variance with what is regarded by them to be both the spirit and the letter of the command of Christ. Nor do they then actively resist the powers; but are ever ready passively and without a murmur to bear the penalties by law appointed. And even when these have been

* 47*l.* 4*s.* 2*d.* sterling. In this sum the fines for absence are not included. Other heavy fines were subsequently added to these, and some had been paid before; but the pecuniary losses to the members, arising from legal disabilities, were very much greater.

misapplied or exceeded, they have had recourse to none other than lawful means in order to have their wrongs redressed.

"It is an undeniable truth, fast growing into universal acceptance, that none should suffer merely for their opinions. It is still more glaringly manifest, that matters of religious worship and conscientious scruple should be entirely free, and are far above the jurisdiction of any earthly tribunal. Nor can this honourable Assembly need to be reminded that it is totally abhorrent to every principle of justice, and every feeling of humanity, that honest men should be coerced into a breach of *the law of God*, as they do deliberately understand it, or that any should be bribed basely to violate their deep-seated convictions of what is right, at once forfeiting their consistency and self-respect. Nay, is it not deplorable that the only alternative left them should be that of appearing as criminals in the eye of the law, and of falling under the sentence of their rulers in common with felons and malefactors? Your petitioners desire in all things to give an example of submissive and cheerful obedience to 'the powers that be,' both in the sight of God and in the sight of men; but seeing that they cannot faithfully serve two masters, they confidently appeal to you to decide for them, whom they ought to prefer.

"Besides the before-named aggravated sufferings in their persons, and unmerited stigma on their characters, your petitioners, and all who coincide with them in their views, are hereby placed *without the pale of the law*. It is known that the Courts are open only to arraign them, and are virtually closed to their suits; by reason of which the unprincipled, the malicious, and the evil-inclined, ever ready to take advantage of the unprotected, are tempted to make them the victims of their insolence, their slanders, and their rapacity. And whilst the innocent are thus oppressed, and the guilty triumph in impunity, great and growing injuries are inflicted upon society at large. The wholesome restraints of the law are weakened, the peace of families is disturbed, the rights of private judgment and religious freedom are invaded, and the best ends of government are subverted by the law.

"Should these grievances remain unredressed, many virtuous, intelligent, and highly useful inhabitants may be driven to seek

refuge in other lands, and our Settlement be at once deprived of their industry and moral influence. The page of history will have to record of our rising community that, in this, the age of comparative light and liberty, the exploded policy of the darker ages was still acted upon by *you*; and that our less favoured neighbours, the infant and still struggling States of Central America, in whose territories we are as it were embosomed—although hitherto unfreed from the influence of the see of Rome, had in this particular, from the dawn of their independence, provided for the relief of their conscientious citizens,* whilst her Britannic Majesty's loyal and peaceful subjects were enduring sufferings such as these without obtaining relief. This wise and just provision, honourable alike to their sentiments and feelings, whilst it exalts them, casts no small reproach on our professed civilization, enlightened polity, and reformed religion. And how much more strikingly apparent must the contrast become should a British legislative body refuse to Englishmen the same undeniable right when (as is now the case) it is distinctly claimed at their hands.

“The honourable members of this House are doubtless aware of the partial relief afforded to Quakers, Moravians, and Separatists, who object to be sworn on precisely the same grounds as your petitioners. When the Bill favouring the last-mentioned denomination was debated in Parliament, the propriety of a *more general measure* was strongly urged. At present a Bill having this object is before the British Legislature, if it has not already passed into a law. Like them then, and for the reasons here stated,

“Your petitioners humbly sue for immediate and complete relief at the hands of this honourable Assembly, and respectfully claim to be freed from their vexatious disabilities and sufferings, by the enactment of a law of this Settlement, providing that a *simple affirmation* be substituted in lieu of an oath, on all and every occasion, to each and every one who shall declare that he, she, or they, has or have conscientious objections to be sworn;

* On presenting a petition to the Supreme Court in Guatemala, to which it is customary to attach a form of oath, the author found that legal provision had been made in the national code for such scruples as he entertained, and that he needed only to affirm and state his objection to swear, citing the article in question. Such a case had possibly never occurred before in that country; but this article was copied, with other enlightened laws, from the Livingston Code.

which person or persons shall be liable to the full penalties attached to the breach of the law, as heretofore observed, in any and every case of falsehood and disobedience. And this your petitioners confidently ask, emboldened by the conviction that the honourable members of the Legislative Assembly are not ignorant of the facts stated, and are further personally acquainted with the character of the parties aggrieved, and your petitioners, &c. &c. &c.

(Signed) ALEXANDER HENDERSON, *Pastor.*
 GEORGE BRADDICK, } *Deacons.*
 SAMUEL M. DAVIES, }

Belize, Honduras, 2nd of March 1847.

This document was placed in the hands of a member of the Public Meeting, who had promised to present it; but during the first sitting, he returned the petition to Mr. Henderson, stating that he could not do so, because it was in direct opposition to an "Act" which the Superintendent had sent down to the Assembly for their approval. This was the first intimation given of a formal legislative act, legalising further persecutions against the suffering Baptists. Nor could its precise nature be ascertained even then. Rumours of some undefined impending danger had been rife; but the parties concerned, who had even hoped for relief from this Assembly, were now taken by surprise.

At the second sitting of the legislative meeting, the measure entitled "An Act for declaring and defining the Laws respecting Dissenters, approved March 8th 1847,"* which had been prepared by the Superintendent in Council,† was passed with indecent haste, and all apparent servility. It was read three times during the same sitting without any discussion. One of the members with difficulty obtained that the petition of the church should be read even once, but no action was taken upon it.

The "Act," which contains sixteen articles, first provides that all dissenting ministers who shall have taken *the several oaths of allegiance and supremacy*, and subscribed a Protestant declaration, shall be entitled to all the exemptions, benefits, privileges, and advantages granted to Protestant dissenting ministers and teachers,

* And disapproved by the Home Government in August of the same year.

† The Rev. Matthew Newport, Rural Dean, and the Chief Justice, with some more public employés, then composed the Honourable Council.

by the laws of England. It next prohibits the meeting of more than twenty Protestant dissenters unless in a licensed place. The fifth article, which is the most effective, imposes a fine not exceeding 10*l.*, upon every person preaching or teaching in a licensed place, who shall have refused to take the oaths before the police magistrate, and to procure a certificate as a qualification for these religious duties. *Any Protestant person* was authorized to enforce this process upon any preacher or teacher, and consequently to require an exhibition of the certificate. No meeting was to be held in any place with the doors fastened. Special care was taken that the Church of England and its ministers should not in any way be included in its provisions; and Quakers, Moravians, and Separatists were also exempted from its action, and privileged to meet, preach, or teach without license or certificate. Due provision was made for levying the fines attached to each offence by distress warrant, and for substituting three months' imprisonment where no sufficient distress whereby to levy the penalty could be made.

By this iniquitous law all dissenters from the Established Church, except Quakers, Moravians, Separatists, Papists, Mohammedans, or heathens, were required to admit, to a certain extent, the intervention of the civil power in their religious interests and church polity—an interference to which some of the dissenting ministers, connected with the native church, had as strong an objection as they could possibly entertain to the oaths themselves, which were here so evidently put forward as a stumbling-block to those who were known to object to them. Though somewhat cloaked under the pretence of securing good order and legal protection to religious assemblies of dissenters, the practical action of this law must be to stop the mouths of Mr. Henderson and his associates, both from preaching and from teaching; or, should they persist in doing so, to strip them gradually of any property they might have, and then imprison them during three months, four times every year till they died. The only other alternative left them was their voluntary exile, and for the church to accept Mr. Kingdon as their pastor. No dissenting ministers but the non-jurists were affected, either in evil or in good, by this measure; the object of which was evidently to crush the rising native church, which, though it had survived the Society's displeasure and the tyranny of the Courts, still appeared weak and unable to withstand so formi-

dable an assault emanating from the very seat of local power and authority, and coming as it did before the wounds of previous encounters were healed. Such at least was the design of the Evil One, from whom all persecutions and injustice emanate, whatever may be the pretexts, and however plausible the self-deception of the instruments he uses in the accomplishment of his ends.

This revival and adoption, in a modified form, of an old law promulgated in the days of Henry VIII., in order to crush dissenters from the Infant Establishment, was regarded by the church as a direct invasion of religious liberty, and an intrusion upon private rights. On the evening of the 2nd, the day the Act was passed, the church assembled to deliberate and to pray. Several of the coloured brethren addressed the church in a strain of unflinching fortitude and confidence in God. Deep feeling prevailed, and it was a season of mutual confidence and hope, as well as of sorrow.

The authorities (with whom Mr. Kingdon was upon the most friendly terms, interchanging visits and dinner parties, at the very time that this law was preparing, and after it had passed) had now the impression that, by the rejection of the Society, the native church had ceased to be connected with the denomination, and was therefore not entitled to that consideration which it had enjoyed. They expressed themselves determined to put down this little body, and should the new law prove insufficient, that they would enact another more stringent. None of the dissenters in the Settlement chose to identify themselves with the injured party, and but few, even of the more liberal public men or merchants, perceived the violation of principle and constitutional rights which was involved. There was, therefore, no local influence to oppose to this act of aggression save the passive endurance and uncompromising integrity of the assailed church. The legislature had set up a Moloch in the form of law, in whose name they exacted disobedience to a divine precept, submission to a foreign power in what is the peculiar prerogative and dominion of Christ, and the violation of individual conscientious convictions. The church cried to God, and by their conduct replied to their oppressors, "Our God whom we serve is able to deliver us; and He will deliver us out of thine hand, O king."

On Lord's day, the 7th of March, two additional deacons were

chosen and appointed by the church, in the persons of brethren James Kelly and James York. The members were also divided into tens, one who could read being appointed to each company, four of whom were sisters. The object of this measure was that if the regular worship should be violently interrupted, they might then meet in separate houses within the conditions of the new law. The minds of the brethren were further prepared for the coming trial, and the church united to seek the Lord in earnest dependent supplications that they might be able to continue in the narrow path of duty, as if no such threats had been used.

The church's house was properly licensed for public worship, no obstacle being put in the way. Several of the houses of the members whose little prayer-meetings might otherwise have been stopped were also licensed. The meetings at Mr. Tillett's house were discontinued. A memorial was addressed by the church to her Majesty's Secretary of State for the Colonies, signed by the pastor and other ministers, stating that the church's petition to the public meeting had been met by a measure bearing with still greater severity upon the church. And on the 29th of March, a deputation, consisting of seven coloured brethren,—viz., William Michael, James Kelly, Lenon White, Edward Hyde, William Kief, Edward Thurton, and Samuel M. Davies,—all respectable householders,—waited upon her Majesty's Superintendent with a petition, praying for relief from the oppressive action of the new law, or that its operation should be suspended till the pleasure of her Majesty's Government should be known; an appeal to the proper authorities having been forwarded through His Excellency. No hopes were held out to them of relief; and one of the brethren, an African, and once a slave, witnessed a good confession, and administered a faithful but respectful reproof to the Superintendent in the name of the rest.

During this month, the meetings, which were continued as usual, were visited by policemen, who counted the number of persons present, and on the next day became informers against the preacher, who was summoned to appear before the police magistrate and fined, the amount at first being trifling, but gradually increased. Even the smaller prayer-meetings were thus visited; and Mr. Henderson, Mr. Braddick, Mr. Crowe, and others, were seriously called in question concerning the good work of preaching

and teaching contrary to law, for which they were *lawfully* punished.

The method of annoyance now adopted was evidently less violent in its immediate execution, but it was calculated by a gradually increasing pressure to bear with tenfold effect upon the edifice which it had been resolved should be razed to the ground, and its very foundation eradicated from the soil. The lever employed was the police magistrate; the fulcrum was the law; but the obnoxious objects were living stones of the heavenly temple, built upon Christ the Rock; and the best laid plans, sustained by the most determined and deliberate execution, could prevail nothing.

On calm consideration it was evident to the church that their pastor, after being stripped of the few necessaries which his family enjoyed, would be again imprisoned, and that neither justice nor mercy were to be expected from those who were appointed as the ministers of God to them for good, but who, by becoming the instruments of oppression, had made themselves "a terror" to *good works*, and not to *the evil*. It had, therefore, become a conscientious duty to resist them, who, under other circumstances, it would have been a pleasing duty to obey. But there was another course open to the church, and Divine Providence evidently pointed to it. The oppressive rulers of the Settlement were themselves "men under authority," and an appeal to Cæsar, though difficult and costly, was by no means unlawful. Again it was proposed to send Mr. Henderson to Europe to seek relief from the British Government.

At the very time that the iniquitous Act was being passed, *La Cazamance*, Capt. Falcou, a French schooner from Bordeaux, providentially entered the harbour to undergo slight repairs. Mr. Crowe had some intercourse with the captain, who had brought him letters from his relatives there, though not expected to touch at Belize; and a more favourable arrangement for a passage to Europe was offered than could be expected in the regular traders.

Matters at Tilletton had progressed so favourably that Mr. Henderson's presence there had long been desired; now that some other permanent interruption to his labours was expected, he determined to visit the place once more. He left Belize on the 30th of March, and returned on the 3rd of April. During the interval he married several, baptized a goodly number, and united with the brethren at Tilletton, who now numbered more than twelve, in forming a

separate church, friendly, but quite independent of the church at Belize. They attended to the ordinance of the Lord's-supper, and all concurred in choosing Brother Warner to be their pastor. Thus was the once poor outcast sailor exalted to the highest post of responsibility and honour in the Church of Christ, after having been made the joyful father of many spiritual children.

The members of both churches were received by each, and the duties of mutual watchfulness were considered binding on them, at the same time that there was no interference with the freedom and internal discipline of either. This was the first sister community, the formation of which the much-tried church in Belize hailed with peculiar pleasure.

During Mr. Henderson's absence the usual meeting was attended by two police officers, who had become almost constant hearers. The next day Mr. Crowe received the following summons :—

“ BRITISH HONDURAS, *to wit* :

“ TO FREDERICK CROWE, of Belize,

“Whereas complaint and information have been made before me, William Maskall, Esquire, her Majesty's Justice of the Peace for the Settlement of British Honduras aforesaid, that you have been preaching or teaching in a chapel or house, situated on the north side of the town of Belize, aforesaid, occupied by Alexander Henderson. The said house or chapel being duly certified in the Record Office ; but the oaths and declaration required to be taken by you have not been complied with according to law.

“These are, therefore, to require you to appear personally before me on the third day of April, instant, at the hour of eleven o'clock in the forenoon, to answer the said complaint and information, and further to do and receive what to the law shall appertain.

“ *Herein fail you not.*

“Given under my hand and seal, at the Police Court in Belize, this first day of April, Anno Domini, one thousand eight hundred and forty-seven.

(Signed) Wm. MASKALL, P. M.”

This document cost the possessor one dollar. He was invited to swear, but having declined was admonished to repeat the offence no more. This he would not promise to do, but pointed out the nature of such civil interference with the internal arrangements of

the Church, which is the special prerogative of our Lord Jesus Christ, and entirely without and beyond the jurisdiction of any earthly magistrate. The law was read and explained to him, being interpreted as extending even to the tuition of children in the regular schools, and the penalty was carefully pointed out, accompanied by a threat that it would certainly be enforced, and imprisonment substituted in case of poverty.

The discussions which frequently took place in the Police Court* had now assumed a calm and often a persuasive tone on the part of the magistrate; but the fines had already reached their utmost limit, viz., thirty dollars or 6*l.* sterling for every meeting, and they were kept up at the same point with evident determination.

In Mr. Crowe's case, the very next summons must restore him to his quarters in the jail, as there was "no sufficient distress whereby to levy the penalty." On the 5th of April he had again to appear in Court. The panel of jurors was then being reformed. His often-repeated plea of the want of the legal qualification, together with his well known objection to swear, were now listened to with candour: surprise was expressed at the smallness of his income, and a promise was made that it should be considered. His name was afterwards struck off the venire; thus tardily admitting the injustice and illegality of the pains and penalties which had hitherto been inflicted upon him for this cause.

The desirableness of the departure of both Mr. Henderson and Mr. Crowe became every day more manifest: neither of them could long continue out of prison, and the difficulty of obtaining legal relief would then be much increased.

At a church meeting held on the 7th of April, it was resolved to send both Mr. Henderson and Mr. Crowe as a deputation to England, with a view to obtain relief from the persecutions then raging, and to ask that help from British Christians which the Society had refused to continue, and of which the church already felt the need and foresaw the absolute necessity of obtaining in order to continue without hindrance the important work which it had undertaken. The following letter was then adopted by the Church with a special view to the churches of the same faith and order as itself in Great Britain.

* On one of these occasions, Mr. Henderson plainly stated the whole controversy, by saying to the magistrate, without warmth, "*When you obey God, I will obey you.*"

“The First Baptist Church, Belize, Honduras, to all the Saints in Christ Jesus, with their Bishops and Deacons, to whom this may come, greeting :—

“‘Grace be unto you, and peace, from God our Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ.’

“It has pleased God, dear brethren, in His infinite mercy and love, to send the Gospel of His dear Son to this remote portion of the world, and to choose a people for His name from among the various tribes settled here, under the dominion of the crown of Great Britain. Upwards of twelve years ago, our Lord put it into the hearts of His people in England, to send us a teacher of the truth. By the divine blessing on his labours, we are now more than one hundred and thirty, who by a public profession have joined ourselves to the Lord, and to each other in His name.

“For several years past, we have been called to testify to the truth by suffering, on account of various points of duty; but chiefly for declining to be sworn in the Courts of this Settlement (on the authority of the New Testament precepts, Matt. v. 33, and James v. 12), we have yearly endured in a progressive measure, fines and imprisonments, besides other less direct injuries, to a considerable extent.

“But at length the enemies of the Gospel have been emboldened to assail us openly in the liberty of the public worship of God, and have craftily framed and enacted a law, by which it becomes criminal for us to assemble ourselves together to exhort one another in obedience to the divine injunctions, Heb. x. 25; and 2 Tim. iv. 2, and according to our conscience, laying upon us, in our religious character, certain restrictions to which our subjection to the Head of the Church forbids us to conform.

“In consequence of our persisting in obeying God rather than man, our meetings have become subject to the visits of police agents; and our ministering brethren, besides some who have conducted social worship in their own houses, have been summoned to appear before a magistrate, first threatened and then fined, for preaching and teaching contrary to this law.

“Under these circumstances, it has seemed good to the Holy Ghost and to us, to send unto you our beloved pastor, Alexander Henderson, who is a faithful and tried minister, and the honoured

instrument of God's grace among us, whose crown and joy are we in the Lord. Him we commend unto you, that ye receive him in the Lord.

"And we have sent with him our brother Frederick Crowe, also a servant of this church, whom we esteem faithful. That they, who have themselves suffered and laboured abundantly, and whose usefulness is now interrupted, may state to you, by word of mouth, our position and wants; to the end that we may be helped by your prayers and countenance, and that you, brethren, may assist them in whatsoever business they have need of you.

"If, when our state shall be made known to you, dear brethren, you should feel that we have any claim upon your sympathy, and that it is in your power to help us to obtain from men that liberty to honour God in His own institutions, which is our right, and is so dear to every Christian bosom; or that, by pecuniary help, you can alleviate the burden which is thus put upon us, and enable us more effectually to carry out our plans for the spiritual benefit of those around us; and that by your prayers and fellowship our spirits may be refreshed, it will both draw closer the bond of our union, and increase the debt of love and gratitude, already larger than our capacity, which we owe to the churches of Great Britain, and will, we trust, cause through us thanksgiving to God.

"Brethren, the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit. Amen."

"On behalf of the church,

"(Signed,)"	GEORGE BRADDICK,	}	<i>Deacons.</i> "
	SAMUEL MATTHEW DAVIES,		
	JAMES KELLY,		
	JAMES YORK,		

It was with considerable grief and heaviness of heart that the church determined to remain several months without a recognized minister, to deprive itself of the councils and instructions of their beloved pastor at such a time, and to break up two schools, each numbering 100 scholars. But the duty was plainly perceived, and hopes were entertained that important results might follow this step which would ultimately be promotive of the kingdom of Christ in Central America, and which would redound to the glory of God.

Among the merchants and wealthier residents, a few whose tes-

timony was most valuable—though some of them had been no friends to the Gospel, signed a letter expressive of their respect and confidence in Mr. Henderson,* and some contributions were made towards defraying the expenses of his voyage. This was, however, chiefly borne by the members, who supplied their pastor so abundantly with fruits, vegetables, live-stock, and other provisions that it was accepted by the ship, in lieu of board during the whole passage.

On the last Lord's-day previous to the sailing of the deputation (the 11th of April), while imprisonment was still hanging over their heads and their departure was yet uncertain, another baptizing took place at "Mr. Tillett's water-side." The number of spectators was now even greater than before, and no little emotion of different kinds was occasioned by the critical position in which the native church stood before the public. With some the boldness of the act was matter of surprise or of disapprobation; with others it was a feeling of sympathy and admiration, for the steady maintenance of principle, the display of unshaken confidence in God, and the example of patient perseverance "in well doing." Mr. Henderson, on this interesting occasion, gave vent to a burst of feeling, awakened by the peculiar circumstances of the church, which melted many of his audience into tears. On that day, the meetings were held as usual, the ordinance of the Supper was attended to, and both Mr. Henderson and Mr. Crowe preached, but the policemen refrained from making their usual visit. Still it was anticipated that notice would be taken by the police magistrate of that day's happy engagements.

On the following evening, after the native missionary prayer-meeting, the church remained for business connected with the pastor's departure. One of the deacons then questioned Brother Henderson as to what he would do in case he should fail in his object. Brother Henderson replied, that he had little fear of not succeeding, but that he would certainly return and suffer with them under any circumstances. Several of the brethren had a word of exhortation or of advice. Arrangements were made that the church should continue to meet, and Brother Crowe expressed his gratitude for the supply of all his wants, and for the many

* For this testimonial, see "Honduras," p. 6.

favours he had received since he returned among them, and especially for the sympathy and support which had been extended to him while in prison.

The day of Mr. Henderson's and Mr. Crowe's embarkation for Europe was the 14th of April, the anniversary of the day when the church first heard of the dismissal of their pastor from his connection with the Society, and on which Mr. Crowe had arrived from Guatemala. Again, one of the last payments Mr. Henderson made was a fine of ten dollars for absence from Court. When about to step into the ship's boat, the pastor found himself surrounded with a considerable crowd of members and friends, who made a circle round him on the public wharf, and united in singing the hymn commencing—

“Come, Christian brethren, ere we part.”

While thus engaged, the crowd was considerably augmented and the demonstration of feeling spread rapidly: many friends, some indifferent parties, and a few of the enemies of the Gospel looked on with surprise. Whilst the pastor was lifting up his hands in prayer, the two policemen, who had been employed as informers, were noticed to approach, and to unite themselves with the throng. Not a few were alarmed by their presence, and still feared that an arrest and imprisonment would frustrate the departure of the deputation. But when the prayer was ended, and the friends shook hands with their minister, the policemen requested to be permitted to do the same, and expressed their shame and regret at the kind of duty which they had been set to do by their superiors in office. A few friends accompanied the temporary exiles on board *La Cazamance*, which saluted the town with seven guns ere it left the harbour,* and was followed by many weeping eyes, and many a sorrowful heart, that such a separation and apparent interruption to the good work should be occasioned by the enmity of man to his God.

* The British guns on St. George's Fort maintained a sullen silence under the compliment paid them by the gallant French Commander.

CHAPTER V.

RELIEF—THE CHURCH HELPED.

1847—1848.

Position of the Church—The Deputation arrives in England—Misstatements of the Committee—Captain Thomas's correction of them—Mr. Henderson's settlement of accounts with the Society—Rejection of his demands and the reasons given—Favourable reply from Earl Grey—The first Carib Gospel printed—The Backup Grant—Gifts and help afforded—Intelligence from Belize; Mr. Braddick fined and distrained—Mrs. Braddick's Letter—The Church preserved—Mr. Crowe's reception in France—Public Meeting in London to hear the Deputation—Mr. Henderson sails, and leaves Mr. Crowe in England—Mr. Henderson's arrival in Belize—The persecuting "Act" cancelled—Portions of Mission Property sold—Mr. Buttfield's recall—Second Meeting in support of the Native Missions and Report—Civil benefit arising out of Religious Freedom—Amount paid by Mr. Braddick in Fines restored—Temporary accommodations for Worship—Mr. Kingdon's Meeting closed—Sale of the Mission Premises for a Lunatic Asylum—Nature of the transaction—Mr. Henderson's Protest—The Church address the Committee on the Sale—The Committee's reply—Public opinion of the transformation—Mr. Henderson's continued labours and success—Tillett blessed—The Committee in London invite Mr. Henderson's friends to hear Letters read—Their resolution of the 16th of December—Their charge as to incorrect statements not sustained—Resolution of the Strict Baptist Convention recommending the Church's Appeal—The Committee acknowledge one mis-statement—Motion at Members' Meeting to restore 250*l.* to the Church—The Committee's Resolutions of the 26th of May, and disposal of Property—Mr. Crowe's efforts delayed—His Visit to Sussex and Kent—Manner of applying—The Committee issue "Belize"—Its contents—Published Statements and Advertisement—Obstructions to Mr. Crowe's appeal—Report of Journeys to the west and north of England, and into Scotland—Further efforts interrupted—Progress at Belize—Yucatecan refugees—Prosperity of the Stations.

"Jacobus of Hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our refuge."—Psalm xlii. 11.

By the departure of Mr. Henderson and Mr. Crowe for Europe, the native church was once more thrown upon its own resources under God, at a time when there was little in outward circumstances to encourage the members, and when even its continued existence as a body must have appeared doubtful to the eye of sense. The persecuting authorities had, for a time at least, gained their point, which evidently was to drive the non-juring dissent-

ing ministers from the place. If, indeed, they had entered into the feelings of Mr. Kingdon and his supporters—a supposition which the intimacy maintained between them fully sanctions—they might now hope that the native church would not be tenacious of their connection with a man upon whom so much obloquy had been cast, and who was so obnoxious to the more influential, that it was thought worth their while even to enact laws for the sole purpose of being rid of him. Not a few enemies were on the alert to take advantage of any circumstance that might favour their designs; but the despised church, still fearless and hopeful, looked not at the difficulties that encompassed its path, but was enabled to move onwards under the banner of divine love, confidently interchanging, in the midst of accumulated sorrows, the ancient Israelitish watchword “Jehovah of Hosts is with us, the God of Jacob is our refuge.”

La Cazamance entered the port of Havre de Grace in Normandy, after a favourable voyage, on the 15th of June, 1847. Mr. Henderson immediately proceeded to London by steam, and Mr. Crowe visited the south of France, where his parents were residing, whom he had not seen since he had left them at the age of fifteen.

Captain David Thomas, who had sailed for England some months before the deputation, had already made public some of the leading facts connected with the separation of the church and Mr. Henderson from the Missionary Society, and the persecutions of the Baptists at Belize, though the narrative which Mr. Henderson had forwarded long before had failed to obtain publicity. No information had been published by the Society. They had made a gross misstatement in their Annual Report for 1847, to the effect that two native teachers adhered to Mr. Kingdon, and that the committee had been “constrained by various painful considerations to dissolve their connection with Mr. Henderson,” whom they say they had been willing to aid to remove to the United States; but that “he then resolved to remain at Belize, and has broken up and divided the church.” These erroneous representations were faithfully contradicted by Captain Thomas;* but no correction of them had as yet emanated from the committee which gave them currency.

* See “Primitive Church Magazine,” June 1847, p. 199.

Mr. Henderson arrived in London on the 17th of June. He at once informed the Secretary of the Society of his presence and objects. He also took early measures to bring the acts of the authorities in British Honduras before the attention of Government, by addressing the Colonial Secretary on the 25th of July. The petition of the church was also forwarded, together with testimonies from John Hodge, Esq., of Messrs. Hyde, Hodge and Co., G. F. Angas, Esq., of Messrs. Angas, Bevan and Co. and William Vaughan, Esq., of Vaughan and Sheldon, all leading merchants connected with Belize. Some delay was occasioned at Downing-street on account of the memorial forwarded through the Superintendent of the Settlement not having yet arrived, but a prompt attention was promised to Mr. Henderson's application.

In his first intercourse with the committee, Mr. Henderson expressed a desire for a fair adjustment of accounts, in which he begged to be allowed a moderate supply of furniture for a house in lieu of the cancelled provision which had been made for his removal. 2. That the committee should support the appeal made to Government for the relief of the Baptists in Honduras. 3. That instructions should be sent to the Society's agents at Belize, directing them to cease from all unfriendly steps towards the native church. 4. That should the committee withdraw their agents the mission-premises should be transferred to the church at Belize, in whose name Mr. Henderson offered the Society the half of the estimated value of the whole property, viz. 600*l*. 5. That they would state how they expected him to act while in England, and, as a matter of course, that all due justice should be done to his injured reputation. To these requests the committee promised an early reply.

Subsequently, Mr. Henderson had some interviews with the secretary, and met the committee on the 6th of July, when a final settlement of accounts took place between them. To Mr. Henderson's surprise all his just and moderate claims were disallowed, and almost all those made by Mr. Kingdon were rigorously enforced. The whole of his intercourse with the committee was to him most unsatisfactory, as were also the terms insisted on in winding up his accounts, and to which he found it necessary to agree, in order to obtain a settlement at all. He

had to pay a small balance (34s.), and was charged with 62l. 6s. 3d., the residue of a sum which had been advanced to Mr. Crowe in 1843 and 1844 to enable him to carry on missionary operations in Vera Paz, when the salary due to him by the Colonisation Company was withheld through the embarrassment of their concerns.*

As a reason why the committee would comply with none of his propositions, the secretary told Mr. Henderson that they had lost all confidence in him. Expressing himself as at a loss to fix upon anything in his conduct by which he had forfeited their confidence, the secretary replied, that they had no confidence that the church at Belize would stand; they had no confidence that Mr. Henderson would be supported in England, and they had no confidence that he would *live*!

In little more than a month after this settlement with the committee, Mr. Henderson received the following answer from the Colonial Secretary:—

“Downing-street, 14th August 1847.

SIR,—I am directed by Earl Grey to acknowledge the receipt of your communication of the 22nd ult., enclosing a statement of divers cases in which fines and imprisonment had been suffered by persons, in the British Settlements in the Bay of Honduras, on the ground of their refusal to take oaths, or on the ground of their having violated the provisions of a proceeding of the Public Meeting of Honduras, called ‘An Act for declaring and defining the laws respecting Dissenters.’ I have now also received from Governor Sir Charles Grey† the Memorial presented to Colonel Fancourt on the 29th of March last against this Act, and the Memorial addressed to me by yourself and others at Belize on the 20th of March last.

“Lord Grey, not having received from the local authorities any report on the particulars of the cases stated in your communication of the 22nd ult., is not enabled at present to express any opinion upon them; but he has no hesitation in assuring you, that her Majesty’s Government would strongly disapprove the exaction of any penalties from persons refusing to take oaths from *bonâ fide* religious scruples, and without any desire to defeat the ends of justice. And with regard to the proceeding called

* See Honduras, p. 51.

† Governor of Jamaica.

'An Act for declaring and defining the Laws respecting Dissenters,' they consider it inexpedient that any person should be called upon to take oaths under it; and her Majesty's Government will use their influence with the local authorities accordingly. But his lordship desires me to remind you, and those on whose behalf you apply, that, in choosing these Settlements for their place of abode, they place themselves in a situation in which legal rights must be unavoidably subject to more uncertainty than in the territorial possessions of the Crown.

"I have the honour to be, Sir, your obedient servant,

"The — A. HENDERSON."

"R. HAWES."

Thus was God graciously pleased to grant to the prayers of his suffering people in Belize the most complete success as to one object of the deputation, and that the most pressing at the time, if not the most important. Very gratefully is the prompt intervention of the British Government also acknowledged in the complete relief afforded to the sufferers from this local act of oppression in a distant dependency. It was just; it was nobly done. And it has earned the warm gratitude of the loyal subjects in Honduras who could appreciate the full extent of the benefaction. If righteousness be indeed the strength of a people, acts like these must tend to establish the British throne more than its often terrible armies, and better than the most gallant navies it has ever equipped.

In a visit which Mr. Henderson paid to Scotland, and, indeed, during most of his short stay in England, he was busily engaged in revising and transcribing his translation of the Gospel of Matthew in the Carif language. The church at Edinburgh, under the pastoral charge of Mr. Christopher Anderson, most kindly undertook to bear the expense, and thus obtained the honour of printing this first portion of the Sacred Scriptures in a language never before reduced to writing.

The church at Bacup, in Lancashire, of which Mr. T. Dawson is pastor, resolved to contribute the annual sum of fifteen pounds towards the support of Brother Warner, who thus became in part their missionary, and was requested to correspond directly with that church. Some boxes of useful articles for sale, and for the use of the mission, were generously bestowed by various friends, and about fifty pounds were contributed towards the expenses of the deputation.

Mr. William Norton, of Egham, Surrey (then of Dalston), at that time editor of the "Primitive Church Magazine," very kindly and earnestly advocated the cause of the Honduras mission and the church at Belize, in which he was seconded by several respected ministers and brethren, and especially by Mr. W. Barnes, of Trowbridge, and the brethren connected with the Strict Baptist Convention (now the Strict Baptist Society). This body passed a resolution on the 28th of September, expressive of its willingness to be the vehicle of transmitting funds to the church at Belize. Three Baptist ministers, of their own accord, took up the subject by writing to the committee of the Baptist Missionary Society.

While in London, Mr. Henderson received intelligence from Belize, to the effect that the brethren, who "continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers," had been continually watched and denounced by the police, and that Mr. Braddick had been six times summoned for conducting worship, and as repeatedly fined. At length he found himself unprepared to pay one of these impositions, and legal proceedings were being taken against him preparatory to a distraint for the sum of 8*l.* 12*s.*, for which goods would probably be seized of twice or three times that value.

Subsequently, Mr. Crowe received a letter from Mrs. Braddick, in the following terms:—

"Belize, 19th June 1847.

"DEAR BROTHER CROWE,—I take this opportunity of writing these lines to you, hoping they might find you in the same state of health as they leave me at present.

"Dear Brother, the same thing that Mr. Braddick and I were blaming you about, we find it now our duty to do. Not very long after you went, Mr. Braddick was called up by Mr. Maskall, and had to pay five dollars. He then threatened him that he would come upon him if he did not submit to the law, but we still kept on as usual. They brought him up again for the Wednesday night meeting, and he paid ten pounds fine. They had then a long argument, in which Mr. B. told him [the magistrate] that they would not stop from keeping meeting. They never used to trouble us before on Sundays; but after that, they watched us, morning and evening, on the Sabbath and on Wednesdays.

"After that, they brought him up for a Wednesday evening

meeting, and condemned him to pay ten pounds. He refused to pay. The police then came with a distress warrant. Mr. B. was not at home. I was sitting down sewing. Miss Jennett was with me. They came in. They asked no questions, but told me that they brought a distress warrant. They then began to mark the Queen's mark [here follows an imitation of the official cypher] on everything in the house; the bed and bedding: they took every chair: the hall and the two outside rooms were cleared away; only the middle room was left—they did not go into that.

