

“Up to this time (the conclusion of the treaty with the Attah of Eggarah) the Expedition,” says Dr. MacWilliam, “had been fortunate beyond all expectation. The Delta had been passed, and we were entering the valley of the Niger, under circumstances seemingly the most auspicious. The crews contemplated with delight the novel and diversified scenery of the high land before them. With such prospects, so favourable beyond all anticipation, it is not to be wondered at if we indulged a rather sanguine hope that the continuance of health would be granted to us, and that we should, under Providence, thus be enabled to persevere in the great object of our mission But it was otherwise ordained.” *

On the 4th of September fever of a most malignant character broke out in the Albert, and almost simultaneously in the other vessels. The Expedition, notwithstanding, proceeded towards the confluence of the Niger and Tchadda.†

The country was remarkably well cultivated, and in excellent order; plantains, yams, Indian corn, and cotton being still the principal occupants of the soil.‡ The villagers had large farms of Guinea corn, which grew beautifully, and did credit to their industry.§ The town of Adda Kuddu was found to be in a ruinous condition, having been destroyed by the Fulatahs. The soil was a rich vegetable mould. Castor oil, cotton, indigo, and other plants were abundant.|| Mr. Schön observed a mallam or priest wearing a silk robe of native manufacture; the weaving was done remarkably well; the silk could not weigh less than seven or eight pounds.¶

An agreement had already been made with the Attah for the cession of land at the confluence for a model

* Dr. MacWilliam, p. 74.

† Captain Trotter's Report, P.P. p. 91.

‡ Mr. Schon, p. 106.

|| Dr. MacWilliam, p. 77.

§ Mr. Crowther, p. 295.

¶ Mr. Schon, p. 116.

farm. A tract of land was chosen near Mount Patteh, where the soil, although not of the best quality, grew a considerable quantity of cotton*, and there seemed every probability that coffee would grow on the hills.†

The natives of these parts were exposed to the ravages of the slave-trading Fulatahs: but, as the Commissioners observed —

“The mere occupation of one or two stations by a few British subjects would have the effect of establishing confidence among the natives, who once assured of the protecting care of Great Britain, would be easily induced to build up their former habitations, and thus furnish an useful population, and have a beneficial effect on the surrounding tribes.” ‡

These observations coincided exactly with Mr. Macqueen’s opinion (formed from the reports of previous travellers), who wrote with reference to a settlement at the confluence, that “a city built at that point, under the protecting wings of Great Britain, would, ere long, become the capital of Africa. Fifty millions of people, nay, even a greater number, would be dependent on it.”§

As soon as the land had been selected for the model farm, the people in the vicinity brought abundance of provisions to the new settlement for sale, and those who had nothing to dispose of came and hired themselves as labourers: nothing could exceed the good feeling shown by the natives on every occasion.|| Cotton cloths of good manufacture, spun cotton, calabashes beautifully carved and ornamented, tobacco, camwood balls, shea butter, dried buffalo flesh, and

* Despatch from the Commissioners, P.P. p. 41.

† Mr. Schön, p. 118.

‡ Despatch from the Commissioners, P.P. p. 41.

§ Quoted in the “Slave Trade and Remedy,” p. 356.

|| Mr. Cook’s Report, P.P. p. 159.

dried fish, were brought on board in great quantities. As with most Africans, traffic seemed to be the predominant passion with the people, with a good share of dexterity in turning a bargain to their own account.*

“So far,” says Mr. Commissioner Cook, “the object of the Expedition had been attained, and everything promised a favourable termination to the mission.” But now the sickness on board increased with such appalling rapidity that Captain Trotter deemed it advisable to send the sick back to the sea in the Soudan, in charge of Lieutenant Fishbourne, who displayed equal zeal and ability in rapidly bringing the vessel through the difficult navigation of the river, notwithstanding the disabled state of the crew. At the mouth of the Nun, the Dolphin, Commander Littlehales, fortunately encountered the Soudan, and immediately relieved her of the sick, conveying them to Ascension.

The intelligence that the Soudan had returned to Fernando Po, and that nine men had died of the fever, reached England in the beginning of December. It may well be conceived how this news was felt by the friends of the cause in England. Sir Fowell Buxton writes to his son : —

“Northrepps Hall, Dec. 4. 1841.

“I was very glad to receive your letter, reminding me that, in such a storm, there is but one anchor; but that one all sufficient. The blow, however, is tremendous. There is no comfort to be found under it, save in the assurance that it is the will and the work of our merciful God. Mysterious it certainly is, but could we survey the whole, there can be no doubt we should perceive that all was done in true mercy and never-failing love. Our text for the day has been, ‘Therefore will we not fear, though the earth be removed, and though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea.’ The sympathy of dear Catherine’s letter was quite charming—it has been a great comfort

* Dr. MacWilliam, p. 83.

both to my wife and me. I think Sir Robert Inglis could not have done a better thing than asking the Bishop to prepare a prayer for us. How extremely gratified I shall be if a day is appointed for the purpose!"

To the same.

"December 6. 1841.

"Even now I do not wish the whole effort undone. A way, I firmly believe, is opened for the missionary into the heart of Africa, and we have found, in some respects, greater facilities than we expected. And is the price we have to pay so intolerably heavy? Is the loss of nine men enough to damp all our zeal, and quench all our courage? Would it have been enough if we had been at war with the French, or the Americans, or even the Chinese, to stop us? Would the public feeling have been quite satisfied if it were said, 'Why, we have lost nine men; we must give over; it would be madness to fight any longer!' Oh! but war with France is quite a different case; great national interests are concerned. And are no interests concerned in the overthrow of the slave trade, in the spread of Gospel light over the darkness of Africa, in the addition of a fourth quarter to the productions and the requirements of the world? Not only the interests of the nation, but those of human nature, are concerned in this expedition; and it is not a trifle that shall put us to flight. Perhaps these very calamities have been sent in order to try us, and to ascertain whether we have faith enough, sufficient reliance on the promises of God to hear our prayers, and to be near us in our trials. It may be that, after all, a better day is now dawning for Africa, and I am disposed to believe that this is the fact, and that if we do our part manfully we shall not be defeated, even in this very expedition."

The next tidings which reached England did not confirm this hope. The sickness still continuing, Captain Trotter was compelled, on the 21st of September, to direct the Wilberforce to follow the Soudan to the sea, whilst he and Captain Bird Allen pushed forward in the *Albert* in hopes of reaching Rabba, a very large town, the capital of the Fulatahs. After leaving the confluence,

the banks of the river were found to be better peopled, and "a great many villages" were observed. In the market-place of Gori were not less than from 1500 to 2000 people. The articles exposed for sale were bags of salt from Rabba, tobos of various colours, country cloths, camwood in balls, iron-work, as hoes and shovels, Indian corn, ground nuts, twine, silk, seeds of various kinds, shea butter, straw hats with enormous brims, platters of wood, and calabashes beautifully carved.*

Mr. Schön also mentions "several large bags of cotton in its raw state." He asserts that the price of cotton there could not be less than in England; but, he adds, "it is true that they might grow ten thousand times the quantity they are now growing.† The trade of dyeing blue was carried on there: the blacksmith was busy at his anvil, and the grinders of the Guinea corn at the stones."‡

The district of Gori is dependent on the Attah of Eggarah, and, accordingly, the treaty formed with him was acknowledged as binding by the inhabitants. Captain Trotter, having found there some slaves in a canoe, liberated them after a formal trial. The owners pleaded ignorance of the new law, and were therefore suffered to retain the canoe. The poor slaves fell on their knees to Captain Trotter in token of gratitude for their liberation. Both the owner of the slaves, and the son of the Attah, who attended the trial as his father's representative, at once acquiesced in the justice of Captain Trotter's decision. §

When some weeks afterwards the Albert descended the river, the Commissioners found that at Budda, the

* Dr. MacWilliam, p. 87.

† Mr. Schön, p. 143.

§ Captain Trotter's Report, P.P. p. 96.

‡ Mr. Crowther, p. 305.

farthest point of the Attah's territory, he had faithfully proclaimed the law against slave trading:—

“The inhabitants,” says Mr. Schön, “candidly admitted that Budda had ever been a great slave market, but said that from the time they heard that the Attah abolished the slave trade they relinquished it altogether. They were glad to hear that an English settlement had been commenced at the confluence, and said that they would go and see how white people built houses and made farms; and they would settle near them to be protected from the Fulatahs. The same desire was expressed at Kinami, a few miles farther,—the first village in the Nufi country, which is tributary to the powerful and warlike Fulatah nation, who keep the Nufis in continual terror. The inhabitants of Kinami are estimated at 1000 by Captain Trotter. They occupy themselves in weaving, and carry on some trade with Egga, in country cloths, ivory, and bees' wax.”

The Albert reached Egga, the largest Nufi town, on the 28th of September.

Some alarm was found to have been excited there by the news of the seizure of the slaves at Gori. But when the nature of the treaty under which the seizure had taken place was explained to the Governor, he was quite satisfied, and expressed himself desirous that the slave trade should also be abolished in the Nufi country.* He, however, declined entering into any treaty without the permission of his superior, the king of Rabba: stating, that he did not think the Fulatahs would be willing to relinquish the slave trade. Mr. Schön spoke very earnestly upon the subject to a slave dealer in the market. The man replied, “that all he said was very true, and that if the King of Rabba would make a law against it, he should be as glad of it as any person, and that the people in general would willingly give it up.”

* Captain Trotter's Report, P. P. p. 97.

