

lath and plaster, notwithstanding the pretty appearance from the sea, soon suffered them to go to ruin; when standing, the interior did not present so fair a picture as the exterior; we can safely assert that three fourths of the present habitations of the Tahitians are more like shelters for brutes, than dwellings for human beings.*

The honesty of the Tahitian has certainly not improved, either from the force of new laws, or under the new doctrine. The thief was formerly at the mercy of the person whose property he stole, when detected; if not detected, in most cases a superstitious dread hung over him, and if a misfortune happened, it was attributed to his having injured the party, which made him desirous of making atonement. Thefts were petty and not frequent; they are now common, and the Tahitian bids fair soon to equal the European in that civilized vice. The character of the females in all countries influences the whole people. The Tahitian has been represented by the Author as having been raised from a degraded position. We are sorry to say that she has not profited by her advancement, but has descended to the lowest possible abyss in the scale of virtue and morals, and has dragged the male population with her in her fall. The Author has given a thrilling picture of the horrible extent to which child-murder was carried in the heathen state of these people, which will cause every feeling mind to rejoice with him at the abolition of such barbarous practices. We cheerfully join our tribute of praise to the general voice raised for exertions made to remove such crimes from the face of the earth, but regret that we cannot admit the claim of the Missionary, in having raised up a virtuous female community at these Islands; and with sorrow do we state our belief that it is not altogether a sense of religion which has checked the great crime. Fear, first under the new religion, from the terrors held out by the Missionary stopped it, and the universal horror with which all classes of Europeans looked upon it, gave durability to the check; the frightful destruction of human life in the interim to the present day, is a proof that the dread of an offended Maker is passing away, and that the sense of a moral duty to society has not taken deep root. The present state of morals of the Tahitian female cannot be expressed; their degraded state is barely to be conceived; the immorality which existed in their unsophisticated state of nature, now assumes a character of fixed and un-

*This description will equally apply to very many habitations among the Hawaiians, but they are of the lowest class, and the farthest removed from foreign or missionary influence. Any improvement in them we consider as resulting from those causes, and the actual condition of such as are altogether isolated from their operation, as a good type of the primitive condition of the islanders generally, when heathens. When Cook and the early navigators first visited these islands, the natives interested themselves on all occasions, to make the most pleasing appearance possible, and it is not at all strange that the voyagers should have been deceived. They were always received into their best houses, in which the finest mats and tapas were spread, which are usually reserved for such occasions, and all the finery of the savages exhibited. But could they have returned unexpectedly to the same places, they doubtless would have found it difficult to have recognized the neat habitations, in the filthy interior in which they would find themselves. Every body knows the fondness of the savages for display, and the various practices common among them of borrowing &c. whenever there is an occasion of showing their *waiwai*, but their common manner of living, one must witness to believe.

blushing vice; old pandering to the young, the young lost to every sense of decency, with hardly an exception on the whole island. Tahiti might formerly resemble Cythera; it is now more like the parlious of St. Giles in its customs. We attribute this profligacy principally to two leading causes; the laws made nominally to check immorality, but which prove a productive source of revenue, and the entire absence of industry with the young females. A sensible and reflecting christian, knowing the existence of immorality in a community, will use every exertion to reform the society by mild persuasion, and dwelling upon the beautiful picture of virtue in all its forms; he will be very cautious of dragging vice before the open day; it is contagious; the predominancy of evil is strong in our frail natures; take the entire sense of shame away from a female, and no law will prove effectual in giving a moral tone to society. This has been unwisely done at the islands. The laws framed by Missionaries, with the best intention, but most erroneous judgment, to check immorality, have produced universal profligacy.* The fines received by these laws, are divided between the Queen, governors, and constables informing. Nothing can better prove the demoralized state of these people than the scenes at this tribunal. An offender brought up for the first time appears with reluctance; she leaves, callous to the future; the sharers of the spoil are like so many hungry sharks darting upon their prey, and divide a plunder that the manly dignity of the chiefs under their ancient system would have saved them the degradation of soiling their fingers with.

*They may not have proved an *adequate* check, but they could not have produced profligacy in a nation, among whom every species of licentiousness had been universal from time immemorial. The system so prevalent among the native governments, of commuting crimes by fines, tends to produce evils little less if any, those they are intended to check.

& To be concluded.

THE POLYNESIAN.

SATURDAY, JAN. 2, 1841.

A charge frequently brought against foreigners, is their supplying natives with fire-arms, and otherwise encouraging them in their wars. This is true, but its results have generally been beneficial. We find that wars have ceased, soon as one leading chief secured the ascendancy, and his power has been frequently established through the assistance of whites. They would naturally prefer the service of the most energetic and capable man, as he would best appreciate their services, and we rarely hear of their joining indiscriminately both parties, and aiding in protracting a long and bloody warfare. At these Islands, the Society, and indeed others, we perceive that the way was opened for christianity through these very means. When missionaries have succeeded in establishing themselves before this has occurred, wars have resulted between the advocates of the new religion and the adherents of the old. The christian party has finally triumphed, but by the aid of fire-arms, and the superior knowledge derived from more immediate contact with the whites. This year we have heard of the disastrous struggle at Tonga, which, although the heathen party have been victorious, will eventually terminate in the success of the better cause, as a powerful nation has become involved in the contest.

