

# CHRISTIAN



# VISITOR.

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REV. E. D. VERY,

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

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[From the Puritan Recorder.]

## AFFECTING COINCIDENCE.

Rev. WILLIAM B. TAPPAN, whose sudden departure to a better world has awoken such a sensation in this community, being himself a poet, was wont to do us the favour frequently, of exercising his poetic taste in making fit poetic selections for our paper. And it so happened, that on Saturday, but two days before his death, he brought in the selection which appeared in our last, under the head of "TO DEATH," which because of its singular appropriateness, we beg leave here to repeat. If he had known how near he stood to the gates of death, he could hardly have found a selection more appropriate. And there is something striking in the providence that led the poet thus to address himself "To Death," in this last exercise of his poetic taste.

### TO DEATH.

FROM THE GERMAN OF GLUCK.

Methinks it were no pain to die  
On such an eve, when such a sky  
O'er-canopies the West;  
To gaze my fill on yon calm deep,  
And, like an infant, fall asleep  
On earth, my mother's breast.

There's peace and welcome in yon sea  
Of endless blue tranquility;  
The clouds are living things:  
I trace their veins of liquid gold,  
I see them solemnly unfold  
Their soft and fleecy wings.

These be the angels that convey  
Us weary children of a day,  
Life's tedious nothing o'er,  
Where neither passions come, nor woes,  
To vex the genius of repose  
On Death's majestic shore.

No darkness there divides the sway  
With startling dawn and dazzling day;  
But gloriously serene  
Are the interminable plains;  
One fixed, eternal sunset reigns  
O'er the wide, silent scene.

I cannot doff all human fear;  
I know thy greeting is severe  
To this poor shell of clay;  
Yet come, O DEATH! thy freezing kiss  
Emancipates! thy rest is bliss!  
I would I were away.

[From the Watchman and Reflector.]

## HOLIDAYS ABROAD;

Or Europe from the West. By Mrs. Kirkland. 2 vols.

We pass by all the poetic beauties of her two volumes, and give her straight-forward, matter of fact sketch of Oxford:

Oxford was, from very early times—as far back as the year 750, perhaps—the seat of some religious houses, priories, or monasteries, under the Catholic order of things. Here, too, from a date quite as remote, were established, under the patronage of these establishments, various schools. These religious establishments possessed much wealth, in lands, and privileges and pious bequests, and, as the Catholic faith declined, they were converted, both buildings and lands, to the use of these schools of learning, which thus became endowed with property that every century, until recently, has done much to appreciate. Thus, the University of Oxford is composed of twenty-four different and independent schools or colleges, each owing its origin to some more or less remote foundation in an ancient monastic establishment, or else to the piety and munificence of some pupil of one or another of these establishments, whose gratitude tempt-

ed him to found another school like that in which he himself had been nursed.

It is necessary to understand that Oxford is a city of thirty thousand inhabitants, occupying, perhaps, two miles square, of which far the largest part is taken up by college buildings and grounds. The number of students being so large, the buildings in which they reside are, of course, immense; for every college has within its own jurisdiction whatever may be needed for the instruction, as well as living, of its inmates. They are uniformly built round a quadrangular court, and very few of these squares are less than two hundred feet on each face. Some of the colleges enclose as many as three quadrangles, and besides the large courts within, are surrounded by grounds of from fifty to two hundred acres in extent. These grounds, through which the two rivers of Oxford—the Cherwell and the Isis—meander, are laid out in the most tasteful manner, full of shrubs and flowers, and carpeted with a velvet sward. Trees of great magnitude and age shade their cool walks, and the most precious associations cluster about them.

There is as much difference in the extent, endowments, age, lands, and numbers of students, among these colleges, as if they were in different parts of the country; and except for certain purposes, they are as independent of each other as Harvard, Yale, Columbia and Union. When we consider that there are twenty-four of these colleges, each having edifices of its own, a hall or refectory, a chapel, a library, lecture rooms, and dormitories; and that, while several of them have very much more extensive accommodations than Harvard or Yale, few have less: and we may form an idea of the extent of the University of Oxford. Now, if it be remembered that the colleges are all built of stone, and usually in the highest style of architecture; that they form the most massive piles of building, with two or three exceptions, in the world; that they preserve very much the appearances of the old monasteries from which many of them sprung having still parts of the old buildings with the chapel, cloisters, refectory, and cells of the religious orders of seven hundred and a thousand years ago; that piety, and wealth, and taste have lavished for many centuries their stores in adding to these buildings, or restoring them; if it be further understood, that whatever we are accustomed to see in our own country, in Gothic architecture, most elaborately wrought in wood and plaster, is here upon a far more magnificent scale, and with an increased richness, done in solid stone, both within and without, so that no flower that blows may not be found in marble there; if it be also considered that it takes a whole day barely to walk in and out of these different quadrangles—each spacious, and splendid, and costly enough for the palace of a mighty sovereign; if it is further remembered that there are twenty-four chapels, each a magnificent temple, within this University, and full of the most costly work in stone or oak carving, or painted glass, or monuments of antiquity, or pictures, or painted ceilings, or invaluable memorials of the past—as many libraries, too, scarce one of which contains less than thirty thousand volumes, with a common library, (the Bodleian) containing five hundred thousand—as many halls full of portraits by the best masters of the most celebrated scholars or statesmen of England for a thousand years past, with museums of all that is curious or instructive in science, art, antiquity, and these countless edifices of substantial stone in various stages of preservation, most of them hoary with age, flecked with moss, or with jagged outlines where the tooth of time has gnawed them, contrasted here and there with those of lighter color, and sharper and

fresher outlines, but of the same primeval style and all soft with the damp and soot of the English atmosphere; then the reader will have, after all, an inadequate notion of the outward seeming of this vast, magnificent, and glorious University of Oxford.