“To gain over the Fulatahs,” adds Mr. Schön, “is certainly a most desirable thing, as then the axe would be laid to the root of the slave trade in this part of Africa.”*

Egga was the largest town yet seen on the banks of the river; the population was reckoned at seven or eight thousand.† The people were in general tall and well made; the form of the head, the countenance, and the lighter shade of the colour of the skin, indicated an intermixture of the Caucasian with the Negro race.‡

At Egga the manufacturing of country cloths was found to be the principal occupation of the people. There were no less than 200 looms employed in various parts of the town, sometimes as many as ten in one place. The looms are very simple, and the cloth uncommonly neat, never being wider than three inches: some is quite white; some striped, white, blue, and red. The dye is likewise made by themselves: the blue colour is made with indigo, of which they possess a large quantity, dye-pits being seen everywhere; the red colour is obtained from camwood.§ “The people desired me,” says Mr. Crowther, “to tell them what kind of country cloth I should like, that they might get it ready against our coming this way again.”||

The cotton is purchased from the left bank of the river, where it is said to grow in great abundance. They commence planting it after the first fall of rain, and five months afterwards it is fit for use.¶

At Egga, Captain Trotter had reached a point 320 miles from the sea. He had accomplished his object with respect to two of the three kingdoms to which he

* Mr. Schön, p. 178.

† Dr. MacWilliam, p. 92.

|| Mr. Schön, p. 331.

† Ibid. p. 180.

§ Mr. Schön, p. 174.

¶ Ibid. p. 157.

had been sent; but he was now compelled to relinquish his hope of completing his work by reaching the town of Rabba. "A very little mediation on our parts," he observes, "might probably have had the effect of making the Nufi nation more independent, and less oppressed, and have tended materially to the diminution of the slave trade."* But the sickness on board had become so very alarming, that it was found absolutely necessary, on the 4th of October, to steam down the river with all speed. Captain Bird Allen, who had been most anxious to persevere, and in fact almost all the officers and men on board, except the negroes, were seized with the deadly fever. Captain Trotter himself was at length disabled by it: and at this critical period the engineers also were too ill to perform their duty! Dr. Stranger (the geologist), however, having learned how to manage the engines from a scientific treatise on board, undertook to work them himself; and Dr. Mac-William, in addition to his laborious duties in attending the sick, conducted the ship down the river, with the assistance of only one white sailor, "in the most able and judicious manner."

"One of the officers," writes Mr. Schön on the 8th of October, "is apparently dying; many are still suffering; and others, though free from fever, are in such a state of debility that they will not be able to do duty for a considerable time. * * * Nothing that I have hitherto seen or felt can be compared with our present condition." "Yet," he afterwards adds, "there was not one of those whom I attended in their sickness and at their death, but who knew perfectly well that the climate of Africa was dangerous in the extreme, and had *counted the cost* before engaging in the hazardous undertaking. And, to their honour be it mentioned, no expression of disappointment or regret did I ever hear; on the contrary, they appeared in

* Despatch from Captain Trotter, P. P. p. 44.

general to derive no small consolation from the conscious purity of their motives, and the goodness of the cause in which they had voluntarily embarked.*

“When the *Albert* approached the model farm,” says Dr. MacWilliam, “the quantity of cleared land and the advance made in the building of the superintendent’s house induced us to hope that he and the two Europeans had been mercifully protected from disease; but in these hopes we were doomed to disappointment.” †

Mr. Carr, Mr. Kingdon, and Mr. Ansell were all ill, and had to be taken on board. But the negroes, none of whom had suffered from the fever, were left at the settlement, under the care of Mr. Moor, an American negro. The *Amelia* schooner was left at anchor with a black crew for the protection of the settlers. The natives had shown a great readiness to engage as labourers at the model farm. “They had been on all occasions most friendly to the settlers, and abundance of provisions and labour had been easily procured at a moderate price.” ‡

Dr. MacWilliam informs us that when the *Albert* reached Aboh —

“Obi and his people brought abundance of wood, besides goats, fowls, yams, and plantains. His prompt assistance to us on this occasion was of the highest importance. He is decidedly a fine character, and assuredly did not discredit the high opinion we had already formed of him. He was melted into pity when he saw the captains sick in the cabin.”

While the *Albert* was still a hundred miles from the sea, its disabled crew were surprised and delighted by seeing a steamer coming up the stream towards them. It proved to be the *Ethiope*, commanded by Captain Beecroft, who had been directed by Mr. Jamieson to

* Mr. Schön, p. 243.

† Dr. MacWilliam, p. 99.

‡ *Ibid.* p. 100.

afford every assistance to the Expedition. This timely assistance was of the greatest importance. Captain Beecroft and his engineer took charge of the *Albert*, and brought her in safety to Fernando Po. It was hoped that Captain Bird Allen and his gallant fellow-sufferers would rapidly revive under the influence of its purer air; but many were already too much sunk to receive benefit, and the mortality was most painful. Of the 301 persons who composed the Expedition when it commenced the ascent of the Niger, forty-one perished from the African fever. It may be worth while to observe, that of about 150 Africans on board not one died from the effects of the disease. Captain Bird Allen fell a victim to it, at Fernando Po, on the 21st of October.

Thus failed the NIGER EXPEDITION. From the facts stated by all the different gentlemen who were on board, and who have written accounts of what they saw, and also from the direct assertions of the four commissioners, it would appear that nothing but the climate prevented the Expedition from fulfilling the most sanguine hopes of its promoters.

“On its own part it possessed, in vain,” as was remarked by a contemporary writer, “all that modern science and human skill — all that undaunted courage and determined enterprise—could contribute to success. To its officers and men, dead as well as living, the highest credit appears to be due; they conquered every thing but impossibilities; nature they could not conquer, and they only ceased to persevere when the survivors had almost ceased to live.”*

* The opinion of the Government is given in the following letter from the Under Secretary for the Colonies, G. W. Hope, Esq., to Captain Trotter, R. N.

“ Sir,

“ Downing Street, April 3. 1842.

“ I am directed by Lord Stanley to acknowledge the receipt of your

On the other hand, the natives proved to be far more inclined to trade, and far less barbarous and disorganised, than could have been supposed possible in so secluded a part of Africa. They eagerly sought the protection of the British from their slave-trading oppressors, the Fulatahs; and that protection it would have been perfectly easy to give. The country, although some thought it less fertile than had been anticipated, was found to produce cotton, sugar-cane, coffee, indigo, ginger, arrow-root, dyewoods, magnificent timber for ship-building, palm-oil, and many other important articles of commerce. Ivory also was frequently seen.

“The banks of the Niger,” writes Captain W. Allen, “are populous, with the exception of the neighbourhood of the Mangrove Swamps: but wherever man has been able to get a firm footing, he has cleared away a patch for cultivation, and has built his hut. These are found to increase rapidly as we ascend the river. Large villages, towns, and even populous cities are met with. The banks of the Tchadda, however, have been almost depopulated by the frequent slave-catching expeditions. The country on both sides nevertheless is capable of supporting prodigious numbers: the luxuriance of the vegetation is beyond belief, and the palm-tree, which would form a groundwork for national wealth and prosperity, grows in the greatest abundance. * * * The strongest characteristic of the people is the love of traffic; it is indeed their ruling passion. Every town has a market, generally once in four days; but the principal feature is in the large fairs held at different points in the river, about once a fortnight, for what may be called their

letter of March 15., transmitting your Report of the Proceedings of the late Niger Expedition entrusted to your command.

“His Lordship desires me to take this opportunity of conveying to yourself, and to the other Members of the late Expedition, an expression of the sense entertained by his Lordship of the zeal and ability manifested by yourself and those under your command, in the attempt to execute the objects of the Expedition, under very difficult circumstances, and at great personal risk to all who were engaged in it.

“I am, &c.

“G. W. HOPE.”

foreign trade, or intercourse with neighbouring nations † * * * Here, then, we have an immense and highly productive country, at no great distance from our shores, and which may even be said to diminish daily by the improvements in steam navigation. The nations inhabiting this valuable region are desirous of being supplied with our manufactures. * * * If the only interchangeable commodities were salt and palm-oil, a profitable trade might be extended to the interior, and yet, with such vast resources and capabilities on both sides, the exports from the greatest commercial country in the world, which is seeking on all sides an outlet for its manufactures, is less than half a million sterling.”‡

The chiefs were quite ready to enter into treaties; and Captain W. Allen emphatically declares:—

“I have no doubt that if the climate had not opposed a barrier to frequent intercourse, those treaties would have been mainly instrumental in putting an effectual stop to the traffic in slaves, in the waters subject to those chiefs. The principles of humanity, so new to them, which we expounded, were received with great satisfaction; and all classes earnestly desired the presence of British influence as the surest means of ameliorating their condition, and of procuring a cessation of the wars which now desolate the country. Very small means, such as the occasional passage up and down the river of Her Majesty’s steamers, would have been sufficient for this purpose.

“* * * The voice of vituperation has loudly charged the Expedition with total failure. This, I may boldly say, is not true; for although the lamentable loss of life which it suffered had the effect of preventing the accomplishment of all the objects for which it was equipped, its success, until our exertions were paralysed by sickness, was complete; since we were able to make satisfactory treaties with two of the three most powerful chiefs that are known. * * * It is much to be deplored that the single obstacle of the climate should have thwarted all the great efforts which have been made for the benefit of Africa.”§

† Captain W. Allen’s Narrative, i. p. 379.

‡ Ibid. i. 407.

§ Captain W. Allen’s Report, P.P. pp. 135. 138.

It was the climate also, and the climate alone, that prevented the Expedition from being the herald of Christianity to West Africa. The disposition of the natives was found to be eminently favourable to the settlement of missionaries among them.

