

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. 3.

The laws of England, and her warlike character.

Without adverting to the peculiar constitution of England, which is a limited monarchy composed of King, Lords and Commons, of which it is a settled principle that the king can do no wrong, we will glance briefly at some of those laws which have given England her civil and moral strength, and beginning with Alfred's reign we see the origin of many of her liberties. The trial by jury is one of those great safeguards for the liberties of the subject. The *Wittenagemots* or meeting of the wise men, which in the meaning of the Saxon word, was the embryo of the *English Parliament*, meeting together under the Norman dynasty. Let us notice the civil and moral influence produced on national character by these institutions. The trial by jury, courts of law and Parliaments.—Law in a christian country, so far as that country is really christian has indeed, to use the magnificent language of *Hooker*, its seat in the bosom of God, and her voice, inasmuch as it breathes the spirit of divine truth is indeed the harmony of the world.

The history of a nation's internal life is the history of its institutions and its laws, both of which are included under the term laws, in the comprehensive sense of that word, as used by the *Greeks*. But as far as it is most convenient to distinguish them let us consider how much these two terms include. I would say that by institutions I wish to understand such offices, orders of men, public bodies, settlements of property, custom or regulations concerning matters of general usage, as do not owe their existence to any express law or laws, but having originated in various ways, at a period of remote antiquity, are already parts of the national system, and are recognized by all actual laws as being themselves a kind of primary condition, in which all recorded legislation proceeds.

And I would confine the term laws to the enactment of a known legislative power, at a certain known period. The institutions and laws of England are thus divided into Common Law and Statute Law, or as in *legal parlance* *Lex non Scripta* and *Lex Scripta*.

The bearing of the constitution of a country upon its internal life is twofold—direct and indirect. For example the effect of any particular arrangement of the judicial power is seen direct in the greater or less purity with which justice is administered—but there is a further effects and one of the highest importance, in its furnishing to a greater or less portion of the nation one of the best means of moral and intellectual culture—the opportunity, namely, of exercising the functions of a judge, I mean that to accustom a number of persons to the intellectual exercise of attending to and weighing and comparing evidence, and to the moral exercise of being placed in a high and responsible situation, united with one of God's own attributes, that of judgment, and having to determine with authority between truth and falsehood, right and wrong, is to furnish them with very high means of moral and intellectual culture, in other words it is providing them with one of the highest kinds of education. Let us apply this line of reasoning as the cause of the civil and moral strength of England through all the ramifications of her jurisprudence. Her high courts of law, her judiciary, her houses of Lords and Commons. The Statutes passed emanating from these principles, Magna Charta extorted from John by the proud barons, the Habeas Corpus Act drawn out of the dissolute and reluctant Charles II., one of the worst kings that ever disgraced the English throne. The Bill of Rights, passed in the reign of William III., with all the innumerable statutes to be found in English history, tend to show that the Common law of England is based upon the fixed and immutable principles of justice, giving its coloring likewise to its Statute law, and thus we have the true secret of England's civil and moral strength in the majesty of English Law.

It may be necessary to refer briefly to the warlike character of the people. This is no place for war's dire alarms—but I may be excused if I incidentally make mention of this

feature of her character. England has come well by her lofty preeminence, either in the tented field or on the mighty ocean, no craven blood flows through her veins, we have traced her descent from the ancient Briton, where undisciplined valour held at bay the world renowned veterans of Rome, under the great Cæsar. But the history of England clearly begins with the coming over of the Saxons, the Britons and the Romans had lived in the country, but they are not our fathers, we are connected with them as men indeed, but nationally speaking the history of Cæsar's invasion has no more to do with them than the natural history of the animals which then inhabited their forests. We, this great English nation whose race and language are now overrunning the earth, from one end of it to the other, we were born when the white horse of the Saxons had established his dominion from the Tweed to the Tames.

From that race England has derived her bravery, her best institutions, and the best of her language. There has been an intermingling of Danish blood and the Norman, and the Danish and English blood will mingle more closely by the marriage of Prince of Wales to a daughter of Denmark.

