

EUROPE.

BILSTON CHOLERA SCHOOLS.

Saturday last, the 3d instant, Aug. being the anniversary on which the cholera commenced its dreadful ravages at Bilston last year, the schools for the education of the poor children, who have become orphans by that awful visitation were opened for their reception. Previously to this solemnity a neat and well executed medal had been prepared by Mr. Outley, of Birmingham, to commemorate the sad event, having on one side the front elevation of the school, with the following inscription:—

"Cholera Orphan School opened August 3, 1833. Number of Orphans by Cholera under 12 years of age 450." On the reverse:—

"Erected and supported by the Fund, subscribed by the British Nation, for the Relief of the Sufferers by Cholera at Bilston, in the Year 1832. Population of Bilston, 14,492. Persons attacked by Cholera, 3,568: Persons who perished by Cholera, 742: The first case, August 3rd; The last death, September 18; Amount of Contributions, 8,536l. 8s. 7d. W. Leigh, A. M., Incumbent."

In the fortnight before the opening, hand bills had been distributed through the township informing the poor sufferers that the Rev. Pastor and the Committee would sit two evenings in each week at the Sunday School-house to enroll the names of the orphans, &c., and that it was expected some friend or relation would attend with them, as no child could be admitted into the school whose name was not enrolled; and that orphans by cholera of all ages would be received and educated without any charge or cost whatever. Numerous were the applications, and each child was presented with a ticket of admission. At nine o'clock in the morning the affecting business of the day commenced: 25 at a time of these bereaved little ones were presented by their friends to the Committee of ladies and gentlemen assembled at the Sunday School-house, who in exchange for the received ticket, placed a medal round the neck of each child, suspended by a black ribbon, indicative of its mournful deprivation. These children being conducted by a lady and gentleman from each Committee, into the Cholera Schools, 25 more were brought forward, and so on until the whole number were supplied with medals. When all were assembled in the new School (which consists of two excellent and commodious rooms, one for the boys and the other for the girls, well lighted and ventilated from the top), the Reverend Incumbent offered up, in the presence of the children, their friends, and all who attended this interesting ceremony, an appropriate and most impressive prayer to Almighty God (first in the boys' school and next in the girls), imploring Him to succour, bless, and protect, the undertaking and the bereaved objects for whose benefit it was erected. The feeling manner with which this prayer was delivered, the sight of upwards of 430 destitute children, the sobbing and distress of so many poor widows, all decently dressed in mourning, with their helpless infants in their arms, together with the painful recollections of the months of August and September last year, were most affecting—indeed what must be that person's heart who could witness such a scene as this unmoved! There was not an adult present who was not affected to tears, and many a tear, was seen trickling down the cheeks even of little ones who might have been supposed too young to understand or to feel their unhappy situation.

A procession was then formed in the following order:—
The Rev. Wm. Leigh, preceded by the Beadle of St. Leonard's;
The Committee of Ladies;
The Female Orphans who were able to walk;
Widows (and other friends of the female children) carrying those Orphans who were too young to walk;
The Rev. H. S. Fletcher, and the Dis-senting Ministers of various denominations, preceded by the Beadle of St. Mary's;
The Committee of Gentlemen;
Orphan Boys who could walk;
Widows and other Friends carrying the Male Infants.

This arranged, the procession moved from the Cholera School and proceeded through the principal part of the town in solemn silence and in tears, amidst thousands of sympathizing spectators, to the Church of St. Leonard, where the morning service was performed by the Rev. W. Leigh, the worthy incumbent, who selected for the occasion those beautiful psalms, the 34th, 91st, and the 121st, and for the lessons, the 17th chapter of the 1st Book of Kings and the 11th chapter of St. John's Gospel. After prayers, the Rev. Gentleman delivered to the congregation, consisting of nearly 3,000 persons, an extensive address in the most eloquent, impressive, and affecting manner, which was listened to with intense interest and attention, and when he particularly addressed the poor children, the Rev. Gentleman himself was so much overcome as to be unable for some time to proceed. It was most gratifying to see the effect his impressive address had upon these children, who were anxious enough to comprehend and appreciate the address they had sustained, when their departed parents were alluded to.

