

AND CHRISTIAN WITNESS.

"RIGHTEOUSNESS EXALTETH A NATION: BUT SIN IS A REPROACH TO ANY PEOPLE."—PROV. XIV 34.

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The Protector and Christian Witness.

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Lines on the Death of Sir Henry Havelock.

Brave Havelock fell! Britannia's sainted chief,
And many a martyr's blood is wrung with grief.
From down by martial walls, and ceaseless care,
From no longer count the pressure bear—
Though rescued from the press of his own hand,
And weeping heroes sought th' Almighty's aid;
Though Science taxed her utmost powers to save
A life so valued from th' insatiate grave:
Yet prayers, alas! and tears, and skill were vain
The soaring, heaven-born spirit to detain.
His last conflict o'er, prepared, he dies—
And victory crown him, as he mounts the skies.
A legacy of fame, he leaves to us below,
And triumphs mingle with the tears that flow.

KIRWAN'S LETTERS TO BISHOP HUGHES.

LETTER VII.
Reasons for not returning to the Papal Church.—Prohibition of the Scriptures.—Ceremonial Law of Popery.—Objections raised between God and the Soul.

My dear Sir,—Agreeably to the promise made to you in my last letter, I now commence a statement of the reasons which, on the mature reflection, yet prevent me from returning to the Papal Church. I have written to avoid prolixity of statement and minuteness of detail, as I feel that I am addressing one who can see the point and weigh the force of an argument without either. Details are only needed by the student.

When, in the kind providence of God, my mind became interested to know what God would have me to do, I cast around for a true guide to the solution of the question, and I found the Bible to be the only one which I could rely upon. I felt there was a God, and that I was bound to obey him; but where is the rule of my obedience? This was the question. I was told of the Bible, but that I knew nothing; and then I knew the Bible to be by your Church a prohibited book, or to be read only by priestly permission. I sought the Bible, and read it. I found it to be the true and only guide to the right solution of the question as to what God would have me to do; and without the fear of the Pope, or of the anathemas of the Council of Trent, and without a line of license from prelate or priest, I have continued to read it for years. If this is mortal sin, I am daily living in its commission. Thus far I will confess to you. And the virtual prohibition of the unfeigned reading of the Bible by your Church is one of the main reasons why I can not return to it. That your restrictions are a virtual prohibition, your censor will not for a moment deny.

And let me ask you, dear Sir, why this virtual prohibition? Why not give me authority to say that I must not read that which you direct me to do, but to read the Scriptures? God has commanded me to "search the Scriptures: who has given you authority to forbid me?" What right have you to forbid me more than I have to forbid you? Produce your credentials! Where does God place his revealed will in the keeping of pope, prelate, or priest, to be doled out to his erring children in such way as they may deem best? He has no more placed the Bible under your control, or of your Church, than he has the sun in heaven, or the vital air, or the gushing fountains of pure water. Nor can I conceive of any withholder of the Bible, or of your Church, to withhold it from the people, without gloss or comment, save one: "Every one that doth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to light, lest his deeds should be reproved." It is in the New Testament, when convinced that he was not of the royal line of Jews, burned their genealogies and records, that his false pretences might not be confuted by them. Is it for a similar reason that your Church withholds the Bible from the people? The Bible lays the axe at the root of the upstart of popery: is this the reason why it is withheld? If you reply to these letters, will you tell us plainly why it is withheld?

Another of the reasons which prevent me from returning to your Church is the way and the manner of your public worship of God. On reading the New Testament, I find that Jesus Christ came to inaugurate a new dispensation, declaring the will of God. After his ascension and the descent of the Spirit, the apostles went every where preaching the Gospel of the kingdom. The worship of God, as taught in the New Testament, consisted in prayer, praise, and the preaching of his word for the instruction and edification of the people. To the instruction and edification of the saints every thing in the Church of Christ is made subservient. It was on the last day of Rome? Do your masses convey any instruction to the common or the unlearned mind? Do they ever give—days they ever give—of God or of religion to a human soul? If so, I should like to know it. May not individuals attend upon them from youth to gray hair, and yet know not the first principles of the doctrines of Christ? It is in the New Testament, that Mass at one of your cathedrals. It was on the last Christmas day, and in the Cathedral at Baltimore. I bore the unmeaning pageant for three mortal hours together. There was the archbishop in his robes, with his cap, his crook, and his crosier; there were priests in numbers, moving about, making their crosses, obeisances, and genuflections. When the bishop rose, the crook and crosier moved before him, and the priests, as waiters, went behind him; the book was shifted from side to side, and was read and chanted in ways that no mortal hearer could comprehend. There was the raising of the Host, and the bowing down of the people—the incense, and all the other usual accompaniments of such a service; and it struck me as one of the most farcical pantomimes that I ever witnessed. Forgive this honest statement, if it is within your power of abolition. I left the house without receiving a solitary religious suggestion, and puzzled and confounded for a solution to the question how intelligent men could possibly submit to such a farce, and to pass it off upon a multitude of poor-looking people for the solemn worship of God. And if your Mass, when thus performed with all the splendor and pomp of your ritual, is thus unmeaning, how insipid must it be when performed in your country chapels by ignorant priests, who hunt up the sheep only to shear off their wool? God, my dear Sir, is an intelligent God; he has given me intelligence with which to worship him. For the intelligence within me, rather than its increase or exercise, your Church makes no provision in its public worship. I must not, then, return to your Church, and seek to have my soul, made for the inhabitation of the Spirit, satisfied with the unmeaning of your Mass in the public worship of God. My soul craves bread, and you give it stones.

