

Correspondence.

For the Christian Messenger.

England.

HER LAWS, HER LITERATURE, AND HER RELIGION, AND THE NECESSITY OF COLONIAL LIBERALITY IN HER PRESENT DISTRESS. A DISCOURSE BY THE REV. WM. HALL, DELIVERED ON THE LORD'S-DAY EVENING, NOV. 30TH, 1862, FOR THE BENEFIT OF THE FUND FOR DISTRESSED COTTON OPERATIVES.

No 4.

Her literature, sacred and profane.

A widely extended field of observation sketches out before us in perspective, and we must trace the literature (sacred) of England to the Church history of the venerable Bede, born in 674, only fifty years after the flight of Mahomet, from Mecca. He died at the age of sixty-one in 735, two or three years after that great victory of Charles Martelle, over the Saracens, which delivered France and Europe from Mahometan conquest. At ten years of age he was placed under the care of the abbot of Wearmouth, and from that monastery he removed to the neighbouring one of Jarrow, and there passed the remainder of his life.

He was ordained deacon in his nineteenth year, and priest in his thirtieth, and beyond these two events we know nothing of his external life, except his writings. These are various, and he himself at the conclusion of his Ecclesiastical History has left us a list of them. They consist of commentaries on almost all the books of Scripture, of treatises on some Scriptural subjects, of religious biographies, of a book of hymns, and of some of a different character on general history and chronology, a book de Orthographica, and another de metrica arte. His ecclesiastical history in five books embraces the period from Augustine's arrival in 597 down to the year 731, only four years before his own death, so that for a considerable portion of the time to which it relate it is a cotemporary history.

His works are written in the monkish Latin, peculiar in his time. The next man of note is Bradwardine, who may be called the Prince of Divines. I will pass over the early literature of England and call your attention to that with which you are more familiar, and in the whole range of Sacred literature, England stands deservedly preeminent. Merely to mention the names of Howe, Charnock, Bates, Baxter and the giants of Puritan Theology is enough to establish her supremacy in this department, not to mention a Butler, that profound thinker, the reading of which was a breakfast recreation to Queen Caroline wife of George II., whilst it made the head of one of her downy Bishops ache to read a page, a Catworth, a Chillingworth, with men whose massive minds and massive thoughts will forever control English character. Is there any necessity for me to refer you to the long list of English Divines, bringing their accomplished education in the halls of Oxford, or Cambridge, to bear on every subject connected with morals or religion. Germany seems now to bear away the palm by her profound thought and erudition, but along with that deep and suggestive thought may be found German mysticism, and gross infidelity. Modern writers, Trench, Mansell and others now fairly compete with the minds of Germany on their own field of thought.

England is no less celebrated for her sacred poets. At the top of the ladder stands the name of Milton, whose mind seemed to be a connecting link between the human and angelic, whose grand Epic Poem of Paradise Lost is no less distinguished for its piety, than for its gorgeous embellishments, where the wealth of Ormus and of Ind are employed as a fitting setting to the noble production of the human intellect, and which also exhibits the profound and varied learning of Cromwell's Latin Secretary. The sweet strains of Cowper must also be justly admired by every lover of the good, the lovely, and the gentle, who amidst his hopeless despondency, when hope, the last solace of the wretched had failed him, still exercised faith in the Son of God. Young, with his sombre thoughts, discoursing of death and judgement, also occupies a high place in English sacred literature. Need we direct your attention to those wondrous productions of the Bard of Avon, the immortal Shakespeare, who has evinced such mastery over the human mind, and who for his clear insight into the secret springs of human nature, stands unrivalled. Is it necessary for me to point you to the Augustan age of England, the reign of Queen Anne, the long array of names scattered through her history. Pope, Swift, Bolingbroke, etc. That great Leviathan of literature John-

son, though, alas, the pure element of Christianity is not to be found in his lofty morality. The accomplished Addison, and an innumerable host of writers, time will not permit me to specify. Passing over her poets of the Byronic and Pope School, including Coleridge, Wordsworth, Shelly, et omnes egus generis, all the lesser fry, not forgetting to mention Lytton Bulwer, and Dickens, who though having many admirers yet have exercised a pernicious influence on English morals and religion, the former on the higher classes, the latter on the lower walk of English life, the one exercising a seductive influence over the heart, by the brilliancy of his genius, and the splendour of his imagination, but who has heroized the highwayman, the robber, and the adulterer, in his productions; the latter has made vice respectable, and iniquity to partake of the character of the romance, to the pure mind of the Saxon.

A passing remark may be made concerning the classic elegance and pure Saxon English of the celebrated Robert Hall. There was a bright assembly of literary names in the seventeenth century, but no two minds occupy a higher niche in the temple of fame, for great originality, and moral power, than the names of John Milton, the author of Paradise Lost, and John Bunyan, the immortal dreamer, author of Pilgrims Progress.

For the Christian Messenger.

The breath of calumny.

