

mountain, exposed to the sun and in a sandy soil: as soon as you cease bringing water to it, it dries up and withers."

3. *Letter to a sick sister, October 15, 1824.* "Dear sister, I assure you that I grieve to learn what you have suffered; but do you not know the Comforter? For the worldly man, affliction, sickness in particular, is a great evil; for when he loses his health, nothing remains which he can enjoy; and the fear of death subjects him to the greatest bondage. But to the Christian, trials are useful; and, in the midst of his sufferings he experiences the grace and compassion of God. You suffer, it is true, dear sister, but you know that this suffering will not last long; you see before you deliverance and rest; you reckon upon days of sorrow, and you say as the prisoner said, whose term of confinement was about to expire: 'Yet one day more has passed, and it will not return; I am today nearer than yesterday to my eternal home.' Death does not affright you, it is for you the gate of life. The thought of the judgment does not alarm you; for there is no condemnation to them that are in Jesus Christ. Meditate upon these consoling truths, and you will find your cross light. Hope will sustain you, when even the grace of the Lord shall seem to you hidden and obscure, as often happens. The good Shepherd does not always hide his face. If you pray to him, if you go to him, he will come to you; if you cry to him, he will answer you; for he is not far from every one of us, and especially is near to those who call upon him. Think of the tender love of this good Saviour, who calls us his brethren, who is called the spouse of our souls, who loves to adorn them, to purify them, who will make us sit and reign with him. It seems, on hearing the language of this sweet Saviour, that he would not be happy without us, so much does he love us, though we are so unworthy of his affection!"

RELIGIOUS IGNORANCE—ITS CAUSE.

It is justly regarded as a wonder, that so many people, not deficient in secular knowledge, and brought into such familiar contact with the means of instruction in religion, should manifest such ignorance as they do of the first principles of the doctrine of Christ. But we find a partial explanation of the mystery, in fact, in the experience of Christ's disciples, showing how hard it is to understand that which we do not wish to understand. Christ told his disciples, over and over again, that he was to be put to death; but this was so contrary to their expectations and wishes respecting a temporal reign of the Messiah, that they could not understand it. On one occasion when he spoke of it, the evangelist says, "But they understood not that saying, and it was hid from them, that they perceived it not." On another occasion when he spoke of it, Peter undertook to contradict and rebuke him, not being willing to have it so. The thought was so unwelcome, that when uttered it could not enter into their minds, and it passed away as water glides over a rock which it cannot enter. And the result was, that when Christ's words came to be verified, and when he was actually put to death before their eyes, they were smitten with amazement—such an event was farthest from their expectations, though they had been repeatedly told to expect it, in the plainest terms. They were ignorant of what Christ had told them again and again. They knew it not, because they had been unwilling to entertain the thought of it.

Here, if we mistake not, is a leading cause of the religious ignorance that prevails under the intensest light of the Gospel. Men retain their ignorance of the most important truths of the Gospel, while constantly hearing these truths, because the ideas are such as they are loath to entertain. They hear of their lost condition—of the reconciliation to be had through Christ—they hear that Christ will have the throne, and assert his sovereignty in all his works of grace—that their hearts must undergo a radical reformation—that God's kingdom must be set up in them, and that their lust and vile affections must be put down; they hear these things constantly, and yet they know them not, because they do not allow them to sink deep into their minds. They hear as if they heard them not.

The sound comes in at the ear, but the thought reaches not the mind, because the heart is unwilling to entertain it. And it is a sad and mournful thought, that among those who have heard the Gospel all their days, many will for the first time be made aware of the first principles of the doctrine of Christ, when they awake in eternity. AND WHOSE, THINK YOU, WILL BE THE FAULT?—*Puritan.*

RELIGIOUS INTELLIGENCE.

From the N. Y. Observer.

FOREIGN MISSIONARY INTELLIGENCE.

SYRIA.—A letter dated April 28, written by Mr. Smith in behalf of the mission, gives a minute account of the then present relation of the mission to the Druses. Their intercourse with that people began to be important in the winter of 1835 and 1836. As is almost always the case with unevangelized communities, who of course have no correct idea of spiritual benefits, the Druses were at first led to seek the friendship of the mission by the hope of temporal advantages. Individuals then wished to be connected with the mission, in the hope of being protected from the military conscription of Mehemet Ali. At a later period, they were influenced by the hope of obtaining a national government of their own, dependent, indeed, on the Porte, but independent of the Maronites, and under the protection of England. With this hope, they determined to become Protestant Christians, and for that purpose put themselves formally under the instruction of the American mission, which was authorized to establish schools throughout all their villages. In this hope, as the public already know, they were disappointed. About this time, several of the great Druze sheiks, who had been banished by the old Emir Beshir, returned to their homes. As their exile had commenced before their people became acquainted with the mission, they knew nothing of Protestantism; and understanding that nothing was to be expected from England, they sought to strengthen themselves by aid of the Turks, and agreed to put their people under the instruction of Mohammedan teachers. This, however, was the movement of the sheiks merely, and was contrary to the wishes of the common people. The result of this movement was, that the Turkish governor, on some pretext, seized the sheiks, and at the date of the letter, held them in close confinement at Beirut. The Maronite Patriarch, the most efficient opposer of the mission, was crushed by his war with the Druses. He may in time regain some part of his power; but it is not probable that he can ever become as dangerous as he has formerly been. The great Druze sheiks have fallen; and the missionaries are left at liberty to hold direct intercourse with the common people who regard them as friends, and whose friendly intercourse with the mission has never been interrupted since its commencement, except by immediate danger of oppression. And it is a curious and important fact, that among this people, religion is a matter of choice, and not of inheritance. No one is a Druze, in the religious sense of the term, by birth. The candidate must be a person of sound mind and sound body, and must voluntarily seek for admission. Hence a large part of the people remain uninitiated, are in fact of no religion, and according to the notions that prevail among them, have their religion yet to choose. The advantage which the mission may derive from this fact, is obvious. In every other sect in that region, and almost in the world, every child inherits the religion of his father, and must practise it, or be punished as an apostate.

