

American Free Press

GENESEE EVANGELIST.—Whole No. 737.

PHILADELPHIA, THURSDAY, JUNE 28, 1860.

VOL. IV.—NO. 44.—Whole No. 209.

Poetry.

THE TIME FOR PRAYER.

When is the time for prayer?
With the first beams that light the morning sky,
Ere for the toils of day thou dost prepare,
Lift up thy thoughts on high,
Commend thy loved ones to his watchful care:
Morn is the time for prayer!

And in the noon-tide hour,
If worn by toil or if ead ead's oppress,
Then unto God thy spirit's sorrow pour,
And he will give thee rest;
Thy voice shall reach him through the fields of air;
Noon is the time for prayer!

When the bright sun hath set,
While eve's bright colors deck the skies;
When with the loved at home, again thou'st met,
Then let thy prayer be sweet;
For those who in thy joys and sorrows share;
Eve is the time for prayer!

And when the stars come forth—
When to the trusting heart sweet hours are given,
And the deep stillness of the hour gives birth
To purest thoughts of heaven,
Kneel to thy God—strength life's life to best;
Night is the time for prayer!

When is the time for prayer?
To every hour while life is spared to thee—
In crowds or solitude, joy or care,
Thy thoughts should heavenward fly,
At home—at morn and eve—will loved ones there,
Bend then the knees in prayer.

Correspondence.

LETTER FROM CHINA.

FELICITOUS WORDS AND SENTENCES USED BY THE CHINESE.

The Chinese language, whether spoken or written, abounds in words and set phrases, which are considered as felicitous and ominous of good. The use of such is very common, especially on occasions joyous and complimentary. I propose in this letter to illustrate this peculiar trait of Chinese character, by a reference to several of their words and stereotyped sentences.

The Chinese unicorn, (*kiung*), is in popular use, an omen of good. This fabulous animal is described as having only one horn, with a body all covered with scales. For several thousand years it has eluded the vision of mortals; excepting one, when it is stated to have been seen by Confucius in his old age. He is said to have regarded it as ominous of his approaching death. *Thy body*, that Confucius was the elf of the unicorn. Hence perhaps the origin of the common saying, that an extraordinarily bright boy is the "son of the unicorn." Such a boy is also spoken of as the "gift of the unicorn." At the feast of lanterns in the middle of the first Chinese month, a kind of lantern is exposed for sale in great numbers, representing a boy riding the unicorn. When one purchases such a lantern and gives it away to a friend he means, I judge you may have a very bright son. A child that can ride the unicorn is one who gives marks of unusual talent and of future promise as a scholar or a mandarin.

The word or character for *longevity*, or old age, is regarded as very felicitous, and is used in a very large variety of ways. A cake made of dough in the shape of a peach, or the likeness of a peach, traced on paper and painted, is called *longevity peach*, the peach being adopted as a symbol of long life. The character is sometimes made out of strips of dough in which a red coloring matter has been put. After being baked, this longevity cake is placed on the top of a plate full of other cakes, and in connection with other things is presented to one on the celebration of his, or her birthday. Sometimes this character made out of bread-crust, or velvet, and from two to three or four feet long, and of proportionate width, pasted on a foundation of red silk, or red crape, or some other good-looking material, is used as a birthday present to an aged friend. The character on such presents is frequently gilded very neatly.

At other times the word for old age is written in an ancient style, and in one-handed different forms of a large and uniform size, on sheets of red paper. These characters are then gilded. The sheet having been neatly put on rollers is then presented to some aged relative or friend, on the occurrence of his or her 60th, 70th, or 80th birthday. It is usually suspended in the reception-room, and is really a fine-looking ornament. The meaning of the donor of the longevity peach, or of any form of the longevity character thus presented, is, *may you enjoy a green and happy old age*.

On the birthday of gods and goddesses, offerings of plates of whiten longevity cakes are often made before their images. The character for longevity written neatly in a large form on red paper, with black ink, is posted up in large numbers on the door-posts or window-posts of their houses.

