

CHRISTIAN VISITOR.

A Family Newspaper: devoted to Religious and General Intelligence.

REV. I. E. BILL,

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

EDITOR AND PROPRIETOR

VOL. 7.

SAINT JOHN, NEW-BRUNSWICK, JULY 14, 1854.

NO. 26.

EARNEST!

Time is earnest,
Passing by;
Death is earnest,
Drawing nigh.
Sinner! wilt thou trifling be?
Time and Death appeal to thee.

Life is earnest:
When 'tis o'er,
Thou returnest
Never more.
Soon to meet Eternity,
Wilt thou never serious be?

Heaven is earnest:
Solemnly
Float its voices
Down to thee.
O thou mortal, art thou gay,
Sporting through thine earthly day?

Hell is earnest:
Fiercely roll
Burning billows
Near thy soul.
Woe for thee! if thou abide
Unredeem'd, unsanctified.

God is earnest:
Kneel and pray
Ere thy season
Pass away—
Ere He set his judgment throne,
Vengeance ready, mercy gone.

Christ is earnest,
Bids thee "come!"
Paid thy spirit's
Priceless sum.
Wilt thou spurn thy Saviour's love,
Pleading with thee from above?

[Written for the Visitor.]

RUSSIA.

BY A. H. MUNRO.

From many causes other nations must regard Russia with peculiar interest. Her vast extent of territory, her undoubted power and rapacity, and her duplicity and many signal triumphs, are alone sufficient to render her of vital importance to the civilized world. If we seek to penetrate into the secrets of her internal economy and domestic institutions, we are confused by endless contradictions and seeming impossibilities on the surface, while all BENEATH is enshrouded in mystery. Russian grandeur and barbarism, magnificence and meanness, splendour and misery, attract, dazzle and disgust. But, independently of all this, the war in which she has so wantonly engaged, has raised our interest in her to the highest point of intensity.

What Russia is, determines what that war must be. If her power and pretensions, her strength and rapacity are equal, long and bloody will that war necessarily be; but if her resources are not equal to the present contest, if she is now putting forth all her strength, if her yoke is galling the necks of millions waiting for, and knowing how to use their opportunity, if her army is ill-fed, ill-clad, and ill-disciplined, and her ships rotten and manned by landsmen, as sick at sea as they are of sea-life, speedy and severe will be her punishment.

When every body is talking about Russia, of course most people will desire to be well informed on so popular a theme. But this is a wish, which, however laudable, is by no means easily gratified. Books about Russia are very numerous, but they are very perplexing, because very contradictory. This, however, must be understood as applying chiefly to things reported by travellers, whose information respecting those particular matters had been obtained from statements made to them by the Russians themselves. As respects the employees of the Russian government, it appears to be a rule with them to mislead and misinform foreigners who apply to them for information. As an instance, we may mention that an intelligent English traveller, whose social position certainly entitled him to civil-

ty, enquired of some of the officials at St. Petersburg, respecting the discharge from the Russian ranks of men who had completed their full term of service. The first functionary to whom he applied stated, that, in all such cases a pension was allowed, and named the precise amount. The next to whom he repeated the enquiry, pleaded entire ignorance on the subject, while a third assured him that both those gentry knew well that no pension was ever allowed. Russian officials appear to lie according to orders as well as from habit and natural propensity and aptitude. Nor must it be forgotten that his high and mighty Majesty, Nicholas, Emperor of all the Russians, does sometimes stoop to employ his royal fingers in the small business of pulling the wool over the eyes of travellers, too inquisitive, and sufficiently influential to be the recipients of his regal hospitality. How adroitly he performs the feat, aided by his well-trained minions, our limited space forbids us to illustrate by amusing instances, ready at hand. But, when due allowance is made for the necessary ignorance of unofficial Russians, combined with the usual amount of national prejudice, or envy, and willingness to flatter or conceal, it cannot be doubted, that, in Russia, "the pursuit of useful knowledge," respecting herself, is certainly attended with many "difficulties." In the preparation of a series of articles on Russia, we have strictly adhered to the results of the personal observations of travellers, and such other authority as is entirely independent of sources of information exclusively Russian. We are willing to believe respectable travellers when they tell us that they saw such and such things; but we cannot place the same dependence on their gleanings from the revelations of convivial hours, the whisperings of the saloon, or the private conversation of the boudoir, to say nothing of the boasting of those whose interest it is to deceive. Thus when ex-Alderman Smith returns to Gotham, and astonishes its natives by the astounding intelligence, that in Russia, there are fourteen hundred thousand troops, all well armed and disciplined, and that of these he actually saw sixty thousand, we regard his assertion as being on a par with that of a certain juvenile who, on one occasion astonished his grandmother by declaring that there were a thousand cats on the roof of her domicile; his cross-examination at the hands of the old lady, however, eliciting the confession, that he had seen in the place assigned, no more cats than were included in the reasonable number of "her Tom and another."

