

tage for ever, the Government taxes us, in materials, about one-tenth of the cost; but when persons belonging to the dominant sect build a church, the tax is remitted, although the right of presentation may be retained as private property for ever. The Government exacts from us, against our solemn convictions, the payment of tithes, of dues, of rates, and of taxes, to support an Establishment which we conscientiously believe to be unscriptural and injurious; and we are yet told, that we have "nothing to do with taxes, but to pay them, or with the laws, but to obey them." We do not, indeed, rank in our numbers the great, the mighty, or the men of title in the land. Our pastors, the "bishops" of the New Testament, hold no seats among the Peers of the realm. We have no endowments from public property, or parliamentary grants of millions per annum; and our private endowments are altogether insignificant. We disclaim Government support, and we disallow any interference of the State in our spiritual affairs, or in the free choice of our spiritual instructors. We employ no force, except the force of truth, and of evidence demonstrated by the Spirit of God in the hearts and understandings of men. We acknowledge the binding authority of no "human creeds" whatever; nor do we impose pains and penalties, or obey any act of Parliament, in matters of faith; or acknowledge any "Supreme Head on earth" of the Church of Christ—but Christ himself. The New Testament alone is our guide and charter. "Yet before the whole world we make our hallowed boast, that Independent or Congregational churches are the best constituted churches in Christendom."^a

The simplicity of the Christian dispensation has not many attractions for the wealthy or the worldly, and hence it happens that few of them come to us, or are retained by us; but we exult in the honour put upon us by the patriotic John Hampden—the sublime genius of John Milton—the philanthropic John Howard; and, amongst divines, by Charnock, Owen, Howe, Watts, Doddridge, Goodwin, and many others, some of whom are now living, whose names will be endeared to our churches in future ages. We can appeal to the page of history to shew what has been the influence of our principles on this country, and on the world itself, in the peaceful encouragement of the arts, of science, of manufactures, of commerce, of sacred literature, and of Christianity; as England, and especially this great community around us, can fully attest.

SLAVERY.—On the 20th December last, a treaty was signed by the representatives of Great Britain, France, Austria, Prussia and Russia, by which the Slave-trade is denounced as a crime against the law of nations, and additional powers are given, in order to render

more efficient, the right of search, already mutually conceded by the high contracting powers.

RELIGION ON THE CONTINENT OF EUROPE.—Dr. Pinkerton writes, that from 30 to 40 decidedly Christian journals and magazines are published in different parts of Germany and Switzerland; of which 20 years ago, there was not one in existence. These facts, taken in connection with the constantly increasing demand for the Holy Bible, and full attendance in all the Churches where the gospel is preached in its purity and power, tend to confirm the remark, that the cause of evangelical religion is gaining ground in Germany, against all the various systems of infidelity and error with which many parts of the country have been overrun. In many of the principal towns, there are depots, or shops, for the exclusive sale of religious tracts or books.

Wallachia, and the countries where the Wallachian language is spoken, are destitute of all religious books. The population is estimated at more than ten millions, a large portion of which belong to the Roman Catholic Church. In Hungary, also, the wants of the people are great. It would be difficult to find any country, since the time of Mohammed, where Protestantism has suffered such severe attacks. The extension of the pernicious principles of infidelity has been much more rapid and destructive in this country than in many others. The Gospel has disappeared from most of the pulpits, and has become nearly unknown, both among the higher and lower classes. The London Religious Tract Society have circulated 14,000 copies of "Bible Histories" in the Bohemian and German. This book has received official sanction to be used as a school book, throughout the Austrian Dominions. It has, in consequence, been stereotyped.

Doddridge's Rise and Progress has been translated into Swedish and Icelandic.

The opposition of the Roman Catholic priests in Spain, to the circulation of Scriptural truth, continues unabated. Every opportunity has been taken to promote the circulation of religious books and tracts, and yet only 5300 Spanish works have been issued from the depository, and these have been principally sent to Gibraltar. The Spaniards belonging to the troops of Don Carlos, in France, have been supplied with religious books. They are represented as very anxious about religious subjects. A Colporteur went among them, and was surrounded by them begging for the New Testament. He was compelled to fall on his basket, to prevent the books from being taken. Many of the men can read. In the midst of the infidelity and rejection of the Saviour, which exists in Spain, there is one bright feature, which is, that the Spaniards are beginning to take a little more interest than they were wont to do, in the important concerns of eternity. They like to have the Scriptures

* Hanbury.