After the morning service had concluded, the children were conducted to Mount Pleasant, and being arranged in files, each child received a large piece of plum cake and a glass of wine. This terminated this most solemn and affecting ceremony, which was conducted, throughout with the

utmost regularity and decorum, and it was highly pleasing to see the children so decently and cleanly clad.

RICHARD LANDER'S EXPEDITION.

To the Editor of the Literary Gazette.

Custom House, Liverpool, 21st July, 1833.

Sir—Knowing the lively interest you take in my brother's welfare, and the success of the expedition of which he has the command, any news of him will, I am quite sure be highly acceptable to you. Various reports of a discouraging but contradictory nature have been recently circulated here in regard to the expedition, which are pretty generally believed; but I am happy to say, many of these reports are destitute of all foundation, and others are so grossly exaggerated, that the truth can with difficulty be discovered in the maze of error and falsehood in which it is entangled. May I therefore, be permitted to inform you of all that is known at present of the expedition to the Niger, though the accounts are so meagre as almost to require an apology on my part for presuming to trouble you with a recital of them.

You are already apprised of the decease of Captain Harris of the *Qowara*, and of the arrival of both steamers at the *Eboe* country. You are also aware that the sailing brig *Columbine* was to remain at the mouth of the *Nun River* to await their return. By a letter received from a medical gentleman at *Old Calabar*, dated April 19th, I learn that "as a vessel called the *Martha* of this port was passing the *Nun*, on her destination to the *Old Calabar River*, she was hailed by a boat's crew from the *Columbine*. When received on board, the men stated that the captain of their vessel had died three weeks previously; that they had been reduced to great distress from the refusal of the natives to sell them provisions, from which extremity they were relieved by an American vessel which had happily just entered the river; and that they had themselves ventured over the bar to crave further assistance from the *Martha*. When questioned about the steamboats, they declared they had received no intelligence whatsoever, respecting them, though five months had elapsed from the period of their departure.

In allusion to this letter, I would venture to observe that the people inhabiting the banks of the *Nun River* are exceedingly poor and destitute, being themselves very frequently in want of the necessaries of life. Their alleged refusal to assist the crew of the *Columbine* must have arisen from their utter inability to do so, rather than from any display of heartless indifference to the sufferings of our countrymen, though, Heaven knows, the poor wretches are bad enough at times. In regard to the non-arrival of information from the steamers in the interior, a thousand conjectures might be hazarded. For my own part, I see no great reason to wonder at this delay, chiefly because I am convinced that no intercourse is, or can, under existing circumstances, be established between any part of the interior and the coast. This would be at variance with the barbarous policy of the barbarous tribes inhabiting the country in the vicinity of the sea. They would not suffer a messenger from the interior to escape their vigilance. Were any one to attempt the journey, he would infallibly be captured and sold; therefore, unless our countrymen were themselves to descend the *Niger*, and be the bearers of their own despatches, I see no possibility of any communication being carried on between the steamers in the interior and the sailing brig on the coast.

A letter has just been received by a gentleman at this port from a young friend in the *Boony River*; it is dated 17th May. Adverting to the expedition, the writer says—"When we passed the *River Nun*, the *Columbine* was lying there, but nothing had been heard of the steamers that went up the country. I was told this by the Captain of the *Curley* sloop-of-war, who was on board the *Columbine* about a month ago. I gave him all the letters I had for the expedition, as he said he would return to the *Bras River* at the end of two or three weeks; a great many have died on board the brig."

Still more recent accounts, which I have been able to collect from individuals who have within these few days arrived from *Bonny*, confirm the accuracy of these statements, and give a still higher colouring to the distresses of the crew of the *Columbine*. One of them states, that the acting master and a boy were the only survivors on board; and that these solitary individuals had sent to *Bonny* for assistance. However, I am disposed to doubt the truth of this report, simply because it was brought to *Bonny* by a native trader, whose steadiness and veracity could not be depended on. An intelligent young gentleman informed me yesterday, that about the latter end of May a rumour prevailed very generally from *Accra* to *Badagry*, that "the white men in the *walking canoes* were in good health, and were trading a long way back in the bush."