Missionaries have been at the Samoa and Friendly groups several years, and the natives have made rapid advances in christianity. These islands having no foreign population, and being but an occasional resort for shipping, show conclusively how much can be accomplished by missionaries, undisturbed

or unaided by other influences: their remarkable success in turning the people from their idols, and the great moral reform which has followed their labors, are unanswerable arguments in favor of missions, for no like changes have occurred where they have not been established. Yet they raise a people only to a certain point, when they either remain stationary, or retrograde; unless indeed by imitating the Jesuits in Paraguay, and becoming their rulers, remodel their polity, introducing the customs, laws and manufactures of Europe, and thus force them as it were to be civilized. This may appear to be an uncharitable conclusion, but it is far otherwise, and in making it no censure is intended to be implied upon them. However faithfully they may devote themselves to their work, as missionaries, this will be the inevitable result. The reason is obvious. By their own inclinations and characters as preachers of the gospel, they must necessarily confine themselves to moral and doctrinal teachings. Their hearers are engaged in every work of vice and crime, and even all their games and amusements partake of sensuality. In proportion as they become influenced by the new religion, they discontinue their old customs, and the whole government must be revolutionized. Despotism must be abolished, as inconsistent with their new belief—wars cease, and those sports whose only merit consisted in their manly activity—while they depraved and corrupted the mind, are necessarily forsaken. Industry is inculcated both by precept and example by their teachers, and every advice and direction for culture of the earth, instruction in simple trades, and engaging in new avocations, given. But until some more powerful motive than the mere desire to be industrious is presented, or there is a demand for labor, men will not become so. Hope of reward is necessary to stimulate them. Thus at Samoa the manners of the natives are fast becoming revolutionized, but the novelty of the change will soon wear away, and unless something occurs to employ their time profitably to themselves, a moral reaction will necessarily take place. Their natures remain much the same: at present the desire for learning, attending meetings, and other sources of missionary instruction, which are necessarily multiplied in order to keep the minds of the natives alive to these subjects, will occupy them. But the experience of missions shows that this soon palls, and unless something else is brought forward, they will do those things in secret, which their new laws may forbid, but which have been sanctioned by usage with them from time immemorial. The guilt in their view will lay more in detection, than in any criminal act itself. The brightest examples of true conversion among the natives are those who are the most engaged in steady occupations. A nation may change its religion, and by so doing those sources of activity by which its energies (however wrongfully directed) were tried, and hopes stimulated, are dried up; because in direct opposition to the spirit of the new. Something must now intervene, for in these islands the mere labor for subsistence occupies but a small portion of time, else the nation will perish, or return to their former practices. Agriculture, trade and commerce are now the resort, and as missionaries cannot engage profitably in them, and retain their original character, for reasons which we have previously given, men whose business these are, should be encouraged to settle. In this way the dormant industry of the country will be awakened, its natural resources developed, and the natives provided with the means of becoming civilized, without which it is vain to think of *keeping* them christianized. Every one who knows any thing of native character, is aware that while they herd together like swine, in miserable and filthy huts, their time unoccupied, or only to such an extent as preaching or

schooling will fill, their moral habits will but slightly changed. Severe laws may suppress open vice, but they cannot produce refinement of feeling, or elevate the nature of such wretched beings, until they remove the causes of their degradation. Compel them to live in a similar manner, and they will rapidly degenerate. Indeed, we doubt the condition of the serfs of Russia is a better.

The Roman Catholic missionaries at the Gambier Islands have been eminently successful in converting the people to their faith, but in this they have been aided by many accidental circumstances. The island is small and contains but 2200 inhabitants. They are far separated from other islands, little shipping touching there, and the people consequently were without any previous influence and undisturbed by conflicting doctrines. The population is now on the increase, the men are employed in shelling, while the women learn to spin. The poverty of the island compels the natives to labor for their subsistence, and the various arts which they are taught, keep them industrious, so that at present every thing there is in a prosperous state.

In many parts of the United States New Year's day is made a festival of the most pleasant nature. Not to speak of the exchanges of wishes of good will, and gifts between acquaintances, the family meetings, and the little gatherings of friends to pass social hour, and the throwing open the heart to the full current of domestic happiness when young and old meet around the hearth of their common home, it is also a day devoted to reconciliation. Calls are made upon all acquaintances, and the occasion improved to bring those together, whom accident or mutual unkindness has estranged. The past is to be forgotten, and only the present kindly greeting remembered. A tendency is of the happiest nature, and many a family feud has been healed in this manner, which otherwise might have rankled through long years. Well would it be for mankind if the custom be universal. Business is also closed on that day, places of amusement open, and the streets thronged by thousands of light-hearted pedestrians hastening to pay their devoirs to the friends who remain at home to receive their guests. This over, and if snow is on the ground, vehicles of every size and description turn out, up to those mammoth sleighs (peculiar to America) holding forty individuals, and away they speed, the bells ringing right cheerily in the clear air, for a ride or dance. As we have no big sleighs here, we cannot invite our patrons to a ride, but we can and do wish that the present year may be to them the happiest of the happy.

GUESS AGAIN.—No lady in Honolulu wrote the poetry published in our last.

Another year has melted into eternity. Its hopes and fears, smiles and tears all mingled with the past, and we are one step nearer our "dark inn," the grave. How many of the lovely and beautiful have preceded us in that drear journey! How many that our hearts held dear, whose memories are enshrined in our natures, will be there to welcome us! They too have played their part in this busy scene below, have mingled their tears with the sorrowful, and rejoiced with the joyous. But friendship could not stay them, and when their turn came, they passed from our sight like a fleeting cloud. Time rolls sternly on—the great, the good, as well as the bad—young and aged—alike crushed beneath its wheels. Nature herself grows grey, as its furrows deepen upon her bosom. What does this lesson teach us? Do rolling years weave a wreath of virtue and wisdom around our brows? Shall we be prepared for the perfect society, the unlimited expansion of happiness and know-