"Blessed be his name. I feel, dear Brother, that the Lord's promises are sure. He has promised to be near in the day of trouble, for He was with me that day. He has said that we must not think evil in our thoughts against our enemies. I remembered the sacrifice of the Lord must be a willing sacrifice. After they had marked all the things, I asked them what they were going to do. They told me they were going to fetch a cart to take them away. I told them they must let me send and call Mr. B. When Mr. B. came, both of us were of one mind. We were willing to part with everything, so that we only could win Christ. I felt so at the time that I was obliged to shed tears to see how they wished to hinder us from telling the truth to others; that grieved me more than all that they took out of the house; because at the time I felt that nothing was mine, and I remembered Job. The fines, costs, and charges, altogether amounted to one hundred and eight dollars.

"At the time Mr. B. paid the five dollars, the police begged him hard to take back their half [as informers] knowing that it was not right for them to keep it. I forgot to mention before, that whilst the police were taking out the things, Mr. B. sung a hymn, and praised God, and the house was full of people. The police called to the cartmen to stop their noise [which was interrupting the hymn of praise from the assembly within]. That day we felt, I and my dear partner, that the Lord was near to us. The more the world tried to quench our grace, it still burned hotter and higher towards that Saviour who gave His life for us. What is it in this world that we should think too much to give for Him?

"The church is still going on as usual, only Mr. B. don't stand at the desk now. The appointed members read from their seats.

Mrs. Henderson commenced first. They have not troubled us since the 6th of June. On the day Mrs. Henderson was reading, the police tried to see who it was. All the members that can do so, read. One reads every Sunday.

"We still feel that the Lord is present with us, for He is merciful to me and Mr. B.; for the more we give to the Lord we receive doublefold: and when our neighbours were fretting and crying for us we felt rejoiced. We could say nothing to them. Several Wealeysans and Church of England members were here; we begged of them to read the scriptures, to see which religion fulfils the scripture. We trust that those in authority, through the mercy of the Lord, have let us alone for a season, for they hear so much of the scripture spoken to them that they cannot but see that we are in the right."

After detailing some more private matters, she signs herself,

"Your affectionate sister in Christ,

"SARAH BRADDICK.

"P. S.—I forgot to mention that Mr. Warner came down on Thursday, and on Wednesday he preached, and was brought up, and paid a dollar for the summons."

The eloquence of this sisterly epistle needs none of the adornments of art, or the polish of refinement. It is the eloquence of feeling, and her unvarnished tale exemplifies that uncompromising principle and grace combined which can alone enable any one thus "to take joyfully the spoiling of their goods."

From this time the brethren continued to meet together with little interruption till the intelligence of their success with Government arrived. And thus were the church again graciously carried through a period of peculiar trial and difficulty. It should not be forgotten that whilst they continued at all hazards to resist the unrighteous encroachments of an iniquitous law, there was an almost empty place of worship within a few hundred paces of their own, to which two agents of the Society would gladly have hailed their return, and where they would have been comparatively without pecuniary burdens, and entirely shielded from the operation of the *Act* that had driven their pastor away. The only obstacle that debarred them from these advantages was the sacrifice of principles which they held dear as a church, and which they were fully con-

vinced they must give up, together with their beloved pastor, if they returned to the Society's agents. The grace of God was sufficient for them. To Him be all the praise.

Mr. Crowe met Mr. Henderson in London on the 1st of October. During his visit to Bordeaux, he had the happiness to baptize his aged mother and a sister in the Gironde, whose waters had probably not been put to such a use for many centuries before. This act was the first of the kind that had drawn the attention of a small Protestant evangelical congregation in that city to a practical exhibition of this Divine ordinance in its primitive simplicity. Mr. Crowe had been kindly received by various congregations of French Protestants in Paris, and at several other places, and obtained an important grant of French and Spanish books from the Book Society of Toulouse, through the Messrs. Courtois of that place.

Preparatory to Mr. Henderson's return to Belize, a public meeting was held at Trinity-street Chapel, Southwark, on the evening of the 7th of October, when Mr. Henderson and Mr. Crowe gave some important details respecting the country and the mission. Mr. Henderson's speech, which occupied more than two hours and a half in the delivery, was listened to with intense interest and many tokens of deep feeling. Brethren Ward, of Stratford, W. Norton, James Oliver, of Peckham, Joseph Rothery, E. R. Hammond, and Benjamin Lewis took part in the proceedings. The resolutions adopted by the meeting expressed the conviction of the brethren present, that it was a duty to help the struggling cause at Honduras; through Mr. Henderson they also conveyed the expression of their sympathy to the church and sufferers there; and they bade him an affectionate farewell, in the prospect of his speedy return to the labours of the field, to the encouragement of the expectant church, and to the bosom of his family.*

Mr. Henderson embarked for Belize on the 16th of the same month, accompanied by some of his former scholars from Hemyock, in Devonshire, who chose to emigrate with him; leaving Mr. Crowe in England, to endeavour to carry out the third object of the deputation, which had become absolutely necessary through the entire failure of the second, that is, the obtaining of the use of the meeting-house, &c., from the committee. Mr. Crowe was to

* See a full report of this Meeting in the "Primitive Church Magazine," for November 1847, which also contains Mr. Henderson's farewell letter.

seek directly, from Christian churches and friends in Britain, the assistance needed towards the erection of a new place of worship at Belize, and for the maintenance of the out-stations and general missionary operations of the now self-supporting native church; in short, that sympathy and aid which was refused them by the Baptist Missionary Society.

The first intelligence received in England of Mr. Henderson's arrival at Belize was by a letter, dated the 11th of December 1847. In it he says, "By the good hand of my God upon us all, I reached Belize on the 9th instant, in good health, and found all well.

"My arrival was anticipated by the brethren. A boat was out to meet the ship, but missed us in the dark, it being nine o'clock p.m. ere we got into port. On reaching my home, the house was resounding with the voice of praise: about one hundred were assembled together to give us welcome. As in departing so in returning, prayer and praise were the accompaniment. And, surely, if the Lord had not helped in our past struggle, vain had been the help of man. Therefore, praise, all praise is due to His name. I trust we shall never forget His loving-kindness.

"The enemy has been subdued for the present. The Act (now notorious) has been publicly announced as disallowed by the Home Government; consequently, it is null and void.

"Mr. Kingdon has sold a second portion of the mission ground.* The press has also been sold, and the public have bought it. Mr. Battfield is selling off his furniture, and his passage is already taken for England by a vessel loading in the harbour. Thus ends his career as a missionary to Belize."† He left Belize in December 1847, having resided there three full years.

Soon after Mr. Henderson's return, the second public meeting in support of the native missions connected with the church was held, on the 4th of January, in the Baptist chapel, which was this time lent for the occasion, and though spacious it did not afford sitting room for all. Mr. Henderson, as secretary, gave an account of the progress made since the first meeting. "The expenditure had exceeded the income by 34 dollars, 5 reals; but 75 dollars had

* That part of the lot which had been the Yucatecan fisherman's residence, and which Mr. Henderson had advantageously purchased, had been as advantageously sold by Mr. Kingdon before Mr. Henderson's return.

† See "Primitive Church Magazine," March 1848, p. 84.

been received from the church at Bacup, Lancashire, for the year ensuing, so that at the close of the year 40 dollars 1 real remained in hand. The sum total received was 218 dollars 3 reals (or 43*l.* 14*s.*), out of which two out-stations had been sustained. During the year the clear increase of members was thirteen, making a total of 151, exclusive of the church at Tilletton, which numbered thirteen members. Again, not one member had left the church to unite with Mr. Kingdon, though two more of its excluded members had been received by him. On the 2nd of January Mr. Henderson had baptized seven persons. Mr. William Tillet, of Tilletton, who had been a supporter of the cause, had resolved to be baptized on that occasion; but something had prevented him. He was present at the ordinance, and was there seized with fever which in four days terminated in death. Mrs. Tillet had been baptized, and joined the church during Mr. Henderson's absence. The church at Tilletton was peaceful and prosperous; both the congregation and school had tended materially to promote the industry, comfort, and social happiness, as well as the spiritual good of the settlers. The formation of other out-stations was contemplated.

In a letter written at that period, Mr. Henderson says, "When on the platform at our anniversary, I remembered with gratitude the parting meeting at Trinity chapel, and related to the assembly the manner in which I had been sent away by Christian friends in England; telling them that I accepted their presence on that occasion as an expression of their welcoming me back to Belize. I have not yet been brought into contact with the authorities; to be let alone is all I ask. One of our teachers, Brother Kelly at Baker's, has been exempted this year from militia-duty, simply reporting himself a teacher.

"I have not yet recommenced translations: but ere a week I expect to have this work and my day school in full operation.

"Mr. Braddick . . . has been advised to petition the same public meeting that passed the law under which he suffered, for the amount of his losses to be restored. It is worthy of observation, that our resistance, on religious grounds, to the usurpations of the authorities in this place, has been attended with benefit to its civil interests, and to the very Meeting which was used to oppress us. It has been the practice of the Superintendent, for

many years, and contrary to the old method of conducting public business, to embody in a kind of message from himself, the only business that was to be transacted by the meeting; whereas, formerly, any member desirous of bringing business before it, gave notice of motion, say three weeks prior to assembling. This custom is, I understand, required to be restored, and is again in practice this year, showing how dependent civil liberty is upon religious freedom. The one cannot stand long without the other."

In answer to the petition of Mr. George Braddick, the Public Meeting directed that the sum of 58*l.* 12*s.* 6*d.* should be refunded to him by a unanimous vote of the House. Thus restoring to him the amount of his fines and costs; but not the real value of his property, which was sold by auction to pay them.

The meetings of the native brethren continued to be so well attended after Mr. Henderson's return, notwithstanding the poor accommodation which their house afforded, that forms were placed outside of the house, and a large sail was spread to shade the portion of the congregation who were thus out of doors from the vertical rays of the sun, or in some measure to shelter them from the copious tropical showers to which they were exposed during worship.

Less than three months after Mr. Henderson's return to Belize, Mr. Kingdon closed his place of worship for want of a congregation.* Subsequently, negotiations were entered into between him and the Fancourt Dispensary (a creature and favourite project of the Superintendent's) for the sale of the entire mission-house and property to that institution. The ostensible object of this sale was the transformation of the meeting-house into a lunatic asylum. Mr. Kingdon had had instructions from the committee in England to sell the property if he could find a purchaser, but was directed, in such case (*viz.*, after having found a purchaser), to make a tender of it to the native church, giving them the preference, *on the same terms* (*i. e.* the highest price that could be obtained): thus entirely putting aside the church's claim to the use of the property, as having been devoted to the accommodation of the Baptist Church by the past acts of the Society, and also disregarding the request

* The few members of the mixed-communication church attempted to be formed by Mr. Kingdon were disbanded on the 18th of March 1848—a little more than two years after its foundation.

and offer made in the name of the church by Mr. Henderson while in England, to be allowed to use the premises if not needed by the Society's agents, or to purchase them at half their value.

The *Honduras Observer* of the 19th of February contains a formal protest from Mr. Henderson against this perversion of the gifts of British Christians, and of contributors to the Society's funds on the spot. He states that the church was not able to pay the sum required, viz., 1,200*l.* sterling, and enters into some details to show the injustice done by the Society to the church in its sale, finally laying claim, on behalf of the church, to a fair proportion of the proceeds as compared with the contributions of the native church, if the sale should be effected in violation of the implied understanding of contributors. To this protest Mr. Kingdon replied in harsh terms, charging Mr. Henderson with impertinent meddling and ingratitude, in a subsequent number of the same paper. Other letters followed on both sides;* but the transaction was concluded by the sale of the whole property to Colonel Fancourt for 1,100*l.* At the time, it was deemed probable that the real object of the purchase was for the extension of the Anglican Church Establishment; and Mr. Kingdon himself, in his public correspondence on the subject, says, that *for aught he knows*, "the Gospel may yet be preached in the chapel, by just as pious, zealous, and useful a minister (of another denomination indeed) as Henderson has ever been blessed with," plainly manifesting his own suspicions that this might be the ultimate result of the transfer.

The church had addressed the committee on the sale of the premises on the 9th of February, stating their inability to purchase on the terms proposed; their expectation that the use of the place of worship would have been secured to them without charge; and that they considered the sale as an unwarrantable violation of what was due to themselves as a mission church, and irreconcilable with the principles of the revealed will of God. They, therefore, utterly decline the proposition of the committee, and beg them to reconsider the step they were about to take. In a subsequent letter to the committee (dated March 11th 1848), the church add that the secret which Mr. Kingdon had kept, as to the parties with whom he was in treaty for the sale, had transpired, and had occu-

* A full account of this correspondence is published in the "*Primitive Church Magazine*" for May 1848, p. 149. See also "*Honduras*," p. 67, to which the reader is referred.

sioned "a great outcry among those who had been aiding and contributing to the keeping up of the cause." That a friend had offered to lend a sum of money to the church in order to prevent the transfer, and they were, therefore, enabled to offer 750*l.* for the whole property. The reply of the committee to these letters (dated May 30th 1848) states, that it was now too late, Mr. Kingdon having had instructions to sell to the best advantage, if the church refused to equal it. It also refuses to grant the church any proportion of the proceeds, but the committee add their willingness to refund any sums that may have been contributed by the church towards the building, which was finished about twelve years before the church had a being.* An effort is also made to justify the sale, on the grounds of the past expense of the mission at Belize—the committee saying, "We think it unjust to the Society, and to the heathen, that all these expenses should fall on our ordinary funds," forgetful that there were both heathen and brethren in Honduras, and that the church had proposed to carry on the mission without further expense to the Society.

The public voice and the local press at Belize both united in condemning the perversion of the property to such a purpose, and that, too, while the native church and a large congregation were suffering great inconvenience for want of their place of worship. The transformation was, however, soon effected; the benches and fittings up, which were of the most simple description, were removed, and were kindly given by the purchaser to the native church. In their places cells were substituted to accommodate three or four madmen and idiots, who had already been close companions with the Baptists during confinement in the jail.

Writing on the 11th of March 1848, Mr. Henderson complains of the lengthy correspondence occasioned by the reply to the circulated charges against him, and the kind inquiries of his friends, which proved a burden to him in the midst of his already excessive occupations. He speaks of it as a sacrifice of feeling as well as of time in these terms,—“Ever since the exciting times of late outrages

* For this letter of the Committee, see "Belize," pp. 6-7, or "Honduras," p. 116. A contribution of 20*l.* made towards the erection of the building by G. F. Angus, Esq., through his house at Belize, has since been transferred by that gentleman to the native church, to assist in building them another place. But the Committee refused to comply with the donor's wishes in this respect.

upon me, I find that my nervous system has been fickle, so that any persevering mental exercise provokes fever, and no small degree of suffering."

He also adds,—“Last Lord’s-day, the 5th, six persons were immersed, one a convert from Backland, near Tilletton, that dates her awakening to the exhortations of Brother Warner. Another appears to have had her attention to Divine things forced upon her by the efforts of Mr. Kingdon and his friends to get a congregation; for although she could not with them, she did with us, hear the word that fastened conviction of sin upon her soul. ‘Minister,’ said she to me at the time of her inquiries for baptism, ‘I may say I live upon my Saviour, for I have for two weeks past had no desire for food. My thoughts are sometimes so happy that I feel as if I could hug him in my arms, and again my mind, I cannot tell how, is filled with such bad thoughts.’ On one occasion she fainted under the exciting power of the word. I suppose she had been fasting.” After naming the candidates, he adds,—“The lame ones walked in with their staves or supported by the brethren.

“Mr. Warner has sent his first epistle to the church at Bacup. Tilletton is in ‘great joy.’ The blessing of the Lord is on the very ground about them. Their plantations flourish. To me this is matter of comfort, as they used to have them at a great distance off; now they are round their very houses. This gives promise of future stability to the place as a township.”

After the sale of the premises, it was expected that Mr. Kingdon, who disbanded his few followers on the 13th of March, would be recalled as well as Mr. Buttfield. Such was not, however, the case. Notwithstanding the committee’s declaration that they “*withdraw from Belize*,” he remained there still for many months without a preaching station of his own, occasionally supplying the Wesleyan pulpit and attending and communing, together with his lady and a few of his former flock, at the Episcopal Church, established by Act of Parliament. In May 1848, Mr. Kingdon left Belize for the New River, a few miles to the north, with the object of forming for himself another station, being still supported by the Baptist Missionary Society. This place was then the refuge of a number of fugitives from Yucatan, where the war of races was at its height. He was still learning the aboriginal language of that interesting people, and preparing to translate the Scriptures for their use.

A month had not elapsed after the sailing of Mr. Henderson from London, when the committee at Moorgate-street passed the resolution* to sell the mission-chapel, dwelling and school-house in Belize, which was carried into effect by Mr. Kingdon, as already related. The next decisive measure which they took, in connection with the interests of the church at Belize, was embodied in a resolution of the committee, dated the 25th of November 1847, inviting various brethren to the mission-house to hear readings from certain letters relating to Mr. Henderson, who the committee alleged had been recommended by these brethren to the support and sympathy of the churches *on various incorrect statements*. The truth of this allegation the committee failed to prove in any of its parts, but by this step † they gave currency and seemed to give their sanction to the slanders which Mr. Kingdon and Mr. Buttfield had written against Mr. Henderson, slanders which they had not examined, nor had they even informed Mr. Henderson that they had ever been made, though he had so recently met them face to face. But when he was once more thousands of miles off, they brought before the minds of the few friends who had received him kindly, statements and insinuations which actually produced feelings of loathing and horror in the minds of those who listened to them, and drew from one of the hearers the strong protestation, that he would as soon leave his reputation in the keeping, of Satan himself, as in the hands of the writer of such abominable charges. ‡

After this (on the 16th of December), the committee passed a resolution, which they published in the *Missionary Herald* of the following month, making it appear that Mr. Henderson in his farewell letter had misstated facts, which on examination were

* See the resolution itself, and comments upon it, at p. 85 of "*Honduras*."

† The meeting accordingly took place at the mission-house on the 10th of December; but the brethren being required to pledge themselves to *secrecy*, they declined to hear the letters read. Selections from the correspondences were afterwards more *privately* communicated to small companies of the same friends, and others. See "*Honduras*," pp. 49-53, 86 and 87.

‡ As soon as the church at Belize were informed of these slanders against their pastor by friends in England (not, as they ought to have been, by the committee itself), they wrote, on the 9th of Feb. 1847, stating that such imputations had never even come to their ears in Belize, where they must have been known if they had been true; and expressing their grief and shame that such things should be so much as named among saints. The church also wrote to Mr. Kingdon on the subject, and, after doing so, ceased to have any further intercourse with him.

found to be correct, Mr. Henderson having said with truth of the church at Belm, what the committee imply that he erroneously stated of himself.* In this resolution the committee, assuming that Mr. Henderson referred to the Strict Communion principles of the church as a reason why it was cast off by the Society, took occasion to deny their knowledge of the fact that the church was Strict till after Mr. Henderson's connection with them had ceased. Mr. Buttfield had, however, pointedly alluded to it, and complained of Mr. Henderson's "exclusive system," in a letter which was before them, when they decided against Mr. Henderson (on the 16th Feb. 1846). By this denial of a fancied charge, the committee were the first to bring up the, with them, neutral question of Communion, and thus called forth a letter from Mr. Crowe, in which the following passage occurs:—

"The assumption that the words quoted refer more particularly to the question of Communion, is gratuitous on the part of the committee; but, as they have thus made this point prominent, I, for my part, feel it my duty to assert my firm conviction, and what I knew to be also brother Henderson's belief, though he has refrained from publishing it,—viz., that the question of open or close Communion very materially affected the separation both of brother Henderson and of the church of which he is pastor, from the Society, though it may not have been distinctly referred to as the ground of difference in the correspondence, and that for obvious reasons."

On the 21st of January, the secretary of the Society transmitted to Mr. Henderson's friends an official statement of various passages that had been published, said by the Baptist missionary committee to be *incorrect*; but which were found to be quite free from error, except in one minor point. They were complained of as having been the ground of the recommendation already noticed as passed by the Strict Baptist Convention on Sept. 28, 1847, although the date of that resolution shewed that it was passed before the statements complained of were made.†

The correspondence between the committee of the Baptist Missionary Society and the Strict Baptist Convention having closed

* See "Primitive Church Magazine," 1846, pp. 84 and 87; also, "Honduras," pp. 13, 84, and 86.

† See "Honduras," pp. 49, 51, 84, and 86.

without producing any fact really affecting the character of Mr. Henderson or of the church at Belise, and the investigation (which had lasted more than six months) to which it gave rise having terminated favourably to the native church in British Honduras and to its pastor, the committee of the Strict Baptist Convention passed a resolution on the 26th of March, recommending the appeal of that church to the sympathy of the British churches and Christians. This resolution was confirmed by another, to the same effect, passed at the annual meeting of that body on the 26th of April following.

Being repeatedly urged, and having several times promised to contradict the misstatement issued in the Society's report for 1847,—that Mr. Henderson had broken up and divided the church,—the committee (after letting the injurious report spread uncontradicted during nine months) at length acknowledged it to be incorrect, "all" the members having gone "with him."^{*} This tardy and partial reparation was made without any apology or expression of regret, and did not appear, as it should have done in fairness to the injured party, in the Society's report for the following year.

At the meeting of the members of the Baptist Missionary Society, held at Moorgate-street, on the 25th of April 1848, it was proposed by one of the members, "that 250*l.* of the purchase-money of the property recently sold at Belise be presented to the church, as a testimony of good-will, from this Society." The secretary then openly stated that Mr. Henderson had not the confidence of the committee, and that while the church was connected with him, the committee did not feel it right to appropriate to it any of the Society's money. The proposal was rejected.†

The committee, at a meeting held on the 26th of May 1848, resolved, "That they (the church) be informed that the committee have already given up all claim to the house in Dean-street, Belise,‡ and that they will be very willing to allow the church to occupy at a nominal rental, from year to year, the lot of ground at Free-town (the Baptist burial-ground) with the house erected upon it;§ the

* See "Herald" for March 1848. † See "Primitive Church Magazine," 1848, p. 159.

‡ Given by a member, still living, to the church, and which Mr. Kingston ought never to have claimed.

§ The land was a grant from the Governor to the Baptists. It was fenced in at a cost of 60*l.* 14*s.* 6*d.* sterling by the friends on the spot; and the house was built at the cost of 45*l.* sterling, wholly by the members, and by them exclusively, as "a kind of jubilee offering" to the mission at Belise. See p. 396.

lot of ground at Baker's, with the house erected there at the expense of the Society and of the church;* the lot of ground at Tilletton, with the house erected there at the expense of the Society and of the church;† and the lot of ground at the Mosquito Shore.‡ They also resolved, "That the lamps and furniture of the school and chapel, amounting in value to about 50*l.*, be handed over to the church at Belize for their use." §

Upon the property here specified, the church and friends had expended 242*l.* 14*s.* 6*d.* exclusive of one building and in every case the value of the land; whilst the sum total that had been added from the Society's funds upon all the said property was 39*l.* 10*s.* But small as the worth of this property is in comparison with that which was sold, still the use of it, granted to the native church in the proposal of a nominal rental, implied countenance of that church, and the confidence of the Society in it, and in Mr. Henderson, its pastor, as fully as the use of the larger amount of property which they denied them on his account could possibly have done. The letter that conveyed these resolutions to the church (dated 30th May 1846) closes with the words, "We sell *our* property, because we cannot with confidence, or in justice, give it to any one in Belize;" immediately adding the Apostolical benediction, "Grace, mercy, and peace," and the committee's prayer that the church might be *faithful to its principles, as Baptists and as Christians, even unto death.*" ¶

Mr. Crowe had remained in England for the express purpose of

* The lot was the gift of George Tillet, Esq., to the mission at Belize. The church expended 9*l.* in the erection, and the Society paid ten shillings for recording the grant of land.

† The lot here was given by William Tillet, Esq., to the mission at Belize. The church alone bore the expense of the first erection. Towards the second house, built after the fire (p. 383), the Society paid 39*l.*, and the friends on the spot an equal, if not a larger sum; so that upon this house alone, and the one at Baker's, the members and friends expended 137*l.* sterling, exclusive of the first house, and contributions in labour, materials, &c. &c.

‡ The grant of John Hodge, Esq., to the mission at Belize.

§ These Mr. Kingdon had been instructed not to sell. They were sold, nevertheless, with the building. Colonel Fancourt, the purchaser, afterwards presented them to the native church as his own gift. For these resolutions, see "Missionary Herald" for July 1846, p. 104. If the reader will reconsider the resolutions without the explanatory notes, he will perceive the impression they are calculated to convey of the Society's liberality towards the native church.

¶ See "Belize," pp. 6-7; also "Honduras," pp. 26, 30, and 111.

raising an interest in the missionary work of the church at Belize, and to endeavour to obtain help towards building a place of worship for its use instead of the one now turned into a lunatic asylum. He had laid the facts before a few ministers and congregations in London and its vicinity, and was preparing to carry out his appeal more extensively, when interrupted by the steps taken by the Baptist Missionary Society to discourage the few friends that God had raised up to this struggling cause.

When the recommendation of the Strict Baptist Convention, and that of a considerable number of respected ministers of the Gospel and influential persons, had been obtained, Mr. Crowe commenced journeying, first into Sussex and Kent. From the 6th to the 27th of July he travelled over 620 miles. He visited twenty-four Baptist churches; fourteen of the number favourably entertained his appeal; ten ministers refused to give him an opportunity of making the facts public; two of the number only promising to inquire further into the merits of the case. The sum of 38*l.* 11*s.* 11*d.* was then collected at an expense of 6*l.* 9*s.* 2*d.*

In this first effort Mr. Crowe addressed himself to the churches in their united capacity, according to the letter of his instructions, as the messenger of the church at Belize. It was not always that he could obtain access to them in this manner. When he did so, he contented himself with reading the church's letter, of which he was the bearer, and giving as much information as the opportunity afforded him would allow; always expressing his readiness to bear to the church at Belize the reply of the church he might be addressing. At first he was induced by some friends to make personal applications; he, however, soon felt the indecency of this mode of appeal, especially where it has been so much abused, and not being the method pointed out to him by the church; he preferred to make no direct applications for pecuniary help, either personally or congregationally, and was content that the facts should speak for themselves, leaving it to the churches, or to individuals, deliberately to consider what it might be in their power to do for their suffering and labouring fellow-disciples at a distance.

Scarcely had these feeble efforts been commenced, when the committee resolved to issue a pamphlet of sixteen pages, entitled "Belize. Ordered by the Committee of the Baptist Missionary

Society at their meeting held June 15th, 1848. To be printed for private circulation. 33, Moorgate-street."

This document commences with a view of the importance of Belize as a mission station, and of the Society's hopes concerning it, completely at variance with and contradictory to that uniformly maintained in the published reports during the previous twenty-five years. It represents the cause of disagreement between the missionaries at Belize as mere personal quarrels. It quotes a portion of Mr. Kingdon's letter, which grossly misrepresents Mr. Henderson's conduct as a minister of the Gospel. It gives imperfect copies of some of the Society's letters to the church; never in one instance giving any of the church's letters to the committee, and thus affording but a *partial* view of the correspondence. Its statements of facts are also defective, partial, and incorrect. Out of twenty-four professed quotations of Mr. Henderson's words in proof that misstatements were made by him, more than half are positively misquoted, and others are misrepresented so as to look like inaccuracies,* although what Mr. Henderson says is literally correct, and in spirit strictly true. It indirectly casts blame upon Mr. Henderson in matters of account, though no open and candid charge is preferred against him. It positively asserts more than one thing, as matter of fact, which the committee have failed to sustain, while the contrary has been sufficiently proved in the reply to those statements. It fails to account directly for the abandonment of that station,† but justifies the sale of the property, "for fear that after all the committee might be constrained ultimately, because they held the premises, to incur great expense in repairing them, and even to occupy a station which, but for the property, they would probably have relin-

* In one case, by the insertion of words not used by Mr. Henderson, but quoted as though they were his, he is made to appear to apologize for what he really was defending. See "Belize," page 12, line 13 to 14; also, "Honduras," p. 126. In another case he is represented as saying with respect to *goods* what he only asserted of *peace*, and that too for no other purpose than to prove him wanting in truthfulness. See "Belize," p. 12, line 41; and "Honduras," p. 127.

† It may, however, be inferred from "Belize," the "Missionary Herald," and the "Baptist Magazine," that the committee were dissatisfied with the amount of *success* at this station, though that success was fully equal (in comparison with the amount of *agency*) to any of the Society's stations, and superior to not a few; also, that it was a mere measure of financial retrenchment. See "Baptist Magazine," for July 1848, under Editorial remarks; the editor being at the time a member of the committee.

quished long ago;" and it closes by saying that the committee, who "make these explanations with much regret" and do not *publish* but only print them *for private circulation*, "are deterred from doing *more*, by an unwillingness to expose what they would have preferred entirely to conceal." In short, this document, in which there are few direct charges, contains not a paragraph, and scarcely a line, but conveys some impression unfavourable to Mr. Henderson and the church he is connected with, all calling for correction, and fully capable of a satisfactory elucidation; and no part of it demands an antidote more imperiously than the venomous sting in the last paragraph, which insinuates that other worse charges are only kept back from the committee's unwillingness to expose them.

The printing of "Belize," was followed up by a statement *published* in the "Missionary Herald" for July 1848, p. 103, representing the station at Belize as unimportant in itself, and as having failed to realize the hope of carrying the Gospel into the interior, accounting for its abandonment as a station of the Society by the dissensions of the missionaries; the conduct of Mr. Henderson in returning from the United States, and the conviction that the same funds might be better employed elsewhere. Minutes of resolutions respecting the disposal of the property were also published, and a notice to the subscribers that further information on the subject could be obtained by application at Moorgate-street, either personally or by letter. A notice of the same kind was also forwarded from the committee for insertion in the "Primitive Church Magazine" of that month, addressed to "their friends":* thus calling public attention to that which they had printed for private circulation.

To the *published statements*, Mr. Crowe addressed a reply from Bacup, in Lancashire, on the 20th of September, which was refused insertion in the "Baptist Magazine," but afterwards appeared in the "Primitive Church Magazine" for December 1848, p. 380.

By the publication of the Society's statements reflecting upon Mr. Henderson, by the *private* circulation of "Belize," and by less tangible (because not printed) misrepresentations concerning the Honduras mission, Mr. Crowe found his appeal to the churches

* See Honduras, p. 81.

in England, greatly impeded. During the six weeks intervening between the 5th of August and the 13th of September, he travelled over 500 miles in the west of England. Eleven churches in Wiltshire and Somersetshire favourably received him; and his application was rejected by eight pastors;—27*l.* 17*s.* 5*d.* was contributed to the mission, upon which the expenses were 5*l.* 11*s.* 2*d.*

In his third journey, Mr. Crowe was directed into Lancashire, where he was cordially received by the church at Bacup, and others in its neighbourhood. He then visited twelve of the principal towns of Scotland, where his reception was generally warm and most hospitable, and especially so at Edinburgh. During this tour, which occupied four months and a half (from the 16th of September to the 2nd of February 1849), he travelled 2,671 miles. In Lancashire he applied to seventeen churches, and was rejected by the ministers of three out of that number. In Scotland his application was favourably entertained by twenty-one churches: 139*l.* 16*s.* 2*d.* was contributed, the travelling and other expenses being 21*l.* 18*s.* 9*d.* Altogether, Mr. Crowe travelled during eight months 3,191 miles, of which he accomplished \$10 on foot. He applied to eighty-four churches, out of which he was denied access to twenty-three. He delivered about one hundred lectures, and preached nearly half as often. The sum total collected was 206*l.* 5*s.* 7*d.*, upon which the expenses were 32*l.* 19*s.* 2*d.*, besides which, the friends of the mission made up several boxes of useful articles, and contributed a considerable number of books for the use of the native teachers. A printing-press was also purchased by the friends in Edinburgh, aided by others, for Mr. Crowe's use at Guatemala.

In his appeals, Mr. Crowe was increasingly careful to make it apparent, that, while he was sent to obtain relief and pecuniary assistance, the church at Belise had a loftier object than their own accommodation, or even the receipt of funds to enable them to spread the Gospel around them, well convinced that the mere ministering of our substance, however liberally, is not alone adequate to that great end; and that co-operation which should be thus limited is not worthy of the name, and would not be accepted of God. By eschewing the character of an itinerant religious mendicant, it may be that a smaller sum was collected;

but it was in the first place given and received with more purity of mind and feeling, and it is confidently expected that the motive and the accompanying prayers will secure a more abundant blessing from on high.

Gratifying and encouraging as this measure of success was in itself, and especially in the amount of interest manifested, the sympathy shewn, and the prayers offered, it was yet but a partial relief to the church in British Honduras, and would not alone warrant the commencement of the much wanted building for worship at Belize. Further efforts of the same kind were, if not entirely precluded, at least very much limited and obstructed by the efforts of the Society at Moorgate-street, to shake Christian confidence in the church and pastor at Belize. This was done by means of their pamphlet, which was sent by post to influential parties wherever Mr. Crowe was, and by travelling agents, who, in one case at least, were sent all the way into Scotland to counteract his success. Mr. Crowe then resolved to suspend further efforts of this kind till a full and complete reply should be printed to the charges brought against Mr. Henderson and his flock: and he returned to London for that purpose, well convinced that this was the path of duty, and that he could not hope to carry out the mission entrusted to him by the church, especially in the manner in which he had felt it his duty to proceed, until this task should be accomplished.

While these efforts were being made in England in favour of Central America, the Lord was pleased to grant blessing and enlargement, as well as a season of peace to the native church. The war in Yucatan had filled Belize with Ladino and Spanish-Indian refugees, to the number of some thousands; and the brethren were not slack to avail themselves of the opportunity of evangelizing, and distributing the Scriptures and tracts among them. Concerning this people, Mr. Henderson writes: "It would be saying too much to state, that they have been driven out; for the very mild treatment of the long-oppressed natives was such that the refugees were at liberty to carry with them all their goods, only houses and landed property were left behind. Indeed, a more mild transfer of authority is perhaps not on record, than that will have been which chronicles the resumption of native rule in the Peninsula of Yucatan, after a Spanish domination of three hundred

years. One only fear exists, and it is this—it appears that the Spanish race have applied to the United States for protection against the extirpating outrage [represented as such] of the natives and some think that they will be patronized by that territory-loving power. The native population have also asked for British protection, if not incorporation. At all events, a very friendly spirit is manifested towards Englishmen, so that a great door of entrance is opened to us for missionary exertion among them."

It has been seen that interference on the part of both the parties above mentioned has produced a prolongation of this warfare; thus impeding the natural course of events, and that, too, by means of Anglo-Saxon agency at the very time that both Britain and the United States were ringing with execrations on the despotic suppressors of Hungarian independence. Thus, while thousands of Anglo-Saxon hearts were throbbing with a noble sympathy for the Hungarian people, the constitutional governments of these two potent nations were each taking part in suppressing the equally natural and defensible efforts of the Maya Indians to establish a government of their own, or to rid themselves of the oppressive domination of a favoured class.

In the earnestness of their zeal to evangelize this people, the brethren regretted the absence of one of their number, who might have aided in their good work, but who was detained in England by the impediments that were thrown in his way, by the necessity of justifying the church and its much-calumniated pastor, and in order to secure the means which were required to carry out their plans, and enable them to continue those efforts.

