

Christian Messenger.

A REPOSITORY OF RELIGIOUS, POLITICAL, AND GENERAL INTELLIGENCE.

"NOT SLOTHFUL IN BUSINESS: FERVENT IN SPIRIT."

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Poetry.

The Celestial Army.

I stood by the open casement,
And looked upon the night,
And saw the westward-going stars
Pass slowly out of sight.

Slowly the bright procession
Went down the gleaming arch,
And my soul discerned the music
Of the long triumphal march;

Till the great celestial army,
Stretching far beyond the poles,
Became the eternal symbol
Of the mighty march of souls.

Onward, for ever onward,
Red Mars led down his clan;
And the Moon, like a mailed maiden,
Was riding in the van.

And some were bright in beauty,
And some were faint and small,
But these might be, in their great heights,
The noblest of them all.

Downward, for ever downward,
Behind Earth's dusky shore,
They passed into the unknown night,
They passed, and were no more.

No more! oh say not so!
And downward is not just;
For the sight is weak and the sense is dim,
That looks through heated dust.

The stars and the mailed moon,
Though they seem to fall and die,
Still sweep with their embattled lines
An endless reach of sky.

And though the hills of Death
May hide the bright array,
The marshalled brotherhood of souls
Still keeps its onward way.

Upward, for ever upward,
I see their march sublime,
And hear the glorious music
Of the conquerors of Time.

And long let me remember,
That the palest fainting one
May to the diviner vision be
A bright and blazing sun.

—Thomas B. Read.

Miscellaneous.

AUSTRALIA.

THE CHINESE.—TEMPERANCE.—BAPTISTS, &c.

A correspondent of the London Freeman in a letter to that journal gives some interesting particulars of that far-off land. He refers to the political questions which are occupying the attention of both Britain and the colonies—the ballot, which is adopted there; the entire discontinuance of State aid to religion; the extension of the franchise, &c., and proceeds to speak of the position of the Chinese there as follows:—

It is a little remarkable that while the people of England have been called to undergo the excitement of a general election, brought about by the "Chinese question," we at their antipodes, at nearly the same time, should also have a "Chinese question," hardly less exciting to the people of Victoria. Owing to the multitude of Celestials which poured in upon us some time back, it was deemed expedient to impose a capitation tax of 10*l.* upon every Chinese landed in the colony, and to adopt other restrictive measures for regulating the admission of these Mongolian tribes; but all has proved ineffectual, for they still get landed in shoals on the South Australian coast, and, with a kind intimation that "We are all coming!" they make their way hundreds of miles overland to our attractive diggings, were they unearched our gold and consign it to Hong Kong, or somewhere else, without any compensating advantage whatever to the country. Further, these people bring no women with them; their habits, though peaceful, are extremely vicious; and, altogether, their presence is regarded with disfavour, especially upon the gold fields, where there have been several slight skirmishes between them and the Europeans. A wholesale expulsion of the Chinese from the Buck-

land river diggings took place a few days ago, when 300 or 400 European miners, aggrieved at some conduct on the part of the Celestials, routed their camp and drove the whole of them, numbering about 2,000, like an affrighted flock of sheep, several miles from the place. It is to be regretted that some acts of violence were committed, the Chinese tents having been burnt to the ground, and all their property destroyed. The Government has stepped forward to protect the Chinese in this instance, and some persons have been arrested for the mischief done; but there is a general and loudly expressed feeling throughout the colony that some steps must be taken, and taken promptly, both for preventing any further influx of these unwelcome visitors, and also for directly taxing every head of them while they remain here. The question is surrounded by difficulties, but the Government is alive to its importance, and is now engaged in deliberating upon it. The mission established for imparting Christianity to the Chinese does not appear to have been attended with any positive success as yet, but the effort is still continued.

He speaks of the progress of Temperance principles with some degree of encouragement.

