

Christian

A Family Newspaper—Devoted to



Visitor.

Religious and General Intelligence.

GEO. W. DAY, Proprietor.

"BY PURENESS, BY KNOWLEDGE—BY LOVE UNFEIGNED."—ST. PAUL.

{ Rev. E. D. VERY, Editor.

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LOOKING UNTO JESUS.

BY MRS. MILES.

It was no path of flowers,
Which through this world of ours,
Beloved of the Father, thou didst tread;
And shall we in dismay
Shrink from the narrow way
When clouds and darkness are around it spread?

O thou, who art our life,
Be with us through the strife;
Thy holy head by earth's fierce storm was bow'd;
Raise thou our eyes above,
To see a father's love
Beam like a bow of promise through the cloud.

And, O, if thoughts of gloom
Should hover o'er the tomb
That light of love our guiding star shall be;
Our spirits shall not dread
The shadowy way to tread,
Friend, Guardian, Saviour, which doth lead to thee.

Cuba and its Capitol.

Havana is in many respects a desirable, as well as a delightful place for a Winter's residence. Its harbor has a very narrow entrance, but spreads immediately into a vast basin large enough to hold a thousand ships of the first class. On the extreme point at the left of the entrance, stands the Light house, near which is the Moro Castle, and a little beyond on the same side, is a much more extensive and important work, called the Cabanas. Nearly opposite the Moro, on the west side of the Channel or entrance to the harbor, is a small fortification named the Punta. On a height overlooking the city, about three-fourths of a mile west of the Punta, is another fort, and still another on an elevation one half-mile east of the Moro.

These works, together with one or more large ships of war, always found in the harbor, render this one of the most strongly fortified cities in the world. On the south side of the harbor is a considerable village, called the Regulas, near to which are two hospitals. Between the Regulas and the city, which is built on the west side of the Channel, a steam ferry-boat passes every half-hour during the day. Havana ranks among the first cities in America in commercial importance, and is increasing rapidly in wealth as well as in the number of its inhabitants. It is purely Spanish in its construction, with its balconies, awnings, terraces and narrow streets.

The houses are built of coral rock,—generally two stories high, with huge doors and immense grate windows. The doors and windows are all open, and as the streets are passed during the evening when the houses are brilliantly lighted, the eye penetrates the whole interior of domestic life.

This city is the great mart of the large and beautiful island of Cuba, which enjoys a perpetual Summer, combined with a luxuriance and variety of vegetation hardly paralleled in any other region. The soil of Cuba pours forth at the slightest touch of cultivation, two or three crops in a year of the most delicate and nutritive products; sugar-cane, pine apples, sweet potatoes, oranges, lemons, plantains, bananas, cocoa, coffee, maize, tobacco; and a great variety of other fruits and vegetables, whose names are scarcely known abroad, are abundant here. The product of a sugar plantation is stated from calculations published from the Patriotic Society, at about fifteen per cent., on the capital invested. The growth of the native orange tree is very rapid, and its culture might be made a great source of wealth. In its perfect state, this tree exhibits at the same time its rich, deep-green foliage, its perfuming flowers and its golden, glowing fruit, affording altogether the most splendid spectacle in the vegetable world.

Three years after the seed is deposited, the tree is from ten to fifteen feet high, and the fourth year it bears fruit. It is said that trees ten years old will produce on an average annually, fifteen hundred oranges. The trees are planted at about eighteen paces distance from each other, and one hundred acres will contain not less than two thousand trees, each bearing on an average, fifteen thousand oranges, which at the usual rate of four dollars the thousand, will give a gross product of twelve thousand dollars, and deducting the expenses of fifteen hundred dollars for cultivating, picking, packing and carrying to market, you have a net profit of ten thousand five hundred dollars. While the cultivation of this fruit might be made a very lucrative business, only a few orange orchards are to be found on the island. The trees are planted on most of the coffee and many of the sugar estates in large numbers, as borders to the avenues and lines of division, but the planters rarely gather the fruit. Coffee, which at one time was considered the most important product of the island, is now said to afford but a very small per cent. on the capital invested. If not the most productive, the coffee estates are far the most beautiful of any, and form the great ornaments of the interior.

