

citizens with the saints, and of the household of God."—*Record of the U. P. Church.*

MISCELLANEOUS.

Christianity hostile to Slavery.

The gospel, from its vitally expansive character, works outwards and onwards, affecting and renovating all things with which it comes into contact. It renews the individual in heart and in conduct; it associates in active and benevolent fellowship those whom it changes; and it passes over on external society, moulding and reforming all its improper laws and habits. It tells us that God "has made of one blood all nations of men, for to dwell upon all the face of the earth;" that all men are our neighbours, and that it is our duty to love them as ourselves. It recognises believers in Christ, whatever be their external rank or circumstances, as our brethren, members of the same spiritual family, and heirs of the same heavenly inheritance; and it enjoins us to cherish towards them growing brotherly affection, to bear their burdens, and thus to fulfil the law of Christ. It not merely forbids all injustice and wrong, but it proclaims that the design of its mission is to "let the oppressed go free, and to break every yoke;" and it calls upon us to be "kind one to another, tender hearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven us." The general nature of the gospel, which is so kind and merciful, would, therefore, lead us to expect that under its influence, slavery would wither and die; and, if we examine its special provisions, we shall arrive at the same result. In the first place, no Christian can justly say that the New Testament permits him to become a slave-owner. Reasons may exist, particularly at the beginning of the Gospel in a rude country, which may render it inexpedient at once to demand the dissolution of this relationship, where it existed before conversion took place, but no reasons can ever be given, that warrant a Christian, in any state of society, to enter into such a relationship, or to acquire willingly this sort of property. In the second place no Christian master can justly plead that the New Testament allows him to increase the number of his slaves; that it permits him either to buy or to sell his fellow men, or to doom the offspring of slaves to a state of bondage. Any of these things seems to be quite contrary to that law of brotherly love, which pervades the whole New Testament, and which commands us to do unto others as we would wish others to do unto us. In the third place, the precepts which are addressed to masters in Eph. vi. 9, and Col. iv. 1, cannot, we apprehend, be consistently and systematically wrought out without practically abolishing slavery. These call upon the master, as the servant of Christ, to act towards his slave as a conscientious part—to feel ever that the eye of God, who is the great Master of both, to whom he is responsible, and with whom there is no respect of persons, is on him—to "fear Christ, threatening," that is, not to employ even menace, far less any of those coercive appliances, which are the usual apparatus of forced servitude—an injunction which Dr. Eadie says no human statute ever contained with regard to the slave, and to give unto his bondmen "that which is just and equal." Wherever such commands are obeyed, the slaves will not be regarded as chattels, nor will they be labelled and sold as articles of property;