At Belize, all the different departments of labour were prosecuted with uninterrupted vigour. Mr. Henderson's school was, from necessity, more limited and select, as there was not room to accommodate all the former scholars or all those who desired to be admitted. Miss Cornelia Lockward and Miss Page Henderson were engaged as teachers in the infant and evening adult schools. The influential parties who had been excluded from the church, and had supported Mr. Kingdon were now again hearers with the native congregation. And the strife which had lasted upwards of four years, and which had produced so many important results, had now ceased in Belize. At Tilletton, Brother Warner's success con-

tinued unabated. In April 1848, he baptized as many as twelve converts on one occasion, and among the number one José Sac, a Maya Indian, the first-fruits unto God of that people, and a man who gave promise of future usefulness as a native translator and teacher. Already, long before he made an open profession of the name of Christ, he had been marked and persecuted by the priests of Peten, where he then resided, for reading to his neighbours the Spanish Bible which he had procured at Belize. Brother Joseph Kelly, of Rehoboth, was also made useful in the conversion of souls, and was authorised by the church to administer both ordinances, though, as no church was as yet formed there, the "breaking of bread" was limited to the members of the churches at Belize and at Tilletton, resident at Baker's. Other features of a work of grace around those places, such as a great desire to hear the Gospel, had also manifested themselves.

On the first Christian Sabbath in the month of May, Brother Joseph Kelly, for the first time administered the ordinance of Believers' Baptism at Rehoboth Station, Baker's Bank. Four individuals were then immersed by the young native evangelist, on a profession of their repentance towards God and their faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, the bed of the river serving them for a baptistery, and the vault of heaven instead of a gothic roof or pompous cupola.

A long and intensely-hot dry season occasioned a scarcity of water and much suffering at Belize. Mr. Henderson's family were supplied by a kind neighbour, which he records as "a special mercy." The mission tank, which had often, under such circumstances, relieved the wants of others, was then in the hands of strangers. But the Father of Mercies was not unmindful of their wants, and under every new token of His care, they could joyfully exclaim, "Jehovah of Hosts is with us, the God of Jacob is our refuge."

CHAPTER VI

EXTENSION.—THE CHURCH THRIVING.

1843—1850.

Retrospect and prospect—Renewal of penalties for non-juring—Mrs. Purdie's case—Affirmation Bill, and petitions—Mr. Kingdon's third station formed and abandoned—Reply to the Society on the disposal of property—Straitness of means—Public money voted for Education—Mr. Henderson's refusal to take it—Renewed threats—Brother Boddick imprisoned—Correspondence with the Committee—Third Public Meeting in support of Native Missions, and Report—Tillett—Backlanding—Silva—Northern River—Projected stations—Translations—Mr. Kingdon's fourth station at Bacalar undertaken—Government interference renewed in favour of non-jurors—Local measures of relief thrown out—Mr. Kingdon's flight from Bacalar—MS. of translations restored—Brother Michael forms a new station among the Caribs—Station at Buxton formed by Brother Warner—Providential leadings—Arrangements concerning property—A new lot given in Belize—Projected Library—A Meeting-house determined upon—Death of Mrs. Henderson—Schools in Belize—Mr. Kingdon's fifth station—Program of out-stations—Opinion of Missionary Societies—Funds—Fourth Public Meeting for Native Missions, and Report—State of out-stations—Mr. Kingdon's recall—Re-opening of "Prayer-house" at Preetown—Details—Teachers in training—Donations on the spot—Mrs. Willats—Sunday Schools—Society's claims—Results of the Mission—Moral improvement—Surrounding darkness—The Church's confidence and request—Ebeneser.

"Behold, I have set before thee an open door, and no man can shut it."—Rev. iii. 8.

In the timely relief and assistance which God was pleased to grant to his afflicted people in British Honduras, there was enough that was Providential to signalize His hand, and enough that was gracious and bountiful to call forth the adoring gratitude and the confiding faith of the church. At the same time it was not the Lord's will that outward ease and security should succeed the late uncertainty and suffering. There was enough of difficulty and danger left to call forth active energy and watchful care. There was as much power and ill-will remaining in the hands of the enemies of the truth as would make them distrusted. There was a scarcity of means to carry on the work that would be conducive to

dependence upon Divine support and direction. And while a review of the past yielded encouragement for the present, the future prospect was full of hope, and afforded abundant opportunity for exertions under circumstances the most favourable to the development of the inward and outward resources of the little native band.

Though a small company, and helpless in themselves, and though wearied with a long and recent conflict, they had already tasted of victory. They perceived that "an open door" was indeed set before them, and being graciously sustained by an unseen Hand, as well as animated by the retrospect and prospect, they followed up their advantage in the true spirit of moral conquerors, "faint yet pursuing."

It was for the ultimate establishment of the truth, and the speedier confusion of bad legislation, as well as for their own immediate good, that some renewal of their sufferings for conscientious non-juring was at this time permitted.

Positive and forcible as was the declaration of the Colonial Minister of State, "that her Majesty's Government would strongly disapprove the exaction of any penalties from persons refusing to take oaths from *bona fide* religious scruples, and without any desire to defeat the ends of justice," Belize could produce a stout-hearted coroner able to set it aside, and as willing to violate the conscience of a suffering woman as he was himself unscrupulous of the breach of that Divine law which enjoins upon coroners, as well as upon other subjects, submission to "the powers that be."

Mrs. Perak, a sister of colour, was afflicted in the person of her eldest son, a boy of fourteen, who was an idiot, and subject to fits. Having lost sight of him for but a short time, her maternal solicitude was aroused, and on going to seek him, she found him indeed, but lying on his face in a few inches depth of water, and quite dead. It was on the 2nd of June that an inquest sat upon the remains of her child. Required to give her evidence, she had no motive for withholding it, but she believed that her Saviour had especially enjoined it upon her, to "swear not at all." The coroner chose to use with severity the power which he possessed, to attempt to coerce the conscience of this good woman in the hour of her affliction, and thus to exemplify in the most striking manner the error and inefficiency of the

law that placed such a power in his hands. He adjourned the inquest for four days—had the weeping mother torn from the remains of her boy, which were scarcely yet cold, and committed to prison, to spend the interval with felons and prostitutes, in the vain hope that by that time her mind would be changed. A delicate infant, three months old, was incarcerated in the arms of its sorrowing mother. On the second day it began to droop. Her husband, Joseph Perale, an industrious labourer, was obliged to remit his toil for their support, and to attend upon his wife and sick child in the prison. On the 5th Mrs. Perale was brought back into the presence of the coroner, who, finding her integrity unshaken, sent her back to gaol, for three days more, unless she could pay a fine of three dollars (probably as much as a full week's remuneration of her husband's labour, in addition to the four days they had already lost). As a proof of her willingness to suffer while she could neither be persuaded nor forced to do wrong, she preferred the confinement, although more than one person offered to pay the fine on her behalf. Before the week was ended, her baby died in the prison, and was buried beside her elder son. The bereaved mother was only liberated when the term of her sentence expired. Albeit that one point of law was satisfied by this penalty, the ends of justice were frustrated, and the interests of the community sacrificed to it, for Mrs. Perale's evidence was not taken; and besides the accumulated injury done to one family, the majesty of law, in whose name these enormities were perpetrated, suffered in the minds of the people, and it must and will continue to suffer till the law that occasioned those wrongs be repealed.

Her Majesty's Superintendent, the same who had been instructed by the Home Government to cancel the act enforcing the oaths of allegiance, &c., upon Dissenting ministers, was appealed to by Mr. Henderson, on behalf of Mrs. Perale, but he declined to interfere. A memorial, founded on her case, was forwarded to Earl Grey, and the facts were published in the *Nonconformist* and some other periodicals. Several petitions for the relief of non-jurists and the total abolition of oaths were also got up,* and presented to Parliament in support of the Affirmation Bill, by Mr. Page Wood and other members. Several Baptist churches in Scotland also forwarded petitions on the same subject.

* See "Primitive Church Magazine" for September 1846, p. 268.

By reason of the amount of suffering which the church at Belize had endured on this account, the brethren there are perhaps liable to attach an undue importance to it, which is equally true of any point of principle for which our forefathers have contended, the fruits of which we reap with a degree of calmness which was probably unknown to them. But there is perhaps some foundation for the impression which the sufferers in British Honduras have received as to the general apathy and ignorance of British Christians on this subject, notwithstanding all the sufferings of the faithful members of the Society of Friends and others who have carried out both the letter and the spirit of the New Testament injunction to "bless and curse not."*

In a letter dated from Belize on the 16th of July 1848, Mr. Henderson says—"Since my last nothing has transpired of special interest in the station, except that we progress. At Tilleton, Brother Warner has had another baptism. The church there, which commenced last year with thirteen members, now numbers twenty-nine. I expect to visit both that place and Bakers' in the approaching month, where as many as eight couple wait to be joined in matrimonial bonds in their neighbourhoods.

"Mr. Kingdon has settled himself at the mouth of the Rio Hondo on the English side, 'among a people amounting,' he says, 'to four or five hundred, chiefly Spanish refugees.' They are delighted to hear that he will keep school, as they hope thereby to acquire a readier knowledge of the English language."

At this place Mr. Kingdon assumed the office of civil magistrate by appointment from the authorities at Belize, being the only one

* The "Affirmation Bill," which, in different forms, has been repeatedly before the Legislature, intended to grant relief to conscientious objectors to an oath, has been as often thrown out, chiefly, perhaps, because not more extensively supported by the British public, and because counsel upon the subject has been so often "darkened by words without wisdom." Those who are doubtful as to the practical duty in their own case, can scarcely be so on the propriety of affording relief to such as are fully convinced in their own minds. To Nonconformists the case has another and a very simple aspect, which is only to carry out consistently the separation of the submission due to the civil magistrate from the obedience which is due to Christ alone as king in His kingdom. An oath, as an *act of worship*, if allowed at all, should assuredly be free, spontaneous, and voluntary. To swear at the bidding of the law is, then, to give to Cæsar that which is God's. Imprecations were well suited to the national religion of the Jews, and the genius of the law, which both blesses and curses, but they can in no way be adapted to the law of liberty and life, and they are even likely soon to be found inconvenient in our civil polity as inimical to toleration, and therefore abhorrent to the spirit of the age.

in that district. This official dignity of their agent was at once disapproved of by the committee of the Society in London.

On leaving Belize, Mr. Kingdon took no step to restore to the church the use of the building at Freetown, which he had closed to the people there, because claimed by him for the Society, and which he had failed to make any use of himself. Nor had he made any arrangements as to the burial-ground, in order that the dead might be buried during his absence. The key of the gate was still in his keeping. Happily, he had suffered the fence to fall into decay, though he had scrupulously exacted a dollar for each internment for the express purpose of keeping it in good repair, so that the Baptists, for whose convenience this ground had been provided, were able to enter it to bury their dead by the breach through which the cattle and swine had free ingress and egress in common with them. Considerable inconvenience had also arisen out of Mr. Kingdon's claim upon the property at Tilletton since the death of the generous donor of the land.*

The native church, in reply to the committee's resolutions of the 26th of May, now informed the Society that they declined to make any *claim*, on the ground of particular contributions towards the purchase and erection of the property lately sold by the committee; that the forms and fittings of the late meeting-house had been sold with it by Mr. Kingdon, and were afterwards presented to the church by Colonel Fanscourt the purchaser; that the sister who had given the house in Dean-street "greatly disapproved of the attempt which had been made to wrest it from the church;" that they did not feel the force of the reasons given by the committee for the sale of the premises; that they declined the use of the ground on the Mosquito Shore as "unavailable at present for any missionary purposes;" and as to the piece of land at South Stann Creek, purchased from Messrs. Hyde, Hodge, and Co., at the nominal price of one dollar, for the formation of a Carif village there, the church regretted that the committee had remitted it into the hands of Mr. Hodge without first advising with them on the subject.† The church also declined to hire of the committee, even at a nominal rental, the out-stations at Free-town, Bakers', and Tilletton, on the

* See "Handbook," p. 22.

† This grant was at once restored to the church by Mr. John Hodge, for the use of the mission, for which it was originally given.

ground that the committee had no just reason for requiring it, nor for standing any longer between the people and their free use of the property. The church concluded their reply by expressing regret that, before deciding upon differences which had occurred between the missionaries, and which had "never extended to the church," it should not have occurred to the committee to appeal to them, "convinced that in such an appeal lay the legitimate hope of a peaceful settlement of all difficulties."

In addition to the inconvenience arising to the native church out of the Society's claims upon the out-stations, and the grief which was occasioned them by the evil and unfounded reports to which the committee in London had given currency, the church now felt the want of that pecuniary assistance which they had hoped would by that time have been extended to them by sympathizing brethren in Britain. Instead of receiving this, Mr. Crowe, the church's messenger, had been in England many months, and was only then beginning to meet some response to its appeal. One result was, that Mr. Henderson was himself greatly straitened for means, having waived his prior claim on the church in favour of the native teachers, rather than their labours should be interrupted, and in the hope that the desired help would soon be afforded. Since his visit to Europe, Mr. Henderson had been materially assisted in this respect by family connections in England, who had enabled him to enter upon a little traffic in general merchandise, to which his family attended. Unless this timely and providential help had been afforded, all Mr. Kingdon's worst prognostics as to the penury and distress of his family might have been realized, for at this time the utmost efforts of the church for their pastor, after upholding the native teachers, amounted to little more than 50*l.* per annum. About an equal sum was received by Mr. Henderson as the proceeds of his school. Already he had made another garden with his own hands, which supplied vegetables for sale, and, together with the little store, barely sufficed to maintain him and his family in a place where every necessary of life is so dear.

Just at this time the local legislature voted money for educational purposes in the Settlement, over and above the usual provision made for the Episcopal free school. It was proposed to divide it between the Wesleyan and the Baptist denominations. Her Majesty's Superintendent addressed Mr. Henderson on the subject, stating

that it was designed "for the support or assistance of any additional schools that may be established in connection with any dissenting denomination of Christians," and requesting him to submit the plan which he might propose to adopt in the application of this grant.

The following is a copy of Mr. Henderson's reply, which appeared, with the official correspondence on the subject, in the local paper of the period:—*

"To his Excellency, Colonel St. JOHN C. FANCOURT, her Majesty's Superintendent, &c.

"SIR,—I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your Excellency's letters of the 27th and 28th instant, informing me that one hundred pounds currency have been placed at your Excellency's disposal, by the Public Meeting, for schools in connection with dissenting congregations, and requesting from me a plan for its application to the Baptist denomination.

"In reply, I beg leave to say that I have advised with the Baptist church and friends of the denomination, who all agree with myself in expressing our disapprobation of the grant of the Public Meeting, indeed, of any grant out of the public revenue, for either educational or religious purposes, considering such objects to be altogether out of the proper sphere of its operations, and that the civil authorities ought at all times to leave every religious denomination to provide for the support of its own institutions.

"The consistent maintenance of these sentiments your Excellency will readily perceive to be at variance with the emanation from me of any plan for the appropriation of the grant in question. And I have the honour to be your Excellency's obliged servant,

"ALEXANDER HENDERSON."

Thus was avoided another legislative snare which was set for the feet of the nonconformists of British Honduras. The Wesleyan missionaries, though in the end also preserved from falling into it, did not use the same caution. They accepted the proffered bait, but afterwards found so much vexatious inquiry, trouble, and delay connected with the receipt of the money, that they gave it up in disgust, and were thus at that time prevented from perverting to denominational purposes the people's contributions for the maintenance of the state.

* "Honduras Observer," 7th October 1848.

Writing to Mr. Crowe concerning funds, on the 12th of October, Mr. Henderson says—"Looking at your progress, it appears unlikely that you will realize in England 200*l.* sterling, which would be but a poor drop in the bucket for our wants in Belize. But looking at God's word and grace, I see the fountains of the great deep broken up to pour out upon us the overflowing flood. Had our movements been ordinary, or even our sufferings and position, I should have looked no further than to ordinary resources. But all being of another character, I expect after ordinary to see extraordinary means made to aid our cause.

"O, for a strong, a lasting faith,
To credit what the Master saith!"

On the 8th of October six persons, out of eleven who had offered themselves, were baptized. Mr. Henderson adds,—“The church is peaceful, and not a little encouraged to find dear brethren in England remembering them in affectionate prayer. May the Lord of mercy and grace return the blessings sought for us a thousand-fold into their own bosoms.”

The coroner who had incarcerated Mrs. Persle, never had another opportunity afforded him of pursuing the same line of policy. He was removed from office by order from the Home Government, and the appointment was restored to the person who held it before, and who used his discretionary power so as to diminish rather than aggravate the evils of an unequal and objectionable law. The Chief-Justice, however, was understood to be threatening a repetition of former excesses in non-juring cases, saying that Earl Grey, who was *in England*, was not himself British law, and that he (the judge) was *in Honduras*, where no abatement of severity must be expected from him towards those who feared an oath, until the British Parliament were pleased to alter “the letter of the law.” Mr. Braddick's name was once more placed upon the venire for the ensuing Grand Court; but he and the brethren were enabled to fear no evil.

It had been proposed to add six or seven feet to the place of meeting, with a sort of shed roof instead of the sail; but even this was deferred till intelligence should be received of Brother Crowe's further success. Dysentery had been introduced into the Settlement by the fleeing Yucatecos, and all Mr. Henderson's family had been affected by it. Mr. and Mrs. Kingdon, who had been visited

by Mr. and Mrs. Henderson during their sickness, had recovered, and were residing at St. George's Key. Mr. Kingdon had now neither congregation nor field of usefulness, and no pulpit in Belin was accessible to him.

On the 16th of November, Mr. Henderson wrote,—“ In my last, I noticed that Brother Braddick stood exposed to suffer again for the oath question. Accordingly, on Monday, October the 30th 1848, he attended the Grand Court, over which Judge Temple presided, and answered to his name as a juror, which we always do, feeling it to be our duty to ‘obey magistrates,’ so far as conscience permits, and only when they require of us that which our subjection to a superior Lord forbids us to give, do we inform them that we must obey God rather than man. Brother Braddick, contrary to the advice of many professed friends, attended the Court, answered to his name, and took his seat among the jurors. When the Bible was presented, he stated his objections, as he had often done before. He was then subjected to an interrogatory from the judge, as to whether he were a Quaker, a Moscovian, or a Separatist; and having said that he belonged to none of these parties, he was next asked if he had not, on coming into court, expected to be required to take an oath? He replied that he had. Did he expect any favour to be shewn him, and for what reason? Brother Braddick answered that he did, and for the reason that intelligence had been received from the Colonial Office, that her Majesty would disapprove of any one suffering in case of religious scruples to taking an oath, when there was no intention of impeding the purposes of justice. He was next asked if he had conversed with any one since receiving the citation, concerning the duty before him. With many he said; and being requested to name one, he pointed out a public functionary then in court, Provost-Marshal Adolphus. This was not the object the judge had in view (as every one perceived, and as I was told by an eye-witness). At last, Brother Braddick was directly asked, have you conversed with the — Mr. Henderson on the subject. He replied that he had. And will you state the nature of the conversation you had with that person? Mr. Braddick, determined as he was to be submissive, felt that there were limits beyond which he could not pass in replying to these interrogatories. Accordingly, he replied that he did not think he was called upon to repeat what the nature of the con-

versation between us was. This the judge did not further insist on. He was then told that he was sentenced to a week's confinement in jail, for refusing to take an oath. He was accordingly conveyed thither, and remained in prison till about the same hour on Monday, November 6th, when he was released."

While Mr. Braddick was awaiting the jailor's arrival to take him to prison, in an ante-room of the court-house, his name was again included in the number of jurors who were cited to attend another sitting of the Grand Court on the 13th of the following month, *i. e.* in a fortnight after the day of his inquisitorial examination, so that when Mr. Henderson wrote, he had suffered one penalty, and his recommitment for a longer term, perhaps accompanied with a fine, was anticipated. Another case occurred about this time, in which a poor defenceless woman was robbed before her face, and only escaped being herself punished for accusing the thief, because he had no evidence to prove that she had charged him with the robbery. She could not avail herself of the law for her protection. She even feared imprisonment as the consequence of being dragged before a magistrate who might require her to swear; but the impudent thief had well nigh made use of the magistrate to inflict a greater wrong upon her, and this only because British law will not admit the evidence of an honest, conscientious person who fears an oath, though it will take and will act upon the unhal- lowed imprecations of a profane swearer.

The committee in London once more addressed the church at Belize on the 6th of October 1848. In this letter they spoke of the burial-ground, at length admitting themselves to be only trustees of the property; and they expressed their willingness to give it up, if the consent of the authorities could be obtained to the transfer.

The stations at Baker's and Tilletton they still persisted in offering to the church at a nominal rental, or else required that 50*l.* should be given as an offset to the donations of British Christians through the Society, expended on the property at those stations. The total amount of which, it has been seen, was 39*l.* 10*s.* If this were still refused, the committee said, "we shall regard the negotiation as at an end, and conclude that you make other arrangements more convenient and economical."

An extract from this letter, respecting the burial-ground, was forwarded to the Superintendent, who replied that, "should the

original grant contain any covenant requiring the consent of the Crown to the transfer contemplated by you, that consent will not be withheld. If it does not contain such covenant, the consent of the Crown will be unnecessary."

Again the church replied to the Society on the 11th of Dec., requesting the transfer to be made with as little delay as possible. Respecting the nominal rental, the committee are referred to the church's former refusal dated on the 10th of August, and as to the proposal to refund 50*l.* to the committee in London, the church say, they "cannot entertain the question as at all proper;" but "regard the withdrawal of any funds which had been appropriated to the cause of God in British Honduras, as a step to be deprecated and without a parallel in the history of the Society." The church, therefore, informed the committee, that the brethren have decided to occupy the stations until required to give them up, trusting "that the committee will see the duty of ceasing to insist upon any measure that might have a tendency to cripple a cause which has had much to struggle against hitherto, and that they will rather feel it to be a privilege to do their very utmost to promote a work that had in it peculiarities of no common interest."^{*}

To this communication the committee replied on the 16th of April 1849, by directing their secretary "to express their willingness that the use of the ground, &c. at Freetown, should be given to the church." Concerning the property at Baker's and at Tilletton they say,—“To give you premises on which a considerable sum has been spent by us, and so enable you to dispose of them to-morrow, would be neither consistent with the interests of our denomination, nor with our duty to the Society,” and they agree to leave this property in the hands of the church, only on condition that the church “admit that they belong legally to the Society.” The church felt that this property, as well as that which had already been alienated, ought, indeed, to have been secured from the possibility of abuse or sequestration, by being put in trust for the use for which it was originally designed.

The committee further required that the church should formally express its wish for the transfer of the burial-ground, after the consent of the local authorities had been transmitted to England, thus still longer protracting this matter, though the church were

^{*} See "Honduras," pp. 93, 94, and Prim. Ch. Mag. for April 1849, p. 125.

inconvenienced in the mean time, the building was unused, and in such a climate it must of necessity be rapidly decaying. The church, in reply, requested that the burial-ground might be conveyed to Mr. Braddick and Mr. Henderson, for the use of the Baptists residing in and near Belize.

On the 11th of January 1849, Mr. Henderson wrote,—“ We wait to see the result of Brother Crowe's appeal to the churches, ere the church here determines its procedure, respecting the building of a house of worship. For myself, I see no means of securing such an object from funds raised on the spot. They are wholly engrossed in procuring support for the brethren who are engaged in teaching the things relating to the Kingdom of Christ; and if I should have no better accommodation for preaching, to the day of my final address to the children of men, I do not feel at liberty to build a house for God, until He has shewn how His own laws shall all be honoured in its erection.

“ Yesterday was the anniversary meeting of the Honduras Baptist Missionary Society, which was held at the Wesleyan Chapel. On such an occasion we feel the want of a capacious place, and the probability of the Baptists not again having such a one of their own was saddening to my mind, last night in particular. I know whom we serve, and His promise to supply all our need. I know, also, that the cause of the Redeemer and of souls suffers much more from having certain places of worship, than ever it has done from the absolute want of them, or of accommodation in them. Indeed, judging from what is said in the New Testament, it is a matter of perfect indifference, and one not calling for any special notice whatever. It might even be said respecting it, that what is ‘highly esteemed among men, is abomination in the sight of God.’ ”

The sum total of expenses in the missionary branch of the church's operations for the year, was 66*l.* 9*s.* sterling. In the incense of this department there was a deficiency of 10*l.* 0*s.* 3*d.*

At the commencement of the year, there were 151 members in the church at Belize. ¶ There had been three restored, twenty-nine received by profession, ten excluded, four dismissed to other churches, and four had fallen asleep in Jesus. The clear increase was therefore fourteen, making a total of 165 members.

To the church at Tilletton, eighteen had been added during the year, and their total number had increased to thirty-three.

At both places fifty-one baptisms had taken place, a greater number than during any previous year since the commencement of the mission, and 198 members were in communion.

Connected with the various stations, there were four day-schools and five sabbath-schools.

At Belize, besides the preaching of Mr. Henderson and the worship of the church, four weekly subordinate stations were maintained, and occasional preaching in Carif by Brother William Michael.

At Tilletton, besides its own worship, the church had already supplied one subordinate station, at a place called Backlanding, in its immediate neighbourhood. This place is somewhat populous and important, as the point at which the waters of the Old and the New Rivers approach so near to each other as to have facilitated a line of communication between them, and given rise to the name. Brother Alexander Kerr, who had been acting as an evangelist there, was now appointed to succeed Brother Warner as pastor, the latter removing to another station, partly on account of considerable bodily suffering, and partly because of differences with influential parties on the spot, which had arisen out of Mr. Kingdon's interference in claiming the property on behalf of the Society. Brother Kerr had undertaken to supply both stations.

On the river Sibun, about twenty miles from the bar, a place of worship, 23 feet by 16, had been erected during the year by the brethren living near. A Sabbath-school had been formed, and both were supplied by Edward Thurton, a creole brother, long a member of the church. He is a carpenter by trade, and having a plantation on the banks of this river, where he often resides, the station was formed by his spontaneous efforts, sustained by the zeal of other native brethren, without any expense to the church.

At Northern River regular worship had been maintained by the Brethren James Goff and James York. The first is a sturdy mahogany cutter, the father of a large family. Mr. Henderson had himself taught him his letters, and writes concerning him, that "he begins to be an acceptable, zealous teacher." The second named is a deacon of the church. A house of worship was being

talked of for this place, about twelve miles from Belize, and the ground to build upon had been offered by the residents.

It was proposed that Brother William Michael should now undertake a station at Stann Creek, as a teacher to "his own nation," and it was intended to send Brother Warner, who was suffering greatly, to Ruatan, to labour there, as soon as he should be sufficiently recovered. This station, undertaken in 1846, had remained unsupplied for want of a teacher and the means of support.

Mr. Henderson's further labours in translating the Scriptures, had been circumscribed both by the pressure of other duties and for the want of funds. In the prospect of losing the assistance of his faithful pundit, he was then about to take his last lessons from him, in the preparation of the school-books which were necessary to this enterprise. These enlarged efforts were undertaken in the confidence that God would raise up the necessary help to the church, and in the anticipation that that help would come from sympathizing brethren in Britain.

At this period Mr. Kingdon had returned to Belize. He had had some unhappy differences with the Wesleyan missionaries, on account of an evil report which he raised or took up against one of their most respected members. He had no congregation or school, but was throwing in all the weight of his influence in favour of the established sect, by attending its worship. He made use of "Belize," the committee's *private* pamphlet, and tried to induce other ministers in the Settlement to discountenance Mr. Henderson on the ground of its (then) unanswered allegations. He was about visiting Bacalar with fifty Spanish bibles for distribution. Remarking on the expense of this agency, Mr. Henderson says,— "Half the money Mr. Kingdon has spent since he left the mission premises would have furnished my house, and rubbed out that blot upon the conduct of the mission committee, of sending a missionary, after twelve years of approved labour, to a strange home without one room's furniture."

Representations which had been made at home on the case of Mrs. Persle, drew from the Colonial-office an assurance that measures were again being taken to prevent the infliction of imprisonment and fines on conscientious non-jurors in British Honduras; the Governor of Jamaica having received instructions on the subject. An effort was also made to introduce a clause into the Affir-

mation Bill then before Parliament, extending its operation to the colonies. It was at the same time suggested that a measure affording the desired relief might with propriety be passed by the local Assembly at Belize, which was said to possess more of the democratical element, and a greater degree of power than any other colonial legislature.

On this subject, Mr. Henderson wrote on the 10th of February 1849, stating that a draft of an act for the relief of non-jurors had been sent to the Public Meeting with the recommendation of the Superintendent, in compliance with a request from Sir Charles Grey, Governor of Jamaica, and at the suggestion of the Colonial office. In this Assembly, there were then found only five persons to support it, and the measure was thrown out. Mr. Henderson still hoped that it might pass at a future meeting, but adds,—“It is, however, more than probable that the example of the Imperial Parliament in giving some general measure will be the precursor of our relief. The colonies look much to the mother-country for example, and are even tardy in following what is good. Can it be wondered at, when we consider of what materials society is there composed? The slave-holding spirit, although humbled, is not destroyed. I have thought how probable it is, when church establishments have been got rid of at home, that the party will nestle down on colonial ground, unless we have an out-and-out minister at head-quarters to search out their lurking-places, and chase them off.”

Mr. Kingdon had already removed from Bacalar. Mr. Henderson says, “he had every facility afforded him by the inhabitants for prosecuting missionary work, but he became alarmed at reports concerning an attack from the Spaniards, and left.” Once more in British territory, Mr. Kingdon manifested no disposition to return to Bacalar, but as he said the committee did not require him to quit Belize, he was looking out for a spot where to locate himself upon the banks of the Old River.

The manuscript translations which the Society had required Mr. Henderson to give up to them, they again restored to him (and in his hands alone they could be useful), by a resolution passed on the 20th of March. They were shortly after sent back to Belize, where they arrived safely, having travelled 13,000 miles to no purpose.

In February 1849, Brother Michael left Belize to commence a mission at Stann Creek for the benefit of the Carifs. The church, in undertaking this station, felt that, though they had not the means to support their Carif brother, as God had provided the labourer, which was the greater gift, they ought to exercise faith that He would also provide for his sustenance, which was the lesser. They had consequently to proceed on a very small scale, and instead of forming a new settlement at Southern Stann Creek, where land had been given for that purpose, they were reduced to locate Brother William at the village already formed, for which purpose they bought a small native built house, and directed him to cut and clear a plantation for his own support, as his people usually do for their wives to cultivate. He soon after removed his family to the Carif Settlement. Concerning this, Mr. Henderson writes,—
“It is possible that this very way of commencing is the best. With us it is not choice, but of necessity. Let the Lord therefore have all the praise when success appears.” Thus was this Christianized Carif family placed in the midst of a community of their heathenish fellow-countrymen, a living exhibition of the cross of Christ and of the doctrines and precepts of the Gospel, and provided with the books and knowledge requisite to communicate to them in their own tongue the wonderful works of God.

Speaking of William Michael's departure, Mr. Henderson says,—
“Our brother is very sanguine, but I fear he does not see enough of the trying nature of the undertaking. Let him be followed by heartfelt prayer from the righteous—this will avail much. Some separate fund must be found for this station, or there must be a considerable augmentation of the mission funds. I feel we must trust for this, and take the step in the mean time.”

The station at Tilletton, which had been fruitful and promising, was now virtually forsaken. The heirs of Mr. W. Tillett, much displeas'd at the movements of the Society with respect to the property there, and the prospect of its alienation, had erected another place of meeting at their own expense at Backlanding, where they enjoyed the ministry of Brother Alexander Kerr, who was one of themselves, not only by birth, but also by family connection, his wife being one of the late Mr. Tillett's daughters. He was also able and willing to give his time and services to the church without remuneration; and after Brother Warner's removal, the

church was transferred from Tilletton to Backlanding where Brother Kerr was appointed to the pastoral office, and his ministrations were found acceptable.

Brother Warner and his family were detained several months in Belize. During the year, he was twice brought nigh unto death by sickness, but being graciously restored, he left Belize for Rutan on the 1st of May, to prepare a place for his wife and four children. On the 14th, he wrote to Mr. Henderson, informing him that he had met with an encouraging reception from the settlers, and pointing out two spots which then presented themselves as available for the station. The one was a bare lot of ground which would cost 10*l.*, and required building upon; the other included a small dwelling-house and kitchen (which is always a separate out-house), and had a plantation attached. On this property there were also one hundred cocoa-nut palms in full bearing, and the price was 250 dollars, or 50*l.* sterling, the one-half payable at once and the other half in twelve months' time. The church at first sight did not feel at liberty to sanction so great an outlay as the second lot required; but Mr. Henderson says,—“The Lord had it all prepared. Mr. Edwin [a magistrate on the island] came to Belize, who owed me some thirty dollars. He wanted a considerable supply of goods, such as I had. He then explained how sensible he was of some former kindnesses received, and that he had now an opportunity of returning them, should we resolve upon a purchase of the lot in question (the second). His plan, or rather the plan that God had put into his heart, removed the difficulties. I saw how I could pay the first instalment, 125 dollars; and that being so remarkably providential, I felt I could trust to being also provided with the means when the second became due a year hence. In short, I made the purchase; and with goods out of the store and about thirty dollars I paid the sum required, so that Brother Warner is now prepared to take his family, and has a house and provisions out of the plantation awaiting them.” Brother Warner consequently received as good an outfit as the circumstances of the church could afford, and removed his family from Belize on the 18th of August, with a cheerful hope of success. In four days they arrived safely at the new station.

The property at this place, though held by Mr. Henderson, who had become the purchaser, was designed solely for the use of the

mission, and to be put in trust for it, as soon as the debt should be paid. Brother Warner's support was derived in part from the church at Bacup in Lancashire, and it was hoped that with his plantation he would require little help from the church at Belize. It was also suggested, in consideration of his rising family, that he should gradually acquire a share in the proprietorship of the property, which he would be improving.

It was expected that the settlers on the island would themselves, with perhaps a little assistance, provide the necessary place of meeting, and great hopes were entertained of a blessing upon this work, in facilitating which the hand of God in Providence was manifest, a circumstance affording more real comfort to the minds of the brethren than the possession of ample funds without it could possibly have done.

George Tillett, Esq., of Baker's, this year presented the church with a piece of land, situated on the Barrack-road, Belize, upon which it was proposed to erect the new meeting-house, when the necessary means should be obtained. The value of this gift was estimated at 120 dollars, or 24*l.* sterling. Towards the purchase of the house still occupied conjointly by the church and Mr. Henderson's family, only 120*l.* sterling had as yet been paid, the half of which was Mr. Henderson's own contribution, as already stated.* The debt due upon it, with the interest, was then 145*l.* sterling. The church having come far short in their efforts to support their pastor,—partly by reason of their poverty, partly because of the outlay occasioned to support the out-stations,—now freely gave up to him the whole and sole right over this property. He also took upon himself the responsibility of the debt, as he says, "to be provided for as I can, or sell the property. This alternative I trust not to be forced to; I confide in the kind providence of God to enable me to clear it."

The native teachers and the reading members of the church in Belize have hitherto felt the want of a freer access to religious and useful books, with which they have been but scantily supplied through Mr. Henderson. Now that the desire to read was increasing, the difficulty of obtaining books had also become greater. Encouraged by Mr. Crowe's partial success in obtaining donations of books for the use of the native teachers, Mr. Henderson now

* See page 408.

planned a library expressly for their use, to be sustained by their own funds, and placed exclusively under their own management. Thus a general depôt of standard works would be provided, to which the church might have access, and in which each member should have equal proprietorship. It was thought that a room for this purpose might be included in the projected building.

