

The Christian Messenger.

A RELIGIOUS AND GENERAL FAMILY NEWSPAPER.

NEW SERIES.
Vol. XXIII, No. 4.

Halifax, Nova Scotia, Wednesday, January 23, 1878.

WHOLE SERIES.
Vol. XLII, No. 4.

Poetry.

The Saviour's Knowledge.

"We are sure that thou knowest all things."—JOHN xvi. 30.

Thou knowest, Lord, the weariness and sorrow
Of the sad heart that comes to thee for rest;
Cares of to-day, and burdens for to-morrow,
Blessings implored and sins to be confessed;
I come before thee at thy gracious word,
And lay them at thy feet; thou knowest
Lord, all that I have done and thought,
Thou knowest all the past; how long
And blindly
On the dark mountains the lost sheep
Had strayed;
How the Good Shepherd followed, and
How kindly
He bore it home upon his shoulders
Laid,
And healed the bleeding wounds, and
Soothed the pain,
And brought back life, and hope, and
Strength again!

Thou knowest all the present; each tempta-
tion,
Each toilsome duty, each foreboding
Fear;
All to myself assigned of tribulation,
Or to beloved ones, than self more
Dear;
All pensive memories, as I journey on,
Longings for vanished smiles, and voices
Gone.

Thou knowest all the future gleams of
gladness,
By stormy clouds too quickly overcast,
Hours of sweet fellowship and parting
sadness,
And the dark river to be crossed at
last;
Oh! what could hope and confidence
afford
To tread that path, but this—thou knowest,
Lord.

Thou knowest, not alone as God, all
knowing,
As man, our mortal weakness thou
hast proved;
On earth with purest sympathies o'er-
flowing,
Oh, Saviour, thou hast wept, and thou
hast loved!
And love and sorrow still to thee may
come,
And find a hiding-place, a rest, a home.

Therefore I come, thy gentle call obeying,
And lay my sins and sorrows at thy
feet,
On everlasting strength my weakness
staying,
Clothed in thy robe of righteousness
complete;
Then rising and refreshed, I leave thy
throne,
And follow on to know as I am known.
Dr. Kennedy's Hymnologia Christiana.

Religious.

From Jaffa to Jerusalem.

BY A. LOWREY, D. D.

We were two days in passing from the sea to Jerusalem, having stopped for the night at Ramleh, a small village near Lydda, and about fourteen miles from the coast. Lydda, it will be recollected, is the town visited by Peter, when he went out on a general tour of exploration; the place, also, where the saints dwelt, and where Christ healed Eneas of the palsy, through the agency of the apostle. This miracle, and the revivification of Tabitha, at Joppa, begat faith and originated a grand revival in both places. These events, flung over this part of our trip a peculiar interest.

At Ramleh we ascended a high stone tower, by spiral steps located inside, which are much worn and difficult of ascent. This old relic is a part of an ancient mosque, the ruins of which are still visible. From the dizzy height of this monument we had a grand view of the circling hills of Judea. They lie before the southeast front of Ramleh in the form of a crescent, and sweep round right and left to the Mediterranean and the desert. Our guide pointed out the tribal divisions of the land with great accuracy and ease. This guide, Herbert Clarke, is a young man from

New England, who, with his associate, Mr. Floyd, now in the employ of Mr. Cook, of London, the tourist, lives at Jaffa. They are by far the best guides in Syria. They went out some years ago as part of the New England colony to Jaffa, which turned out to be so successful. They speak the Arabic well, and are every way competent and most agreeable. We employed native guides for short local excursions, but found them vastly inferior to these Yankees. The omnipresent Yankee is the auger that will bore through the world yet. Between Jaffa and Ramleh, and still further on in the direction of the holy city, lies the famous valley of Sharon—the original home of the Philistines, the sea of Samson's exploits, and the spot where the symbolic rose and lily grew. As we looked upon the level plain, sweeping away beyond the limits of vision, and carpeted with green fields of wheat, we were reminded of the verdant prairies of Illinois in the month of May. The road was lined with small scarlet and blue flowers of very brilliant colors, but the floral season had not fully arrived, and the "time of figs was not yet." But we saw many impressive illustrations of the "sweet promise of the prophet Micah: "They shall sit every man under his vine and under his fig tree, and none shall make them afraid," for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it. It is common in this country to make the fig tree a trellis for the grape vine. We saw many such vines interlaced among the crooked branches of the fig tree. When both are in foliage a dense shade and protection must be formed. It is a beautiful emblem of comfort and security in times of peace and prosperity.

