

(For the Gospel Tribune.)

ASPECT OF AFFAIRS.

(FROM THE REV. JOHN GILMOUR.)

The interest felt in our own warlike affairs in the East, makes us feel less concerned about the strange cruel convulsions occurring still further East—China. yet the immense population which they affect—hitherto shut up from the intercourse of other nations, and all but impervious to the light of truth, do not fail to protract our interest in their operations. The most unexpected event awakened both hope and fear, and also offered great facilities for the circulation of the Scriptures in many places hitherto lying under the hand of despotism. In the strange movement of the insurrection party, at times it appeared as if a desire of the knowledge of pure religion prevailed, and that the attempt was truly patriotic, but more recent news induce the fear, that it is neither a patriotic nor religious movement, yet we do not despair that much good will result from the evangelical effort which it has called forth. The last letter of Dr. Legg shows that the Leaders are beginning to assume Titles which evince incurable enthusiasm, or most impious knavery. The one professes to be the Lord Jesus, and the other the Holy Ghost. No doubt in such an army there are shrewd worldly men of low selfish design, who make a mere pupit of the Head man, until they get all the power into their own hand and then despatch him. However, the wedge of liberty, and evangelic truth has been entered into that immense Empire, nor can be easily withdrawn.

Events thicken in the East.—The Crimea, so that the public men feel a necessity for news from that quarter. The battle of Alma was oppressively dreadful, though full of promise: The almost unnoticed manner in which our troops were allowed to pass through the Enemies' Country to their present position. Balaklava, promised still more the awful nature of the opening Bombardment with the ready response from Sebastopol, and the recent attack on the rear of the allies under the command of Laprandi. have given a new aspect to the siege, and made things somewhat tremble in the balance, and indicate that the struggle will be very severe; reinforcements from all quarters are called for, and are being given. God's three plagues begin already to luxuriate—The sword, pestilence and famine. Duty may be the charmed word of British Troops, but *glory* is that of our allies, uninterrupted and brilliant success might make the throne of Napoleon easy, a reverse might plant it with thorns, and render it toppling. A low murmur may soon be heard, and heard to wax louder, why must our armies remain at home to protect the throne, while needed so much abroad? And why our famed Generals remain in exile, while needed to lead an army in the Crimea? Cavainach, Lamorecier, Changarnier and others, are not dead, but live in unglorious ease; and pant with a Frenchman's heart for the martial honor of France. Who can tell what a day may bring forth. But the Lord reigneth.

War is like water let loose, where it will sweep and how long flow? Are questions easier asked than answered.

A streak of light gleams over the Dark East, and the horrors of war must meet with some softening. The bible is circulated, the Colporteur plies his task, and the Missionary redoubles his effort, aye, and unaided by any official, the tent of the soldier for an hour becomes a Bethel. A Soldier writing to his wife says, "Many of the men meet together in their tents from thirty to forty for prayer and reading the Scriptures, and more beautiful devotion I never witnessed in any Church or Chapel in England than is visible among them." A camp appears a rather unsuitable place for prayer, yet many prayers full of faith and love are offered there, and many obtain mercy with faith

and love in Christ Jesus on such occasions, and in similar circumstances, as the writer experimentally knows. We regret however to learn, that the men in authority are likely to reject the Chaplains best fitted to aid these poor fellows in their devotions, and send those who will attempt to reduce the whole to cold forms. A protestant soldiery in their hour of weakness and need, require warm hearted christian men, to favor their moral wellbeing and spiritual improvement; and protestant sisters rather than sisters of charity. The London Record, a reliable authority on such a subject, says, "We are informed that Miss Nightingale takes with her to Scutari five Roman Catholic Sisters of Mercy, and six Sisters from St. John's establishment." We do impute blame, he adds, to the Government Officials, to whom the matter more especially belongs; for refusing the voluntary services of pious and experienced Clergymen, who have offered to devote themselves without pay to this work, and who are fully prepared to act under the official instructions incident to such duty. We can conceive no intelligible notion for this refusal beyond the determination to use one favorite channel only, as likely to supply agents, whose sentiments will be more conformable to the High Church views of certain persons than those of the evangelical clergymen, whose services had been freely "proffered."

Austria and Prussia seem still to play the double game, nor will the Czar allow them to do otherwise, duty and inclination are often in conflict in governments, it is, however, always safer to yield to the former than follow the latter. The political sympathies of Austria, are all with Russia, as being alike opposed to social progress and rational freedom. As for Prussia, her family and political ties left her no option but to favor the cause of the Emperor Nicholas, but under the quiet of neutrality. We think however, they will not be able to play the game much longer, but will be pushed into active war, as well as all the smaller German powers, and then what will be the end? The pernicious party which rules the policy of Prussia, considers there can be no Prussia without Russia be supreme in Europe, no Germany without Prussia be paramount through Russian reflection, and no security for crowns or governments, unless the revolutionary West be checked and hard tied. Russia's aim is to invoke Germany in a war with the West, and he will promise his aid to keep down the rising tide of liberty. The Crown Heads of Europe are placed between two fires, Despotism and Democracy, the war rule of the former, favors the Crown Heads, the operations of the latter, that of the people. The sea often heaves after the storm is past. The political storm which passed over Europe in 1848, left the sea of Sedition still heaving in all its borders. The Monarchs of Europe returned to their thrones, with promises on their lips which they have most woefully violated; the most of them occupy their position through falsehood. The quietness of the people is the quietness of restraint not of satisfaction. Our politicians know we have to work on these seditious elements, and only bide their times, to set Hungary and Lombardy against Austria and Poland, (if it can be raised from its prostitution,) against those who divided it among them in the day of its calamity. Denmark quakes already with convulsion. The French our ally, do not like our religion, tolerate it with an ill grace, but how long? A feather may turn the scale.

Britain is quiet, the war is popular, trade dull, money tight, reforms go on, education makes progress. Oxford University thrown open to Dissenters. The statistics of Scotland, show that the improvement of education there is satisfactory, every seventh person at school, England, &c, or thereabouts. The sufferings of our countrymen, in the East are not concealed, and most worthy exertions are being made by all parties to mitigate them, nor can we omit grateful mention