The character for *HAPPINESS* is considered to be very felicitous, and is much used by the Chinese as a symbol of good. Ordinarily it is written with black ink on red paper, several inches square, and with white paper with red ink, and then pasted up on the doors of houses. This is done quite generally about Chinese new-year. Sometimes it is engraved on wood in raised lettering, and then gilded and placed on the doors, or on some other place, inside or outside the house, or on some corner-beam or post. Not infrequently it is written very prettily in a large form on two or three feet square, in red ink, on the wall opposite the front or main door of a house. They explain this custom by saying that happiness will be always near by, and on opening the door, every one will see it. Sometimes the pictures of four bats are made at the four corners of the happiness character thus written on the wall. The whole is then called "five happinesses," the characters for bat and happiness having in this dialect the same sound. A very happy coincidence! Every body desires as much happiness as he can obtain, and this is one of the Chinese ways to indicate this universal desire of mankind. The four characters, happiness, official emolument, longevity and joy, are often written together in a certain way, one of them comparatively of a large size, and the other three inside of it, or on it, and in a smaller size. The whole combination would seem to be unintelligible, except to the initiated, and is regarded as a kind of amulet or charm by some. The "five happinesses" are explained referring to wealth, office, tranquility, virtue, and death in old age and in peace, (not by violence or in a disgraceful manner).

The Chinese here are singularly fond of wearing ornaments made of gems, or some precious stone, either genuine or imitated. The stone is first cut or ground down to the desired size and shape, and these happy characters or sentences are engraved on it, such as "Happiness like the eastern ocean,"

(abundance), or "Longevity like the southern mountains," (durability and permanence), or "Long life, wealth and office," or "Gold and gems filling the house," or simply the word "Happiness." These badges, or ornaments are of various shapes, circular, square, oblong, or fanciful. Some are made to imitate flowers. They are worn as finger-rings, or on the caps of men or boys, or as ornaments for the heads of females, or are suspended from various parts of the dress. The design in many instances is not only to add to the respectability of the wearer, but often also to express the wish of the wearer for the object indicated by the character. Such ornaments are often worn suspended on the side of the persons of adults. Some seem to believe that such a use helps them to keep their balance, and acts as a preventive against slipping or falling. When the outermost upper garment is short, such ornaments are not infrequently seen dangling down much in the same manner, as tops and first met' at the west sport a gold chain and fixtures.

The expression "a hundred children and a thousand grand-children," is a very popular and felicitous phrase, consisting of 4 Chinese characters. A lantern coarsely made, about a foot, or a foot and a half long, and 8 or 10 inches in diameter, covered with a kind of white gauze, and having on one side the characters for "Hundred children," and on the other side the characters for "Thousand grand-children," cut out of bright red paper, and fastened on the gauze, is in very common use here. At burials, weddings, and on removals, this lantern is used in pairs, and is regarded as an omen of good. On ordinary occasions, if used at all, it is used singly. Two such lanterns are hung up on the poles of sedans in front of the sedan themselves, one on each pole, on returning from the burial of an elder member of a family, or from placing the coffin in a death-house for a season while procuring a suitable burial-place, each lantern having a lighted candle in it, although in broad daylight. The sedan which carries the ancestral tablet of the dead, and those which contain the female members of the household, have each such a lantern. Also on removing from one house to another, such lanterns are hung on the poles of the sedan, which have in them ancestral tablets, and females of the family, the candles being lighted all the way. On marriage occasions such lanterns are also invariably used among the heathen of this place. The object of the use of this kind of lantern is to indicate the desire for a numerous posterity. Those who have many children and grand-children are described as "ho ming," having a "happy lot."

Pictures of two boys, mutually embracing, or locked in each other's arms, standing side by side, are often seen exposed for sale. They are an index of peace and harmony, representing two persons mutually agreeing, and as constant companions. Some families procure this picture, and hang it up in their house, as a symbol of their desire to "live all in the family live in peace and love with each other." On the same picture, sometimes, is painted the likeness of two bats. Such a picture symbolizes the desire for *happiness* as well as *harmony*, the word for bat being of the same sound as the word for happiness! In some temples there are images of youths as large as heads 6 or 8 years old. These are worshipped for the purpose of procuring peace and harmony among those who once were friendly to each other, or between husband and wife, brothers or partners in business, &c., in case of enmity or bad feelings existing between them. Some of the friends or relations of the estranged parties, go without their knowledge to the temples where these images are, and take some of the ashes out of the censers, standing before the images, (at the same time offering lighted incense and candles before them.) Having mixed these ashes secretly in tea or wine, it is given to the parties whose reconciliation is sought, to drink. It is believed that in due time they will become friendly, and at peace with each other. If, however, they are aware of the meaning of this means for their mutual reconciliation, will prove inefficacious.

