

For the Christian Messenger: LONDON CORRESPONDENCE.

[From our Special Correspondent.]

London, Dec. 18, 1857.

INDIAN MUTINY—LUCKNOW, DELHI, & CANNAPORE. MR. EDITOR,

The most important tidings brought by last mail are—that towards the centre of revolt—Lucknow and Oude—our troops were concentrating from all points; to relieve General Havelock, there surrounded, and give battle to the general mass of his envying enemies.

General Havelock sends a modest description of that series of gallant exploits which ended in his reaching the despairing inmates of the Residency at Lucknow, just as their savage and overwhelming enemies were on the point of overcoming the sick, wearied, but dauntless band, who so nobly defended themselves. The loss in doing so was very severe. First in the open country had Havelock's column to fight their way; and when Lucknow was reached, the struggle became even more fierce. Along narrow streets, whose flat-roofed houses were loop-holed for musketry, and covered with marksman secure in their deadly aim—through gardens which afford ambush for inflying foes—over and through a dense mass of swarming and desperate fanatics—our gallant soldiers penetrated, decimated by carnage. But at last all was compensated for by victory; and the following will give an idea of how timely that succour arrived—of the despair and sickening of hope deferred, which, until then, had swayed those who looked for the broad banners of England, as to salvation from fiendish and pitiless savages. Says a lady, who was one of the rescued—

“On every side death stared us in the face, no human skill could avert it any longer. We saw the moment approach when we must bid farewell to earth, yet without feeling that unutterable horror which must have been experienced by the unhappy victims at Cawnpore. We were resolved rather to die than to yield, and were fully persuaded that in twenty-four hours all would be over. The engineers had said so, and all knew the worst.

We women strove to encourage each other, and to perform the light duties which had been assigned to us, such as conveying orders to the batteries, and supplying the men with provisions, especially cups of coffee, which we prepared day and night. I had gone out to try and make myself useful, in company with Jessie Brown, the wife of a corporal in my husband's regiment. Poor Jessie had been in a state of restless excitement within the last few days. A constant fever consumed her, and her mind wandered occasionally, especially that day, when the recollections of home seemed powerfully present to her. At last, overcome with fatigue, she lay down on the ground, wrapped up in her plaid. I sat beside her, promising to awaken her when, as she said, 'her father should return from the ploughing.' She fell at length into a profound slumber, motionless, and apparently breathless, her head resting in my lap. I myself could no longer resist the inclination to sleep, in spite of the continual roar of the cannon.

Suddenly I was roused by a wild unearthly scream close to my ear; my companion stood upright before me, her arms raised, and her head bent forward in the attitude of listening. A look of intense delight broke over her countenance; she grasped my hand, drew me towards her, and exclaimed, 'Dinna ye hear it? dinna ye hear it? Ay, I'm no dreamin', it's the slogan o' the Highlanders! We're saved, we're saved!' Then flinging herself on her knees, she thanked God with passionate fervour. I felt utterly bewildered; my English ears heard only the roar of artillery, and I thought my poor Jessie was still raving; but she darted to the batteries, and I heard her cry incessantly to the men, 'Courage! courage! hark to the slogan—to the Megregor, the greatest of them a'! Here's the houp at last!

To describe the effect of those words upon the soldiers would be indescribable. For a moment they ceased firing, and every soul listened in intense anxiety. Gradually, however, there arose a murmur of bitter disappointment, and the wailing of the women who had flocked to the spot burst out anew as the colonel shook his head. Our dull lowland ears heard nothing but the rattle of the musketry. A few moments more of this death-like suspense, of this agonising hope, and Jessie, who had again sunk to the ground, sprang to her feet, and cried, in a voice so clear and piercing that it was heard along the whole line, 'Will ye no believe it noo? The slogan has ceased indeed, but the Campbells are comin'. D'ye hear, d'ye hear?' At that moment we seemed indeed to hear the voice of God in the distance, when the pip-brooch of the Highlanders brought us tidings of deliverance, for now there was no longer, any doubt of the fact. The shrill, penetrating, ceaseless sound, which rose above all other sounds, could come neither from the advance of the enemy, nor from the work of the sappers. No, it was indeed the blast of the Scottish bagpipes, now shrill and harsh, as threatening vengeance on the foe, then in softer tones seeming to promise succour to their friends in need.

