

There is unquestionably a marked improvement in the state of society, but I fear it has been over-rated by many. That restraining moral and legal influences, (and illegal also, as the Vigilance Committee still exists, and is a terror to evil-doers,) have been at work none will deny, but that effective radical reformation has been effected but few will assert. Here it is really and fearfully true that "broad is the way that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat."

Such a scene as a "revival of religion," I mean a general, all-prevailing religious interest, such as churches and communities in other portions of Christendom have enjoyed, has never been witnessed by men or angels in California.

True we are permitted with gratitude to God to record individual cases of conversion, but such occurrences are like angelic visits, "few and far between." Let us look at the state of things in San Francisco, perhaps the most favored spot in California. For a population of 40,000 there are 2 Catholic churches, 11 Protestant churches and 3 preaching places, the entire accommodations of which will not seat more than 5,000. The number of communion members in connection with the Protestant churches is 485, and the average attendance upon public worship is about 3,000. There are 12 Sabbath schools with about 600 scholars enrolled, and an average attendance of about 350; leaving about 1,400 children in the city without the pales of the Sabbath-school. Is not here a demand for Sunday-school effort? And will not the friends of this holy, heavenly enterprise, by their prayer and contributions strengthen the hands and encourage the hearts of those who are engaged in this blessed work on this coast?

That you may have an idea of the moral condition of society, and the danger and evil influences to which the young are exposed in this city and State, I will give you the following from the editorials of the secular press. Says one of the editors of the San Francisco Daily Whig: "As we were walking through a gambling saloon the other night, speculating upon the chances of the games, and reading the map of human nature, as exhibited by the countenances of betters, bankers and cappers, we came across an A B C table, where we saw a little girl, apparently ten years of age throwing the dice, and paying and taking for the game—a little bright eyed, flaxen-haired, rosy-cheeked girl—beside her sat a woman, whether her mother or not, we do not know.

The child, with innocent laughing eye, saw the bright dollars and yellow gold accumulate or disappear from her bank, with the unconcern of one who neither knew nor cared for their value. Her little hand grasped and threw the dice, as though they were pretty playthings and the game was to her an amusement and pastime. Custom has enabled us to look upon gambling, dissipation, and vice, unmoved. We have so long seen men and women in the indulgence of their worst passions that we have come to regard the existence of criminal practices, in a California community, as a matter of course—necessary evils which must exist. We have seen old men and young premeditatedly enter upon, and perseveringly follow a course which must inevitably terminate in ruin and disgrace; and we have philosophized, that those who have arrived at maturity and discretion should be the judges of their own habits and pursuits. We have never as yet advocated the necessity of legislating for men's morals, or curbing by restraints of law, the private conduct of citizens, so long as their acts do not result in the positive wrong and injury of their neighbors; but an incident like the above leads to reflections of a serious nature. The parent who would thus expose an innocent and artless child of ten years, to the associations and corrupt influences of a gambling hall should be deprived of the privilege of rearing it."

Says one of the editors of "The San Francisco Herald," in the No. of Jan. 27th: "Yesterday morning a young lad of light and delicate frame, who from his appearance might be about 14 years of age, was seated among the prisoners at the Recorder's court, his youthful appearance forming a strange and painful contrast to the rude, burly, ruffian forms about him. He sat as in a drunken stupor, his blue eyes fixed upon vacancy, his yellow hair matted and disorderly, and his smooth round face overspread with a death-like pallor, so unnatural to boyhood, that the observer turned away from the spectacle with a sensation akin to disgust. This boy had been picked up in the public streets in a state of brutal intoxication, without a remnant of consciousness remaining to render him aware of his condition. He was fined five dollars by the Recorder, and after speaking with an effort, of his inability to meet the penalty, sunk back into his seat with listless apathy and apparent unconcern. Neither is the above an isolated or an uncommon case. San Francisco, though the proportion of children among its inhabitants is but small, can count as many youthful offenders as many an older city. Even upon the same occasion as that above mentioned, a young Mexican lad, good-looking and intelligent, was sentenced to five days imprisonment for fighting. To look at the boy one would suppose that he would be handed over from the officer's custody into the care of a mother to be punished and sent to school; yet when asked to state his means of livelihood, (for he was well and neatly dressed,) it appeared that this seeming child had been for a long time past, a professional gambler in this city. Two others of like tender years were arrested on the same day for drawing dangerous weapons at a dance house. They were Peruvians, with keen, mischievous eyes, the one had drawn a large pistol with a bayonet attached, the other had concealed beneath his blanket a murderous looking broadsword, that might from its size and fashion, have graced the thigh of some ancient Templar. Truly, the rising generation is a promising one, and the necessity for a House of Correction for vicious youth is becoming every day more apparent."

I have myself seen interesting, bright eyed boys in the band of a gambling saloon, to attract by the influence of music, the young and inexperienced into those dens of vice and sinks of infamy.

