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THOUGHTS OF HEAVEN.

No sickness there,
No weary wasting of the frame away,
No fearful shrinking from the midnight air,—
No dread of summer's bright and fervid ray!

No hidden grief,
No wild and cheerless vision of despair;
No vain petition for a swift relief,
No tearful eye, no broken heart, are there.

Care has no home
Within that realm of ceaseless praise and song—
Its tossing billows break and melt in foam
Far from the mansions of the spirit throng.

The storm's black wing
Is never spread athwart celestial skies!
Its wailings blend not with the voice of spring,
As some too tender flow'ret fades and dies.

No night distils
Its chilling dews upon the tender frame: [fills
No moon is needed there! the light which
That land of glory, from its Maker came,

No parted friends
O'er mournful recollections have to weep;
No bed of death enduring Love attends,
To watch the coming of a pulseless deep!

No blasted flower
Or withered bud celestial gardens know
No scorching blast, or fierce descending
shower,
Scatters destruction like a ruthless foe!

No battle word
Startles the sacred host with fear and dread!
The song of peace Creation's morning heard,
Is sung wherever angel-minstrels tread!

Let us depart,
If home like this await the weary soul.
Look up, thou stricken one; thy wounded
heart
Shall bleed no more at sorrow's stern control.

With Faith our guide,
White-robed and innocent, to trace the way,
Why fear to plunge in Jordan's rolling tide,
And find the ocean of Eternal Day?

[National Era.

PALERMO.

[From the Foreign Correspondence of the New-York Evangelist.]

The panorama of Palermo, seen from the center of the Bay, is enchanting. Rugged mountains, over-laid with a soft mantle of green save where the crags project, villas and terraced gardens upon their slopes, and a luxuriant valley spread out at their base; a city within the encircled plain, presenting a row of palaces along the shore, and numerous domes and turrets of some architectural pretension over the wilderness of housetops in the rear; with an ample bay in front, singularly beautiful in shape, generally dotted with men-of-war, and always alive with trading vessels and skiffs—these together, seen under the varying light of an April sky, reward each day's leisure gaze with new discoveries of beauty. The effect of the view upon a fine morning, was always manifest in the good spirits of our ship's company.

Among the agreeable things of a fair morning in the Bay of Palermo, we should not forget to mention the remarkably good music with which we were generally entertained, by a band of humble minstrels plying about in their skiff. Their instruments were flutes, guitars and violins, usually six in all; and with these they executed the choice passages of the favorite operas of the day. Music like

this does not greet one upon the highway in America; perhaps nowhere but in Italy: it is therefore no small wonder to a man from the New World, when in the exhilaration of his delight he looks to see whence come these delicious sounds, and finds only some rough-clad, hard-visaged men, thus beseeching him for his coppers. This custom of greeting the newly arrived vessels with music is very ancient at Palermo; and the excellence of the music has been remarked by the Greeks, Romans and Saracens, as well as by modern travelers.

A few moments within the city of Palermo will cast down the lofty imaginations which most persons entertain, at the first view from ship-board. Ancient ruins are interesting, i. e. we have good authority always for flogging our wits into admiration of them, in case of any holding back: descriptions of them also have a venerable claim to pass for pleasant reading. But what shall we say of modern dilapidations? In fact, they need a cause to give them interest—paint or charcoal sketches, wherein they figure as moral lessons. We may therefore commend the distressing subject of Palermo dwellings to some lecturer upon oppression, Romanism, war, hot climates, stucco and pretension, all of which matters enter into the explanation of the present state of Palermo. Certain monuments of Saracenic and Norman art prove it to have been a magnificent city in its day, when a haughty barbarism held court there; it offers, also, some handsome specimens of modern taste in the way of palaces; but from all of these the glory has departed, at the same time that the pressing wants of Christian civilization are utterly neglected. The churches, indeed, retain somewhat of their ancient splendor; but commerce toils at wretched landing-places, and hides itself in remote old palaces; traffick is happy to find anywhere a doghole with a bit of sunshine in front; domestic industry occupies the sidewalk, and flaunts itself upon fishpoles out of the front windows; while mechanical labor plants itself in the street. It is too plain for argument that tyranny and Romanism, in league to perpetuate the gloomy magnificence and costly mummery of the past, have thrust the active age, with all its important interests, upon the expedients of poverty; and the consequence is that violence and destruction, idleness and decay, are written in affecting symbols all over the town. When we think of the immense revenue of Palermo, and its splendid advantages as a commercial city, such as in England or America would have built up square miles of substantial warehouses and elegant dwellings; the ruinous and beggarly aspect of the place tells us, as language could never represent, the curse of its government and superstitions.

The last thing which dies in a degenerate kingdom, is display. Though poverty come as an armed man to ransack the dwelling, folly jeers at him upon the promenade. It is hard to believe that the gay world coursing up and down "The Marina" at Palermo, have emerged from the old rookery within the gates. This promenade along the bay in front of the city, is one of the finest in Europe. Nature has done everything for it; art has also been generous to it; and now nothing but bad weather or a bombardment can prevent the Palermians from enjoying it. Grandee beggars and titled nobodies here flourish in state.—For a dollar, a Jack tar may here run an hour's career in a coroneted coach, with driver in livery; inasmuch as the privileged owner would fain pay for his dinner. The feast, however, is to see Jack at it, playing the noble! *Sic transit gloria mundi*; and sensible people are glad of it: it is better than otherwise, that factitious greatness should be hired out by the hour.