We propose giving an account of Russia as she is, so far as that can be satisfactorily ascertained, as well as an outline of the events which have led to her anomalous state. Her history, if less known, is certainly not less interesting than the history of any other nation of Europe. But we intend to dwell more upon the degree and extent of her civilization, and the policy and working of her ecclesiastical system. Her future, we leave to be depicted by bolder hands and more speculative minds than ours, believing in spite of all theories and theorists that her destiny is known only to Him who is King of Kings and Lord of Lords.

[From the London Atlas, June 17.]

The First Days of the Crystal Palace.

The career of the Crystal Palace has begun right well; the Queen, the Church and State have lent their influence to its opening day, and the forty thousand spectators who witnessed the inaugural ceremonies were the representatives of millions whose deep interest and hearty appreciation are an unequivocal presage of future success. No large undertaking ever found such willing contributors; and while those who assisted in raising the

million that was required had faith in its commercial prospects, they were distinguished from the shareholders of ordinary joint stock companies by the strong interest they felt in the objects which it was intended to fulfil.

The Great Exhibition of 1851 left a strong, although imperfectly-defined conviction upon the public mind that a permanent institution ought to be established somewhat similar in character, but much wider in scope. Happily, official ignorance and red-tape prejudice secured the destruction of the Hyde Park building, and the people, thwarted by their rulers, took the affair into their own hands, and while a few stones were being leisurely added to the walls of the Victoria Tower, there sprang up in its own grounds at Sydenham an edifice surpassing in size and splendour the "gorgeous palaces" and "solemn temples" that have commanded the world's admiration from age to age. History can tell of no work of such extent executed with a rapidity so marvellous and at so small a cost. It arose not like an ordinary building, but like an exhalation from the human mind, an emanation of genius at once "lovely, serene, and grand." England may well be proud of it, and that man must have an ill-regulated mind and an untuned heart who can stand beneath its crystal roof without an inward prayer for its prosperity, and a determination to lose no opportunity of promoting its success. If it were only a question of profit or loss to a few hundred speculators in the great game of gain that is played so ceaselessly in these British Isles, we confess that we should have taken small interest in its fortunes; but it is intimately connected with the people's aspirations towards a nobler form of life; it is a great hieroglyphic in which "Excelsior" is written in characters that all can read, and hence its claims to boundless sympathy and unstinted praise. Looking at it with these feelings, we rejoice in being able to congratulate the shareholders and the country upon the aspect of its early days. Few could have been sanguine enough to anticipate that it would have begun with such a princely revenue as the sale of season tickets and the rent from exhibitors has already secured. Without knowing the precise sum, we may confidently assert that it is a large percentage upon the entire outlay, and that with the help of the contributions from casual visitors, there is every appearance that the receipts of the first and most difficult year will have a handsome surplus over the current expenditure. The official returns show a sale of 20,170 season tickets up to the 15th, and notwithstanding the bad weather 7,987 persons paid their 5s. each for admission during the first four days, being at the rate of £500 a day, or £156,000 a year. Monday is the first shilling day; and next week, if fine, will afford some indication of its attraction for the masses. We know that many are afraid of the outlay still required, but they may take comfort with the reflection that the Sunday opening is only a question of a few months more or less, and that with that point gained, comes an additional income of at least £40,000. It is not by the magnitude of the cost, but by the magnitude of the attraction that our calculations should be framed, and a very slight acquaintance with the Crystal Palace and its grounds will demonstrate that by the mere development of existing features, the latter must steadily increase. Every month will give a new aspect to the magnificent gardens both within and without; the newspapers will tell of thousands of plants putting forth brilliant flowers, and their blossoms will not be less attractive at Sydenham than at Chiswick and Kew. By-and-bye the smaller fountains will begin to play, and after a longer pause the great hydraulic apparatus will be ready, and all the world will crowd together to see whether Paxton has kept his promise—which