It is very difficult to give a clear idea of the internal constitution of an English University. We have nothing answering to it in our own country. It has been already stated, that the separate colleges at Oxford are entirely independent corporations; and before we can understand the University, we must know something of the constitution of a college. Here, then, we must lay aside our American notion of a college as a high school, under the charge of professors chosen to instruct it, and entertain a quite different idea. A college in an English University is an establishment in which a certain number of elected persons are supported by endowments under conditions of celibacy, and perhaps, other obligations, for the purpose of cultivating learning and piety in a studious retreat. These persons are termed Fellows. They are all clergymen, and all supposed to be pursuing their studies for the public benefit. The connection of a school with the college is not an essential part of its constitution, although it is a uniform coincidence. The fellows, however, are not necessarily instructors. Besides the fellows, the colleges have tutors, appointed by the masters and fellows, who drill the young men in their studies. Besides the fellowships, there are, in all the colleges, scholarships, to which indigent young men are eligible. Others are admitted upon the payment of certain fees. We understood that two hundred pounds a year was a moderate estimate of the expenses of a commoner at Oxford, being about three times as much as in our own colleges. There are no professors in the colleges. The University appoints professors, who give lectures, on which the students of all the colleges attend. All the instruction in the way of recitation is given by the tutors of the particular colleges, or by private tutors elected and hired by the student himself, from among the fellows of Oxford.

### THE GIANT'S CAUSEWAY.

The following description of this great natural curiosity, is from a letter published by the *Boston Post*, dated at Belfast, April 19, 1849:—

Last week I visited the "Giant's Causeway." It is a singular freak of nature, and is evidently the produce of volcanic action.—The rocky coast that you walk over is a sort of irregular pavement that appears to be composed of blocks of stone shaped like the cells of honeycomb, the ends of the columns being up. Most generally six sided, many pentagons, some seven sided or heptagons, some eight, and occasionally nine, and in some instances with three or four sides. The usual diameter of these blocks is from 12 to 18 inches.—Each block or pillar runs down, *ad infinitum*, for aught I know, and all of them are in sections, or composed of separate pieces, about one foot high usually. When one of these sections of a pillar is taken off, it always leaves the next one convex or concave—the bottom part of the piece taken off being the converse of the top of the one left, as they fit together exactly. The top of each block is more usually convex, and the bottom concave. Whatever size or shape these pillars are, they always fit exactly on all sides to those around them; so that for many irregular acres it is a vast field of mosaic work, and the pieces so closely fitted that not a drop of water can run down between the columns.

The tops of some of these pillars are much higher than others; and in one or two in-

stances form perpendicular banks or cliffs near forty feet high, looking like large hewn posts standing up so thick as to form a wall. In one place they form distinct and separate columns, and take the name of "the chimneys." Some parts of the bank along at this place are 320 feet high, but not columnar.—Parts of these pillars or columns of the Causeway have been taken down and carried off to put in museums, which can very readily be done. The name of this stupendous work of nature probably came from the appearance of its being a gigantic effort to build a stone pavement or causeway from here to the Scottish coast; but I suppose the old fellow that laid out the work, got tired, or "hard up" for the pewter, and gave up the job. At least, this is my opinion, and being something of a philosopher, presume I am right. The Brobdingnagian builder has long since packed up his traps and retired to "Fingal's Cave," which lies about 85 miles nearly due north from this. From representations of that, I should presume that to be a similar formation, formed at about the same time. The columnar appearance of the Causeway, and of Fingal's Cave, extends clear into the sea beyond the reach of mortal ken, and were the waters to subside, I have no doubt but they would be found to be the same formation. I obtained with a "silver hook," a few boxes of beautiful specimens of minerals at the Causeway, part of which I mean to exchange, when I get home, with some of our collectors in America.

### India—a Problem of Providence.

That vast continent, occupying an area of 1,200,000 square miles, and containing a population of 150,000,000 of responsible and immortal beings; that continent thus peopled, mysteriously but wisely opened to the Gospel of Jesus, is a theatre to which the attention of the Christian Church should be more immediately and vividly directed, and towards which their efforts and prayers should still more directly tend. Here is a vast country placed at the disposal of Britain, and of the British Churches, in the mysterious Providence of God. And for what purpose? India has belonged to other countries. Greece possessed India. Alexander fought some of his noblest battles, and obtained some of his greatest conquests, on that very field where our recent battles have been fought, and our victories achieved. Mohammedanism has possessed India in its length and breadth, conquering its tribes, and imposing upon many of them its stern faith. Portugal laid hold of the coast of India, and availed herself of its ports and treasures. France, Spain, and Holland have all, in turn had possession of parts of India. And why has it passed from the grasp of these different countries? Why has it come into the possession of Britain? All the countries which have conquered India, forgot that she placed at their disposal for great and righteous purposes. India has been given to Britain, that Britain may give to India that without which India can never be blessed, a crucified and a glorified Christ. That country has been remarkably prepared for the reception of heavenly truth. A great external work has been carried on there for many years. The prejudices of the government of the country have been materially removed. The influence of idolatry upon the native mind has been greatly weakened. Slavery has been legally abolished. Education vastly extended. Converts have been made to the Christian faith. Churches after the New Testament model have been formed. Native teachers and schoolmasters have been prepared and sent forth into the length and breadth of the land; and India at the present moment is, to the