

The Provincial Wesleyan.

Naples abounds in the priestly impostures to which I have referred. Nodding and winking madonnas are common, and miracles prevail triumphantly. One of the most flagrant frauds of the kind known in the world is perpetrated in the very cathedral of the city, and therefore under the direct sanction of the highest local responsibility of the Church...

The signs of the times then are favourable for the advancement of evangelical religion. The iron grasp in which debasing superstitions have for long held the masses of mankind, seems somewhat relaxing its hold, and there is hope. An extract from the review we have quoted will form an appropriate close to these remarks. The contrast which it draws is full of comfort. "In the beginning of the seventeenth century, there was a Jesuit Patriarch of Ethiopia, a Jesuit Bishop of the Syrian Christians of India. The Romish Missionaries had won the ruler of Abyssinia, the Emperor of China, and reckoned their converts by hundreds of thousands in both China and Japan. At that moment there was not a Protestant Missionary on the face of the Pagan world. And now, while their Missions have dwindled into comparative insignificance, ours are filling islands and continents with native converts, who have done more than change their hereditary idols for the image of Mary, who are really instructed in the Gospel, and love the Saviour for His own sake, independently of the influence of their European teachers."

A time when the Reformation all the more powerful nations remained true to Rome. Spain, Austria, and France have succeeded to the supremacy of the world, and lost it. We may venture to predict, not one of them will ever make the attempt again. The supremacy of the Old World is to be disputed for the future between England and Russia; that of the New World falls, without any shadow of contest, to the United States; that is, the three nations of the future are all anti-Catholic. There are, at the present moment, in the world about one hundred and fifty millions of Romanists, about eighty million Protestants, such as they are, about sixty-five of the Russian and other Oriental Churches; but, even independently of the moral influence of Protestantism and the progress of its proselytism, the simple proportional distribution of races insures a rapid supremacy to its relative strength.

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THURSDAY, MARCH 27, 1856.

The religious aspect of the period in which they live must always be a subject of interest to Christians, and every new array of facts that bear upon it, with the reflections they induce in appreciative minds, will not fail to attract and reward the attention of the student of the signs of the times. Following the able writer of this topic in the pages of the London Quarterly Review for January last, we shall attempt a panoramic survey of our world in this important phase. At the first feature which presents itself is one on which our eyes repose with gladness. We see that religious interests receive a more important place than erst in the minds of men—Statesmen calculate more carefully than formerly their altitude, and man individually evinces a deeper reverence for his own faith and its forms—than was his wont. The pessimists to which with sorrow we sometimes point, as well as the conversions from darkness and error to light and truth, which we always chronicle with joy, are evidences of the earnestness which prevails. "Many members of the English, the German, and the Swedish aristocracy embrace Roman Catholicism, because it is the religion of authority, of time-honoured tradition and apparent material unity—Thousands in Belgium, in France, in Italy, in the United States, tens of thousands in Ireland, embrace Protestantism because it leads them directly to the Saviour. Numbers of Livonian and Estonian Lutherans have attached themselves to the most considerable of the degenerate Churches of the East; and among the Armenians, on the contrary, evangelical truth is spreading to an extent and with a rapidity which may almost be compared to the times of the Reformation."

The altered tone which infidelity assumes affords another proof of the more commanding position which Christianity has reached in the thoughts of mankind at large. Another fact in which we discover in that most cheering characteristic of our day, the recovered consciousness on the part of Evangelical Protestantism of its unity, and its liberty of action regained by its use of free associations. "We are no longer divisions of an army acting without concert and offered by chiefs indifferent to the cause, we are marching against Rome as our fathers did, in the strength of individual conviction, and with a feeling of holy brotherhood toward all evangelical Christians. The crusade is assuming the aspect it wore during those memorable forty years when it advanced irresistible from the Baltic to the Mediterranean. We are beginning to recover the position which was lost when the jealous and selfish intervention of political power paralysed the arm of Protestantism."

Another fact in which we must rejoice, and one that makes its urgent appeal to our sense of responsibility is found in the numerous, unprecedented, openings for evangelical effort which characterize the present moment,—openings of which we must avail ourselves right speedily, or the opportunity may pass forever from us. To those who have been accustomed to peruse the columns of this paper, it is enough that we remind them by mentioning the names of China, of India, of Turkey, and to come nearer home, of Ireland.