In England, Mr. Norton and Mr. Crowe were engaged in endeavouring to counteract, through the press, the unfavourable impressions concerning Mr. Henderson and the church which had emanated from Moorgate-street. In September 1849, they printed a statement of facts and a full reply to all the Society's charges—whether published or privately circulated; whether printed, rumoured, or only implied—under the title of "Honduras." In doing this they sought to clear Mr. Henderson and the Church at Belize of what blame was undeservedly cast upon them, and also to enable the Church's messenger to continue to prosecute his mission to the British churches. The protracted stay of Mr. Crowe was the more felt and regretted that Mr. Henderson's strength was scarcely equal to his burdens, and several fields around appeared to be open for his labours, though a return to Guatemala was evidently not yet practicable. On this subject Mr. Henderson says,—"The delay of your return I regret, but am willing to wait the movements of Divine Providence. Certainly your remaining in England after my departure was of the wisdom and goodness of our heavenly Father. When you are no longer needed there, you will return. May you have grace to discover this, and act accordingly."

Referring to late events, he says,—“I fear the lessons to be learned from all, will not be sufficiently appreciated and approved. With respect to myself, I know not if I shall ever recover the shock, or even long remain to improve them. I am now resting a week, my exhausted faculties claiming indulgence. I have got into a sort of nervous irritability that prevents sleep; this has succeeded the cessation of inward fever with which I had so long been afflicted. So it is on earth; we change trials, but cannot escape them entirely. Thankful, then, for remaining strength and energy, let us put them forth willingly while it is called to-day, *the night cometh.*”

In August, Mr. Henderson wrote, that, Providence favouring the purchase of building materials, a contract had been entered into by

Mr. Braddiek, with a view to the erection of the projected meeting-house. Some contributions from wealthy inhabitants had been added to the gift of land, and, together with the sum collected in England and Scotland, a commencement had been determined upon.

Another severe trial was now appointed to the mission family; for some months they had been visited by sickness. In a letter to a relative, dated from Belize on the 21st of October, Mr. Henderson conveys the sorrowful intelligence of the death of his beloved wife Mary Anne. She was removed, after a fortnight's illness from intermittent fever, to attacks of which, like most Europeans on the coast, she had been often subjected. Writing on the day of her departure, Mr. Henderson says,—“This morning, at four o'clock, she breathed her last—breathing her soul, I trust, into the hands of her gracious Saviour. Her end was peace—no ecstasies and no fears. Her mind, being stayed on Divine mercy and all-sufficiency, met the conflict of conscious unworthiness, joined with growing weakness, which, though like fiery darts in the hand of the enemy, were quenched in the faith of Jesus, never before so precious as then, as she expressed herself to me.”

Mr. Henderson's feelings on this occasion, he does not himself attempt to express; he says, however,—“When my dear boy (Jabez) was removed from our sight, I had one left to stay my grief, although a fellow-mourner. Now, it is not so; I am left to weep alone, and to feel the world's emptiness.” Further on, he adds,—“She will be buried in the Baptist burial-ground, Free-town, Belize; not, however, by the side of her boy, as I could have wished, for that was on the late mission premises, which are now sold.” His allusions to the grief of his children are most affecting, and he adds,—“My family circle is now broken, and, however much we take care of a broken vessel, we do not commonly set our affections upon it. May I be found more devoted to the service of the Lord, who condescends to employ me in his work.”

Mrs. Henderson had resided full fifteen years at Belize, and had there discharged the important and often arduous duties of a laborious missionary's wife, in whose toils and sufferings she bore her part. Their participated trials were of no ordinary character; and amongst them, the stinging sense of wrongs inflicted by those who should have been foremost to cheer the hearts of the voluntary exiles was not the least keenly felt by the departed one. Her

sufferings, even those occasioned by the material inconvenience and privations of her family, which followed upon their expulsion from the mission-house, were all wisely and graciously ordered by Him who is pitiful and of tender mercy. But this truth is calculated to yield but small comfort to those who participated in inflicting the wrong, while confronted with the stern reality of her mental and physical sufferings, or the probability of her hastened end.

Soon after her arrival in Belize, Mrs. Henderson was in the full enjoyment of her yet unimpaired European vigour, and in the prime of life. She was then actively devoting her strength to the cause in which she had embarked with her devoted husband, and toiled daily in a flourishing infant-school, in which one of the scholars was frequently set to rock the cradle of her fairer babe, that its mother might be free to attend to the mental and moral training of, perhaps, 100 children of her ignorant and dissolute neighbours. Ten years later her brow was furrowed, and her pallid cheek was wet with tears shed in the prospect of a long separation which the violence of proud and wicked men, and it may be, too, the unfaithfulness of brethren had occasioned. Between the period when the author first beheld her engaged in her cheerful labours, and that when she stood upon the deck of the *La Cazamance*, the ship which was about to convey her husband far away to the land of her fathers, to seek relief from the dangers to which he had long been exposed, many were the mental pangs, heart throbs, and physical sufferings, which she had endured in connection with her own and her husband's labours, her separation from the home of her youth, and the rigours of the climate!

During Mr. Henderson's absence in Europe, on one occasion, when the emissaries of oppression intruded themselves upon the peaceful assembly of the church, in search of a victim whom they might denounce and bring to punishment for unlawfully teaching and preaching the truth of God, Sister Henderson was found sitting in her place among her sable brethren, and taking her turn to read a portion of the Word of Life. Thus were the mad persecutors baffled in their design by the sex of the person engaged, for though far gone in the way of oppression, goaded on by enmity, and blinded by pride, they had not yet reached that pitch of shamelessness which would qualify them to fine and

imprison a countrywoman for such an offence, notwithstanding they had approached pretty near it, as manifested in the cases of Mrs. Perale and Mrs. Morgan.

Mrs. Henderson shared the trials of the pastor and of the church, and with them was enabled to outride many storms; she was not, however, permitted to see with earthly vision the realization of the hopes which have been and are yet entertained by the people among whom she suffered and laboured; but a better portion is hers. Her tempestuous life is, we hope, succeeded by the perfect calm, complete security, and unspeakable enjoyment of the haven of eternal rest.

With the additional burden of the undivided care of his family, Mr. Henderson endeavoured to assuage his grief in the work upon which his heart had been so long set, and with which his hands were more than ever filled. His school continued to flourish; even on its reduced scale it still numbered about seventy scholars present, and it was regarded by that part of the community who could not appreciate its best, its religious influence, as a public benefit to the Settlement. Some young persons were attending it in order to qualify themselves for teaching. Mr. Henderson says,—“We need an infant school very much. This we have no fit person to undertake. Such as might be inclined to come to our help must have their souls imbued with love to Christ, and consequently love to souls.”

Again, in another letter he says,—“In my garden of vegetables I find much recreation. You would be pleased to see how it is improved. Filled up with sea-soil back to the swamp, and we are getting river-soil to cover it. Nearly the one-half has been done. My garden of intellectuals flourishes also. I have no doubt you will be pleased with both when you see them.”

Before the close of 1849, Mr. Kingdon had purchased a piece of plantation land on the banks of the Old River, upon which he built himself a house, and thus founded his fifth missionary station, since his arrival four years before. The spot chosen was about twenty miles from Belize, in a very thinly-peopled neighbourhood, where his studies and labours in translating Maya would be but little interrupted by any openings for more active labours, though they might be by the visits of excursionists and pleasure-seekers up the river. An effort was, however, made

to collect the scattered people there, and some half-dozen children were formed into a school, and received instruction during one hour in the day. The meetings for worship were on the same reduced scale. The Society's Report for that year records 334l. 11s. 10d expended on this their only station in Central America, and that for 1850 the sum of 408l. 11s. 10d. bestowed upon the same work; while the entire sum reported since the disruption as devoted to this object, up to March 30th, 1850, is just 2,192l. 9s. 4d. Little more than one-fourth of this sum would have erected the commodious meeting-house needed for the church at Belize.

Further up the same river, at Rehoboth station, Brother Joseph Kelly was reported by Mr. Henderson as going on "very well. He is steady, and the people respect him much." On the 1st of April he had baptized four more converts at Baker's. After this he was visited with serious bodily affliction, but was graciously restored. Still further up the stream, at a place called Duck-run, about a week's paddle from Belize, there is a settlement of perhaps 500 persons residing on the borders of what are deemed British limits. These people were so anxious to obtain the residence of a teacher among them, that they drew up a document signed by 104 heads of families, requesting Mr. Henderson to send them a religious instructor, proposing to meet all his expenses, and they even offered to impose a *fas* of 10s. on all non-attendants at Sabbath worship. "Poor things!" adds Mr. Henderson. "do they not need instruction?"

Brother Alexander Kerr was experiencing some of the difficulties of the pastoral office. The church at Backlanding was divided and unhappy, the influence of the world having been suffered to assume the ascendancy over the minds of some of the members.

"From Sibun," Mr. Henderson says, "a kind of first-fruits of Brother Thurton's labours has appeared in the person of an African man who came to me last week, expressing himself in such a way as to give good evidence of a work of grace in his soul. He has been accepted for baptism." He has since become a member.

The thoughtful reader, who has followed the late mission church in all the painful providence through which God was pleased to conduct it, will not be surprised to learn that the

brethren in British Honduras had little confidence left in mere Society and Committee management; but the practical lessons which they were so plainly and so forcibly taught had led them yet a step further. Having seen and felt the abuse that was made of delegated power, and that even the churches of Christ were actually made to succumb to it, they arrived at the conclusion that churches and not societies were entrusted with the evangelization of the unbelieving, and that the sooner the churches resumed their own proper work the more blessing would accrue to themselves, and the greater success would attend their labours. In short, they became convinced that to substitute any organization or instrumentality of human device for that which has been Divinely instituted is unscriptural, presumptuous, unbelieving, and must prove, to a corresponding extent, vain and injurious.

In a letter addressed to Mr. Crowe, about the same time, Mr. Henderson says,—“If Baptists would forego their cherished predilections, and supersede the Society by a more scriptural mode of conducting missions to the heathen, how honourable would it be! How successful must we not expect them hereafter to prove! Baptist missions to the West Indies taken up by churches in different parts of Britain, say one to Antigua, one to St. Vincent, one to Barbadoes, &c., striving together, yet in separate and independent action, and receiving intelligence every fortnight from their missionaries! How enlivening would such a state of things be! Look at poor crippled Jamaica, after all that has been done for her, without a single neighbouring isle to which she has sent a missionary (so far as I know of).

“Like John in vision, who must be taken into the wilderness to see aright the position of the church, so I find that out of connection with Missionary Societies, better than in it, can be discerned the true character of modern missions. Do brother, in your visiting of the churches, press upon their attention that no healthy and successful action can be looked for in missions, until they return to the New Testament model. The movements and funds entirely under the control of *the church*.”

In a letter dated 11th Dec. 1849, just after he had read the reply to “Belize,” entitled “Honduras,” Mr. Henderson says,—“What a document, dear brother, is ‘Honduras,’ to lodge in the Belize Baptist Library. It is abundantly to my satisfaction. I

still find myself in possession of further facts that would have given lustre to the truth, but fear the work is already larger than will be good for its faithful perusal." Of the Baptist Missionary Society he says,—“ It is of no use arguing that there are good things in it. It stands on no denominational foundation. Sixty years back it had no existence ; it is of itself a perfect anomaly. As Baptists we cannot fulfil our trust to Christ without missions, but by this monopoly of missions by the Society, they are secularized and perverted. Does not the history of the Society in both East and West Indies show this ? Besides when the Society was originally constituted, did the men most responsible for its character speak of it as embracing their views on the mode of conducting missions ? I believe not ; but only as a substitute until the church should wake up to the true mode of conducting them. As Baptists we were honoured to lead in what was at the time better than leaving heathen nations in their ignorance. How mighty the impulse let the present state of things say. It may be given to us again to lead. Vast progress, during the last fifty years, has been made in preparing the minds of Christians to act on principles New Testamental. The time has come for *the church* to put its shoulder to the work.

“ In this matter the New Testament plainly teaches that missions shall spring from and be directed by a church or churches ; and I maintain that we have lost much in our success abroad from overlooking this. Instead of Christians casting their contributions into a general fund, let one church, or if it be too small, let two or three churches resolve upon a mission to a continent, a country, or an island, and sending such a brother or brethren as the Lord shall furnish from amongst themselves, follow them with prayer, and correspond directly with them in their chosen field of labour. Would not the Lord provide men and money, and bless the proceeding ? Unquestionably he would. He has done so. Let these be multiplied in the West and in the East, emulating each other in holy efforts, and soon the churches at home would come out in force—the force of faith and love for missions. On the present system they never will, I am persuaded ; but, soured and disappointed, will contribute reluctantly and parsimoniously. I long to see this state of things.

“ Only let *——*—— Baptist church first pray over and consider well the subject, and see if a brother does not cry

quickly, 'Here am I, send me.' Let it be for example to Barbadoes he is to be sent; for notwithstanding all the talk of West Indian missions, a tenth of the places have not yet been supplied. Let the brother start, carrying with him a full understanding of his position with the church; both of them strong in the faith of a divine work. His passage, his outfit, his location in the island, would all drop into order, and soon we should see how the Lord would work. Let him be cautioned to preach the gospel to the poor,—to begin with them I mean. Among the mistakes of the Society, the rich have too much shared their care. So far as I have seen, the efforts of the Society's Missionaries have been directed more to Europeans,—the class of masters, than to the bulk of the population. Let him be instructed to find employment, if possible, during the week, at least for a time, until a congregation on the spot relieve him from labour.

"Begin, begin! We are in danger, even in the West Indies, of sinking. Why? The key note has been struck too high. High aspirations of zeal, instead of the holy, humble actings of a chastened faith. But I remember, a word is enough to the wise. I ought not to dwell so long on what abler pens will deal with. In short, let the churches have their own missions, and control their own funds."

At a meeting of the brethren, entrusted by the church with the management of their mission fund, held on January 5th, 1850, present, Brethren York, Davies, Braddick, Kerr, Cain, and Henderson;—Brother Henderson having reported that he had received from England, through the trustees of the Honduras fund, 50*l.* in goods and 100*l.* in cash, it was resolved, that Brother Henderson should write and acknowledge the receipt of the above-named sum of 150*l.*, and that the thanks of the church be offered to friends in England who have contributed, and to Brethren William Bowser, William Norton, and James Oliver, who have kindly undertaken the management of this fund.

The fourth public meeting in support of the native missions was held in the Wesleyan chapel on the 9th of January. The expenditure for the year was 114*l.* the income only 52*l.*, leaving a deficit of 62*l.*; but this was an improvement upon the previous year, especially as a strenuous effort was made among the members after the accounts were closed. On this point Mr. Henderson

says,—“Last year we reached little over 150 dollars from all sources in this country for this fund, this year we have raised about 380 dollars; so that had we not extended our operations our funds would have been in excess. But I believe, dear brother, it is in this way that the Lord intends we should act in his cause: walking by faith, convinced of duty to act, next acting faith on the Divine faithfulness. It will, indeed, be most gratifying to us to keep funds received from England entirely for the building this year.”

The Report stated, that at the beginning of the year there had been 184 members; six had been excluded; six belonging to the Second West India Regiment had been dismissed, their respective companies having been ordered away from Belize; four had died, making a reduction of sixteen. On the other hand, three had been restored, and twenty received by profession, making the increase twenty-three, and a clear addition of seven to the church at Belize, which now numbered 191 members. There had been baptized at Baker's, four; at Belize, five: in all nine persons.

At a subsequent church meeting, it was agreed that, as Brother Thurton had given so much satisfaction to the church in the management of the station at Sibun for two years, he should be placed on the same footing as Brother Kelly at Baker's; that is, to administer the supper to members of the church residing near, as well as baptism, when satisfied with the profession of candidates.

Concerning this period, Mr. Henderson says, “All the teachers have been present with us this season, except Brother Warner and Brother Crowe. On occasion of the general missionary prayer-meeting on the 1st of the month, when a numerously attended and a joy-inspiring meeting took place, after the usual course of proceeding, it was proposed and carried at once into effect, that a brother, in the name of all, offer special prayer for Brother Crowe, and the cause that detains him in England.

“At our missionary committee meeting, last evening (10th of January) when all the brethren were again present, the business of the past year was gone into, and that of the present one before us, with the facts connected with the cause in this country which brought us together. I felt it good to be there, and as all seemed to act as men, free and full of the work, I thought how much better this is than dependence on a Society could have been at the

same time. All have left this morning, to be at their stations before the Sabbath, carrying settled accounts and advances for the ensuing year. When this letter is off, at six P.M., I shall be alone again, and have breathing time as it were: I do feel the absence of *one*. But peace! I shall go to her."

Captain Thomas had been with the brethren at this interesting season, and was at once rejoiced in his own soul, and very helpful to them. Mr. Kingdon was still at his plantation up the river, and there were rumours that he expected his recall. He had taken part in none of the public meetings of the season.

At the more remote and recently formed station at Stann Creek, Brother Michael had made a plantation, and continued cheerful, labouring incessantly. The enterprise was felt to be great for him, and the period critical, as it would put all his energy and perseverance to the test. Mr. Henderson says, that the people there "prize the privilege of hearing about religion in *their own language*, which is an entirely new feature in their teaching. The Spaniards taught them in Latin or in Spanish, the Wesleyans in English. They are attentive, and our brother has scarcely room for all who attend."

The station lately resumed on the island of Ruatan was evidently blessed under Brother Warner's management, who was much gratified by the reception given him there. Mr. Henderson wrote concerning it on the 11th of July, "At Ruatan a favourable movement has begun. One of the Wesleyan leaders has given in his ticket, and has sought baptism at the hands of Brother Warner." On the 22nd of April, he adds, "We had a visit from Brother Warner lately from Ruatan. He came to see his annual accounts made up, and to take with him supplies. He seems to have his hands and heart full, and good prospects of success. I expect to hear of a baptism this month, as several have offered. Indeed, there is quite a stir amongst the Wesleyans there, who declare that never before had the truth been set before them. Mr. Webster, Methodist Superintendent, has written to Brother Warner, blaming him for preaching Baptist doctrines."

From occasional notices published in the *Honduras Watchman* it would appear that the British claim upon this island has been again abandoned, and the official countenance of the Superintendent of Belize once more withdrawn. One immediate result has

been, that the settlers encouraged to occupy the island, who now amount to about 2,000, have found themselves without the means of securing order; lawless acts have since been frequent, both there and at Bonacca, and there have been several hostile encounters between the residents and the Spaniards, from the main land, it is presumed.

Early in 1850 a public meeting of the inhabitants was convened, at which Lieutenant Commanding Jolly, of her Majesty's schooner *Bermuda*, stated, "I am directed by his Excellency the Governor of Jamaica, to inform you that you are to go on and enact your own local regulations. Do the best you can for yourselves—no interference will be allowed with your form of government, and the protection of the British flag will be afforded to all the settlers without distinction of any kind."*

In a recent appeal, the courts at Belize have declared that they have no jurisdiction over the island. All the magistrates and functionaries elected by the settlers there, are "obliged to take the oath of allegiance to the British crown." The tendency of such a state of things must be apparent to all. The injustice of such proceedings is equally so. The final result must be left for time to develop; meanwhile, all must be gainers, and none can possibly be losers by the success of the station there.

Brother Joseph Kelly of Rehoboth, was much encouraged by the harmony of the brethren residing at Baker's bank. On the 17th of March, Mr. Henderson says he had "baptized six believers in the presence of, I suppose, a larger congregation than ever assembled there on any previous occasion. Captain Thomas preached the baptizing sermon. He had to go up the river some eight or ten miles for water to supply his ship. He went a couple of days before, taking with him Brother Braddick, and some members of his family, so that Baker's had a high day. All seemed to enjoy it, and I trust souls were benefited."

During the first week in April, Mr. and Mrs. Kingdon finally left Belize in the *Mesardis* for New York, being recalled by the Baptist Missionary Society, which has now determined really to abandon Central America as a field for Missionary labour, after its occupation during twenty-eight years. The house, &c., at Mr. Kingdon's fifth station was disposed of to Col. Fancourt for 110*l*. to make a country residence of, thereby showing, that in some

* *Honduras Watchman*, May 18th 1850.

respects the locality was not ill chosen. Mr. Henderson heard of their intended departure from Belize on Saturday, March the 30th, "and yesterday," he says, *i. e.* Sunday, "a little before morning worship, it occurred to my mind that Mr. Kingdon, notwithstanding all, might have a desire to address the brethren before his departure. I felt that in his circumstances I should. Accordingly, I addressed a hasty note, which Mr. Adams carried to him, saying, "Dear Sir,—If you felt your mind at liberty to preach to us this evening, the pulpit will be at your service." His reply was, "Dear Sir,—For reasons too numerous to mention, I must decline your invitation to preach for you this evening,—I am, dear Sir, yours faithfully, John Kingdon." Thus closed the mission of one whose arrival at Belize had been looked forward to with fond hopes, and was hailed with joyful gratitude, accompanied by perhaps too great expectations.

It was considered not a little remarkable by some of the more reflective inhabitants of Belize, that just before Mr. Kingdon's final departure, the functionaries of the Establishment and the Superintendent had serious disagreements, which resulted in the sailing of the clergymen who were in the Settlement for Jamaica to obtain redress—somewhat as the non-juring dissenters had been compelled to do three years before. The salaries of these public servants had been stopped, and they sought the interference of their diocesan. "Thus," as one has expressed it, "has the pit which was dug for the Baptists been the one into which the very diggers themselves have fallen. How wonderful!" So much had matters now changed that Mr. Henderson wrote on the 4th of January 1850,— "The Superintendent called quite friendly two days ago, and inspected my garden. He spoke of a remedy for the law of marriage by dissenters within the Settlement, &c., so healing all former animosities. What does not time and the God of time effect."

Some months previous to his departure Mr. Kingdon had been applied to for the key of the house at Freetown, which the Society had declared its willingness to give up to the church, but he had declined to return it to the people until directed by the Society to do so. Now, the property was restored to those who had built the "prayers' house" with the expectation of using it themselves.* Mr.

* The title to the burying-ground was not made over to the church by the Society till the 10th of April 1850. See "Primitive Church Magazine" for September of that year p. 386.

Henderson says—"Last Thursday, the house on the burial-ground was re-opened, and was devoted afresh to the divine service. Friends were as numerous as we had accommodation for, and a very cheering meeting it was. I could not help noticing in my address, first, the divine testimony which had been given to the authority of a christian church. An attempt had been made to overthrow it, but the church remains whilst the men and missionary Society are cast out of the country. Secondly, the divine approbation of exercising ourselves in the faith that right principles will finally overcome. Here we were put in possession of a house paid for by the very parties then within it, but which under certain pretences had been taken from us and kept from us for nearly four years; and without sacrificing one Christian principle, we had quietly waited until it was restored to us. No appeals to courts, no expensive counsel, no application of legal coercion. We only needed to see a capacious place of worship erected at Belize to find ourselves as well accommodated as whilst under the Society.

"This we hope soon to see effected," adds Mr. Henderson, "although the progress of Brother Crowe, in procuring funds in England, is not great. Ours is not a popular cause. Well, let it be so, we do not need a great deal, and we would prefer to be on the giving side rather than the receiving. I hope we shall have our new place finished before the anniversary meeting, for the Methodists have given us plainly to understand that after the doings of Brother Warner in taking away their members, they could not any longer assist us in such ways again."

In the same letter Mr. Henderson says—"I don't know that I have informed you of a Government School Bill having passed the Public Meeting of the Settlement. The measure was brought to me before it was presented to the Meeting to know if I would accept of its provisions, to which I gave an unqualified negative. One thousand pounds sterling for one year have been granted.* The bill is most liberal, permitting any minister, Catholic or Protestant, to recommend a school of fifty children. The rent of the school-room is paid, a salary to the teacher, stationery provided for the use of the school, and even annual prizes, without interfering with the religious sentiments taught. Is it not remarkable? Such liberality is not taught from the pulpits of the Establishment.

* This is in addition to the annual grants to the Anglican Establishment, which, in 1847, reached to nearly 2,000*l*.

Our principles advance, though they are not yet wholly understood. The authorities do not know that money, however needful in conducting our operations, is not all that is wanted, nor even the chief thing. *Men* are more difficult to be procured than money—men worthy of the confidence of the church, and of the money that may be expended.

“In a familiar interview I had with our Superintendent, I made bold to propose a purchase of part of the old mission lot; I was not successful, but I obtained leave to fence up that part where the graves of my child, that of Mr. Adams', and of Mr. Philpot, are, with permission to visit them when we choose.

“My little daughter, Mehatabel, has been brought, the last week, to the very portals of death by dysentery, but, blessed be the Father of mercies who has not added to my sorrow, she is reviving apace. One of the black sisters, Eliza Munro [the same who ministered to Mr. Crowe's wants while in prison], took the place of the departed, and night and day watched over her without reward, save that which He gives who knows how to recompense into the bosom of the liberal their generous sacrifices for his name. My own health is good, and all proceeds as usual.

“I am training one female member with a view to her becoming a teacher. A male member exhibits some signs of fitness—he also has been encouraged to devote some of his time to improvement in the school. His name is John Bennet, but he has a family to provide for, and knows not how to spare time from them.”

The erection of the much needed place of meeting in Belize having been resolved on, an effort was there made to obtain the voluntary gifts of those inhabitants who were well disposed towards the object. Her Majesty's Superintendent, Colonel Fancourt, was pleased to present the church with ten guineas for the building, and Chief-Justice Temple added five more. Several leading magistrates and merchants also subscribed; so that, with the estimated value of the land, 743 dollars (or 148*l.* 12*s.* 6*d.* sterling), had been contributed on the 22nd of April last by residents of Belize, not members of the church. The estimated cost of a large wooden building, for which plans were kindly drawn by able architects in Edinburgh and in Glasgow, is 600*l.* sterling, of which more than one half was thus already raised by the united contributions of Christian churches and friends in England, and the gifts

of friends on the spot. In consequence of this success, the carpenters were expected to begin the erection under the direction of Brother Braddick, at the latest in May.

In the contributions above enumerated it will be seen that the faithfulness of the native brethren had not tended to sink them in the eyes of the public, who had been spectators, nor even in the estimation of some who had been actors in the late trial of their faith. The local press, which at the time was strenuously advocating the cause of the established sect, also came forward spontaneously to advocate that of the ejected Baptist church in a leading article, which appeared in the *Honduras Watchman* of the 6th of April 1850, from which the following are extracts :—

“ It is well known that, in consequence of some unhappy differences, which, if we wished, do not come within our province to explain, the premises formerly occupied by, and belonging to, the Baptist Missionary Society were disposed of, and are appropriated as a Lunatic Asylum to the use of a few unfortunate idiots, under the euphonious name of the ‘Fancourt Dispensary.’ Since that period the principal portion of the members of that Society have been meeting in a house in Eve-street—too small for the purpose, inconvenient, and incapable of accommodating, not only parties desirous of attending Divine worship there, but even the members themselves. Under these circumstances, and feeling the real necessity of enlarging their premises, or procuring others more suitable, they have come to the determination of erecting a new building on a lot in Caesar-lane, given to them by Mr. George Tillett for that purpose. Without entering into their particular tenets, we really believe that their undertaking will prove a great benefit to the Settlement. Experience has taught us the use and advantages to be derived from the proper support of the school conducted by the pastor of that Society—the — Alexander Henderson—this alone, we think, will be a sufficient inducement to procure the assistance necessary to enable them to complete the work. The members of that Society, though generally poor, have struggled on, and maintained their church independent; and, from their general peaceful and quiet behaviour, they deserve some encouragement.”

At this time, Mr. Henderson reports the death of three of the scholars who had grown up in his school—one of them was Miss

Cornelia Lockward, who had been keeping the infant school for some time during 1849. Speaking of her, he says, "The funeral scene on the Sabbath was peculiarly solemn. She had joined the church, had given a very touching account of her hope and views of Divine truth, [this is almost invariably done before the assembled church] and twice she was with us at the table of the Lord." The want of a suitable teacher in this department was greatly felt and would be still more so when convenient accommodation would be provided in the new meeting-house. Before this event took place, Mrs. Willats, a widowed sister and member of a Baptist church at Greenwich, spontaneously offered herself for this field, and is now under training at the Home and Colonial Institution, Gray's-Inn-road, expecting to leave England for Belize before the end of the year, to labour there as an infant-school teacher.

Mr. Henderson also reports that Miss Anne Braddick, the daughter of the deacon, once an infant scholar of Mrs. Henderson and now a member of the church, together with Miss Page Henderson, his own daughter, had "volunteered to re-open the Sabbath-school (closed for four years by the Society's claim), in the prayers'-house at Freetown. They have kept school there three Sabbaths with about 50 children.

Sabbath-schools have been in operation under Mr. Henderson's eye, ever since his labours in the Settlement had a beginning. The peculiarity which generally distinguishes them is that a great proportion of the scholars are adults, and often aged persons, and it is not uncommon to see the children who attend the day-schools teaching the grey-headed "uncles" and "aunties" to say their letters or to spell.

From the facts recorded in this chapter, it will be seen that the London Baptist Missionary Society have entirely abandoned missionary efforts in Central America. They, however, continue to lay claim to certain lands and tenements at two of the out-stations on the Old River. The church at Belize and the church at Becklanding (formerly of Tilletton), are equally agreed not in any way to recognize these claims. Tilletton, where the property is situated upon which the Society spent 39*l.*, is now abandoned as a station, most of the people having removed as a result of the Society's interference. Consequently, that property is not *now* even *used* by the native church, nor indeed by any one else.

The property at Baker's, upon which the Society expended ten shillings, is still used by the parties there who gave the land, and erected the building. The Society's tenacious claim, though disallowed by the occupiers, will probably have the effect of inducing them ultimately to build another house on other land, and to give up that one now occupied like the one at Tilletton, to rottenness and to the Society.

Among the results of Mr. Henderson's and the church's labours during fourteen years are the following:—

1. At Belize—the central station.—A communion of strict Baptist believers in the Lord Jesus Christ, now consisting of about two hundred in full fellowship, sustaining, by means of Mr. Henderson and occasional helps, two or three preaching stations, a day-school of seventy children, an adult evening school, and two Sunday-schools.

2. At Backlanding, on the New River.—A similar communion of more than thirty members, occupying, by Brother Kerr, two preaching stations, and sustaining a Sunday-school, without any salaried agency whatever.

3. At Rehoboth, Baker's bank.—A preaching station, where the ordinances are administered to the members of the churches at Belize and Backlanding by a native teacher (Brother Joseph Kelly), who also teaches a day-school, and an adult Sunday-school. Here it seems probable that a third native church will soon be formed.

4. At Sibun, to the southward of Belize.—A preaching station and Sunday-school sustained without expense to the church by the efforts of Brother Edward Thurton, a Creole of Belize, assisted by the brethren who live on the banks of that river.

5. At Northern River, northward of Belize.—A preaching station sustained without expense to the church by the Brethren James Gough and James York, where the erection of a house for worship is contemplated by the friends desirous of using it.

6. At the Carif Settlement at Stann Creek, brother William Michael has recently commenced preaching and teaching in the vernacular language of his tribe, and is already encouraged by their attendance.

7. On the island of Ruatan, Brother John Warner has made a happy and a promising commencement in preaching the Gospel, and teaching a day school and a Sunday-school, and converts have already been made.

8. At Guatemala, in the interior, the station lately occupied by Brother Frederick Crowe, has remained without a labourer, and the political state of the country has hitherto placed a barrier in the way of his return.

In addition to these eight stations, there are others already contemplated, and native teachers are still being raised up to supply them.

The first books ever written in the Carif and in the Waikna languages have been printed as the results of Mr. Henderson's labours in translating, and he has also now undertaken the Maya, so that the Scriptures in their mother tongue, may be extended to that people also.

During twelve out of the fifteen years, the average number of scholars attending the day schools under Mr. Henderson's direction was two hundred. The indirect effect of his schools has been considerably to improve the character of education generally, and to increase the number of schools in the Settlement.

The moral influence resulting from Mr. Henderson's labours and the presence of the church in a community so corrupt, and so far removed from the better influences of more refined society, cannot be expressed either in figures or in words; and as others participated in those labours, it would be invidious to attempt to say how much of the good done is attributable to any one man or denomination, but the fact that a great improvement has taken place will be denied by none.

The religious element has been much increased; the moral tone of society, in all its ranks, from the lowest upwards, has been greatly purified, extended and elevated. Information has been diffused; and even physical benefits have resulted in increased industry, cleanliness, order, and consequent healthfulness.

But it is particularly in the points which were alluded to at the beginning of this history that a change may be recognised in the Bay. The superstitious practices there recorded, though common within the memory of not a few still living witnesses, have now disappeared; and the unblushing immoralities there alluded to now hide their heads abashed, and timorously crouch and retire into the darkness that befits them.

The custom of sitting up all night and waking the dead, is still indeed continued; but on such occasions, the solemn hymn has

superseded the unnatural merriment that was then provoked, and outward decorum and seriousness take the place formerly occupied by lewd revelry and intemperate indulgence. Concubinage, before so general, is now the exception to the rule, and lawful marriage is deemed essential to respectability, as well with the merchant and his clerks, as with the artisan and the labourer. Numbers of the adult population can read, and some value is beginning to be attached to education, while most of the rising generation attend school, and bibles and useful books are in the houses and in the hands of all classes of the people. The very dress and deportment of the coloured people has so much improved within the last few years, as forcibly to strike the attention of any one who might return after a long absence, and there is a class of the natives, chiefly composed of those who make some religious profession, who would probably not suffer by comparison with any class of Creoles and coloured people in the most favoured of the West India islands. In no place on the continent, or in the neighbouring Archipelago, is there less of the abominable prejudice of colour than at Belize, and as a consequence, the natural dignity, intelligence, and good feelings of that much injured class, have a more favourable and complete development, and the influence of religious light and moral principle is so much the less impeded in its progress.

But let it not be supposed that the work of the missionary is accomplished in British Honduras. For though the gospel has been successfully planted, and has begun to shed forth its beneficent influence, even where its power is not felt, yet are there many monster evils still preying upon the vitals of Society there, and spreading around them contagion and death. Among these, drunkenness, licentiousness, dishonesty, violence, and other sins to which depraved mankind is subject, still have too prominent a place. But the deeper seated evils of avarice, pride, profanity, and all the other forms of human selfishness, remain comparatively untouched, except in individual cases, and the chief sin of man—his most daring and malignant insult to the Deity—unbelief, still asserts its cruel empire over the minds and souls of almost the entire population, and over all, *all* the vast regions around!

Belize and its dependencies are the only points upon this immense continent, within thousands of miles in every direction,

where the Gospel of Salvation is proclaimed. The believers there constitute a small speck—the only star of light upon a map of thick moral darkness, extending over the minds of millions of men, and that star is placed on the border of a country which is precisely the centre of the densest population in Spanish America, a designation extending over a tract of land which includes full one-sixth part of the habitable surface of the globe; and it is the Lord of missions, the great projector and the sole manager of the triumphs of his own kingdom, who has placed them there.

The native church in British Honduras burns to be the instrument of spreading to others on that continent the blessed truth, which it has received in deposit to dispense as a responsible steward. That church has given proof of its disinterested and benevolent purpose—of its integrity and zeal—of its efficiency for the work entrusted to it, and God has given tokens of his willingness to use them. Even while they are waiting for the succour and assistance, which they need and ask at the hands of their British fellow Christians, they are going forward with their appointed task, and they know in whom they have trusted. “The Lord of the Harvest” has given them hearts to feel for perishing sinners; He has not denied them the gifts by which those feelings may be expressed; and having thus granted them the greater blessings, they are unhesitatingly and fearlessly confident that he will also bestow the less. Having sought “*first* the Kingdom of God and His righteousness,” they *know* that all other things needful shall be added unto them.