The seed of the coffee plant comes up in about six weeks after it is deposited, when the plant is about two years old the top branches are cut off and its height reduced to four or five feet.—It then requires to be protected from the sun, and it is for this purpose that rows of orange, palm, banana and other trees of thick foliage and large growth are planted between these of the coffee. An extensive coffee plantation with its long avenues and enclosures of orange and palm trees—its almost numberless lines of coffee plants, overshadowed by the banana and other beautiful trees, blooming in rich luxuriance of perennial vegetation, seems, at least, to verify the visions of an earthly paradise.

The banana is one of the most delicious vegetable products of the island. The tree on which the fruit grows is an annual one, that rises to the height of eight or ten feet, when it throws off a cluster of immense leaves five or six feet long, by two or more broad, and in the midst of these leaves is found a single bunch or cluster of from forty to one hundred fruits, which are nearly six inches long, and somewhat similar in shape to the common cucumber.

Tobacco, maize, cocoa and the sweet potato appear to have originated on this island.

Tradition says they were introduced into Mexico by the Toltec race in the seventh century, and thence have spread over the continent. An interesting story is related by a Spanish writer on Mexico. He says:—"Maize is native to the island of Cuba, its name is found in the language of the aboriginal inhabitants and it is supposed to have been introduced into Mexico by the Toltec race. Soon after its introduction, it became the great staff of life, and was looked upon with a kind of religious veneration. The Devil taking advantage of this, moved one of the Pagan priests at a festival of the God of War, to make an image of the God out of the flour of maize kneaded with the blood of human victims who had been sacrificed in war; which was broken in pieces, and distributed among the people who ate it with great veneration, saying they were eating the flesh and bones of the God. Thus did Satan himself ordain in Mexico, a communion to counterfeit the Holy Sacrament." Much more might be written, descriptive of the products of Cuba, but this communication is already too long, and what may be said in relation to the moral character of the island and the importance of sustaining a Seaman's Chaplain in Havana must be deferred to a future number.—*Sailor's Magazine.*

The Value of the Barometer.

Torinelli invented and Pascal perfected this instrument, and it is of great use, not only in foretelling the changes of the weather, and thus saving the lives of navigators, and preventing the loss of millions of property on the ocean, but also enabling us readily to ascertain the height of mountains, or of any other situation to which it can be taken.

In illustration of the use first mentioned, I am going to tell you an anecdote which I have read of Lord Collingwood, who succeeded Lord Nelson in the command of the British fleet, after Nelson's death at the battle of Trafalgar, in 1803. Dr. Gray, a surgeon in Lord Collingwood's ship, was very fond of observing the weather and kept a regular register of it. But his Lordship had little or no faith in the barometer, and used to laugh at the Doctor for his credulity. The fleet at one time, was cruising off Sicily near Saracuse, a little before sunset; the weather was very fine, and the sky gave no indications of a change. Dr. Gray, on going to consult his glass, and enter his observations as usual, was surprised to find that the mercury had fallen nearly an inch. This alarmed him, and he mentioned the fact to Lord Collingwood, who was greatly amused by his anxiety. The Doctor however urged that the fall was unusually great, and he had to encounter a gale, which though it might not be of long duration, would be extremely heavy. He added, if in this case the glass deceived him, he would admit, that it was a false prophet. "Well," said his Lordship, smiling, "we will put you on your trial, and you shall have the management of the fleet for once." A signal was accordingly made to prepare for bad weather. One of the captains told Dr. Gray, next day, they were quite at a loss what to make of such an order, as the afternoon was so fine, and the sky looked so settled. However, before midnight, they all acknowledged the wise foresight of the order, for it blew a hurricane for several hours, which must, had they not been prepared for it, have done them great damage.