I dreamed! and a column of spotless Parian stood before me, in its virgin purity, immaculate as the snows that gird the brows of Atlas; and the sunbeams danced around it, and the flowers sparkled at its foot, and the bubbling streamlet murmured through the shade, and the sweet birds sang there, and all was happy. But as I gazed, a viper, that dragged its loathsome body through the putrid neighboring morass, wound its filthy volume around that beautiful pedestal, and it was stained; and I sat down and wept, for I thought it was sullied forever; but in the darkness of the night the soft dew fell, and trickled like the silent tear-drops of injured innocence from the lily encircled capital of that fair marble, and when the day dawned I looked, and it was pure again; the trail of the viper had been washed away, and when the sun arose, I thought it shined more brightly for having been soiled by the cruel serpent, and for having passed through tears and darkness; and I looked upward in gratiude, and a cloud that had appeared darkly, now grew bright in the sunlight, and I saw as it were a Hand in it, and I knew that it had wrought these things, and I awoke.

My soul was saddened by the dream, and I arose and went on weeping, for I fain would know the interpretation thereof. And as I went a form of beauty came up from the wilderness for she was not known of the world and she dwelt in solitude with those of a meek and quiet spirit, whose portion is beyond the azure, and when she approached, I knew that her name was Love: and she asked 'why weepest thou?' And when I had told the cause, she regarded me with a sweet sad smile and said, 'Thou hast seen a picture of thy kind, of perfidious cruel man, of man careless for the weal or woe of his fellows. Thou hast seen the tongue of calumny wound the spotless character, and bring reproach and obloquy on an unstained name; and see there was a ruling hand in all, and He who brings light out of darkness caused Justice to be exalted in the end.'

NEMO.

For the Christian Messenger.

Bible Prohibition of Intoxicating Drinks.

The question of intoxicating drinks being prohibited by the sacred scriptures has been often disputed. Perhaps a glance at the following collection of particulars from that holy book, may give a different idea to some who have not taken the pains to "search the scriptures" on the subject. It may also aid any who wish to turn at once to the passages therein referred to and read for themselves.

1st. God commanded Aaron and his sons not to drink wine or strong drink when they went into the tabernacle of the Congregation, on penalty of death. This prohibition was to be a statute forever throughout their generations. One reason for the prohibition was that they might put a difference between the holy and the unholy, and between the clean and the unclean. Another reason was that they might teach the children of Israel all the Lord's statutes, Lev. x. 9-11.

2nd. The Nazarites were prohibited from all drinks of the vine during the time of their separation. They were not allowed even to eat any thing of the vine-tree, from the kernel to the husk. The reason was that they might be Holy to the Lord, Num. vi. 3-8.

3rd. If any man amongst the children of Israel had a son who was a glutton, and a drunkard, who could not be persuaded to reform, God commanded his father and mother to lay hold on him and bring him out to the Elders of the city. And all the men of the city were to stone him to death, Deut. xxi. 18-21. This is prohibition with a vengeance. One reason for this, was, that evil might be put away from amongst them.—Another that all Israel might hear and fear.

4th. If there was a man, or woman, of any tribe, or family, among the children of Israel who turned away from God's service, to serve other Gods, who was among them as a root bearing gall and wormwood, and would not hear God's curse, but said I shall have peace though I walk in the imagination of mine heart to add drunkenness to thirst. The Lord would not spare him, but anger smoked against him and all curses written were upon him, and the Lord blotted out his name from under heaven, Deut. xxix. 19-25.

5th. In Sampson's case God was about to raise up a strong man, therefore three times over, God charged the mother of Sampson, previous to his birth, that she should not drink wine or strong drink, Jud. xiii. 4. 7-14. The reason was; he was to be a Nazarite to God from his birth to his death.

6th. Solomon informs us that wine will mock its consumer and strong drink is raging, (or violent). It will use him violently, consequently, he that is deceived thereby is not wise, Prov. xx. 1.

7th. Solomon also positively forbids being among winebibbers, &c, because the drunkard and the glutton shall come to poverty, Prov. xxiii. 20-21.

8th. In the same chapter 29-31, verses, he also prohibits the use of wine by asking six questions, Who hath woe? who hath sorrow? who hath contentions? who hath babbling? who hath wounds without cause? who hath redness of eyes? Then he answers. They that tarry long at the wine: they that go to seek mixed wine. Here is the drunkard's legacy, woe, sorrow, contentions, labblings, wounds, redness of eyes. Then, if we would not have these, says he, Look not thou upon the wine when it is red, when it giveth his colour in the cup, when it moveth itself aright. At the last it biteth like a serpent, and stingeth like an adder.

9th. The mother of king Lemuel instructed him very earnestly against the use of intoxicating drink. It is not for kings O, Lemuel; It is not for kings to drink wine, nor for Princes strong drink. Lest they drink and forget the law, and pervert the judgment of any of the afflicted, Prov. xxxi. 4-5.

10th. Isaiah pronounces a solemn woe upon them that rise early in the morning, that they follow strong drink, that continue all night. Woe to them that are mighty to drink wine, and men of strength to mingle strong drink, till wine inflame them, (margin, till wine pursue them.) Isaiah v. 11-22.