Never surely was there such a scene as that which followed. Not a heart in the residency of Lucknow but bowed itself before God. All

by the simultaneous impulse fell upon their knees, and nothing was heard but bursting sobs and the murmured voice of prayer. Then all arose, and there rang out a thousand lips a great shout of joy which resounded far and wide, and lent new vigour to that blessed pip-brooch. To our cheer of: 'God save the Queen' they replied by the well known strain that moves every Scot to tears, 'Should auld acquaintance be forgot,' &c. After that, nothing else made any impression on me. I scarcely remember what followed. Jessie was presented to the General on his entrance into the fort; and at the officers banquet her health was drunk by all present, while the pipers marched round the-table playing once more the familiar air of 'Auld lang syne.'

It would be but mockery to dilate on this. Who, that reads, cannot see it all, and rejoice with the ransomed ones?

But all is far from being ended. Havelock is supposed so have contemplated returning with the poor worn-out garrison to Cawnpore; but 50,000 troops environed him: he was obliged to tarry there, himself besieged, and wait for that advancing stream of troops which was on its way to help him. Allumbagh is only 3 miles from Lucknow, (and where, it will be remembered, Havelock tarried on his way, to leave his sick and wounded); but through even that short distance news at last could not penetrate. Letters were for some time sent secretly, in quills; but at last even that resource failed, and now we only know that Havelock and Outram were fighting gallantly, but with what result is uncertain. Their troops appear to have been divided, and some of the engagements had for object their reunion. The garrison was expected to be able to hold out till the 10th of November, by which date they would be relieved by the Commander-in-Chief and a large army.

“On the 31st October, Brigadier Grant's column, 5,000 strong, crossed the Ganges, and reached Alumbagh without opposition on the 3rd November. They took with them 2,500 camels and 500 carts, with supplies for Lucknow. On the same day Sir Colin Campbell arrived at Cawnpore. He had very nearly been made prisoner on his way up. He and his staff appear to have been proceeding very injudiciously, without an escort, when they suddenly came up with a body of the mutineers of the 82nd Native Infantry. These were mounted on elephants, and were accompanied by seventy-five native troopers. The commander-in-chief, as soon as he observed the enemy, retreated, till he found refuge in a bullock-train some ten miles in the rear. The troopers continued for awhile to hover round, and the marvel was that this piece of unparalleled rashness should not have terminated fatally. Having arrived at Cawnpore on the 3rd, Sir Colin Campbell remained there till the 9th, when he started for Alumbagh, where Grant's column was understood to be awaiting his arrival.”

Thus, then, we may hope soon to hear that the main army at once attacked their foes. 7,000 to 50,000 are fearful odds; but we may be sure that that would not dismay our gallant soldiers; and, looking at past victories, we may also be confident of victory.

“Conscience makes cowards of us all.” The Sepoys are quite terrified at the appearance of the Highlanders: and, reverting to their own massacres of women and children, suppose that we have taken off the Highlanders' ‘continuations’ to mark their mission as avengers of petticated innocense! Nena Sahib said to his men—‘Keep out of the way of the Blue Caps (Madras Fusiliers): they hit without firing (in allusion to the long range of the Enfield rifles, the report of which was not often heard); and when the Highlanders get near any village, kill all the women; for these are the men who have been sent out by the Queen to avenge the death of their women and children, and that is the reason they go into action with kills.’ The English are represented to be sending out monsters with faces covered with hair, red eyes, and bare legs like elephants. The sailors (Naval Contingent) are represented as four feet high and four feet across the shoulders, and carrying a field piece under each arm as easily as a porter would a bundle.

From Delhi, we have other fearful details of past barbarities. Twelve English ladies were stripped naked, blinded, and then hung up by their heels! The Sepoys took all the wounded Europeans they could catch during the siege, and burnt them alive! The charred bodies, tied to stakes, were found by the stormers, with the Queen's buttons still recognizable. In one village was found the skeleton of a European woman, the bones cruelly hacked: and doubtless we may justly fancy other and unutterable horrors, before the poor flesh left those witnessing bones.

