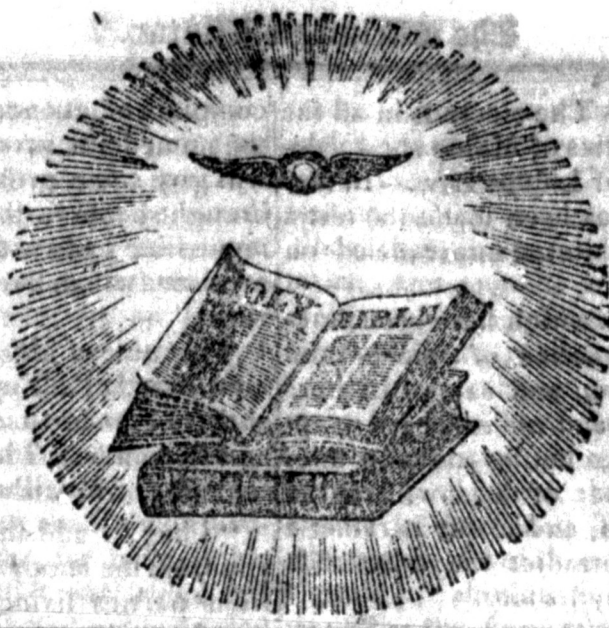


CHRISTIAN



VISITOR.

A Family Newspaper: devoted to

Religious & General Intelligence

REV. E. D. VERY,

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

EDITOR.

Volume V.

SAINT JOHN, NEW-BRUNSWICK, FRIDAY, MARCH 26, 1852.

Number 10.

[FOR THE CHRISTIAN VISITOR.]

BE CONTENT.

Why murmurs man against the king of heaven?
 All that he doth possess, hath He not given?
 Are not his health his reason and his food
 Given by Him the donor of all good?
 Is he not blest what e'er he goes about
 Are not life's luxuries to him poured out?
 Carpets of verdure and rich fields of corn
 His wants supply and villages adorn.
 He plucks the mellow fruit from nature's trees
 And if he wishes sips the sweets of bees,
 If he choose climates other than his own,
 There's Frigid, Temperate, or the Torrid
 Zone.

And in regard to friends, if he have any,
 Let him but be a friend, and he'll have many.
 Then wherefore doth he murmur at his lot,
 Why doth he wish for that which he hath not?
 O! murmur not against the hand of God,
 For though by times it bears a chastening rod,
 Yet all our blessings flow from heaven above,
 From the great fountain of eternal love.
 O, rather let us then his grace adore,
 Who hath for us such mercies laid in store;
 Who looked with pity on a race undone
 And but to save us sacrificed his Son,
 That through the medium of Immanuel slain
 He might be just and we redemption gain.

LEONORA.

Dorchester, March 16th, 1852.

In our last paper we reported the death of the persecuting Queen of Madagascar, who has signalized her reign since the death of her husband by some of the most unrelenting cruelties with which Christian converts have ever been visited. The son who succeeds her if not really a Christian, is decidedly favourable to them, and has risked his all in their behalf.

Our readers will doubtless all be interested at this juncture in the following account of the Island.—Ed.

THE ISLAND OF MADAGASCAR.

The island was only discovered (or visited) in the year 1506 (in the reign of Henry VII.) by the Portuguese navigator Lorenzo Almda, after whom it was, for a time, called St. Lawrence. By the French, in the reign of Henry IV., it was designated the Isle Dauphine, and by Marco Polo, at the end of the sixteenth century, "Majaster." Ellis says that the natives on the coast do not call it Madagascar, but Nosindambo, i. e. the island of wild hogs. There are other figurative expressions applied to the island, as "Ambony Tany," "Ambony Lanitra," &c., signifying "on the earth," "beneath the skies," and "in the midst of the flood." Madagascar is separated from Africa by the Mozambique Channel; its distance from the Cape of Good Hope is 1,800 miles, and from the Mauritius 480 miles. Its greatest length, from north to south, 900, and its breadth, from east to west, 350 miles; and the aggregate superficial area of this vast island cannot be estimated at much less than 200,000 square miles. Situate south of the equator, and extending from latitude 11 deg. 57 min. to 25 deg. 42 min. south, the aspect and climate of the island offer much variety. The whole island flows with "milk and honey," and abounds in mineral wealth of every description, as well as in rice, silk, cotton, spices, and magnificent timber. The interior is considerably elevated, and the slope down to the sea undulates into beautiful vales, watered by rivulets and rivers; the soil, in general, consisting of decomposed granite, of delightful fertility. Many of the rivers are navigable into the interior, but their entrances are almost blocked up by sandbanks, especially on the eastern coast. This is caused by the

roll of the ocean from east to west, on one side of the island, and by the incessant currents which set in from the Mozambique Channel on the other. This obstruction of the efflux of the rivers has caused the formation of vast marshes on its coast; and the consequent generation of miasmata produces the dreaded (because fatal) malady, called the "Madagascar fever." The highlands in the interior are very healthy.