11th. He also complains against the Ephraimites. He reminded them of the glorious beauty of their fat valley, pronounced a woe to the crown of pride of the drunkards, and gives a description of them under the influence of drunkenness. "The priest and the prophet have erred through strong drink, they are swallowed up of wine. They are out of the way though strong drink, they err in vision, they stumble in judgment. For all tables are full of vomit and filthiness so that there is no place clean, Isaiah xxviii. 1-8.

12th. In the xxiv. 9, he also forbids drinking with a song saying strong drink shall be bitter to them that drink it.

13th. God used the example of the Rechabites, in adhering to their father's pledge, to condemn the Jews for disobeying him. Jeremiah by God's command brought them into the house of the Lord, and set wine before them, and commanded them to drink. But they refused, saying, we will drink no wine, for our father commanded us saying, ye shall drink no wine neither ye nor your sons forever, Jer. xxxv.

14th. Habakkuk in the ii. chap. and 15th ver. pronounces a woe unto him that giveth his neighbour drink, that putteth thy bottle to him and maketh him drunken.

15th. Our blessed Saviour also says to that evil servant whom he would find at his coming, eating and drinking with the drunken, he would have his portion with hypocrites, where there

shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth, Matt. xxiv. 49-51.

16th. He also exhorted his disciples to take heed to themselves lest at any time their hearts should be overcharged with surfeiting and drunkenness, Luke xxi. 34.

17th. Paul in Rom. xiii. 13, exhorted them not to walk in rioting and drunkenness, but to put on the Lord Jesus Christ.

18th. He also reminded the Church at Corinth that he had written to them not to keep company with any man that is a drunkard, no not even to eat with them, 1 Cor. v. 11. He classed drunkards with thieves, covetous, railors, and extortioners, saying that such shall not inherit the kingdom of God, 1 Cor. vi. 10.

19th. In Gal. v. 19-21, Paul classed drunkenness with all the bad works of the flesh and prohibits the doers of them from the kingdom of God.

20th. The church at Ephesus v. 18, is commanded not to be drunken with wine.

What inferences shall we draw from the bible then on this subject.

1. If drunkards cannot go to heaven, dying such, is it not a sin to license people to make them.

2. If the most temperate use of liquor makes a man unholy and unfit for the service of God, as in the case of the priests and Nazarites, is it not best to let it alone.

3. If God honoured the Rechabites for obedience to their father's injunction in this respect, and blessed them with the perpetuation of their race, it is not best to be Teetotalers.

4. If there is a solemn woe upon the man that makes another drunk, who dare sell it or drink it?

A. W. BARSS.

For the Christian Messenger.

De we sow in tears?

He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him, Psalm cxxvi. 6.

Who can think that a christian ought always to be gloomy? and have, according to the old adage, "his head bowed down like a bulrush." It is indeed an ill grace of the child of God, to live, talk, and act, in the world, as if he thought religion, and heaven to be blackness and darkness itself. How unbecoming, for one bearing the "glad tidings," to appear in such a melancholy garb of life. And any one, of right thinking, must deplore the fact, that so many seem to think it piety, to be forever crying out against this awful world of woe; and telling, how they long to be released by death, from this "vale of tears," this "wretched land." Certainly, if such were faithful servants, they would labor in their master's vineyard, content, and cheerful, yea even happy, until he should call them home. The christian above all ought to be happy.

Is there not however, a sorrow for the christian, a godly sorrow, too sacred, and too secret to his own heart, to be carried out of his closet, or into outer life: a sorrow which bears the richest fruit of all his feelings: a sorrow, for sin in his own heart, and in the world. What means the wise man, when he says, "It is better to go to the house of mourning, than to the house of feasting?" and, "by the sadness of the countenance, the heart is made better?" Were it not well for most of us, to have more inward grief for sin. To be more like the weeping prophet, who says, "Oh that my head were waters, and mine eyes a fountain of tears?"

Some of us, are particularly engaged, in sowing the seed of truth. We have toiled hard, and long; and have watched closely, to see the tender blade spring up; but alas, in many cases, have watched in vain. We ask, again, and again, why does not God give the increase? Why are not souls converted? Perhaps the difficulty could be solved, by asking ourselves only one question. Do we sow in tears? Do we take the souls of those for whom we labor, to a frequented Gethsemane, and there plead, and wrestle with God for them, even in agony of soul? Do we speak to them with heart words? O ye, who have labored for years, and still behold your fields barren, may not this be the secret of your want of success? It requires something more than education, or talent, or logic, or eloquence, to convert souls. In how many cases, when the best of all these have failed, a few of the simplest words, spoken in tears, have broken the heart. It requires the power of an earnest soul.

Why was Whitefield so successful, as a preacher of the Gospel? Many a man, whose sermons have had more intrinsic value than his, has seen but little fruit of his labor, and yet Whitefield has been the means of converting, may we not