There are perhaps no communities in the world, where the morals of children are so shamefully neglected, owing to the pursuits of the inhabitants and the unsettled state of

society. Although my residence in California has been short, yet I have seen and heard enough to teach me most impressively, the importance of moral culture in youth. Had the thousands of women and men, both old and young, who are rushing with a fearful velocity to disgrace, infamy and ruin both temporal and eternal, by violating the laws both human and Divine; degrading and disgracing humanity,—been trained in childhood and youth "in the way in which they should go," the scenes of violence, licentiousness and crime, which shock our moral sensibilities and cause us to blush for our species would not occur so frequently as to be regarded "as a matter of course." This is emphatically a "fast country," in more than one respect. If men of enterprise make and lose money fast; so also do the young and aged run swiftly to ruin. Such is the precocious character of children, and the evil influences by which they are surrounded, that they form evil habits with amazing rapidity, of which I could give you several painful instances, which came under my own observation. Here thousands of young men who never drank ardent spirits, in any form, or gambled or used profane language, or visited the abodes of her, whose gates lead down to death, and whose steps take hold on hell, at home, are enticed, and before their friends are aware of their fall, their ruin is effected and complete. I would not have the friends of the Redeemer and his lambs, abate in the least their zeal, and contributions in behalf of the Great West, but as the "Lord of the harvest" has enlarged the field of our operations, so he calls upon us "also to be enlarged." Every Sabbath-school scholar, every teacher, and every Christian in the East should do something, and that promptly, to advance the good cause in this important and interesting field.—Sunday-School Journal.

THE INDIA RUBBER TREE AT BRAZIL.

Kidd's Journal, an English publication, furnishes these particulars respecting the caoutchouc, or india rubber tree, of Brazil:

"The caoutchouc tree grows, in general, to the height of forty or fifty feet without branches; then branching runs up 15 feet higher. The leaf is about six inches long, thin, and shaped like that of a peach tree. The trees show their working by the number of knots or bunches, made by tapping; and a singular fact is, that when most tapped they give most milk or sap. As the time of operating is early day, before sunrise the tappers are on hand. The blacks are first sent through the forest, armed with a quantity of soft clay, and a small pick-axe. On coming to one of the trees a portion of the clay is formed into a cap, and stuck to the trunk. The black then striking his pick over the cap, the sap oozes out slowly, a tree giving out daily about a gill. The tapper continues in this way, tapping, perhaps, fifty trees, when he returns, and with a jar, passing over the same ground, empties his cups. So, by seven o'clock, the blacks come in with their jars ready for working. The sap at this stage, resembles milk in appearance, and somewhat in taste. It is also frequently drunk with perfect safety. If left standing now, it will curdle like milk, disengaging a watery substance like whey. Shoemakers now arrange themselves to form the gum. Seated in the shade, with a large pan of milk on one side, and on the other a flagon, in which is burned a nut, peculiar to this country, emitting a dense smoke, the operator having his last, or form, held by a long stick or handle, previously be-moated with soft clay, in order to slip off the shoe when finished, holds it over the pan, and pouring on the milk till it is covered, sets the coating in the smoke, then, giving it a second coat, repeats the smoking; and so on with a third and a fourth, till the shoe is of the required thickness, averaging from six to twelve coats.

"When finished, the shoes on the forms are placed in the sun the remainder of the day to drip. Next day, if required, they may be figured, being so soft that any impression will be indelibly received. The natives are very dexterous in this work. With a quill and sharp pointed stick they will produce finely lined leaves and flowers, such as you may have seen on the shoes, in an incredibly short space of time. After remaining on the forms two or three days, the shoes are cut open on the top, allowing the last to slip out. They are then tied together ready for market. These peddlers and Jews trade for them with merchants, who have them stuffed with straw, and packed in boxes to export. In the same manner, any shape may be manufactured.

Thus, toys are made on clay forms. After drying, the clay is broken and extracted. Bottles, etc., are made in the same way. According as the gum grows older, it becomes darker in color and more tough. The number of caoutchouc trees in the province is countless. In some parts, whole forests exist, and they are frequently cut down for firewood. Although the trees exist in Mexico and the East Indies, there appears to be no importation into this country from these places. The reason, we suppose, must be the want of that fruitfulness which is found in them here. The caoutchouc tree may be worked all the year; but, generally in the wet season, they have rest, owing to the flooded state of the woods, and the milk being watery, requires more trouble to manufacture the same article than in the dry season.

OBSERVANCE OF THE SABBATH.—If any doubt the necessity of a Sabbath, in order to the maintenance of our civil and religious institutions, let them look to those nations which have made the experiment of living without one. What was ancient Rome, with her 6,000,000 or 7,000,000, when she had no Sabbaths, but the grand theatre of inhumanity and crime, whose deleterious influence has ever since been felt all over the world? What was France when she introduced her decades and blotted out the weekly Sabbath? What have been Mexico and South America? And, it may be asked, what are they now? And what has been that of every Christian nation contemplating that heavenly institution?