“ Their conduct,” says Captain Trotter, “ not only at the model farm, but on all other occasions that came under my notice, is a subject to which I feel much pleasure in adverting; as during the entire period in which the vessels under my command were in the Niger, not only the native chiefs of the country, but the people in general, evinced the most friendly disposition towards us, and this not only during our prosperity, whilst going up the river, but also in our forlorn condition when coming down. * * * I may remark, that the desire evinced by the natives in the neighbourhood of the model farm to be taught the Christian religion, gives me reason to believe that, when the day happily arrives of missionaries reaching that part of Africa, they will be gladly welcomed by the inhabitants.”*

In a despatch addressed to Lord J. Russell from Iddah, the four commissioners expressly state their belief that “ Christian missionaries and teachers may be safely † and advantageously introduced into this part of Africa; a measure which, by the blessing of Almighty God, would tend effectually, in our opinion, to enlighten this unhappy country, and to put an end for ever to the abominable slave trade.” ‡

* Captain Trotter's Report, p. 105.

† At that time there had not been any appearance of fever on board.

‡ Despatch from the Commissioners, P.P. p. 38.

CHAPTER XXXII.

1842, 1843.

DECLINING HEALTH.—EFFORTS AND VIEWS REGARDING AFRICA.—
THE MODEL FARM BROKEN UP.—LETTER FROM THE BISHOP OF
CALCUTTA.—COUNTRY PURSUITS.—PLANTING.—CHARACTERISTIC
ANECDOTES.

It may well be conceived with what anguish Sir Fowell Buxton received the melancholy tidings of the Niger Expedition. Deeply did he sympathise with the sufferings of the brave men who had attempted to carry out his plans; nor was he less dejected at feeling that the door was closed, for the present at least, through which he had hoped that so many blessings might have been poured upon Africa. His health, which had been undermined before, became gradually more feeble, and he could no longer bear any sustained mental exertion, especially if attended by any sense of responsibility. To a man, the law of whose nature it was to be at work, with head, hand, and heart, it was no slight trial to be thus prematurely laid aside. He was only fifty-five years of age; but already the evening was come of his day of ceaseless toil; nor was its close brightened by the beams of success and joy. The idea of what he so forcibly termed “the incomparable horrors” of the slave trade had fastened itself on his mind with the most vivid reality; the burning and plundered villages of Africa, the ships traversing the Atlantic with their cargoes of torture; these pictures were ever before him. When unconscious that he was observed, he would at times utter such groans as if his heart were sinking

beneath its load. But his grief was not of that kind described by an old divine*, which "runs out in voice." He rarely spoke of the Expedition, — to Captain Bird Allen's death he could scarcely allude at all; but his grave demeanour, his worn pale face, the abstraction of his manner, and the intense fervour of his supplications that God would "pity poor Africa," — these showed too well the poignancy of his feelings.

And yet the three years which elapsed between the failure of the Niger Expedition and his death were brightened by not a few gleams of domestic happiness; by many country pleasures; by the great satisfaction of receiving, in the main, good tidings of the working of emancipation in the West Indies; by some encouragements about Africa; but, above all, by the exercise of faith, and the consolations of religion. During all that period he was humble, patient, and resigned in an extraordinary degree; and especially was his heart overflowing with love to all around him, and with the living spirit of thanksgiving and prayer. His correspondence, after the lamentable issue of the Expedition, shows that his mind did not sink under discouragement; and although he candidly admitted the ruin of his own scheme, he yet cherished hopes that the same great end might be achieved in some other and better way.

To the Rev. J. M. Trew Sir Fowell thus expressed his feelings, when he received the last painful accounts: —

"I need not tell you[?] the grief excited by your heavy tidings. I mourn from my inmost heart. But what can I say? It has pleased God to send us a *deep disappointment* — a personal, as well as public calamity of no common kind. That dear Bird Allen; — his long illness — the sickness and suffering so griev-

* Dr. South.

ously prevailing: that gallant fellow Stenhouse—poor Willie—and the others! A mercy indeed it is to have had Trotter spared. * * * Now we must meet the case fairly, and we cannot conceal from ourselves that this effort for this time has been frustrated. The Government seem to decide the question for us by recalling the Expedition, and our course so far is clearly pointed out—to pause till Captain Trotter's return, till we have the facts fully before us, till they have been digested. It may then appear that from the ruins of this enterprise another may arise, consisting of negroes; or it may appear that single missionaries must do the work. The call seems to me to be very distinct,—to be still, to wait in faith and submission for further light, and for our Master's will, concerning His own work.”

What he still could do, he did with his usual energy; and amid all his own sorrow he strove to maintain the hopes of others. In a letter to the Rev. C. W. Bingham, after alluding to the mortality on board the vessels, he adds—

“ But, on the other hand, the natives received us kindly; they had no objection to our making settlements in the country; they supplied us with provisions, and sold us land; they have entered into treaties for the abolition, both of the slave trade and of human sacrifices; and seem only more desirous to receive, than we can be to send them, missionaries and instructors. This looks as if ‘the set time were come,’ and makes me hold fast to conviction, that, although *we* may fail, and *our* plans prove worthless, the day is at hand when the right methods will be devised, and when Africa will be delivered. God grant that that happy day may soon arrive!”

“ Your favourite oracle,” he writes to Miss Gurney, “ thunders forth every day a leading article against me, and attacks me in poetry and prose; all of which does not excite a moment's vexation in my mind. * * * At all events, we must not desert Africa till we see that all exertions are useless.” He earnestly hoped that the

discouragement would not preclude further efforts. Thus he writes:—

“ Grant, for the sake of argument, that events have confuted my ‘Remedy;’ that the latter half of my book be proved to be mere nonsense; yet the former part remains intact. No one denies the enormous number of human beings whom the slave trade annually devours. Because one plan has failed, are we to submit in patience to this incomparable evil? Because we erred in one attempt to subdue it, are we henceforward to act as if we were reconciled to the abomination; as if one abortive effort were all that humanity pleads for, or that is required at our hands by the Gospel of Christ? Again, our exertions have *not* been wholly useless. At all events we know one thing which we did not know before. We know how the evil is to be cured; that it is to be done by native agency; by coloured ministers of the Gospel. Africa is to be delivered by her own sons!”

Strongly impressed with these feelings, he went to London early in February, and passed a few weeks at the house of his son; giving all the strength he could muster to meetings and consultations on the subject. The whole spring was spent in a succession of painful efforts to gather some benefit for Africa from the wreck of the Niger Expedition. The model farm was still in existence; and to obtain the promise of an occasional visit to it from a Government steamer was one of the principal objects at which he earnestly aimed. The heads of the African Civilisation Society obtained an interview with Lord Stanley, which Sir Fowell thus describes:—

“ We entered the chamber of the great man, anxious, I take it,—and one at least having on his lips and in his heart, ‘ O Lord, give us good speed this day.’

“ Lord Stanley received us very kindly, and Lushington opened our case with great skill, and boldness too. How hearty my prayer had been for him and for myself, that utter-

ance might be given to us, that we might 'speak with all boldness as we ought to speak.' Then followed Sir Robert Inglis, saying strong things in a very mild voice, and in a very gentle manner. Then Acland put in a few words extremely well: and then I spoke; contending that, one point excepted, that of the climate, we had met with success in every particular, and that it would be most wicked and shameful to abandon Africa in consequence of anything that had occurred. After hearing all we had to say, he offered, very frankly, to send round the Cabinet any paper which we should transmit to him, embodying our ideas, and stating what we wished."

Upon Sir Fowell's return to Northrepps he received a visit from the Rev. J. F. Schön, of the Church Missionary Society, who had been chaplain to the Niger Expedition. Sir Fowell tells his nephew and faithful coadjutor, Mr. Gurney Hoare, March 24.,—

"Schön has been staying a week with me. I perceive that he attaches the deepest importance to the intercourse which would be produced with Africa by the retention of the model farm. If you and Cook and Samuel Gurney cannot concur with me in my anxious desire to give the model farm one fair chance, but feel that it must be abandoned, even before the first crop has been harvested, I will thank you to summon a meeting of all the subscribers, in most urgent terms, and I will come up in order to make the forlorn attempt to obtain a majority for going on a little longer. God grant that we may be wisely directed in this very important matter."

A public meeting of the African Civilisation Society was to be held in June: he wrote many letters on the subject, but was unable to take a part in the meeting.

To Dr. Lushington.

"May 14. 1842.

"I try to whip myself up to some exertion; but it is all in vain, *I can do nothing*; the truth is, you and I feel the effects of the last quarter of a century. * * * How do you like

Peel's new tariff? I look at it, as at everything else, with an eye to Africa; and I think lowering the duty on timber, rice, and many other things, can hardly fail to be productive of benefit to us."

To Lord Ashley (Chairman of the Meeting alluded to).

"My dear Lord Ashley, "Northrepps, June 18. 1842.

"It is no little aggravation of the trial of my present ill health, that it prevents me from attending the meeting of our Society. I need hardly assure you that I retain an unaltered conviction on two points, viz. that whatever discouragements we may meet with, it is our duty to persevere; and again, that the Lord of compassion and righteousness is, and will be, with those who faithfully labour for the purpose of rescuing millions of the human race, not only from their moral darkness, but from the intense sufferings which they now endure. May He hasten the day when the Gospel, with its train of attendant blessings, shall shine forth upon Africa.

"I am very thankful that, although I am debarred from taking my share of labour, your lordship and other faithful men are still prosecuting the good cause."

Nothing could be stronger than the contrast between the exulting hopes of the meeting in 1840, and the sorrowful tidings which were to be communicated to the one now convened; nevertheless its tone was less desponding than had been feared.