The character for *JOY* written twice together, and as though it were one character, is regarded as a very auspicious combination. It may mean *double joy*, or joy repeated, and indicates, when used in the manner mentioned below, a desire that occasions for rejoicing may be repeated. People take very red paper, and trace on it with black ink, as neatly as possible, this character for *repeated or double joy*. It is then taken and stuck up on the door of a bride's room, or on some of the doors of a new house, or on the doors of an old house into which the family has just moved, or on the door soon before, or after new year's, or on the wall opposite one's house, &c., &c., as caprice, or taste, or circumstances at the time seem to suggest. It is thus used as a symbol or omen of prosperity.

I will close this letter by referring to another peculiar and singular custom prevalent here. On occasions festive or mournful, such as marriages, births, deaths, funerals, celebrations, birth-days, &c., the Chinese avoid the saying or the hearing, as much as possible, of inauspicious and unpropitious words or phrases, those which can be construed as unfortunate and of ill omen. For example, at weddings no one should say anything about *any one not having children* or *grand-children*, &c. At births no one should drop a word about the child being *weakly* or *sickly*, or about its not being *easy to nurse*, or bring up, &c. Should such expressions be heard, they would be likely to throw a damp on all present, and be afterwards remembered by the family. Should anything unpropitious or unfortunate afterwards occur, the person who uttered the expressions would probably be regarded as the cause, or the occasion of it, even if spoken in jest, or in regard to some other person or place. The utterance of "bad words" (and here there is not the remotest reference to vile and filthy language, but to unlucky and unpropitious words), must be carefully and studiously avoided, by servants, relations, guests, the family, &c., on specially festive or sad occasions. The same reason language relating to confagurations should be avoided by workmen engaged on a new house, as well as by those who happen to come to the place. A short time since, the writer happening to go to the place where a large building was being put up, asked one of the workmen whether the "new house" was not on the precise site of a recent fire. An angry and violent answer was returned, not relating to the subject of

my question: Supposing myself to have been misunderstood, the same inquiry was repeated, and a similar reply was given. Finally the man in a very excited manner replied in the negative to my question, adding that the owner of the premises would be very much displeased if he knew that I had talked about the burning of houses there. Here I had unwittingly used terms and references which being capable of an evil or unwholly construction, should, in accordance with Chinese prejudices and customs, have been entirely avoided, unless I had intended to excite the anger of the person addressed, or of the owner of the premises. —SINM.

Fah Chan, March 14, 1860.

CHAUCEER.