THE EXPECTED DOOM OF ROME.—Dr. Cumming, in his *Apocalyptic Sketches*, and many other authors, have asserted, as their interpretation of some parts of the Apocalypse, that Rome will be destroyed by fire from heaven, or swallowed up by earthquakes, or overwhelmed with destruction by volcanos, as the visible punishment of the Almighty for its popery and its crimes. I am unwilling to deduce any argument of this kind from the prophecies which are unfulfilled; but I beheld everywhere—in Rome, near Rome, and through the whole country of Italy from Rome to Naples—the most astounding proofs, not merely of the possibility, but of the exceeding probability, that the whole region of central Italy will one day suffer under such a catastrophe. The soil of Rome is tufa, of a volcanic origin, the smell of the sulphur, which we found to be most disagreeable, must be the result of volcanic subterranean action still going on. At Naples, the boiling sulphur is seen bubbling near the surface of the earth. When I drew a stick along upon the ground, the sulphureous smoke followed the indentation; and it would never surprise me to hear of the utter destruction of the entire peninsula of Italy.—Townsend's Journal of a Tour.

THE FIRST RESIDENCE OF THE JEWS IN ENGLAND takes its date from the time of the Hepharchy, and the first mention of their existence is made in an ecclesiastical canon of Egbert, Archbishop of York (A. D. 740), which forbade Christians taking any part in the Jewish festivals. The laws of Edward the Confessor (A. D. 1041), declare them to be the property of the king, in the same manner as they were in France. Many Jews came over to England with William the Conqueror. We find especial mention made of them in the time of William Rufus, the second king of the Norman line. The king himself, the enemy of the clergy, and but little attached to the church, permitted the Jews to defend their religion in public, as much as they pleased. What, however, he liked best in them was their wealth, which, for his own sake, he gave them every opportunity of amassing, especially from the clergy. At that time the Jews possessed, in London and elsewhere (as at Oxford, Lincoln, and York), considerable mansions, resembling the castles of the nobility in their exterior; and whole streets were afterwards named from them.

CRIME IN LONDON AND NEW YORK.—The most recent statistics of vice in the British metropolis, show that there are 16,000 children trained to crime in that city, annually, and that there are 5,000 receivers of stolen goods, 16,000 gamblers by profession, 25,000 beggars, 30,000 drunkards, 180,000 habitual drinkers, 150,000 persons subsisting on profligacy, and 50,000 thieves, making a total of 470,000 persons who subsist on vice and crime in one city. A similar estimate has also been made for New York, which puts down, for that city, 3,000 children trained to crime, 1,000 receivers of stolen goods, 2,000 gamblers by profession, 2,000 beggars, 10,000 drunkards, 80,000 habitual drinkers, 50,000 persons subsisting on profligacy, and 5,000 thieves, making a total of 153,000 villains and debauchees in the last named city—a greater number in proportion to its population than in London.

THE WAR SYSTEM.—Baron Von Reden, who is esteemed the first statistical writer in Germany, and perhaps, in the world, calculates (and his calculations are unquestionably below the mark) that the annual cost of the war establishments of Europe amounts to £81,178,200; and the loss occasioned by the withdrawal of the men engaged in their several armies and navies from all productive labour, is at least £36,000,000; making a total yearly expenditure of £117,177,000. The same writer estimates that the national debts of all the European States (almost all of which have been contracted for war purposes) amount at the present moment, to £1,883,786,850. If this were distributed over the whole population, it would be above £7 to each man, woman, and child throughout Europe. The annual interest of this sum, according to Baron Von Reden, is £71,324,406, and if all the costs of collection and disbursement be included, it will probably be little less than £100,000,000. If we add this sum to the expenses of the actual war establishments, and the loss of labour, as stated above, we shall find a total of more than £200,000,000 wrung from the toil and industry of the people of Europe, every year, by the war system.

CROMWELL A TERROR TO PUBLICANS.—A writer in *Eliza Cook's Journal*, speaking of public-house signs, says:—"There are Marlboroughs, Abercrombys, and Wellingtons; Duncans, Rodneys, and Nelsons, by dozens. I have seen an admiral painted on a horseback somewhere; but I never saw Cromwell on an alehouse sign yet. This is a singular and a significant fact."

THE YOUNG SOLDIER AND HIS BIBLE. In a town with which I am connected, a young man, whose conduct had nearly broken the heart of his widowed mother, entered the army. The regiment first went, I believe, to Malta. A little while afterwards his mother had an opportunity of sending him a Bible. She did not hear again of her son till the regiment returned, when she found that he had fallen in America. But her son had received the Bible at Malta, and it had led him to seriousness and reflection; his vicious habits were reformed, and his soul brought into possession of substantial and enduring peace. But this was not all. At the close of the action in which he received his mortal wound, he was found under a little bush, his Bible open before him, the leaves stained with blood, and his dead hand lying upon his mother's Bible. This was an end which glorified spirits would rejoice to witness. From such an end praise resounds to the Redeemer of sinners, who can make that look the blessed pillow to a dying head, and fill the believer's soul with joy unspeakable and full of glory. H. N. and Rev. Gerard Noel.