they will be treated with brotherly kindness; they will have their rights and privileges as thinking, responsible, and immortal beings, cheerfully allowed; and they will obtain a fit remuneration for their labour, for the Divine Lord has said, "the labourer is worthy of his hire;" and in the fourth place, it is incumbent on Christians, as members of civil society, to endeavour to remove unjust and oppressive laws. In this view they will have to admit that all men are equal in the sight of God; that they have a natural right to life, freedom, and happiness; that liberty, civil and religious, is necessary to the full development and welfare of the social state, and that being under the strongest obligations to carry the principles of religion into all the stations and duties of civil life, the legal abolition of slavery becomes an imperative duty. They have no right as members of the church, to remodel the laws of the state; but as the members of civil society, which the apostle Peter calls man's ordinance, they are bound, as far as they have influence and power, to see that no law is antagonistic either to the spirit or the letter of Christianity. The man who pronounces slavery to be an evil, is bound by that very confession under a bond to labour for its overthrow. Such views as these—and they seem to us to arise necessarily out of the teaching of the New Testament, cannot be held and acted on without putting an end to slavery. The first and the second prevent the increase of the system, and make its continuance commensurate with the lifetime only of those under it; the third virtually abolishes it, as it encircles the slave with kindness, justice, and equity; and the fourth secures its legal abolition in every nation where Christians are the majority. Now, the church, as the organ of religious and moral teaching, is to disseminate such views, and to urge them upon the attention and the practice of her members. Her instruments of influence are instruction and discipline. She is to say to her members, you are not to become slave-owners; you are neither to buy nor sell your fellow-men; you are not to deal with them, as you do with animals or things, as if they were destitute of immortal souls; you are not to regard and to treat the children of slaves as the heirs of servitude; you are to be, as the servants of Christ, conscientiously kind and forbearing towards all your bondmen; you are to give them proper wages for their labour; and as the members of civil society who have the power of legislation, it is your duty to abolish slavery—a system which all experience testifies to be attended with cruelty, injustice, and pollution, and to be utterly incompatible with the safety of any state. She is to declare that as slavery is an evil and a dangerous thing, the aim of all Christians should be to seek its removal; and that, in every case, where it can be legally done, they are to grant personal freedom to their slaves. And if the members will not listen to such admonitions, they are to be called to account, and if they persist in their disobedience, they are to be excluded from the fellowship of the church. For, we repeat the statement, that which was tolerated when Christians, being few in number, had no power either to modify or to abrogate unjust laws, is not to be tolerated when, being the majority, they can reform the civil constitution. The refusal in such a case to abolish slavery, can arise only from the fact, that said majority approve and love it; and that is a state of mind so essentially sinful, as to constitute of itself a just ground of exclusion from fellowship. The

church that acts in the manner described will soon put down slavery; and the church that does not act in this way, fails in duty, ceases to be a light in the world, and is unfaithful as a teacher of the truth, and an administrator of the laws of Christ.—*Ibid.*

The Struggle between Liberty and Poverty in Sardinia.

A Struggle is going on just now, in the Kingdom of Sardinia, betwixt the State and the Church, or, more properly, betwixt the moderate Popish State, headed by a liberal-minded Ministry, and the ultramontane Papists, led on by the Jesuits of Turin and Chambery. A bill has been introduced into the Chamber of Deputies suppressing twenty convents as religious houses, and distributing more equally the revenues of the Church; the Archbishop of Turin having at present more than all the Bishops of Belgium put together, while the curates have scarcely £35 a-year. In the House of Representatives the bill is sure to be carried, but in the Senate it is a doubtful matter.

The dispute involves something of far more importance than the mere suppression of a few religious houses; this is felt by all parties. Rome is keenly alive to the important issues which are at stake. She sees clearly that the result of this contest will go far in determining whether the Vatican or the Government of Piedmont is to legislate for the ecclesiastical affairs of the country. Animated by such a man as Cardinal Wiseman, who is presently in Rome, who has been appointed a member of the Congregation of the Index, and who has distinguished himself by the fiercest animosity to what he regards as foul rebellion on the part of Piedmont, and by the most unscrupulous zeal in upholding the Papal supremacy, Pío Nono feels that this bill really involves the question, Is he, or is he not, in future, to exercise a dominant power over the National Church, irrespectively of the national Government? And if this question is carried against him in Turin, it will not only be cited by other Cabinets as a precedent against Papal supremacy, but it will also be employed as a stimulus to other States to make similar struggles in the behalf of civil and religious liberty.—*Rome Presbyterian.*

THE PRESS AT CONSTANTINOPLE.—There were printed last year at the mission press in Constantinople 5,268,000 papers, in the Armenian, Armenian-Turkish Greek, and Hebrew-Spanish Languages; of which 2,132,000 were of the Scriptures. This agency will probably be far more extensively employed during the present year. At a recent weekly business meeting of the station, letters were read from the British and Foreign Bible Society, offering funds for printing two editions of the Bible in different languages, and one of the New Testament; and from the London Religious Tract Society, expressing the desire of the Committee to participate in the great work, and requesting to know in what way they may co-operate conformably to the principles of their Institution.