And is it surprising that on the fields of her fame, fresh, and gory, England, during her long and European warlike history has only met with two serious reverses, the battle of Hastings, in which the Norman conquered, and the battle of *Fontenoy*, fought by the Duke of Cumberland, against the great *Marshall Saxe*. It is only necessary to mention the name of Cour de Lion, the lion hearted, and the Crusades. I need only refer to her deeds at Agincourt, at Cressy, at Poitiers, to her Cromwell and his *Ironsides*, to a Marlborough hand his battles, and to her great captain, Wellington, and to that victory whereby the destinies of the world were decided. *Waterloo*, you remember my hearers the story in your mind's eye—we now see those small squares of serried steel against which dashed the chivalry of France, but in vain. Side by side were Erin's gallant sons and old Scotia's Tartan brigades, side by side were Ennis Skillen dragoons and the household troops of St. James's palace, and when at the close of that dread day the last order rang out from that iron Duke, *up guards and at them*, that vast host so lately marshalled under the great Napoleon melted away. Need I refer you to Alma, to Inkerman, to the deadly breaches of Sebastopol, need I speak of a Havelock, marching over the plains of India, the avenger of English wives and English women and English children, and though last yet not least, our own Inglis, the defender of Lucknow. Ah Jack Inglis was a dull scholar, though he became a brave soldier, a Williams of Kars, a Beckwith, the man of lofty philanthropy, a Welsford, and a Parker, the sons of Nova Scotia, my own native land. What one can contemplate the glories of that flag which has for a thousand years braved the battle and the breeze, without a burst of noble patriotism as he thinks of the long line of English Admirals and Captains, her Drakes, her Frobishers, her Howards, her Codringtons, and her great Nelson. What a galaxy of naval and military heroes stand out in English history. Is it to be wondered at that Armadas, Fleets, ships of war and lines of battle, have all been sunk or blown out of the water, or captured, or broken through, by such men as these, in the wooden walls of old England. In battle every little middy, every ensign, bearing the colors of his regiment, every little powder monkey, every soldier, every man becomes a hero. The consciousness that, "England expects every man to do his duty" urges them on to certain victory and triumph.

For the Christian Messenger.

A Fragment.

The sun set fierce and fiery behind the purple haze that shrouded the western horizon, and blent the waters with the sky; and black portentous clouds rolled up from the ocean bed, till the east lay girded with a belt of gloom that seemed to mock our fragile vessel, as impatiently she flapped her useless wings to the long smooth roll of the Atlantic.

The day had opened with a gentle breeze, which, though athwart our course, wafted us on pleasantly, and with every yard of canvas spread aloft, the *Ida* walked the waters, dashing the opposing wavelets into glittering spray that fell like countless diamonds around her.

Twenty-three leagues yet remained to be traversed, and the log marked 'five,' so that should the wind continue, we could be well up with the light before dark, and our trusty anchors might bite, ere night-fall, the sands of

home. But as the sun neared the zenith, the wind fell, and when the quadrant told that he had passed the meridian and was hurrying on his downward course, we lay with idle tossings on the waves, and no sound broke the stillness but the creaking of the spars aloft or the measured tramp of the watch as he paced the deck from the deserted wheel to the windlass-end. The long low coast extending far to the right and left, drew its blue outline on the northern sky, and away to the southward stretched the glassy sea, dotted with many a sail, till its countless undulations smoothed and mellowed by the distance, mingled with the azure.

But the sun has set, and his last beams gild with lurid splendor the few clouds that hover over to watch his departure; and on comes the sombre mass till ocean's verge grows dark beneath it, and fitful puffs at intervals give our loitering *Ida* way. The wheel is manred, the sails braced sharp, and anxious eyes, now eastward, now westward, turned, seem to gather confidence that before day-dawn we shall be at home.

"The sky is changed! and such a change. Oh night And storm, and darkness, ye are wondrous strong. Yet lovely in your strength, as is the light Of a dark eye in woman!"

The wind increases every moment in intensity, and the driving mists drip from the seamen's tarpaulins, and, with the spray that is now flying over us in right earnest, drenches everything fore and aft, while under shortened sail we plunge onward, almost leaping from wave to wave in our madcap career. The energetic orders of the mate, the prompt "aye aye's" of the watch, and the quick patter of feet on the wet deck, tell that every man is at his post and knows his duty. Light ho! Where away? Three points on the starboard bow, sir. Red light? Aye aye, sir. All right; four leagues off the harbor; keep her west. West, sir. Steady, so. Steady. And on we run more frantically than before, our strong spars crackling to the pressure, while far astern and on either side of our track, the stirred waves sparkle like molten silver.

Oh, but it is pleasant thus, even in the storm, to see the glimmering beacon that is to guide our vessel to the longed-for shore! it has a beauty that seems not of earth, like the angel voices that reach a dying christian's ear and beckon him upward.

And as we lay at day-dawn safely moored in the harbor, with our sails furled and our tossings over, while the storm still raged on the ocean, I thought of that haven where the christian, safely guided by a Father's hand, shall rest in quietness forever.

NEMO.

For the Christian Messenger.

Colchester County Sabbath School Convention.

MR. EDITOR,—

The Colchester County Sabbath School Convention held its first Quarterly Session at Great Village, Londonderry, on the evening of the 25th inst.

The Great Village S. School, under the Superintendence of Ezra Layton, Esq., gave an excellent prelude to the evening's exercises, by singing selections from the "S. S. Bell," and reciting alliterative texts of scripture.