After a drive of twenty miles we began the ascent of the rugged hills of Judea, and do not stop until we reach an altitude of twenty-five hundred feet above the level of the Mediterranean. The road is wide and in good repair, but oh, how steep and stony! The first thing that strikes a beholder in looking upon the huge and precipitous upheavals what is now almost bare rock is the evidence of ancient cultivation in harmony with Scripture history. The traces of terraces are distinctly visible from the base to the highest summits. There are yet nooks and patches of soil on the broken and irregular benches which support numerous flocks of sheep and goats. We saw them clambering over and among these jagged stones and lofty peaks, all the way to Jerusalem, each flock attended by a shepherd, who would sometimes greet us from his inaccessible cyrie with an unintelligible salute. It may have been admiration, or it may have been contempt. Where he descended and found shelter and safety for his person and property at night, from beast and man of prey, we could not often discover. We saw but few sheepfolds, while the thief and the robber, as in the Saviour's time, are reported to be still there. The Bedouins, answering to our Indians, are a marauding race, who are constantly committing depredations. When the road was built watch-towers were erected at convenient distances, where guards were placed to protect travellers. For some cause they do not seem to be occupied now, and yet the danger of molestation is not past. We heard of a missionary who had been recently robbed, and narrowly escaped death. The Turkish Government is very ineffectual. The natural indolence and servility of the people are the best guaranty of safety.

The most noted places that we passed on our way to Jerusalem, after we left the plain of Sharon, where the house of Obed-edom, or the place where the ark rested, and the valley of Ajalon and Gibeon, where Joshua was gifted to utter, "Sun, stand thou still upon Gibeon, and thou moon in the valley of Ajalon." Gibeon was in full view of our road. It is not a high elevation, but a good vantage ground, and sloping without obstruction in the direction of the valley, where the rout took place. The valley, at the point where we crossed it, seems to be not more than

three miles wide and seven in length. But no correct idea of its area could be formed, as it is of irregular width and meanders among the hills, alternately contracting and expanding, with only a small part in view from any one point. There are other historic places on the line from Jaffa to Jerusalem, but the exact sites are not at all well authenticated. Ramleh is supposed to have been the residence of Joseph of Aramathia, Aramathia being the ancient name. We pass another smaller village reported to be Emmaus, the destination of those disciples whose hearts were warmed by the words and expositions of Jesus in his journey with them. Here is an instance of supernatural power attending truth under circumstances where nothing could be borrowed from the instrument of its communication. We also passed in sight of the spot of Samuel's birth and burial place. As we look first upon the face of the country, the impression is, that the whole land is barren and unproductive, except the few limited valleys, and therefore incapable of supporting a large population; and yet, upon examination and inquiry, the fact is revealed that among these rocks, there is much good soil that yields even now, in spite of miserable cultivation, quite abundantly. We saw excellent wheat, the most enormous cauliflower, and the largest and most luscious oranges in Syria that our eyes ever beheld.—*Western Advocate, Dec. 1877.*

Sacking the Town of Elena.

