

CHRISTIAN VISITOR.

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REVDS. I. E. BILL & E. THOMSON,

"Glory to God in the highest, and on earth Peace, good will toward Men."

EDITORS.

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[From the Head Quarters.]

By the kindness of a friend, we are permitted to make some extracts from a MSS volume of the minor poems of the late Rev. Samuel Elder. To the chosen few who were permitted to penetrate the inner life of the deceased, and to discover below an unpretending and retiring exterior, the abounding evidences of a ripe and rich intellect; and a nobly generous heart which broke forth when his confidence was free—these extracts will occasion no surprise. To such the refined delicacy of his literary taste, like his moral sense, is also familiar, but the many who knew him to esteem him only as the earnest and unostentatious minister, pursuing ever the even tenor of his quiet way, we are persuaded the selections we shall be permitted to present, will be received with pleasure, and recognized as witnesses of a capacious, elevated, and free thought, which were not generally appreciated because not generally known.

SONG OF THE CHRISTIAN LABORERS.

Cheerily—Brothers!—we labor for time,
To fill his bright years with the triumphs of Right;
To wipe from his red leaves the annals of crime,
And hide them with Virtue's fair records of light.
Evolving the thought of the Prophet and Sage,
Doing what great minds have pondered and planned,
We build in the beams of the light-spreading Age—
Our temples, and see them in beauty expand.
For Eternity—Brothers!—Our work hath no end—
Its far-reaching issues of glory we trace,
Sweeping on in bright waves with the Future to blend,
Till lost in the depths of the infinite space.
Hark! the songs of the ransomed in melody roll,
Deep, mighty and grand—like the swell of a sea—
Love's greatest labors, whose prize is—the Soul,
Are glorified there in that high Jubilee.
Lovingly—Brothers! we labor for man—
For man the immortal,—to rescue and save!
With the spirit of martyrs our life let us plan—
Meek, patient, forgiving; heroic and brave,
Our Pattern? Behold it in Him who to earth
Spoke peace and forgiveness—the message of Heaven;
Whose life was the living song, hymned at his birth,
Whose death to its bright consummation was given.
Hopefully—Brothers! we labor for God!
From Him is our mission—from Him the reward;
Be the pathway of duty undauntedly trod,
For the shield of His might is forever our guard
Then faint not—the joy of the Lord is our strength;
In the name of Jehovah our banners we plant;
His right hand will bear us to conquest at length,
The robe and the crown of our triumph will grant.

FRANCE.

THE POPE AND THE EMPIRE—PERSECUTION OF PROTESTANTS BY GOVERNMENT—Closing of Baptist Places of Worship—COMPULSORY DISSOLUTION OF THE FRENCH PROTESTANT HISTORICAL SOCIETY.

Paris, January 19, 1853.

Even in the youngest spectators of our latter revolutions, there is the feeling that we are very far from having attained anything definitive. They cannot help smiling when they see passing before them, like a theatrical decoration, the Empire, the chamberlains, the costumes of another age; it all has the appearance of a phantasmagoria; to them it looks like playing at Emperors. All becomes Imperial after having been National and Royal. Is that the cycle in which we are perpetually to turn? Changes are so rapid that we cannot take as serious what exists, and we look to the horizon to see if nothing new arises. For the present we are in the full-blown Empire. The chamberlains are Excellencies; the dress-coat is, with the uniform, the only one now received at Court. The court attends mass on Sunday! The throne and the altar supporting each other mutually, make reciprocal concession and vie

in each other's praise. Hear what General Gemesu, commander of the division occupying Rome, says in his speech to the Pope on New Year's day—"Already France must have given sweet satisfaction to the august head of the church. France was rushing toward an abyss; she was being drawn into it by the genius of Evil, who thought he could mark beforehand the day of his fatal triumph; but Providence was watching over the eldest daughter of the Church; it chose to save her, and sent to her a man, one of those men that she reserves to herself to grant as a blessing. The man of Providence appeared, and France has understood him. The man of Providence proposed to France to follow him in the path of honour and duty, by presenting to her, as guides, Order and Religion, and France (attracted, also, by a name she loves) replied by eight millions of thanksgivings.