At 7 o'clock the President, Rev. D. W. C. Dimock, took the chair, and at once the business of the meeting moved forward with smoothness and commendable speed. This through, the Rev. J. Reid presented a brief, yet sound and wholesome Essay on "the benefits of S. S. instruction." Short addresses, based upon the essay, were then delivered. The subjects embraced were the relation of parents to the S. School,—the best means of qualifying the teacher and securing the end in view; and affectionate appeals to the children present.

The pauses of the meeting were filled with sweet singing by the children. Praise and prayer closed the meeting.

The session was one of interest. Facts were elicited, showing that good has already flowed from our Union. Improvements are sought—better records are kept, and libraries are growing. During the quarter, several pupils have found Jesus. A County agency, and a uniformity of lessons were mooted; but for want of time were reserved for future action.

Some of the Schools in the County were not represented. I would here and now solicit the hearty co-operation of every Superintendent contemplated in this Convention. Send a Letter and Delegates to the next Quarterly Session in *Stewiacke*.

I would further ask special heed to the following resolution passed at the above meeting:—

Resolved, "That we earnestly recommend to the Superintendent or Secretary of each School in this Convention, the keeping of a good Register,"—as found on page 31 of the Minutes of the Association; "and that an abstract be forwarded to our Secretary at each Session of this Convention."

It is of the first importance that reliable data be furnished, that we may have some tangible standard by which to estimate our progress or decline.

Notice of the day and hour of the next Quarterly meeting will appear at the proper time.

Yours truly,

T. H. RAND, Secretary.

Truro, Nov. 27th, 1862.

For the Christian Messenger.

Gone! Gone!

Days have grown into weeks, weeks into months, and now a year has fled. It has brought changes to all,—hung bright clouds over some, tinted with many rainbow hues. While over others it has hung a sable pall,—torn from loving arms a father or a mother, a sister or a brother, "Or a nearer one still, and a dearer one yet than all others."

How many such bereavements have we known? Many,—and of the dying testimony of one who departed but a few weeks since would I write, that others might be led to lean upon the same God, who is "a present help."

Mrs. JAMES INGERSON, a member of the Baptist church at Cape Canso. In the sunny days of girlhood she sought and found her Saviour, ripened fast for glory in the garden of her Lord, was called from health to suffer for a few days, and then lay aside the earthly tenement of clay. She was young, and life had many ties; a fond husband and lovely child had bound her heart with golden chains. But love for her Saviour was uppermost. Her treasure was in heaven, and she could bid a glad farewell, saying, "I'm going to see Jesus,—precious Saviour." "I shall see him as he is and be like him." Yes, doubtless she was satisfied when she awoke in his likeness. She had fought the good fight of faith, and now a crown was before her.

"Jesus in her heart,
Heaven in her eye,
And the world under her feet."

Who would not live the life of the righteous, that their last end might be like theirs!

We mourn when such loving hearts are stilled, but Jesus says "Your sorrow shall be turned into joy." He came to "bind up the broken-hearted." There is a needs-be for this grief. He knows and loves his children too well to make life all bright. "There must be rain and hail and storm," says Ruthert rd, "in the saint's cloud." Did not these rude blasts disturb us, we would cease to wish for a "better country." These little rills of sorrow flow heavenward, and when the scenes of life are disclosed, we will see that each storm swept us nearer home.

And as we linger o'er the graves, or think of our departed loved ones, let the words of Jesus soothe our troubled souls,—"I am the resurrection and the life." That mortal frame, decomposed and mingled with the dust, shall yet start from its resting place, reconstructed a "glorified body." Jesus hath brought life and immortality to light. He, the bright and morning star, hath turned the shadow of death into the morning. This word of Jesus spans like a celestial rainbow, the entrance to the dark valley. The dust of our departed loved ones, is redeemed by the precious blood of Christ. It is locked up in the casket of God until the day when he maketh up his jewels.

Bereaved Christian, rejoice through your tears, in this glorious hope so full of immortality. The silver cord is only loosed. This dust that heeds not your bitter cry, shall yet praise its redeeming God.

And sinner canst thou not hear the voice of God calling to thee over those troubled waters. Wave after wave has rolled o'er thy soul, yet thou heedest not. Let the words of Jesus come to you once more, it may be for the last time,— "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." Seek, then, the Lord while he may be found, obey his calls of love flee to the cross of Christ, that you may have his rod and his staff to comfort, and his presence to cheer you through the dark storms of life or deeper gloom of the valley of death.

"Lord, to whom shall we go, but unto thee, thou hast the words of eternal life."

Cape Canso, Dec. 21st, 1862.

ENVY.—Envy, if surrounded on all sides by the brightness of another's prosperity, like the scorpion confined within a circle of fire, will sting itself to death.