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### THE RELIGIOUS INTELLIGENCER

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### Religious Intelligence.

#### THERE IS HOPE FOR ITALY.

(From a Correspondence of the New York Observer.)

I would not notice Italy at all,—as you have your own correspondents there, and opportunities of information from public sources, but that there are Irishmen in Italy helping forward the spiritual liberation of that lovely but enslaved land: and their accounts published in Ireland, are not likely to reach you. Take the following as a specimen. It is from an article in the *Cork Constitution*, upon the *Madiai* persecution and its effects.

It is pleasant to see, however, that notwithstanding the care taken to check it, Christianity makes some way—not as much as, for the sake of the unhappy people we would wish, but enough to encourage those who believe that, through faith in their great Author, the Scriptures “are able to make wise unto salvation.” In the *Church Sentinel*, we find some letters which furnish the following very interesting extracts. They will be read with the more pleasure when the writer is understood to be, as the *Sentinel* describes him, “one of the most estimable of the clergy of the English Church, one whose labors and whose writings are of world wide renown:”

NICE, Dec. 14, 1852.

Time was when the English chaplains abroad were required to dispose of the sacrament money through the priests. On these occasions, as well as with other sums given in charity and coming to their knowledge, they are at no loss for plausible methods of securing their own per centage. No wonder if, as light and knowledge advance, they should be fast losing their hold on the people. It is the case in Italy; and indeed it is well known that by far the greater part of the priests are infidels, nursing and upholding a system which they disbelieve and despise. But whatever breaks the spell, and snaps the chain of Popery is an advantage. One can only look at infidelity with horror, considered *per se*, but it may prove an important transition state, which God, in his mysterious sovereignty may overrule for good. Whilst priestly dominion has its hold, the victim cannot stir. The very horrors of infidelity may rouse to more vigorous pursuit of something better which its liberty facilitates. I constantly hear of instances of this. A leading and influential individual was exiled from Naples; he went to Rome as a thorough Papist, but what he saw there so disgusted him that he became an infidel, and, as such, he went to Sardinia. There, through rich mercy, he fell in with some real Christians, who read the Scriptures and prayed with him; which was blessed to his conversion. In the ardor of his love and zeal, he resolved to devote himself to the ministry; and I had the pleasure of forming his acquaintance in Geneva, where he is preparing for the ministry. I heard him give his first public address to a little band of Italians. He is highly educated, very eloquent, and highly talented. He was formerly a judge. I am more and more persuaded that, while the door is open and opportunities are afforded, every thing should be done that can be to promulgate truth on the Continent. \* \* \* The great thing to do is to get the Scriptures circulated as freely as possible. Facts abundantly prove that they are wrong who maintain that Bibles and Tracts will do nothing without preachers. What glorious results are springing from the circulation of the Scriptures by the colporteurs in Syria. It is now some time ago that 500 inhabitants of Nablous, the ancient Sychar, from the reading of the Scriptures they had bought from colporteurs, had seen their errors, and, in a body, implored the Bishop of Jerusalem to receive them into the English Church. We are not half aware of what is thus progressing throughout the East. In Turkey, the Scriptures are producing wonderful results. I lately had the privilege of seeing some highly influential persons from Turkey, who quite electrified me with their accounts. In a town on the sea of Marmora 500 persons were lately discovered, who had renounced their religion in consequence of reading the scriptures brought by the colporteurs, and had formed themselves into a new church, and were longing for a minister to be sent to them. It is not easy to estimate the good that the *Bible alone* is effecting throughout Italy at this moment. And all the persecution that the priesthood are raising up in consequence, however hard it presses on individuals, is immensely forwarding the good work. Curiosity is thus created, and men will see for themselves a book which is so much dreaded. I have abundant proof of this; and strange to say, on taking up a Turin newspaper the other day (not the *Buona Novella* or any other religious one) I read a paragraph stating that the case of the *Madiai* was exciting intense interest throughout Italy, and in all directions men were resolved to see for themselves a book the very reading of which was visited with condign punishment. I could tell you of numberless instances in which the reading of the *Bible* is doing wonders. In a little town, not many miles hence, sixty persons have just renounced Popery, and implored that a faithful minister may be sent them. All was arranged for the purpose, when the priests succeeded in raising such a storm that it was obliged to be suspended for the present; and dear B—, in whose labors I was so much interested on Lago Maggiore, is to go over once a month. One more instance I must give you. A little company, in a village not 46 miles from Turin, experienced the transforming power of Bible truth, and lately renounced Popery. They were brought to see the duty of feeding on Christ in his own appointed ordinance, after a spiritual fashion; and hearing that there was a Protestant church in Turin, three of them actually walked between thirty and forty miles to receive the Lord's Supper. [God bless them. Amen.]

