





INTERIOR OF A CHIEF'S HOUSE IN THE FEEJEE ISLANDS.

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THE FEEJEE ISLANDERS*.

THE Frontispiece this month represents the interior of a house belonging to one of the Feejee chiefs. It is considered the most elegant house in all the Feejee Islands, and is very beautifully ornamented with sennit and braid.

The natives of Feejee are in many respects the most barbarous race now existing upon the globe, although they have made considerable progress in several of the useful arts. Among them may be seen the *savage*; and a comparison of his character with that of the natives of other islands in which the Gospel has been attended with success, enables us to form an accurate estimate of the value of Missionary labours.

The Feejeeans are addicted to *stealing*; they are treacherous in the extreme, and yet, with all their ferocity, they are cowards. The most universal trait of their character is their inclination to *lying*. They tell a falsehood in preference to truth, when even the truth would better answer their purpose; adroit lying being regarded as an

*The engraving is in the style called Glyphography, lately invented by Mr. Palmer. The word means engraved drawing, and relates to the manner in which the lines are cut into the plate.

accomplishment. Covetousness also strongly marks their character, and is the incentive to many crimes.

The Pantheon of the Feejee group contains many deities,—benignant and malicious gods. These are served by priests, called "*ambati*," who are worshipped in buildings denominated "*mbure*," or spirit houses. Of such buildings each town has at least one, and often several, which serve also for entertaining strangers, as well as for holding councils and other public meetings. In these mbures images are found; but these, although much esteemed as ornaments, and held sacred, are not worshipped as idols. They are only produced on great occasions, such as festivals, &c.

The *ambati*, or priests, have great influence over the people, who consult them on all occasions, but are generally found acting in concert with the chiefs, thus forming a union of power which rules the islands. Each chief has his *ambati*, who attends him wherever he goes. The people are grossly superstitious, and there are few of their occupations in which the *ambati* is not more or less concerned. He is held sacred within his own district, being considered as the representative of the *kalon*, or spirit. The natives seldom separate the idea of the god from that of his priest, who is viewed with almost divine reverence.

A belief in a future state is universally entertained by the Feejeeans. The passage from life to death is in general considered as one from pain

to happiness; they look forward to it with desire, in order to escape from the infirmities of old age or the sufferings of disease.

This belief in a future state, guided by no just notions of religious or moral obligation, is the source of many abhorrent practices. Among these is the custom of *putting their parents to death* when they are advanced in years, suicide, the immolation of wives at the funerals of their husbands, and human sacrifices.

It is among the most usual occurrences that a father or a mother will notify to their children that it is time for them to die, or that a son shall give notice to his parents that they are becoming a burden to him. In either case, the relatives and friends are collected, and informed of the fact. A consultation is then held, and the request is usually complied with. They then fix upon a day for the purpose, unless that should be done by the party whose fate is under deliberation. The day is usually chosen at a time when yams or taro are ripe, in order to furnish materials for a great feast called "*mburua*." The aged person is then asked, whether he will prefer to be *strangled* before his burial, or *buried alive*. When the appointed day arrives, the relatives and friends bring tapas, mats, and oil, as presents. They are received as at other funeral feasts, and all mourn together until the time for the ceremony arrives. The aged person then proceeds to point out the place where the grave is to be dug; and while some are digging it, the others put on a new maro and turbans. When the grave is dug, which is about four feet deep, the person

is assisted into it, while the relatives and friends begin their lamentations, and proceed to weep and cut themselves as they do at other funerals. All then proceed to take a parting kiss, after which the living body is covered up, first with mats and tapa wrapped around the head, and then with sticks and earth, which are trodden down. When this has been done, all retire, and are tattooed as at their ordinary funerals. The succeeding night, the son goes privately to the grave, and lays upon it a piece of ava-root, which is called the "*vei-tala*," or farewell.

This barbarous custom is considered by the natives as so great a proof of affection, that none but *children* could be found to perform it!

An old man at Levuka did something to vex one of his grandchildren, who in consequence threw stones at him. The only step the old man took in the case was to walk away, saying that he had now lived long enough, when his grandchildren could stone him with impunity. He then requested his children and friends to bury him, to which they consented. A feast was made; he was dressed in his best tapa, and his face blackened. He was then placed sitting in his grave, with his head about two feet below the surface. Tapa and mats were thrown upon him, and the earth pressed down. Thus he died.

—*Wilkes' Exploring Expedition.*

Compare the death of this poor old man at Levuka with that of Judy Campbell, our next subject, and see how much superior is Christianity to Heathenism.

Surely such a people have needed the Gospel!

