

nothing—it is past," and raising himself in his chair, looked again upon the ring.

"There is no doubt," he murmured, "it is that same ring—that Arabic ring, brought me from the East, and which I gave—oh, no!—impossible!" he hurriedly exclaimed, as a horrible thought seemed to cross him.

"After a moment's pause to recover from his agitation, he gave orders to one of the guards to remove the hood from Magdalena's head, that he might see her features.

"Less rarely, varieties!" cried the Ober-Amtmann, with a feeling of sudden forbearance towards the wretched women which surprised all present, for they could not but marvel at the slightest symptom of consideration toward such an abhorred outcast of humanity as a convicted witch; and as such the miserable Magdalena was already regarded.

"I know you not," replied Magdalena with a low and choked voice; for she, now trembled violently, and the tears gushed from her eyes.

"How camest thou then by this ring? Speak! I command thee," continued the Ober-Amtmann.

Magdalena bowed her head with a gesture of refusal to answer any further question.

"Wretched woman! Hast thou violated the repose of the dead! Hast thou torn it from the grave? How else came it in thy possession?"

The unhappy woman replied not. She had again covered her face with her hands, and the tears streamed through her meagre fingers.

"Speak, I tell thee! This ring has conjured up such recollections, that were there but one human link between thee and one who has long since rested from all sorrow in the grave, it might ensure thy safety."

No answer was returned by Magdalena; although, to judge by the convulsed movement of her body, the struggle within must have been bitter and heavy to bear.

"Die then in thy obstinacy, miserable woman," cried the Ober-Amtmann in a suppressed voice—"Let justice take its course!"

"D-nouncer!" said the chief scribe to the witchfinder, "hast thou further evidence to offer?"

"Needs no more to convict a criminal of the foul and infernal practices of witchcraft!" cried Black Claus with bitterness.

The chief scribe turned to the Ober-Amtmann, as if to consult his will. For a moment the Ober-Amtmann passed one hand across his brow, as though to sweep away the dark visions that were hovering about it; and then, waving the other, as if he had come to a resolution which had cost him pain, said with stern solemnity—"Let the workers of the evil deeds of Satan perish, until the earth be purged of them all."

This customary formula implied the condemnation of the supposed sorcerers.

"To the stake! to the stake!" howled the crowd, upon hearing the delivery of this expected sentence.

After enjoining silence, which was with difficulty enforced, the chief scribe rose, and addressed to Magdalena the accustomed question, "Woman, dost thou demand the trial by water, and God's issue by that trial?"

"I demand but to die in peace," replied the miserable woman; "and God's will be done!"

"She refuses the trial by water," said the chief scribe, in order to establish the fact, which was put down in writing by the adjuncts.

"To the stake! to the stake!" howled the crowd.

"And hast thou nothing to urge against the justice of thy sentence?" asked the official questioner.

"Justice!" cried Magdalena, with a start, which caused the chain around her waist to clank upon the wretched stool on which she sat.

"Justice!" she cried in a tone of indignation. For a moment the earthly spirit revolted. But it gleamed for an instant.

"May God pardon my unjust judge the sins of his youth," she paused, and added, "as I forgive him my cruel death!" With these words the last spark of angry feeling was extinguished for ever.

"May God pardon him, as well as those who have thus cruelly witnessed against me; and may He bless him, and all those who are most near and dear to him," she continued—her voice, as she spoke, growing gradually more subdued, until it was lost and choked in convulsive sobs.

Again a thrill of horror passed through the Ober-Amtmann; for the sound of the voice seemed to revive in his mind memories of the past, and recal a vision he had already striven to dispel from it. His frame shuddered, and again he fell back in his chair.

"It is a delusion of Satan!" he muttered, pressing his hands to his ears, and closing his eyes.

Bertha's eyes streamed with tears; her pitying heart was tortured by this scene of sadness.

Blessings instead of curses upon those who have condemned her! Can that be guilt?" said gentle Gottlob to himself.

"The blessings of the servants of the fiend are bitter curses," said the infatuated witchfinder, on the other hand; "and she has blessed me. God stand by me!"

"To the stake!—to the stake!" still howled the piteous and blood-thirsty crowd.