Thus are justified those fine words spoken by a sacredly-inspired voice in the days when the lot of our country was being decided on: *God pays to France the debt of the Church!* It is a second happiness to us, Most Holy Father, to believe that we owe this marvellous blessing, above all, to the prayers which Your Holiness has known how to send into the very presence of God in favour of our France, so proud of the aid she has given, and still gives, to the Holy See."

To-day, in the bosom of a society quite as depraved as formerly, if not more so, it is the fashion, and looked upon as good taste, to curse reason and liberty, and to go back to the mediæval ages, there to find the basis of a truly religious state of society. At this present hour there are fanatics of the mediæval ages who, like M. de Maistre, see but two men the supporters of social order, the Pope and the executioner, fanatics who preach one crusade against England, and another in the interior against the Protestant Propaganda. We are not surprised at anything in a Government which makes common cause with that party whose absolute doctrines in religion please it, because it applies them also in politics. The trial respecting Estissac has ended in the confirmation of the sentence of the first judges. There will be no recourse to the Court of Cassation. There will, therefore, be no public worship at Estissac, where 500 persons have officially declared themselves Protestants. Elsewhere, in the Department de l'Aisne, THE BAPTISTS HAVE HAD THREE OF THEIR PLACES OF WORSHIP CLOSED; THE LITTLE FLOCKS, PREVENTED FROM FINDING EDIFICATION IN THEIR USUAL CHAPELS, MEET, AS BEFORE 1789, IN QUARRIES AND WOODS. We are returning to the "Church of the Desert," the Church under the cross. A society was formed, nearly a year ago, to the end of collecting all the documents relative to the History of Protestantism in France. It has just been dissolved by the Minister of Police; it had, nevertheless, at its head, an official man, the Director of Non-Catholic Creeds at the Ministry of Public Instruction and Worship. This, however, is but the slightest thing, a sort of prelude to what menaces us. It is threatened to close our schools* and our chapels. As to our schools, you know that the threat has been partially put in force; eleven schoolmasters employed by the Evangelical Society have been deprived of their functions. The Minister who was studying the question—so, at least, he replied to an application for an audience, presented by the committee of the society—has just decided that there was no reason to alter the decision. As to our chapels, none have yet been touched: will such a thing be dared? We cannot tell. So much is dared that if, while we now write, we were to receive the news that our chapels were closed, we should be in nowise astonished. I know well that

the fanatics above alluded to are pressing the Government on to take the most extreme measures against us. Will it undergo this influence to its full extent? Will you be called upon, generous English brethren, to come to visit new Madiais in France? All is possible; we have to do with a persevering and furious adverse party. But perhaps they will not dare to advance, recollecting that we have Huguenot blood in our veins—not to excite us to take up arms—God forbid!—but to teach us to suffer perseveringly for the name of the Lord Jesus.

Medical Missionaries to China.

An enlightened mind gladly seizes every available help to communicate to others the truth it has itself received, and endeavours, accordingly, to present it in a form as attractive as possible. The character and capacity of the auditors ought to be studied. In the celebrated struggle between the Jansenists and the Jesuits, the weighty truths enunciated in bare theological dogmas fell powerless upon a witty people; but when Pascal clothed the same truths in the garb of satire, they were eagerly read. The mind was not prepared to receive abstract truth. The appropriateness of the address of our blessed Lord, and of the Apostle Paul, to the peculiar characters of their audiences, and even to local peculiarities, must have been observed by every one. The heathen require to be interested; their minds are darkened by idolatry; their natural heart is intensely selfish; truth falls on ungenial soil, which needs preparation; it must be softened, and nothing so effectually does this as disinterested kindness. For this purpose no more suitable agent can be found than the Christian medical man; he carries his credentials with him, and no one doubts their genuineness.