It is gratifying to find how truly our countrymen and country-women kept their faith. “Five Europeans at Moradabad turned Mussulmans to preserve their lives. These five appear to be the only Christians about whose conduct

during the rebellion there is even a suspicion. Nearly 6,000 of our countrymen were exposed to a danger to which that of death is trivial. One may have yielded, four more purchased life by a temporary apostasy, and that is all; while hundreds have met death or torture as calmly as reward—fighting, like Tucker, after hope had gone; or, like Mrs. Boyse, clinging to her husband's breast to shield him from the balls.”

“Delhi, (says an eye witness), is deserted by the inhabitants, and at night is silent as a graveyard. The Military Governor is judiciously strict in allowing no one to enter without a pass. Some Europeans, as well as natives, have been creeping into the city through a drain or water course, the iron bars of which were broken. They were soon caught, and will probably be severely punished. Their object was to loot, no doubt. They say there are many sepoys still hidden in the city.”

“When the troops came to Cawnpore, and, entering the charnel-house of the massacre, perused the writing on the wall, and saw the still clotted blood, their grief, their rage, their desire for vengeance knew no bounds. One officer was met coming out, with a small article of female dress dabbled with blood in his hand: ‘I have spared many men in fight,’ he said, ‘but I will never spare another. I shall carry this with me in my holsters; and whenever I am inclined for mercy, the sight of it, and the recollection of this house, will be sufficient to incite me to revenge.’ Stalwart, bearded men, the stern soldiers of the ranks, have been seen coming out of that house of murder perfectly unmanned, utterly unable to repress their emotions. From them there will be no mercy for these villainous assassins.”

From Saugor and Jubbulpore the accounts are reported as unsatisfactory—the former place being rendered of vast importance by the fact that it contains a large number of European women and children. The neighbourhood is not healthy, nor are the defences of any particular value. At Jubbulpore is situated the great central prison for Thug convicts, and we fear that these professional GREENACRES have been let loose upon the district. But Brigadier Stuart's column, on its way to Mhow, has been diverted into the disturbed country, where, as we may hope, the besieged Europeans will be enabled to resist all attacks until the arrival of succour.”

I gave in my last an account of a British officer who was left, sick and all alone, at Rewah, surrounded by mutineers who hourly threatened his life. It is glorious to know that reinforcements arrived in time to save him, and that he is in a fair way of recovery.

“Elsewhere, in India, events were rapidly progressing towards a general pacification. Brigadier Showers was crushing every remnant of rebellion to the south-west of Delhi; General Van Cortlandt held a tight rein over the north; between Agra and Meerut peace had been completely reestablished; the Punjab, the Nizam's territory, and Sindh, were tranquil: in Bombay, only the predatory Bheels of Kandeish were partially in arms: to the east of Oude, two bodies of the mutineers had been defeated by a Bengal Contingent; the insurrection had gained no ground in Rajpootana; the Madras Presidency continued untroubled.”

Such is an analysis of the chief features of our last information; and most encouraging is it. Oude once subdued, the other scattered places in which revolt pursues its flying course will be speedily subdued. Then may we set down, the mission of the sword over, to pass judgment by law on implicated parties, left now—review the causes of the revolt—and strive, with the wisdom derived from dreadful experience, to originate such measures and such changes as shall not only avoid repetition of the past, but inaugurate a new and more glorious government in India—prompted by a Christian and civilizing spirit; defended by Christian arms.

PARLIAMENT

Is up. The short session is over, and was conducted with an apathy which could not be prevailed upon to discuss beforehand those most prominent subjects to which we look with interest. Notes of preparation were sounded; but Christmas and Twelfth Night's intervene, and, until the legislature shall have paid proper attention to them,—till February shall recompose their physical and mental constitutions, business in general is tabued.

The special object of this short sitting, the Bank of England Indemnity Act, passed.