The Victoria Temperance League has recently held a great demonstration on behalf of its principles, and, in connection with kindred societies in the neighbouring colonies, is about to transmit to England funds for procuring the services of one or two talented lecturers to advocate the cause of temperance. It also purposes establishing a weekly newspaper especially devoted to the same interest. That the crime of drunkenness has greatly decreased in the Australian communities is very apparent, and it is admitted by all that the consistent advocacy of temperance professors has chiefly tended to this result. So far their labours have been rewarded, but still, much requires to be done to reduce the evil to its possible minimum.

On the 1st of July the Victoria Bethel Union opened a floating chapel in Hobson's Bay for the special use of seamen, about 30,000 of whom visit this part annually. The Government granted the use of a hulk for the purpose, but the undertaking is sustained by voluntary contributions, all sects of Evangelical Christians having united their efforts in its support. The Rev. Kerr Johnstone, a Baptist minister, formerly of Hobart Town, Tasmania, is the recognised chaplain, and the Right Rev. the Lord Bishop of Melbourne preached the introductory sermon, before Episcopalians, Presbyterians, Wesleyans, Congregationalists, and Baptists; a circumstance that would be regarded with a kind of pious horror by the strict upholders of the dignity of the Church Established in England, but one that is eminently suggestive of the prevailing sympathy which here exists among all orders of Christians and the happy results to be anticipated from their more general intercourse and co-operation.

The Rev. James Taylor, the Baptist minister in Melbourne, has won golden opinions, if nothing else, since his arrival in the colony, for the earnestness and activity with which he has set about the work he came amongst us to do; and although his labours have as yet been necessarily limited to Melbourne and its environs, there can be no doubt he has already effected much good. We look anxiously for some equally able and diligent ministers of our denomination to transport themselves hither, that they may employ their energies and influence in the same cause on this side of the globe.

Reports from New South Wales inform us of a devastating flood that has taken place in the neighbourhood of Maitland, causing a greater destruction of property than ever before known, but no loss of human life. From South Australia we learn that some valuable discoveries have been made respecting the physical features of the interior country, and proving incontrovertibly that, in the unexplored regions of Central Australia, there exist vast, pic-

turesque, and fertile lands, awaiting occupation by the future inhabitants of this great continent.

An editorial of the same journal notices the above communication in the following terms:—

LIGHT FROM THE ANTIPODES.

The letter of our Melbourne Correspondent, the whole of which will be found very interesting, reminds us afresh how much politicians at home may learn from our free colonies. Canada and Victoria we may look to with much confidence, since the population in both of them consists largely of the present generation. The colonists are not merely of English descent, retaining English notions, habits, and prejudices, but a great part of them were but yesterday, as it were, with us. We have conversed with them, acted with them, and understand them, and can feel confidence in their being quite as wise as we, whom they left behind, and probably more energetic. The chief social and political difference between them and us would seem to be, that they are unblest with a titled aristocracy. They have an aristocracy no doubt, for Human Nature is aristocratic; no jealousy can prevent its rise, no ostracism expel it; but in the colonies it must be due to wealth, generally combined with the personal ability which earned it, intellectual endowments and attainments, or general merits. If a man is born a legislator there, it must be in the same sense in which a poet must be born; he cannot inherit nobility. The effect of this is obviously to show what our middle and lower classes can do when charged with the management of public business; to teach us what are their real wants and wishes; and to show us what the same classes could do and would do at home, were not their hands tied.

The great triumph of our cousins in Victoria is, however, the severance of the connection between Church and State. Our readers may remember how determined Lord John Russell was that the Victorians should at least start right; he had a clause, therefore, inserted in their constitution, appropriating an annual grant to the support of religion in the colony. It was to be apportioned fairly among the different sects—a pretty fair bribe, one would think, for its continuance. We are told, however, that the proposal to abolish the clause was carried by the votes of more than two-thirds of the House! We congratulate the colony sincerely on this success. Religious liberty is surely the most precious liberty of all; indeed, without it, civil liberty itself can never be perfect; and how a policy which makes its supporters State paupers, and which compels all to support some disbelieved doctrines and disapproved worship, can be called a policy of liberty at all, we are at a loss to understand. Equality it may be, but it is the equality of servitude; and even if it may be called voluntary servitude, it is none the less disgraceful for that, but rather the more so. The Victorians prefer voluntaryism and entire religious liberty.

