

CUSTOMS OF THE UNITED STATES.

LETTERS OF LILIAN CHING, TO HIS BROTHERS IN THE ISLAND OF LOO-CHOO; WRITTEN DURING HIS RESIDENCE IN THE UNITED STATES.

LETTER IX.

Mount Hope, 5th month, 1826.

The brief account in my last letter, of the benign and amiable character of the Lord Jesus, may have increased your astonishment at the military character of his professed disciples, and may have led you to suspect that—though meek and benevolent, he might be deficient in requiring by his precepts the same spirit in his followers which he exemplified;—that living as he did, among a violent people, he was afraid to speak against the popular prejudices and customs. If this suspicion has arisen in your minds, you will be still more amazed when the whole truth shall be told you. Although the Messiah had the meekness of the lamb, he had also the fortitude and boldness of the lion. A more fearless and faithful preacher never appeared among men. He prohibited the indulgence of every passion which tends to war, and required the exercise of that love which never fights, or seeks the harm of any being.

When Jesus appeared among the Jews, they had a popular maxim or precept, thus expressed:—"Thou shalt love thy neighbor and hate thine enemy." In one of his sermons, Jesus quoted this precept, as what they had often heard, and then, with all the authority of a Divine Teacher, he said—"But I say unto you—Love your enemies; bless them that curse you; do good to them that hate you,—and pray for them who despitefully use you and persecute you;—that ye may be the children of your Father who is in heaven; for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust."

In the same sermon, he explicitly prohibited every thing of the nature of revenge, or rendering evil for evil; or what the fighting Christians now call *retaliation*, or *redress of injuries*. In the same sermon too, he gave his disciples a form of prayer, with which I have been much pleased. I think it is even preferable to any of the prayers taught by the priests at Loo Choo. As it is short, I shall transcribe the whole.

"Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth as in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. Forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors. Lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, the power, and the glory, for ever, Amen." Immediately after repeating this form of prayer for his disciples, Jesus said—"For if ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will forgive you;—but if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses." Jesus also said to his disciples—"Learn of me," and gave this as a reason, "For I am meek and lowly of heart."

An apostle of Jesus Christ, after exhorting Christians not to "avenge themselves," says, "Therefore, if thine enemy hunger, feed him, if he thirst, give him drink; for in so doing, thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head." He then adds—"Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good." I may subjoin one more precept given by the Messiah himself, which is admirable, and of universal application. "All things whatsoever ye would that men should do unto you, do ye even so to them."

These are a few of the precepts of the Christian religion; I might mention many more of the same benevolent character; and I may say, that there is not one in the gospel which gives the least countenance to the spirit of war. Besides the precepts and prohibitions of Christ, he pronounced his benedictions, not on warriors, as Mahomet did, but on persons of the opposite character. Thus, in his wonderful sermon from which I have quoted so much already, he says—"Blessed are the poor in spirit; for theirs is the kingdom of God. Blessed are the meek; for they shall inherit the earth. Blessed are the merciful; for they shall obtain mercy. Blessed are the pure in heart; for they shall see God. Blessed are the peace-makers; for they shall be called the sons of God."

Such, my brethren, is the spirit, the very essence of the religion which is professed by the fighting nations of Christendom. The more you reflect, the more you will be astonished, that fighting men have called themselves Christians, and at the same time, glorified in their religion and in their wars. Perhaps no two beings ever appeared on earth more unlike than Messiah and Mahomet; and yet the Christians have surpassed the Mahometans in war achievements, and they glory in the fact! At the same time they reproach Mahomet on account of his warring disposition, and praise the pacific character of their Messiah! I doubt whether the universe contains a people more inconsistent than the Christians.

L. C.

LETTER X.

Mount Hope, 6th month, 1826.

By this time your astonishment has doubtless been raised to a greater height, and you will wish to know why it is, or how it has happened, that the Christian nations glory in a character so

perfectly the reverse of that of their God, of their Messiah, and of what is required by the precepts of their religion. I fear I shall not be able to set this matter in a true light, or to give an account which will be satisfactory either to you or to myself. The task is difficult, as you must understand me as only offering such conjectures on the subject as have occurred in the course of my reading and my reflections.