Happily, Missionaries have gone to the Feejees. The Wesleyan Society have several Missionaries there, and nearly a thousand natives who have become Christians, and a thousand scholars in their schools.—*Ed.*



JUDY CAMPBELL; OR, THE HAPPY DEATH.

JUDY CAMPBELL was a slave on one of the sugar estates in the island of St. Vincent. She had been a member of a Christian church for several years, and was a steady and consistent Christian. In the year 1834, she was taken very ill, and the Missionary who visited her was much pleased with the peaceful and happy state of her mind. On asking how she felt, she said, "Oh! me Massa! me long to go home." "To what home, Judy?" "Oh! to me Jesus, to me home above." "Are you satisfied as to your pardon?" "Oh yes, me Massa! me know me Jesus forgive me all me sins long, long ago. God is love, me feel him here; he warm me heart." She was asked, "Why do you love Jesus?" She replied, "Oh! for he pardon me all me sins." "You were a sinner, then?" "O yes! me a big sinner; but blessed Massa pardon me all." "Are you afraid to die?" said the Missionary. She answered, "Oh no! me go when blessed Massa Jesus take me." "Would you not like to live longer, to be with your children; can you give them up?" She said, she "no do any ting for them now, and yet de Lord take care of them; and if the Lord take me from them, he will take care of them."

This she said with calm and holy confidence. She was told that she must not desire to die, merely to escape pain and suffering. Oh me Massa! me in no pain; me Saviour so good to to me, me in no pain; me willing to live or die. My Massa's will be done."

A few days after, when her minister visited her again, she said to him, "Me not gone yet, Massa." "But you will soon be there," pointing upwards. "Yes, Massa, me shall be for ever wid de Lord; me shall praise him for ever and ever." In this happy and thankful state she died, and went to spend an eternal Sabbath in her happy home above.

Now, my dear children, are you not very glad to think you are helping to send out Missionaries to the poor Heathen, since you see how useful they are, and how happy the Heathen become when God has changed their hearts. Will you not try to do more and more for them? Yet remember, that unless you give *your* hearts to Jesus, and love him as this poor negro did, *you* will not be happy when you come to die.

R. B. S.

INDIAN CHILDREN in BRITISH GUIANA.

THE writer of this little story lately visited the Indian settlements on the Corentyn River, Berbice, where he gathered the following particulars concerning Indian children:—

"The first little infant that arrested his attention was only a few days old. Its mother was in company with other Indians, who were on a

journey. The poor little baby was born in the woods, far away from home: no house was near, and the only bed for itself and its mother was a hammock swung between two trees. The little one had *no* clothing; its mother was very partially covered. She had painted her darling child with a kind of black vegetable dye; and, as she swung in her hammock, with her baby on her bosom, she appeared cheerful and contented. Alas! she knew nothing about God, and could not train up her child in the way that it should go.

“ Another little child belonging to the same travelling Indians had died on the journey. Its father and mother were building a small shed over its grave. Had it died in the shed, which its parents call their house, they would have *buried it there*; and, for some time after its death, they would have *lighted a fire over its grave every night*. Happy child, said the Missionary, it has gone to be with Jesus, who says, ‘Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not.’ But will the surviving baby learn the Saviour’s name, and find the way to Heaven? Who will help to teach it?

“ At an Indian settlement, five young Indian children came around the Missionary. Three of them were girls. One little boy had a monkey, which was so tame that it lay down upon his head while they all stood to get a lesson. They were shewn the letters of the alphabet,—were told how Jesus loves little children,—how he took them in his arms and blessed them; and they were exhorted to love and serve him.

“One of those pretty medals of the ‘John Williams’ was offered to another little Indian boy; but before his father would let him take it, he wished to know if it would ‘*do him nothing for the dead.*’ The poor man thought that it might, perhaps, either *kill* his child, or *keep him from dying.* When he was told that it would do neither, and when he had heard about the *Ship* that the dear English children had bought and sent far, far away, with Missionaries and Bibles to teach people about God who made them, and Christ who wishes to save them, he was pleased to have two medals, one for each of his children.

“These interesting Indians have no Missionary and no teacher now; therefore the children who hear of them, and who love Jesus Christ, should fervently pray that God would send them the Gospel, and they should try what they can do for all the people who are yet ‘without God and without hope in the world.’”



A GIRL SWINGING IN TAHITI.

THE amusements of the children in the islands of the Pacific are not much diversified. One of them is represented in the annexed Engraving. It consists in swinging by means of a single rope from a tall cocoa-nut tree, which gracefully bends over the water's edge. A small piece of wood or stick is tied to the rope, which serves as a kind of seat. The pastime, it has been observed, is picturesque and in good keeping with the landscape.