I cannot close this letter without expressing you of a fact, which will appear incredible to you. Can you believe me when I assert, on the most unquestionable authority, that there are merchants here so heartless and inhuman as to instruct the masters of their vessels who trade to the *African coast*, to "refuse any assistance to the expedition, of which it may stand in need; to reject all letters that may be sent from the parties connected with it; and, in fine, to hold no communication whatever with the steamers of the brig?" Does it not startle you, that jealousy and selfishness can go so far?—Believe me, I blush at the reflection of a crime so heinous and so English as this, I am, &c.

JOHN LANDER.

N. B. The fact of the merchants' instructions to the masters of their vessels may be safely depended on. Nothing can be more true. They had gone even farther than I have ventured to hint. They have taken measures to prejudice the minds of the natives against the expedition.

The late Mr. Wilberforce.—The following requisition has been sent to the son of this benevolent man, on the subject of a public funeral:—

"TO THE REV. H. W. WILBERFORCE.

"We the undersigned Members of both Houses of Parliament, being anxious upon public grounds to show our respect for the late William Wilberforce, and being also satisfied that public honours can never be more fitly bestowed than upon such benefactors of mankind, earnestly request that he may be buried in Westminster Abbey, and that we and others who may agree with us in these sentiments, may have permission to attend his funeral.

"William Frederick, Brougham, (C.), Eldon, Lansdowne, (P. C.), Vassel, Holland, Westminster, Clarendon, Essex, Clifton, Wellesley, Grey, Bexley, Sidmouth, Gratton, W. Cantuar, Ripon (P. S.), Wellington, Haddington, Plunkett, J. Lincoln, E. Chichester, Bristol, Gosford, Harrowby, Albemarle, C. J. London, Godolphin, Rosslyn, Calthorpe, Dule, Denbigh, Ducie, Caledon, Clanciarde, Morley, Edward Hereford, Daere, Charles Lemon, E. Knatchbull, J. H. Langston, Alexander Baring, Stephen Lushington, J. Scarlett, J. Byng, &c. &c."

Mr. Wilberforce's family have complied with the request, and the funeral will take place this day at 1 o'clock. The Members of the Houses of Lords and Commons will proceed from their respective Houses of Parliament to Westminster Abbey at 12.—Aug. 3.

SOCIAL CONDITION OF THE WEST INDIES.

Domestic Manners and Social Condition of the White, Coloured, and Negro Population of the West Indies. By Mrs. Carmichael, five years a resident in St. Vincent and Trinidad, 2 vols. 12 mo. London, 1833. Whittaker, Teacher & Co.

This publication is so politically well-timed, that we have no doubt it will attract much popular attention, though its statements are anything but favourable to the views taken of the West Indies, of the planters, and of the slaves, by a most zealous and active party in this country. Mrs. Carmichael, a Scottish lady, accompanied her husband, a planter and proprietor of slaves, to St. Vincent's in 1829; and she has here given us her impressions as an intelligent and respectable female, in such a situation, observant of the most common and minute details of society. We have hitherto had nothing so full of little domestic particulars; and in this light these volumes will be read with curiosity. On the broader questions at issue between the abolitionists and the colonists, it is not our province to dwell; but it is our duty, as fair reporters upon what issues from the press, to say, that Mrs. Carmichael's facts and reasoning are all opposed to the anti-slavery representations and tend to support the opinions maintained by those who advocate the West India interests, and insist on the inexpediency and danger of interfering too much with the existing state of things.

According to her, the slaves are infinitely better off and much happier than European labourers; and the grant of freedom (which they of themselves do not want) would only render them idle, and consequently wretched. We shall, as an example, instance a few of her statements and arguments.

