

duction in his cast of thought, and doctrine, and ecclesiastical convictions, giving birth to one of the most learned and influential forms of Protestant Christianity.

The Presbyterians are, in doctrine, strongly Calvinistic, and in church government, their ideas are borrowed from the civil-ecclesiastical constitutions of their great founder.

The following statistics of Presbyterianism, which we clip from one of our exchanges, comes from the Edinburgh Christian Witness:

"Presbyterianism seems as if it were indigenous to Scotland; every other form of church government having proved like a tender, a stunted and shriveled exotic. There are scarcely two hundred congregations of Episcopalians, Independents, and Baptists, in Scotland; and even of these, there is no small number without regular pastors. The Dissenters are seceders from the Establishment, and have retained Presbyterianism. Of Presbyterian congregations, including the Establishment, and other Presbyterian bodies, there are about 2,600.

In Ireland there are about seven hundred Presbyterian congregations, embracing about the half of the Protestant population of that beautiful island.

In England there are upwards of 200 congregations professedly belonging to the Presbyterian Church; and in Wales there are about 550 congregations of Calvinistic Methodists, whose form of government very closely approximates to Presbyterianism.

The Waldenses, like their fore-fathers, are Presbyterians. They have thirteen pastors, and 23,000 people.

In Hungary, Germany, and Prussia, the great body of the people are Protestant, and belong either to the Reformed or Lutheran Churches—the former thoroughly Presbyterian, and the latter approaching far more closely to Presbyterianism than any other form, maintaining that the presbyter and bishop are identical, and that all pastors are equal in office, possessing what are termed superintendents, only from human expediency.

If from the Old World we pass into the New, we find Presbyterianism in great strength. A large proportion of the ministers and congregations of the United States are Presbyterian—there being about 7,500 churches and 5,000 ministers—embracing a population of several millions.

We have furnished enough statistics to show that the Presbyterian Church is a large and influential body in both hemispheres.

The ecclesiastical constitution established by the Council of Dort, from which come the Dutch Reformed Churches, of the Netherlands and of this country, is also a close approximation to Calvin's great ideal, and may be reckoned among the offshoots of his mighty mind. And even the English Church as modeled by Cranmer and the Thirty-nine Articles, the present professed basis of its faith, owes its doctrinal definitions more to Calvin than to any other man. The State Church of England barely escaped Presbyterian forms throughout, and, no doubt, would have taken that cast, but for the influence of the king, court, and bishops.—New York Chronicle.

Christian Messenger.

HALIFAX, JANUARY 23, 1856.

GREAT excitement has been lately produced in Ireland by the burning of a number of Bibles at Kingstown, near Dublin, by a Roman Catholic Priest, one Father Pecherini. By his name he would appear to be an Italian, and belongs to a Romish Order called the Redemptorist Fathers. Like some others of his creed, the worthy Priest appears to have been rather anxious to court persecution, and as a ready means to effect it, resolved to have a public bonfire of Protestant Bibles. The matter was so public and so much talked of, that the Irish Government seem to have felt it necessary to prosecute the delinquents under some old Statute, and gave directions to the Irish Attorney General to that effect. Accordingly Father Pecherini and his accomplices were brought up and tried in the Criminal Court in Dublin before a Jury, the majority of whom were Roman Catholics. The fact

was proved, but the defence set up was, that it was done unintentionally—that Father P. having in his zeal for the morals of the people, determined on making a bonfire of a number of bad books, some Bibles by mistake had got among them. This was also clearly proved, which no doubt it was very easy to do, and the natural result was that the accused were fully acquitted, to the vociferous joy of a large Dublin mob. We can only say that we more than doubt the good policy of the prosecution, as the consequences might easily have been anticipated; or had they been otherwise, we do not think it the wisest way of vindicating the truth and value of the Bible. Apropos to this subject, we subjoin an extract of a sermon lately preached by the celebrated Father Gavazzi, the Italian Reformer. We have been inclined hitherto to suppose that a zeal, somewhat indiscreet, for the civil renovation of his country, was probably the leading motive of this great Seceder from the Romish Church. The excellent spirit of the following remarks, however, would lead us to a far more favourable conclusion, for we have seldom met with sounder religious views or more practical good sense.

THE CHURCH OF ROME AND THE BIBLE.

