

# The Christian Visitor.

A FAMILY NEWSPAPER: DEVOTED TO RELIGIOUS AND GENERAL INTELLIGENCE.

REV. I. E. BILL, EDITOR AND PROPRIETOR. "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth Peace, good will toward Men." MR. JAMES DE MILL, ASSISTANT EDITOR.

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### Poetry.

#### ATHESISM.

BY MRS. LYDIA H. SIGOURNEY.

"The fool hath said in his heart, there is no God."  
No God! no God! The simple flower,  
That on the wild is found,  
Shrinks at its drink the cup of dew,  
And trembles at the sound;  
No God! astonished Echo cries  
From out her cavern hoar;  
And every wandering bird that flies,  
Reproves the Atheist's lore.

The solemn forest lifts its head,  
The lightning on her crystal bed,  
The brook to praise his name,  
High o'er the deep and vernal sea  
Along its yellow track,  
And red Vesuvius opens its mouth  
To hurl the firebrand back.

The pain tree with its princely crest—  
The ocean's leafy bed—  
The bread that feeds its kind,  
In you far islands laid—  
The winged seeds, borne by the winds,  
That such a worm of dust should mock  
Eternal Majesty!

#### The Puritans.

The Puritans, were, perhaps, the most remarkable body of men which the world has ever produced. The odious and ridiculous parts of their character lie on the surface.—He that runs may read them; nor have there been wanting attentive and malicious observers to point them out. For many years after the restoration, they were the theme of unmeasured invective and derision. They were exposed to the utmost licentiousness of the press and of the stage, at the time when the press and the stage were the most licentious. They were not men of letters; they were, as a body, unpopular; they could not defend themselves; and the public would not take them under its protection. They were, therefore, abandoned, without reserve, to the tender mercies of the satirists and dramatists. The ostentatious simplicity of their dress, their sour aspect, their nasal twang, their stiff posture, their long graces, their Hebrew names, the Scriptural phrases which they introduced on every occasion, their contempt of human learning, their detestation of polite amusements, were indeed fair game for the laughers. But it is not from the laughers alone that the philosophy of history is to be learnt. And he who approaches this subject should carefully guard against the influence of that potent ridicule, which has misled so many excellent writers.

Those who raised the people to resistance—who directed their measures through a long series of eventful years—who formed, out of the most unpromising materials, the finest army that Europe had ever seen—who trampled down King, Church, and Aristocracy—who, in the short intervals of domestic sedition and rebellion, made the name of England terrible to every nation on the face of the earth, were no vulgar fanatics. Most of their absurdities were more external badges, like signs of freemasonry, or the dresses of friars. We regret that a body, to whose courage and talents mankind has owed inestimable obligations, had not the lofty elegance which distinguished some of the adherents of Charles I. or the easy good breeding for which the court of Charles II. was celebrated. But if we must make our choice, we shall, like Bassanio in the play, turn from the specious caskets which contain only the Death's head and the Fool's head, and fix our choice on the plain leaden chest which conceals the treasure.

#### Living Epistles.

Sketch of a sermon by Rev. John Berridge, an eccentric English preacher of the last century. On the words—"Ye are our epistles." After a short introduction, he says:—  
In an epistle there must be paper, or parchment; a pen, ink, a writer, and somewhat written.

1st. The paper, or parchment, is—the human heart; which, some say, is as clean as a white sheet of paper; but, if it be so on one side, it is as black as sin can make it on the other.

2nd. The pen may be compared to the ministers of the gospel; and many of them are willing to acknowledge themselves very bad pens, scarcely fit to write with. They have been trying for many years to make good pens at the Universities; but after all the ingenuity and pains taken, the pens which are made are good for nothing till God has nibbed them. The best of pens want mending. I find that the poor old one that has been in use now for a long while, and is yet employed in scribbling, needs to be mended two or three times in a sermon.

3rd. The ink is the influence of Divine Grace on the heart. Sometimes you perceive the pen is exhausted, and almost dry. Whenever you find it so, either at Tabernacle, St. Ann's, or Tottenham Court Chapel, and are ready to say, "O what a poor creature this is; I could preach as well

myself,"—that may be true; but, instead of these sad complaints, lift up your hearts in prayer for the poor pen, and say, "Lord give him a little more ink."  
He then shows that the best of pens cannot move themselves; that these pens must be moved by Christ, by his Holy Spirit; and when he moves them, the strokes can never be obliterated. So also, there must be somewhat within, especially repentance, faith, and holiness.

