

Christian Messenger.

A REPOSITORY OF RELIGIOUS, POLITICAL, AND GENERAL INTELLIGENCE.

"Not slothful in business: fervent in spirit."

NEW SERIES.
VOL. V.....No. 18.

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WHOLE SERIES.
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Poetry.

A Voice from Heaven.

FOR THE BEREAVED.

I SHINE in the light of God,
His likeness stamps my brow,
Through the shadows of death my feet have trod,
And I reign in glory now!

No breaking heart is here,
No keen and thrilling pain,
No wasted cheek, where the frequent tear
Hath rolled and left its stain.

I have found the joy of heaven,
I am one of the angel band;
To my head a crown of gold is given,
And a harp is in my hand!

I have learned the song they sing
Whom Jesus hath set free;
And the glorious walls of heaven still ring
With my new-born melody?

No sin, no grief, no pain,
Safe in my happy home!
My fears all fled, my doubts all slain,
My hour of triumph come!

O friends of mortal years,
The trusted and the true;
Ye are waking still in the valley of tears,
But I wait to welcome you.

Do I forget?—Oh no?
For Memory's golden chain
Shall bind my heart to the hearts below,
Till they meet and touch again.

Each link is strong and bright,
And love's electric flame
Flows freely down like a river of light
To the world from which I came.

Do you mourn when another star
Shines out from the glittering sky?
Do you weep when the raging voice of war
And the storms of conflict die?

Then why should your tears run down,
And your hearts be sorely riven,
For another gem in the Saviour's crown,
And another soul in heaven?

Religious.

For the Christian Messenger.

Christianity and Popery.

LETTER V.

DEAR SIR,

I have been unavoidably prevented from writing for these few weeks past. Before resuming the argument on which I have entered in former letters I wish to call the attention of your readers to a subject which has attracted a good deal of notice lately. I allude to the Pope's temporal power.

It is well known that the Pope is not only bishop of Rome, and head of the Roman Catholic Church, but also one of the sovereigns of Europe. The territory over which he rules is called, "The States of the Church." It is an irregularly shaped country, lying on both sides the Apennines, about 350 miles long, and varying in breadth, from thirty miles, the narrowest part, to eighty. It contains rather more than ten millions of acres, and the population is about three millions and a quarter.

This territory was acquired gradually, and by various methods. Pepin, king of France, gave some. The compliant Pope, Zacharias, having sanctioned his usurpation of the throne, and the next Pope, Stephen II., having crowned him, Pepin in return bestowed on his Holiness the districts which had been known as the Exarchate of Ravenna and the Pentapolis. Charlemagne added to the gift. The countess Matilda of Tuscany gave more. There have been some cessions since, and some conquests, for even Popes used to fight in the olden time. The issue is that Pius IX. is both a priest and a prince. He holds the pastoral staff, and he wields the royal sceptre. As shepherd, he cares for the flock. As king, he governs his subjects. His subjects are his flock.

I will not now inquire into the merits or demerits of the papal government. Very grave accusations have been brought against it. They say that all the important offices are held by priests, laymen being systemati-

cally excluded. They say that justice is bought and sold, and that the methods of administering law are execrable. They say that vexatious restrictions cripple agriculture, and that a puny, sickly commerce seems to live by sufferance. They say that though the means of education abound, the people are grossly ignorant and superstitious. They say that internal improvements are discouraged or refused. They say that crimes against the person are far more numerous than crimes against property, whereas in all other civilised kingdoms the reverse is the fact. They say that neither property nor life is secure, the government being unable to protect either. They say that freedom is unknown, and toleration scouted as an accursed thing. They say much more, which I will not repeat. And they sum up all by pointing to the French occupation of Rome. "See," they exclaim, "how this priest-king is beloved by his subjects! French bayonets keep them in order. The Holy Father would not be allowed to live a week in Rome if Louis Napoleon were to recall his garrison. Is any other European sovereign in such a predicament?"

All this may be truth or it may be scandal. I do not take upon me to decide the question. I will only remark, that the allegations against the papal sway, a few of which I have recounted, are taken, not from Protestant but from Roman Catholic writers. And it is a significant fact, on which I shall offer no comment, that the provinces which have recently revolted from the Pope have resolved, by an overwhelming vote of the people, to ask for annexation to Piedmont rather than to be replaced under the paternal administration of his Holiness.