In poor Tuscany I could tell you more of the wonders the Bible is effecting than it would be prudent to do. I have good authority for stating the number who have seen into the errors of popery, from reading the Scriptures, 24,000. But every one says they are 26,000 at least. And is not this a prodigious fact in so short a period? and a fact that all the advancing enmity and priest-ridden government will only magnify and forward. “Why do the heathen rage and the people imagine a vain thing?” The Jesuits and priests are as surely doing the Lord's work, as the infuriated Jews did when they stoned Stephen, and drove the Christians from Jerusalem all over the world. I think I told you Captain V— and S— and I got 800 Testaments and 1,000 Tracts into Savoy last winter, and the Popish Canton de Velas. Several we were enabled to trace afterwards, and heard much respecting them that was interesting; and some readers in consequence, we know, began to attend a Protestant church.

#### From the London British Banner. DESTITUTION OF LONDON.

“The spiritual condition of London is fearful beyond all human calculation. At the present moment, with its vicinity, it comprises two and a half millions of immortal souls! In the course of seven more short years, it will, in all probability, number three millions. The question therefore, comes to be, what is to be done? What will be its spiritual condition when it shall have realized these figures, and have been thus converted into a mighty nation? There is the utmost reason to fear, that neither the Christians of the metropolis, nor those of the Provinces, have any idea of the true state of the case. There is no proportion whatever, between the spiritual apparatus and the work to be achieved. This want of clear information is the cause of so much calmness and complacency in the general mind. Even they who have been born in London know little of it—none less! The nearer an object is to the eye, the less that eye is struck by it. That it may be rightly estimated, it must be placed at a proper distance, or special care must be taken to deal with the difficulty, by minute and particular examination. We shall state a figure or two, not to satisfy inquiry, but to stimulate it.

Well, then, we have the means of knowing sufficient concerning the spiritual state of several portions of it to excite indescribable emotions. We shall show how matters stood in two or three localities on the morning of the census taken last year. We regret to say that the census is not yet published; but we have the means of ascertaining, with sufficient accuracy, certain facts, which will go far to illustrate our subject. There is, then, one locality comprising a population of 119,990. Now, what number of edifices of all denominations, Popish and Protestant, heterodox and orthodox, are to be found in that district? Just fifty-seven. What is the amount of the accommodation supplied by these edifices? Just 31,556 sittings. It is important, then, to ascertain how these edifices were occupied on the morning of that eventful day. Passing by fractions, we shall state in round numbers what, we believe, will turn out to be substantially correct. In the morning, the attendance of old and young, including schools and children accompanying their parents, was 21,000. What shall we allow for the evening? Perhaps few of our readers will hesitate to say, somewhere about one third or one-half more, and, in some cases, double that of the morning. The fact is otherwise. It was one-half less,—that is, it was 11,000. Yes; 11,000 out of 119,990, was the attendance on the means of religious instruction, showing the tendency towards half-day hearing!

This is not an exceptive case. In another locality, with a population of 139,200, comprising fifty-one places of

worship of all sorts, supplying 35,065 sittings, the morning attendance was, in round numbers, just 21,000, and the evening about the half of that number.