Chauceer, frequently called "the Father of English Poetry," was born in London, in the year 1328. His parents were respectable and prosperous, and were enabled to give him a classical education. He commenced writing poetry at the age of seventeen. His muse soon gained him many friends, among whom was John of Gaunt, afterwards Duke of Lancaster, who remained his true friend for life. With the Duke, he went to France on a military expedition, which gave him an opportunity of gaining that knowledge which was invaluable to him as a poet. After he returned from France, he obtained a lucrative situation as Officer of the customs. For a number of years he abode under the smiles of the court, espoused by the King and his consort, flattered by the public, living, if not in luxury in great comfort, and with sufficient means for exercising a generous hospitality. In the reign of Richard II., however, in consequence of an attachment to the doctrines of Wickliffe, he was exiled from England, and obliged to take refuge on the continent. After suffering for about two years from the neglect and dishonesty of professed friends, who had left in charge of his property, he returned to England. He was a short time afterwards thrown into prison. During his confinement, he kept up a cheerful, hopeful course, by again wooing the muses. After an imprisonment of two years and a half, he was released, well laden with the rich experiences of trial and adversity, with his nature made more sympathetic and kind, and almost prepared to write his great work. In the time of Chauceer, the Saxon language was semi-barbarous, it had no countenance among the great. The Norman French was the language of the court and of business life, the Latin, that of scholars and philosophers. It certainly required moral courage to write in the Saxon language at that time, and to risk a reputation on its capability of flowing into harmonious verse. The first English book, Sir John Mandeville's *Book of Travels*, had not yet been published. But Chauceer showed the power of the vigorous old Saxon in verse, and improved it by a judicious intermixture of words from the French and other languages. Dryden says, "From him the purity of the English tongue began." Two marked characteristics of Chauceer are his confidence in woman; and his love of nature. He differs very much from the prevailing taste of the age in which he lived, in his sketching of female characters. It was customary then to make woman almost a divinity, and invest her with all the dazzling attributes, that an age of chivalry could imagine. He does not, like Spenser, make her Juno-like in beauty, or elevate her above all the common weaknesses of our nature. His women are flesh and blood, patient, gentle, pure; yet such as demand our charity and forbearance, by exhibiting little faults. Although he has portrayed the Wife of Bath, and a few other female characters that we shrink from with disgust, yet we know that he has delineated these for the purpose of giving us a true picture of his times. The lovely Emilia, the patient Griselda are both fair exponents of his estimate of the female sex. His passionate love of books and study is exceeded only by one thing, his love of nature. The sweet carol of the birds, the balmy odors of the Spring, the waving foliage of the woods, will lead him to throw aside his books and allure him to a ramble in the field and grove. He remarks "that birds and flowers are able to dissipate all his cares." His charming residence at the Woodstock must have furnished him considerable material for describing the beautiful in nature. It was here, after his exile and imprisonment, that he returned in his old age to write his principal work, the *Cantorbary Tales*. Having been a soldier, a courtier, a public officer, a traveller, an exile and a prisoner, he appears by these varied experiences, to have been remarkably fitted for his great undertaking. It was written in the year 1389. In the prologue he gives us the plan of his proposed work. He states; that when going on a pilgrimage to the tomb of that famous saint, Thomas a Becket, he stopped at the Tabard Inn, Southwark, for refreshment and lodging, and there met with a company, who were going on the same pilgrimage. While at supper, the landlord of the inn proposes that they shall each tell a tale on their return, another making sixty tales in all, and that he who told the best one, should be provided with a supper at the expense of the other. He offered to go along by himself, and set as a judge of the merits of their respective narratives. The number of Pilgrims was thirty including the landlord; but Chauceer has told only twenty-four tales. These were a true and faithful picture of middle life in England during that age. The first is that of *Palamon and Arcite*, by the Knight, a noble and dignified epic. Among others, he has the Miller's tale, the *Wife of Bath's*, the *Prioresse's*, the *Parson's*, and the *Monk's*. The characters of the *Parson*, and the *Monk*, he has sketched with the moral pollution of the religious orders of the day. In contrast to these, he has given us one of the most beautiful delineations of the true ambassador of God, that we can find in uninspired language. This is exhibited in the character of the "Poore Parsonne," which has been imitated by Dryden, and no doubt was in the minds of Goldsmith and Cowper, when they described the faithful minister of Christ. What can teach me more impressively than these few lines, the foundation of all ministerial success?

"That first he wrought, and afterwards he taught." And again, "But Christ loved and his apostles twelve, he taught, but first he loved himself."

Chauceer's leading purpose in writing this work seems to have been to reform the clergy, and to introduce a purer form of spiritual religion. He endeavored to do this by strong satire, always a powerful weapon in the hands of a master. He was far in advance of the age in his religious views, and in complete sympathy with Wickliffe. Another feature of this work is its democratic tendencies. His characters are all from middle life; instead of the usual subject of courts and princes, he enters into the everyday life of the people, and exhibits each class of the citizens by their appropriate type. An objection is frequently made to Chauceer, on account of his occasional coarseness; but this appears to be more the fault of the age than of the poet, for we gather from his writings that he was the steadfast friend of virtue and religion. In order to properly appreciate Chauceer, not only the peculiarities of the old Saxon must be mastered; but his works must be closely studied, and accurately pondered, and then there will be discovered a tenderness, a beauty in the ancient idiom which the cursory reader could not possibly have imagined. —M. P. J.

MEMPHIS, JUNE 14, 1860.

THE B. AND O. R. R. EDITORIAL EXCURSION.

DEAR EDITORS:—I had long heard that this was a "great place, and destined to be one of the largest of our western cities;" but I had so often heard the very same thing of so many places, that I was nearly taken aback with the handsome appearance, busy aspect, and rapid growth of Memphis. The location of the city is very prepossessing. Upon a high bluff, fully one hundred feet above the river, upon the convex side of a majestic curve in the stream, the buildings are crowded solidly for two miles, the density of the built-up portion becoming less and less as you recede from the river, until the city seems to melt imperceptibly into the surrounding country.