Repentance is written with a broad nibbed pen, in the old black letter of the law, at the foot of Mount Sinai. Faith is written with a cross pen, in fine and gentle strokes, at the foot of Mount Calvary. Holiness is gradually and progressively written; and when this character is completely inscribed, the epistle is finished and sent to glory.

#### Communications.

#### European Correspondence.

FLORENCE, Dec. 10th, 1854.

MR. EDITOR.—I remained several days in Marseilles and then embarked on the steamer for Genoa and Leghorn. The day was fine, and the mirror-like surface of the sea reflected the deep blue of an unclouded sky. Our course lay along the coast, and towards evening we came opposite to the picturesque shores of Piedmont, studded with towns and villages and presenting a background of lofty mountains whose snow-capped summits glistened in the sun. The high road connecting Marseilles with Nice and Genoa, here runs along a narrow strip of land between the mountains and the sea; so narrow indeed, that in many places a passage has with difficulty been cut along the sides of cliffs, at whose base lash the waves of the Mediterranean.

The next morning we arrived at Genoa.—As I had taken the precaution to obtain the Sardinian visa to my passport, I found nothing to prevent my landing, and soon stood for the first time on the classic shores of Italy. The emotions of awe and veneration with which I was prepared to contemplate every object were soon driven away. I was surrounded by swarms of hotel-runners, guides, and fat beggars, who, in Italian, bad French, and execrable English, related the advantages afforded by their respective hotels, or implored me for the love of heaven to have mercy upon their poverty and misfortunes. Several well-aimed blows from a stout umbrella soon cleared a passage, and then selecting a guide, I started off to see the town.

Genoa is the capital of the Sardinian States, and owing to its comparatively free government, is the most flourishing city in Italy, with a fast and increasing trade, and a population of 150,000. On account of its magnificent palaces and churches, the Italians call it Genoa la Superba—the Superb, and it certainly deserves the appellation. The Cathedral of St. Lorenzo is a magnificent edifice of the eleventh century. From its richest chapel, that of St. John the Baptist, they very ungalantly exclude females for six days in the week, a prohibition imposed by Pope Innocent VIII. Genoa is rich in historical associations, and is especially interesting to the American, as the birth-place of the discoverer of the New World. At seven in the evening we got under way, and the next day, late in the afternoon, arrived at Leghorn.

The same trouble and anxiety which I had experienced among the Genoese awaited my landing here. I had great difficulty in escaping from the guides and beggars, and in keeping the porters from my baggage, ten or fifteen of whom, however, triumphantly carried it to a hotel, where I dismissed them with the extravagant sum of two or three Crazies each, (about three half-pence.) The next morning I took a stroll through the town. It is the chief commercial port of Italy, and contains about 70,000 inhabitants. The houses are well built; the streets broad and straight, well paved, and lighted with gas.—During the summer months, owing to the salubrity of its climate, it is the most fashionable watering place in Italy.

I then proceeded by railroad to Piza. This is one of the most beautiful and ancient cities of Italy. It is finely situated on the Arno, which runs through it in the shape of a crescent. The principal object of curiosity is the celebrated leaning tower. This is an exceedingly beautiful marble edifice in the Grecian style. It is 190 feet high and leans 14 feet from its perpendicular, an accident supposed to have been caused by an earthquake. In the same square are situated the Cathedral, the Campo Santo, and the Baptistery. The Cathedral is adorned with innumerable fantastically arranged columns of every species of ornamental stone. Its interior is magnificent. The ceiling gorgeously gilded, and supported by pillars of polished granite and marble.—The Campo Santo is a quadrangular building in the Gothic style, enclosing a square, the earth of which was brought from Mount Calvary. It is used as a place of burial. The Baptistery was built in the tenth century. It contains five fonts, one in the centre for adults, and four others for children. These are all beyond doubt designed for immersion, and thus clearly prove that at that time at least, infant sprinkling had not begun to be universally practised, and that the word Baptism was understood in its right sense. These four buildings are altogether, and form a tout ensemble unsurpassed elsewhere. I remained in Piza nearly two days and then proceeded to Florence.

London, Dec. 21, 1854.