"The Church of Rome holds all these fatal errors, because of not taking the scriptures as the only guide. She teaches that the scriptures can only be interpreted by the church; and she forbids the people to read for themselves. When I was a boy, I was neither advised nor permitted to read the bible; and my own father had to obtain a license for reading the bible. But Christ says, 'Search the scriptures.' Therefore, if Christ commands me to read the bible, and if the pope forbids me to read it, I will a thousand times obey the pope and his creatures, in order to obey Christ. My dear brethren, guard your bible—read your bible—study your bible—practise faithfully what is commanded in the bible. In its sacred pages may be found certainty for doubt, strength for weakness, hope for despair, help in difficulties, comfort in tribulation. When the bible may, in some cases, appear obscure, explain it by means of the bible itself, comparing one part with another; and pray for the guidance of the Holy Spirit, who is promised to any one who shall humbly ask for his aid. Pray the Holy Ghost to give you strength and light to study and understand the Word of God. It is a beautiful thing for families to meet morning and evening to read the bible together. If you cannot have these little services both morning and evening, yet once a day, in the evening, read the bible together, my dear brethren. Read at least one chapter a day in seclusion; or if you cannot possibly do more, still a few sentences every day. Be thankful that you live in a country where the Word of God can be read without hindrance. There is a party among you calling themselves members of your English church, who are against the free reading of the bible. They are in reality Roman Catholics. Beware of these traitors! Beware of all papists concealed under this mask of Tractarianism.—Gavazzi's Sermon on 'The Evangelization of Italy.'"

DR. HACKETT'S "Illustrations of Scripture" is one of the most instructive and useful works that have lately issued from the press. It is the result of personal observation during a tour in Palestine, in the spring and summer of 1852. Dr. H. has also availed himself of the recorded experience of other travellers. The following are the titles of the chapters:—Eastern travelling—manners and customs, climate, soil, and productions; agriculture, its operations and implements; geographical accuracy of the Bible; Jewish opinions and usages; Jerusalem and its environs; sketches of particular places.

An extract will be gratifying to our readers:—"In the parable of the mustard-seed, it is said that seed, although the smallest of all seeds when cast into the earth, becomes, when grown up, a great tree (in a comparative sense, of course), and puts forth branches, so that the fowls of heaven come and lodge among them. I was beginning to fear that I should leave the country without having an opportunity to see any example of this plant answering to the description of it in the parable. Of the various persons of whom I had made inquiry at Jerusalem, no one was able to give me any certain information. One said that probably this species of plant was now extinct. Another said that it was reputed to grow very large in Galilee, but could not vouch for it from personal observation. I had observed, indeed, in crossing the plain of Esdraelon, just before coming to Nazareth, that the mustard-plant was by no means uncommon; but yet, though some of the stalks which I took pains to measure were quite large, they were still not so large as I had expected to find them, and not large enough, as it appeared to me, to suggest naturally the illustration in the parable. I was, therefore, disappointed.

"Some days after this, as I was riding across the plain of Akka, on the way to Carmel, I perceived, at some distance from the path, what seemed to be a little forest or nursery of trees. I turned

aside to examine them. On coming nearer, they proved to be an extensive field of the plant which I was so anxious to see. It was then in blossom, full grown, in some cases six, seven, and nine feet high, with a stem or trunk an inch or more in thickness, throwing out branches on every side. I was now satisfied in part. I felt that such a plant might well be called a tree, and, in comparison with the seed producing it, a great tree. But still the branches, or stems of the branches, were not very large, or, apparently, very strong. Can the birds, I said to myself, rest upon them? Are they not too slight and flexible? Will they not bend or break beneath the superadded weight? At that very instant, as I stood and revolved the thought, lo! one of the fowls of heaven stopped in its flight through the air, alighted down on one of the branches, which hardly moved beneath the shock, and then began, perched there before my eyes, to warble forth a strain of the richest music. All my doubts were now charmed away. I was delighted at the incident. It seemed to me at the moment as if I enjoyed enough to repay me for all the trouble of the whole journey.

"Such incidental illustrations of Scripture furnish no small share of the gratification which the traveller receives from day to day, as he wanders through the lands of the Bible. He finds that he has a local commentary spread everywhere around him, which brings home to him the language and scenes of the Bible with a freshness and power which no learning or skill of commentators can supply."

This volume has our heartiest commendation. All our ministers, and Sunday School teachers should possess it.

There is another volume recently published, which may be strongly recommended to the notice of young men. It is the "Memoir of Amos A. Lawrence," well known for many years as a prosperous, wealthy and benevolent Boston merchant. We have perused it with great satisfaction.