On the eastern coast there are two distinct seasons: The "fine season," which begins in May, and terminates about the middle of October, during which the heat is moderate, and strong breezes renew the air and dissipate the effluvia of the stagnant waters. The second, or "bad season," begins in October and continues till April. The hottest and most unhealthy weather occurs in the first three months of the year, and during this period the country is inundated by floods of rain. The wind is calm, or blows lightly from the northeast by day, and from the north to the northwest by night. At this season the influence of the intense heat upon the decayed animal and vegetable substances washed down by the floods, breeds infectious and pestilential vapors.—The temperature of the interior is much cooler than that of the sea-shore. The thermometer, in summer, (i. e. from October to May,) rises to 85 deg. Fahrenheit, and in winter falls as low as 40 deg., or only 8 deg. above freezing point.

Madagascar is divided into twenty provinces, called as follows, viz.: Vohimarina, Iboina, Maroa, Ivougo, Antisanaka, Ambongo, Antankay, Betsimaraka, Anteva, Mantitana, Fierenana, Vangaidrano, Amosy, Androy, Mahafaly, Fierenna, Sienimbalada, Ibara, Menabe, Betsiolo, and Ankova. Independent of these primary divisions, there are numerous others of less importance.

Into the interesting local details of these geographical divisions of the island it is impossible for us to enter. A perusal of this portion of the notes induces the conclusion that the country abounds in resources, and that it is, for the most part, highly favoured by nature. Ankova, situate nearly in the centre of the island, is by far the most important and most populous. It is subdivided into the three districts of Vonizongo, Isamano, and Eurezina, and includes the city of Tananarivo, or Antanarivo, the capital of the whole island, and the seat of government, situate in lat. 18 deg. 56 min. 26 sec., and in long 46 deg. 57 min. east of Greenwich. Antanarivo contains a population of about 24,000 inhabitants, including the surrounding villages. It comprehends 8,000 dwellings, and five or six "very large houses." Immense riches are said to be concealed in the tomb of the deceased King of Emirina, near the capital. With King Radama (the last monarch) were buried, among other articles of property, 49 hats, 455 coats and jackets, 96 waistcoats, 171 pairs of pantaloons, 53 pairs of gloves, 47 cravats, 54 pairs of stockings, 37 shirts, 38 pairs of boots and shoes, 2 gold musical boxes, 18 gold rings, 3 watches, 2 gold watch chains, 2 silver plates, 1 silver salad dish, 4 writing desks, 1 glass chandelier, 1 curry dish, a pair of silver candlesticks, 9 pairs of gold epaulettes, 1 gold vase, 24 mirrors, some silver dishes, an air gun, a gold spoon, 24 spears, some pistols richly ornamented, 10 swords and sabres, a fowling piece, 24 muskets, some crystal decanters, a soup tureen and ladle, and a gold-headed spear.

As if these were not sufficient, six of the Royal steeds were killed and interred, a cask of wine was buried opposite his tomb, and a brass cannon burst and buried likewise; and to crown the whole, the sum of \$10,000 was deposited in the royal "vault." By way of

avoiding the imputation of avarice, his Majesty left some 140 hecatombs of oxen to be distributed among the mourners assembled in the capital.

Nearly in the centre of the city is the "Tarpeian Rock" of Madagascar, called by the natives "Ampahamarimana," where criminals are executed by being hurried headlong down a precipice of eighty feet; at which depth the victim is received on some scattered masses of broken rock, whence his battered remains fall some three or four hundred feet below, at the base of the hill. The next place of importance is the spot where the public assemblies are held; this is a large open space, well suited for the meeting of the people *en masse* for the purpose of transacting public business. The market is also held there. The market-day, however, is rather a holiday than a season for traffic; and scenes of debauchery too shocking to describe invariably disgrace this place of rendezvous.

The Hovas have only been known as a power for fifty years. They are quite a distinct race from the other inhabitants of the island, and were formerly persecuted and dispersed. They are regarded as superior in intelligence to the rest; the nobles are particularly shrewd and cunning; but the lower orders are disgustingly dirty in their habits. In general, the Hova character is a combination of ferocity and talent. Their besetting sin is avarice. The death of Radama, the last sovereign, which was provoked by intemperance, was the signal for the massacre of all his relations by the reckless tyrant who then ruled and who established "a reign of terror" in Madagascar. The Queen, Ranavalona Manjaka, was both the wife and cousin of Radama. From her accession dates the era of persecution against foreigners and Christians. This persecution—the result of which has been the banishment of all foreigners and missionaries—is part of a system advised and managed by a renegade Frenchman who is now a prince of Madagascar, and a blood relation of the Queen—an honor and a relationship which were purchased, it is said, at a price as unusual as it was scandalous.