General Havelock's pension of £1000 a year afforded scope for men of all parties to eulogise his merits. Not a dissentient voice was heard, except to remark that the reward was meagre and disproportionate. The General is over 60; and an Assurance Office (the best valuer in such a case) would only deem the annuity worth three or four or year's purchase, irrespective of risks of balls and swords. Comparisons were drawn between the honours paid to Crimean Earls, who had not deserved half as much, and those doled out to one who has not the prestige of aristocratic birth. These wrung from the Government a promise to extend the provision, after the General's death, to his eldest son,

Captain Havelock, who has served well in the same field with his father. Though not committing themselves further, the Government are expected, in the coming session (should further victory crown the hero of Lucknow) to raise him to the peerage. Such would but echo the popular desire; and bestow nobility, by acknowledged patent, where there exist all the true features for it already.

JEWIS AS LEGISLATORS.

The vexed question of admission of Jews to Parliament bids fair to be settled. The Lords have hitherto thrown out bills agreed to by the Commons; and at last a collision was threatened between the two Houses—a serious affair. Baron Rothschild has repeatedly been returned for London, which asserts in his person the principle of equality. Of course he refused to take the customary oaths, because he would have to do so “on the true faith of a Christian?” and was therefore ordered, by the Sergeant-at-arms, to leave the House. Had he remained and voted, he would have incurred a law penalty of £500, with costs each time. Lord John Russell maintained that, constitutionally, the House could allow him to sit, upon taking the oaths most-binding on his conscience, and not in the objected form. This roused the Peers, who threatened, by the Judges, to prosecute, as already described; and so the Legislature, which makes laws, would have come into collision with the Executive of them.

But Lord J. Russell's threat supported by a large body of the Commons, whose spirit is aroused by the repeated rejections of their decision—and aided by the wish to avoid such collision; on part of the Lords—has induced them to give way. So it has oozed out therefore, next Session, it is supposed that a regular bill will be allowed to pass, and so all the danger ceases.

The Commons are now our real legislators, and the Peers have exercised a wise judgment in giving way. The principle is now established, among reasonable men, of a Jew's right to enter the common representation of a nation in which his people constitute so large a proportion of the population. Religious liberty, by this act, will achieve another victory over the bigoted spirit of by-gone times—those times in which (as your learned Correspondent ‘Menno’ shows) Baptists were hunted to death, and when to be a Jew was to become a very outlaw—a target for the practice of spoliation and cruelty.

Church-rates are also doomed—these iniquitous levies which force Dissenters, beside supporting their own system, to aid another from which they conscientiously dissent—which sell the bed from under a poor man, and, in the name of religion, perpetrate outrage and violence, none the less criminal, morally, because legalized by the State. Government will introduce a Bill on the subject; whether it will be what is wished, and sufficient for the subject, remains to be seen.

YOUR SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT.

[To be concluded next week.]

Religious Intelligence.

Rev. James Reid writes, Dec. 28th, from Port-au-Pique,—

“The good work is still progressing slowly. One was baptized the Sabbath before last, which made 36—some more are expected at our next conference.”

Extract of a letter from Mr. Gideon Cogswell, Billtown, Cornwallis:—

“There is a prospect of a revival of religion. A gracious work has begun. Six persons were baptized last Lord's-day. We confidently expect more.”

Mr. D. Mosher, writes from Windsor, Dec. 28.—“The revival at Falmouth and Hantsport, still continues with increasing interest. Yesterday baptism at Falmouth and Hantsport. Mr. Thomson is still among the people. We are somewhat encouraged in Windsor. Our Pastor is labouring incessantly, and, to great acceptance. There seems to be an awakening up in the Church, and a number of serious inquirers. We hope to feel and see a revival amongst us.”

The Swedish Mission.

Dear Brother—This is a very promising Mission, originated two or more years ago by the “American Baptist Publication Society.” At the Convention in Yarmouth, last August, a proposal was made and adopted, recommending the churches in this province, to raise enough for a Colporteur, in that interesting field. This will require \$200 or £50. I hope this recommendation will be carried out. I beg to announce that I have received the following contributions toward this object.

John A. More of North Sydney, C. B., 10s. Peter Andrews, “ “ 10s. Henry Saunders of Yarmouth, 5s. If enough is not raised for the object contemplated, brethren More and Andrews wish their contributions to be devoted to the support of the Gaelic Mission. Yours truly, GEORGE ARMSTRONG.

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