Another of the reasons which prevent me from returning to your Church is the burdens which it places on my conscience, which crutch without correcting it. It institutes a kind of a ceremonial law, which restricts where God has given liberty, and which licenses where God has prohibited indulgence. With your fast and feast days, who can keep up without an assistance in his hands? And how many of your people can read? Should I blunder in counting the days of the week, and mistaking Friday for Thursday, eat meat, my conscience is winking. If, in performing penance, I miscount my beads, and say a

less number of paternosters than required, my conscience again suffers. If, ignorant of the "Laws of Lent," which have been just published by you, I should eat three meals on a day between Ash Wednesday and Easter Sunday, I should eat meat on the Thursday next after Ash Wednesday, or on "any day in the Holy Week," my conscience would be again burdened. And these are but specimens of the thousand and one ceremonial regulations of your Church, as burdensome as they are unmeaning, which fret and crush the conscience without directing or strengthening it; and while thus restricted in things indifferent, I am freely indulged in things which the divine law prohibits.

Now, Sir, who has given you authority to make laws where God has made none? Where is the law in the statute-book for your Lent, your fast-days, your fast-days, your Easter days? Why fast or feast at one time more than another? Who has given you authority to say what I shall eat, or how often, in any one day of the year? What unchristianlike arrogance to tell me I cannot eat fish and flesh at the same meal; what priestly intolerance to tell me, with my Bible open before me, that if I transgress these laws I sin against my God! You know that the Gospel is a law of liberty; you know that if a man eat meat he is not the worse, and that if he refrain he is not the better; you know that the Bible teaches that man is defiled, not by that which enters into him, but by that which comes out of him; and why burden souls and fetter consciences by silly enactments about things in themselves indifferent, and about which God has made no regulations? Oh, Sir, like the Scribes and Pharisees of old, you are busied about the mint, the anise, and the cummin, forgetful of the weightier matters of the law; and I deeply regret that a man who has formed himself up to station and influence against so many adverse circumstances, had not foregone enough to the region of intellectual, and moral, and religious freedom: you are too much of a man to stoop to such nonsense. I would leave such things to those who know no better. Even at the risk of your mitre and princely income, you should give such chaff to the winds of heaven.

On these subjects, dear Sir, your Church must return to the standard of the Bible and of common sense before I can return to it.

Another of the reasons which prevent my return is the objections which your Church raises between man and my God. My Bible—that hated book of pope, prelate, priest, and papal peasant—teaches me that if any man sin, he has an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ. It every where teaches me that I may have a priest, and go through Jesus Christ; that if I sin, I may go for pardon directly to the throne of God, through the mediation of his Son; and this is a precious privilege—a privilege which may be enjoyed by any man, and without any priest. Now, what do you ask me to do in order to receive the forgiveness of sin, and to be restored to the favor of God? You send me to Peter or Paul, or some other saint on the catalogue of the saints, and you know me, and who may never hear me if I pray into them; or you send me to Mary, whom you blasphemously call the Mother of God, to ask her to intercede for me. Nor will this suffice. I must go to your confessional, and tell you all my sins, incurring the fearful penalty of refusal of pardon if I withhold one. Thus you take from me the privilege of repentance and faith—yes, and not purchased for me by the death of Christ. You say I must go to the priest, and confess to him the sin or the Virgin, and the saint or Virgin will go for me to the Father, and the Father will grant it, if it goes from the Father to the Son, from him to the saint or Virgin, from him or her to the priest; and when in the hands of the priest, he will give me absolution—if I pay for it. Will you say, dear Sir, that this is the way of your teachings upon this matter? Would you go with you could with truth? Why send me to the saints, to ask them to intercede for me, if this is untrue? This I can assure you, I never saw, and I never saw any man through the statement of Jesus Christ on my repentance and faith, in a precious doctrine of the Bible and of my God, and that I received the moment I sincerely exercised the grace of repentance and faith—yes, and not a whit the less freely if all of you, pope, patriarchs, cardinals, and priests were with Pharaoh and his chariots. I would speak to my heavenly Father, and he would send me to my heavenly Father, and he would send me to a priest, or a saint, or a virgin, to ask them to do for me what I can do for myself! I have no more need of a priest, or a saint, or a virgin, to return to your Church until every thing is removed which forbids the free access of my soul to my God—which suspends my salvation on anything else than repentance to God, and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ. I would not pull down your toll-gates on the way of life before you see me back.