The bare gifts of British churches and of British Christians are not, however, that which the church at Belize covets. Those gifts they have long received, and they have never been unmindful of the favour, nor would they now, in the least degree, detract from the debt of gratitude and love which they have thus incurred; but with such gifts alone they could not rest satisfied, and it has long been one of their griefs that they were so much confined to the reception of pecuniary help, so limited in the amount of intercourse which they would willingly have had with their generous benefactors, and so undistinguished in the general prayers of the faithful for the cause in which they are engaged.

They now ask for the heart sympathy, the direct countenance, the special and circumstantial prayers adapted to their peculiar

wants, at the hands of those who feel that they are identified with the spread of Christ's kingdom. The labourers among them who, like Joshua and the fighting men of Israel, have gone forth to engage with the enemies of God, fighting hand to hand upon the plain, desire to feel that British brethren, who are exalted to heaven in privileges, are, like Moses, Aaron, and Hur, upon the mount, lifting up holy hands in prayer—in special prayer for *them* and for their success.

They are confident that the battle is the Lord's, and they know that while he chooses his own instrumentality, and directs it himself, he will be "enquired of for these things." They have become increasingly impressed with the importance of their task, the extent of their field, and the magnitude of the difficulties that it presents to them. They are somewhat sensible of their own feebleness and imperfection, and they therefore desire to have their faith increased, their hearts cheered, and their hands strengthened in this good work, by the direct expression of Christian fellowship in their labours and sufferings, and of sympathy in their trials and sorrows, as well as in their triumphs and their joys.

If in this manner the hands which hang down are lifted up, and the feeble knees are strengthened, those who contended, and those who beheld them afar off and influenced their victory, will at last rejoice together, and like Israel of old, after the defeat of Amalek, both will unite to erect an altar to God's praise, and both will recognise the solemn and inspiring truth that Jehovah is our banner.*

In recording some of the dealings of the Lord with them as a church, the brethren in British Honduras desire to give expression to their gratitude to God, who has led them hitherto. And while they adoringly recognise his faithfulness and his tender compassion towards them, they would lie low in the dust of self abasement as most unworthy in themselves to be, in the humblest way, employed in the great and holy work of propagating the gospel in Central America.

* "And Moses built an altar, and called the name of it Jehovah-nissi," (margin, *the* is, The LORD my banner.) Exodus xvii. 15.

PART III.

THE BIBLE IN GUATEMALA.

INCLUDING THE AUTHOR'S ACCOUNT OF HIMSELF, AND A NARRATIVE OF THE LEADINGS OF DIVINE PROVIDENCE IN HIS CONVERSION, AND DURING FIVE YEARS' RESIDENCE AND LABOURS IN THE STATE OF GUATEMALA, SUSPENDED BY HIS VIOLENT EXTRAMMISSION FROM ITS CAPITAL IN APRIL 1846.

"How long are ye slack to go to possess the land, which Jehovah the God of your fathers hath given you?"—Joahua xviii. 3.

In the minds of the persons who were instrumental in first establishing the mission in British Honduras, there were ulterior objects of probable attainment, to which cherished hopes sometimes aspired. Prominent among these were the evangelization of the Mosquito Shore and of the Spanish provinces of the interior. The first appeared to human sight the easier undertaking, and early efforts were made to establish a mission station among the Waiknas, with the concurrence of their king. It has been seen how signally such efforts have failed hitherto, and how mysteriously the Providence of God removed the labourers who had devoted themselves to that field in 1824. The second hope, represented by the Baptist Missionary Society as the grand object for which their station at Belize was so long maintained under so much discouragement,* was apparently of more difficult attainment; for the Central American States, in common with all the late Spanish colonies, have too often been regarded as entirely beyond the reach of any direct missionary effort; as though they

* See "Belize," p. 3.

were hermetically sealed by the powers of darkness, or as if they had really been excluded from the commission of our Lord, and formed no part of his patrimonial heritage, or were not destined to be incorporated among the possessions of his crown.

The reader who has perused the previous sketch of intestine convulsions with which the Central States have been exercised since their independence, will be prepared to attribute the absence of any direct missionary efforts there, to the supineness of the disciples of our Lord, rather than to any real barriers which an intolerant superstition had placed in their way. There were not found any bold enough to face the Popish apostacy, and to brave the terrors of its hierarchy, its inquisition, and its abuse of the civil power; and, therefore, when a favourable season for the labours of a missionary presented itself under the triumphs of the liberal party, and with the protection of a law of religious freedom, there was no one prepared to avail himself of them, and while hundreds of devoted men of God went forth boldly to assail Idolatry, Mahometanism, and Infidelity, in the peculiar regions where they most prevail, none, *none* were found intrepid enough to attempt a breach upon any of the strongholds of the man of sin!

The Lord of the vineyard, who has hitherto granted an encouraging measure of success wherever faithful efforts have been maintained in the name of his holy Child Jesus, might under these circumstances have permitted the enemy with whom His people refused to grapple, to grow in power and in audacity, and where not positively overcome, and subjected to tribute, He might justly have permitted them to be a thorn in their sides. How far this has been the case let the reader decide. It is worthy of our particular notice, that within a very few years the Lord has himself thrust forth labourers into this part of His harvest, and we have heard of stirring movements in popish Madeira, Malta, Tuscany, and even Rome itself; and more is, without doubt, now doing by unobserved labourers in many Roman Catholic lands, the results of which will probably soon burst forth into the same blaze of persecution which has so lately distinguished those places, and made the sufferers known. This invariable result of such labours cannot surely be pleaded as a reason why they should not be undertaken; for where has the Gospel ever been successfully planted, without being watered with the tears, if not with

the blood, which the iron hand of persecution has caused to be shed!

Signal and numerous have been the providential interpositions in which the hand of God is traceable in the small beginning which He has already made in introducing the Bible, and the truth of the Bible, into the Romish and once priest-ridden state of Guatemala. That which a weak faith and a criminal ignorance prevented us from boldly undertaking, God has graciously led us into step by step, His own hand conducting, His shield protecting, His grace sustaining, and His power establishing the work of our hands, at the same time that He closed doors which appeared to be open before us. He who knows our frailty and the faintness of our hearts has thereby spoken encouragement for future efforts, at the same time that He indicates the line of action to such as would be doing, and secures to Himself the whole glory as the projector, the executor, and proprietor of the great and holy undertaking.

The writer of these pages being now about to record some of the ways by which the Lord has led him in the good work in which he is honoured to be engaged, is desirous of directing attention to the special providences which he has experienced in that way, to the end that God may be glorified, and, if it may be, that sympathy and earnest prayers may be enlisted in favour of that particular branch of the Central American Missions, and of him who, though utterly unworthy in himself, has been chosen of God from his mother's womb to be an instrument in beginning it, and now of bringing it, together with other more important labours, before the attention of the reader. In order to assist this design, some notice of his preparatory career may perhaps be patiently borne with.

The ancient and once bustling, but now gloomy and always priest-ridden town of Bruges, the capital of Flemish Flanders, was the place of my birth, which occurred in 1819. My parents were among the first English emigrants who flocked across the channel, and spread themselves over the whole continent of Europe immediately on the establishment of that peace which followed the captivity of the French Emperor. Though domiciliated in a foreign land, my parents never renounced their nationality, nor even lost much of their British prejudices, and being then among

that numerous class who do not think for themselves in matters of religion, they claimed an interest in the professed Protestantism of their ancestors, and a name to live in the sect established by civil law in their native land. As a result, their numerous children, who though born abroad were still British subjects, were brought up under the idea that they were Episcopalians by birth and education, though even that scanty amount of tuition and morality which is imparted under similar circumstances at home, was considerably decimated and relaxed through the influences to which the family was subjected in a decidedly Popish country.

At the age of eleven years, immediately after the Revolution of 1830, which very much unsettled my father's plans, and finally caused the removal of the family, then living at Brussels, beyond the French frontiers, I was brought to England and put to a boarding-school at Greenwich, where I remained with a younger brother for two years. This "Establishment" was directed by a Wesleyan local preacher; but little or no efforts were made to impart religious truths to the scholars, and with the exception of the excitement of some natural feelings, under the stirring appeals to which I sometimes listened at the Methodist meeting-house, and the enthusiasm awakened by attending a missionary meeting, I received no impressions of a religious kind, and was surprisingly little benefitted even in what might now be termed secular education. This, with some very partial and unsustained instructions at a variety of Belgian schools which I had previously attended, constituted all the scholastic advantages which my father's depressed means could afford me. The two following years were spent at home under a variety of circumstances, and in different parts of France.

Never trained to a proper subjection, and often left entirely to my own guidance, the result was the rapid development of natural depravity, in a waywardness of disposition, which, joined to a want of application, unfitted me for industrious or useful pursuits. This state of mind my former education had done nothing to correct; but, on the contrary, much to cultivate. A frequent attendance on theatrical amusements, and the society of light-minded persons, had fostered a taste which was now fomented by an unrestrained indulgence in light reading, in which whole days and weeks were consumed. The ideas that were gathered,

and the feelings which were cultivated in the rapid perusal of a whole circulating library, consisting of English novels and romances, were little calculated to fit a youth of fifteen for the toils and difficulties of this life—how much less to prepare his soul for the love and service of his God, and the solemn realities of the eternal state!

The legitimate fruits which must spring from such culture were not tardy, but soon attained a premature ripeness. The false notions which I had formed of the world, and especially of myself, led me to regard it as a theatre upon which I might at will act a part that would be flattering to my vanity, and I determined to make my own fortunes, and to leave home in search of adventures, change, and earthly happiness.

The wishes of my parents in a matter of so much importance had none of that weight which they must have had in any well-ordered mind, and their remonstrances or their authority were unable to restrain my ungoverned will. It was in a sweet secluded cottage * on the banks of the Loire, very near the town of Tours in Touraine, that I tore myself from the parental embrace, and undertook on foot a journey of nearly three hundred miles, in order to reach the port of Bordeaux, anxious to embark and participate in the vicissitudes of a sailor's life, such as Captain Marryatt, and other writers of naval fiction had depicted it to my imagination.

Three years of bodily hardship, mental degradation, and inward wretchedness, succeeded this rash and wicked step, during which many changes and adventures were indeed experienced, but of such a character as to go far to correct the false notions of life which previous training had engendered. I soon exchanged the hardships and wanton cruelties which accompanied my initiation into the duties of a cabin boy, for the pollutions of the barrack-room, and the degradation of low-lived associates in the British Auxiliary Legion, then intermeddling in armed contentions for the Spanish crown. From this I was early delivered by the generosity of a superior officer, in whom God raised up a friend to snatch me from

* La Grenadière.—This modest but picturesque abode, situated in the very centre of "the garden of France," and commanding the richest scenery, has attracted the attention of more than one French poet, and is particularly described in one of the tales of M. de Balzac, in his "Scenes de Province."

further exposure to the moral and physical dangers of the military career. I also successively obtained and lost a variety of situations in England.

Before enlisting and leaving for Spain, I had been employed in a circulating library, at one of the fashionable watering places, and was dismissed in a fortnight, because I could not resist the temptation to read the books which my employer had forbidden me to do. On my return from Spain I entered the employ of a famous London publisher, and travelled through several large provincial towns soliciting orders for ornamental works issued periodically. At Oxford, where I had some success and considerable intercourse with the students and professors in all the colleges, I conceived an ardent desire to make up in some way for the deficiencies of my education. At Nottingham, stimulated by this object, I succeeded in obtaining admittance into a large boarding school, as a kind of assistant teacher and French master, and gladly renounced my itinerating life. I had but just time to become sensible of the drudgery of my new position, when I was attacked by the smallpox, to the great alarm of my employer, who succeeded in keeping the fact a secret, and sent me up to London as soon as I was sufficiently recovered. Here I returned to my undesired connection with Paternoster Row, as the only available means of subsistence, which was afterwards irregularly followed at intervals, leaving me exposed to all the snares of the capital, and under no restraints but those imposed by necessity; for, alas! my carnal mind, instead of being fortified against such dangers, had only been prepared to fall an easy prey; and dishonesty and licentiousness were soon added to profanity and dissipation.

Still, the providence of God watched over my erring steps, and in a remarkable manner prevented my forming a permanent connection with a French theatrical company, which was about removing from London to Strasburg. It was through an acquaintance formed in these circles that I became aware of the existence of "The Eastern Coast of Central America Commercial and Agricultural Company." Being asked to serve as interpreter for a young Frenchman, who was desirous to emigrate to Vera Paz, I at once conceived the design of accompanying him, thoroughly disgusted with the unhappy and precarious life I was leading, and not a little allured by the grand descriptions of American scenery and society

which I had read in the works of Fenimore Cooper, and others of his class.

The few obstacles in the way were soon overcome, and in July 1836 I embarked with my French friend, on board the brig *Britannia*, for the mouth of the Rio Dulce, destined to New Liverpool, a spot on the banks of the Cajabon, one of the tributary streams to the Polochic. Two ship-loads of emigrants had preceded us by a few months, with the project of forming a new colony, and in order to secure to the Company a very extensive grant of land, and a most advantageous charter, offered them by the legislature of the State of Guatemala, in accordance with the decrees of the Federal Government.

There were nearly a hundred persons huddled together in the narrow hold and steerage of this emigrant ship. Among them all there was probably not one who was really adapted for the enterprise, and small indeed was the aggregate amount of respectability which the entire band conferred upon it. There was, however, as rich a variety of race, language, and occupation, as could well be collected within the same limits. Above a score were Israelites, and with the exception of an equal number of Metropolitan tailors, this was by far the largest number which could be classed together by any tie less common than that of humanity. Among the rest there were some Irish labourers with their wives, a German organ-grinder with a musical family, including some girls who were dexterous players on the tambourine, and several inexperienced youths, who preferred adventures afar off to honest industry at home. And yet the board of Directors who proposed to constitute a new society, and to lay the foundations of a prosperous state with these excrescences of a dense and corrupt population (the very elements which society already constituted naturally threw off) were not deficient in intelligence in other matters. What wonder that their schemes and their criminal speculations were brought to nought, and involved the ruin of those capitalists who confided in their wisdom and in the credit of their names. Not a little misery and wrong was also entailed upon the more immediate victims of this delusion.

Among the incidents which diversified the passage out, the most prominent were :—Immediately on starting, the prevalence of the smallpox on board, of which there were seventeen cases at one

time. But though there was no proper medical assistance, three cases only resulted in death. Several regular pugilistic encounters took place, and brawls were consequent upon the distribution of rations of ardent spirits. The feast of trumpets was celebrated in the captain's cabin by the Hebrews. An attempt at suicide was made by a wretched young girl, but was repented of before her hold of the ship's side had been loosened. The water, which became scarce before we left the English Channel, was in a fetrescent state, through the unwholesome condition of the cask. A popular demonstration, headed by a violent Irishwoman, was got up in order to compel the captain to water at Madeira, when that island was in sight; but it was successfully resisted. When in the warmer latitudes, for want of proper precautions, filth and vermin literally took possession of the ship, so that the hardiest mariners declined to sleep below. Open immorality was practiced in the cabin, and the captain was intoxicated during most of the voyage; so that the emigrants and crew owed the preservation of their lives, under God, entirely to the sobriety of the first mate.

After a passage of ten weeks, the *Britannia* cast anchor off the Carif settlement of Livingston at the bar of the Rio Dulce. No preparations had been made for the disembarkation of the emigrants, who were now left on board for a fortnight, while the captain ascended the river in search of the Company's agent. During his absence, some of the victims who had preceded our arrival found their way down to Livingston, in the hope of getting a passage home. They were partially clad, emaciated, and covered with sores. On coming on board the ship, they related that no proper accommodation and provision had been made for them before their arrival; that their sufferings from want, climate, ill treatment, and "plaga,"* had been great; and that New Liverpool consisted only of a few thatched huts in the heart of an impenetrable forest, to reach which from the river, they had been compelled to scramble over a morass. Much less than this would have sufficed to dishearten the hopeful company on board the *Britannia*, whose expectations had been raised to the highest pitch by glowing descriptions of the really beautiful country which they were intended to people. All the wealth and productions of the five States, the salubrity of the temperate plains, and the united

* Mosquitoes and other noxious insects.

advantages of the hot regions and of the table lands, had in their minds been concentrated and associated with New Liverpool and the valley of the Polochic. The effect of this sudden reaction upon their minds may be imagined.

Mrs. MacMinnis, the heroine of former commotions, and a person of some influence among the rest by reason of her commanding manner and her violent and profane tongue, now raised the voice of wailing, and, with deep and horrid imprecations, lamented her folly, and vowed that none of her family should proceed another step. Her resolution was re-echoed in lower tones, but with equal determination, by all on board, and the sailors were not slow to sympathize with the exiled dupes of the Company in London. Very soon the fire-arms in the cabin were seized by the men, under the direction of Mrs. MacMinnis; and the return of the commander was awaited with a dogged determination.

When the captain at length came, he was accompanied by the agent, in expectation of removing the colonists to their destined home. They were both suffered to come on board, and to go down into the cabin, when the arms were openly assumed, and they learned to their surprise that they were constituted prisoners there. A violent scene and noisy recriminations ensued, in which Mrs. MacMinnis ably performed her part. The ship was thenceforth well watched and guarded, and the prisoners were kept below during that night.

In the previous interval, Providence had supplied the mutineers with a black pilot, who, being in another ship loading mahogany at the same place, and hearing of our position, informed us of the neighbourhood of the British settlements, of which all on board appeared utterly ignorant, and kindly volunteered his services to take us to Belize. No boat was suffered to approach the *Britannia*, and, thus provided, the anchor was weighed the next morning at dawn, and in twenty-four hours she was riding in smooth water in the harbour of Belize. A deputation sent to the magistrates soon returned to inform the rest that they might land on sufferance; and the ship, which had been reduced to its last biscuit, though intended to provision New Liverpool for several months, was soon abandoned of its passengers, and given up to the vermin and the crew.

At Belize all the emigrants found employment; and had they

been industrious, they might have done well. Many of them, however, fell early victims to their own intemperance and the effects of climate conjoined. Most of the Hebrews, and some others, wandered to the United States and into the surrounding country. Ten years after their memorable arrival, scarcely a vestige of them remained in British Honduras.

Among the rest, I also found employment as soon as I landed. My first situation was as a clerk in a wealthy merchant's store. Thence I was sent, after a few months, into the forests on the banks of the river Ullua in the State of Honduras, with a new gang of mahogany cutters, and I returned to Belize early in 1837. I then became an assistant to a printer in a small office, where the local newspaper was printed.

A few months only elapsed before the printer, who was also editor, fell a victim to his intemperate habits. He first lost his reason, and then died miserably in the jail. At this juncture, I found great difficulty in obtaining another employer. In pursuing my inquiries, I was advised to make application to Mr. Henderson, the Baptist Missionary, who, though he had been but two years in the Settlement, was already known as the willing friend of the needy. At the same time I was particularly warned to be on my guard against his religious opinions, which were represented as extravagant and strange.

I found Mr. Henderson actively engaged in the labours of his school. In the lower part of the same building, I saw Mrs. Henderson and another teacher, surrounded by a goodly number of coloured infants. I was kindly received, and admitted to their family board. My circumstances were considerably inquired into. My tale of past vicissitudes was heard with sympathy, and I was encouraged to come and take up my abode with them, and to endeavour to be useful in the school till I should find some other occupation.

The toil of teaching, and the restraints of Mr. Henderson's house, united with my own unfitness for such a position, soon made it appear irksome to my mind. What little thought I had ever entertained about religious matters, had been influenced, on the one hand, by the lifeless formalities and self-righteous observances which I had been imperfectly taught at home; and on the other, by that professedly philosophic infidelity which I had

either gleaned from irreligious books, or imbibed in the society of French sceptics. During my wanderings, I had tried entirely to reject the authority of the Bible, in which there was so much that appeared to me obscure and even unreasonable. While in this determination, I one day took up one of Sir Walter Scott's Tales of the Crusaders. From a foot-note, I learned that the powerful description there given of the Dead Sea, and of the sterility and gloomy nature of the surrounding country, was a faithful portraiture of that desolate district. The conviction that the Bible account of the destruction of the cities of the plain *must be true* flashed across my mind with irresistible force, and was alone enough to overthrow the plausible objections which my unbelieving heart had raised, or my vain mind had taken hold of. I still professed to disbelieve the Scriptures; but in reality I could not. In my more superstitious moods, I would even read with fancied pleasure the sonorous liturgical compositions of the Book of Common Prayer, and I invariably thought the better of myself, and was the more persuaded of the inherent goodness of my heart in spite of the occasional admonitions of conscience, by the aid of its authorized formularies of contrition, and in the very face of its general confessions of sins. Except what little I had imperfectly heard while at Greenwich, my mind had never till now been brought into contact with the truth of the gospel in any form. The only person whom I can remember as ever having made a direct effort to bring the theme before my attention, was a miniature portrait-painter living in the Strand, upon whom I called in the course of business. This stranger faithfully reproved me for a profane word, and drew me into a conversation, from which I received the vivid impression that he considered himself in a saved state, and looked upon me as under condemnation. This I then felt disposed to resent as impudent presumption. Perhaps this good man's prayer had followed me till now.

While engaged with Mr. Henderson, I attended the worship of the church, for the first time in my life, in a thoroughly dissenting congregation. Mr. Henderson's sermons only arrested my attention when he was a little louder and more animated than usual; but his expositions of the sacred Scriptures fixed my wandering mind, and created surprise and admiration of the Word. In our more private communications, I was not less astonished to find how

easily he turned all the difficulties, supposed contradictions, and fancied absurdities, which I pointed out in the Bible, into simple truths, impressive examples, and sayings and doings every way worthy of the great God of creation. Thus was my mouth stopped, and a conviction of my own ignorance most unwillingly forced upon me. But with all this my heart was little affected, except that Mr. Henderson's influence, and the restraints of his society, became increasingly intolerable.

To escape from this, I sought other company more congenial to my depraved tastes, and the tavern, the billiard-room, and the sentimental song, occupied some of my evenings, and occasioned irregularity of hours. For this Mr. Henderson reproved me, and more than once spoke to me seriously and affectionately concerning the state of my heart. On one such occasion, when I retired from his study to my bed-room, I was so much affected that I fell upon my knees, and though I then knew that I could not pray, I wept. Still I was not sorry when Mr. Henderson soon after intimated that our connection must cease, especially as an opening was made for me to enter into business in a retail provision store, under circumstances that promised to leave me more than ever unrestrained, a French widow lady having proposed to supply the means.

Though he had felt it necessary to dismiss me, Mr. Henderson still continued to notice his almost hopeless protégé, and when my store was opened, he frequently visited it, purchased articles for household use, and sometimes brought me a book to read, as I had many vacant hours behind the counter.

The impressions which I had received whilst with Mr. Henderson, instead of wearing off now that I had embarked in business, returned ever and anon; and the more I strove against them, the greater was their force. I now knew that there was a way of holiness, and I felt that I ought to walk in it. My first effort at reformation was an outward one connected with the observance of the Sabbath. In common with other retail stores, we had been used to sell during a part of the Sunday. I represented the impropriety of this to my partner, and we were agreed; though with some sacrifice, to keep the store shut during the whole of the day. This did not, however, answer the end of quieting my scruples, as I spent the day in listless idleness, or in trifling amusements with light-minded and gay companions like myself.

After the conviction of the truth of the Scriptures, came gradually the knowledge that I was hopelessly corrupt by nature, as well as a sinner by practice. At the same time, though faintly, some of the leading points of the plan of salvation through a substitutional atonement for sin, and the imputed righteousness of a representative and a Saviour, who was at once human and divine, were revealed to my benighted heart, which was both humbled and rejoiced at the view, and fell prostrate in adoration before God. This process was, however, so gradual that no great transition was perceptible to myself, and it was so intimately connected with *action*, that it is only by an effort of the mind that I can, at this distance of time, distinguish the inward impulse from circumstances that fixed a decision which had for some time floated indefinitely in my mind.

In the midst of business, one Saturday evening, a black woman,* who was once a slave, and who had been a servant to my partner, came into our store to buy, and joyfully informed her former mistress that she was going to be baptized on the following morning. Without appearing to notice what was said, the example of this poor woman, who had enjoyed so few opportunities, smote me to the heart. I then felt, if I was not conscious of it before, that I, too, ought to follow my Lord in this ordinance (which I knew to be scriptural), and thus at once make an open profession of the name of Jesus Christ, and cast in my lot with His despised people. So strong was this impulse that, without expressing it, I felt a wish to be included among those who were to be immersed on the following morning, had there been sufficient time. I soon after opened my mind to Mr. Henderson, who was surprised at the application, as he had given up hope respecting me. But, being satisfied with my profession of repentance and faith, he admitted me to that ordinance on the 1st of October 1837, together with five others, all coloured people. On that solemn occasion, some of the companions of my dissipated hours stood among the spectators, and, on coming up out of the water, as I passed before them, the contemptuous sneer which I observed upon their countenances, awakened in my bosom a glow of love towards that Saviour who was despised for me. From that moment I was enabled cheerfully to give up their society, except as I might convince them also of the error of their ways.

* Eliza M'ware, the same dear sister who afterwards ministered to my wants in the jail.

It was not till after this act of submission had been performed that I was permitted greatly to rejoice in the Lord. My first waking thought, and my constant joy was, that my sins which were many were forgiven me. The same week I was added to the church. Many of the brethren, with whom I was yet unacquainted, came to my store to congratulate me on the event. Among them were some aged African pensioners, who recounted their conversion to me. Finding that the way in which the Lord had led them appeared very different from my own experience, I, in my ignorance, was led to doubt, for a moment, the reality of the new career which I had embraced. This was but a momentary snare. I was soon taught that my faith rested upon a firmer foundation than similarity of experience, and my hope revived. Nor am I conscious of ever having been permitted to doubt the truth of the Gospel, and my own interest in it, from that time to this: no, not even for a moment. In endeavouring to do the will of God in the midst of inward depravity and outward failures, I have since been gradually confirmed in the knowledge of His ways and in my inward confidence and hope. With adoring gratitude, I desire to record it to the honour of God's grace.

My business, which must have proved a barrier to any sustained active service in the Gospel, to which I now felt a desire to give myself, also implied a connivance at certain irregular practices, such as purchasing smuggled goods, or the sacrifice of profits to such an extent as to make it impossible to compete successfully with others. I, therefore, came to the resolution, together with my partner, who had now become my wife, to give up the store, and remove to the mission premises. I laboured daily with Mr. Henderson in the schools, endeavouring to improve myself, and make up, with his kind assistance, for very great deficiencies in my own education, as well as in many other respects. The instruction of the young, which had before been so irksome a task, now became a real pleasure, and the society of Mr. Henderson and the brethren was esteemed a privilege of which I really felt myself unworthy.

Thus I continued spending my days in the school, my evenings in the prayer-meetings of the brethren, and often portions of the night in efforts to study, which were mostly futile, on account of the exhaustion resulting from the climate and the toils of the day. The inward wretchedness to which I had before been a prey in

moments of reflection, I never felt again; and though not freed from temptations and griefs, I had now a certain prospect for eternity, and an object worth living, toiling, and suffering for in uncertain and narrow bounded time.

During my previous wanderings, I had entirely neglected to write to my sorrowing parents, for whom I entertained a tender affection, at the same time that I thus requited their indulgent care with unnatural neglect. One reason of this was that when I had frequently sat down to write, I could neither give a favourable report of my circumstances, nor indite a tolerable epistle. Soon after my conversion, this long-neglected duty was performed, and I sought the forgiveness of my parents for past acts of disobedience and folly. The first replies, which I received with indescribable joy, conveyed the happy intelligence of the conversion to God of a beloved sister; the next letters announced that my mother also had become a new creature. My heart was then filled with gratitude, and my mouth with a joyful song of praise.

The even tenor of my new life, so different from my former vagaries, was interrupted after the first year by bodily sickness, and after that by a temporary separation from Mr. Henderson, during which I kept a small school of my own for several months, but from which I returned during 1840 to my former position. At the close of that year, the efforts of the Emigration Company in London to fulfil the conditions of their charter were renewed under other management, as already related, p. 355. Some eighty settlers had been located at Abbottsville, on the Boca Nueva, somewhat further up the valley of the Polochic than New Liverpool, and the agent of the Company came to Belize. Anxious to remove to some out-station, and watchful for any opening in the direction of what is termed in Belize the Spanish country, I called upon this person, as an old emigrant, and learned that they had a chaplain, who was also the schoolmaster. Immediately after this interview the agent received information that the person referred to had left for the capital, forsaking his post, and having conferred with Mr. Henderson, he offered me the appointment. With the understanding that I should be the Company's schoolmaster, and that any efforts of a religious character among the colonists or the natives were to be purely voluntary, and upon my own responsibility, I agreed to accompany him to Abbottsville, that I might see the place.

Before leaving Belize, the sanction of the church, to which I had occasionally ministered, was solemnly given to my proposed efforts on the 1st of January 1841, and in a few days I embarked in the Company's steamer *Vera Paz*, for Yzabal, on the Gulf of Dulce.

Being well received by the colonists at Abbottsville, and satisfied with the prospects of the new settlement, which, though far from being wisely planned, was many degrees better than New Liverpool had been, I removed my wife thither, and occupied a neat boarded cottage, constructed in London, and perched upon the edge of a precipice overhanging a considerable plain but newly cleared, and still strewn with huge trunks of unburnt trees lying between the high and massy stumps from which they had been cut. My latticed verandah commanded a view of the Boca Nueva, a rapid mountain stream, and of gigantic virgin forest trees extending along a wide valley, and spreading their continuous mantle of rank verdure over the very summits of the bold and lofty ranges of mountains which bounded the scene to the north and to the south, at once setting limits to the sweep of the mighty Polochic, and seeming to the eye to terminate only where the broad ocean was known to commence. Those sylvan recesses, inaccessible to the foot of civilized man, are still the retreat of the *Indios Bravos*, or wild aboriginal tribes; and through the midst of that valley may be traced the winding line of loftier vegetation which marks the banks of the majestic river in its course towards the lake of Yzabal—a river destined, as the projectors of the Colony fondly hoped, to be the high road of commerce between the eastern coast and the capital, and which had already been navigated by the Company's smaller steamer, the light and graceful *Pelichiquito*.

Wonderful and adorable is the providence of God which led a wandering outcast to traverse the Atlantic, and first changing his destination, and then his heart and objects, now brought him, by means of the same unchastened enterprise with which he had before madly connected himself, into a field of usefulness which, under other circumstances, God's people would not have dared to attempt! The charter of the Company secured the fullest religious liberty to the colonists, Spanish as well as English. Bibles could be freely introduced without inquisitorial examination or legal obstructions;

but all this was only introductory, and to myself proved a preparatory school both of endurance and for more extended labours.

The colonists who composed the bulk of the little community at Boca Nueva were very little, if anything, superior, in a moral point of view, to those who had mutinied on board the *Britannia*. Among them were German labourers, English artizans, French roués, and a mixed medley of Irish soldiery, Portuguese peasants, and Belize settlers. Besides these, there were a few Ladino families, one of them the original inhabitants of the place, the rest had been attracted by the free expenditure of the Company's funds; and sometimes there were employed as labourers, as many as a hundred or more Indians from Cajabon and from Tierra Caliente (*hot lands*, a region to the north and west of Abbottsville). Among all these, the grossest immoralities prevailed, and the most profane language was common. A very few addresses on their spiritual concerns sufficed to scatter the little congregation which was first brought together under official influence, and indirectly "by authority." The very parties who were thus willing to uphold an appearance of religion were themselves flagrantly outraging the laws of God, and were soon among the bitterest enemies and opposers of the truth. The Company's school was scarcely better attended than the meetings, and amidst much scorn and malice, which often took an active form of expression, accompanied with considerable bodily suffering, I was enabled to continue labouring in this narrow sphere, and earnestly pursuing my studies in comparative seclusion.

The almost entire failure of the means used in favour of the European colonists led me to direct my attention more particularly to the natives and to their children, without, however, ceasing my efforts for the former. I had commenced learning the Spanish language; and long before I could venture to speak it myself I obtained some Spanish scholars, and profited greatly by their reading in the New Testament, in which I exercised them continually. In a few months I was enabled to read the Spanish Scriptures to their parents in their own cottages, and before the expiration of two years I ventured to read the Bible publicly in the *cabildo* to the Spaniards, and gradually added some words of remark.

The little colony, which was paralyzed for want of industry, and

undermined by many kinds of wickedness, was several times convulsed by intestine commotions, and was the theatre of more than one deed of blood. Many of the natives who were attracted to it were of such a description that other towns and villages were benefited by their absence; and not a few had been outlawed by their local magistrates, who possess the power to banish troublesome vagrants, without regard to the mischief they may do elsewhere. By the third year many of the colonists had wandered away, and were scattered abroad. The Company's funds also began to fail, and there was little prospect of their fulfilling the terms they had agreed to, though the time specified in their charter had been prolonged more than once.

Anxious to improve the opportunity for Scripture distribution, the Auxiliary Bible Society at Belize had kept me well supplied with Spanish Bibles and New Testaments, in addition to a considerable stock which had been granted to the late chaplain for the use of the colonists. Many of these I found means of circulating, and supplied visitors from the interior, who often became purchasers, and even took with them a dozen or so of copies as a deposit for sale in their places of residence. I thus obtained several correspondents; and, to my surprise, there were no less than three Romish priests among them who had purchased copies for distribution, and were aiding me in this good work. Subsequently, the Auxiliary Society paid my travelling expenses into some of the neighbouring towns, and helped me to the purchase of a horse for this purpose. In two or three cases I was enabled to introduce the New Testament as a class book into the native schools; and in one instance some attention had been drawn towards the Scriptures by the violent opposition of the Padre Rojas, a priest at Salama, who finding the books in the hands of the children in that town, greatly stormed, and declared he would send one of them to the Provisor, the head of the ecclesiastical court. By the spontaneous interference of the Corregidor, the chief magistrate, he was, however, forced to restore the copy which he had illegally abstracted from the school; and that functionary himself took charge of the books, which he afterwards distributed amongst his private friends.

Though quite deprived of religious communion with man, and subjected to many trials arising out of the character and habits of my neighbours, who thought it strange that I would not join in

their carousings, I was not left without solace in this moral wilderness. The deeply-shaded recesses of "the bush," as the English Creoles term the forest, and the wild banks of the Boca Nueva, afforded retreats where I might enjoy my own reflections, and hold sweet communion with my God. These favourite haunts at times re-echoed with grateful praises and earnest prayers for the poor Indians, the Ladinos, and my fellow-colonists, where only the bush fowl, and other inhabitants of the jungle, were startled by my voice.

In the visible fruits of my labours among the people, I had small encouragement; yet even in this respect I was not entirely destitute, as the following case will show:—

Juana Mendia was a girl of only twelve years of age, but of full stature and womanly development. She was of almost unmixed Indian descent, and her countenance—notwithstanding her dark copper-coloured complexion—was singularly pleasing. Her profuse black curly locks were usually intertressed with bright ribbons, after the manner of her class, whose whole costume is generally becoming and graceful, and in her case appeared to peculiar advantage. There was a wild decision mingled with a cheerful animation in the glance of her eye, which indicated superiority of natural parts, in addition to more than ordinary personal attractions. But Juana had been trained up in ignorance and vice. Her mother and sisters were loose characters. Her step-father was a drunkard and a murderer;* and, even at that early age, report indicated that Juana was soon likely to outstrip them all in wickedness.