Lord John Russell, with his usual courage, came forward and took a prominent part in the proceedings, boldly asserting the soundness of the principles on which the schemes had been founded. The present Bishop of Oxford spoke with hereditary eloquence and feeling. He fully admitted the disappointment, but, like Lord John Russell, he did not fear to uphold the principles which had actuated them, the righteousness of the cause, and the certainty of ultimate success, if discouragement did not paralyse their exertions.

Among the speakers were the Bishops of Gloucester and Norwich, Lords Mahon, Sandon, Teignmouth, and Fortescue, Sir R. H. Inglis, and Sir T. D. Acland.

To Lord John Russell.

“ My dear Lord John,

“ June 23. 1842.

“ You must excuse me for giving you the trouble of reading a line from me, but I feel personally so obliged to you for your well-timed and powerful assistance, and for your generosity in coming forward publicly, and claiming your share of the obloquy which has been cast on us, that I must be permitted to offer you my most sincere thanks. The effects of the late meeting will not, I am persuaded, be lost. It has already put us in better spirits, and will, I trust, convince the country that the efforts made to reclaim and civilise Africa are not so wild and visionary as they have been described.”

It may be supposed how soothing to his feelings, at this time, was the following letter from his highly valued friend, the Bishop of Calcutta: —

“ Bishop’s Palace, Calcutta,
April 9. 1842.

“ Be not cast down, my dearest friend; yield not to disappointment and sorrow; all will work for good. The grand blow is struck; the monster must fall like Dagon before the ark; and your honest, devoted, anxious heart shall yet be comforted with blessed tidings: and indeed, when we consider how little we worms of the earth can scan the designs of an infinite Being, we need not wonder that grief and disquietude sometimes follow on our best concerted schemes. Supposing all our hopes to fail, Providence has other ways of bringing about the redemption of the enslaved population of Africa.

“ Let us, then, go on cheerfully in the use of all such means as are open to us, and new and unsuspected blessings will arise in due time. Gird up the loins of your mind; be sober and hope to the end. Nothing we do for God in the cause of humanity is lost either to the cause or to ourselves. Soon, soon the tempest will be calmed; soon life will be past; soon the

heavenly port will open to our frail and weatherbeaten bark, and we shall have reached that 'good land.' * * *

"Ever believe me

"Your sincere and affectionate friend,

"D. CALCUTTA."

In July, 1842, Lieutenant Webb courageously volunteered to go up the Niger in the *Wilberforce* to visit the model farm. He found the settlers all well: a large portion of ground had been cleared; and from twenty to thirty acres were "in good order, mainly planted with cotton, the growing crops of which were very promising." *

"Of native labour there had been no scarcity, the numbers employed being frequently 100 men, women, and boys; on one day 236 were fully occupied. They worked nine hours per diem, and received three pence each in cowries. Seven houses and four huts had been erected. * * * Well-supplied markets were regularly held at the farm and in the surrounding villages. †

"The security which the establishment afforded from the constant inroads of the slave-hunters had induced numbers of the persecuted tribes to settle in the neighbourhood, and to cultivate much more extensively and carefully than before. * * * The natives were most peaceable, friendly, and industrious. The Bassas (a neighbouring tribe) are described as a quiet and intelligent people; and extremely desirous of learning the manners and customs of Europeans; very obedient and industrious." †

* Lieutenant Webb's Report, P.P. p. 75.

† "They were," says Captain W. Allen, "mostly small well-made active men, and their manners particularly mild and agreeable. * * * The innate modesty and gentleness of the women made them appear very prepossessing." Mount Patteh is described as being almost covered with luxuriant crops of corn, yams, millet, &c.; and the natives appeared to have some idea of the rotation of crops; but the slave-trading Fulatahs were the terror of the country.

‡ Account of the Model Farm. — *Friend of Africa*. Dec. 1842.

On the other hand, owing to the murder of Mr. Carr, while returning to the model farm from Fernando Po, the settlers had been deprived of all effective superintendence. Mr. Moore, the negro in charge, had no authority over his companions; and, in consequence, the most complete disorganisation had taken place. These evils Lieutenant Webb expected to remedy by leaving Mr. Hensman, the surgeon *pro tempore* of the Wilberforce, as superintendent; but sickness appearing on board, Mr. Hensman could not be spared. Lieutenant Webb therefore broke up the settlement, and brought all the people away.

“This necessity, however,” he says, “I could not help regretting, because I felt that we were retiring from a position of great advantage, whether regarded as an inland point from which commerce and civilisation might be expected to diffuse their blessings through the neighbouring countries, or as a point of refuge for the fugitive negroes, seeking to avoid slavery, where they might become acquainted with the advantages of our protection, and possibly in time form a considerable colony under our rule.”

The tribes which had collected round the farm expressed the deepest regret at its being removed; and even displeasure, that the white man should come and sit down among them, “to teach them his fashion,” and then go away. One man said that the Bassas would “go down to meet” another expedition. For a moment Sir Fowell’s equanimity was ruffled by this bitter disappointment.

“As to the model farm,” he writes to Mr. Trew, “it makes one mad to think that it was going on so well—*our* experiment likely to be successful,—and that they were torn away because Lieutenant Webb had not a superintendent to spare them. However, all regrets are kept down by the reflection that at the head of our cause stands One who cannot err.”

In October Sir Fowell had the gratification of hearing that Captain Bosanquet had offered to the African Society his gratuitous services to conduct another expedition up the Niger, together with a donation of 500*l.* towards the expenses of it. In replying to a letter of thanks addressed to him by Sir Fowell, Captain Bosanquet writes: "My whole heart is embarked in the cause of our black brethren, and what little talent and energy I am possessed of shall be used towards the success of the expedition, if sent out."

The Committee of the Society was convened to take this proposal into consideration: it was gratefully received by them, but they found themselves compelled to decline it.

To Dr. Lushington.

"Northrepps, May 22. 1842.

"I am much obliged to you for telling me what passed between Sir Robert Inglis and yourself on the subject of his meditated Church of England Society for Africa. I can have no doubt about my course. I am quite ready and willing to unite with him; he shall freely have my subscription, and what little service my shattered frame can give. Only I hope they will not expel me for giving my money also to any right-hearted Dissenters who will endeavour to befriend Africa, for I shall not refuse that, and my earnest good wishes, to every sincere Christian who sets about this work of charity in his own way. I am extremely sorry that you and I do not see this one point in exactly the same light. But though we differ *pro hâc vice*, there shall be no separation between us—so do not expect it. Why, man, have you not borne, for the last twenty years, more than half my burden? and have you ever failed to render me every assistance which could be furnished by your better judgment, your greater experience, and your unquenchable industry, and am I to let you off so easily at last? However, I am called away to shoot with my boys."

To his younger Sons, at Trinity College, Cambridge.

“ My dear Fowell and Charles, “ Northrepps, Feb. 1843.

“ Our Sabbath day’s business is over, and our family reading finished. Well, you have been much in all our minds to-day. I hope it has been a tranquillising day to you, and that, knowing that you have each done your best, you are satisfied in committing yourselves and the result of the examination to Him whose province it is to decide what shall be the issue of every effort. You must bear in mind, that though you may lose the places at which you aim, you will not therefore lose the advantage of your studies. The knowledge you have acquired, and your habits of application, will in great measure cleave to you all your life long. Despite all my philosophy, however, I shall most heartily rejoice in your success.

“ Now, God bless you ! May you not forget to pray for help, knowing that it is expressly promised to those who humbly and devoutly ask it, ‘ Commit your way unto the Lord, and he shall bring it to pass.’ ”

In January, 1843, Sir Fowell proceeded to London, to bear his part in the painful duty of dissolving the African Civilisation Society. In reply to the summons to attend the meeting, he says, in a letter to the Rev. J. M. Trew, “ I feel as if I were going to attend the funeral of an old and dear friend.” After the resolutions for suspending the operations of the Society had been passed, he addressed the meeting in a tone of deep feeling. He warmly thanked the Committee for their past exertions, and, although he insisted strongly that the Expedition had not failed in any one of its great objects, still he admitted that there was a necessity for the step which had now been taken. He alluded to the attacks of the papers, but added that, “ painfully as he felt all the disasters which had attended the Expedition, he did not accuse himself of having been imprudent or over-sanguine in the measures which he had proposed.”

That all human means for success had been tried was the feeling of all who saw closely into the subject. Lord Monteagle writes, December, 1842 :—

“ I am very sorry you cannot give me a more cheerful account of yourself. Everything which acts upon your mind, like the question of the Niger to which you refer, is sure to do more mischief to your health than a mere bodily ailment. But remember that the result is no moral test at all — *eventus stultorum magister*. You have no doubt as to the greatness of the object you sought to accomplish. You have no doubt of the labour and patience which you applied to the investigation of the facts. You have no doubt of the skill, courage, and industry applied to increase all the probabilities of success. Remember it was a case in which after everything had been done which could be done beforehand — after all *a priori* reasoning had been employed — much remained on which no human prescience could have led you to any definite or certain conclusion. Therefore, my dear Buxton, let me most earnestly entreat you not to allow this subject to rest unreasonably on your mind, or interfere with your health or your happiness.”

A meeting of the Ladies' Society for educating the Negroes in the West Indies, which he attended about this time, bore a brighter aspect. He writes :—

“ I was quite fired by it and cheered. You cannot conceive how well Trew spoke; and Sir Edward Parry capitally too. I came to the conclusion that I ought never to be low, never downcast, all the rest of my pilgrimage, the accounts are so very bright of those for whom my heart used to bleed a few years ago. And these blessings I firmly trust will last long after I shall be mouldering in the dust.”

To Andrew Johnston, Esq.

“ Northrepps, Feb. 1843.

“ Your little Buxton is in great force, and takes very pleasingly to grandpapa: he is a great wit; and, what is better, very happy.