Ranavalona Mynjaka's tenure of the sovereignty, as we have said, rests on a rigid and remorseless despotism. It is thought by Europeans that if the abolition of slavery were proclaimed by an invading force, not one of the districts would refuse to rise. Various plans for this purpose have been proposed by the different residents. The future destinies of Madagascar are not quite so dark.—The son of the present Queen, named Racon to Radame, is a Christian, and a youth of studious habits and amiable disposition. Unless cut off by assassination, the renewal of friendly relations with Madagascar on the accession of this prince may be reasonably hoped. The Queen has, for some years, been running a career of intemperance and debauchery, which enervated her constitution, and made her the willing tool of her ministers.

English Luxuriousness.

Few whose lives are passed in republican simplicity, have any definite idea of the amount of wealth and splendor that surrounds many of the English nobles in their residences. An intelligent American, writing from England, describes some of these things.

The Earl of Spencer's homestead, about sixty miles from London, comprises ten thousand acres, tastefully divided into parks, meadows, pastures, woods and gardens. His library, called the finest private library in the world, contains fifty thousand volumes. Extensive and elegant stables, green houses and conservatories, game keeper's house, dog kennels, porter's lodge, and farm-houses without

number, go to complete the establishment.—Hundreds of sheep and cattle graze in the parks about the house.

The Duke of Richmond's home farm, at Goodwood, sixty miles from London, consists of twenty-three thousand acres, or over thirty-five square miles. And this is in crowded England, which has a population of 16,000,000, and an area of only 50,000 square miles, or just 32,000,000 of acres, giving were the land divided, but two acres to each inhabitant.—The residence of the Duke is a complete palace. One extensive hall is covered with yellow silk and pictures in the richest and most costly tapestry. The dishes and plates upon the tables are all of porcelain, silver and gold. Twenty-five race horses stand in the stable, each being assigned to the care of a special groom. A grove near the house, the ladies spent six years in adorning. An aviary is supplied with almost every variety of rare and elegant birds. Large herds of cattle, sheep, and deer, are spread over the immense lawns.

The Duke of Devonshire's place, at Chatsworth, is said to excel in magnificence, any other in the kingdom. The income of the Duke is one million of dollars a year, and he is said to spend it all. In the grounds about the house, are kept four hundred head of cattle; and fourteen hundred of deer. The kitchen garden contains twelve acres, and is filled with almost every species of fruit and vegetables. A vast arboretum connected with the establishment, is designed to contain a sample of every tree that grows. There is also a glass conservatory 337 feet in length, 112 in breadth, 67 in height, covered by 76,000 square feet of glass, and warmed by seven miles of pipe conveying hot water. One plant was obtained from India by a special messenger, and is valued at \$10,000. One of the fountains near the house, plays 276 feet high, said to be highest jet in the world. Chatsworth contains 3500 acres, but the Duke owns ninety-six thousand acres in the county of Derbyshire. Within, the entire is one vast scene of paintings, sculpture, mosaic work, carved wainscoting, and all the elegancies and luxuries within the reach of almost boundless wealth and highly refined taste.

Cotton from Straw.—A circumstance extremely interesting to all engaged in textile manufactures, indeed to the whole community, has this week been communicated to us. An amateur chemist of this town while engaged recently in testing the Chevalier Claussen's chemical process of making cotton, not having any flax straw at hand, tried it upon oat straw. To his astonishment, after the silica and gums which enter into the composition of oat straw in greater proportions than in flax, had been dissolved, he obtained a large quantity of good cotton. The opinion he formed from this and subsequent experiments is, that the common straw of this country may be profitably converted into cotton, thereby adding to the certainty and abundance of our future supplies.—*Nottingham paper.*

The Chateau of Ham.—This now noted building was erected in its present state by Odon IV. in 1216, on the site of a castle dating probably from the time of the Romans. The principal tower of this bastille is called "La Tour du Comte de St. Pol." For the last thousand years this castle has served as a state prison, and some of its memorable inhabitants were Charles the Simple, king of France, in 923; Louis XI., king of France, in 1470; Mirabeau, 1792, &c. Its external appearance is quite in keeping with the mediæval period in which it was erected.—*The Builder.*

Spanish Names.—A Spanish journal gives the following singular names as those of two *Employees* in the Finance department at Madrid:—Don Epifanio Mirarzarurdunduary Zengotita, and Don Juan Nepomuceno de Bariona gonatoretocagocazcochea. The journal, in quoting the name of the latter of these honorable gentlemen, would have done well to have given some directions as to the pronunciation.