MR. EDITOR.—I do not intend to make my letter very long this time, so your readers need not be afraid of the dullness of your London Correspondent. The fact is, there is nothing new—absolutely nothing; and as I do not possess the happy faculty of creating substance out of shadow, or of finding out items of intelligence unknown to every other living soul, you must pardon me, if when news is unsatisfactory or uninteresting, my letter falls short of the legitimate length. As the Crimea, which of course is always uppermost in the mind, it is well known to everybody, that the siege is flagging, that both sides seem temporarily exhausted, that the allied soldiers are wearily working in the trenches, and anxiously awaiting the coming of reinforcements, of clothes, ammunition, and provisions. This news of a general kind has been known to all for weeks; and all items of intelligence from the seat of war, do not at present bring us anything new. The best judges have now come to the conclusion, that the reduction of the Crimea stronghold will be a work of time; and so far from expecting that its fall will be speedy, they seem to think that if only the new preparations are finished by May, much will be accomplished. The disappointment which succeeded the failure in immediate success, is now being supplanted by more cheerful patience in the public mind. The people are willing to wait; and, confident in the final success of the allied armies, and trusting still in the prestige of the British soldier, they have a certain steadfast expectation of victory.

There is nothing in the world so harassing as this constant state of anxiety. While the war lingers, business is dull. The immense expenditure of the Government upon the army, and the constant trembling of the balance between hope and fear in the heart of the nation; the incessant interest with which the people gaze upon the distant seat of war, and the horror which occasionally fills the minds of all at some new scene of slaughter, all unite to take away energy from commercial affairs, and to thrust down mercantile pursuits to the lowest degree of dull inaction. Money is scarce, and every one, feeling the need of it, joins in oppressing his neighbour. The Banks will not, or cannot give discount; the prices of almost everything are low; and indeed, it is impossible to tell what article of commerce may now be made profitable. More than everything else, the unfortunate wood trade seems to languish and droop. What the merchant in St. John are doing with their property I cannot imagine; but here in London, those engaged in the trade are selling their different cargoes at enormous sacrifices. However, those who ought to know all about it, think that the wheel of fortune has carried us down to the lowest possible point, and will shortly carry us up; an opinion, which a recent trifling rise in the price of lumber seems to favor. Unless there be a speedy rise however, I fear that it will hardly assist those who are now struggling. The good times will come too late to save them, and many a strong swimmer will be overwhelmed, just as his foot touches the shore.

Of course every evening is taken up by some famous lecturer, and he who wishes to employ his time to advantage, is never at a loss. Noel, and Binney, and Hamilton, delight their crowded congregations on Sundays, and teach, and lecture, and write incessantly. This last gentleman is now emphatically in his glory. During the last three or four years preceding the war, he was entirely absorbed in resisting Papal aggression. This had been the work of his whole life, but in those years it was particularly so. Now however he stands agitated by two tremendous subjects: One is the Papacy, the other the fulfilment of Prophecy. At one time, the Rev. gentleman dashes off to a distant town, to have a discussion with a famous Papal Champion; at another, he stands up in Exeter Hall, to warn the assembled thousands of the swiftly approaching day of judgment! In the present Russian war; in the awful strife of nations; in the plague, pestilence, and famine, which are abroad; in the wide spread human misery; in the general woe which is so appalling; he reads the awful symbols which announce the day of wrath.—An eager host of listeners drink down his words; and multitudes of rival authors catching from him, their knowledge and their inspiration; alarm and stun the ears of men, by their terrific denunciations and prophecies, and pronounce the decree of utter ruin upon the worn out world!

Mr. Peto, of whom all Baptists are justly proud, and whom I mentioned in my last as the originator of the Railway from Balacava to the Camp, which he will build without any remuneration, has still more astonished the nation by another act. In order to devote all his time to the thorough accomplishment of his railway design, he has given up his seat in Parliament, an act of noble sacrifice, and preference of patriotic duty to personal honor, which as lofty in its character, as it is rare in its occurrence, has excited the admiration of all.

Yours, &c.

W. N. B.

Every second of time, throughout the busy hours of the day, and during the silence of night, an immortal soul is passing from time into eternity.

The eye that sees all things sees not itself. The Bible: this oldest book is always new. Benevolence is peripatetic; it goeth about doing good.

From the Christian Mirror.

#### "I Am Determined to take more Stock."

In a certain congregation in New England is a very eccentric but good man—of little culture and knowledge, but having a heart warm with love for Christ and for the sons of men. Not long since he was severely "stricken of God and afflicted" in the death of a beloved member of his family. The Providence took a strong hold upon his heart, and well might be said, "but by the grace of God he was enabled to rise above his sorrow, and even in the midst of his desolation, to maintain his reason, his sensibility, and full of grace." A short time after the stroke which had broken his hopes and so sadly marred his earthly plans, his pastor was startled, at a late hour one evening, by a knock upon his study door opening it this man came in, and immediately began conversing on the subject of religion—referring to his bereavement and its bearing upon Christian character, he exclaimed, "I am determined to take more stock than ever in the cause of Christ." This remark has in it great significance and force, and is most strikingly illustrative of the effect designed by God to be produced upon Christians by the chastening of His hand. He afflicts them so that they may centre their affections more supremely in Him—love things perishing less, and things unseen and eternal more.