The inquiry is naturally suggested—Is this temporal power a christian thing? Is it consistent with christianity, reconcilable with its principles, adapted to promote its interests?

One would think that those who reverence the New Testament ought to have no difficulty in arriving at a decision. "My kingdom," said the Prince of peace, "is not of this world. If my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight." "It is not reason," Peter observed, "that we should leave the word of God, and serve tables." The bishops of those times had but one duty; they were to "feed the church of God." They were spiritual men, holding a spiritual office, for spiritual purposes. Like the warrior, they were not to "entangle themselves with the affairs of this life." Much less would it have been deemed, in that age, compatible with their holy calling, to occupy any position which would involve duties at variance with the exercise of benevolent feeling and brotherly regard. A bishop was to be "no striker" "not given to filthy lucre"—"not self-willed" "not soon angry"—but "patient"—"holding fast the faithful word," so as "by sound doctrine both to exhort and to convince the gainsayers." But if the bishop become a duke, a prince, or a king, he must discharge the usual functions incident to his earthly rank, however contradictory they may be to the principles supposed to be embodied in the spiritual dignity. Here it is that we discern the anomaly. As bishop of Rome, as head of the church, the pope celebrates mass, blesses the people, superintends instruction and worship, appoints bishops, sends out missionaries, guards the faith, and performs all other duties connected with his high spiritual office. As sovereign of the Ecclesiastical States he enacts laws (for the government is despotic) he judges—he taxes—he fines—he imprisons—he banishes—he puts to death. Do these things agree? Can the "Chief Shepherd" contemplate them with satisfaction? Is he likely to say, "Well done, good and faithful servant?" I think not; for he came, "not to destroy men's lives, but to save them;" and when he gave his final charge to Peter, whose successors these men pretend to be, it was couched in the tender words—"Feed my sheep—feed my lambs."

Perhaps some one will remind me of the bishops of the Church of England, who have seats as barons, in the House of Lords, and assist in the legislation of the empire. To this I reply, that though two negatives may make an affirmative, two wrongs cannot make one right. And I think it is not at all improbable that some who read this letter will live long enough to witness the downfall of the

Church-and-State-system in England, and the restoration of the bishops to the spiritual duties of their dioceses. That event, whenever it occurs, will be to the Church of England as "life from the dead." She will come forth in the glory of freedom—"redeemed, regenerated, and disenthralled."

And so it will be with the Pope. Roman Catholics have strange dreams on this subject. They tell us that the temporal power is essential to the Pope's independence, and that (I quote the words Archbishop Conolly uttered at a public meeting held recently in Halifax) they "cannot afford to allow their spiritual head to become a creature or a puppet in the hands of any king or government." True, they have learned some humbling lessons in this matter. Plenty of Popes have been "creatures or puppets" of kings, and of men lower in rank than kings. But that was when the papacy intermeddled with all worldly things, and those who aimed to be strongest sought papal influence for that purpose, and not infrequently compelled its exercise. Those times have long since passed away. Many a Papist hankers after their restoration. But it is too late. "Mene, Mene, Tekel, Upharsin."

The better sort among them wish only that the pope's spiritual authority may be preserved, and that he may be protected in its exercise. That may be easily settled. Let the States of the Church be annexed to Piedmont, or become an independent country, under good secular rule, with a free constitution. Let the pope retain St. Peter's and his palaces. Let the property of the church and of ecclesiastical incorporations, be left intact, subject, of course, to the laws of the State, for property has duties as well as rights. Let the Roman Catholic Church, said to contain one hundred and thirty-nine millions of people, support her chief pastor:—a farthing a year from each will give him an annual income of £144,791. 13. 4 sterling, with which he will be able to keep up a very respectable establishment, and to distribute princely alms among the poor. Let him then be altogether disengaged from the politics of the world, and spend his time in the government of the church. He will be a happier and a better man. He will be far more respected and more sincerely honoured than he is now. He will live in peace. To be sure, he will not be able to lay kingdoms under interdict, or consign heretics to the tortures of the Inquisition; but he will have holier work to do, work more congenial with true christian feeling. The church—the church—nothing but the church will engage his attention. Then will the papacy attain its highest glory. As such, it must necessarily be antichristian still; but any change that may disencumber it of worldly trammels will be hailed with satisfaction by the friends of religion and morality.

Yours truly,
April 23rd 1860. TYNDALE.