We have abstained from giving our readers the sickening details which have so often come to us of the massacres and cruelties practiced on either side, in the terrible war now being waged in Turkey. The revolting scenes which have been witnessed on the battlefield after the many recent battles and sieges are dreadful to think of, and even reading of them has somewhat of a demoralizing tendency. And yet we are unable to form any adequate idea of what follows the killing of hundreds of thousands of men, women and children except some picture of a portion is looked upon. Here then is one described by a correspondent of the *London Times* of Dec. 24th, last:

We are in Elena, and the sack of the place is now in full swing. From the window of the house in which I have sought a few minutes of quiet to jot down these notes, and which overlooks the long main street of this little town, I see the ruin progressing fast. To give an idea of the scene in this street it needs to be photographed in panorama and thus presented in its ensemble. Word-painting gives but a feeble notion of it, because the simultaneity of the incidents is lost. Thus, if I say that the Bashi-Bazouks and Circassians are battering in doors and shutters with the but-ends of their muskets, slashing window-frames to pieces with their yataghans, blowing off locks with their revolvers, throwing the contents of houses and shops into the street, still it is only two or three houses that the reader pictures to himself, while what I want to describe is going on both sides of the way all down the main street of Elena, which is a good deal more than a mile long. In the byways, too, so far as they lend themselves to such work, the depredators are at work howling and hooting, drunk with the joys of spoliation and red-hot with the excitement of destruction.

From the window alone no adequate notion of the wild play that is going on can be formed; but I have just ridden up and down the whole length of this high way, not expecting to find myself in such a pandemonium, but attracted to the further verge of the town by the fact of the flag of truce, which I had seen there, being advanced from the high ground of the abandoned Russian camp where I was standing. It had been intended to take precautions to

prevent the sack of the town by the Irregulars. Three companies were to have been told off to protect the spoil from the hands of those who had done nothing to entitle them to participation in the loot; but in the excitement of the victory it was not carried out, and thus the Irregulars are securing for themselves or recklessly wasting, the great bulk of the booty. I was in so soon after the troops that when I went up the street it was comparatively empty. On a little bridge over a rivulet which crosses one end of the town lay three Russians dead, and the way was almost barred by a dead horse lying still harnessed to a broken fourgon; but as I went on the Bashis came rushing past and soon the street was filled. Shop after shop was burst open. Now a grocer's, from which skins and bladders filled with cheese and Russian butter, were thrown into the street; here sugar was the attraction, and the Bashis thrust the white sugar lumps by handfuls into their breasts and into the folds of their turbans, and when they were stuffed, scattered the rest about the street. It must have been a Bulgarian feast day yesterday, for in all the grocer's and baker's shops there was holiday cake, upon which the Bashis pounced with childish delight. Now a draper's shop was tapped, and the yarns and rougher goods were thrown out to be trampled under foot, while the long yards of calico and cloths were dragged forth, the pillagers chopping off with their yataghans such lengths as they could secure. From the vintner's the casks of wine were rolled into the street and heads stove in, bottles were hurled into the air and came smashing down among the crowd by the score. From time to time a troop of scared pigs would come rushing into the street, hounded out of their styes by the side currents of the looter. Then there was a shout and a chase, and the poor beasts were bayoneted or shot by rifles and revolvers recklessly fired amid the crowd. Before a silk store lay an old Bulgar, shot through the chest, lying as he fell, and a little further, laid out stiff and straight under the projecting front of a cook's shop, was the body of a Russian, clad in shirt and drawers, clean and fine of texture, apparently the remains of some Civil functionary. Here and there along the street lay bodies of Russian soldiers and one or two Bulgarians, but they were soon so trampled and crushed that by the time I came back they were but hideous and shapeless heaps of carrion. Stretched across the street in its broadest part, and about midway, was the triumphal arch, raised by the inhabitants to greet the arrival of the Russians, bearing the inscription, "Welcome to the deliverers of the Bulgarians." It was but a poor structure of wood and branches, draped with pink and white calico, and very forlorn looked its withered branches and faded hangings stretched over the cruel irony of the scene beneath. Great was the struggling over the furrier's stores, but the greatest struggle was for Bulgarian woollens—the beautiful long-wooled rugs, the "chools," the rolls of Shyak and felt; and many a laden looter pitched his foregathered plunder away to reload with these precious fabrics. Being early winter, and doubtless under the stimulus of a large Russian demand, the stocks of these goods was very large. With these the Bashis loaded themselves and their horses and piles of valuable articles which they could not carry away, and which would have been a God-send to the hospitals, were scattered over the streets to waste in the mud.