When no clouds gather in the Christian's sky—no storms beat upon his path, and no anguish wrings his heart, his investments in the kingdom of God and Heaven are comparatively small; they are all made here, in this world. But when trials come, and the awful shadows of disease and death darken one's dwelling, then higher interests, than those of these fleeting and unsubstantial possessions of time, appear in their true value, and the soul is disposed to venture its all in them. And there is no risk incurred in such venture; investment here is perfectly safe.

Stock in the kingdom of God will never be below par—its notes will never be protested, they are all redeemable at the banking-house of Heaven. Reader, how much of this stock have you in your possession? You do well to sell all that you have elsewhere and buy here. The things which worldlings do most value are going down, rapidly depreciating in value; if you trust in them they will make you miserably poor for the world to come, they give a dividend of sorrow. Remember too, that the time for which this stock is for sale, is exceedingly limited—it soon will be out of the market—it will be impossible for you to get any of it. Just now a *Heavenly Salutation* is offering it "in the top of high places, by the way in the places in the paths at the gates at the entry of the city, and at the coming in at the doors." Will you buy? If you become a buyer the bill of sale which you will have, the certificate of stock which will be given you, will entitle you to "an inheritance incorruptible, undefiled and that fadeeth not away."

Are you a Christian? Then become a larger stockholder—buy more extensively, embark your all in the christian's enterprise. Your own good requires it. The times demand it. Never will this world be given to Christ till there is a greater sacrifice and devotion on the part of Christian men. How do the men of this world identify themselves with those movements which promise thrift and gain. And shall christians, in a nobler, better enterprise, have but a nominal interest? My brother, let me impress every thing here, and we shall be no more, and so will these around us. And when it is that gain shall be? No Arithmetic of time can compute it; to it must be applied the reckoning and the measure of eternity.

R. W. N.

#### Influence of Little Things.

In the eye of God, nothing which men do can be called great. "God alone is great." And yet when life is seen to flow on into endless futurity, nothing which reaches through that long duration can be considered small. No act is insignificant when magnified by the vastness of eternity.

Look at the springs of influence as they issue from the ground, and before they have swollen into mighty rivers. How small are they in their beginnings?

The first influence which meets us as we come into the world is that of a mother. It is a retired and silent force. It seems a little thing. But who can measure the effects of a mother's watchfulness upon her child's happiness and destiny? The place of a Sunday School teacher is regarded as a very humble sphere of usefulness. Yet his teachings often leave an impression which time cannot wear away. It is a small thing to pick up a ragged child out of the fifth and vice of some miserable hovel, and bring him into the Sabbath School, where he may learn the path that leads to God—but that child may yet stand on the shores of India, and preach the riches of Christ to thousands of idolaters. To adopt an orphan boy is a private charity, which attracts little notice; but how differently it appears when that poor boy becomes a man of high character and influence—a benefactor to his race.

It is a little thing to pray in the family morning and evening. But on that faithful household piety may depend the salvation of your children. It is a small thing to come through rain and snow to a prayer meeting week after week. But that little circle may be the spring where your spirit shall drink the waters of life! It is a little thing to turn aside from business for an hour to talk and pray with one who is dying, but those few words at the awful hour of death may be as a fortunate turn of the helm to guide the soul into eternal rest.

Let those who can never do their duty without an eye to human praise, seek high places and great deeds. Be it enough for us to serve our Master faithfully along the roadside of life; and if we come at last to put on white robes to follow the Lamb in heaven, then may it be our joy to have a multitude of the poor and forsaken, gathered out of wretched homes, and saved from the depths of misery and sin, to bear us company!

In watching the humble labors of obscure Christians, we are often reminded of this noble reflection of Hooker—"The most brilliant fact of Church history is that which can never be written; it is reserved for the stupendous scene of the Judgment Day."

Different indeed are the praises and censures of human history from God's eternal record! On that day when the hearts of all are revealed, the deeds which men call great will sink into the insignificance to which their low motives justly consign them. The dazzle of the world will be gone. Then the false judgments of mankind will be reversed; and many that were first shall be last; and the last shall be first.—N. Y. Evangelist.

#### Parental Example.

A mother related the following seemingly trifling incident, which forcibly illustrates the importance and power of parental example:—  
As I was about to enter my nursery, to look after my little ones, I observed the youngest, a boy of three years of age, looking over a book, which he had taken from a shelf, resembling a family Bible, used before morning and evening prayer.