One night after reading to my wife rather longer than ordinary, I had closed the book and noticed that the hour was unusually late. Our door had long been carefully shut, for we had more than once seen the footprints of the prowling panther and its cubs very near the threshold. Our house, being the last in the colony, was upon the very borders of the clearance. About retiring to

* This man was known to have killed several, and he had well nigh added me to the number on a then recent occasion, when I attempted to disarm him of his long knife, with which he was threatening several, among whom were the Alcalde and his assistants, who were armed with rapiers, and who had already wounded him in the head, and covered him with his own blood. I succeeded in pinioning his elbows from behind; but as none of the numerous bystanders took advantage of the position, we both fell to the ground, and before I could rise I had received a stab in my back, which must have proved fatal had it been but a very little deeper.

rest, we were startled by a loud rapping at the door. It was the well-known voice of the Señor Alcalde, who answered to my inquiry; and the bolts being speedily drawn, he entered, leading in, or almost dragging by her arm, Juana Mendia. They were followed by a crowd of well-known pale and sable faces, all made equally lustrous in the glare of the pitch-pine torchlight. One of the ministros (assistants) of the magistrate held in his arms a heavy log of wood, with a chain and shackle appended, which I recognised as a clog such as I had seen criminals, who were suffered to be at large, dragging at their ankles. The reason of this untimely visit was soon explained. A brawl had taken place, and on account of Juana, knives had been unsheathed, and foul work was likely to result. The Señor Alcalde had interfered, and as the girl was under age, in virtue of his official prerogative, he felt it his duty to place her depositada (in deposit) with any citizen householder who would be answerable for her good conduct. If no one willing should be found, the other alternative was, that the clog should be chained to her leg, and she employed to sweep the streets—if indeed the rugged road between the thatched cottages inhabited by the colonists might be dignified by that name. In a short conference with my wife, carried on in a language which the bystanders could not understand, I found that she was unwilling to receive her. I briefly urged, that by consenting for the time mischief might be prevented, an opportunity would be afforded for angry passions to subside; and might not the hand of the Lord be in it for the good of this poor young creature? To this reasoning, which she afterwards recalled, she yielded. Juana, in a paroxysm of violence, and stamping with her foot, exclaimed, “Ponganme la cadena. No me quedo aqui.” (Put the chain on me. I will not remain here.) The Alcalde and his attendants, however, withdrew. Her passion was shortly succeeded by tears; and, being somewhat calmed, a mosquito-net was hung up in the hall for her use, and each agitated bosom was soon soothed in sleep.

The following morning, on reflecting, we felt that we had undertaken a delicate charge, and a task of some difficulty, and I sought the Lord's direction in prayer respecting it. By the law of the land we would be entitled to Juana's services without remuneration: but, as we were in want of a servant, she was kindly and firmly told, that if she would alter her conduct, and cheerfully perform

the duties assigned her, she should have full wages; but that the very first return to her former life would be followed by her instant dismissal, let the consequences be what they might.

At the hour when I rang the school bell, her younger brother and sister, together with three or four German, Ladino, and Indian children, came as usual to be taught. At the reading lesson, Juana was called, and stood up with the rest in the little class. She could read fluently, having been taught at home when much younger; but she had never read in the scriptures before, nor had she ever had her lessons explained to her. A New Testament was given to her, and the same number of verses to be repeated by heart on the next day, were required,—a little reward book being offered to her as to the rest, should she learn more than the assigned task. That day Juana performed her household work so as to please her mistress, and a word of advice and encouragement to continue to do well was becomingly received. For days her steady industry was sustained and even increased, and though Juana frequently wept over her work, at other times she was cheerful, her New Testament was often open by her side in the kitchen, or when sewing at the feet of her mistress, and her memory being good, she could soon repeat several chapters.

Some weeks rolled on, and Juana was still assiduous at her task, whether in the house or in the little school. When she went daily for water to the purest neighbouring stream, she filled her tinaja (a large earthen jar) poised it upon her head, and came directly home, or if she turned aside, it was to salute her relatives, and quickly return. The neighbours began to wonder, and spoke to each other on her altered mien and behaviour, and her mother came to thank us, and to express her delight and astonishment at the marvellous improvement which she observed.

In the class, her attention and replies were no less pleasing to her teacher. She longed, she said, to be one of the lambs borne on the shoulders of the great Shepherd into the heavenly fold, and expressed her willingness to be led to Him. One day that my own bodily sufferings had brought the subject of death vividly before my mind, I made it the theme of the lesson. "Which of us who are here," enquired I, "is likely to be the first victim?" Juana at once pointed out her brother, who was a spare and delicate boy. Though impressed with the idea that it was likely to be myself, I

reminded her that her robust health was no pledge of life, and that it was as likely to be her. The event proved that this warning was prophetic.

Antonio de la Cruz, a youth of scarce nineteen, was the eldest son of a respectable Ladino widow. He was employed in the care of cattle, and was already a good hand at flinging the Lazo.* Willing to improve himself, with a few others, he attended an adult evening class, to learn to write, and to read in the Bible. Since Juana had been with us, Antonio had seldom missed his evening lesson. One afternoon her mistress directed Juana to proceed into the borders of the forest, to gather wild pot herbs. She soon returned in a state of excitement. Antonio had followed, and would have detained her, but she had fled from him. Disappointed and enraged, the wicked youth spread a foul report in the village, which soon reached Juana's ears, and caused her the most poignant grief. Assured of the young man's guilt, a complaint was immediately laid with the Alcalde, and to avoid the penalty of his malicious slander, Antonio absented himself from his home. Notwithstanding every effort to soothe her, that night Juana wept herself to sleep, and was agitated in her slumbers. The next morning she awoke with a burning fever, the second day she was delirious, the third she was a corpse.

A few hours previous to her departure the delirium left her, and a precious opportunity was afforded for conversation. "Juana," said I, "You will soon die, are you ready to meet God?" "I am a very wicked sinner," she replied with evident emotion. "Do you think God can pardon you?" "I fear I am too wicked," was her reply. I then spoke of the Saviour, of whom I had often spoken to her before, and drew from her some expressions of hope and resignation. She could forgive Antonio more easily than she could believe her own offences blotted out; but she did assent to the declaration of the Saviour's love and substitution for her, and when her shortening breath precluded a reply, a smile of placid joy

* This is a very long thong, cut out of an entire raw hide, and well twisted and grased, so as to become smooth and pliable. Of this a noose is made at one end, the other extremity being made fast to the tail of the horse, the rider, whose business it is to catch half wild cattle in the Savannas or the pine-ridge, overtakes the fugitive, and nimbly throws the Lazo over its horns. The well trained horse at once spreads out his legs the better to sustain the shock, and the captured animal is then driven before the rider by a goad fastened to a long stick.

played upon her countenance, and was arrested there by death's cold seal. Her teacher, when he perceived that he could do no more, retired from the side of her couch, giving place to her relatives and some superstitious friends, who muttered their *Christians* incantations in her closed ears, and then removed her stiffened corpse to be waked with frantic noises and gestures.

On reflecting upon this affecting event, I concluded that Juana had been removed from the evil to come. The change in her behaviour had been complete. The cause of her death proved the susceptibility of her mind to a charge, to which but a little before she would have been quite callous. The expressions of her lips, and of her last looks, though feeble in themselves, appeared enough to warrant the conclusion, that Juana Mendia was the first fruits unto God of my feeble labours, on behalf of the natives of Central America.

During that night, the deluded people assembled in a wretched hovel, and consumed a large quantity of native rum. Under its influence they shouted, wept, laughed, and prayed alternately. One of the old women who had been most active in repeating the death charms, now severely burned her naked feet by leaping upon a pile of blazing fuel, which others were content to leap over, for which purpose it had apparently been kindled on the clay floor of the house: and thus they continued till the dawn of the unconscious morning.

There being no priest at hand, I was requested by the parents of the deceased to officiate at the funeral, and I consented to address them at the grave. With unassuming decorum, a numerous train accompanied the rude coffin into the forest shade. The Campo Santo (holy field), to which the natives were pleased to apply the name usually given to their cemeteries, though it had no claim to the distinction of consecrated ground, had been cleared two years before, when the colony was first formed; but it was now grown over with bushy underwood, and even shaded with young trees, that excluded the sun's rays far above our heads. Here, where the foot of man had but lately trodden—a soil from which the Jaguar and the Cougar were not excluded, a few of England's exiles—convicts of penury and vice—lay mouldering beneath the soil. Here, around the open grave of Juana, the attendants scattered and half-concealed from each other by the teeming vegetation, was I permitted to preach the Gospel of the Son of God to a larger Spanish

congregation than I had yet addressed ; some of whom had never heard the Gospel before, and may possibly never hear it again, though they should be spared to old age. Not a stone marks the spot in the now forsaken district where the remains of Juana Mendis were deposited. The cross of wood which her parents erected is decayed ere this. The vestiges of a former clearance will soon be undiscernible. Already the ground is trodden by the fierce Tapir, and traversed by large droves of waree. The coarse shrill shriek of the gaudy macaw, or the deep melancholy tones of the ringdove's note, are uninterrupted by the sound of the woodman's axe or the thunder of the falling tree. But the circumstances of Juana's death are as indestructible as memory, and it is fondly hoped that the last day will reveal that her conversion was as real as the truth of the Gospel itself, which, to all appearance, was the instrument employed to produce it.

When the colonists had almost all left Abbottsville, and it became apparent that the Company would fail to fulfil the conditions of their charter, the neighbouring priests, who had heard with uneasiness some reports of my limited efforts among the people speaking the Spanish language, began to take steps to interrupt them. The curate of Tamaju, who, though the nearest of them, resided at a distance of nearly two days' journey, chose to consider the forsaken colony within the limits of his parish, and therefore took the initiative by writing to the Provisor at Guatemala, giving a report of the heretical and disorderly doings of "El Padre Protestante" (the Protestant Father). Soon after, the Alcaldes of the various places in the district were instructed to prevent all Scripture reading, either publicly in the Cabildo, where I had for some time preached in the Spanish language every Lord's-day, or privately from house to house ; so that I was reduced to the necessity of confining my teaching to my own dwelling. Even here their vigilance followed the few people who desired to hear the Word, and Juana's mother and others were threatened and persecuted for attending my instructions. Rumours of worse measures with respect to myself were also repeatedly brought to my ears, and I could not hope much longer to hold my ground.

Such was the posture of affairs in August 1843, when I received intimation from Mr. Henderson at Belize, that he had projected a station for me on the Mosquito Shore, and recommended my

leaving Vera Paz. Mr. Henderson, who reported me to the Society as occupying a sub-station in connection with the mission church, had assisted me from the funds of the Society, when the Company's resources had failed to supply my salary as schoolmaster. Without this assistance I must have suffered want, and perhaps would have been compelled to leave. I was not, however, anxious to form a permanent pecuniary connection with the Society, preferring to support myself by teaching, with the help of a plantation, should that be required. I had conceived the hope that the Lord would direct me to some place in the interior, where I might labour for His kingdom in this manner, and where my knowledge of the Spanish language would be available. And should I be compelled to leave, I was particularly anxious not to take out of the country a goodly number of Spanish Scriptures and tracts which had been introduced under the auspices of the Company, and still remained in my hands. Having already met with encouragement in previous journeys, I now conceived the project of attending the grand fair held at Salama, the Cabacera of Vera Paz, on the 20th of September, in order to dispose of them to the multitudes assembled there. The Auxiliary Committee approved of the proposal, and forwarded another box of books to increase my stock.

Four days before the fair I left Abbottsville, accompanied by four Indian bearers, each laden with more than a hundred weight of books, myself mounted upon a hired mule, my own horse having been stolen. After the usual vicissitudes of the mountain path, we arrived on the fifth day at Salama. The fair was in full activity. My first step was to visit the Señor Corregidor, and inform him of my presence and object. I had already presented him with a handsomely bound Bible, containing the Vulgate text and Spanish translation. He was pleased to receive me kindly, though not without a smile at the nature of my business. He was a military man of intelligence, a partizan of the liberals, and a personal friend of General Carrera. I now returned to the house of Don Sinforoso Chacon, a friend who had long had a deposit of Scriptures in his store, and where I had left my boxes. This person took me into the midst of the throng, and introduced me to Don Jacinto Masariegos, a wealthy relative, who at once supplied me with a suitable stand in a street of low uniform shops, so placed as to cut off a portion of the Plaza, or market-place, upon which the doors opened

at the back, thus placing me in the very centre of the fair, for which he afterwards refused any remuneration. In a very short time I was garnishing the empty shelves with Bibles, Testaments, and many Spanish publications of the Religious Tract Society, and then standing behind my counter, which separated me from the street, and calling the attention of the numerous passers by to my unknown wares.* I had been careful to fix the price as low as possible, barely covering the original cost of the Scriptures, so as to place them within reach of the poorest. A stall exclusively of books of any kind was a novelty in the country, and though they could see nothing else in mine, I was frequently asked for articles of merchandize and warlike weapons, to which I invariably replied by presenting the Bible, as the best possession and the best defence.

On the first day, little was done besides exciting astonishment, and conversing upon religious topics with a few. The following day the sales commenced, and the comparative cheapness of the New Testament, added to the desire which exists for books, soon gave an activity to the business which gladdened my heart. Among the purchasers were some uncouth looking Indians from Los Altos,—the Highland districts about Quesaltenango,—clothed in coarse woollen stuffs of their own manufacture. Doubting if they could read, I put them to the proof, and thus obtained oracular demonstration of the remaining fruits of those schools, which were established by Las Casas just three centuries ago. The third day the fair began to be filled with persons with books and tracts in their hands, and the neighbouring Curates, who had some knowledge of my former efforts, and who were drawn together by the occasion, passed and repassed before the shop, eyeing it askance, when they were not taken up with their masses and processions.

I had reason to believe that some of the conversations which had been held were reported to them, if the parties were not expressly sent for the purpose. At the same time, the Curate of the place laid a complaint with the Corregidor, that I was circulating heretical books, which are prohibited by the Pope, and requesting his

* During the fair a shock of earthquake occurred. My attention was suddenly arrested by a sharp rattling among the tiles over my head, and without much consciousness of the cause, I soon found myself standing with my neighbours in the middle of the street. How I got over the counter was a matter of subsequent speculation. The shock having passed off, we returned to our own business somewhat impressed with the instability of earthly things.

interference. The magistrate had little favour towards the priests, but being pressed, and perhaps fearing their influence, he at length sent his secretary to request me, as a personal favour, to put up the front shutters of my shop, and continue my sales with less publicity. Aware of the critical nature of the circumstances, and glad to be permitted to continue my sales at all, I complied with this request, though not a little chagrined at the interruption, but well assured that this was the path of duty. It was easy for me to ask those who came to the front to pass round to the back door, which opened upon the plaza, and I soon found that the dealers with whom I thus came into closer contact, bought up the books by the dozen, with a view of retailing them again at three or four times the price which they paid me for them. Thus the books would be scattered far and wide, where I could not expect to convey them, and it may be, that some would be taken to other fairs, to be sold in a more private manner by the natives themselves.

On the Sunday, which was the great day of the fair, I refused to sell at all, and contented myself with reading to those who were willing to hear, and giving away a few tracts. This I did for the sake of example. The sales of Monday were about double those of any previous day. The priests, who were on the *qui vive*, and watched me closely, continued to assail the Corregidor with complaints, that I was still sowing my tares among their wheat, and to oblige them, he again sent his secretary to say, that I must now cease selling altogether. To this I replied, that I was anxious to oblige the Señor Corregidor, as I had shown; but if he wished me to understand this as an official order, he must please to send it to me in writing and in due form, which if he did, I should certainly lay my complaint before the Supreme Government at the capital, as I was not aware that I had transgressed any law of the land; but claimed a right to sell my wares, as well as any other vender at the fair. This reply gave me a little more time, as the written order was not forthcoming till late on the following day, when the fair was fast drawing to a close.

Had I been left alone, it is not unlikely, after disposing of the rest of my books, that I should have returned to Belize, and, perhaps, have abandoned Guatemala altogether. As it was, I now felt it my duty to carry out my threat, and prove whether or not the civil powers would consent to please the priests by hin-

dering the circulation of the Scriptures. I therefore packed up the remainder of my stock, which had been reduced to about one-third, and after receiving the written order, scrupulously refused to sell a single copy, though earnestly solicited to do so, with promises of secrecy. I was not, however, forbidden to give them away. Having written to Mr. Henderson and to my wife, the next morning early I mounted my mule and left Salama for the capital, taking with me a few books as samples, and enough of tracts and pocket New Testaments to furnish my holsters with. I had now no guides, and I had never yet travelled this road, nor, I suppose, any other European before me in the same lonely and unarmed manner, and certainly not on any mission of the same description. It is usual for travellers to have one servant at least, and that both servants and master should be well supplied with blunderbusses, pistols, sabres, poignards, and sometimes revolving many-barrelled fire-arms: nor do they then feel secure, but endeavour to associate themselves with other parties. Not having contemplated so long a journey, I should have been without the means of accomplishing it but for the proceeds of the sales at the fair; nor did I know whither this step would lead me: but my mind was clear as to the duty, and I felt I could trust all else to Him who had guided my steps thither. After four more days of hard riding, more than one kind and hospitable entertainment by the way, and sometimes using my saddle for a pillow, I arrived at Guatemala.

Not knowing who was worthy, and having no letters of recommendation to any one in the city, I took up my *posada* (resting place) at the *Mezon de Cordova*, among itinerant traders and market people. My first visit was to the British Consul-General, Mr. Chatfield, who received me courteously, and promised to attend to the business which had brought me to the capital, recommending me to leave it entirely in his hands. I also saw some of the functionaries of State, and presented copies of my books to Don Mariano Rivera Paz, who was then *Gefe Politico*, or chief minister of state, and associated in the government with the Marquis of Aycinena, a Servile and a priest. Having done this, I awaited the result of the Consul's remonstrances. In the mean time, I made it my business to form acquaintances in the capital, and to make my object generally known especially to public and influential men

who might aid its attainment, some of whom were in power, and gave me much encouragement. Providence directed me to a suitable lodging in the house of Don Antonio Baldez, a native merchant of credit, and of decidedly liberal opinions. My religious principles were very frequently the subject of conversation; and my arrival in Guatemala soon produced a more than ordinary sensation in a place where every foreign resident is well known, and every visitor is a marked object of attention. Among other places to which the obliging civility of the natives introduced me, was the university of San Carlos, where I one day found myself seated among the students of a theological class, listening to comments on the Latin text of the Vulgate, made by a learned Dominican friar, dressed in white flannel robes; and shortly afterwards, standing in the cloisters of that building with a group of the same students round me, freely discussing the doctrines which we had heard.

The correspondence which the British Consul and the authorities had commenced on the subject of the free sale of the Scriptures, was exceedingly tedious, and assumed a controversial character which promised little results. From my intercourse with Mr. Chatfield, I gathered that he would be glad if I would leave the capital and permit him to manage the business at his leisure. On the other hand, the authorities led me to believe that if I would take the matter into my own hands they would speedily grant me the liberty that I sought, and of which I began to think of availing myself very extensively. My judgment inclined me to adopt the latter proposal; and a petition was presented, in which, at the suggestion of the person who drew it up, I stated myself to be a native of Belgium (a fact which, though it may appear contradictory, does not really affect my rights as a British subject, upon which the interference of the British Consul was grounded). By this petition, the question came before the Government divested of any national or personal influence, and rested upon its own intrinsic merits, to which the persons at the head of affairs had promised to do justice. Instead of this, however, being rid of the Consul's somewhat weighty importunity, they put me off from time to time, no doubt thinking to exhaust my patience, and thus rid themselves of the disagreeable necessity of a decision either for or against—the common dilemma of all neutral parties and mixed administrations.

Time was rolling on, resources were limited, and the patience of friends as well as of foes was exhausted, still I felt it my duty to persevere in attendance at the offices of Government, and always returned precisely when they told me with provoking punctuality, so as at length actually to wear out the extreme courteousness of the high officials. Finding that I would have a decision, they turned over the books that I had brought to the Ecclesiastical Cabildo for examination, and a further delay occurred. I still pursued my system of private agitation, and took the liberty to address letters to the Provisor, the head of the court entrusted with the examination of the books, in order if possible to accelerate their speed. It was some months ere they had read through the Bible, and about forty—some of them voluminous, but the greater part brief—publications of the British and Foreign Tract Society, an exercise which they could scarcely perform without deriving some measure of personal advantage.

At length their report was handed in, and the Supreme Government was graciously pleased to forward to me a document by which I was authorised freely to sell or circulate *four* of the smaller tracts, the titles of which were specified, and strange to say one of the number was a *recommendation to read the Scriptures in the vulgar tongue*, by Dr. Villa Nueva, who makes use of the writings of the Fathers by numerous quotations to enforce this anti-popish duty. No part of the Sacred Scriptures were, however, included in the permission, and immediately afterwards that point was decided in an ecclesiastical sense by the promulgation of an edict, prohibiting the reading or even the possession of Bibles, said to be deficient, interpolated, and falsified. This edict, which is voluminous,* contains long extracts from Papal Bulls *regulating* the reading of the Bible, and placing the liberty to do so under the control of a Father Confessor. It requires all who have any of the Scriptures or other books introduced from England to give them up to their priests upon pain of excommunication, and attaches the same penalty, extending

* It is to be regretted that by reason of his sudden expulsion, which prevented him from bringing away any of his papers, the author is obliged to depend upon his memory only in describing this instrument, and other documents and events relating to his residence in Guatemala. This reason also precludes exactitude as to dates, &c. during this period.

to the sixth remove, to any one indulging in conversation on religious topics with the Protestant heretic who had circulated them.* One passage of the edict was of a character to excite the ignorant fanaticism of Popish devotees to an act of public violence, or private assassination. It expressed in grandiloquent terms that Socrates was immolated at Athens for depreciating false gods; but here is an individual, says the edict, who scruples not openly to insult the God of heaven and earth, and public jealousy is not awakened.† To this document, which was ordered to be read from the pulpit of every parish church throughout the diocese after the celebration of the next high mass, was appended a catalogue of books prohibited by the Church, thus placing the Word of God in juxta-position with the histories of the Popes and other contaminating writings of infidels and obscene jesters.

On the first Sabbath upon which this edict was publicly read at Guatemala, I was as usual spending the time in the retirement of my room, when I received a visit from two intelligent young lawyers, with whom I had a slight acquaintance. I was surprised at this interruption, as it was generally known that on this the great visiting day I received no visitors but such as came to converse on religious subjects; accordingly these gentlemen began by introducing a religious topic themselves, and led me on to express my opinion on the favourite dogmas of the Romish church, which I was accustomed to do with all freedom. When we had talked for about half an hour they rose to leave; and begging to be excused for the intrusion, they stated that they had come direct from the Cathedral where they had just heard the edict read, and they hoped I would pardon their anxiety to be the very first to incur the penalty of excommunication-major, which they were now about to spread far and wide. Such was not, however, the effect produced upon all minds. Some of the Beatas and Terceras now began to cross themselves when they passed me in the streets, and many thought my life in jeopardy. Some of the parties at Salama and other places who had Scriptures and good books gave them up to their priests. Others, however, and

* Any one talking with me, and then conversing with others who should speak on the same subjects to a third party, that one to a fourth, and so on to the sixth, were declared under the influence of the *greater* excommunication.

† "¡ Y no se dispierta el zelo publico!"

these were the most intelligent, immediately sought to obtain copies, and not a few Bibles and Testaments which had lain neglected in merchants' stores and upon book-shelves, were now dusted, handled, and attentively read. Indeed, the proclamation of the edict was the first notice that hundreds had ever yet had of the existence of the Bible, and it was probably the very best mode of general advertisement which could possibly have been devised or adopted. Chagrined as I had felt, I was enabled to rejoice on observing and reflecting upon its practical operation, as one of the greatest difficulties, viz., to arouse the minds of the people to the importance of the book, was in a great measure secured.

With the present Archbishop, who was then only newly nominated to the See, I had had more than one interview about the object of my solicitude. To him I now addressed a somewhat lengthy remonstrance in reply to the edict, in which among other things I complained of the parallel in which I was disadvantageously placed with the illustrious Socrates, which I took the liberty of interpreting, together with the intelligent natives themselves, as an incentive to tumult and crime.

Some of the students, who had induced me to attend their theological classes several times, had themselves sought conferences with me at my lodgings, until the professors and rulers of the University heard of it, and it was strictly forbidden. Still I had occasional opportunities of conversing with them, and some were afterwards supplied with Spanish Bibles, only a few having access to ponderous Latin editions with voluminous notes.

Many applications being made for the Scriptures before the edict was published, I had sent to Salama for some of those which had remained after the fair. When the box arrived, an embargo was laid upon it at the custom-house by order of the Provisor; and though this was an illegal exercise of priestly influence, I could not obtain possession of the books.*

One Lord's-day morning, my privacy was again invaded by a visit from a well-dressed gentleman, with a huge Spanish cloak on, and bearing a silver-headed cane. He politely informed me that he was a public officer, and had been entrusted with the painful duty of communicating to me an order from the authorities, which

* Mr. Chatfield procured the restitution of this box, which was said to have been destroyed, in 1847, after the author's expulsion from the State.

he put into my hands. It was a brief and peremptory document, requiring me to leave the city and the State within three days, without assigning a cause, on the pretext of the well-being of the public, and signed by the Corregidor of Guatemala. I replied by writing at the foot of the order, that, until I was convicted of some infraction of the laws, I could not think of obeying such a mandate. I as politely returned it to him, and, according to the usual requirements of civility, accompanied him to the street-door, fully admitting his numerous apologies. This man was a Teniente de Policia, or lieutenant of police, such as are employed in arresting criminals of all descriptions. He was accompanied by two Corchetes, a lower grade of police, who carry drawn swords in their hands, and whom he had very considerably left outside the door of the house. The amiable family with whom I was residing were much alarmed, and the neighbours were drawn in to inquire the cause, and to express their condolence by the unusual sight of the emissaries of justice at the gate of so peaceable a residence. I determined to remain quiet, if no violence should be attempted, till the following morning, when I presented myself before the chief authorities, who professed to have no knowledge of the matter. Mr. Chatfield, also, being duly informed, addressed them on the subject, and it was found that the order had emanated from a subordinate quarter, not qualified to issue it, and the matter fell to the ground.

In reporting progress to the Auxiliary at Belize, I had led the friends there to participate in my own sanguine hopes of success with the Government. I had also in process of time sent them a copy of the edict, and of the permission to sell four of the tracts. This was of course a sad disappointment to them, as it seemed to preclude all hopes of further direct efforts for Scripture circulation in that State. The Committee of the Auxiliary had paid me the full amount of my allowance at the rate of 50*l.* a year and my travelling expenses. They now resolved upon suspending their agency in the interior, and made no provision for my return. Mr. Henderson, who had kindly continued to supply my wife with the means of subsistence at Abbottsville during my long absence, now wrote, urging my speedy return to Belize. But, however willing I might have been to comply with this advice, the means were wanting; and that line of action I appeared by the circumstances

absolutely precluded from choosing, though the difficulties before me were great whichever way I turned.

During nine months' residence, while the unequal struggle with priestly influence was going on, I had become somewhat acquainted with the capital, and had already a large circle of acquaintances there, among whom I might hope to exercise a salutary influence. My project of supporting myself by teaching was not lost sight of, and there seemed a possibility of doing so here. Some persons were desirous that I should remain, and promised me their children to teach; and though I had thought a retired spot more suitable, I had found practically that I could contend with the enemies of the truth more effectually in their own lair than at a distance from the capital. Much practice in the Spanish language had given me greater facility in it. And, besides all this, my health, which for five years had been very precarious, and lately seemed to threaten a speedy dissolution, when I resided on the low lands near the coast, had wonderfully improved at Guatemala, so that I had ceased to expectorate blood, and had recovered some of my former physical energy. In short, I began seriously to entertain the thought of at least attempting to settle myself at Guatemala. But how to get my wife there I knew not; and when I mentioned the matter by letter to Mr. Henderson, to whom I looked up as to a father, he utterly discouraged what he considered the rash attempt.

In my perplexity, I opened my mind freely to my kind host, Don Antonio, to whom I owed a small sum for board, which was one of the most pressing sources of my trouble. As soon as I named the project of fixing my residence in the capital, he at once proposed that I should repay him in the tuition of his children, and was quite willing that I should go and fetch my wife. To get to her would take me full eight days' journey with a good beast, and, without money, that was no small difficulty; but to bring a timid female who could not ride over the mountains such a distance appeared an Herculean undertaking, even with superabundant funds. My duty, however, was now clear. I determined to go and fetch her, and consequently sent to the Potrero, or grazing estate, for the mule which had brought me to Guatemala, the hire of which had been unavoidably accumulating. As a climax to my difficulties, when the poor animal was brought, it

was in such a plight that it became a doubtful question whether it could endure the journey home without a rider. It had evidently been left to graze upon the roots of what had been green grass during the wet season ; but the spot where it once grew had long been converted into a scorched plain of red clay and pebbles, by the complete dry season of the table land. So pitiable was the aspect of the poor creature, that my host scouted the idea of my leading it by the bridle ; and it was evident that he would have felt his dignity lowered by being found in its company, even for a moment. It was no use to think of feeding it well and awaiting the slow process of its recovery. I had made up my mind ; delay could only increase my troubles ; I resolved to execute the journey on foot ; and if the mule died I would see the last of her. Cheered by the bare prospect, however remote, of reaching home, I put the saddle upon the poor brute, which of itself seemed an act of cruelty, and with more than usual good spirits prepared to start. My host, who was watching me, came into the patio, and begged that I would put off my departure. I represented how useless such a delay would be, and continued my little preparations. Again he came to me, entreating that I would defer it at least one day, and finding I was still determined, he generously engaged to provide me with a beast for the journey. Through his kindness, I was enabled to start the next morning, well mounted on a horse of my own, and with a sum of fifty dollars in my wallet towards the expenses of our removal from the colony to the capital. The debilitated mule was made fast to the tail of the horse I rode, and both were entirely dependent upon my attention and care.

Thus, aided and encouraged, I retraced my steps through Vera Paz, in May 1844. At Salama the former curate had been replaced by another, who had politely invited me at any time to make his convento my posada. This invitation, to his evident surprise, I now accepted ; and as it happened to be a vigil, or fast, I freely partook of his mess of pulse, over which we seriously discussed our doctrinal differences, and I spent a night under his roof. The next day I resumed my journey towards Abbottsville, where I arrived safely with the mule, and found the street overgrown with bushes taller than myself, and the frail houses rapidly falling upon the cows and swine which had taken possession of most of them. My

only business was to prepare for our departure. The night before we took our final leave of the deserted colony, our own kitches fell with a heavy crash, and the pretty English cottage in which we had spent three years was soon as desolate as the rest. The few natives who then remained have since died or left the place, a wilderness more dreary far than before the criminal and tragic scenes of the English colony were enacted there.

The difficulties of this journey, which I was so providentially assisted to undertake, were still considerable. The rainy season had set in. My wife, who was too timid to ride, was carried by Indians in a large arm chair, which I had carefully covered with matting; one of the bearers, staff in hand, sustaining the whole weight by a strap passing over his forehead, while another, ready to release or assist him, trotted by his side. The horse which had been stolen from me, I recovered in good condition while on the way, and it served for a female attendant who waited upon my wife. Twelve Indians were laden with my household stuff, which we had no way of disposing of at the colony for want of purchasers. The covered chair, which I closely followed at a walking pace, generally led the van, the rest followed in a long line, and thus we wended our way along the rugged mountain path, over crag and precipice, crossing plains, passing over high mountains, and through rich valleys; sometimes following the bed or the margin of a rocky torrent, completely shaded by a variety of tall trees, for many hours, ever and anon fording small streams, and now and then passing rivers which were barely fordable, and were well calculated by the roar of the water, and the trembling steps of the muscular Indian bearer, to excite the utmost terror and alarm in the mind of the European female he was carrying. All the first part of the road, if such it may be called, lay through the deepest forest shade, and consisted of a narrow winding foot-path but lately opened, scarcely cleared from encumbrances and protruding branches, and frequently invaded by the luxuriant underwood which was rapidly closing in on every side. Small clear streams and rivulets intersected the path almost every three or four hundred yards, or oftener, constantly wetting the feet of the Indians and the horses. The sounds most commonly heard were the screams and notes of the wild bush birds, and the deafening hum of the chicharra.*

* To this little but noisy insect may be traced the origin of the word *humm-bug*.

At the pass called La Hamaca, *the hammock*, we crossed the foaming and deep Polochic on a bejuco, or tie-tie bridge, constructed by the natives entirely of those creeping vines, or natural ropes, which abound in the jungle. It is suspended from tree to tree about thirty feet above the level of the river when most swollen by the rains. The breadth of the stream at this place is perhaps sixty or seventy yards. At every step we took, it shook beneath us as we crept slowly and cautiously along, our feet supported by two or three of the larger bejuocos lashed together with others of the thickness of twine, each hand holding a single one on either side instead of banisters. The space between these three main lines was slightly interlaced with small tie-tie, which united the whole in one, and formed the hammock bridge. The wild scenery of this romantic spot is in perfect unison with the primitive character and singularly wild appearance of the Indian device, from which it derives its name.

The foot of the steep mountain, which we had just slowly descended by a zig-zag road, approaches to within a few score paces of the grassy margin of the river, which rolls rapidly and majestically past a high overhanging rock on the opposite bank. In its fissures, between the masses of stone, some noble trees find sustenance for their roots. It is to two of these that the hammock bridge is made fast by many clumsy turns of the tie-tie rope, the rude descent from which, on that side, winds round the rock by a narrow ledge, and is even more perilous than the frail bridge itself. As soon as the water has laved the foot of the massy cliff, which here confines the stream, it spreads itself, and speedily dividing, forms several verdant islets, upon which the cattle are often carried by the impetuous current, in their ineffectual attempts to swim across the stream. Here the open prospect expands over the wooded valley of the Polochic. Before we reached La Hamaca, the road had gradually been improving. On leaving this spot, where every traveller necessarily pauses, and all the labour of loading, harnessing, and starting is at once renewed and doubled, we entered a shaded, though wide and somewhat better road, lined with green grass, a proof of its having been long and repeatedly cleared, and soon we passed some of the numerous sheds which shelter the crucifix and images of the virgin, all indicative that we had entered a more populous district than that we had left, while trapiches

(sugar-mills)—milpas (cotton-fields)—and frejolars (fields of frejoles, or pulse) were also more abundant and extensive, and the mountain side was more frequently diversified with patches of cultivation, contrasted by the deeper and continuous forest green.

At the Indian villages at which we stopped, we had ample opportunities of noticing the superstition and intemperance which characterize the Indians, and also of witnessing something, and hearing more of the extortions and immoralities of the resident curates. Part of our road now lay over an extensive pine-ridge, which covered the mountains as far as the eye could reach, during more than one of our short day's journeys.

