

T H E

# CHRISTIAN BANNER.

"If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God."  
"This is love, that we walk after his commandments."

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## THE PAPACY A CORPSE.

"An idol is nothing," says St. Paul. "We know that an idol is nothing in the world, and that there is but one God." So earnest was the great Apostle's faith in the fundamental fact common to the religion of his fathers and the religion of his own adoption—or rather the religion that had adopted him—that he could not waste an argument upon the fictions of Paganism. When he would reclaim to consistency the wavering converts of Corinth—when he would detach from occasional service at the heathen altar, those who had participated in christian rites—he had only an epithet of scorn for the objects of implied devotion. "An idol! it is nothing!"—a non-entity—at best, a symbol; and now a symbol of what has no substance, a lie—once, a power; but now, believed in by none, without terror and without beauty.

In the same spirit Mazzini says of the Papacy, "It is a corpse." He says this not of himself, but for his people. The phrase is not the expression of his individual opinion, but of the "national consciousness of a fact." He said so in 1831, and again in 1849. In both instances his assertion was supported by universal assent. At the former period, Rome was the leader in an Italian insurrection. The revolt included all the principal cities in the Peninsula, and all classes of the people, from the decayed noble of Venice to the street-porter of Naples. There was a wide and ultimately destructive diversity of political aims among the insurgent patriots. They all fought for Italy—but some for Italy monarchical, others for Italy republican. But in this they were agreed, that there should be no more a temporal Pope. Austrian intervention, not alone in Upper, but extending to Central Italy, resettled the tottering chair of St. Peter. The cruelties of Gregory the Sixteenth deepened the patriotic desire to get rid of him and his successors. The liberal measures of Pius the Ninth, on his accession, obtained for him immense personal popularity, and gave a colour to the pretensions of the priesthood to be regarded as the natural tribunes of the people. But the reforming Pontiff could not avert the doom of the Papacy as a political institution, though he might have secured for himself a firm place in the