“ I have begun to plant again, and make great progress in providing employment for the poor people in this neighbourhood,

which is the first and pleasantest thing in planting, be the second what it may.

“ * * * We have much indeed, very much, to be unreservedly thankful for, very much at home, very much at Halesworth, very much at Cambridge, very much at Forest Edge, and at many other places, while, with much submission, we have to be satisfied, though astonished, with the event of the Expedition, and to feel, and to be able to say, ‘God’s will be done,’ although it be in the teeth of our fondest wishes. Another day may yet dawn upon Africa, and I doubt not it will.”

Some years before this time he had purchased a small estate at Trimmingham, on the coast of Norfolk, four miles from Cromer; and he took great interest in executing various plans for its improvement. One of the farms he retained in his own hands, and took great pains to bring the land into the highest state of cultivation. In 1840 he bought some more land at Runton, on the other side of Cromer, and on both these properties he formed extensive plantations. On commencing them he wrote to Mr. Aubin at Rome:—

“ Northrepps, Sept. 5.

“I am now once more settled at home, but as yet I have only been able to get out shooting once. The fact is, I have been buying an estate, where I hope, on some future day, to show you some partridges and a pheasant or two; and I find more sport in the delicious occupation of projecting improvements, and letting the imagination run wild in visions of future woods and groves, which have yet to be planted, than in pursuing preserved game. After all, I like your wild Macarese shooting (bandits, assassins, vipers, and all) better than our tame sport.”

These plantations formed his chief amusement during the last years of his life. “His friends,” says Mr. J. J. Gurney, “will not fail to remember the lively pleasure which they enjoyed in accompanying him over the hills and dales of Runton and Trimmingham, while he pointed

out to them the exquisite views of the sea, already rendered more lovely by the young and rising plantations in the foreground." * Mr. Herbert Johnson, the former proprietor of the Runton estate, was his constant and kind companion in his endeavours to improve it. His plantations were called (as his horses had been in earlier days) after the objects which were most deeply interesting to him at the time. One wood went by the name of "the Nigèr," another by that of "Fernando Po," and so on.

To Andrew Johnston, Esq.

"Northrepps Hall, Feb. 10. 1843.

"Our party here, although very small, and with a touch of the lonely, is very cheerful and comfortable.

"At least ninety families have been supported during this hard weather by double trenching my plantations, and earning, I am happy to say, on the average two shillings a day. But this last snow has beat them, and they can do no more at present. I am getting decidedly stronger, and feel more like myself.

"Feb. 12. — All Earlham came here yesterday to dinner. I have been riding with a large party, to see my new plantations; and we are all greatly delighted. Love to all. In truth I can say from my heart, 'The good Lord bless you all.'"

One of his friends observing to him, "Your plantations will some day be the pride of the country if England stands." "England stand!" said he. "I will never believe that any country will fall which has abolished slavery as England has done."

The following recollections of Sir Fowell during the latter years of his life are from the pen of his secretary Mr. Nixon, and may aid the reader in forming a just idea of his character: —

"The qualities which struck me most in Sir Fowell Buxton

* "Brief Memoir of Sir T. Fowell Buxton, Bart.," p. 27.

were his perseverance, benevolence, disregard of outside appearances, his entire devotion to what was practical, and, perhaps beyond all, his *humility*.

“As regards perseverance: before entering upon an undertaking, he seemed to consider, not whether success in it were *probable*, but whether it were *possible*; if so, he would set about it at once, and never give in till that success was gained.

“His humility led him to esteem no one unworthy of a certain portion of respect, however low his condition; so that I never in any instance saw the principle of that Essay by Dr. Channing, which has for its title ‘honour due unto all men,’ so fully and consistently carried out as by him.

“In June, 1840, a few days after I became his secretary, he went to town from Upton, leaving me the task of making an epitome of his ‘Slave Trade and Remedy.’ When he returned we walked up and down the lawn, I reading my paper to him. He listened very attentively, and when it was finished he tapped me on the shoulder and said, ‘Very well done indeed, Mr. Nixon; it does you great credit, but it won’t do for me. It would make a capital flowery speech for a young member of Parliament; but I want something more practical, *very brief and very strong*: so now come along indoors, and let us make a beginning.’

“I never recall the period of my connection with Sir Fowell without a feeling of astonishment at his wonderful powers of concentration, which enabled him to apply every atom of his energies to the one purpose in hand. In carrying out a great object he was borne along irresistibly, and to compass it every effort *must* be made which human ingenuity could point out, or bodily endurance admit of. He used to become far too deeply absorbed to be conscious of fatigue, and would often laugh at me good humouredly when I complained that I felt very tired, and should like to give up for awhile. ‘Tired, Nixon! why, you don’t know what it is to be tired. When you’ve had nineteen years in Parliament you’ll be able to form some opinion of what it means: however, we must finish this job at any rate. I don’t care how many white slaves I make to save the black ones!’

“When he returned alone from Italy, at which time I became his secretary, he was overwhelmed with business connected

with the Niger Expedition. These affairs were so widely ramified that none but a powerful mind could have sustained such constant and heavy pressure. When the day's labour was over, he was frequently quite unable to sleep, and night after night I was called upon to read aloud to him, in the hope of soothing him to rest. Many a time when I was at length dropping off into a lower and lower tone, believing that his slumbers had begun, he would stop me suddenly, exclaiming, 'Get me my memorandum book, Mr. Nixon; set down so and so,' and he would go on until there was work enough set down for the next week perhaps. Then came another monotonous page or two of the book I was reading, and then up he would get, saying, 'It's of no use, I can't sleep: come into the drawing-room — now then, take a sheet of paper;' he would then dictate three or four notes or a letter, or a portion of some long statement upon which he might be engaged, and then go to bed again.

"His perseverance in small things as well as in great was displayed in the labour he bestowed on his plantations, which had been formed upon the roughest ground, and were exposed to those bitter north-east blasts which seemed to preclude all hope of covering the hills with wood. But he spared no pains to accomplish his purpose: reading, correspondence, conversation with men of experience, visits to nursery-grounds and woods — every method was resorted to for obtaining information and securing success: and it was attained abundantly. Indeed the flourishing plantations at Trimingham and Runton are brought forward as the example of successful planting, in the essay on that subject which gained the gold medal of the Royal Agricultural Society in 1845.

"The rule of Sir Fowell's life was to be 'complete in all things,' and to do well what he did at all: but I ought to observe, that in forming his plantations he evidently derived the greatest part of his pleasure from the employment it gave to the poor.

"His delight in horses was remarkable. I may relate an anecdote which he told me himself, in connection with one of his favourites. 'Poor old Abraham,' he said, 'was the finest horse I ever had in my life.' At the time when George IV. was very unpopular, I was riding through St. James's Park,

just as the king passed, surrounded by an immense mob. The shouts and groans and yellings were terrific, and there was I wedged in among the multitude, in the midst of noises which might have frightened the most courageous animal. But my noble-spirited horse pricked up his ears, distended his nostrils, curved his neck, and stood immoveable. The next day came the Marquis of—— to endeavour to buy my horse. I said I did not wish to sell him, that he was a great favourite of mine, and perfectly suited my purpose. Nothing daunted, the Marquis held his ground, made me first one offer and then another, and at last told me that he was not endeavouring to buy the horse for himself, but was authorised to go as far as 500*l* for a friend. This offer I still refused, when, as a last resource, “The fact is, Mr. Buxton,” said he, “it is the king who has sent me to buy your horse, and I hope you will not refuse to sell him to his majesty.” This took me rather aback, but I had made up my mind; so, with very many apologies and regrets, and in the politest manner imaginable, I maintained my ground, and thus the matter ended. What I meant, though I didn’t think it exactly civil to say so, was, “You may tell His Majesty that I’m happy to hear he’s so fond of a good horse; but so am I; and having got one, I mean to keep him!”’

“His generosity was unbounded. I remember, when we were at Bath, his chief pleasure was to look into the shops, and see what he could buy for his family, his grandchildren, or his friends. His manner, too, of making a present was the most agreeable and delicate imaginable. In looking over things, he would sometimes say, ‘Well, I don’t know which to choose; which do *you* think is the best, Nixon?’ And on my pointing out which I thought the most desirable article, he would say, ‘Oh! you think so, do you, Sir? well then put that on one side for Mr. Nixon!’

“His public liberality, which is so generally known, was only equalled by his private acts of generosity and charity—acts which were known only to myself and the recipients of his bounty. He appeared totally *unable* to deny relief, where it seemed to be required, although he might feel it had not been merited. Sometimes, when he had relieved the same person several times, he would give me directions to write a rather

sharp note, stating that he could attend to no further applications. In the course of the day he would ask me whether I had sent the note. He would then hesitate, read over the applicant's letter once again, and then, leaning back in his arm-chair and raising his spectacles upon his forehead, would look me steadily in the face. 'What do you think of it, Nixon? The poor old *villain* seems to be in a bad way, shall I send him a trifle more?' On my declining to give an opinion, he would continue, 'Well, then, send him another sovereign; and as this is the *seventh* time he has promised never to apply to me again, tell him that I give him a trifle *this once*, but only on condition that I am never to see his handwriting any more. I don't wish to hurt the poor old fellow's feelings, but explain to him, in the very civillest terms imaginable, that I'll see his neck stretched before I send him another halfpenny.' Then rising to go out of the room, he would look back before shutting the door, to beg of me 'not to put it *too sharp*,' and to let him see the letter before sending it off. Such was the man — he could not bear to give a moment's pain.