“Taking another, and one of the most respectable localities, with a population of 56,500, comprising twenty-eight edifices, with 16,279 sittings; what was the morning attendance here? In round numbers just 11,000. Did the evening, in this case, improve the matter? Slightly so—that is to say, there were then 7,000, old and young, out of 56,500!

“Such, then, is the condition of these three localities, and they may be taken as a very fair sample of the entire of our mighty metropolis. With an aggregate of one hundred and thirty-six chapels, there were at the principal service—that is, the morning, just 54,000 attendants!

“This view is sufficiently awful, but it is by no means the worst. Passing by the ocean of immortal spirits that make no pretension to any regard for the salvation of their souls, let us look at those who more regularly, or occasionally, do attend on the ordinances of religion. How many of these may be supposed to be earnest worshippers, to have made something like a conscientious profession of faith in the Redeemer of men? Shall we say the half? The result would still be a mournful fact; but even this is denied us. Shall we venture upon a third? That, too, would be greatly to err. We shudder at the idea of stating the real figures? This matter, however, has been already set before the public in the last and in the invaluable report of that most important institution, the London City Mission. The Committee of that organization have deliberately declared that the insignificant island of Jamaica, with only 330,000 population, adults and children,—has as large a number of communicants as is to be found in the metropolis of England, with its two and a half millions! The figures may thus be stated: The communicants at Jamaica are 56,000. The communicants of London, allowing to each of the 800 church edifices seventy,—and examination will show that the figure is rather under than over,—of course, amount to just 56,000. Were our readers prepared for this communication? It may well startle, but we trust it will not end with a mere rush of emotion. The figures ought to promote inquiry, into the fact whether things really be as here alleged in London. Nor is this all. They ought to stimulate inquiry, whether a state of things somewhat resembling this does not exist in other of our great towns and cities.”

#### A PICTURE IN LONDON.

From the Baptist Reporter.

I HAPPEN to know a christian brother who is devoted to home missionary labour, and asked permission to accompany him some afternoon, that I might see a few of the persons and homes he had described to me. My friend has told his own tale in the pages of the *Reporter*, but I will now tell one for him.

“Here,” said he, “is one scene—look around you.” I did so. A group of ragged boys were playing at pitch and toss. They had pinched, keen faces, shaggy hair, sunken eyes which glared wildly upon the coins as they tumbled to the ground, and anon some foul oath sprang from their lips. “These boys,” said my friend, “are all thieves. That boy, who always hangs his head down, has just come out of prison; his mother is dying.” We walked on. A small dogged-looking active man passed us. “That said the missionary, “is a fighter. In a short time he will fight for a hundred pounds, and thousands of poor men will venture their money upon him. He is quiet in ordinary life, but awfully savage in actual combat.” Going down a short street, we saw a crowd. The people—men, women and children—were enjoying a dog fight. The more the brutes worried each other, the louder rose the laughter of the mob. “Don't interfere,” said I to my friend. He gave me a strange, resolute smile, and seemed determined to stop the fray, when a policeman came up, and in a moment dogs and people dispersed. “Come,” said the missionary, “let us enter this house, and I will show you a ‘fence.’” “What is that?” “It is a house where stolen goods are bought; it is also a lodging-house for vile women, fighters, boys who sweep crossings, ballad singers, and now and then a thief as well.” I hesitated, and said, “Is there any danger? I have my watch and—” “Never mind,” replied my guide, “what you have. The worst thief here will not harm you.” We mounted a pair of creaking, sloppy stairs, and found ourselves before a huge door! My guide stamped upon the landing. “Why don't you knock?” I whispered. “You will see.” He then struck the toe of his boot gently and slowly upon the landing, and behold the door opened, and he went into a room which was before us. I followed and the door closed behind us; but we saw no one. “I want to see Mother—,” said the missionary and, to my surprise, a tall, red-faced, stout, repulsive woman stood before us. Where did she come from? Nay, reader, I must grant that is a mystery. However, she made us welcome, and when my friend said, “I should like to see some of the friends—my friends; I mean.” She