Among the Druses, too, a strong feeling has been excited in favor of education, and there is an earnest desire for schools throughout this country.

There are, however, some very discouraging circumstances. The state of the country is unsettled. The designs of the Turkish government are unknown, and may be such as seriously to interfere with missionary labors. That government is exceedingly jealous of foreign intrigue. It may suspect that the mission has secret political designs, and therefore arrest its operations by force. The missionaries hope, however, by manifest innocence, to escape such a calamity; and think it their duty, notwithstanding some uncertainty concerning the future, to take advantage

of present openings, and extend their operations among the mountains.

Here let me remind your readers, that during all these manœverings for secular objects, there have been among the Druses some serious inquiries after the truth; and that a goodly number of them have given evidence of piety, and are consistent members of the mission church. It may be well also to remark, that the hopes of temporal good, which have been mentioned, were always conjured up by the Druses themselves, and were never suggested by the missionaries. They first thought of turning Christians, to escape impressment into the Mohammedan armies; and they were driven to think of Protestantism, by their hatred of their old enemies, the Maronite papists. Having thus become acquainted with the missionaries, they were pleased with the men, who appeared to be their friends, and found in their system of religion and education, some things which they liked, and others which they fancied that they should like, if they understood them.

Letters have been received to June 10. Those of the younger missionaries indicate a discouraged state of mind. The Turks were bringing in barbarous troops from Europe, (Albanians,) for the purpose of disarming the mountaineers, and there was a prospect of another scene of universal carnage and devastation.

INDIA.—Letters have been received from Ahmednuggur to April 29. The station at Ahmednuggur calls loudly for help. Mr. Poor is preaching at Tillipally, his first station, to three congregations on the Sabbath, amounting in all to about 1000 souls, of whom not more than one-tenth fail to attend on the same day.

ITALY IS WAKING UP.—The present state of feeling in Italy is far more favorable than our country men generally suppose. That country is often viewed as one of the darkest places of the earth; because from its superstition, ignorance, immorality and false principles have been extended to other countries. It is, however, a remarkable fact, that there are multitudes of the Italians who scorn the intellectual chains which many other people choose to wear, and utterly reject the doctrines which are elsewhere preached as peculiarly Italian.

It is difficult, for example, to find an educated Italian who is not an open opponent of the Pope; and, if the cause of his opposition is asked for, the answer is, "we know him too well to love or to approve. Go to Rome, and you will learn why we wish the papacy overthrown. It is the great foe of our country, and every man sees how it acts against his own individual happiness. It has not a hook left to hang upon except the bayonets of Austria; and if the principle of *Nonintervention* were extended to Italy to day, to morrow there would be no Pope."

JEROVAN JIREH.

The following narrative is extracted from a report, made to the Board of the New York City Tract Society, by one of the Missionaries, at the last monthly meeting.

A woman, whose hopeful conversion we reported last month, was left with three small children entirely destitute of the means of subsistence. In her distress she sought the residence of the Missionary, but could not find it. She returned to her cheerless apartment and hungry little ones with much anguish of spirit; but having recently been made a partaker of precious faith, she reflected that God knew what was best for her infant family. That she might defer as long time as possible the wretchedness of want, it was late the next morning when she arose. She felt her situation, and the iron entered her soul. Encircled by her little ones, she bowed before the Lord and poured out the sorrows of her heart. While repeating the Lord's prayer, she offered the petition "Give us this day our daily bread," and then, with all the gushing emotion of a mother's grief, she exclaimed, "Father, give me bread for my children, or else they die!" Her mind became more tranquil, and she felt assured that a mother's cries had been heard by her heavenly Father. Just then she heard a knock at the door, and the Missionary entered. He inquired generally as to her welfare, and then, as her diffidence prevented a particular disclosure of her grief, he wished her well and left the room. When he closed the door, she felt as if shut up in despair, for her