If we pass to a review of the countries of Continental Europe, beginning with Norway, we shall find that there good has been done. A revival, says the writer in the London Quarterly, was begun in that country about forty-five years ago through the instrumentality of a peasant, Hans Hauge, whose earnestness, intrepidity, perseverance, together with the character of his doctrine, and the success with which he was favored in the conversion of thousands, all strikingly recall the ministry of John Wesley. Evangelical religion has ever since made uninterrupted progress, and taken deep root among

the people. The gracious revival of which Sweden is the scene, has been recently recorded in these columns. Turkey, we have every reason to believe, is being rapidly prepared to become the theatre of striking triumphs of the Gospel. Germany, so long the seat of false philosophies, gives indication of the presence and increasing influence of vitalizing faith. Of France, one of her own writers says, "France is the most orthodox country in the world, because it is the most indifferent to religion." But even in France that heaven of unadulterated truth has been invaded, which we confidently hope will leave the whole lump. Italy is groaning for deliverance from the Romish yoke, and Spain gives symptoms of the same impetuosity.

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The following is a portion of Lord Palmerston's speech in the House of Commons, Feb. 8th, in reply to Mr. Cobden's remarks on the international relations of Great Britain and the United States.—LORD PALMERSTON.—First, I will deal with the question of Central America. The honorable gentleman is perfectly correct in saying that the treaty of 1850 was a treaty honourable to both parties, and which had in view objects that could only conduce to the improvement of commerce and the extension of civilization in every part of the world. It is well known that great interest was excited upon the subject of the opening of the ship canal through the Isthmus of Darien between the Atlantic and the Pacific. Jealousies grew up between England and the United States, each supposing that the other had some exclusive object in view, and that it meant by some means to establish itself to the prejudice of the other, either at one end or of the canal. The object of the treaty concluded by my right honourable friend, Sir H. Bolwer, with Mr. Clayton, was to remove all possible cause of jealousy upon that point, and the provision of that treaty is calculated to accomplish that end. The project of cutting a ship canal between the two oceans has, however, been found liable to physical difficulties which there is not much chance of overcoming, and particularly, therefore, that part of the arrangement has ceased to have any immediate application.

But there were further provisions in that treaty, by which, in order entirely to do away with the jealousies which each of the two countries entertained of the views of the other, both countries disclaimed any intention to appropriate any territory in Central America, or to colonize or obtain any possession therein. There was an exception made, however, with respect to the possessions which we had already there—Belize and its dependencies—and with respect to certain districts of protection which had been performed by us for a long course of time, and which were at that moment existing. I do not think that at all that the treaty is liable to the criticism which the honorable gentleman has passed upon it. It seems to me that the words of the treaty are plain and its meaning perfectly obvious, and I really do not see that any other construction can be put on it. The treaty is contained in an article three columns long in the Assembly.

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might be disposed to enlist in the military service of this country. The honorable gentleman seems to think it a moral and political absurdity to expect that the tide of emigration which has been setting from the East to the West can, with regard to individuals, turn back and flow from West to East; but he must know, or at least be ought to know, that in point of fact that tide has already commenced—(hear, hear, hear), and that, in regard to Ireland, hardly a month or a week passes that a certain number of individuals who have emigrated to the United States do not return to their native land, either having amassed what they considered a competency, or, on the other hand, having been disappointed in their expectations. It was not for us to judge before hand whether any considerable number of Germans would be willing to enlist, and order were therefore given to stop recruiting; but we must not suppose ourselves capable of service who might present themselves for enlistment should be enrolled. At the same time strict and specific orders were given that nothing should be done which should interfere with the municipal regulations of the States in relation to the laws of the Union. Several hundreds of Germans went to Halifax and enlisted, and some of them are now in this country. Her Majesty's government, however, very soon found that it would be exceedingly difficult in carrying out this enlistment to avoid that which might cause offence to the American government; and, being most anxious that nothing should occur which could give umbrage to the United States, we issued orders that these proceedings should be entirely discontinued—(hear, hear.)

Soon afterwards an official representation was made by the government of America, complaining of the enlistment. The answer given to that was that, anticipating that they might take umbrage at the proceedings which had been commenced, Her Majesty's government had of their own accord ordered that they should be discontinued. In regard to anything which might, contrary to our intentions and instructions, have been done in violation of their laws, though we were disposed to think that no such violation had occurred; and referred, as a proof of the sincerity of such regret, to the fact that we had of our own accord discontinued the proceedings of which the American government complained—(cheers.) The honorable gentleman (Mr. Cobden) has said, that the relations of governments should be regulated by those rules which apply to the conduct of gentlemen towards each other, and I would ask, what could be more satisfactory as between two great powers than that one should say to the other 'I thought I foresaw that what my servants were doing might give you reason for complaint; I have stopped it, your reasons; but, nevertheless, if they have contravened by my instructions, done anything which you have reason to find fault, I beg to say in great earnest, I am sorry to hear of it, and I regret it.' When the communication to which I have referred was made to the American Minister in London, he expressed himself satisfied with the explanation—(cheers)—and said he felt confident that his government would entertain a similar feeling in regard to it. For some time we heard nothing more. Subsequently, however, complaints were renewed, the question was reopened, and a correspondence has gone on upon this subject.