Some months before, when I had traversed this beautiful district, which is comprised in one vast cattle estate, larger than many an English county, the rich pasturage between the clusters of trees was of a bright yellow hue, by reason of the dry weather. This contrasted singularly with the dark green, which the straight and gigantic pines put on at that season. At one lofty summit over which the road passes, these pine-clad mountains are seen to encircle, by several bold ridges, the extensive plains of Salama, and behind them other hills succeed each other in soft undulations, as far as the eye can reach. They then resembled heaps of gold dust, thickly studded with emeralds. This was soon after blackened and scorched by the fire which clears the ground for a new crop of tender grass, and nature gorgeously illuminates the landscape, presenting a night scene of singular beauty. The always green, because well watered plain, itself dotted with extensive haciendas, or farms, is occupied near the centre by the town, with its white-washed buildings and red tiled roofs glistening in the sun. The whole is ever more like a fairy scene than a reality, and had then fixed my astonished and delighted gaze for a longer period than it ever before dwelt upon a way-side prospect. On the present occasion, the various shades of lively green, if less striking, were even more beautiful, and the fresh cool air of the mountain was exhilarating and bracing even at noon-day. After descending from this summit into the hot plains below, we encountered a violent thunder-storm, accompanied by a high wind and torrents of rain, through which we had to travel for several hours.

The consequence was, that my wife was laid up with severe indisposition at Salama, and we were detained there for several

weeks. When she had quite recovered, we started again, and were amongst the first to pass over the Rio Grande de Montagua (formerly the greatest difficulty on the road*), on an iron suspension bridge, imported by the English company, and which had just then been completed.

As I afterwards learned, we were passed on the road, on the first morning soon after leaving Salama, by a Government messenger, who was the bearer of an order to the Corregidor of Vera Paz, to suffer me to proceed no further in the direction of the capital, but to send me back whence I came. This danger was providentially escaped by our starting when we did; and was no doubt the result of a step which I had taken before leaving the capital, informing the municipality of my intention to open a school, a formality required by law. The fact of my detention at Salama had probably reached the capital; but the influence of the priests was once more baffled in their unconstitutional attempts to thwart my plans.

Among my baggage was now included the remnant of Scriptures which had remained at Salama, my own books, and a quantity of school materials, which were essential to my undertaking. These were the subject of painful solicitude, arising out of the fear that I might be entirely deprived of them, which greatly increased as I approached the capital. Some friends whom I consulted had advised me to smuggle them into the city through the ravines, which there were men ready to do for a trifling consideration. This, of course, I rejected, and preferred trusting to the good providence of God. When at length we arrived near the Guarda del Golfo, at once the outer gate of the city and the station of the custom-house, I rode on before, and boldly presented my keys to the officer in charge, requesting him to examine what he pleased, and to let me pass without sending the baggage to the Aduana, as I had nothing that was chargeable with duties. On the bearers coming up, the guarda fixed at once upon a box which contained nothing but Scriptures, probably because it had more the appearance of a case of imported goods. I now feared the worst, and with a trembling hand helped to force open the lid. The guarda

* At this place, when the river was swollen by the rains, there had for many years been only a garrota, i. e. a long cable stretched across the river, to which a kind of seat in a was basket suspended, and the travellers were pulled across, one by one, by means of ropes and pulleys. The sister of the Bishop Viteri lost her life at this place by the breaking of the tackle. She fell into the river, was carried away by the current, and her body was never recovered.

took out a New Testament, and, as he opened it, inquired, "What book is this?" On being told, he added, "Is it the same book that was seized at the custom-house some time since?" I replied that it was. "And wherefore was it seized?" inquired he. "Is it a bad book?" I then told him briefly that it was the best of books, and that it was the enmity of the corrupt heart of man that caused it to be spoken against; adding some words about the anxiety of certain interested parties to keep the book of God out of the hands of the people. Seeing that he was reading some passages, I begged him to accept of the copy which he held in his hand, that he might satisfy himself of its character, and handed another to his son, who was standing by us, that he might learn to read in it. The good man looked at me, and turned over the leaves of the book, seeming to hesitate; meanwhile I lifted up my heart to God. At length he muttered something about the priests, who will not teach the people themselves, and will suffer no one else to do so; and, rising from kneeling upon one knee by the side of the box, which was open in the midst of the road, he directed me to take them in and pass on, thus taking the responsibility upon himself, and dispensing with any further examination of my effects. Half an hour later, the guards received a written order from the authorities to suffer no goods of mine to pass in without sending them to the custom-house. This I afterwards learned, the load of an Indian who had lagged behind the rest having thus fallen into their hands. It consisted, in part, of culinary utensils, together with a small box of my private books, which, though not Scriptures, I had some trouble to get through the Aduana.

When I had thus happily passed the city-gate, my heart filled with gratitude to God, and in the pleasurable anticipation of meeting my kind benefactor Don Antonio Baldez, whom I had parted from about four months before, what was my surprise and disappointment to find his house entirely closed and unoccupied. Leaving my wife in the street before the door with the Indians, I hastened to the house of a relative of Don Antonio's to inquire the cause, and to my grief I learned that he had hastily removed his family into the State of Salvador on account of political matters. I now felt that I was alone in this city, completely destitute of means, having had to dispose of some of our goods by the way in order to accomplish the journey, and uncertain of earthly friends, though there was no doubt as to enemies. My wife and our little

property were at that moment in the street without shelter, and we knew not which way to turn. Divine Providence, however, again appeared for us. Don Juan Antonio Martinez, the uncle of my former host, who gave me the sad intelligence, also put into my hands the key of his nephew's empty house, and bid me use it freely. On leaving him to relieve my wife and discharge the Indians, I was followed by the servants of this worthy merchant with refreshments; and a renewal of former civilities and attentions from many of the natives commenced. Though we remained about a month in this commodious dwelling no rent was received for it, and I was further helped to the use of some necessary furniture.

One of my first steps after our arrival was to proceed to the post-office and inquire if I had any letters. To my surprise and joy I found one from the Secretary of the Honduras Auxiliary Bible Society, announcing that, on the recommendation of Mr. James Thomson, the agent of the Parent Society, the committee had reappointed me to act for them for another year, and consequently enclosed a draft for my expenses. Thus, in an unexpected manner, was I enabled to set about the execution of my plans deliberately and with sufficient means, which the absence of my tried friend had made apparently doubtful. Thus also was my faith in God's providential care strengthened, and I was taught that He who at will dries up one stream is Himself the fountain of every blessing, and can open up many springs even in a dry and thirsty land.

We had not been three days in New Guatemala when I received another order to quit the State. This time it emanated from the chief Minister, and allowed me only three days to get out of the territories of the Republic, a feat which it would be found difficult to accomplish without some application of locomotive power not yet introduced into the country. Again I declared my determination to go only when they should send me, and I once more waited upon the authorities to remonstrate and protest; I also obtained the private intervention of the British Consul, who chose to deny my nationality, and declined to act officially. Other influential friends also moved in my favour. Desirous as they were to frighten and if possible to get rid of me, in order to please the ecclesiastical authorities, it was not thought worth while at that time to employ violence to compass the end, and again the matter fell to the ground.

Knowing that I had introduced a quantity of Bibles, and that I did not feel myself bound by the ecclesiastical edict, the civil authorities sent me an order, requiring that I should neither sell nor give away any copies whatever of the Spanish Scriptures. At this I was much grieved and perplexed, as I felt that I ought to obey the magistrates, and yet when I was applied to for the Word of God I did not feel at liberty to refuse to supply it, having the books in my own possession. These applications were now very frequent, and from persons who seemed anxious to read the books that they might judge for themselves. It occurred to me, however, that whereas they had strictly forbidden me to sell or give away, I was not bound not to *lend* my own Bible to any one that I might wish to accommodate. I therefore became the purchaser of a certain number of volumes, which I placed to my own debit, and carefully wrote my name in each copy, so that, when any one applied, I lent them a Bible, and took note of the circumstance, thus retaining a control over the book, either to resume it, to sell, or to give it away, when I should be more at liberty. This quite relieved my mind, and met the difficulty for the time.

It is a notable circumstance that I did not need to continue this practice many months, before I was entirely relieved, and the free circulation of the Bible became legal in all the country, in spite of the edict. This was secured by the promulgation of a law passed in May 1845,* by the influence of the liberals, who had no thought of the Bible at the time, but merely sought to protect the liberty of the press against the censorship of the clergy. No book was thereafter legally prohibited till a jury of ten *citizens*, chosen by lot, should decide against it by a majority of two-thirds. After this, I received further supplies of Scriptures in small quantities, and regularly supplied the demand.

My first object, after our arrival, was to establish a school. Some of my advisers recommended a select class of scholars, but to this I was averse, feeling that the poor people had the greater need, and therefore the first claim. In my search for a suitable house, I fixed upon one situated in the barrios. The neighbourhood, though poor, was rather more free from Chicherias than the other suburbs, and children seemed to abound. The house itself, being far superior to those around it, was known by the name of Casa de Polanco, having been built by a proprietor and builder of

* See p. 178.

that name for his own residence. Since his death, no one would hire it because of the danger and ill repute of the barrios in general. The large hall which I made my school-room had, however, been generally used for revelries and debauch, and more than one murder had been committed within it. For these reasons the rent was unusually low, and I judged it most suitable for my object. Having removed, we were careful not to go out or open our doors after dark; frequently, while thus shut in, we could hear the footsteps of those whose feet are swift to shed blood, and on one occasion, our family worship was interrupted by the clash of knives close by our grated windows. Breathless we listened to the scuffle, and soon heard a heavy fall upon the pavement, then a groan, and then a tumult of voices. Through the partially opened shutter, we could also see the glare of lights carried by those who came to remove the smitten one to the hospital of San Juan de Dios.* The horrid consciousness that such deeds were constantly occurring around us was unavoidable.

At first I made it my business to visit all my neighbours, and to solicit the attendance of their children at school. They consisted of Ladinos, and the majority were poor artizans, who received me most courteously, and as I had fixed the school charges very low, I soon assembled three or four boys, though with some difficulty, as my objects were not yet understood. These seedlings I endeavoured to foster and improve with the utmost assiduity, fully expecting that they would in time produce the effect I desired upon the neighbourhood, and so fill my schoolroom. Of course the New Testament was immediately put into the hands of such as could read a little. In the mean time I cultivated the acquaintance of the people, and spent a part of each Lord's day in reading the Scriptures to them in their own cottages. On such occasions, I was invariably received with courteous deference, and was always thanked for what they were pleased to deem an act of condescension. Frequently the guitar and dice, as well as light and profane jesting, gave place, and seemed to be cheerfully put aside for the words of truth and soberness, indited by the spirit of wisdom and love. At times, two or three females sat with decorous attention and superstitious awe, to hear the story of Calvary, as they had never heard it before. One family was that of an aged carpenter, a Tercero, or professor of the third order, himself wearing a half

* Saint John of God.

monkish grey habit, and a large scapular hanging over his breast.* Another was an industrious weaver, who seemed to hail my visit with delight, and readily stopped his old fashioned and clumsy loom, to hear and converse. None of them appeared to need much prompting to lead them to contrast what they heard from the Bible, and what they had been taught by their priests, and some needed to be restrained rather than stimulated in their strong condemnation of the insatiate rapacity and licentious habits of their clergy. Freedom of thought and of speech was evidently the order of the day with the men. The women, with less opposition to error, seemed most seriously attentive to the truth.

Five months were suffered to elapse in this manner, during which my school increased to nearly a score of boys, who were making some progress. Their parents were astonished and delighted, not only at the fact that they were advancing in several branches of study at the same time, but more still, that they were decidedly attached to their school, and would even sacrifice their breakfast rather than be too late. Some of the merchant class, and two or three of the political leaders of the liberal party, though displeased at the locality I had chosen, also sent me their sons. But even thus, the proceeds of the school scarcely covered its expenses, and as some of the parents could not afford to pay anything, an extreme straitness, never extending to absolute want, was the result. I was enabled partly to make up for the deficiency of resources, and at the same time considerably to extend my influence, by devoting some hours in the morning, and the interval between schools, to private lessons in the English and French languages, at the houses of some of the wealthier natives. An early class of students from the University was also formed for the study of the French; an evening class was precluded by the danger common to the barrios. On the whole, my prospects appeared to be rapidly improving.

General Carrera had now openly assumed the presidency of the

* This man, though strongly attached to his prejudices, and to the convent and system with which he was connected, yet heard the Word gladly, and soon spent much time in reading, and hearing the Scriptures read by his grandchildren, my scholars. He had during my residence in Guatemala, and though he lent himself to the heat to the ceremonies of the church which claimed him here on earth, I conceived the hope concerning him, that he had been united to the Saviour by faith, through the knowledge of the Scriptures.

state, and military despotism was everywhere in the ascendant. Anxious to bring the Scriptures before his attention, and if possible to secure for them a favourable reception, I had sent him a selection of Bibles in four languages, together with some other good books, in acknowledgment of which I received a polite letter of thanks, signed by the General himself; for by this time he had learned to write his name. One of his favourite officers, an English Creole of Jamaica, afterwards informed me, that the President-General set a great value on the books, and sometimes employed him to read the Scriptures. He had also frequently expressed his approbation of what he heard, remarking that he would be glad if the clergy would practise and teach such doctrines as those.

Let not the reader, however, suppose that I had for a moment escaped the close observation of the priesthood. From the time that my little company of boys commenced to assume the appearance of a school, the curates had carefully and perseveringly visited the neighbourhood, and warned, exhorted, threatened, entreated, and bribed the parents of my poorer scholars, in order to prevent their attendance. In one or two cases they prevailed—in others they were met by rebuffs which must have been very humiliating. One parent, himself a sculptor of some repute, and therefore an image-maker for their idolatrous worship, asked the padre who visited him, if he would undertake to teach the children *himself*, and told him that he felt that this foreigner was conferring a great favour upon them. In general, these measures failed of their object; but they probably had the effect of preventing a more rapid increase of the school. Foiled on this point, the pulpits, which had never been silent since the promulgation of the edict, began to resound more frequently with tirades against Protestantism, and with denunciations of excommunication upon all its aiders and abettors, but especially upon the parents of the children who frequented my school. The three prelates who were then assembled in the capital, endeavouring to revive sacerdotal* power, joined their influence with the Government to obtain my expulsion from the State. It was even reported that they had unitedly waited upon the President, some time before he had received the gift of Bibles, &c., and entreated him with humiliating earnestness to consent to my banishment. But, strange to relate, they had entirely failed.

* See pp. 155, 156.

While they were still together in the capital, a course of seven sermons was preached at the opening of the temple of La Recoleccion. In more than one of these sermons, which attracted great crowds of all classes of the people, the heretical school was the subject of warm declamation, and the Bishop Viteri faithfully warned the unwary inhabitants of Guatemala against "Protestantism, which was lying in ambush, and ready to pounce upon their innocent children." The press, too, was made available for the same purpose; and *La Aurora*, a semi-liberal paper which had just been started, became the vehicle of priestly bitterness and misrepresentation. Rumours of more decided steps than these were constantly brought to my ears; but I was enabled to continue the quiet labours which filled my hands and my heart without being materially turned aside, until the 30th of January 1845.

A month after Carrera had been ceremonially installed into the presidential chair, he left the capital for his estate on the Pacific Coast. Late in the evening of that day, I received a summons to present myself immediately before the Municipality. Promptly obeying, I found this body assembled, and afterwards learned that they had been summoned, at an unprecedented hour, to attend an extraordinary sitting as soon as the President had left the city. It was then notified to me that I was required instantly to close my school, and ordered to quit the capital within three days. I requested that a copy of this order might be given me in writing, that I might take the proper steps to have it revoked. This was promised, and I retired. I afterwards learned that one of the members of this corporation had recorded his vote against their unconstitutional proceedings, and afterwards resigned his seat in it, because of their willingness to become the tools of the clergy in this affair.

On the following morning, at an early hour, I received the visit of Don Manuel Dardon, a young lawyer of recognised talent and decidedly liberal opinions, who came on horseback to inform me that the municipality had appointed a commission to visit my house during that day, for the purpose of seizing my books and papers. He generously offered to become the depository of whatever I might wish to place in his custody, gave me the benefit of his legal advice, and offered any further assistance that I might require. As to my books and papers, I contented myself with

turning my school-room key upon them, and putting it into my pocket. I then left the house, and with the assistance of this kind friend, prepared a petition to the Supreme Court of Justice, claiming the writ of *habeas corpus*, and placing myself under its protection.

The minds of the citizens, which had already been repeatedly, if not continuously agitated on my account, were now unusually alive to the struggle, and intent upon the issue. The law of *habeas corpus*, though long on the statute book, had never yet been put into force, no one ever having claimed it. If the writ had been granted on this occasion, there were not a few persons suffering for political offences who were ready to avail themselves of the precedent. On the day after the presentation of the petition, when I was to be heard, the court was attended by an unusual number of persons, mostly officials and young students. Don Manuel Dardon, who acted as my lawyer, was first heard in support of the petition, and ably sustained the legal points of the case. I followed in my own defence, and replied to several allegations with which the municipality had furnished the court. To the charge that I had illegally and surreptitiously introduced myself into the country, without complying with the laws respecting the establishment of foreigners, I was enabled to reply, that having entered the country as a *colonist*, under the provisions of the charter given to the English Company, I was exempted from those regulations, and was further entitled to all the rights and privileges of a natural-born citizen; and that my conduct since I had left the Colony had been open and public. I had complied with all the requirements of the law in the opening of my school, and claimed a right quietly to continue it as a means of subsistence. To the charge that I was "a Protestant missionary," I pleaded guilty, and gloried in the fact, claiming a right to sustain that character also, and explaining that in the school I had taught no dogmas but such as are contained in the Bible.

The order of the municipality, of which I could not obtain a copy, though it had been promised, occasioned some technical difficulties, and when it was handed in to the court, it had assumed a modified form, leaving me the alternative of a formal trial if I would not go, and thus reducing it to a mere threat of illegal violence.

On the third day we returned to hear the decision of the court: and long before the doors were opened parties were to be seen impatiently waiting before them. When the hour arrived, we were ushered into the court-room, and a paper couched in abusive terms, was read, in which I was stigmatized as guilty of falsehood, declared to be a disturber of the public peace, with many other like words; and refused the writ for my protection.

The time assigned by the Municipality had expired, and rumours were afloat that violence was intended towards me. I retired to the house of my generous lawyer, where I found myself surrounded by a numerous company of respectable citizens. Some of the younger men were under much excitement, and all spoke indignantly of the decision of the court. While there, a messenger came from my house to inform me that a Teniente de Policia and two corchetes had been there to inquire for me; and my wife earnestly entreated me by no means to return home. After deliberation, the friends present advised me, as a last resort, to make another application to the British-Consul General, who was then residing at the Antigua, a distance of thirty miles. A good mule, ready caparisoned, stood in the yard. The owner offered me the use of it; and in a few minutes more I was mounted and riding over the grassy plain in the direction of the two volcanoes.

It was near midnight ere I reached the door of the house which Mr. Chatfield was occupying in the once magnificent but now ruined city of old Guatemala, and his English good nature was somewhat put to the test by being knocked up on such an errand. I was, however, hospitably received, though told that I had brought all this trouble upon myself by disturbing the prejudices of the people, and making use of the Bible in my school, for which they were not yet prepared, and without which my teaching would have met with support instead of opposition. In conclusion, I must now extricate myself the best way I could; and though I claimed to be a British subject, British protection should not be extended to me till I could show documentary evidence that I was. With this food for reflection I retired to bed. The step that I had taken during the last three days had all failed. I was however, little disappointed, as I had no great confidence in the justice of my fellow-men; and had used the means because convinced that such was my duty. I felt prepared for the worst. I

knew that even this agitation was serving the cause I had at heart, and that by actively waiting upon the Lord I was warranted to expect his blessing.

Early the next morning I was aroused by drums beating to arms. On inquiring the cause, I learned that while I had been riding over the plain during the still night, an insurrection had broken out in the capital. The absence of the President, of which advantage had been taken to molest me, had also been abused by some discontented military. The prisoners, and Monte Rosa among them, had been set free, and armed; an attempt was being made at revolution;* and Sotero Carrera, the Corregidor of the Antigua, was now mustering troops to lead them against the insurgents. This intelligence, which struck terror to the hearts of most people, brought security to me, and proved the instrument of my deliverance.

That day I remained with the Consul, and was kindly and courteously entertained. The next day, hearing that the road had become passable, though occupied by troops, I remounted my friend's mule, and re-entered the terror-stricken capital by making a *détour*. All was safe and quiet at home. The Monte Rosa faction was soon put down, a change of ministry was made, and it was some weeks ere tranquillity was completely restored. Meanwhile the persecuting authorities had ceased to occupy themselves about me; but my school having been closed by a municipal order, it remained so, and I took early measures to procure its reopening. To this end I frequently waited upon Don Juaquin Duran, the new minister, and urged the injustice of depriving me of my means of subsistence. When I pleaded that I ought to be lawfully tried if I had offended against the laws, he acceded, and promised that a formal trial should take place. By the assistance of my friends, who were now somewhat increased in numbers and earnestness, the evidence of my neighbours and of the parents of my scholars was taken, both as to my character and the nature of my instructions. They cheerfully underwent several examinations before the Juez de Primera Instancia, which were favourable to both, and in the event of a regular trial a strong defence was already prepared. It seemed, however, as in the case of the Bibles, that they were resolved to weary me by delays.

* See page 163.

During this interval, which lasted three months, I had ample employment for my time in giving private lessons, which was much more remunerative than my school had been. But my mind was depressed by the suspension of my own plans, and I longed to reopen my little school, to which I felt strongly attached. Many things now combined to discourage any further attempts in Guatemala. My efforts were cramped in many respects; I was not yet free to sell the Scriptures. Instead of making a living, I found myself involved in unavoidable debts. Mr. Henderson, who had heard of my difficulties, and who, with the brethren at Belize, had all along discouraged my attempts, now renewed his efforts to persuade me to give it up, and offered tempting inducements if I would return to Belize. Christian fellowship or sympathy I had long wanted; human protection I had none. My greatest trial was that I felt quite alone in my work, being cut off from connection with other Christians, even by correspondence or the receipt of intelligence. It was now industriously rumoured that I was a spy of the English Government, and what step my enemies might take next was quite uncertain, while it was evident that friends and foes considered my life in jeopardy every hour. On the other hand, there was nothing obliging me to abandon my undertaking. The circle of my influence had considerably extended. My presence alone was a testimony in favour of the Gospel. The Scriptures were still being circulated and read to the people. My very poverty, and the refusal of the Consul to aid me, told in my favour, and effectually counteracted the mischievous slander that my objects were national and political. Had I been sustained by foreign funds, or protected by the Consul, it is probable that this device would have been enough to accomplish what the direct influence of the clergy had failed to do. Thus my insignificance was my protection, and the power of God was made manifest in the weakness of His servant. There was yet a hope that some change would favour the reopening of my school, if I had patience to wait for it. Upon these reasons I determined to remain, and being refused justice at the hands of human tribunals, I made my appeal to the heavenly throne, nor was my confidence vain.

Scarcely had I settled my mind, and declined Mr. Henderson's kind proposals, when, on the 3rd of April, I was sent for by Don

Félic Solano, a native gentleman, the proprietor of a distillery, and a well-known partisan of the liberals. He had heard of my efforts in teaching, and proposed that I should devote some hours every day to the tuition of three of his children *in his own house*. I should be left entirely free to carry out my own plans, and to associate with his children any others that I could procure; three or four were already pledged to join them. All the responsibility would be *his*; I should act only as his servant; and should any one interfere with me I had but to refer them to him.

Although somewhat dubious of the proposal because of several apparent inconveniences, I saw that it met the emergency, and was an answer to my prayers; I therefore felt it my duty to accept it, and closed with him at once. I commenced by devoting five hours every day to six or eight scholars of a higher class, and gradually added others. My former commodious school-room was exchanged for the dilapidated cloister of what had been a convent, but was then a distillery of rum. On one side it was unsheltered from the weather, and we were exposed to constant interruptions by labourers or persons frequenting the place, besides being continually surrounded by the nauseous effluvia as well as the moral contamination of the noxious spirit. Nevertheless we soon began to take delight in our daily tasks, and the little band in a few weeks had attained to about my former number, which had never been above a score. To do them justice I had then to bestow more time and to remove from the house of Polanco to one in the vicinity of the monastic distillery. About the same time Mr. Klee, a wealthy merchant, the Consul for Prussia and the Hanse Towns, also engaged a portion of my time for the tuition of his little daughters in his own house, permitting me to associate others with them, and freeing me from all responsibility as in the former case. Thus a small class of six or eight girls was added to the boys' school established by Don Félic Solano. I now once more found myself employed as I had wished, and was greatly encouraged. Not a few persons who came to the distillery on business stood and listened to my lessons; and Don Félic himself, who was no believer in revealed religion, increased in his respect for the Book of God. Evening as well as morning classes for the study of English and French were also established, and were attended by more than twelve students of the Uni-

versity, with most of whom a pleasing intercourse was maintained. More than twelve hours a day were occupied in tuition, in which the Bible and religious conversation were more or less prominent. Once more my object appeared to be gained, though I was never long without hearing that I had been dragged into the pulpits, and that some great trouble was in store for me.

For the space of four months I was permitted to proceed thus without molestation, during which several important events occurred. The decree freeing the press from ecclesiastical censure, and making the sale of the Scriptures lawful, was passed. The threatened invasion of the Jesuits, which had caused gloomy forebodings, was prevented, as before related (page 171), and the clergy were not a little humbled in the result. Legal proceedings had at length been instituted against me by the Municipality in a secret manner, and the neighbourhood where I had before resided was canvassed in vain for evidence against me. The *expediente*, legal forms and process, had been passed in due course to the Juez de Primera Instancia, and had produced so much disgust in the mind of that functionary that he was unwilling to proceed with it, though urged to do so. More than one of the favourite officers of Carrera's staff were pleased to send me their children to teach, and it was publicly rumoured that the President-General had determined to place his eldest legitimate son with me. He was afterwards removed from a native boarding-school for that purpose; but the priests having gained his mother's ear the act was never consummated.

On the 16th of July 1845, the first attempt at violent interference with Señor Solano's school was made by the Municipality. A deputation, accompanied by armed men, visited the premises, and found the boys reading the New Testament. They signified to me that I must close this school also, and obey the former order of the Municipality to leave the State within three days. I begged to refer them to Don Félix. With him they had some discussion. He permitted them to examine the boys. One of the alcaldes put several questions, the two first being, "Who is the Head of the Church?" "Who was the First Apostle?" to neither of which he could get a reply, as they were among the points which had not been brought before the attention of the children. My employer at length lost patience with these functionaries; and

them with warmth that he would teach his children to be Mahometans if he chose, and would do as he pleased in his own house. Upon which they departed, little satisfied with their visit, and the school continued uninterrupted.

These proceedings of the Municipality were followed up with zeal on their part; but though they were determined to close the school, and even to arrest Don Félix Solano, to whom they were politically adverse, they alone appeared to lend themselves willingly to the schemes of the archbishop and his friends. The Corregidor, the head of the corporation, and brother to the one at Salama, was not with them in this matter, but was disposed to do justice, and to send his children to be taught by me. The Minister of State, now Don José Antonio Azmitia, also regarded their proceedings as unlawful, as well as unreasonable; and after another summons to appear before the Municipality, which I obeyed, and some more trouble and anxiety, it appeared that they would fail in this effort for want of support on the part of the supreme authorities, though they continued on the offensive, and were preparing documents, &c., for publication. Another mode of effecting their object was then resorted to by the priests. Greater activity than usual was given to the slanders which had long been circulated against us. We were misrepresented as teaching infidelity, atheism, and immorality to the children. The circumstance that a valuable costodia containing the idolized wafer had been stolen from the very altar of one of the churches, was attributed to the Protestant doctrines which were being introduced, and was made use of to stir up the angry passions of the more fanatical among the people. One of the priests especially, who had long been famed for the warmth and energy of his harangues against "El Protestante," now wrought up the populace of his barrio-parish* by his rabid eloquence to such a pitch of excitement, that it was feared the mob would come and speedily accomplish the ruin of our monastic school-house, which time and earthquakes had hitherto spared.

Shortly after the last interference, when public excitement was once more at its height, and another storm appeared to be threatening, I felt that in order to stand our ground some step must be taken to counteract it, and, if possible, to avail ourselves of the

* La Candelaria, the largest suburb, and reputed the worst of all.

advantages which our foiled enemies had now given us. I therefore proposed to Don Félix that we should have an exhibition of the school, as the best reply to the misrepresentations concerning it. The step was a bold one, but the exigencies of the case seemed to require it; and printed invitations to attend the examination of the children were sent to all the principal persons of all parties, including the authorities themselves.

On receipt of a courteous invitation which I addressed to the Municipality as a body, a strenuous effort was made on their part to forbid the meeting proposed; but the Corregidor, being disposed to favour it, settled the contention which had arisen by appointing a deputation, consisting of two Alcaldes, a Fiscal, and the Secretary, to attend, preside, and report on the occasion. Several of the chief functionaries had promised to be present; and this point also appeared to be gained.

It was on the morning following the twenty-fourth anniversary of the day of independence, the 16th of September 1845, that the public assembled in my own house, to see and hear for themselves what I had taught the children. The sala was hung round with maps, &c., and adorned with Scripture texts in large letters, which I had cut out from English placards, and put into Spanish. Some of my lesson boards had been prepared after the same manner, others were supplied by the British and Foreign School Society, being portions of the New Testament in Spanish. Two desks at one end of the room were occupied by eighteen boys, all natives of the country with one exception. An easy chair was placed in the centre with a table before it, sustaining globes, a bell, and a basket-full of Scriptures and English toys designed for rewards. The rest was occupied by chairs, which were soon all filled by a highly respectable audience, composed of heads of families, merchants, lawyers, several public men, and a few ladies.

At the time appointed the house was already full, and the assembly was anxiously awaiting the deputation. When they came, they were accompanied by a guard, consisting of four corchetes with drawn swords, who remained outside. Having met them at the saguan—the gate-way—I handed them to the seat of honour. While laying before the chief Alcalde the programme of our proceedings, to the general consternation, he declared that he had not come to preside, but to prevent this examination from taking

place. He then rose, and made a speech addressed directly to me, and only indirectly to the audience. To neither was he very courteous. He described me as a contumacious and rebellious person, already repeatedly outlawed. He read a law placing *public instruction* under the inspection of the Municipality, and declared that they would not suffer me to breed a nest of vipers in the bosom of society. I replied that I had done all that the law required in the case of *private* schools, that I was not unwilling to be tried, and I inquired upon what authority he invaded a private residence, and interfered with a private school and an orderly private meeting such as that was. He replied that he had no account to render to me on that point. Several of the audience now took up the question in succession, and ably argued it, addressing such reasoning to the chief Alcalde as must have rendered his soft seat rather uncomfortable. He sat, however, sullenly, and seeing himself opposed, he declared his intention not to move till the audience had dispersed. They on their part also kept their seats, and protested that they would not leave the house till the examination had taken place.

The corchetes at the door, and the rumour of the proceedings within, rapidly attracted other persons, and the patio and the gallery around it were soon filled with citizens, as well as the sala. One aged and respected lady, the mother of two of the scholars, who had suffered much from the priests on account of their connection with me, was with difficulty restrained from giving vent to her indignation, in a burst of maternal eloquence and feeling, addressed to the municipal deputation. Consulting with a few friends, I determined to see the Vice-President, and claim his interference. In this object I failed, and lost much time; but learned that the Alcalde Primero had done this upon his own authority only, and that the proper legal resource was to bring an action against him.

On returning, fatigued, and with little hope, I found everything as I had left it, and that my generous advocate and others had respectfully addressed the chair in forcible words, but no impression seemed to be made upon it. The magistrate had been reminded of the responsibility involved in this act, and Don Félix Solano argued the right of parents to choose the education of their children, as some did by sending them to Protestant countries, and in the presence of the masters of the two leading schools in the

city, he challenged any school, after a year's teaching, to compete with this one after four months. All were eager to hear of my success, and being disappointed, there were renewed tokens of excitement, and a determination to remain. Some said, "go on," "take no notice of him," "turn him out," &c.; but there was good sense enough to restrain these ebullitions. The gentlemen present then resolved upon sending a deputation of their own number to the supreme authorities, to complain of the interruption occasioned by the Alcalde, the rest awaiting their return. Consequently, Don Pedro Valensuela, an ex-president of the State, Don Juan Dieguez, a judge, and Don Ignacio Gomez, a talented licentiate, were selected, and left the meeting for the national palace.

The poor children had been much alarmed by all that was passing around them, and the more so that the subordinates of the deputation had taken down their names, and asked them questions. Many of the gentlemen present had called out several of the children into another room, and had been examining them in detail behind the back of the Señor Alcalde Primero, much to their gratification and satisfaction. Their copy books, also, had been handed about, and much interest was manifested in them. Refreshments were now supplied, and the company gave themselves up to smoking puros and cigaritos, and to quiet conversation, during which the municipal deputation might very well have taken a nap.

After another interval of about an hour, during which the attendance was rather increased, the deputation from the meeting returned radiant with smiles, accompanied by a Government messenger, with an official despatch for the Señor Alcalde Primero. The stragglers immediately sought their places. The room and doorway were quite filled. All eyes were fixed upon the magistrate's countenance while he opened and read to himself. He then arose and said that the Señor Corregidor ordered that, without reference to the past, he should preside over the examination and make his report. No noisy indications of a low-minded exultation followed this announcement, though the audience had felt themselves grossly insulted by the now crest-fallen magistrate. Seeing that he rose to depart, and feeling that the triumph was painfully complete, I stepped forward and entreated him to remain and witness the examination, that he might judge for himself; and if he could not do so in his public character, suggesting that perhaps he might feel at liberty in a private capacity. He, however, politely

declined, and, with his associates and the armed men, left the self-satisfied company.

A proposal to adjourn, as most persons present were somewhat wearied, was met by general cries of "Now, now." Don Juan Dieguez, an esteemed friend, and one of the successful deputation, took the chair, and three additional hours were spent in rapidly going through the classes in Scripture reading, grammar, geography, mental arithmetic, &c. &c. After what has been said concerning the state of education in the country, it will not be matter of surprise to the reader that the parties present, whose best feelings had been powerfully called forth, were pleased, and somewhat enthusiastic in their admiration of the methods pursued, of the cheerfulness of the scholars, and of the earnestness and good feeling which pervaded their operations. The masters of the other schools assisted in distributing the rewards; and after full six hours of unusual excitement, I was left to reflect upon the probable consequences of the events of that day. Before separating, it had been agreed upon that petitions should be presented to the Executive Government, to be printed and circulated as a corrective to the current false reports, and the persons of most influence who had been present afterwards drew up testimonials, in which they expressed their approbation of what was taught in the school. These documents were sent in to the authorities, together with the petitions.

For some time after the examination I received numerous congratulatory visits, from the impression made it appeared that the end sought was answered, and by the turn which the opposition gave to affairs, the success of this device was far more complete than the most sanguine had ventured to hope.

The two printed petitions were confined exclusively to the parents of the scholars. They represented the school as a national benefit, and claimed full liberty for it. Both were signed among others, by a priest, whose illegitimate son was one of the scholars. On being reproved by the Archbishop for this scandalous incongruity, the curate answered his prelate in a manner that savoured more of Billingsgate along than of *holy orders*; but no further notice was taken of the offence.

. The school children were soon after treated to a *día de campo*, a field-day, when they spent several hours in pelting each other

with oranges at the ancient estate of Aceytuno, and were regaled with a rural repast and abundance of helotes—green maize in the ear boiled or roasted, which is then very sweet.

