

to disseminate the knowledge of the Gospel, and to stir them up to take part in the Godlike enterprise of bringing all men to the knowledge of the Truth. To the Christian mind, few things impart a more spirit-stirring pleasure, than to know that the kingdoms of the world are in the way of becoming the kingdoms of our Lord and his Christ; that the slaves of Satan and Sin are being emancipated, and are coming into the glorious liberty of the Sons of God;—that they are experiencing the influences of God's holy spirit, fashioning them after the image of Him that created them, and enriching them with the sublime consolations of a Heavenly hope. The knowing that all this is in progress, is well fitted to excite admiration of the riches of the grace of God, and to awaken our kindest sympathies for our fellow sinners. In this age, which is eminently the age of missions, all Christians ought to be well informed respecting the progress of the Gospel; they should know the obstacles which lie in the way of its advancement, and the means which are being taken to surmount them. Also, it is of high importance to know what amount of Christian principle there is in the various Churches which are taking part in the movement—how far they are infected with the leaven of self-seeking and wordly ambition—and to what extent political leanings modify their views and their actings. All this is necessary to be known, that we may understand how far the Gospel is likely to be advanced by their means—whether we should wish them God-speed or regard them as encumbering the progress of the work—whether we should thank God for what they have done, or pray that He would defeat their counsel.*

At the present time there is much in the aspect of Christianity fitted to awaken deep thoughts—rejoicings and fears. There are shakings in most Churches. Sects which not long ago shewed a disposition to unite, now manifest a tendency to separate. Old settlements are breaking up, and the separate parties forming new combinations. A few years ago there seemed a tendency to move on to that happy state when all should see eye to eye, when Judah should not vex Ephraim nor Ephraim Judah; Christians gave thanks and looked around for Churches, which might be brought to unite their energies in spreading the Gospel, enquiring not in what they differed but in what they agreed. Charity, that believeth all things, and hopeth all things, and thinketh no evil, was extolled as the queen of virtues. Men saw in the British and Foreign Bible Society, at whose board Churchmen and Dissenters met on equal terms, the instrument by which this change was effected, and by which it might be carried forward to a high degree of perfection. The Bible Society was extolled as the first of human institutions; and much of the praise was well deserved. It seemed as if the Millenium were about to come in with the mildness of a summer morning. It was almost fancied that there had been discovered a way by which the overturning of thrones—battle fields,—Armageddon—might be

*In this number is inserted an article intended as an introduction to Religious Intelligence.