Near the further extremity of the highway I met the crowd entering from that end of the town, just beyond which the battle had just finished and the surrender of the rear guard had followed, and a very excited crowd it was. My fur cap bearing some resemblance to the Bulgarian headgear made me an object of scrutiny and suspicion, and repeatedly I heard "Obizim yok"—that's not one of ours. They thought I was a fugitive trying to brazen it out, and twice my horse was roughly seized and I was told to turn back. The homely

and particularly graceful phrase, "What dirt are you eating now?" was enough to shake the purpose of these zealous gentry and make them understand their mistake; but they came sweeping down the street with such rush and clamour that I could scarcely get my horse to face them. Shortly afterwards came the Russian prisoners who had surrendered; the crowd was too great and restless for me to count them, but there seemed to be about 120. They looked very fagged and anxious, and the sight of a European face seemed welcome, for they saluted as they passed. The belief prevails in the Russian ranks that the Turks murder their prisoners, and even some of the officers are under that conviction. A Lieutenant who was taken in the morning implored that he might be shot at once, as he knew nothing but a worse fate awaited him at the place to which he was being conducted. There was happily some one at hand to reassure him. Retracing my steps through the long streets, I found the work of wrecking at its height. The "raki" had been found. Densely packed, all armed, all excited, many wild with unaccustomed drink—for though the Moslem spills the wine he loves the more ardent liquor of the distiller—quite regardless how they manipulated their weapons, and bereft of all sense of responsibility, it needed some little care and patience to push through such a throng. Nor was the general temper pleasant, and the civil appeal, "Comrade, make a little room for me," had no currency. But when four of the captured guns were marched up the street, followed by a battery of our own going forward on the Tirnova road, it made matters worse; it added to the excitement to see the new proof of the day's triumph, and the Artillery jammed the crowd closer than ever, so that a mounted man had a *chevaux de frise* of bayonets about his head, of which the jerky handling left, as the French say, much to be desired. It was just after the guns passed that I saw a Bashi coming out of a house laden with raw silk just spun off the cocoons of this year. He had wound the heavy yellow and white skeins round his turban and shoulder, and must have had some 25 pounds weight of the precious thread about him. A Bimbashi passing by bought the lot for 20 piastres *Caimé*—less than 2s. There was now a regular mart going on; the overlaid plunderers were selling what they and their horses could not stagger under for any money that was to be got. Pieces of fine Shyak, worth £5, were offered for 5 piastres; 2 piastres was the price of a Russian musket; long-woollen rugs, prized as they are, and worth £6, were offered for 8 piastres. Of articles of Bulgarian clothing, fur jackets, under jackets of mixed silk and wool, you might have a cart-full for a handful of small coin, if you had but the cart, or even a remote certainty of getting one before the Russians retake Elena. But there is neither cart nor pack-horse to be had within two days' journey; all have been impressed for Army transport.

After reading the above, how true and appropriate the exclamation of the poet.

—War is a game
Which, were their subjects wise,
Kings would not play at!

Go into any country community and converse with the people. Ask who ministers most to their happiness. You will very likely be told of some venerated clergyman, whose salary has never been more than enough to barely support him; or some poor widow, who goes from house to house, like a ministering angel, wherever sorrow and suffering demand consolation or relief. It is astonishing how much one without money can give! A kind word, a helping hand—the warm sympathy that rejoices with those that do rejoice, and weeps with those who weep! No man is so poor, no woman is so poor as not to be able to contribute largely to the happiness of those around them.