"I will venture to assert, that there is no class of men on earth more calumniated than the West India planters. I do not speak at present (for that I shall enlarge upon in due time) of their conduct towards the negro population. I speak of their general character and mode of life, as members of society. I had heard, and I had heard, West India planters spoken of as a peculiar race of men; imperious, unpunished—men who had raised themselves from poverty to affluence, and who reclined in the lap of luxury in tropical ease,—each a bashaw, lordly over the creatures of his little dominion. It is no doubt certain that there are individuals in the West Indies who have raised themselves, probably from very low situations, to what may be called a comfortable independence; but it is scarcely necessary for me to say, that the affluence which once in some degree existed, is to be found no more; and it would now be more correct to say, that, with very few exceptions, they, although nominally proprietors, are really nothing else than the farmer for the British merchant, who receives their annual produce. The planters (at least I have not met with one exception) are hard working men; up before sunrise, and often the first in the field of a morning, and generally the last there at night. Many of them in these hard times keep no manager, and have only one or two overseers to assist in the regulation of the estate, without whom the business of the estate could not go on; and these must be white men, that is to say, not men of colour, for of course there can be no objection to a Creole. It has been more than once attempted in St. Vincent, and I may say in all the colonies, to introduce a coloured overseer, but the negroes have uniformly resisted it—they having a most decided dislike to the coloured population.

West Indians do not now shrink from investigation on the subject of kindness to their people, neither need they do so; from a fair impartial investigation they have nothing to fear. What they justly dread, is that despicable system of espionage which is so boldly carried on and encouraged, by those, too, who ought to know better than to listen to the descriptions of persons who never mixed in decent society in the colonies; and whose observations can only be derived from second hand, and, there can be little doubt, often from the lower orders of coloured people. This is not the place to describe the effect produced upon the negro by the sweeping aspersions laid to the charge of the white population; but it is now too late to soften the bitter cup of calamity that many an European family has had to drink. More than one proprietor I have seen sink to the grave under his accumulated feelings of disappointment at finding his character so unjustly attacked, and his worldly prospects completely crushed, while his afflicted family were bereaved of a husband and a father, and reduced to work for their own support, early and late, to procure a miserable pittance. There are not a few at this moment in these lamentable circumstances, who were kind benevolent owners of negroes, and whose people, though of course no longer belonging to them, visit them and feel for their taking provisions frequently from their own grounds to their old Misses. Negroes are by no means the stupid beings some people suppose them to be; they know very well the mistake that is doing well, and the one that is sink-

ing; and they can trace from cause to effect more accurately than some may imagine. I recollect a negro coming one day to my door in April 1833: she had two trays, one upon her head full of plantains, and another on her arm with some fruit. After purchasing some pines, I asked her if the plantains were for sale; she said 'No'; and, with a tear in her eye, added 'I'm going to carry them to my old misses—she be very kind to me when I was her nigger; my misses knowed better time, but had tided now misses, bad times; my misses had plenty nigger, and her husband, and fine pie-a-ninies; but dem bad times come, and so you see dem sell one, two, tree,—I no know how many nigger, till at last massa die. I believe he die of a broke heart: so we just go now and den to see misses, and gie her some yam, or some plantain, or any little ting just to help her.' This negress had no provision grounds of her own, being a domestic slave, and therefore must have actually purchased, or at least bartered something of her own to procure the plantains for her old mistress. This is no uncommon case; but in Trinidad I saw more of such, where the distress of the white population was even much greater than in St. Vincent.

After describing the wants and woes of the free persons of colour in the lower ranks, Mrs. C. exclaims:—

"How different is this from the coloured domestic slave! He has the same money weekly for his allowance—the same privileges from his master's table: he is furnished with an annual supply of linen, jean and nankeen trousers, that would rather astound our good English housewives; his clothes are washed, smoothed and mended for him, without one thought or anxiety on his part; he has every comfort in sickness—medical advice, and all incidental expenses provided, and, if required, a sick nurse in attendance. Should he have a family, no child he has is any burden to him; or else if his wife belong to the same master, his children increase his comforts; their allowances commence from the day of their birth, and it is some years before they can consume all he receives from them. No accident, disabling him from work, deprives him of a home, food, clothing, or any necessary comfort; and he looks forward to old age without anxiety, or the chilling dread of poverty, for himself or his family.