Dr. Livingston at Manchester.

On Wednesday morning Dr. Livingston, the African traveller, met the members of the Chamber of Commerce, Commercial Association, and Cotton Supply Association, at the Town Hall, Manchester, and had a most warm and hearty reception. There were a number of ladies present. Sir James Watts, Mayor of Manchester, presided, and on the platform were Mr. Cheetam, M. P., and several influential gentlemen of the town. An address having been presented, Dr. Livingston, in reply, returned his warmest thanks for the welcome offered him, and said the approbation of the merchants of Manchester afforded a powerful stimulus to the further prosecution of his efforts. (Hear, hear.) He agreed with them cordially that the Africans ought to be encouraged to cultivate the raw materials of English manufactures; and he was so fully convinced of the elevating tendency of lawful commerce, together with the probable influence which

the course specified promised to have on the slave trade and slavery, that he proposed to devote the next few years of his life to special efforts in that direction. With reference to the capacity of Africa to produce raw materials used in manufactures, he gave many interesting details. With respect to oils he said he brought home about twenty-five or twenty-six different kinds of fruit, some of which were valuable as yielding oil; and, in the central part of the country, called Lunda, where the seeds were abundant, the fleshy part was eatable, and the oil was used by the natives for anointing their bodies. Among so great a variety, doubtless some must be good for food; though, perhaps, from having been usually pretty hungry, he could not be supposed to be a very good judge.

(Laughter.) Nearer to the coast, eastwards, the people cultivated large quantities of cucumbers, and their best salad oil was made from the seeds of cucumbers. Throughout the whole country the groundnut was cultivated in large quantities—used as food and for oil; and they had also castor oil throughout the country, their only use for it being to anoint their heads and bodies, though it was not a very agreeable unguent. In reference to cotton Dr. Livingston said that very large quantities of it were cultivated by the natives, and one small district between the rivers Conza and Loanda, produced 1,300 cloths annually, of cotton grown by the natives, spun by the women, and woven by the men. With respect to wheat he stated that it had never been tried in the central country. The Portuguese came to Angola to make a little money, and go back to Portugal, and they devoted themselves entirely to the trade in ivory and bees-wax. The country produced beautiful wheat, and he saw it growing on the high lands with ears the length of his hand. The high land produced it without irrigation, and it might be grown there to almost any extent. It was quite remarkable that the Portuguese did not cultivate it because they paid the Americans handsomely for all the flour and biscuits they consumed; and he found they had Irish butter from Cork. The east side of the country also produced wheat. The Portuguese had been in the habit of cultivating the wheat on that side of the country; all that it required was that a slave woman with a little hoe should make a hole in the ground, drop a few seeds in, and push back the soil with her foot. In four months there was a crop of beautiful wheat. This simple operation answered all the purposes of our subsoiling, ploughing, draining, liming, and manuring. The higher they went up, the better the wheat was. At Zumbo the grain was twice the size it was at Tete, where it was rather small.—In answer to a series of questions Dr. Livingston also gave an interesting account of various other products of the country, and in conclusion expressed a strong hope that the Government would afford the same aid in exploring the Zambesi as they had to the Niger expeditions. The object was of national importance, and it was hardly reasonable that all should be left to private exertion, or private mercantile capital, to develop a country in which much would have to be done before commercial operations could be fairly entered upon.—Mr. J. A. Turner, M. P., proposed a resolution on behalf of the commercial community, thanking Dr. Livingston for his visit, and for the interesting details into which he had entered, and expressing a hope that Government would place at his disposal further means for exploring the country.—The motion was seconded by Mr. G. Hadfield, M. P., and carried with applause. A vote of thanks to the chairman concluded the proceedings.—Dr. Livingston also addressed a meeting in the evening on the missionary prospects in Africa.

It is said that the early bird picks up the worm; but gentlemen who smoke, and ladies who dance till three or four in the morning, will do well to consider that the worm also picks up the early bird.

More are drowned in the wine-cup than in the ocean.