

17. North and South America, China, the Indies, and the Levant, were crowded with men whose highest ambition was to serve their fellow-creatures and introduce among them the knowledge of Christianity. But towards the close of this age, their labours received a severe shock and considerable interruption from the political disturbances which arose at that time among many nations of Europe, and which tended at once to destroy the facilities of communication with foreign countries and curtail the resources which were necessary for the outfit of the clergy. The suppression of several of the religious orders, whose members formed the chief portion of the missionary body, was likewise the cause of serious injury to the preaching of the gospel among the heathens. The dissolution of the Society of Jesus, particularly, can never be too much lamented, for the immense detriment which religion suffered from it in this respect. From the operation of these various influences the missions generally declined, at the period to which we have alluded, and remained in their less flourishing condition for nearly thirty years.

In the Levant, comprising the countries towards the east of the Mediterranean sea, the bishopric of Babylon became vacant for twenty years. Persia no longer heard the truths of the gospel; in the Archipelago, in Syria, at Constantinople, a few priests of the Congregation of the Mission, exercised the holy ministry under many disadvantages, while the war in Greece excited the animosity of the Ottoman government against the Christians, and subjected them to a fierce persecution.

In the interior of Asia, the labors of the missionaries presented rather a brighter aspect, sustained by the zeal of the Carmelites at Malabar, of the Capuchin fathers in Thibet, and of the Oratorians in Ceylon. But the magnificent achievements of St. Francis Xavier in Madura, owing to the want of sufficient protection, had fallen considerably from their ancient splendor, and were even distracted by the efforts of a schismatical faction, headed by an illegally constituted prelate (7). Bengal had no episcopal see; but one bishop and six priests employed in the district of Pondichery; on the other hand this immense region, partly fallen under the dominion of England, Holland and Denmark, was open in many directions to the emissaries of Protestantism. The Christians of the Indo-Chinese peninsula in Siam were served by a bishop and two missionaries. In the empire of Annam religion presented a more favourable

aspect; four hundred thousand Catholics approached her altars, assisted by a numerous band of native clergy, and possessing houses of worship in all places of importance, with convents and schools for the pious education of youth. But the accession of Minh-Menh to the throne, already foreboded the dreadful persecution which the Christians in this part of the world would be doomed to suffer. Three vicars apostolic, with their co-adjutors and several European priests, saw the storm gathering over their heads, and rejoiced in the anticipation of receiving the martyr's crown.

To be continued.

MUSIC.

It says much for the native and original predominance of virtue—it may be deemed another assertion of its designed pre-eminence of the world, that our best and highest music is that which is charged with loftiest principle, whether it breathes in orisons or sacredness, or is employed to kindle the purposes, and to animate the struggles of resolved patriotism; and never does it fall with more exquisite cadence on the ear of the delighted listener than when attuned to the home sympathies of nature, it tells in accents of love or pity, of its wishes for all humanity. The power and expressiveness of music may be well regarded as a most beautiful adaptation of Eternal Nature to the Moral Condition of Man—for what can be more adapted to the moral constitution than that which is so helpful as music eminently is, to his moral culture? Its sweetest sounds are those of kind affection. Its sublimest sounds are those most expressive of moral heroism; or most fitted to solemnize the devotions of the heart, and prompt the aspirations and resolves of exalted piety.—*Chalmers.*

SPRING.

Spring has come in earnest, with her glad smiles and delicious breath. The song of the red-breast is heard, and everything conspires to rejoice the heart. Who could feel in his soul to repine and be sad on such glorious days? The man who will permit the blues to enshroud his heart, should be banished from civilized society. Rise early—drink in the sweet of nature—be active, and earth at this season of the year will be a perfect paradise to you—providing you banish ill nature, unkind feelings, and selfish propensities. Who can be otherwise than happy?

(7) To apply a remedy to this evil, Gregory XVI, in the year 1838, suppressed the archbishopric of Cranganore, and the bishoprics of Cochin and St. Thomas of Melapour, and subjected their territories to the jurisdiction of vicars apostolic. Religion is at present resuming her former possessions in those parts.

Love-labour: if you do not want it for food, you may for physic. He is indolent who might be better employed. There are few who know how to be idle and innocent.