Many of the free, and not a few of the coloured slave domestics, of both sexes, have been in England. I have conversed with several of them, but they all disliked it, and uniformly upon the same grounds; let the detail of one conversation serve as a specimen:—E. had been long a female coloured slave, occupied principally about the children of the family to which she belonged. She was what may be termed a very superior servant; she was uniformly extremely well dressed, always wearing stockings and shoes, with many expensive ornaments, and nice Madras handkerchiefs for her turbans. She had gone home with her master's family, and resided some time with them in England; though not at all clever, she was polite in her manners, and had no want of common sense. She had permission from the attorney to work out for herself, therefore she paid him a certain sum, and he furnished her with all she required. Her employment was working with the needle. I asked her how she liked England; 'Not very well, misses.' 'No! what did you dislike there?' 'Misses, England be had there, fine shop and all that; but, misses, England very bad country for poor servant. Misses, I feared me to see how the servant work there, and they no thought nothing of neither; misses, they work so hard; up early, misses, they no stop work sometime past midnight, and then their massa and misses take no thought of them when they be old; they no give them house to live in, misses, I'd think it very hard if I worked for my massa all the time I'm able, and then when I get old he no give me house, nor nothing. Misses, a slave here be much more thought of than poor English servant.' I told her that it was very true; but that, in consideration for the loss of some of these advantages some thought it a sufficient equivalent to be free and no longer a slave. 'Well, misses,' added she, 'what signify free if we starve?' That many of the coloured slave population see the superior worldly comforts they enjoy, compared with their white brethren in free service in Great Britain, I have had abundant evidence.

"Of all the diseases to which negroes are liable, none is so difficult of cure as the *mal d'estomac*; and as this disease is of great importance, and is extremely curious, from its connexion with dirt-eating, I make no apology for speaking at some length of one or two particular cases. This disease assumes different forms; but in most cases, it is attended by deep depression of spirits, and this not only in adults, but in young subjects."

Several instances are mentioned, and in one of them Mrs. C. tells—

"I never saw any one eat dirt as he did: I have seen him sweep all the dry dust round the servants' houses into a heap, and then actually lie down and put his mouth to it, licking it up as if it had been the greatest delicacy. Medicine he had of every description; fresh food and salt food—every thing was tried; but nothing short of bodily confinement could prevent him of eating dirt. The effect of whipping was tried upon him, but this produced no change; he was then brought beside us to eat, and I saw him devour an amazing quantity of good soup three times a day; but the moment he thought no one saw him he returned to his habit; and if he could not get dry earth, he used to pull up the grass, and shaking the earth that was attached to the roots, put it into his mouth, as any other child would have done with sweetmeats."

In other places Mrs. C. gives an account of her endeavours to instruct the slaves, and turn that instruction to moral and practical utility, in which she utterly failed.

"I believe (she remarks) novelty at first made them willing to attend; but when this charm was gone, they preferred sleeping away the evening. I think, had I instructed them without referring to practical duties, as incumbent upon those who meant to lead a new life and become really Christians, they would not have left of attending; so soon as I knew they were sufficiently instructed to be able to follow the only valuable use of religious knowledge, viz. the personal application of it, I used to insist upon this, and they uniformly manifested a great aversion to such doctrine. When I found them stealing, lying, or acting cruelly to each other, I took them aside, and endeavoured kindly to point to them their sin, as hateful in the sight of God—that they knew this, and that God would judge them by the knowledge they now possessed: it is hardly to be expressed how they dislike such a mode of correction, and indeed they do me that they would rather be flogged as be flogged so! But I had a great aversion to corporal punishment: and was most desirous that an appeal to the feelings, aided by moral and religious instruction, should enable us to banish all such debasing