In reading one of the epistles of Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ, I observed that he predicted a falling away among Christians, and the coming of "the Man of Sin, who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God." It occurred to me whether by the "Man of Sin," might not be intended the SPIRIT OF WAR, personified and permitted to gain an ascendancy among Christians. This surely exalts itself above all that is called God by the Christians. For during its operations, it sets aside all the Christian precepts, and requires almost every thing which God forbids. It makes the precepts and prohibitions of God completely subordinate to its own mandates.

From the Christian histories, I have learned that the early Christians, for two or three centuries, refused to fight in the wars of their Roman sovereigns, supposing it to be forbidden by the Messiah. But the Christians were frequently persecuted by the Pagans: many were put to death, and others endured great afflictions on account of their religion. In the fourth century, Constantine became emperor, and professed to be a Christian. He was a warrior, and his military power was exerted for the protection of the Christians, and for the overthrow of paganism. The phenomenon seems to have both astonished and bewildered the Christians. They probably regarded the event as a special interposition of Heaven in their behalf, to free them from persecution, and extend their religion. Unmindful of the difference between the spirit of their Messiah and the military spirit of their Imperial Deliverer, they flocked to his standard, and engaged in wars, probably imagining that gratitude as well as interest required the measure. As Constantine was a successful warrior, with the name of the Christian Emperor, the Christians were enamoured and intoxicated with military glory. From that period to the present, the majority of professed Christians have indulged the military spirit, and discarded the meek and quiet spirit which the gospel requires.

At a period long subsequent to the reign of Constantine, the Roman Empire was overrun by a warlike people called the Northern Barbarians. As the Christians were then conquered by military savages, they were again under temptation to conform in spirit and practice to the wishes of their conquerors. As the Clergy succeeded in persuading the barbarians to embrace the forms of the Christian religion, they doubtless had to dispense with its spirit; and it is not improbable that the Christians of that age derived from their conquerors, more of the martial spirit than they communicated to them of the spirit of the gospel. When the Roman Empire became divided under a number of military sovereigns calling themselves Christians, the princes would naturally have great influence to render the military spirit more popular than the peaceful spirit of the Messiah. The martial spirit indeed became so popular under the government of military Christians, that it was deemed honorable for Christian bishops or ministers of religion, to head armies with the Sacred Book in one hand, and the sword in the other. What more shocking has ever been done by the priests of Mahomet! To military ancestors such as these, the Christians of the present age may trace their origin and their love of military glory. Conforming themselves too much to the popular spirit, the Christian ministers have generally failed to raise their voices against war, and have suffered their flocks to believe, that war is not inconsistent with the meekness and love required and exemplified by their Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Indeed, so blind are a great portion of the Christians, that, like Mahometans, they believe that there is no surer way to Heaven than to die fighting. The benign spirit of meekness and love by which true Christianity is distinguished from Mahometanism, seems to be, in a great measure, lost or in a low repute among the majority of Christians;—and the martial spirit displayed in destroying vast multitudes of men, seems to be regarded as an ample substitute for every Christian virtue, and a pretty sure passport to glory, immortality, and heavenly bliss.

To illustrate the extent to which blindness prevails in this land, I will mention one or two facts, of which I have been credibly informed. Christians of different sects, so alienated from each other, that they cannot meet together for the worship of God, will in time of war, unite in the work of manslaughter! So it would seem that hatred to the people of a foreign country, will do more to unite these military Christians, than their love to God or their love to one another.

Another fact of which I have been informed, is this.—In the last war of this people on Britain, they were much divided in opinion as to the justice of the war on their part; yet many who professed to believe that the war was *needless, unjust, and wicked*, voluntarily engaged in it.—Some for the sake of commissions, some in hope of plunder or fame, and some because they were so ignorant as to think that they might safely fight in obedience to their rulers, even in a war which they believed to be wicked.

L. C.

THE PEARL.

HALIFAX, FRIDAY EVENING, MARCH 29, 1839.