THE House of Representatives at Washington by our last accounts, and after being for more than a month in Session, were still unable to come to the choice of a Speaker, and consequently to proceed with the business of the Country. This strange state of things is partly attributed to the coming Presidential Election, and partly—perhaps chiefly—to the great question of Slavery. This question is evidently every hour becoming more entangled with difficulties, and as one new state after another makes application for admission into the great Federal Body, the increasingly momentous enquiry will continue to be made—Shall they be brought in as communities of free and independent men, or chained to the Union, to be poisoned and brutalized by the abominations of Slavery. It is little wonder that the free and hardy sons of the North feel indignant and degraded by such a union. We trust there will be sufficient power both moral and civil on their side to avert the heavy disgrace that is threatened them; for as was observed by one of their most gifted men, Dr. Wayland, in reference to the disgraceful passing of the Nebraska Bill, what is the worth of their union despoiled of its very essence, and retaining nothing but the empty name! There is one view of the subject of Slavery and its deleterious workings, that we do not recollect to have seen sufficiently insisted on. The cultivation of the earth—in reality the most virtuous and noble of all employments—the most merciful and surest temporal remedy for the original curse with which it was linked, has by the universal employment of Slave labour in the South, thrown a false and unmerited stigma upon the occupations of the husbandman. The tillage of the ground, and the triumphs of the plow, which not only the sturdy New England Farmer, but the wealthy and intelligent merchant and lawyer, justly esteem as honourable pursuits for every man in the community, are in the South degraded to the position of the most servile employments, and considered only fit for negroes and slaves. The evil has long been sapping the vitals of the Great American Confederation. Had Slavery been strictly confined to its original limits, it had been bad enough, but when it is sought by half of the Legislators of the Country to be extended and enlarged and made part and parcel of the growth of the Union, we tremble for the safety of Institutions which have raised the United States to their present proud elevation, and which if preserved in their integrity might render them a blessing to the great family of nations.

THE Steamer America, with the first January mails from England, arrived on Wednesday, the 16th inst. As the winter has for the time quelled the din of war, there is not much that deserves the name

of news in the papers. The two chief subjects spoken of are the rumours of Austrian interference, to effect peace, and the preparations making for the campaign of next season. These are to be on an imposing scale. Besides the forces in the Crimea, and the proposed expedition to the mouth of the Danube, the French Emperor is about to establish two camps of 100,000 men each. One it is said to operate if necessary on the Rhine, and the other to act with the great naval armament in the Baltic. This demonstration will probably bring the German Powers to some decision as to the part they will take, and should the efforts of Austria to bring about peace fail, it is by no means improbable that a general war will follow in which most of the European Powers will be compelled to take a part. A large and powerful fleet will again proceed to the Baltic early in the Spring, and it is generally believed that an attack upon an extensive scale will be made on the Russian strongholds and cities in the Gulf of Finland. The Russians are strongly fortifying St. Petersburg, Warsaw and Moscow, evidently anticipating the presence of hostile armies in the central provinces of the Empire. We cannot but earnestly hope that some providential opening may appear, by which the horrors and miseries of a protracted war may be averted and the clash of arms be exchanged for the blessings of peace and civilization.

In England, altho' a good deal of depression exists, yet upon the whole, commercial and financial prospects are sound and encouraging.

A large number of Irish emigrants are returning from the United States, finding that the prospects in their native country offer more encouragement than the present state of employment in America. No doubt the anti-catholic feeling, so prevalent in the U. S., has much to do with the dislike of the Irish in their new country, but it is also certain that the state of things in Ireland is vastly altered for the better. The sale of Real Estate under the operation of the Encumbered Estates Commission is having a wonderfully beneficial effect upon Ireland in every respect, and there is great reason to hope that ere long the vast resources of that rich and fertile country will be greatly developed and rendered effectual to its future prosperity.

Telegraph Despatch.

Merchants' Reading Room, Jan. 23rd, 1856.
The Steamship Africa arrived at New York this morning—Liverpool dates to 9th inst.
Cotton declined 1-16th.
Flour advanced nine-pence per barrel.
Wheat advanced two-pence per bushel.
Corn—prices stiffer, but quotations unchanged.
Provisions—prices unchanged.
Consols 86 to 86 1/2.
War news wholly unimportant.

General Intelligence.

SAD EVENT.—On Friday 11th inst. a man calling himself Bell took passage for Prospect with Mr. Henry Johnston of that place, in his fishing-smack, and when about half way down, was seen to walk forward towards the head of the vessel, and it is supposed threw himself overboard, as he was never seen afterwards. He seemed in a dejected state of mind,—talked a great deal about his wife, whom he said he had left up the Railway line, where he had lately been working for Cameron & McDonald, and that she would not know where he had gone to. A small red chest which he left in the vessel is in possession of Mr. Johnston, near Prospect.—Colonist.

The "Edinburgh" a splendid new iron screw Steamship of 2,500 tons, belonging to the New York and Glasgow Line put into our harbour on Wednesday last for coal. She had experienced very heavy weather on her passage—24 days. In consequence of contrary winds and rough weather, she lay off the harbour three days before she could get in. Her masts were of iron and some of her rigging was made of wire rope.

MR. FRASER'S LECTURE.—Mr. R. G. Fraser, Chemist, lectured on Monday evening last before the Mac-Division, Sons of Temperance, on Chemical Analysis. The Division Room was crowded. He first gave a brief outline of the subject—and then illustrated the lecture by experiments. He spoke of the progress in chemistry within the last few years, and showed the superiority of the atomic process over the old one. This was illustrated by dissolving a silver coin in nitric acid, separating the copper from the silver, and then testing the exact proportions of each metal, which was accomplished in a very short time. The whole lec-