I quite agree with the honorable member that this matter is of the utmost importance in its bearing upon the interest of the world. I am not sorry to be reminded of the fact that one should say to the other 'I thought I foresaw that what my servants were doing might give you reason for complaint; I have stopped it, your reasons; but, nevertheless, if they have contravened by my instructions, done anything which you have reason to find fault, I beg to say in great earnest, I am sorry to hear of it, and I regret it.' When the communication to which I have referred was made to the American Minister in London, he expressed himself satisfied with the explanation—(cheers)—and said he felt confident that his government would entertain a similar feeling in regard to it. For some time we heard nothing more. Subsequently, however, complaints were renewed, the question was reopened, and a correspondence has gone on upon this subject.

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what the Times has said, but also much boasting. If England is impregnable in her isles, if her navy permits her to exercise in the whole world an influence which it would be insane to doubt, let the Times say what she has ever effected on the Eastern coast; but he must know, or at least be ought to know, that in point of fact that tide has already commenced—(hear, hear, hear), and that, in regard to Ireland, hardly a month or a week passes that a certain number of individuals who have emigrated to the United States do not return to their native land, either having amassed what they considered a competency, or, on the other hand, having been disappointed in their expectations. It was not for us to judge before hand whether any considerable number of Germans would be willing to enlist, and order were therefore given to stop recruiting; but we must not suppose ourselves capable of service who might present themselves for enlistment should be enrolled. At the same time strict and specific orders were given that nothing should be done which should interfere with the municipal regulations of the States in relation to the laws of the Union. Several hundreds of Germans went to Halifax and enlisted, and some of them are now in this country. Her Majesty's government, however, very soon found that it would be exceedingly difficult in carrying out this enlistment to avoid that which might cause offence to the American government; and, being most anxious that nothing should occur which could give umbrage to the United States, we issued orders that these proceedings should be entirely discontinued—(hear, hear.)

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The War.

Under Destruction of Fort Nicholas. MONDAY, FEB. 4.—About half past 1 o'clock this afternoon, the Russian Fort Nicholas was utterly destroyed by the French engineers. This immense work, calculated to receive an armament of 192 guns, was one of the most conspicuous objects in approaching Sebastopol, as well from its peculiar form as the long extent of ground which it covered, and, perhaps, the most celebrated of the fortifications in the Russian territory on the Black Sea, excepting Fort Constantine.

It was known to a limited number of English officers and others that the last day of Fort Nicholas had come. The precise time fixed for the event appeared to have been communicated very freely, both to Sardinian and French officers, judging from the number who were seen arriving towards one o'clock along the Veronazoff road. This concourse, together with Colington passing by with his staff, attracted attention among the camps in front; and it became quite evident to all that something unusual was about to take place, when shortly afterwards the French marshalled drove, by the usual phalanx drawn by four greys, and attended by an escort of cavalry. Two French officers, and Colonel the Hon. G. Foley, attached to Marshal Pelissier's staff, were with him. In a short time the top of Frenchmen's Hill, and the high ground at Carabel's Hill and near the Victoria Redoubts, were occupied by large groups of British soldiers and officers. Lines of tents were also seen marking their way by the old site of Kamohka-Redoubt, and towards the earthworks on the Malakhof Hill. General Colington passed on to the town; Marshal Pelissier took up his station at the well-known spot on Frenchman's Hill. This point had the advantage not only of a good view of the town and Fort Nicholas, but also embraced a comprehensive panoramic view of the fortifications along the north side of the roadstead.

You will readily perceive the importance of this language of the Sicile, recollecting that it has been adopted by the Government, and you will understand how, in conjunction with the bitterness of the English press and the article of M. de Sacy, the funds should have fallen, and the public confidence have been shaken.

But there is a curious episode in the history of this article of the Sicile. This morning the Constitutional, semi-ministerial journal, says in a short notice without comment, that the article of the Sicile was copied into the Monitor by mistake. It is a mystification which will hold the city in excitement till the contrary is officially announced, for everybody will believe that the statement of the Constitutional is a falsehood. The inference is therefore that the Government accepted too readily all the opinions of the Sicile as its own, and wined in this way to neutralize the unhappy effect which they were producing on the funds; or else that the Ministry ordered its publication without consulting the Emperor, and that the latter condemned its publication. One of the other of these may be accepted as the explanation of the affair, but that it was published by mistake, no one will believe.