Central Africa.

DR. LIVINGSTONE'S EXPEDITION.

The following very interesting communication has just been received by Mr. William Logan, of Glasgow, from Dr. Livingstone's brother, Mr. Charles Livingstone:—

KONGONE, Mouth of Zambesi, Dec. 1, 1859.

MY DEAR FRIEND,—We have explored the river Shire to its source in the great lake Nyassa. This river is about 200 miles long, and has a deep channel for 112 miles from its mouth. A series of rapids then commence, extending about 30 miles, after which there is no other impediment to navigation to Lake Nyassa; and how far that extends to the north, we are as yet unable to say; natives informed us that it took three months to reach the head of the lake.

The Shire flows through an exceedingly fertile valley, which is bounded by two ranges of lofty hills, and is from ten to twelve miles wide at the lake, and from twenty to thirty below the cataracts. East of the cataracts are the highlands—a magnificent country, well watered and wooded, with a rich soil, and pretty numerous population. From the large number of old grey-headed people we met, it would appear to be a fine healthy country, well adapted for European constitutions. The

men are all armed with bows and arrows or spears, yet they do not seem to be bloodthirsty. As a general thing they treated us with civility. As was natural, they were at first somewhat suspicious, but as soon as we told them what our object was, their suspicions vanished. One chief, however, said that parties had come to them before with as fine a story as we had, and after a few days, jumped up, seized a number of his people, and carried them off as slaves. We suspected that he himself had engaged in this business. The country is well adapted for cattle and sheep. Besides various kinds of provisions, &c., they grow cotton largely. In the high lands and low lands, through two and a-half degrees of latitude, we met with cotton everywhere, and it may be as fine a cotton country for several degrees farther to the north than we were. We went no farther than the foot of Lake Nyassa. Some cotton patches covered three acres, though for the most part they did not exceed half an acre. Each family seems to have its own cotton plantation, which is carefully cultivated. They could raise almost any amount if they had a market for it. The cotton is of two kinds—the foreign and the native. The former is of good staple and feels more like wool than cotton. The foreign is perennial, and requires planting only once in three years. It is burned down before the rains, and soon springs up again of its own accord. The native has to be planted every year in the highlands. The people prefer it, because, they say, it makes the stronger cloth. In well nigh every village we saw men spinning cotton, while others were weaving it into strong cloth, in looms of a very simple construction. Both spinning and weaving are very tedious processes.

They are all anxious to trade. The women were often up all night grinding their corn to sell to us. One village we passed without halting. The inhabitants followed us, calling upon our guide to return with them to trade. As a last argument they shouted, "Are we to have it said that white people came to our country and we did not see them?"

They are by no means teetotallers. Large quantities of beer are manufactured by them, and they are as fond of it as our countrymen are of whiskey. The chief of a village almost always presented us with a large pot of beer. We passed a village one day, and saw a large party of men sitting smoking in the public squares, who did not seem at all communicative. After resting a little under a tree, a short distance from them, they sent us a calabash of beer, to see if we were friends, which was to be manifested by our partaking of it. We saw many partially intoxicated people, tipsy chiefs, and even members of the learned professions get "a little elevated at times." A native doctor, with his cupping-horn hanging round his neck, who had evidently been making some deep potations, came out and scolded us severely: "Is this the way to enter a man's village, without sending him word that you were coming?" Entering a hut, he came out staggering under a large pot of beer, which he presented to us. Perhaps his patients only pay him with beer. I wish we had a few hundred good, industrious Scotch families on these fertile highlands. Instead of, as at home, toiling for a bare subsistence, here they could cultivate largely sugar and cotton, &c., benefit the natives by their example, and furnish materials for our manufactures at home. We have a healthy country, and, with the exception of thirty miles, over which a road can be constructed, water communication all the way to England. The natives are industrious, and somewhat ingenious. They have better houses and implements than any on the Zambesi. They would not, I think, molest emigrants. With good missionaries the most happy results might be anticipated.

Yours, with much esteem,
CHARLES LIVINGSTONE.

PRAYER.—An old Author says, "Prayer is the rope in the bellry,—we pull it, and it rings the bell up in Heaven, and so it is. Keep that bell moving: pull it well, and though the bell is up so high that you cannot hear it ring, depend upon it it can be heard in the Tower of Heaven, and is ringing before the throne of God, who will send answers of peace according to your faith."