Struck with the unusual solemnity of his manner, I watched, unobserved, his movements. With great precision, and apparent devotion, he went through the exercises of reading, singing, and then kneeling for praying, in imitation of his father's daily example. And never was manner, voice or gesture more perfectly copied. Trifling as was this circumstance, so deep and solemn was the impression made upon my mind, that to this time I was myself mentally exclaiming,—What manner of persons ought parents to be, in all holy conversation and godliness! Never till this moment had my mind dwelt upon the momentous, though so oft repeated, that the future characters and the eternal destinies of children are usually, at a very early period, stamped by parental example; and I now felt that an amazing influence must be exerted upon young children by the manner of permanent family prayer.

Selected for the Visitor, by ANTON.

#### A Wonderful Letter.

A little child from C—, in Germany, who had just lost his father, found himself left by this sad event without the means of continuing his education. He was particularly desirous of entering an institution founded by the pious Christians known under the name of Moravians; it was his mother's wish likewise. But without money, without friends, without protectors, poor and unknown, he had but little hope in the world. Fortunately for this young orphan he had heard of that friend of the unfortunate—that great and powerful Protector who disposes of the gold and silver, as he does of the heart, according to his good pleasure—of Jesus who says, "Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not, for of such is the kingdom of heaven." The child trusted entirely on the word of this good Saviour; he believed in him, and desired to petition him. "But how shall I go to Jesus?" said our little orphan to himself. "I will write him a letter, in which I will tell him all." This he did in nearly these words:—  
"My dear Lord Jesus Christ,—I have lost my father, and we are very poor; but thou hast said in thy word, that whatever we should ask of God in thy name he will grant it to us. I believe what thou hast said, Lord Jesus, to furnish my mother with the means of placing me at the Moravian Institution. I should like so much to continue my education. I pray thee, good Jesus, to grant my request. I love thee already, but I will love thee still more. Give me likewise, wisdom and all that is good. Adieu, &c."

The child folded the letter, and addressed it "To our Lord Jesus Christ in heaven." Afterwards seriously, but with a heart full of hope, he carried it to the post office. The Post Master, on seeing the address, thought it must be the letter of some lunatic, and threw it aside; but after finishing his work he took it up again, and attentively examining the writing, observed it was that of a child. He opened it, and was strongly affected by reading his infantile prayer, which he communicated to a Moravian of his acquaintance. The latter read the letter in a society of the brethren. The Baroness of Lippe, who was present, considered these circumstances as an appeal addressed to her by the Saviour. She took the young orphan under her protection, and placed him at the much desired institution. Thus the letter arrived at its destination and was answered.

#### "God's Work Must be Done."

The following incident is related by a Missionary in the West Indies, and illustrates the strength of faith and the large-hearted self-denial of an humble coloured man, which is worthy of imitation by those in more exalted stations and circumstances in life. The Missionary says:—  
"There is one incident that occurred which I shall never forget. In calling over the names, to ascertain how much they could give to build the chapel, I happened to call the name of Fitzgerald Matthews. 'I am here, sir,' he instantly replied; and at the same time I heard him hobbling with his wooden leg out of the crowd, to come up to the table-pew, where I was standing. I wondered what he meant, for the others seemed to be names, without moving from their places. I was, however, forcibly struck with his apparent earnestness. On coming up, he put his hand into one pocket and took out a handful of silver, wrapped in paper, and said, with a lovely kind of abruptness, 'That's for me, mass.' 'Oh! said I, 'keep your money at present, I don't want it now, I only wanted to know how much you could afford to give; I will come for the money another time.' 'Ah! mass,' he replied, 'God's work must be done, and I may be dead,' and with that he plunged his hand into another pocket and took out another handful of silver, and said, 'That's for my wife mass.' Then he put his hand into a third pocket, and took out a somewhat smaller parcel, and said, 'That's for my child, mass,' at the same time giving me a slip of paper which somebody had written for him, to state how much the whole was. It was altogether near three pounds sterling—a large sum for a poor field negro with a wooden leg! But his expression was to me worth more than all the money in the world. I have heard eloquent preachers in England, and have felt and felt deeply under their ministrations, but never I have been so impressed with anything they have said, as with the simple expression of this poor negro. Let me never forget it, let it be preserved on my heart; let it be my motto in all that I take in hand for the cause of Christ—God's work must be done, and I may be dead."

\* Gerusalemme Liberata, xv. 57.

(To be Continued.)