You will see from this resume of the peace question that Nicholas' promises to become the Malakoff of diplomacy. I think there is a fair prospect of war at the end of the conference, at least, that peace is far from being certain.

The War.

Under Destruction of Fort Nicholas. MONDAY, FEB. 4.—About half past 1 o'clock this afternoon, the Russian Fort Nicholas was utterly destroyed by the French engineers. This immense work, calculated to receive an armament of 192 guns, was one of the most conspicuous objects in approaching Sebastopol, as well from its peculiar form as the long extent of ground which it covered, and, perhaps, the most celebrated of the fortifications in the Russian territory on the Black Sea, excepting Fort Constantine.

It was known to a limited number of English officers and others that the last day of Fort Nicholas had come. The precise time fixed for the event appeared to have been communicated very freely, both to Sardinian and French officers, judging from the number who were seen arriving towards one o'clock along the Veronazoff road. This concourse, together with Colington passing by with his staff, attracted attention among the camps in front; and it became quite evident to all that something unusual was about to take place, when shortly afterwards the French marshalled drove, by the usual phalanx drawn by four greys, and attended by an escort of cavalry. Two French officers, and Colonel the Hon. G. Foley, attached to Marshal Pelissier's staff, were with him. In a short time the top of Frenchmen's Hill, and the high ground at Carabel's Hill and near the Victoria Redoubts, were occupied by large groups of British soldiers and officers. Lines of tents were also seen marking their way by the old site of Kamohka-Redoubt, and towards the earthworks on the Malakhof Hill. General Colington passed on to the town; Marshal Pelissier took up his station at the well-known spot on Frenchman's Hill. This point had the advantage not only of a good view of the town and Fort Nicholas, but also embraced a comprehensive panoramic view of the fortifications along the north side of the roadstead.

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the human agency, in the midst of a bright atmosphere, and therefore without any of the usual concomitant circumstances of a natural convulsion.

The cloud which rose from this end of the building was very dark—almost black in the centre. It rolled and dilated over the ground from whence it had issued, but ascended very gradually. A thick sprinkling of white spots in the water of the roadstead showed that fragments of stone were falling there; and as they continued for many seconds after the explosion, some of them not evidently being projected to a great height. Newly fallen snow must have elapsed after the second discharge, the great canopies of smoke were bending over towards the town, the spectators were remarking that only the two ends of the fort had been blown up, when another explosion took place on the west side, and succeeded almost immediately afterwards, by a fourth, at what remained of the east end. The two reports from these explosions seemed louder than the reports which had followed the two former blasts. Still a part of the fort remained upright, and between the dark folds of drapery which shrouded the wild spaces left vacant by the fall of the towers, might still be seen, though dimly, the high central tower and observatory. These did not explode. A fifth and then a sixth mine was sprung, and the whole of the gigantic work, which, not long ago, stood offering defiance to the navies of the whole world, was levelled to the ground. The clouds of smoke cleared away slowly, and driven gently by the breeze from the north, passed over the ruins of the town, for a time enveloping it in fog and throwing it into dark shadow. The removal of the accreted mound, and the long gap which was left by the destruction of the fort, was then seen to have changed in its most striking feature the aspect of the whole town of Sebastopol, and to have left it more wrecked in appearance than ever.

As an engineering operation the success was complete. Not one stone is left above another to define the nature or form of the building, which so lately existed on the site of the long line of ruined heaps left by the explosion.

Destruction of Fort Alexander.

MONDAY, FEB. 11.—Today, precisely at one o'clock p. m., Fort Alexander was exploded into ruin by French engineers. This work, which was immediately opposite to Fort Constantine, and commanded the approach and entrance to the roadstead, was second only in extent and importance to Fort Nicholas, on the south side. It was constructed of stone and calculated to mount ninety guns. The day was so far from favourable for witnessing its destruction as it was on the occasion of the blowing up of Fort Nicholas. A tolerable stiff breeze was blowing from the westward, and heavy masses of grey and ink clouds were rising from the horizon, and sweeping rapidly over the plateau. The sun was getting lost in fog. The water of the roadstead, and the sea as far as the eye could reach, were enveloped by a thin mist. The north shore and heights, as well as the batteries and forts, were much obscured from the same cause, and appeared more distant than usual. The day before they had seemed remarkably near, owing to the clearness of the atmosphere. It was evident, from the limited number of spectators who assembled on the hill above the town, either that the intention of destroying the fort was not generally known, or that the raw chilly weather had counterbalanced the curiosity of officers and men-of-duty. The