The refusal of the unhappy Magdalena to abide by the issue of the well-known trial by water, had so much abridged the customary proceedings, that orders were given, and preparations made, for the execution of the ultimate punishment for the crime of witchcraft—burning at the stake—shortly after daybreak on the morrow.

[To be Continued.]

From the Christian Reflector WHEN IS THE TIME TO DIE?

I asked the glad and happy child,

Whose hands were filled with flowers

Whose silvery laugh rang free and wild

Among the wide wreathed bowers;

I crossed her sunny path, and cried,

"When is the time to die?"

"Not yet! not yet!" the child replied,

And swiftly bounded by.

I asked a maiden; back she threw

The tresses of her hair;

Grief's traces o'er her cheeks I knew,

Like pearls they glistened there;

A flush passed o'er her lily brow;

I heard her spirit sigh;

"Not now," she cried, "O no! not now,

Youth is no time to die!"

I asked a mother, as she pressed

Her first-born in her arms,

As gently on her tender breast

She hush'd her babe's alarms;

In quivering tones her answer came—

Her eyes were dim with tears;

"My boy his mother's life must claim

For many, many years."

I questioned one in manhood's prime,

Of proud and fearless air;

His brow was furrow'd not by time,

Or dimmed by woe or care.

In angry accents he replied,

And flashed with scorn his eye;

"Talk not to me of death," he cried,

For only age should die."

I questioned age; for him the tomb

Had long been all prepared;

But death, who withers youth and bloom,

This man of years had spared.

Once more his nature's dying fire

Flashed high, as thus he cried—

"Life, only life is my desire!"

Then gasped, and groaned, and died.

I asked a Christian—"Answer thou

When is the hour of death?"

A holy calm was on his brow,

And peaceful was his breath;

And sweetly o'er his features stole

A smile, a light divine;

He spake the language of his soul—

"My Master's time is mine!"

From the Dublin University Magazine. CEYLON.

No country in the world, perhaps, exhibits the results of misgovernment, more strikingly than Ceylon. With every natural advantage, and remains which attest that it was formerly well peopled, whole districts are now abandoned to jungle—and there are tribes in it, less civilized than the red Indians of Labrador. Numbers of the Kandians have no houses, but live in trees, thus securing themselves from wild beasts and snakes, with, perhaps, a leaf of the tall pot tree to protect them from the sun and rain. There is, in the eastern part of the island, between the rivers Mahale, Gauga, and Battapale, a wild race, who live in the forests and mountains, and who appear to be nearly destitute of social institutions. These are the Vedas. They subsist on the flesh of wild animals, and have hardly any intercourse with the other natives, only on rare occasions exchanging with those on their borders ivory, deer skins and honey for bows and arrows, salt and a very few other articles. They are said to be resolute and hardy, but, like every savage people, treacherous. We are told they have no idea of a beneficent deity, but believe demons, and worship beneath the shade of the banyan tree. The prevalent religion of Ceylon is Buddhism, but there are considerable numbers, both of Singhalese and Kandians, who profess Christianity, and who were brought within the pale of the church by the Portuguese and Dutch; and, in apart of the interior hardly known, there are said to be christians, who do not appear to have had any connection with Roman Catholics, or Protestants. Mr. Newstead, a missionary, told Colonel Campbell