The main street has very much the appearance of some parts of our Chestnut street, being built up with five rows of stores for many squares. They are quite large, and the display is so rich and varied, one almost thinks he is looking at the handsome prints, the housekeeping articles, or the ribbons and silks of our own stores in Philadelphia. One is struck with the rapidity with which the city is growing. On almost every square there are buildings or blocks of buildings going up. There are now 1400 houses being built, including many first class stores, four or five stories in height, with handsome iron fronts, iron cornices and moldings. Amongst them is a spacious hotel, which the adjoining property owners of the northern end of the city are putting up.

What can be the cause of this activity in building, this rapid growth? Several railroads have centered here within the past few years. One leading to Charleston, one to Mobile and New Orleans, one out into the state of Arkansas, across the river, and the one on which I came, leading to Cairo, and when completed, to Louisville. These roads bring in an immense amount of cotton and other produce, which here is sold and shipped by steamers either to New Orleans or to the northern and eastern railroads. Twenty-five millions of dollars worth of cotton were shipped here last year—sixty thousand bales of it going northward. These railroads, together with the river, keep Memphis in communication with a vast tract of improved country, and is there is no city on the river within five hundred miles of her, she is of necessity, a great trading center.

The fact, that the houses and stores are rented long before they are finished, proves that this growth is as yet behind the actual demand of the trade of the city.

At the northern end of the city lies a large piece of property formerly owned by the United States Government, as a rope manufactory—where the western hemp was formerly spun into ropes to be used in the rigging of our navy. A million of money has been spent here. There is a rope-walk 1700 feet long—the longest brick building, I judge, in the country—besides other buildings of the most permanent character, like everything Uncle Sam builds. The affair did not pay, however, and in a fit of economy, the senate of the United States donated the whole property to the city of Memphis, and forever abandoned rope making in the West.

The buildings are rented out as warehouses, mills, machine shops, &c., bringing in to the city treasury a handsome income annually. The city thus possesses real estate worth a million, which its whole debt for railroad construction and internal improvement is but an equal amount. How fortunate for Memphis that rope making was found by good Uncle Sam to pay!

In the streets there is constantly lying a thick coat of yellow dust, which, as the wind rises, is whirled about in all directions, to the great annoyance of storekeepers, as well as pedestrians. I noticed at some places they were spreading a layer of small pebble stones from the bed of the river over some of the streets, and upon approaching nearer, found some of the workmen having a long chain fastened round the ankle, while the other end was attached to the waist. To me it was a revolting sight. They call these workmen the "chain gang." It is made up of prisoners who have committed minor offenses in and about the city. The unfortunates have the chain fastened upon them to prevent their running away. A keeper has his eye upon them all day, and at evening they are taken to the calaboose, as they call it, a jail built upon the bluff. I vastly prefer our own way of treating criminals, leading them entirely from view, for certainly upon the minds of our children, and the rising generation generally, the effect is better to have criminals of whatever grade shut out from society entirely, than to familiarize the mind by looking at them every day, even though some of them wear the disgraceful chain.

I see much fewer of the slave population in Memphis than I had anticipated. There are about as many white men as black, driving the hacks and wagons about town, laboring in the stores and depots, and doing the work generally. I am informed that the free-black population is very small indeed; most of those, I do see, being slaves. There was a slave sale at auction, advertised a day or two ago; but I did not get to it, as I had intended, and my curiosity had to go

unsatisfied. I passed a store on Main street, however, with the sign over the door, "Slave Dealers." A second room opened upon the street, with benches around the wall; on one side a dozen of black men dezing the time away, and opposite them, as many more women and children quietly waiting their turn to be bought. Two white men sat at the door, ill-favored and of hard features, who I judged purchased and owned slaves in a manner which would not come under our Detroit resolutions—for the cause of humanity, the rights of guardianship, &c.

I have just had a delightful drive through the environs of the city. I said above, that the town merges almost imperceptibly into the country. The fact is, in the city, dwelling-houses are scarce and rents exorbitant. Think of a comfortable dwelling, such as we pay four or five hundred a year for in Philadelphia, bringing readily twelve to fourteen hundred in Memphis. We thought home that the stores under the Continental were renting high at four thousand a year; but I hear of a fine store finished a short time since, renting for five thousand dollars a year on a lease of fifteen years—and say good store brings from one to four thousand they tell me. A two story frame house that I saw on the edge of the town, with an ordinarily sized yard, rented for six hundred a year long before it was half built. These high rents, of course, cause a great speculation in town lots. A sale occurred a day or two since, on a tract not quite a mile from the river, an abundance of estates and drinkables were set out for the bidders; but the lots were withdrawn, there being no bids higher than three thousand dollars for lots fifty feet front by one hundred and fifty deep—and this was not satisfactory to the owner. This was completely in the country; no house within two squares of it.