"I hardly ever saw such affection towards little children as his was. Though engaged in the most difficult business, he could hardly make up his mind to turn them out, when they came to him in the study, without a present of sweetmeats or cakes, which he used often to hoard up for them; and if he happened to hear a child cry in the far-off regions of the nursery, he used to jump up, leaving, in the midst, the most important letter or paper, and could never rest till he had gained relief from this to him painful occurrence.

"It would sometimes happen that a little cause of dispute arose between us, generally some difference of opinion; and I, unfortunately, could seldom restrain myself from saying precisely what, at the moment, I felt. This used to vex him; but he would say nothing till the next day, and then, when I thought that the whole matter had passed off (having perhaps received great kindness in the mean time) he would all at once say, 'What a silly fellow you were, Nixon, to put yourself in such a passion yesterday! If I had spoken then, we should most probably have parted. Make it a rule never to speak when you are in a passion, but wait till the next day.'

"If, at any time, he happened to transgress this rule himself,

he was seriously vexed and grieved, and could not rest till he had in some way made amends for his want of self-restraint. Most men consider it not very necessary, perhaps degrading, to make an apology to those below them in station; but such was not his case. The plan of people in general, is tacitly to acknowledge their error by an increase of kindness, if they do not actually presume upon their authority, and make 'might' stand for 'right;' but such was not his mode of action.

"I recollect one instance well. He was going to shoot at Runton (I think it was in 1844), and just before he was to start I had been urging some point upon him, which I knew to be necessary, but perhaps I did so with too great vehemence, and not enough respect. At this time the carriage was announced, and he left the room saying, 'I tell you what, Nixon, I don't wish you to come out shooting with me, and had much rather you would not!' I was sure, however, that he did not actually mean this; so, after a minute's reflection, I mounted the pony and rode after him. When near the Felbrigg Lodges I saw the coachman pull up, and, after speaking to Sir Fowell, beckon to me. As soon as I reached the side of the carriage, he put his hand out of the window, saying, 'Come, Nixon, I know I was wrong; you must not think anything more of what I said just now!'

"I do not put forward these few recollections of Sir Fowell as *anecdotes*, but merely as rough memoranda; and I am only sorry that I have been able to record so few. In conclusion, I may say that it has given me sincere pleasure thus to review the period of my fortunate connection with him; and that my reverence and esteem for him are, if possible, increased every time that I am led to reflect upon his character."

CHAPTER XXXIII.

1843, 1844.

BATH.—SUMMER AT NORTHEPPS.—CONTINUED AND INCREASING ILLNESS.—CORRESPONDENCE WITH SIR ROBERT PEEL AND THE BISHOP OF CALCUTTA.

IN the spring of 1843 Sir Fowell Buxton was recommended to try the Bath waters. In a letter from thence to Mr. Johnston, after alluding to the poor state of his health, he says:—

“ Bath, March 3. 1843.

“ * * * Now for something better. To use David’s words, ‘ My mouth hath been filled with laughter ’ since I read in the *Globe*, which arrived yesterday, the account of Brougham asking a question about the slave trade, and of Lord Aberdeen replying, ‘ that he was convinced the time would soon come when it would be abolished altogether.’

“ Pray turn to it, and let P. taste the delight of hearing that debate, and of seeing that, although our good Lord did not think proper to execute *our* plan, it seems every way probable that He is preparing to accomplish the work, which is all that signifies, and all that I care for. If He do but undertake the task, we know that all obstacles are removed, and all difficulties surmounted. It puts me into the greatest gaiety of heart.”

To Miss Gurney.

“ Bath, May 19. 1843.

“ * * * As to myself, if I am to tell the truth, I do not feel strong; and partly from frequent attacks of illness and feebleness, and partly from the manner in which my doctor shook his head, I catch myself saying, in the language of Christopher North, ‘ Though our day be not quite gone by, we

think we see the stealing shades of evening, and, in the solemn vista, the darkness of night.'

"I called at the Colonial Office when I was in London; James Stephen spoke in such glowing terms of the conduct of the negroes since Emancipation, as sent me home quite exulting."

In writing to Mr. Scoble, explaining his absence from the Anti-Slavery convention, he adds, "I can no longer personally unite with you in fighting; but my prayer to God is, that he would stand by all those who are engaged in the holy attempt to put down these iniquities."

He would occasionally express an earnest desire that he might be enabled to work again in the service of Africa; "but," he observed on one occasion, "no matter who is the instrument, so that there be successful labourers for God, for Christ, and for man, especially for heathen man!"

The summer of the year was passed very quietly at Northrepps. His extremely feeble health precluding him from exertion, he amused himself with the improvement of his farm and plantations; while, in the evenings, he delighted to come out upon the lawn, and watch the villagers at their games of cricket. While the force of his mind was waning, his affections seemed to cling with ever-increasing warmth to all who were dear to him. It would be impossible to describe the energy of his prayers while imploring every "good and perfect gift" for those whom he loved, both present and far away; but, above all, morning and evening, did his most fervent supplications ascend, that his heavenly Father would stretch forth his hand to deliver "poor Africa."

To Mrs. Johnston, Halesworth.

“ August, 1843.

“ We have just finished our family reading, and therefore I trust I shall stand acquitted, even in Andrew’s eyes, of violating the Sabbath, if I spend a few moments with almost the dearest friend I have. Your image has been present with me all the day. I fear too that you are still in suffering. I look about me, thinking what there is that we could do that might add to your comfort. I cannot think how it was that I was so stubborn about that portrait of myself. ‘ May you have it?’ To be sure you may, and I only wish it were ten times more worth your having. I will send it by the van forthwith. * * *

To Archdeacon Trew, on entering on his office in the Bahamas.

“ October, 1843.

“ There is this comfort in your leaving England, that you are embarked in a noble cause, and if you succeed in obtaining black men, who are truly converted and spiritual Christians, to labour in Africa, it will be worth, not only any inconvenience to which you may be exposed, but the lives of any ten of us. So go in good heart, my dear friend, and the Lord go along with you.”

He was sufficiently recovered in the autumn to receive a few guests under his roof; amongst them the Rev. Samuel Crowther, who, during his visit, preached in Northrepps church; and Sir Fowell was not a little gratified at hearing an excellent sermon from the lips of a negro clergyman. In his sermon Mr. Crowther alluded to the failure of the Niger Expedition; but, after describing some of its results in opening communication between Sierra Leone and other parts of Africa, and affording great facilities for missionary enterprise, he declared that it had already produced important good, and that “ some of those who had sown weeping would yet bring in their sheaves rejoicing; for what

greater joy can there be for them, than to hear that their children are walking in the truth?"

In the same tone Mr. Beecham writes, on sending Sir Fowell the Rev. Mr. Freeman's narrative of his third journey in Western Africa:—

“ You live to see that the Niger Expedition has not been a total failure. It has not worked out its beneficial results exactly in the way which was anticipated; but Almighty God is making it accomplish, in his own way, the good on which your benevolent heart was set. The Niger Expedition has given a new impulse to the African mind, and induced the emigration from Sierra Leone, which has opened the way into Yariba and Dahomey, and placed even Central Africa within our reach.”*

Towards the end of November, Sir Fowell's family were alarmed by a great increase of bodily weakness, accompanied by a loss of memory, and at times a confusion of ideas most distressing to those about him. Oppression on the brain no doubt existed, and for several weeks he was very seriously ill; but, at the end of that time, he was again restored in a surprising manner to his usual measure of bodily strength, and to perfect clearness of mind, although he was never able afterwards to bear exertion, either physical or mental.

During his illness a few notes were taken, from which some extracts may be made:—

“ Nov. 29. On some failure of memory, he said, ‘ Well, I should be willing to forget, if the Lord do but forget my sins.’ Several texts being quoted, one of which contained a promise of forgiveness, ‘ Yes!’ he replied, with deep feeling and seriousness, ‘ if it is not presumption on my part to say so, through

* Every year has shown more clearly that the Niger Expedition was in fact of vast moment, in opening the way for missionaries; who have already, especially at Abbeokuta, produced an extraordinary change in the condition, physical and moral, of some of the native tribes.

unspeakable and condescending mercy, I believe I have acceptance with God—that I have peace with God through Jesus Christ.’

“ Dec. 3. On receiving an account of Mrs. Fry’s illness, he immediately exclaimed, with deep earnestness, ‘ O Lord, I beseech thee to restore this most beloved sister, so that she may be permitted to return to her important career, and that her ears may again be attentive to the cry of the miserable of the earth.’ He then went on in a strain of confession and humiliation before God: ‘ O Lord, I beseech thee, forgive thy unworthy servant his innumerable sins and transgressions against thee;’ adding, ‘ If it be not presumptuous to say it, in Christ I find acceptance and peace;’ and afterwards he prayed earnestly ‘ for an uncompromising submission to the will of God.’ ”

At this time the failure of his memory and his general feebleness seemed to be increasing: he frequently put his hands up to his head, as if it were in pain; fetching deep sighs and groans, and tottering even in walking across the room. But his mind, though failing in power, was illumined by the sweetest glow of love to God and man.

“ Some one expressing sympathy with his suffering, he replied, ‘ Oh! it is the gracious act of our most merciful Father; let us most peacefully acquiesce.’ He remarked to his son that he thought himself worse, and that he strongly suspected that his right hand and arm were benumbed. His son tried to turn it off, observing, among other things, ‘ I am persuaded you need not be afraid.’ ‘ Oh no,’ replied he, with great emphasis, ‘ I am not afraid. Whether for life or death, I am not afraid. I hope it is not presumptuous; I *have* a confidence.