that he was in their villages. It has been suggested, that they may have received their knowledge from the Malabar Christians mentioned by Buchanan. This is very possible, but it appears that there is no tradition among them of their having come from the continent of India, and they only know that their religion had been handed down to them from father to son. Most persons, of all denominations in Ceylon, Buddhists, Romanists, Protestants, and those who, like the Vedas, belong to none, worship devils. In every account of Ceylon, devil-worship is a prominent feature, and the extent to which it prevails is absolutely frightful. Mr. Clough, a Wesleyan missionary in Ceylon, says, "The devil is regularly, systematically, and ceremoniously worshipped in Ceylon." The yakanduras, or performers of devil ceremonies, are sent for on all occasions. In illness, if medical treatment is not succeeding, persons who might be supposed above such superstition apply to them. Children are dedicated to the devil at their birth—and, in hundreds of cases, before they are born. Colonel Campbell was often asked at night to listen to the devil-cry. He heard it distinctly, but is persuaded that it was only an owl; and Major Forbes is of the same opinion. Colonel Campbell saw in a wood near where he resided, an extraordinary picture of a set of devils. It is copied in Davy's Ceylon, and is a large dab. There were hung up before it, as an offering, three red cocks just killed. To try what effect it would have on the poor people who were engaged in this sacrifice, the colonel threatened to ride over the cocks and destroy the picture. The natives fled in terror—not for any danger incurred by the colonel, for it seems, they think that devils have no power over Europeans. At one period a fatal illness prevailed at Kurunagalla, where our author lived, and in the country about. He was assailed by Kandians of all castes, to permit a public devil-dance, and the usual ceremonies. The former had been for some time forbidden, and the latter discouraged. He did his best to resist, as well as to ridicule their entreaties, but as the people were flying in all directions, he at last consented to allow them, for one night, to do as they pleased. The permission was no sooner given, than there was such a drumming, piping, clashing of cymbals, shouting, and screeching commenced, and kept up, as was astounding. The illness, however, increased rapidly afterwards—and the deaths were more frequent. There are some efforts now making for the religious instruction of this people, not any at all commensurate to their need of it. There are 99 government schools; 28, under the Church Missionary Society; 86, Wesleyan; 100, American; 16, Baptist; 63, Roman Catholic—and some private schools. It appears that instruction is given in English as well as in the native languages—for, there are two of them, the Singhalese and the Tamul, resembling each other, and both having affinity to the Sanscrit. It is very desirable to make the island, as far as can be, English; and to have the English language taught, and, if possible, established there. Already, a step has been taken towards this, law proceedings being in English. But, however desirable it may be to give the people a new language, it is only by teaching them in their own, that we can at all hope to advance their minds, or put them in possession of religious knowledge. This has been our experience nearer home, in regard to Welsh and Irish. The upper classes in Ceylon are by no means illiterate. There are many works in Tamul, as well as in Singhalese, written on the ola, or talipot leaf. Some on grammar, astronomy, chemistry, medicines, ethics, the drama, religion, and magic. The Dutch made some efforts towards the establishment of parish schools, and had the Scriptures of the New Testament and a great part of the Old, translated into the Tamul; and several editions of this translation have been printed in Madras as well as in Ceylon.

The peasantry in Ceylon have generally some little land of their own. But in the maritime district their possessions, in consequence of the introduction of the Dutch law of inheritance, have become minutely subdivided. The interest of a proprietor may be sixteenths of a perch of rice, five-twelfths of a cocoa-tree, or a decimal fraction of a jack-tree. The natives, however, are greatly attached to their Lilliputian estates, and there is great deal of litigation about them.

It appears that by far the largest part of the island is jungle, and at the disposal of government, and the waste lands, it is said, should be granted at a moderate sum, or as Colonel Campbell proposes, for nothing, to eligible colonists; and that if a land-tax were fixed in perpetuity, at a small corn rent, all over the island, there would be a large revenue for making roads, tanks, and for other public purposes.

Among the products of Ceylon may be counted coffee, which, even when unattended to, is fine, but which when cultivated with a little care, is said to be superior to Mocha. The sugar-cane grows near every village and beside almost every hut. Tobacco in many parts has a peculiarly fine aroma. Cotton grows in great abundance, and the trees are of gigantic size. Areco nuts and cinnamon are its known staple commodities. For the latter it is indebted to the enterprise and perseverance of a Dutch governor, Falk, who succeeded in making it an article of commerce about thirty years before our first connection with the island. Before that, the tree was only used to supply candles to the king of Kandy. Its berries yield an unctuous, fragrant substance, of which such articles were made, and exclusively for the palace. The roots of the *Lauris cinamomum*, or cinnamon tree, give camphor, and its leaves have the taste of clover. The cultivation of cinnamon may be greatly extended, and the country

is capable of growing enough to supply all Europe.