These high rents, together with the heat of the summer season, have the effect of driving all those who can afford it to buy land outside the city and build their residences upon it. The consequence is that a drive such as that I have just taken, leads through a beautiful series of flower gardens, surrounding comfortable quiet residences, where all is inviting and beautiful. Many large old trees are left standing about the houses, giving a very shady and cool and inviting appearance. Many of the houses are but one story in height, with verandahs extending almost completely around them. This style of building, which at all times, as in other cases, is exceedingly attractive, there being something oriental in it, something like what I fancy the houses in India must be.

I saw a beautiful Presbyterian church just finishing in this district, and I hear of another finished last year, making a total of four Presbyterian churches (all of the Old School) in the city. I was glad to find that one of those upon whom they depend for assistance in building these churches, and one who is a main stay in the first Presbyterian church, is neither other than a son of our good old Pine street church, one of Dr. Brauner's boys as he calls them, who came out here twelve or thirteen years ago in moderate circumstances, when Memphis was young, and now holds a prominent and influential position as any man in the city.

Altogether, this city of Memphis has left a favorable impression on my mind, its immense cotton business, its rapid growth, its fine streets, busy streets and landings, and, withal, its pretty, charming suburbs, one that will not soon be effaced.

G. W. M.

GOB'S WONDERFUL WORK IN ITALY.

The kingdom of Sardinia now embraces nearly twelve millions of people, who in a most remarkable manner have become accessible to the gospel—seven millions of them within the last few months. We may well exclaim, "Lo, what hath God wrought!"

This new kingdom of Italy is remarkable for its large and interesting cities, each of them the seat of a university, and containing a large number of libraries and scientific men. Five of these cities, Florence, Genoa, Milan, Turin, and Bologna, must exert great influence by means of the press, while Genoa and Leghorn will possess immense commercial advantages. The people of this new kingdom are better educated than the rest of Italy, and if their freedom shall be continued, who can estimate the intellectual activity that shall prevail, and the power of an unfettered press among them?

We can form some estimate of what this impulse is likely to be, when we consider what Turin has done since 1848. During the last ten or twelve years, a greater number of ably conducted periodicals have been published at Turin than in all the rest of Italy combined. Greater things will certainly yet be done in Florence, if not in Milan and Bologna.

What a field then for the Christian press, does the new realm of Northern Italy present! Thanks are to God, the original *Avanti*, the original *Kingdom of Piedmont* now extends over the newly acquired provinces. Between eleven and twelve million Italians enjoy to-day the great boon of religious liberty. The Bible societies should lose no time in commencing the work of publishing and circulating the Bibles in all the great centres above named.

For several years the American Trinitarian Society has assisted in the publication of religious works in the Italian tongue at Genoa and elsewhere; it has also issued the *Progress* and some excellent tracts at New York in the same language; but now it should enter into Italy with all vigor and energy, and not simply print, but circulate its valuable publications. The admirable *History of the Reformation of the Sixteenth Century*, by Dr. Marie D'Abbege, the *History of the Reformation* in Italy, by Dr. M. Orrie, and Lucilla, by the late Adolphe Monod, are all translated into Italian, and have been published at Geneva or Lausanne, and have also several other and smaller works; Pallesio's "Benefits of Christ's Death," and the life and writings of *Olympic Morici*, should by all means be re-published and widely circulated in Italy. The time, too, has come when the inhabitants of Brescia might well learn what was the faith, as well as the heroism, of their citizen, Arnaldo da Brescia, who lived in the 12th century, and nobly suffered crucifixion at Rome in behalf of the truth.

His body was burned, and his ashes were thrown into the waters of the Tiber, in order that his followers might have no memorial or relic of their leader. It would be well, also, that the people of Italy should know why, towards the end of the 15th century, Savonarola was burned, and his ashes cast into the Arno at Florence, a noble martyr for the truth, who ranks among the Reformers before the Reformation.