By the Acadian, which arrived on Tuesday from Boston, we have received news from England and France, to the 12th of February. We refer our readers for particulars, to the following extracts.

BOSTON, March 23.

The packet ship *Duchess d'Orleans*, Capt. Richardson, arrived at New York on Tuesday evening, from Havre, by her Havre papers to the 12th, and Paris to the 19th, containing London dates to the evening of the 5th of February, have been received.

The Duke of Wellington in the House of Lords, and Sir Robert Peel in the House of Commons, have expressed in very strong and indignant terms, their disapprobation of the lawless conduct of the American Banditti on the frontiers of Canada, and have reminded her Majesty's Ministers, at the opening of Parliament, that they ought not only to assert their determination to maintain her Majesty's Sovereignty in the Colonies, but that they ought also to be ready to make corresponding efforts to enable her to carry her intentions into execution.

The Addresses of the two Houses of Parliament were presented to the Queen on the 7th, with the usual formalities. On the 8th the Queen returned her gracious answer, thanking them for their loyalty, etc.

In the House of Commons, Mr. T. Duncombe's proposed amendment for a reform of the "Reform" Bill, was negatived after a debate of some length, by a majority of 426 against 86.

It is reported that Lord Glenelg, the Colonial Secretary, has tendered his resignation.

Things in the North of Europe look rather squally. In consequence of the appointment of the Polish General Scherzynieki "to be Commander in Chief of the head quarters of the Belgian army," the Prussian and Austrian Ministers had demanded their passports. France was posting strong corps of observation on the Belgian frontier, and Prussia, jealous of the movement, was doing the same.

The Belgian Chambers were prorogued by a royal decree, from the 4th of February until the 4th of March.

LATEST FROM FRANCE.

The Prussian and Austrian Ministers at Brussels, had ordered their passports, and left that capital on the 6th of February. The *Observateur* says, that the King at the last interview which these ministers had with him, took occasion to let them know that he was by no means satisfied with the conduct of their respective governments towards himself, and especially with the manner in which they had observed the promises which they had made to him at the time of his mounting the throne.

In a note from Prince Metternich, the escape of General Scherzynieki from Prague, is considered as having been made with the co-operation of the Belgian Government, and this, together with his admission in the army, is styled a hostile demonstration against Austria. The terms of the note are said to have been strong and menacing; and the Prussian Ambassador having supported it, demanded in consequence his passports at the same time. It appears that the refusal of the Prussian government to allow the exportation of horses, has put the Belgian Minister of War to much inconvenience; as many as three thousand horses having been expected from Prussia for the remounting of the cavalry.

There was assembled on the Belgian frontier, distributed in different cantonments between Commerce and Lille, fourteen field batteries of six guns each; each gun having two hundred rounds of ammunition.

It was reported that all the French Generals in the Belgian service have been recalled to France.

A letter of the 27th from Dusseldorf, states that telegraphic intelligence of the muster of a French corps of observation on the Belgian frontier had arrived on the 26th at Berlin, that an order for assembling the war reserve corps of the Prussian Infantry had been immediately transmitted to Cologne, and that a similar order had been received by estafette at Dusseldorf, and it was expected that in a week all infantry regiments would be on the war footing.

An Amsterdam correspondent writes, that three thousand Prussians were collected at Gelder, and that Wessel had been reinforced with two regiments. Orders for the Landwehr had been sent to four divisions, and it was asserted at the Hague that twenty five thousand Prussians would pass the Rhine before the end of a fortnight.

The above extracts shew that war-clouds are gathering in the horizon of Europe; and its potentates think to prevent the dreadful catastrophe by a large increase of their forces. Austria marshals 80,000 men, as a corps of observation; Russia, besides her regular army of more than 700,000 is raising 120,000 foot with an immense addition to her cavalry; and we suppose that nearly all the other powers, like a flock of sheep following the bell-wether, or a pack of hounds started at the cry of game, or the scent of blood, will resist their fleets, augment their armies, and hold themselves, as armed conservators of peace, in readiness for the wholesale butcheries of war. What a way to prevent strife and blood-