But the most significant display at Palermo is in the religious processions. These tell us plainly the mental and moral degradation of this people. On the occasion of Good Friday we saw paraded through the town by a troop of vulgar-looking priests, a glass case containing a ghastly wax image of a dead Christ made as revolting as possible by the profusion of blood streaming over the face, and from the pierced hands and feet and side. After this came a dolorous image of the Virgin, clothed in black, and next the President, the members of Parliament, staff officers and the military. That the degraded populace should crowd around this spectacle and cross themselves with superstitious horror, was to be expected; but that the legislators and superior officers of the army should lend themselves to such imposition, was the humiliation of many hopes for Sicily, founded upon the intelligence of the age. These dignitaries of the state are enlightened men; they despise the priests, they call the people "swine," for their eagerness after this mummery—and in private conversation warmly deplore the effect of such exhibitions. Yet they succumb to every ghostly custom that leads them out to parade. Their intelligence goes with a moral cowardice infinitely more discouraging than their fear of the Neapolitans. The spectacle referred to must be seen, to know how deeply intelligence can demean itself.

The environs of Palermo afford many delightful excursions, among which that to the Monastery is quite celebrated. The road thither carries us near some Saracenic ruins well worth seeing; and through a plain upon which Divine benevolence seems to have lavished every blessing of the field; but strown, alas! with a race in ruins—a tribe of demi-savages clad in sheepskins, and pursuing agriculture with long guns at their backs. Arrived at the Monastery grounds, we find large vineyards extending on either side, with valuable olive orchards surrounded with high, well-built walls; and close around the Monastery itself are thick groves of oranges and lemons, with an ornamented garden rising in terraces up the mountain side. Here we enjoy the choicest fruit, and the loveliest view in all Sicily. It is one of those positions which we imagine would be set apart for the glorious company of the Apostles, if their mansions were prepared on earth. As if, however, to mock all fancies of an earthly paradise, out come a gang of blowsy monks, sworn to beggary and the affectation of poverty. From this luxuriant garden these lazy impostors go forth to gather charity from the industrious poor.—Poetry has made this Monastery the retreat of pious meditation! But enter—can this museum of wax figures, and relics, and hideous pictures, this studio of raw-head and bloody-bones, called a chapel, be a place of divine communion? Can such a burlesque of sacred ideas aid the soul to any just conception of Christianity?

But they have a library here—"many valuable and rare old works in it," 'tis said. Let us inquire for one such.

Visitor. Have you a copy of the Bible here?
Monk. O yes; we have the sacred Scriptures. (Monk produces the book.)

Visitor. But this is not the Bible. (The goodly fellowship of monks repel the insinuation with an outcry.)

British Officer. Come now, let us prove the matter. Sit down at the table here, and I will read you a passage from the true Bible, while you follow me with yours, to see how they compare. (Officer reads—monks find themselves all out.)

Monk. Stop, if you please, sir; I think we must have the wrong place.

Officer. Very well; let us take another, then.

The result is the same; the two Bibles are wholly unlike.

Officer. Listen, now, while I read you a chapter from John, to show you the style and substance of the true word of God.

The monks listen with interest; one standing by the foot of the table clasps his hands, and repeats a certain verse. As the reader stops, he cries, "Tell me, sir, where can I get a book like that?" In a word, the monks are convinced of the real character of what they called the Bible. It is only a book of Scripture narratives, paraphrased to suit Popish notions: a sheer fraud of the Papal Church. We are happy to be able to testify that many monasteries of Sicily have an older and rarer work in them now, than they ever had before.
Marsilles, May 14th, 1849. G. H. H.

The British Empire in the East.

The above is the title of the leading article in Hunt's Merchant's Magazine for March. It presents many interesting facts in relation to the extent and productions of the British East India possessions.

British India covers a surface of 1,000,000 square miles, being as large as the whole of the United States east of the Mississippi River, and contains a population of about 150,000,000. This immense extent of territory contains within itself, in boundless profusion, everything necessary for the maintenance of its inhabitants.

The first importation of cotton made into England from India was in 1789; and it came not direct, but through Denmark and Flanders, to the extent of 2,000,000 lbs. Since that period the importations into Great Britain have increased to 100,000,000 lbs.—Cotton is used in India not only for dress, but for carpets, curtains, beds, awnings, cushions, &c. The consumption of cotton in India is estimated at 750,000,000 lbs., exclusive of the amount exported.

Flax is cultivated only for the oil which is extracted from the seed. In 1790 Sugar was sent from India to England, and reports were made to the East India Company by their agents upon the mode of its culture, and the importations which commenced in consequence amounted in 1847 to eighty thousand tons.

Indigo was an article of considerable importance even in the earliest commencement of the East India Company, and grows luxuriantly from the equator to the thirtieth degree of latitude. The annual production of all the provinces of Bengal is about 10,000,000 lbs.

Silk is another great staple of India foreign trade, and is much used by the inhabitants. In 1792, the quantity of raw silk exported from India to Great Britain was 401,445 lbs. and in 1829 it had increased to 1,387,756 lbs. At the present time it is estimated at 2,000,000 lbs. The total value of raw and manufactured silks imported into Great Britain from her East India possession is estimated at \$8,000,000.

Opium is produced in great quantities, and prior to the disturbances of 1839 was an article of great and rapidly increasing export to China. Tobacco is produced in India in immense quantities, and almost every person smokes. It is an inferior quality, and very little is exported. The cultivation of tea is yet in its infancy, but it has been demonstrated that teas of a good quality can be produced there. India, including Ceylon exports 13,000 tons of coffee which is within 1000 tons of the amount consumed in Great Britain. At the present time Great Britain receives from India eight or nine million pounds of pepper, a great part of which is re-exported to other countries.