he assuredly will do—and surpassed Versailles in waterworks as well as in the garden front. There will be another great time when Mr. Hawkins' Pre-Adamite families—who are to lead a life of seclusion until their islands are completed—invite the gaze of their successors to the dominion of the globe. Thus there is no fear that public interest will decline, and those who have seen the formation of the Crystal Palace and watched its varied phases as it has grown under their eyes, will bear witness to our assertion, that desire has grown with what it fed upon, and that the oftener they have visited it the more they wished to visit it again.

The extent to which the trading and manufacturing worlds are already testing its capacity to answer their demand for an improved means of bringing their goods before the public is, considering the wholesome dread of speculation which the war has occasioned, very large, but the Crystal Palace can offer facilities for which double or treble the present rental of about £30,000 could be obtained; and if we may judge from the business actually done by Mr. Mechi, and the attention we have seen devoted to the cases of other exhibitors, we may fairly infer that the institution at Sydenham will render a great service to trade. In many instances a large business will be done on the spot, but in others the exhibitor will find his orders increase in consequence of the notoriety given to his name and wares, although he may not be able distinctly to trace the cause. We hope, as far as it is possible, articles of the same kind will be exhibited in the same part of the building, as this will be the method best calculated to attract the public, and give the fairest chance to the most intelligent producer. This is a matter of business that will require the most careful attention on the part of the directors, for, amid all refinements of art, we must not forget that we are a profitable people, and never lose sight of the main chance. To the social reformer this industrial element offers important considerations, for, just so far as the Crystal Palace becomes the means of encouraging progress in the processes of manufacture or distribution, will it bring us nearer the goal of our wishes in elevating the producing class.

Whichever way we look at it, the People's Palace has its affinities with progress—commercial, intellectual, moral, and social—and in leaving it for one week, we bid it farewell in the words of Longfellow:—

Our hearts, our hopes, our prayers, our tears,
Our faith, triumphant o'er fears,
Are all with thee—are all with thee.

CONSTRAINING LOVE.

BY REV. JOSEPH PARKER, BANBURY.

Of all the forces on earth, the influence of love is the most potent! Fear repels—love attracts; severity awes—tenderness woos. There is no heart insensible to the genial influences of disinterested love. It distils like the dew, and gladdens like the sunshine. Wherever love reigns, there must be peace and prosperity. The mother's power lies in the mother's love. Love has found its highest embodiment in the Lamb of God! Influenced by this belief the apostle exclaims, "the love of Christ constraineth us." This love was in his heart the impelling power. An appreciation of its depth and purity led the intrepid apostle through all his sorrow and suffering, and made him "more than conqueror" in every encounter. Love is the sublimest theme of the saints on earth and of the redeemed in heaven. It thrills our hearts with joy, and sustains the melodious song of ransomed millions in the celestial temple! It will be found, at all times,

"A sovereign balm for every wound
A cordial for our fears."

An experimental realization of redeeming