What a contrast between Italy in 1837, and for many years afterwards, and the Italy of 1860! In the spring of 1837, accompanied by two ladies, we had occasion to visit the principal cities of Italy. We carried in the bottom of our trunks, with great care, six Italian Bibles and many tracts, to Rome and Naples, and gave them to friends who loaned them to Italians. The next time the writer went to Italy, he carried twelve Testaments to those cities; and during his many years of residence at Paris, he sent thirty several hundred copies by

travellers. This required caution. He also sent several hundred copies to the Waldenses, and took pains to send 40 or 50 Testaments, whom they annually furnished to the Sardinian army, supplied with the Scriptures. Through the ports of Leghorn and Genoa, with much difficulty, a few thousand Bibles every year made their way into Italy by the help of the booksellers and the *Jesuits*. But now the North-east of Italy, with the exception of the Venetian part, is open to the Bible and the tract. More than 11,000,000 of people have received both. Again we say, "LO, WHAT HATH GOD WROUGHT!"

RELIGION IN JAPAN.

It would appear from the number and variety of religious sects in Japan, that a conscientious does not actively interfere with liberty of conscience, nor sustain any system which properly can be termed a State or organized ecclesiasticism. It is true that there is nominally a distinct ecclesiastical power, and the Mikado, or spiritual Emperor, is held to be inspired by the heavenly descent. But while he receives all the outward manifestations of respect, and even of religious reverence, his temporal power has been substantially transferred to the Tycoon, or actual sovereign, and himself has become the mere shadow of an Emperor, or the representative of a traditional or obsolete system, which has yielded to the more modern and military policy of the nation. Indeed, it may be said that the Mikado is a kind of Pope without a See, and that he enjoys a general homage and a certain spiritual rank, but not the least authority to interfere in the temporal affairs of the Empire.

The purest sect in Japan adopts the dogmas of Sin-Syu, which although somewhat obscured by a modified mythology, still recognize one Supreme Deity, and teach bodily and mental purity, and certain religious ceremonies of an elevated character. It is said that the Divine candidate is not constructed so as to affect the future life; and there is no doubt that the disbelief of the Japanese in the doctrine of eternal punishment, as taught by the *Jesuits*, did much to suppress the growth of Christianity in the East.

The Sin-Syu system is adopted in its purity by a small portion of the nation, the great majority combining it with the doctrine of Buddha, the prevailing religion of the East, and which embraces in its system over three hundred millions of souls. The peculiarities of Buddhism are too well known to need any description. No religion is probably practised in Japan very much as in China; as the sacred books are in the language of that country. Besides this sect called *Ribias*, made up of Buddhism and the doctrines of Sin-Syu, there is a large party in Japan who are followers of Confucius. These, besides the popular religions, and affect a system of pure morality and charity toward their fellow-men.

The writer in the *Westminster Review*, from whom we collate these statements, and who in his turn has gathered them from the travels of Komatsu, de Charlevoix, and Olighton, evidently sympathizes with the Japanese followers of Confucius, and especially for "not presuming to dogmatize upon the nature of God." In other words, he feels partial to the unbeliever of the irreligious; and it cannot be doubted that the followers of Confucius have no belief in Divine revelation, or in its possibility, or in any form or system of religion. We have the authority of M. Hue, the French Missionary, who exhausted every topic of interest connected with China, for saying that skepticism is the prevailing influence of that country, and that the Chinese are a race of doubters and infidels. For this reason he apprehends that the introduction of Christianity into China will be attended with unusual obstacles; and it does seem, indeed, as if a nation whose philosophers are so radically skeptical as to despise as religious sentiment and expression, will not come under the influence of spiritual light. As so many of the Japanese, especially of their philosophers, are followers of Confucius, they are perhaps open to the same comments as the Chinese; and their dry, cold, and unfeeling system of moral philosophy may perhaps be one of the causes which operated in expelling Christianity from the Empire; as well as an obstacle to its introduction at a future period.

N. Y. Journal of Commerce.

THE DUTY OF THE CHRISTIAN CITIZEN.

We have entered upon another political campaign. The questions involved are exciting, and the interests at stake inconceivably valuable. We would not, if we could, disparage the importance of the great questions upon which thirty millions of freemen are called upon to express an opinion, and render a judgment. We are not among those who withdraw from the arena of duty, and responsibilities. Freedom, if worth possessing is worth defending, and extending to others; and he is a sorry Christian who cannot preserve his peace of mind and his garments unspotted, without neglecting his political duties.

