

New England struggled bravely and won victories which told upon the heart of the world and the effects of which can never perish. There were from time to time revivals of true religion, recalling the memory of Apostolic days and spreading over the face of christendom as a wave of Gospel light and love.

CELSUS, the early and bitter assailant of Christianity, draws a vivid picture of the sufferings of Jesus—the shame of the cross, his purple robe, his crown of thorns, the spitting, the mockery, the scourging, the nailing of the hands and feet,—and then passionately exclaims: “In the name of wonder why does he not on this occasion, at least, act the God, and hurl some signal vengeance on the authors of his insults and anguish!”

The infidel Celsus argues thus, that if Jesus were God he would not submit to the fearful ordeal through which he passed. How apt are we to give way to similar feelings! “Why does he not interfere to help His faithful witnesses? Why does He allow the enemy so many apparent triumphs? These questions and the like can best be answered by looking at the cross. Time has shewn to all that the death of Jesus was in reality a mighty victory. Rouseau, an infidel as truly as Celsus himself, is compelled to say: “If the death of Socrates was the death of a sage, the death of Jesus was that of a God!” In like manner the sufferings, the humiliation, the apparent defeats of the Church will prove to be all for the best. She, like her Master, must be made perfect through suffering.

Christ could cut off His foes as was done to the Assyrian host. He could bid the earth swallow them as it swallowed Korah and his company. He could hurl His thunderbolts and scatter them. But this would make His Kingdom one of terror, and blood, and death,—not, as it must be, a Kingdom of gentleness, peace, love. His sword is not like that of Charlemagne or Mahomet, mighty to slay, but mighty to save—to break the fetters of the oppressed and set the captive free.

Nominally and really the kingdom of Christ has made mighty conquests since

He ascended from the Mount of Olives. Then His followers were but about 120. In fifty years they were half a million. In three hundred years they were ten millions; and now they are (nominally) four hundred millions! The number has never decreased; but it is constantly increasing in greater ratio. In another hundred years, according to the present rate of advance, the whole human race will at least have some knowledge of Christ. Eighteen hundred and thirty years ago Christ and His religion were not known beyond a few small districts in Palestine: not a solitary Province or town or village called itself Christian. Now all the great civilized nations are Christian in name; and Europe, America and Australia, are more or less under Christian control; while Asia and Africa are chiefly influenced by the Christian West.

“If,” says Isaac Taylor, “if there are any who wish ill to Christianity, let them hasten to prevent the measures of its friends. Let them teach their babes to hate the Gospel; for those who love it are taking such means to ensure its future triumph as can scarcely fail of success, and such as, on common grounds of calculations, that even the sons and daughters of the present race of infidels may be involved in the approaching conquests of the Son of David, and that they shall actually join in the loud hosanna announcing His accession to the throne of universal Empire.”

We are authorised to believe that the past victories, real and nominal of Christ and His people are but a preparation for still more magnificent achievements. Let us take heed that we shall have a share in the great world-wide battle that we may also be sharers in our Captain's everlasting triumph. Much, alas how much! has to be done before the triumph of Jesus is complete. There is work every hour for the true soldier of the cross. Fight the God fight of Faith; lay hold on eternal life.

“THE CHOIR.”

This is the title of a “Collection of Sacred Vocal Music for the use of the congregations and families of the Presbyterian