As before, in the case of the circulation of the Scriptures, the law of the liberty of the press had been timely and serviceable, so now in the control which the Municipality claimed over my school, the Lord was pleased most opportunely to interpose another law, which entirely deprived that corporation of any legal pretext for continuing their attacks upon the school, and relieved me from their restraints. Shortly after the examination, the law of University Reform,* projected by Dr. Padilla, one of my warmest supporters, was passed by the legislature and approved by the executive. One clause of that law, which was this time introduced with a special regard to my case, committed the surveillance of all primary schools exclusively to the University, thus taking it out of the hands of the Municipality, who had so grossly abused it. The reforms intended to be effected by this law were not carried out, for the reasons before stated; but it enabled me to resume my school in my own house and upon my own responsibility, though no more direct answer to the petitions presented had been obtained from those in power.

Some of my fellow-countrymen who had been present at the examination took a report of it to Belize, and shortly afterwards the countenance and sympathy of my brethren there were restored to me, and was hailed on my part with heartfelt joy and satisfaction. In this circumstance, and in the receipt of letters from some dear Christians in England, who had providentially heard of my position, I distinctly saw the finger of God in answer to my prayers, and was greatly encouraged and refreshed.

On resuming the school, the distillery was exchanged for the sala in which the examination had taken place; and when the excitement produced by that event, and the circulation of the printed defence of the school had entirely subsided, the number of scholars began slowly to increase in despite of the ecclesiastical penalties which were associated with its countenance, and in the face of continued though less operative hostilities on the part of the priests.

At the close of the year 1845 I had an attendance of thirty boys.^a

^a See page 173.

class of six little girls, and sixteen students of languages to teach daily. My Lord's day visits to the cottages of the poor had become more difficult since my change of neighbourhood; but several young men had begun to frequent my house on the Sabbath and through the week, for the purpose of reading and examining the Scriptures together. One of these, who also attended the school, aspired to become a teacher, and was anxious to acquire a knowledge of the modes of instruction adopted. Another less aspiring, but more promising, also attended the school as often as his labour as a blacksmith would permit him to do so, with a view to improve himself. At home he was teaching his wife and two apprentices to read in the New Testament, and his love to the truth seemed to grow, and often cheered my heart. Two persons who followed this Bible class were poor students, already passed the meridian of life, who had been decided infidels and of a misanthropic turn of mind. They both of them expressed themselves as having received an increase of happiness and usefulness by what the Bible had taught them, and they appeared to be earnest inquirers after truth. Alone, or with some of these, I sometimes visited the suburbs or the remote villages on the plain, distributing tracts, and reading the Scriptures.

Meanwhile the enemies of the truth were not slumbering. The Municipality of that year, before giving place to the new one which took office on the 1st of January 1846, published a somewhat lengthy pamphlet, with copies of letters from the Archbishop and other documents, to justify their now unpopular proceedings against the schools, and consequently to criminate me. They also instituted a suit at law both against me and against the Corregidor who had ordered the examination to proceed; but this was suffered to drop by their successors. The statements of this pamphlet, though apparently moderate, were untruthful; but yet I felt that it was a real benefit to my cause. It was abusive enough to show the animus of the authors; and while it substantiated no serious charge, it made prominent several doctrinal and other points, such for instance as my utter rejection of ecclesiastical authority,* which I was par-

* One of the serious charges brought against the school was that the children were taught to pray without having either crucifix, image, or picture before them. The school was always opened with the reading of the Scriptures and prayer.

ticularly anxious should be distinctly understood, but which would have come with less grace directly from myself or my friends: I was therefore very thankful for its appearance.

At the election of their successors, which occurred in December, there was an unusual contest between the Serviles and the Liberals, which appeared to turn very much upon the school question, and the side parties were known to have taken in the late examination. For the first time, printed lists of the nominees of each party were used, and the priest who was so active against Protestantism, and who was said to have threatened the Government with an insurrection of his parish, if I were tolerated in the country, sent up numbers of ignorant Indians to vote on the Servile side, so that the Liberals were unexpectedly defeated, and several of my most active opponents were re-elected.

A petition against my school was also handed about by the priests, and was reported to have obtained 800 signatures, while a learned memorial was addressed to the archbishop, and is deposited in the archives of the Ecclesiastical Court, describing the crimes and enormities of which the Anabaptists were accused in Germany in the days of the Lutheran Reformation. With these fanatical and wild enthusiasts I was classed, and the danger of the revival of their extravagances was pointed out. The pious writer very cautiously refrained from signing the document, because (as was stated in a note) he was unwilling that his name should appear in company with such blasphemous and damnable heresies.

A plot for my assassination was discovered and revealed to me about this time by one of the scholars of the English class. It had been conceived by some youthful choristers in a seminary, but was stayed while yet maturing by the instrumentality of this young friend.

It was related to me that one poor woman had accused herself to her father confessor—a bare-footed, long-bearded, and rope-begirdled Capuchin friar—of the sin of having conversed with me on religious subjects, at which the holy indignation of the friar knew no bounds. After a paroxysm of righteous wrath, he declared that he could not grant her absolution for an offence of such magnitude. He promised, however, to throw himself at the feet of the archbishop on her behalf; but he could not ensure his success. No doubt a proportionate penance was exacted before

absolution was granted to this offender. A lady of distinction was reported to have said that she would gladly imbrue her feminine hands in the heart's blood of the Protestant heretic.

Early in 1846, a new method of annoyance was adopted by the priests towards me. They succeeded in influencing the landlady of the house which I occupied to give me warning to quit. She was a widow, and one of her sons was entitled to the revenue of a stall in the cathedral, of which they threatened to deprive him if I continued in her house. Our servants and tradespeople were also tampered with, and their minds wrought upon by the fears of combined spiritual penalties and temporal inconveniences. The increase of my school, and the prospect of some boarders, would soon have led me to seek a larger dwelling. As soon as I obtained one at a rental of 48*l.* sterling per annum, which was not done without difficulty, the proprietors were also in turn assailed; and the visits of an influential priest, who had long been intimate with the family, were discontinued. In three months more I was forced to give up this house also, and found the utmost difficulty in procuring another, as all those that might have been available were under Servile and priestly influence. The parents of the children, who had failed to find a way out of the difficulty, spontaneously offered to increase the pay of the scholars, and thus enable me to take a spacious mansion, the rent of which was 100*l.* sterling per annum. But even that one could not be procured for the object. A forcible ejection was threatened, and the blockade appeared complete. At length, only a day or two before I was bound to give up the house I occupied, an arrangement was concluded, by which a French cabinet-maker obligingly yielded to me a house which was under the control of Mr. Savage, the United States Consul, he himself taking another for which I had in vain offered a higher rent.

Before this change of premises was effected, the widow of an officer who had been shot in the late civil wars brought me her son to board and educate. Manuel was a fine high-spirited lad of about fourteen, but had been so little restrained that his temper had become indomitable, and I was warned by some of my friends on no account to receive him among my scholars, as he had been the round of all the schools in the capital, and was given up as incorrigible in each. I did not, however, feel at liberty to reject

him ; but having had full and unconditional control given me by his only parent, I sought prayerfully for the wisdom and discretion which the case required.

A few days after his introduction to the school he was guilty of robbing a neighbouring garden of some fruit, in which he drew away others. The offence was duly tried by a jury of the scholars, and according to rule, after full confession, restitution, and apology, the penalty in his case was remitted, because it was his first offence. Shortly after, in a paroxysm of anger, he threw down one of the lesser children, and having kicked him cruelly, he opened the gate and ran home, using foul and abusive language against me ; upon which a priest, who lived nearly opposite, put his head out of his window and said, "This comes of Protestant teaching." I immediately sent a message to his mother to acquaint her with the fact. With some difficulty he was brought back and shut up till the next morning. I then visited him in his room, and spoke seriously but kindly to him, informing him that he would be tried as usual during the play hour at noon. I told him to select his advocate, whom I sent to consult with him upon their defence. Several friends having requested to be informed when we had a trial, I now sent them notice, convinced that the publicity would in this case add to the effect sought to be produced. Don José Barundia, the ex-president of the state, and translator of the national code, who had laboured to introduce trial by jury into the country, was among the persons present. Rather more formalities than usual were adopted. The case against the offender was fully proved in all its points. In his defence his advocate, without any prompting, pleaded a previous provocation, and called witnesses to establish the fact ; in other respects his guilt was admitted. I then addressed the culprit, and dwelt upon the character of the sin against God ; the injury done to the school in general, and to the sufferer in particular ; and also the probable consequences to himself, as likely to lead to murder, if such angry passions were continued to be indulged. Manuel, though a resolute boy, was now melted to tears. I insisted particularly that his reformation was the sole design of his punishment ; and he made an open acknowledgment of his fault. I then pronounced sentence ; condemning him, first, to forfeit his play-hour, which he had so greatly abused, for two weeks ;

secondly, for breaking bounds, that he should not be permitted to go home on Sundays till I should consent to it once more ; thirdly, for using bad language, he should learn by heart certain passages in the Proverbs, which I had marked ; and, lastly, for his personal offence towards me, I freely forgave him.

The impression produced upon him and upon all the school was salutary ; and his conduct was at once changed. When the Sunday came, however, he was impatient at being refused permission to go home ; he committed a slight offence, and under the terror of being again locked up (which I thus found had been too severe a measure) he once more absconded. On Monday morning, when he had returned, I informed his school-fellows of the fact with much grief ; and it was unanimously agreed that he should be sent to Coventry by the whole school till I should relieve him. This measure I ever after kept in reserve as my severest or capital punishment, all corporal inflictions having long before been rejected by a unanimous vote of the whole school.

The struggle with Manuel now continued for some days. All shunned his society ; and even the monitor of his class would not question him till I had given him leave to do so. At meals he received his plate full as usual, and was bidden to go and eat it alone in the school-room. It often remained untouched. Firmness and kindness were, as much as possible, conciliated in my manner towards him. On the third day he gave signs of relenting, and asked for paper to write a penitent letter to his mother. I at once met him, and he was gradually restored to his place in the school and in my confidence. Never after this did Manuel give me any serious trouble. He was soon cheerful and happy ; his mother's heart was greatly rejoiced ; and some months after this his fellow-scholars elected him one of the monitors empowered to keep order. The success of these measures, and the gratitude of his mother, were largely instrumental in repelling the evil reports that were still abroad, and in increasing the popularity of the school ; which, four months after the examination, had doubled the number of scholars.

Two months later, there was an attendance of sixty boys, several of whom were boarders, besides about twenty students of languages formed into classes, conducted according to the Robertsonian

method,* which was found most efficient, and gave great satisfaction. Some of these young men assured me, that the pleasantest hour they spent was in our class, and they frequently separated with enthusiastic exclamations of "Viva Robertson"—long live Robertson. The class of little girls was continued, though it did not increase, and little time could be devoted to them. It constituted my only hour of relaxation, being now employed teaching, with scarcely any interruption, for fourteen hours every day.

Each scholar that could read, and there were few exceptions, daily took home his New Testament, and committed some verses to memory. Sometimes the lesson was not learned, and the reason not unfrequently was, that some member of the family had been reading the book all the time. Such a reason, of course, gave me the greatest pleasure. Santiago, a little boy, referred to at page 288, as the victim of pedagogic barbarity, one day returned to school without his New Testament. On inquiry, he told me, that after leaving school the day before, he had entered the convent of Santa Teresa, to visit two of his aunts, who were nuns, as he was accustomed to do. One of them, seeing the book under his arm, had looked at it, and noticing the subject, requested him to lend it to her. I readily supplied Santiago with another, and bid him return in a few days, and ask if she had read it. When I inquired again, he had been, but could not get it back because his aunts still wished to retain it, and all the nuns in the convent wanted to read it too. I permitted him to lend them another copy, and circumstances afterwards prevented my making any further inquiries on the subject.

Not unfrequently my scholars reported that they were called bad names, and beaten and even stoned by other boys in the street. One of them was chased by a priest, who wanted to take away his New Testament, but the little fellow successfully evaded the pursuit. The archbishop refused confirmation to some children, because they attended my school. One young student was refused the certificate of efficiency to which he was entitled, because

* A course of lessons by Mr. Robertson himself, was providentially brought to my hands when these classes were about commencing, and was of the greatest service. Our class of about eight or ten promising students, after following the course for six months were enabled to read, translate, and conduct most of the conversation of the class in the English language, so that some English residents who heard them were perfectly astonished.

his brothers were my scholars. These annoyances and wrongs were already producing their effects upon the public mind, and their continuance and probable increase bid fair to form an anti-Romish party of a new description.

During the season superstitiously called Lent, sermonizing is more frequent than at any other time. This year, I seemed to enjoy even an increased share of attention from the preachers, who spoke, if possible, with greater virulence than before. Some represented me as a mean, poor, and ignorant person; others, on the contrary, as a very learned and cunning deceiver, insidiously spreading by word, book, and deed, the most dangerous poisons. One of them coarsely pointed me out by name to his audience, and having exposed and caricatured my views on the sacrament, of the altar, the worship of the virgin, &c. he turned to the "Divine Majesty Sacramented," as they are pleased to term the wafer which was before him, and to the images around, and humbly craved their forgiveness, for even mentioning such disrespectful calumnies in their presence, and within their hearing. While the people were dispersing after this discourse, a report that I had been assassinated was circulated amongst them, the horrid details of which were soon brought to my ears, followed by numerous visitors, who came to assure themselves of the truth. Another plot to effect this end was said to have been formed among the military shortly after.

Efforts which I had long made to get some of the pure Indian boys into the school, had at length been crowned with success, and the three first had been admitted. Every week was swelling the number of children, which had now reached to eighty, making more than one hundred pupils in all. Among them were the sons of the functionary who had sent me the first order to quit the State. My desire was to establish a class of the Quiché language, and to acquire it myself, with a view to translating the Scriptures. I still made a practice of reading to my poor neighbours, and some few ladies of the higher class had heard the gospel, and had awakened lively hopes respecting them. The Bible class had increased, and still gave me much encouragement. In this little band, I saw the nucleus of the future church, and I foresaw the time as not far distant, when we should have to contend for the right of the public worship of the God of the Bible, as had been done for the circulation of the Scriptures, and the establishment of the school. This

struggle appeared to me likely to prove more intense than any that had preceded, as the spiritual worship of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, must prove most offensive to the material and carnal worshippers of Mary, the crucifix, and the wafer. Though all seemed to be prosperous and promising at present, my chief anxiety for the future was centred upon this point, and I had long panted for the time, when in a more open manner I might preach Christ crucified, and hope for hearers from among the people. When my thoughts had been exercised on this subject, I had always felt that any attempt of the kind would be wanting in discretion, as I could not expect to gain a hearing, and if I escaped bodily injury, I was assured that my further efforts would be put a stop to. I felt also that I was preaching the gospel every day, and probably in the only manner in which it could then be effectually done. But I daily prayed for, and confidently expected, a favourable change in this respect.

In temporal matters, also, it had pleased the Lord to prosper me. My income from teaching, though my charges were considered very low, had already reached the rate of 200*l.* sterling per annum, which was considerably more than our expenses, and there were tokens of still greater enlargement and progress. My heart was filled with gratitude, I adored that providence which had so evidently guided and sustained me, and wondered whereunto this thing would ultimately grow.

In the midst of prosperity and enlarged plans for the future, and when I had just decided upon a second examination of the school, I was once more overtaken by an order to quit the State, which was accompanied by circumstances of a more weighty character than any of the previous mandates had been.

On the afternoon of the third day of the week preceding the one called *La Semana Santa*—the holy week—when I had just made cheering arrangements for the reception of more boarders, and the opening of a new and larger class of students of English, I was summoned to appear before the Señor Corregidor, Don Pedro Velasquez, who had that day superseded the one who so lately befriended me, and who was now disgraced. I found him alone in his bureau, as the usual hour of business was past. He roughly and verbally intimated, that I was ordered to leave the capital within twenty-four hours, and the State within six days. No

reason whatever was assigned, and when I expostulated, and urged that this was not a legal order, but a threat of violence, he grew angry, and said that as a foreigner I had no right to object, and if I did not obey it, that an escort would be employed to convey me out of the country. A written copy of the order was promised, if called for the next morning. No legal steps could be taken that day. My scattered scholars had already spread the report that I was arrested, and much excitement prevailed among their parents and other friends, who held meetings to deliberate and prepare petitions on the subject that evening, and at an early hour the next morning. With my faithful advocate and other allies, who were disposed to assist, we had agreed that, as before, no known means of relief were to be omitted, though we had less hopes of success than on former occasions, as the order must have been given with the knowledge and sanction of the President-General. Another application for the *habeas corpus* was resolved upon.

That evening I had an interview with the Minister of State, who informed me that the order was the result of a letter which had just been received by the Government from the Archbishop, who was on a visitation of his diocese, and had reached Vera Paz. The number of Scriptures which he had found disseminated there had greatly enraged him. Some copies he had caused to be publicly burned, and he had determined not to return to the capital while the Protestant heretic continued to be tolerated in the State. His letter to that effect had obliged the Government to take this step, as the absence of the Archbishop during the solemnities of the coming week would be sure to create a disturbance, and this being the cause my person would be in danger. I warmly protested against justice being sacrificed to expediency. The Minister heard me patiently, and expressed personal sympathy, but it was plain, that the matter had been deliberately determined upon, and that the real motive was a fear that advantage might be taken of the circumstance by political malcontents, who were then numerous, to transfer the reins of Government into other hands. The usual solemnities of the Easter week were this year to be heightened by the obsequies of the late diocesan, who had expired in banishment at the Havannah, and whose remains were on their way to the capital. The assemblage of a concourse of people was alone a cause of anxiety. The

Archbishop's designed absence would afford them a specious pretext. The influence of the priests needed rather to be conciliated, and therefore my expulsion from the State had been resolved upon. I also learned that at the time the order was discussed it had been proposed to allow me only *one* hour's notice to prepare; but it was decided that twenty-four hours was short enough, thus exemplifying that "the tender mercies of the wicked are cruel."

After learning the cause, I waited upon Mr. Chatfield, and again claimed his protection as a British subject. Once more he declined to interfere; and being reminded that the consequences of his refusal would rest with himself, he became angry, and rudely ordered me to leave the Consulate. The next morning early I addressed to him a respectful protest, making him answerable for any violence that might be used towards me.

Late in the evening it was arranged by my supporters that several officers and favourites of General Carrera's should surround him in the morning at his levée, to intreat for the sake of their own children that I might be permitted to remain.

That night, as I rode homewards at a late hour through the quiet and star-lighted streets, I reflected on the probable issue of the morrow. I almost anticipated a new triumph, though appearances were so adverse. Looking at the worst that could happen I saw nothing which I could not, by God's grace, cheerfully submit to. Should it be so ordered, a short absence might serve the cause more effectually than my presence. I felt assured that a political change would ensure my speedy return, and I greatly preferred a violent expulsion to an ignoble flight. In short, I felt that I could not choose for myself, and would not if I could. But I was then enabled entirely to commit myself, my wife, and the objects I was striving for, to Him whose I am and whom I serve.

At an early hour the next morning I met some of the friends who were using means for my deliverance. I then proceeded to the President's house, and remained in an ante-room while the proposed demonstration in my favour was made. The President at once refused to listen to their intreaties, and being pressed he angrily and brutally declared that the first man who should dare to speak a word in my favour should be dragged through the city at a cart's tail, or instantly shot. An intrepid woman, the mother of

three of my scholars, then stepped forward and eloquently pleaded the cause of the school, the children, and the country. The General listened to her with patient attention, but he would yield nothing; only if I would ask for it, and promise to go, a little more time would be allowed me to prepare. This I absolutely refused to do, feeling that I should be making myself a party to their injustice, and placing a barrier in the way of my return when any future change should favour it. Finding me resolved, my friends urged me to leave the house lest the tyrant should see my face, and I hastily rode home. Here I found my school-room well-nigh filled with persons who had come to condole with us, and who were endeavouring to calm the now hysterical excitement of my wife. On hearing what had passed all with one accord intreated me for the sake of my wife and my own safety * to accede to the offer of the President. This I felt was the hardest trial of my faith; but being fully convinced that I ought not to sacrifice the future to the present, and my principles to my feelings, I tore myself from them, and proceeded to the residence of my kind friend the lawyer, where another petition was prepared.

On presenting ourselves at the tribunal, and soliciting an audience we were shortly admitted, and the petition was read in open court. We were then directed to withdraw till the decision of the judges should be made known. On thus repeating an appeal which a little more than two years before had been rejected with insult and invective, ill befitting a supreme court of justice, little hope of success had been indulged, more especially as the seven magistrates who composed the court were with one exception the same men who had decided against me in February 1844. Though the urgency of the case was apparent, we were long kept waiting in the yard of the palace of justice. It was already rumoured that an escort had been appointed to take me away, and the time allowed me was fast ebbing. I, therefore, determined upon being taken in the court of the palace, as that would be a violation of the very sanctuary of justice, and would spare my wife the additional pain of a parting under such circumstances.

* It was feared by many of my friends that the escort might have orders to shoot me by the way, and say that I was attempting to escape. A method of getting rid of a prisoner which is but too well known in the country.

Groups of friends and curious persons were drawn together in the patio of the palacio. Among them a company of pure Indian men and women, whose children were my scholars, were observed patiently waiting for several hours near the gate, that they might know the issue; and they were pointed to by others as a significant token of the interest which all classes of the community now shared in the continuance of my school.

While waiting thus, a message was sent to me by M. Cloquet, the Belgian Consul, inviting me to make his house my refuge. I requested the messenger to return, and, with grateful acknowledgments, to inquire whether he could receive me as a *British subject*: for in that case, if the protection of the court were extended to me, I would gladly avail myself of his kind offer. If the *habeas corpus* were again refused, I had determined not to do anything to avoid the execution of what would then be a *legalized* act of the supreme powers.

The clock of the palace indicated that my twenty-four hours had expired; and there was no answer from the Court. Shortly afterwards the folding-doors were thrown open, and, to the great surprise of all, and the joy of not a few, it was announced that the Court had granted the petition, taking me under its legal protection, and calling upon the Señor Corregidor to appear before it at eleven o'clock, A.M., on the following day, to show cause for the threatened violence, of which he had made himself the vehicle. This decision was the more surprising, that it must have been known to the judges that the order had emanated, indirectly, from the President-General, and was the condition of the Archbishop's return. On calm reflection, my own surprise remains to this moment undiminished; and I cannot but regard it as a special interposition of the providence of God, who thus turned the hearts even of those who had been my enemies, to do me justice in this instance, and even made them witnesses for me; thus, also, giving to my subsequent expulsion the character of a violation of the highest legitimate authority in the land, as well as a breach of their constitution and laws.

Having received a favourable answer from M. Cloquet, who was willing to receive me as a *British subject*, my own consul having declined to protect me; and finding myself favourably circumstanced in a legal point of view, I determined to shield my-

self as much as possible from any violence which might be attempted. I there ore gratefully shook hands with my friends, and rode off to the Belgian Consulate.

That afternoon M. Cloquet, who kindly interested himself in my behalf, had an interview with the Minister of State, and was assured that the matter would now be legally proceeded with. An order bearing the official stamp was also sent to me from the Corregidor, of which the following is a translation:—

“DON FEDERICO CROWE.

“In order to carry into execution the writ of habeas corpus (*el auto de exhibicion*) which the Supreme Court of Justice has awarded this day in your favour, it is necessary that to-morrow morning at ten o'clock, you should present yourself at the office (*despacho*) of my charge.

(Signed)

“VELASQUEZ.”

“Guatemala, 1st April 1846.”

Though not yet out of my difficulties, I now once more triumphed inwardly, in the anticipation of another deliverance, and communicated my hope to some friendly visitors, who came to me at the Consul's. I even thought that I could perceive how much the cause of truth must gain by such a triumph.

Having slept under the Consul's hospitable roof, I arose early, intending to go home and tranquillize my much agitated wife, before I obeyed the above order. It was before six in the morning that I issued forth from the Consul's gate with this intent. I had not, however, taken six paces in the street, when I heard a sudden rush and clanking of arms. I stood still, hoping that the soldiers might pass me in pursuit of some other; but in a moment I was surrounded, and others were seen running towards me from all directions. The officer on horseback with a drawn sword, issued from a gateway opposite, and riding up to me with menacing attitude and oaths, threatened to cut me down if I offered any resistance. The soldiers, amounting to forty or fifty men, then formed in regular order, and I was marched to the head quarters of the General. To the question where they were leading me I obtained no reply, and I entertained doubts whether they might not have orders to conduct me under the wall of the cemetery, and shoot me summarily, as I knew had too often been done with persons obnoxious to those in power.

I afterwards learned that this company of ruffianly soldiers had lain concealed all night, entirely surrounding the block of houses of which the Belgian Consulate is one. So well was this executed that no person at the Consul's or in the house opposite knew of the fact, though several passed in and out until late in the evening. The ability thus displayed is accounted for by the frequent practice which the soldiery have in taking criminals and political offenders.

At the Comandancia I found two companies drawn out before the gate, and an escort waiting in the patio. I was not kept long in suspense. The escort was marched into the middle of the street, and I was called out of the guard-room, where I had been left, to be delivered over in due form. At this moment the Corregidor appeared, with several other officers, and the street was literally full of military men. Before joining the escort, I stood in the gateway, and with as much firmness as I could command, though not without a tremor of voice, I protested against the proceeding as a violation of the constitution, and guarantees towards foreigners, and especially of the decision of the Supreme Court of Justice given the day before. I called upon all present to witness that I yielded only to violence. The Corregidor then addressed me, saying, that if I wished to be well treated I must hold my peace. Orders were given to the escort to avoid the principal streets; and having stepped in between two file of men, a serjeant and a corporal, I was marched off on foot, no horse having been provided for me, though the journey from the capital to the Port of Yzabal is more than 200 miles. At a window of Carrera's residence, which was next door to the Comandancia, I observed the President-General closely scrutinizing me as I passed.

The circumstance of my being led through the barrios, to avoid the excitement which the escort would have produced even at that early hour, in the more-frequented streets, was overruled for good. One of my scholars, whose house we passed, having caught sight of me, ran to tell my wife and my friends, who then considered me in safety. The parents of one of the scholars immediately sent a horse after me by the same messenger, who overtook the escort near the Guarda del Golfo. This boy was one of the eldest scholars, and though but recently admitted to the school, he ex-

pressed a desire to accompany me, and was much grieved when it was refused.

I had noticed that my guards were of the very worst description of Ladino soldiers—dirty, half-clad, and bare-footed. They had scarcely yet recovered from the fumes of the previous night's debauch; and their manners were brutal and insolent. On mounting my horse, which they scrutinized with bitter irony, I was told to give the reins to one of the men. I remarked that I had no intention of attempting an escape; and the hoarse laugh and significant look which accompanied their assurance that they would send leaden messengers after me if I did, were quite sufficient to convince me that I had better be silent. By the prompt kindness of the friend who sent me a horse, I was spared the additional suffering which a forced march for ten days, over rugged mountain paths, and under a broiling sun, must have occasioned. Having reached the summit of the first heights, from which the city and plain are visible, we paused for a meal; and I sent back the boy who had brought me the horse with a pencilled note of advice and encouragement to my wife, expressing the hope I entertained of my speedy return.

Having resumed our way in silence, the soldier who held the reins of my horse found it very irksome to carry his knapsack at the same time, and he entreated his comrades in vain to relieve him of it. I then told him to give it to me, and made it fast behind me upon my pillion. This little act produced an almost magic effect upon these untutored and vicious men. From that time they gradually became more friendly, and at once made me a sharer of the fruit they bought. Though they were tyrannical and violent to others, they subsequently behaved with uniform respect and considerateness to me, and appeared to be moved at the display of affection towards me which they observed in the boy who had just left us, and in the following events.

Presently we heard a horse at full gallop behind us, and we were soon overtaken by the friend who had sent me the "montura" I was upon. He expressed his sympathy with me, and his shame that the Government of his country should have lent itself to such a deed. "What will the Monarchists think of our Republics" was his remark, as if he thought that the eyes of all the world were upon them, "when they hear of a deed like this?"

Seeing that I had no *manga* or *poncho*, he generously placed his own before me, on the *halbarda*—a description of saddle, and wished me a kind farewell, saying that others were behind him.

Two more *caballeros* soon came up with the escort, which was wending its way through narrow defiles and wild glens. One of these, an intelligent *Ladino*, had lately joined the adult Bible class. He assured me that the grief of the parents of my scholars was profound; and that the tears of the aged and of children were being mingled together on my account. The road, he said, was full of my scholars, many of whom had started with the hope of overtaking me; but he had bid them turn back, as they were not likely to come up with us. He rode by my side for several leagues, and, to my surprise and joy, he administered real comfort to me in the words of Scripture, saying, "Blessed are they who are persecuted for righteousness' sake." He also entreated me to teach the soldiers as I went the same things that I had taught him out of the Bible; and to them he distributed *segars*, telling them that it was for doing good and teaching the people, and not for any crime that I was a prisoner. Before he left me, he gave me the contents of his purse, and some provisions which he had hastily purchased, and bade me an affectionate farewell. These tokens of kindness, and of the goodness of my God, were more exciting to my feelings than even the previous events had been. Another messenger brought me a change of garments, and the assurance that my wife's excitement was much soothed by the sympathy manifested by our numerous friends, who had filled the house and wept with her.

Having toiled on till the short twilight, we descended a steep mountain, and took up our quarters for the night at a place called *El Puente*, thirty miles from Guatemala. Beneath a small low shed, in an open part of the village, and near the bank of the river, a hammock was slung for my accommodation, the arms were stacked, and the tired escort lay scattered upon mats and skins on the ground around me. Confident as I felt that my absence from Guatemala would be but short—a few months at most,—yet the shock was severely felt, and the conflicting emotions and feelings of that day had exhausted my strength. I sat with my head, which ached violently, resting upon my hands, for the first time silently suffering copious tears to flow, when to my surprise I was hailed by Manuel

and Santiago, two of my little scholars before mentioned, who had walked the whole of the day without refreshment, merely that they might bid me adieu, having refused to turn back with the rest. They had also been overtaken by an Indian messenger, sent to me with letters, and who was the bearer of a sum of twenty dollars, which my scholars of the English class had collected among themselves, to assist me on the road. This I was careful to conceal from my guards, and being now quite overcome I sunk to rest, having first procured some supper for the boys, who soon ate themselves to sleep, lying upon the hard ground under my hammock. Long before the grey light of the morning, we were preparing to start again, that we might rest during the noon-day heat. The children returned unwillingly with the Indian messenger, and the dawn overtook us already far on the road.

In six days we reached Gualan, on the river Montagua. When we had approached a town or village, the escort washed their feet in some stream, and fixed their bayonets. The gazing inhabitants would probably soon hear the cause of my being a prisoner, and thus again I was made a silent witness for the Bible, and for the God of the Bible in a godless land. One of the days thus spent was the Sabbath, and I thought of the privileges which saints enjoy, in those countries where they assemble together for worship and communion. While reflecting thus, we traversed the plaza of a small town, in which a crowd of people were assembled. As we passed near them, I looked over their heads to see what they were intent upon, and I beheld two fighting cocks, one of them writhing in the agonies of a mortal wound. This was *their* holy convocation, and I felt that if highly favoured Christians could but witness the scene, they would be quickened in their prayers for this people. Long ere this, I had gained the full confidence of my guards, and repeatedly spoke to them on religious subjects, as well as occasionally to the people where we stopped, to whom I sometimes read the Scriptures. Some of the escort were Mexicans. They told me that they had been selected out of the ranks for this duty, on account of their high stature, by which I understood that the most fierce-looking men in the company had been picked out. One of them was severely beaten by the serjeant for lagging behind, having trodden upon some thorns, and wounded his foot. Soon after they were engaged around my horse, plotting the assassination of

the serjeant, who was himself a little behind. From this purpose I was enabled to deter them by persuasion and reasoning. At Guaha, which my horse was scarcely able to reach, another escort was appointed to conduct me to Yzabal. To save time and fatigue, I procured a boat to convey us to Los Eucuentros, and thence rode through the bush on a hired horse, reaching Yzabal on the same day. Here I was kindly treated by the Comandante of the port, and in a few days was put on board a native schooner for Belize, with orders that I should not be permitted to land till we arrived there. Thus, without being consulted, was I brought to the very place that I would have selected had I been left free to choose, and that too just in time to take my part with the pastor and the brethren in the events before related, as resulting from the separation of Mr. Henderson from the Baptist Missionary Society.

The first letters that I received from my wife were filled with expressions of gratitude that I had been removed from greater dangers. It was reported that a plan had been settled for my assassination during the holy week, and that the priests only regretted that I had escaped it. The obsequies of the Archbishop had been accompanied by a plot to murder the President, and many of my supporters and friends, and elder pupils, being accused as conspirators were cast into dungeons, banished, or shot. It was thought that it would have been easy for my enemies to implicate me also had I been in Guatemala.

The blacksmith before mentioned, as following the Bible class, had witnessed a good confession before many witnesses on the day of my seizure. When my school-room was again filled with visitors come to express their condolence, he boldly avowed his approval of my instructions, and said, "They have taken away my teacher, but they cannot take away what he has taught me." The young man who had been in training had made an effort with a portion of the scholars to perpetuate the school; but he had been interfered with by the authorities, and had fled, fearing for his life.

Several of the older scholars continued to correspond with me while I remained in Belize, and two of them who came to the Settlement visited me during my confinement in the jail.

The political state of the country, as already shewn, has hitherto been such as to preclude the possibility of my return.

The interval of power which the liberals enjoyed since my departure was so short that it cannot be regretted that I was not then at hand to avail myself of it.

Several efforts were made to remove my wife, also, to Belize ; but they have proved entirely abortive, on account of the physical difficulties in the way, added to her timidity and unprotected state, and the scarcity of means. The same God who watched over me continued graciously to raise up friends to her among the natives and help has repeatedly been sent to her by the Church at Belize. Nevertheless, her sufferings have been great and protracted ; but there appears reason to hope that they have not been unaccompanied by an inward blessing from on high, to which she was before a stranger.

Protracted as the period of my absence has unavoidably been, and uncertain as political events and the future generally must appear, it is still my fixed purpose, with the Divine assistance, to return to Guatemala, and to resume my labours there, so soon as that door shall be again opened in Providence. The presence there of my wife, which must have tended to keep alive the remembrance of my efforts among its inhabitants, in the midst of their late convulsions ; the desire of my heart, which has strongly entwined itself around the people and the country ; the conviction of my mind, that this is a field in which I may hope to be most successful ; and my confidence, that it was God who conducted my steps thither, and who, in His own time, also suspended my work there, all unite to induce me to believe that it is there, in the Spanish States of Central America that I am called to labour, should it be the will of my Heavenly Father to continue to employ me in the spread of His kingdom.

The accomplishment of the special mission with which I have been charged by the Church at Belize has, through adverse influences, demanded my continuance in Great Britain. It has now, also, called forth this volume, as a means of spreading and perpetuating information concerning a mission field and missionary efforts hitherto but little known, and which have a well-grounded claim upon the attention of the disciples of Christ. Should that end be even partially secured, it will be with renewed confidence in the God of providence and grace that I shall hasten

back to give a joyful account of my stewardship to the Church whose messenger I am, and to resume my efforts to propagate — by active labours in the field — THE GOSPEL IN CENTRAL AMERICA.

THE END.

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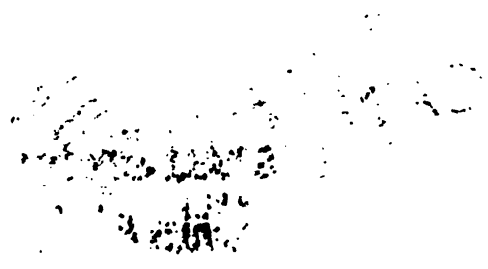
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