

The Presbyterian Record.

VOL. XX.

NOVEMBER, 1895.

No. 11

"WATCHMAN, WHAT OF THE NIGHT."

God still reigns.

Hast thou not known, hast thou not heard,
That firm remains on high
The everlasting Throne of Him
Who formed the earth and sky?

Supreme in wisdom as in power
The Rock of ages stands
Though Him thou canst not see, nor trace
The working of His hands.

Faith not only looks forward in hope that Jesus shall reign, but grasps the precious truth that He now reigns. How restful the thought amidst the unrest of life!

Austria. Sabbath, 1st Sept., bells rang for the first time from a Protestant Church in Vienna. What a story is told by those bells; what a history of struggle, through long centuries, for a religious liberty, at last realized. That toll was but an added chime to the grand chorus which is ringing in the world's redemption from oppression, tyranny, and wrong.

Italy. In Italy how much of darkness has passed away. In their Capital city a few weeks since, the Italian people celebrated the twenty-fifth anniversary of the entrance of the Italian troops into Rome, the overthrow of the temporal power of the papacy, and the beginning of a free, united Italian nation.

The Waldensian Synod a short time previously passed a resolution "joining in the rejoicings of Italy on the 25th anniversary of the day that assured Italy's unity forever, along with her liberties, among which that of freedom of conscience and worship holds the first place."

Madagascar. What a chequered history in the last three quarters of a century. It was one of the earliest Foreign Mission Fields, and one of the most successful. Then came a change of rulers, and for a score of years the martyr church suffered cruel persecution. Again the night passed and for many years the Malagasy Church has been a prosperous one.

But changes have come. France after a year of most unrighteous war against an unoffending

people, has taken the Capital, which means the conquest of Madagascar, and it remains to be seen whether Jesuit influence will once more interfere with Protestant missions as heathenism did a generation ago.

Of this we may rest assured that He who was with them through the sore persecutions of that time will not forsake them now.

China after the war. The hope of many was that the war with Japan would be an awakening to China from the sleep of centuries. Rev. Gilbert Reid, formerly a missionary of the Presbyterian Church, U.S.A., now an independent missionary to the higher classes in China, writes that it appears that China is going to sleep again, ignoring the necessity for the changes in her methods of Government and administration, that were made so evident by her helplessness in the late struggle.

Owing to pressure by the British Government, backed up by the silent, but unmistakable arguments from the presence of British battle-ships, a thorough examination has been made into massacres of the missionaries, and many of the murderers have been executed, one report giving it as high as seventy, with more to follow.

But no one definition can describe China. It is so vast, with about one-fourth of the world's population; and so varied, with its different parts having little or no communication or interests in common. In some parts there is unrest and riot, in others, as in Honan, our own field, there is quiet and peace. As to the permanency of the present dynasty and empire, all is uncertain. But one thing is sure, viz., that missionary work is steadily advancing, converts increasing, Christ's kingdom coming, and whatever earthly dynasty is to rule in future that great people, both faith and sight point to their submission to the reign of Christ.

England Rev. Hay Aitken, a noted evangelist, the Moody of the Church of England, says that while a small section of that Church may lean Romeward, the spiritual life of the great body of the people has been deepened and quickened as never before by the establishment of missions, and the simple, earnest, preaching of the Gospel, that has more largely prevailed in recent years.