The statement of a few additional reasons I hope to give you in my next letter.

With respect, yours,
KIRWAN.

GENERAL HAVELOCK A CHRISTIAN.

Not only the English but American papers express deep and peculiar regret at the death of this eminent soldier. General Havelock was distinguished as a Christian as he was for his determination and cool courage in war; and so open and consistent was his avowal of his faith in Christ, and so gentle and unobtrusive was his zeal in labouring for the spiritual welfare of others, that all gave him credit for his sincerity. It was the character that Christianity formed for him which constituted his chief distinction. It beamed in his countenance, it imparted gravity and tenderness to his manner, it prepared him for duty, however arduous and dangerous. While breaking his way through the strong phalanxes of embittered and exasperated enemies which blocked up his progress on his march to Lucknow, while we are struck with admiration at his talents as a military commander, we are irresistibly won by his noble sympathy for the suffering garrison, which was his heart's wish to relieve. His heart was as full of his enterprise as was his hand. His Christian sensibilities were enlisted in the service of his country, and he was not content with them redoubled power, and diffused a halo of heroism around him, which more courage and military strategy could not produce. Other heroes in this war we may admire, but him we love, and wish with a deep tone of affection that he was spoken of while living, and is now lamented when dead. Even an irreligious world, although, perhaps, unwilling to acknowledge it, pay their reverence to Christianity in their homage to the Christian soldier. His Christianity was inwoven with his character; it was, in fact, his chief staff.

Much enough to know how gratefully his services were appreciated, and how honourably they were to be rewarded. It was of little consequence to him. He died discharging his Christian duty, and his faith opened up before him higher honours and riches than the world could confer. He was not exposed to the temptations which the loud plaudits of an admiring world might have exposed him to, and having accomplished the great objects of life, he laid himself down, wearied and toil-worn, to take his rest. Sacred will be his memory. Sacred to those who have been savagely influenced by his Christian conversation and instruction—sacred to the household that daily loved him—sacred to the hundreds of men, women, and children whom he rescued at the peril and even the cost of his life, from dishonour, outrage, and death, and cared for all who have a heart to love the self-sacrificing and brave Christian soldier.

Since the above was written, we have found in one of our foreign exchanges the following poetical tribute to

The Christian with which we may appropriately conclude it:—

"There gleams a coronet of light around our hero's brow,
But of far purer radiance than England could bestow.
He takes his place among his peers—His peers—and who are they?
Princes of our celestial sphere, whom angels hush obey."
The herald made haste, and found his lineage of the best,
But of far purer radiance than England could bestow.
He stands amid the sons of God, a son of God confessed;
He wears a glittering starry cross, called by a monarch's name;
That monarch whose "Well done's" confer a more than mortal fame.
Victorious first at Fatahporo—victorious at Lucknow.
The gallant chief of gallant men is more than conqueror now.
For his whole life was one stern fight against so fierce a foe,
That only superhuman might could avail him low.
And he possessed a talisman through which he won the day,
A blood-red signature, which kept the hosts of hell at bay.
The banner under which he served can never know defeat,
And so he lays his laurels down at his Great Captain's feet.
Rest in the presence of thy Lord, where trouble may not come,
Nor thy repose be broken through by sound of hostile drum.
There, where no pale moon keeps mournful watch over the silent dead,
And when, in God's good time, this page of history shall be turned,
And the bright stars be reckoned up which in its midnight burned—
Then shall the name of Havelock, the saintly, sage, and bold,
Stand forth engraven on the rock in characters of gold."
January 7, 1858.

* Cor. ii. 5. † Rom. viii. 19.

IT IS IMPOSSIBLE.

Not long since, a young lady, in the upper part of this city, was lying upon her dying bed. The sands of life were rapidly running out, and weeping friends stood around waiting with as much composure as they could command, for the inevitable termination. Years before, she had made her peace with God, but still felt some natural apprehensions when suddenly brought to face the last enemy. "Not long since," she said, "I was lying upon my death-bed, and I said in my mind, 'It is impossible.' Presently she repeated the assertion, 'It is impossible.' It was a few moments the same words were said yet once more. 'It is certainly impossible.' One of her sisters then bent down and said to her, 'Do you mean to say that it is impossible that Jesus can forsake, in the dying hour, the rod and staff which guide him? For who is a mightier set of faith to go calmly down the valley of the shadow of death, confident that, amid the thickening gloom, the form of the Great God will appear with the rod and staff to guide and support; but there is a sufficient basis for such faith in the word of him who cannot lie. It is impossible, absolutely impossible, that the faithful Saviour should forsake those who are committed to his care. For who is a mightier set of faith to go calmly down the valley of the shadow of death, confident that, amid the thickening gloom, the form of the Great God will appear with the rod and staff to guide and support; but there is a sufficient basis for such faith in the word of him who cannot lie. It is impossible, absolutely impossible, that the faithful Saviour should forsake those who are committed to his care. 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