“ Dec. 24. He was very restless at night. He could not recall the name of the remedy he felt in need of. On its being discovered, he said most feelingly, ‘ Thanks be to the great and good God for making me submissive.’ Sympathy being expressed with him in being debarred from his usual occupations, his answer was, ‘ I can say I do *not* feel it painful. There is not a feeling in my whole soul or body either, I believe, that

rebels against any visitation of God:’ and again, ‘No quarrelling or grumbling upon this.’ His own trials made him feel most acutely for those of others: being asked one night why he was sighing so heavily, he replied, ‘For the suffering that is in the world.’ Thanksgivings, however, were perpetually on his lips. On one occasion he exclaimed with great fervour, ‘O Lord, with my whole soul I thank thee, that, instead of ease, and prosperity, and the best things of this world, thou hast sent this illness.’ And afterwards he earnestly prayed that the insight granted him into heavenly things might never be obscured or fade from his view, but that he might ever pant after them, and give his whole soul, and heart, and strength to the Lord who had had mercy upon him.

“His benevolent exertions having been alluded to, he said, ‘It is all the goodness of the Lord. Oh! that I may be but admitted into the lowest place in Heaven!’

“After reading the Lord’s Prayer, he said that he felt it very awful to ask that forgiveness to us should be in any sort of proportion to that we ourselves exercise to others; not that he had anything to forgive, but that his sense of the need of forgiveness was such that he could not bear any restriction upon it.”

Early in January, 1844, his health began to improve, and he then rose for a time out of the fearful state of debility into which he had fallen.

Soon after his recovery he was greatly pleased by two letters, the one from Mr. Anson, addressed to him by direction of H. R. H. Prince Albert, and the other from Sir Edward Parry, informing him that increased efforts were contemplated by the Government for the suppression of the slave trade, by augmenting the squadron on the coast of Africa. At the same time he heard that the Government evinced a determination not to admit slave-grown sugar. “Surely,” he writes, “these are causes of unspeakable thankfulness.”

To Sir Robert Peel, Bart.

“ Sir,

“ Spitalfields, April 17. 1844.

“ As some persons have, I believe, addressed the Government on the subject of the Sugar Duties, and as many are taking measures for making their views known to the public, I hope I do not appear to you to be putting myself too forward by troubling you with my opinions on the same matter.

“ I feel most strongly, that to allow Cuba and Brazil to send their slave-grown sugars to Great Britain, with any serious diminution of restrictive duties, would be to undo in great measure the work in which this country has, so much to her own honour, been for so long a period, and at such heavy sacrifices, engaged.

“ The impulse which would thus be given to the growth of sugar in Cuba and Brazil could not fail to be very great. An immense addition to the number of labourers would necessarily be required, and it is too late to entertain a doubt as to the horrid cruelties and crimes which must be perpetrated in order to obtain that supply of labour.

“ But it is not merely the cause of humanity which would thus suffer: the character of our nation would receive an indelible stain. It has been our pride to furnish encouragement and energy to the friends of freedom; and now, supposing us to yield to the entreaties of those who are interested in slavery and the slave trade, we shall stand forth as the revivers and reanimators of those monstrous iniquities. We shall employ one fleet on the coast of Africa to suppress the trade; while another, under the British flag, and supported by British capital, will be sailing from Cuba and Brazil to supply the British market with sugar, which can only be produced by that new slave trade which we shall thus call into existence.

“ I assure you that I have felt deep gratitude to yourself and your colleagues for your steadfast refusal to admit slave-grown sugar; and I am not altogether unable to estimate the strenuous resolution which it must have required, in order to enable her Majesty's Ministers to resist the entreaties of some, the threats of others, and the plausible appeals of those who have made the

distresses of our own people the ground on which to base their interested applications.

“ I need not trouble you, Sir Robert, with any argument to show that this infamous traffic is a compound and an accumulation of all crimes, or that it merits (looking at the present calamities it inflicts, and the innumerable and heavy evils which result from it), more than any other great iniquity, to be visited with the vengeance of the law; nor can I conclude this letter without remarking how sincerely I have rejoiced in the vigorous policy of the Government, as evinced by their sending out so many additional cruisers and steam-vessels to the coast of Africa, to co-operate with the squadron before stationed there, in a yet more determined effort to give the final blow to the iniquitous occupation of the slave dealer.

“ I have the honour to be, &c. &c.,

“ T. FOWELL BUXTON.”

The Right Hon. Sir Robert Peel, Bart, to Sir Fowell Buxton.

“ Dear Sir,

“ Whitehall, April 18. 1844.

“ It is gratifying to me to receive from you, the untiring and disinterested friend of humanity and of the African race, the assurances which your letter of yesterday conveys.

“ In the present temper and with the present views of the ruling authorities in Brazil and Cuba, I cannot doubt that the opening of the market of this country to Brazilian and Cuban sugar, at greatly reduced duties, would give an encouragement to its production by slave labour, to which there would be no check, either from the influence of humane and moral feelings, from municipal law, or from international obligations. The state of things in Cuba, since the removal of General Valdez from the Government, is most unsatisfactory.

“ This is a critical period in the annals of slavery and the slave trade; and the example of England, if she were now to relax her honourable exertions in that cause, of which she is in truth the only active and zealous supporter, would have a very extensive and very evil influence.

“ If the exertion of force will avail for the suppression of the slave trade, I cannot conceive a use of force more justifiable, in

the eyes of God than the employment of it in the defeat and punishment of an infamous traffic. If it will not avail, though justifiable, it would be of course impolitic: but the experience of a few months on the coasts of Africa and Brazil, were every British cruiser withdrawn, would, I fear, demonstrate the inefficacy of any other means at present for the suppression of the slave trade.

“ I have the honour to be, &c. &c.,

“ ROBERT PEEL.”

In the spring Sir Fowell Buxton went to Bath, where a letter from the Bishop of Calcutta reached him, dated February-15. 1844:—

“ I must write to you now and then, my dearest friend,” says the Bishop, “ because I look on you as much depressed with the events which have occurred in Africa, and as also in but an indifferent state of health. Such is God’s holy will, who disposes health and sickness as he pleases, and success also, or disappointment, in our most lawful projects. Grace is thus strengthened in all its mightiest principles in our heart — silence, submission, contrition, trust in Christ, hope of the peace of Heaven. And though the Niger Expedition seems for the time to have failed, yet how magnificent is the result of the experiment on man in the West Indies, and the demonstration that his noble powers, when allowed to come into play, can beat out and out the tardy product of the whip and chain! In India things are moving on; but the field is so vast that the effects of what has been accomplished are scarcely visible. In the three dioceses there are altogether about 250 chaplains and missionaries, most of them men of God, and labouring to their power and beyond their power for the spiritual and temporal welfare of our teeming population. If God should send us a wise, calm, enlightened, amiable, firm, pious Governor-General, it is incalculable what good might be done, and that in a short time.

“ And the great Arbiter is prospering our arms, and thus extending our influence. Central India is settled, Affghanistan is settled, Scinde is settled (though thinking people don’t like it), China is settled; nothing remains disquieted but the Punjaub. But what times are we fallen upon at home! Well, God is

above; Christ intercedes; the Gospel is being diffused wider and wider; the Holy Ghost is the inward advocate; the Bible, without note or comment or the fathers, continues the inspired rule of faith and practice; and the various branches of the Universal Church are administering the word and sacraments; whilst heaven is the blessed haven whither we are bound! Farewell, my dearest Sir Fowell and Lady Buxton, and Mrs. Fry. May God preserve us all to his eternal kingdom!"

To the Bishop of Calcutta.

"My very dear Friend,

"Bath, May 1. 1844.

"Your comforting delightful letter, of the 15th of February, has just reached me, and has been a real pleasure to us all. It is wonderful that, with all Asia on your hands, you have any sympathies left for poor Africa. I can truly say, your pity for her is most grateful to me, and may it be returned abundantly to you and your more immediate objects of interest!

"I am not now so much cast down with regard to Africa as you may suppose; the bitterness of disappointment as to the Niger Expedition, and the deep mourning for precious lives lost, are in some measure abated; and I have settled in my mind that the expedition was but one experiment upon a great principle: the experiment has failed from no error as to facts or mistake in the principles on which we relied; but from a cause at which we always looked, *and confessed we looked*, with exceeding dread. I can well believe the failure of that great attempt was a right humiliation and check for us. But I more and more see cause to trust that the putting forth of those facts, and of that great principle that the extinction of the slave trade must come from Africa herself—from the operation of the Bible and the plough in Africa—has borne and is bearing fruit. The seed is sown in many hearts—above all, in many hearts that throb under black skins.

"As soon almost as a negro is truly converted and educated, he begins to sigh for Africa. Sierra Leone, over whose days of darkness poor Wilberforce and Macaulay had to groan so heavily, is beginning to show its harvest by the return of *Christian*, civilised, and, by comparison, wealthy negroes, to the various countries from which they were carried away as slaves. All the

societies are more or less awakened towards Africa, and the Church has lately ordained two black clergymen.

“ Our valuable friend Trew is gone as Archdeacon to the Bahamas, and I think his favourite work will be to train spiritual labourers for Africa. So you see, though we decay, the work lives.

“ I have, indeed, been very ill, and obliged to lead much the life of an invalid; but I am surrounded with blessings, and am, I trust, most truly thankful for leisure and repose. My family are favoured too; my dearest and most invaluable wife in better health than she was a few years ago, my two elder children surrounded with sweet young families, my younger daughter our comfort at home, and my two younger sons just entering life. We have one heavy family cloud—the illness, long-continued and grievously painful, of our beloved sister Mrs. Fry. She has been for some months unable to walk or stand, and is deeply afflicted in body; but her faith and hope are preserved in strength, and her reliance on the Saviour is unbounded.

“ Joseph J. Gurney is on a missionary excursion in France; all the rest of our families are in their usual health; the Cunninghams rejoicing and labouring as usual.