methods. On these principles, I proceeded, and followed them up practically—but I failed completely in success, until our servants were justly considered the pest of the neighbourhood; for they became so bold (knowing that they would be exempt from corporal punishment), that their conduct became insupportable, and beyond all comparison more practically wicked than when I began to instruct them. B. and one or two more, were for a time the most finished hypocrites I ever beheld; they had learnt at chapel to groan, turn up their eyes, and, indeed, as well as all St. Vincent negroes, to say 'please God' at every sentence. Tell a child to bring a tea-cup from the pantry, and the answer is sure to be, 'Yes, misses, please God, I'll do so directly.' I did all I could to break them of such expressions, as originating in hypocrisy, and as utterly disgusting in common conversation. I have met with some in Britain who were of opinion that 'if the Lord will' ought to be used upon all occasions; for every thing, say they, is uncertain in this world—but to use this, or any other similar expression, upon all occasions, degenerates into the ludicrous, and indeed, becomes irreverence towards the Deity. Suppose, when a mistress of a family orders dinner, that her servants answer, 'Yes, ma'am, if the Lord will,' is not such an answer calculated to excite the risible faculties, then to raise in the mind any recollection of the uncertainty of earthly affairs? It is a thousand pities that the negroes have acquired these hypocritical forms, which considered as they are by the negroes as the sign of Christianity, stand in the way of their advancement in true religion. Judging by the conduct of those negroes who were the most regular attendants at the Methodist chapel, I am unwillingly driven to believe that the Methodist missions have done little for the cause of true religion, and have rather helped to foster dangerous delusions. The Methodists, I fear, have done harm; for they have diffused a general feeling among the negro population, that abstaining from dancing, from drinking (a vice, by the way, which negroes are rarely prone to), and a certain phraseology, which is mere form on their part, is Christianity. Now it would be much better if the negroes were taught that lying, stealing, cruelty to each other, or the brute creation, slander, and disobedience, were sins in the sight of God, rather than their antipathies against dancing—the favourite, and let me say, the innocent recreation of the negroes; unless when it trenches, as it sometimes does, upon the sacredness of the Sabbath. Religion of this kind is the thing to take with the negro; it invokes no self-denial excepting dancing; and the renunciation of gay clothes and jewellery; but as the negroes are of dancing and fine clothes, they are more willing to yield upon these points than they are to abstain from lying, theft, fighting, cruelty, or slandering their neighbours. It is not my intention to represent the Methodists as approving or disregarding the sins of lying, theft, &c.; I only mean to say, that they insist very much more upon the sin of what they term 'vain amusements and dress,' (and here I use the very words of a negro) upon this subject, than upon lying, theft, fighting, cruelty, and slander. Now the fact is, that the Methodists are not in a condition to know much of the every-day action of the negroes who are slaves; but the noise of dancing is constantly obtruded upon them. The one they see; the other they do not see; and associating very little with those who alone could give them a true picture of the manners and habits of slaves, they are necessarily, to a great extent, ignorant of the true character, or the necessary management of the slave population.

Our Parliamentary discussions are affirmed to have produced the worst consequences.

"The negroes from this moment believed that Mass King George had said they were all to be free—a term very differently understood by the negroes and by their advocates on this side of the water. By free a Briton means that the negro is no longer the property of his master, but situated as labourers in England; that is, he is to work for his own and his family's support, or starve. But the word free means quite another thing in the negro sense; for they tell me that it means 'there is to be no massa at all, and Massa King George is to buy all the estate and gie them to live upon;' for as they have often added to me—'Misses, what signify free, if we have to work; if we be to work, we just as soon and sooner work for white massa than any one; white massa deal better than black mass; and as for slave that signify nothing at all; for if we be to work, we're better slave than free, misses.' This is the genuine sentiment of not one, but almost all negroes; and freedom to them without a total exemption from regular work, would not be the majority be considered a boon, but the very reverse.

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FRANCIS BEVERLY.
Freetown, 4th June, 1833.

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