Another occasion afforded, some time after, to scatter his Lordship's doubts. They had gone ashore, and in the morning it blew a heavy gale which alarmed them greatly for the safety of a little vessel in which was the son of one of their agents. For some reason, it had been taken in tow by one of the ships, and was in danger of being drawn under water. The poor father stood, therefore, on the shore almost distracted. Dr. Gray, however, finding that the mercury in his barometer had risen considerably and very quickly, comforted him, by telling him that he had very little doubt, but that high as the sea was then, in an hour or two he might go on board his son's vessel in a boat; and he actually did so.

Thus we see that this instrument, as a Prophet of the weather, is of great consequence to the sailor, and carries the records of life and death in its prognostics. Life may be secured to him by the knowledge which it gives; for an hour's warning of the approach of a storm, gives him time to lower his sails, and render as secure as possible, the few frail planks, which alone separate him from eternity.

This is certainly the highest use of the barometer, but its other uses are by no means unimportant. The mercury falls when it is carried from any lower to any higher spot, and the degree of falling tells exactly how much air has been left below. Thus, if thirty inches high on the barometer mark the whole pressure at the surface of the ocean, and if the instrument be

found, when carried to another place to stand at only twenty inches, it proves that one-third of the atmosphere exists below the level of the new situation.

In carrying a barometer from the level of the Thames, to the top of St. Paul's Cathedral, in London, the mercury falls about half an inch, marking an ascent of about 500 feet. On Mont Blanc, it falls to half of the entire barometric height, marking an elevation of 25,000 feet; and in De Lue's famous balloon ascent, it fell to below twelve inches, indicating an elevation of 21,000 feet, the greatest of which man has ever ascended from the surface of his earthly habitation.—*Lotus.*

English Arms and Religion.

It is not to be denied that English arms have opened India to evangelization,—not designedly, indeed, but as a consequence of opening it to commerce;—nor should it cease to be matter of thanksgiving to God, that he has overruled the wrath and the aversion of man, so as to secure many glorious fruits of Christianity on the field of India,—but it is, nevertheless, a most lamentable fact that the very means by which England maintains her sway in the East, create a prejudice against her religion, which constitutes a chief difficulty in the way of its progress. On this point we refer the reader to an extract of a letter from India to the American Peace Society dated Bombay, July 27, 1848.

"Much has been published in America concerning the religion of the Hindoos; but I have seen little in American works concerning the general state of the country. The political state of India has no parallel in the history of the world. A country with more than 100,000,000 of inhabitants in subjection to a nation containing not more than one fourth as many, of another complexion, of a different religion, and living in a distant part of the globe, separated by continents and seas. India has had fearful experience of the power of Christian nations—a power for which they are indebted, in a great degree, to the direct or indirect influence of Christianity. But her inhabitants have yet seen but little to produce the conviction that this religion in its spirit and its object is emphatically a religion of peace, and that the Saviour, in whom those nations profess to trust, and whose name they bear, is called the "Prince of Peace." England conquered India by the sword, and by the same means possession is still retained. The military force supported by the English in India for ten years past, has exceeded, on an average, 200,000 men; and the annual expenditure for this immense army has exceeded \$45,000,000. For the two past years the army has been 250,000, and the expenditure for it exceeded \$50,000,000 annually. The debts of the government—money borrowed to sustain the expenses of its numerous wars—now exceed \$200,000,000. Within eight years past, the English government in India has been engaged in five different and successive wars, namely, the Afghan war, the Scindian war, (with a native prince whose dominions are situated between Agra and the Deccan,) the Scinde war, (with native princes whose dominions were off the Indus for several hundred miles from its mouth,) the war in the northern Mahajatta country with Kulapore and Savant Warre; and lastly, the war in the Punjab or with the Sikhs. These do not include the war with China, as that was regarded as a war between England and China, though the cause of it originated in the opium trade between India and China, and a large military force was sent from India to assist in carrying it on. More than nine-tenths of all the Europeans in this country are connected with the army.—*N. Y. Recorder.*