We hold that a Christian ought to be well acquainted with the political issues before the country. Ignorance is the stronghold of despotism; and an ignorant people cannot long preserve their liberties. If, therefore, religion were unfrictionally to political liberty, it would be inimical to the best interests of the country. It is the duty of a Christian to understand agriculture, the mechanics, arts, music and painting, and it is no less his duty to know what measures will promote the highest interests of the country he is called upon to assist in governing.

A Christian ought to vote. This government is a government of the people, and each citizen is a sovereign. The ballot is the mighty power which makes presidents, senators and cabinets. It promotes peace or stirring war; defends and extends freedom or slavery; fosters national industry, or curses the land with leanness. He who has his hand a ballot should think and pray before he votes. It would be good folly for good people to stay away from the elections, because, in that case, the government would fall wholly into the hands of wicked people, and we are assured by inspired authority, that "when the wicked bear rule the land mourns."

But while it is a Christian's duty to understand his civil obligations and to discharge them promptly, and conscientiously, he must be careful to avoid the errors and excesses of a candidate for political office, and the spirit which, too generally, characterizes politicians.

He ought not to become a man worshipping. The best of candidates are but imperfect men. Call no man on earth perfect. It is common, however, for the political friends of a candidate, to fill newspapers and song books with his praises; and if a Christian believes the half he hears, and suffers his thoughts, clap-trap, and buncombe, to absorb his truth, his candidate will soon lose more of his mind and heart, than he will gain. He ought not to become a man hater. How easy it is to suffer political differences to degenerate into personal hatred, and hatred of our fellow-men, even of a political opponent, and of one who perhaps is in the wrong, is inimical to party. No one can foster it in his heart, even during a political campaign; and for the best of political causes, without backsliding.

He ought not to become angry, and to enter into angry discussions. Anger is a miserable reasoner. Its logic always damages its cause and its candidate; and therefore, as a matter of policy, it should be avoided. But anger is a sin, even though excited in disputes with the most unreasonable men in defence of the very best measures. Suffer then this word of exhortation. Examine the questions before the country. Let no party bind you against your conscience. Do not be a

party man. Throw your political influence into the right scale. Vote as you shall answer to God. Keep your temper. Never forget that you are Christ's servant, and to be supreme. In a word, as Christ must, so you must be supreme. You may conduct yourself in this exciting crisis that you may constantly grow in grace and approach nearer and nearer still to the mind and spirit of the Lord.

Religious Telescope.

EXCELLENT ADVICE.

The following extract is from a recent address by Valentine Mott, M. D., LL. D., before the graduates of the University Medical College, of New York. The sentiments are admirable, and are worthy a place in letters of gold in the office of every physician:

"With the ministers of religion, of whatever denomination you will allow, I hope, maintain the most amicable relations. They are generally men of education and of fine talents, whom you may easily affiliate. Though it will be yours to deal chiefly with the issues of temporal life, you must remember that there are also maladies of the soul. You must not allow too much contemplation of secondary causes to lead you to forget the great First Cause, and insensibly develop in you the philosophy of materialism. At the bedside of a dying patient, it may be your duty to study the symptoms of approaching dissolution—the *facies Hippocratica*—the *subtilitas*—the *musca volitans*—with your fingers on his wrist to catch the last dying flutter of his pulse, but during these moments you may satisfy no impertinent curiosity.

"In the presence of the departing spirit your office ceases. In the retinue of the King of Terrors you are but a man in soldier's mail. Least of all can I extenuate any readiness shown at such a time to the messenger of spiritual consolation, be Catholic or Protestant, educated or illiterate, white or black, bond or free; nor should you, at any period in the progress of disease, deprive your patient of the ministrations of his accustomed spiritual advisers. Friends may be excluded and conversation interdicted, but those consolations of religion, that fall like the dew upon Mount Hermon, should always be encouraged."

The following are the closing words of the address:

"It will be a blessing to you through life to believe that, whatever else may be false, the Bible is true—that the Son of God is your Elder Brother—that He has become the first fruits of them that sleep—that He has ascended up on high, and sat down at the right hand of His Father, and how much more shall they enrich you, every bringing life and immortality to light upon this way giving the greatest gifts unto men. To believe that the Author of the universe is your Father—that his power and care extend to the birds of the air and the lilies of the field—and how much more shall they enrich you, every hair of whose head, he has assured you, is numbered in his sight?"

"Go forth, then, gentlemen, to your labors. May the Spirit of him who spent his life in healing the sick, in giving sight to the blind, and who restored to life the widow's son, actuate you in all your ways, and may the blessing of God rest upon you!"