“ I thank you much, my dear friend, for all you say; and can from my heart re-echo your desire, that God may preserve us all to his eternal kingdom.

“ Yours ever, in true fidelity,

“ T. FOWELL BUXTON.

“ I am far more of a Quaker than you are as to these Indian wars. I know every one of them may be called defensive, but the principles and root of all are aggression and conquest. I cannot conceive how our missions are ever to prevail against the arguments of our cannon. Six thousand heathen slain at Gwalior are a terrible set-off against our converts. Yet we are not to be discouraged. I long for the whole Christian world to combine its forces against war. Peace seems to me an object not nearly enough striven for, as lying at the root of all other good.

“ One would suppose by my silence that I think nothing of the abolition of slavery in the East Indies. This is very far from being the truth. We do rejoice most truly at what has been done. We know there cannot be the abolition of slavery,

however narrow and jejune may be its details, without a flight of concomitant blessings. But we want to know each and every detail, and we hope you will write without delay, and tell us all about it."

Mrs. Fry was at this time staying also at Bath, and in Sir Fowell's blank memorandum book of 1844 there is this entry, under the date of May 25.:—

"I visited E. Fry this evening, and found her in tears, and in a very low state. I reminded her of the promises of God, and of the merits of Christ, whereby she and such as she are assured of the 'inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away;' soon she was cheerful and full of smiles; and when I went away, and had left the room for that purpose, she sent for me back, and whispered in my ear, 'How precious is the love and sweet harmony which has always prevailed between us and amongst us! I trust, as we have loved one another in time, so we may abound in love towards each other for all eternity. How delightful is the thought of eternal love binding us together!'"

A branch society for the civilisation of Africa had been formed by the Africans at Sierra Leone, and had sent a considerable sum of money to the parent society in England. To their committee Sir Fowell addressed the following letter:—

"Gentlemen,

"Spitalfields, June 7. 1844.

"I cannot refrain from expressing the very great pleasure which the intelligence of your proceedings has caused in England, among persons so long and so deeply interested in the welfare of the oppressed inhabitants of uncivilised Africa.

It is a matter for great thankfulness to find such exertions for the liberation of the slaves going on in any community, but especially so when set on foot by the very men who have themselves been victims of the most terrible system of cruelty and oppression which the world has ever known. You have, moreover, the credit of setting the example to your fellow-countrymen of what may be done by themselves towards the elevation

of their species, and their own liberation from the dreadful evils to which they have been so long subject.

“Be assured that the spirit which this gift evinces on your part, and the anxiety which it displays for the spread of human freedom in the world, for the advancement of education, and still more for the diffusion of the Gospel of Christ among the benighted millions of your country, will not fail to afford the deepest gratification to those who, for twenty years, have not ceased in their exertions or in their prayers for your real and everlasting welfare.”

CHAPTER XXXIV.

1844, 1845.

SUMMER AT NORTHREPPS.—ANXIETY RESPECTING SIERRA LEONE.—
MR. FREEMAN.—RELIGIOUS FEELINGS.—MARRIAGE OF HIS SON.
—INCREASING ILLNESS.—HIS DEATH AND INTERMENT.

ALTHOUGH in a languid, feeble state of health, he again spent a tolerably cheerful summer at Northrepps. His spirits were less depressed, which he said was owing to a greater assurance of being a partaker of the heavenly inheritance. "This is granted me," he said, "through the *royal* love and mercy of my Lord, who has died for me."

In the fine summer mornings he would often rise at four or five o'clock, and go into his dressing-room, where his voice could be heard for an hour or two at a time in fervent prayer. When remonstrated with on the risk to his health, he would answer, "I have not time enough for prayer. I must have longer time for prayer." "How could I be shorter?" he replied on one occasion; "I could not stop." One night, his voice being heard after he was in bed, he was asked what he was saying. "Praying hard," was his reply; adding, "I have been praying *vehemently* for myself, that I may receive faith, that I may receive the grace of God in my heart, that I may have a clear vision of Christ, that I may perfectly obey Him, that I may have the supporting arm of the Lord in every trial, and be admitted finally into His glorious kingdom." After a

badnight, on his wife expressing her sorrow at his lying so long awake, "Oh, do not be sorry," he replied; "I have had such heavenly thoughts."

In the autumn, although he was still able to take a little air and exercise, going out on his pony with his gun, or to visit his plantations, his appearance indicated increased languor and oppression; and he was, to use his own words, "under decayed spirits." Though very unfit for any mental labour, he was stirred up to exertion by hearing that important changes were about to be made by Government in the arrangements for the liberated Africans at Sierra Leone, by obliging them to go at once to the West Indies. He greatly feared anything approaching to compulsory emigration, and warmly objected to the breaking up in any degree of that system of education and training at Sierra Leone, which appeared to him, through the blessing of God, just beginning to produce results of extreme importance to the whole continent of Africa.

He therefore wrote a long and urgent appeal to Lord Stanley, adducing every argument to persuade him to give up the scheme. The composition of this letter cost him a grievous effort. He was intensely anxious to accomplish it, thinking that it might have weight with the Government, and induce them to relinquish what appeared to him so injurious a measure. He would not give it up, but went on making attempt after attempt to finish it; often did he begin to dictate, and then sink back exhausted in the middle of a sentence; then he would rouse himself and try again, till at last it was completed. It is too long for insertion here; but it scarcely displays any trace of the extreme debility under which he was labouring. With this act closed his long and arduous exertions on behalf of the Negro race.

The able and successful African missionary, Mr. Freeman, who had recently returned from an adventurous journey into the kingdoms of Dahomey and Yariba, came to Northrepps, at the end of October, accompanied by Mr. Beecham.

Remembering with what lively interest Sir Fowell had received Mr. Freeman's journals of his two previous visits to Coomassie, which the Wesleyan Missionary Society had sent him as soon as they could get a copy taken, his inability on this occasion to receive the gratification which his friends had hoped to afford him was very painful. He was, in fact, quite unable to enter into the details, which heretofore would have given him so much pleasure. All the incidents of the journey, although related by Mr. Freeman in the most animated manner, could not rouse him to make questions or remarks. His family could not but feel that evening that the blow was struck; and, indeed, the solemn gravity of his own manner showed that he himself knew it to be so.

He continued too feeble and too much oppressed to converse much; but every now and then the deep feelings of his heart would break forth. When saying grace before dinner, he seemed unable to restrain his overflowing love to the Provider of all mercies.

Some of his expressions have been preserved, as the following:—

“We thank thee, O Lord, for all thy supplies to us, and we pray thee to inspire us with deep gratitude to the Author of every good gift.”

“Lord, make us truly thankful for thy innumerable mercies to us; and with the blessings of the body give us those far greater blessings to the soul, which are by Christ Jesus.”

“The Lord bless us with a sense of His mercy, of His love,

and His indulgent kindness to us, and give us an anxious desire to serve Him, and to please Him for Christ's sake."

"The Lord make us very thankful, and recall to our recollection all the instances of His mercy, and fill us with thankfulness."

One morning, the 11th chapter of Matthew having been read aloud, Sir Fowell, who, in his easy chair by the fireside, had been an attentive listener, said, "There is one passage which you have not touched upon, but which I never can read without the most anxious inquiry into the state of my own soul." He then read the verses beginning, "Woe unto thee, Chorazin," &c., and dwelt on his many and great privileges, concluding by solemnly observing, "How great will be our condemnation, if these be not improved!"

On Sunday, the 17th of November, he went to church; and, according to his custom, gave out the hymns to be sung during the service. One of them was that beautiful hymn, beginning, "All hail the power of Jesu's name!" In reading the last verse, which runs thus —

"Oh! that with yonder sacred throng
We at his feet may fall;
There join the everlasting song,
And crown him Lord of all!"—

so fervant was his emphasis, and so marked the expression of his uplifted countenance, that, on returning home, the Rev. P. C. Law noticed it to his family, and said he felt a strong conviction that he should never again hear Sir Fowell's voice in that church. The presentiment was verified.

Early in December his second son was engaged to be married to the fifth daughter of Mr. Samuel Gurney. On this occasion he wrote with great effort the following note, the last ever written by his own hand.

To Mrs. S. Gurney.

“ My dear Elizabeth,

“ Northrepps, Dec. 3. 1844.

“ I lose no time in answering the letter just received from my son Fowell. In that letter there is a question from you ; viz. ‘ Do I heartily like and approve his marriage with your daughter R——?’ My answer is clear and firm. I do from my heart approve, like, and rejoice in the connection, and from my heart return thanks to that great and indulgent Being who has prompted so admirable a selection. May they live long and happily together ; may great peace and prosperity attend them ; and may they be ‘ the beloved of their good and gracious Master.’

“ With the most sincere love and affection for your husband and all the branches from that old stem,

“ Believe me, my very dear sister,

“ Yours most lovingly,

“ T. FOWELL BUXTON.”

On the 5th of December, while sitting in his chair in his dressing-room, he poured out his heart in prayer, that he, unworthy as he was, might, without a single doubt, know the blessed Lord to be the Saviour ; that he might dwell in Christ, and Christ, through infinite mercy, in him, filling his heart with charity, love, meekness, and every grace ; that his numerous transgressions might be pardoned ; and that, finally, he might be gathered into the land of everlasting life.

Soon afterwards he said, “ I feel my faculties and powers obscured ;” but added, “ my faith is strong.” On the 15th of December he was seized with a severe spasm on the chest, the effects of which, in the course of a week or two, became extremely alarming to his family, and they all collected around him.

While reduced to the lowest state of weakness he was full of the spirit of gratitude, and continually poured forth fervent thanksgiving “ for pardon given and re-