"The following extract is pictorial: it is a well coloured sketch of noon in the woods:

"How often have I felt, on passing through or residing in the forests of Ceylon, how awfully impressive is the stillness of noon! Every animal seeks the deepest shade. The fish conceal themselves at the bottom of rivers or lakes, except where the over-hanging foliage screens them from the rays of a too fervid sun. Not a bird is on the wing and all nature seems, as it were, to be at rest, were it not that the almost appalling silence is broken only to be made the more impressive, by the continued low buzz or humming of thousands of insects. How powerfully have I felt in the thickly wooded neighbourhood of Matura, all this combination of great and little of so much that is wonderful in nature! But as soon as the evening begins to be somewhat cool, the world again seems to start into new life. Every creature is in motion, and in search of its prey or of the food it requires of some kind or other which the Almighty care so bountifully provided for them all. The wild fowl of various kind fly in large flocks towards their haunts; the pea and jungle fowl call their respective broods around them for the night; and even the jackal begins to howl for its prey. Numbers of flowers, which had closed their leaves before the scorching sun, now gently unfolded them, to remain open to receive the dew which usually falls abundantly. Here also the pretty moon flower among the rest, the leaves which had been shut all the day, opens completely, as if to behold the sun's grandeur as he takes his leave of us in surprising brilliancy. I may be an enthusiast in fine scenery and in my admiration of nature's perfections and loveliness but I declare that to behold them as here displayed, would in my opinion amply make up for the inconveniences and annoyances attendant upon a long voyage; for the impressions they leave upon the mind can never be truly described, or, if felt, expressed."

THRILLING INCIDENT.

I passed up the natural avenue and came upon the green. My feelings were very poetical as I walked towards the village church. I entered. A popular preacher was holding forth, and the little meeting-house was much crowded—Several persons were standing up, and I soon discovered that I must retain my perpendicular position, as every seat was crowded. I however, passed up the aisle until I gained a position where I could have a fair view of the faces of nearly all present. Many of the congregation looked curiously at me, for I was a stranger to them all. In a few moments, however, the attention of every person appeared to be absorbed in the ambassador of grace, and I also began to take an interest in the discourse. The speaker was fluent, and many of his flights were even sublime. The music of the woods and the fragrance of the heath seemed to respond to his eloquence.

Then it was no great stretch of the imagination to fancy that the white handed creatures around me, with their pointing lips and artless innocence, were beings of a higher sphere. As my feelings were thus divided between the beauties and blessings of the two worlds, and wrapped in sort of poetical devotion I detected some glances at me of an animated character.

I need not describe the sensations experienced by a youth when the eyes of a beautiful woman rest for a length of time upon his countenance, and when he imagines himself to be an object of interest to her. I returned her glances with interest, and threw all the tenderness into my eyes which the scene, my meditations, and the preacher's discourse had inspired in my heart, doubting not the fair damsel possessed kindred feelings with myself—that we were drinking together at the fountain of inspiration. How could it be otherwise?

She had been born and nurtured amidst these wild and romantic scenes, and was made up of romance, of poetry, and tenderness; and then I thought of the purity of woman's love—her devotion—her truth. I only prayed that I might meet with her where we might enjoy a sweet interchange of sentiment. Her glances continued. Several times our eyes met. My heart ached with rapture. At length the benediction was pronounced. I lingered about the premises until I saw the dark eyed damsel set out for home, alone and on foot. Oh! that the customs of society would permit, for we are surely one in soul. Cruel formality! that throws up a barrier between hearts made for each other. Yet I followed her. She looked behind, and I thought she evinced some emotion at recognizing me as the stranger of the day. I then quickened my pace, and she actually slackened hers as if to let me come up with her.

"Noble young creature!" thought I; "her artless and warm heart is superior to the bounds of custom!"

I reached within a stone's throw of her. She suddenly halted, and turned her face towards me. My heart swelled to bursting. I reached the spot where she stood. She began to speak, and I took off my hat, as if doing reverence to an angel.

"Are you a pedlar?"

"No my dear girl, that is not my occupation."

"Well, I don't know," continued she, "not very basbfully, and eyeing me very sternly—"

"I thought when I saw you in the meeting house, that you looked like the pedlar who passed off a pewter half dollar on me about three weeks ago, and so I determined to keep an eye on you. Brother John has got home now, and he says if he catches the fellow he'll