

Who does not view with gratitude and hope the struggle for liberty in Italy, but lately the very home of oppression, civil and religious?—a struggle that has already denuded the Papacy of temporal power in all except the name. That power—the power of the sword—has done more than argument to propagate error and perpetual superstition in that dark land. It is doubtless well and hopeful in the highest degree that the sword has been wrenched from his grasp who has so long wielded it against God's honour, and the interests—temporal and eternal—of his fellow-men. Now the written Word of God “has free course” in most parts of Italy, where it was heretofore banned, and from which it was carefully barred. There too the voice of the evangelist is beginning to be heard;—so that it may be said of the dwellers there, “The people which sat in darkness saw great light, and to them which sat in the region and shadow of death, light is sprung up.” And the blessed effects of that heavenly light may be expected, with confidence, ere long to appear.

It is matter for Christian congratulation, that while an effective blow has been dealt at the temporal power of the Papacy, the blighting curse of the west, a door has been opened for the entrance of divine and saving truth into the Turkish Empire, the centre and stronghold of Mahometanism, that fearful delusion that has wrought such ruin in vast portions of the East. And China too, with its teeming millions, hitherto so walled around by exclusive laws that the Gospel could only be said to have reached its outskirts, has lately, by a series of singular providences, been rendered, in a goodly measure, accessible by the messengers of mercy. And there is far more hope for India since that memorable revolt that cost Britain so much blood and treasure. The Lord appears to be preparing peoples for the reception of the Gospel, and the experience of its regenerating power by singular instrumentalities, of which permitted war is the chief, though to human seeming, the most unlikely to secure such a gracious end. The continent of Africa is, however, being opened up by peaceful means. Travellers impelled by zeal for science and commerce are penetrating its dark depths, making a way, it may be unwittingly for the onward roll of the Gospel chariot. It is perhaps but justice to Dr. Livingstone, to say that his ulterior aim in adventuring his life in the trackless lands and savage people of inner Africa, was to be the pioneer of Gospel truth to those whose utter destitution cries aloud to Christian lands for help, and concerning whom it is said they shall one day “stretch forth their hands to God.”

And there are hopeful indications that the time draws on when the bond children of Africa, in other lands, shall be set free,—when their grievous and long continued wrongs shall be righted. Events point to the time as not distant when Jehovah shall cause every yoke to be broken. We cannot but believe that the anomalous war at present raging in the late United States of America, is the death knell of slavery in that land whose inhabitants are the guiltiest of oppression,