Heathens, dwelling in dark regions of gross idolatry, do not reason in matters of religion; their creed comes to them through the senses; abstract ideas are incomprehensible; the preacher of the Resurrection is looked upon as a setter forth of new gods; whilst the speaker discourses of temperance, righteousness, and judgment to come, they smoke and jest; he tells them of wonderful things, they applaud; but the heart is untouched; and he cannot enter it, because he wants the key. A savage cares not for the world to come; the present world is his only hope; the future is a wild and shapeless dream. The untaught idolater looks for deeds to prove the beneficence of the Christian faith; he must be convinced that you love him; he knows not the disease of his soul, and will not value the Atonement; but apply the healing balm to his body; tend him in his sickness, bathe his feverish forehead, watch over him with tenderness, and the man will be convinced that there must be something in the character of the men who thus care for him different from other men; you have gained his heart; he no longer jests when you speak; he receives you as a friend, and exerts his energy to understand your words; opposition is disarmed; the man listens to words that tell of a Saviour and His love for sinners; and the power of the Holy Spirit alone is wanting to bring that soul into the fold of Christ. Such results often follow the labours of the medical missionary; he does not supersede, he only paves the way for the herald of the Cross; he levels the rough paths, and breaks down the barriers of ignorance and idolatry. But when the two offices are united in one person, whilst he administers the soothing draught, he pours in another balm to the troubled spirit; when some crevice of the darkened mind is opened, and a pencil of heavenly light enters, then the darkness is dissipated, and the Son of Righteousness rises with healing on His wings. The influence of a medical missionary is

greatly increased when he has to deal with idolaters infected with many of the diseases and vices of civilisation: such persons are too apt to mock at the Gospel, but when suffering from bodily pain they gladly seek relief; they are too corrupt to appreciate a benevolent motive unaccompanied with benevolent action. Such are the Chinese, amongst whom the medical missionary is welcomed with delight; he goes in safety; he needs no law to protect him, the law of kindness defends him against Imperial edicts; people love life, and he who rescues it has a passport to the heart; to him they unburthen a mind oppressed with woe and he becomes their friend. The results of medical practice in China have been most encouraging, and few fields offer such prospects of a rich harvest to missionary enterprise as this almost neglected empire. The testimony of all visitors to that country is strongly in favour of medical agency, in subserviency to the great object of preaching the Gospel. But surely it is not needful to adduce proof to the Christian; the practice of our blessed Lord and His Apostles is sufficient; they healed the sick and taught the people: it was the manifestation of this benevolent power that brought thousands to hear the Word of Life, and to bow the knee to Jesus. If the Apostle Paul had not cared publicans, he would probably have left the shores of Melita without an escort of honour. It is with a deep sense of the importance of uniting the medical element in missionary operations that we cordially approve of the plan of the Chinese Evangelisation Society: its object is to send forth able missionaries to that vast empire to preach the Gospel, if possible, in the interior, and this can only be done with safety by a medical man. The basis of this new association is unsectarian, and many excellent men have given the society their support. An important feature is the printing and circulating the Bible, for which a separate fund is established. We cordially commend it to the sympathy of Christian minds, and trust that ere long many faithful labourers will be sent out by it. We doubt not that this effort, persevered in, will do much good amongst this singular and interesting people, whom fear and exclusiveness have hitherto, unhappily, almost shut out from European intercourse.—*London Christian Times.*

Mind the Little Things.

Springs are little things, but they are sources of large streams—a helm is a little thing, but it governs the course of a ship—a bridle bit is a little thing, but see its use and power—nails and pegs are little things, but they hold the large parts of large buildings together—a word, a look, a frown—all are little things, but powerful for good or evil. Think of this, but mind the little things. Pay that little debt—it's a promise—redeem it—if it's a shilling, hand it over—you know not what important event hangs upon it. Keep your word sacredly—keep it to the children, they will mark it sooner than any one else, and the effect will probably be as lasting as life.—*Manchester (N. H.) Mirror.*

CAN'T AFFORD IT.—Can't afford to take a paper! Two dollars a year, and can't afford it! Your wife and children need a good paper, in which religion, morals, philosophy and general intelligence are judiciously blended—the expense is two dollars for twelve months, and you "can't afford it!" We never hear a man make that excuse, for discontinuing the paper, but we think that that man probably spends ten times as much in some ways, which are of no permanent benefit either to himself or his family. Let retrenchment begin in dress, in amusements, in things which pamper the appetite, and not in that which elevates the mind and makes it free. Of whatever you deprive your family, do not deprive them of good and useful books and papers.—[Trumpet.]

Be temperate in eating and drinking. Be regular, as to the time of your meals.

*Those connected with Churches supported upon the voluntary principle.