

NOTICES OF RECENT PUBLICATIONS.

THE NORTH BRITISH REVIEW. August, 1851

The contents of this number are, as usual, varied and interesting. It opens with a valuable article on "Vinet and his writings." The Reviewer does justice to the Christian character, the intellectual and theological ability and refined and poetic imagination of this distinguished writer. Then follows an article, which many will read with delight, on Hugh Miller, one of the most remarkable men of the day. Several articles of a historical, literary and scientific character follow. The number is closed with an able article on the "Past and Present Political Morality of British Statesmen." The writer reviews the leading statesmen from the time of Walpole downwards. He finds cause of congratulation on the marked improvement that has taken place in our day in the public morality of our statesmen. Contrasting the past with the present, he says, "from low pecuniary sins our age is entirely free." While acknowledging with pleasure, a higher standard of public morality, a nicer sense of honour and greater civility of manners, he makes one exception, referring to the brief administration of Lord Derby, and D'Israeli. Speaking of the public career of these individuals he says, "They entered office without either principles or a policy. They asked votes from one part of the community because they were going to maintain Free Trade, and from another because they were going to reverse it. They canvassed the towns on one set of opinions and the country on another. They suffered one of their colleagues to give one account of their plans and principles, and another to give a precisely opposite account. Looking back upon their conduct at the distance of two years, we are seriously of opinion that, in this country at least, political ambition never stooped to lower language, and public profligacy never raised a more unblushing front." His views in regard to the future are thus summed up,—"though some prophets may imagine that our greatest days are over, that our British spirit has grown tame and feeble, that material interests are 'too much with us,' that a low calculating and commercial temper has become perilously prevalent, that wealth and luxury are sapping our energies, and lowering the tone of national sentiment, and that all these things are indications of our proximate Decline and Fall; yet so long as the standard of political morality is growing more elevated, and the statesmen who conform to it, more numerous with each successive generation, we can point to a feature in our condition which never yet, since history began, belonged to a decaying Empire." We must say that we have read the article with great pleasure, and rejoice to think that there are such grounds of hope in regard to the future.—But we cannot help feeling that the picture is too flattering for this portion of the British Empire at least. Some of our public men, whom we shall not name, would, we think, profit by having their attention directed to the truths brought forth in the article in question. They would learn that among high-minded and honourable men

there is such a thing recognised as public and political morality, and that to a statesman worthy of the name, there should be something of greater importance than political power, party aggrandizement or pecuniary interest.

GRATITUDE. An Exposition of the 103rd Psalm. By the Rev. John Stevenson, author of "The Lord our Shepherd," "Christ on the Cross," &c. New York: R. Carter & Brothers; for sale by D. McLellan, Hamilton.

The author of this volume is well known to the Christian public as the writer of excellent expositions of the 22nd and 23rd Psalms. The present volume, we feel assured, will be equally popular. The portion of scripture which he undertakes to expound, besides being one of the most sublime in point of sentiment and language, is peculiarly endeared to the affections of Christians as the subject of their meditations and the frequently used vehicle of their grateful acknowledgments to God. The exposition is well fitted to bring home still more both to the understanding and the heart, the sublime and comforting truths which are presented in this Psalm. It is clear, evangelical, and devotional, and will, we doubt not, be relished by many, who under a sense of their obligations to the Lord, are seeking to have their souls and all within them stirred up to bless and magnify the Lord.

CHRISTIAN WITNESS-BEARING against the sin of Intemperance. By the Rev. Horatio Bonar, Kelso. New York: R. Carter and Brothers. For sale by D. McLellan, Hamilton.

This is the first of a series of Tracts originally published at Edinburgh, on the subject of Temperance. The Tract before us is well fitted to be eminently useful in removing prejudice, and presenting the subject of total abstinence in a correct light to professing Christians. No subject has been less fairly dealt with than the subject of total abstinence. Many condemn it for the indiscreet zeal with which it has been sometimes advocated, and some have not patience even to give it a hearing. We heartily wish that this Tract may have an extensive circulation, convinced as we are that it will do good service to the Temperance cause.

EVIL IN A CITY; A sermon delivered to his congregation (and published by special request) by the Rev. Robt. Irvine, minister of Knox's Church, Hamilton, on Wednesday, August 2nd, 1851, which was observed as a day of Humiliation and Fasting, during the prevalence of cholera.

The above title explains the circumstances connected with the preaching and publication of the discourse before us. In the sermon there are two points considered and illustrated; first, the truth that all the social evils of which we complain are sent and controlled by Christ; secondly, that though sent and controlled by Christ they are provoked by our sins. These two points are well and fully discussed and illustrated. The fact that a second edition was called for within a few days after the first impression was thrown off, is an evidence of the estimate which has been generally formed of the discourse.

The late visitation, we trust, will not pass away and be forgotten, and leave survivors as they were before. May all have grace to recognize God in the visitation, and to humble themselves under his mighty hand.

MISSIONARY INTELLIGENCE—FREE CHURCH OF SCOTLAND.

We have just received the September number of the *Record*, from which we extract the following items:—

CALCUTTA.—At Calcutta there have been several applications for baptism, which are under the consideration of the missionaries. From a brief statement and appeal which has been published at Calcutta, in behalf of the mission, it appears that the number of Hinda youths at present in training at Calcutta and the several branch schools connected with it, amounts to at least 2,600.

MADRAS.—SYNOPSIS OF PROGRESS.—The Presbytery, at its meeting at Madras, on the 9th June, resolved to ask the sanction of the Foreign Mission Committee, for taking on trials for license, as preachers of the gospel, four of the young men who have been for some time students of Divinity, and already been employed as probationary missionaries. At the same meeting, other six young men have been admitted as students of Divinity, with a view to the ministry.

PANA.—At Pana, Wesor Bag, a convert from Mahomedanism, who was lately formally licensed as a preacher of the gospel, has, in addition to his other duties, entered on a new field of usefulness, viz: the direct instruction of the Mahomedans through their own language, the Hindustani. Taking advantage of the fondness for poetry, generally exhibited by the Mahomedans, he has composed several Christian hymns for their use, with which they seem much pleased.

CAFFRARIA—LOVEDALE.—The Rev. Mr. Laing of Lovedale, writes that, on the 26th March, no fewer than twelve converts—eight men and four women—were received by baptism into the Church; of these one was a Caffre, the rest were Fingoes. At Lovedale, the number of native church members is now 160, a considerable accession having been lately received from the mission station at Birklands.

JEWISH MISSION—CONSTANTINOPLE.—In the girl's school at Constantinople, conducted by Miss Whittet, there are several very interesting cases, showing the power of the Word of God when applied by the Spirit, to remove prejudice and ignorance. Young female converts, however, have very great and peculiar difficulties to encounter in publicly taking up the yoke of Christ. Miss Whittet, in writing of one who has been convinced of the truth of Christianity, says, "her mother has threatened her in every possible way, if she will persevere in conversing on our holy doctrines to the other members of the family. One who saw her told me that Ve. gina heard all in silence, and received the reproofs with meekness, and added, that some time