

Christian



Visitor.

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—BY PURENESS, BY KNOWLEDGE—BY LOVE UNFEIGNED.—St. PAUL.

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DEATH'S FINAL CONQUEST.

BY JAMES SHIRLEY.—1825.

The glories of our birth and state
 Are shadows, not substantial things;
 There is no armor against fate:
 Death lays her icy hand on kings;
 Sceptre and crown
 Must tumble down,
 And in the dust be equal made
 With the poor crooked scythe and spade.
 Some men with swords may reap the field,
 And plant fresh laurels where they kill;
 But strong nerves at last must yield;
 They tame but one another still:
 Early or late
 They stoop to fate,
 And must give up their murmuring breath,
 When they, pale captives, creep to death.

The garlands wither on your brow,
 Then boast no more your mighty deeds;
 Upon death's purple altar now
 See where the victor victim bleeds;
 All heads must come
 To the cold tomb,
 Only the actions of the just
 Smell sweet and blossom in the dust.

Romanism and the Nations.

Would any one know what Protestantism can effect?—let him look at England, Scotland, Prussia and the United States. Would he know what Romanism achieves as its victories?—behold every land cursed and wretched where it bears away. Look at the following from the French correspondent of the N. York Observer:

What is the condition of those nations which continue to be in subjection to the papal yoke? When Luther and Calvin began to preach the Reformation, Spain was the most powerful country in Europe. She had wealthy colonies in all parts of the globe. Charles V., and after him Philip II., aspired to establish a universal monarchy. They held, besides the Iberian peninsula, a preponderating authority in Germany, in the Netherlands and in Italy. Their treasures were vast; their fleets covered the seas, and their formidable armies inspired terror into all the Western nations. Where is now their prosperity? where are these almost incredible riches? Spain has lost all; she has preserved none of her possessions either in Germany, or in the Netherlands, or in Italy. Even the American colonies are separated from their parent state. The successors of Charles V and Philip II are poor and feeble kings, who have no influence in the great affairs of Europe. The Spanish people are wretched; they have no commerce nor manufactures; they are too ignorant to cultivate their naturally fertile soil. Their political liberty is an empty name. In a word, Spain is an object of pity and grief for other nations; and if any one asks: 'How is this country fallen so low?' impartial history answers: The great cause of this decline is a false and degrading religion. Suppose for a moment that the Spaniards had adopted in the sixteenth century the doctrines of the Reformation, they certainly would not have met with so many reverses, nor sunk so low in power. But with Romanism, the Inquisition, innumerable bands of monks and nuns, greedy and despotic priests who stifle every generous thought, every liberal sentiment, what could they do? They decline, they perish, because they are Papists.

The same remarks apply to Portugal. In Luther's time, the Portuguese composed a very flourishing nation. They produced men of the first order, Vasco, de Gama, Albuquerque, and many others, who sustained their country's honor in the remotest parts of the globe. They conquered a great part of the East Indies; they carried on a vast commerce with Europe. What are the Portuguese of our days? A petty, im-

becile nation, without education, without money, without authority, and almost without government. They are mere agents of the English. No liberal constitution has ever been established among them. Parties equally divided rend this desolate country with their bloody quarrels. The ports are deserted, the arsenals empty, the public treasury exhausted. Why so? History answers again: *The Portuguese have declined, they perish, because they are Papists.*

To pass to Italy. Once it was Queen of the world. Even in the dark ages, after the dismemberment of the Roman Empire, the Italian peninsula occupied still the foremost rank among nations. There science, learning, arts, first revived. Illustrious men covered their country with worthy monuments. Venice, Genoa, Leghorn, and Milan had republican institutions. The most famous universities were founded at Bologna and Pisa. But what a change since that time! Italy has lost her liberty; the republics established in her bosom have fallen before the blows of foreigners. Science and arts which she cultivated with so much genius have experienced a rapid decline. This glorious country seems covered with a winding sheet, and Lord Byron compares it to a beautiful female corpse. Whence came these evils upon Italy? Several causes may be assigned; but one more than all: *Italy has lost her ancient splendor, because she is Papist.*

What shall I say of Austria? Viewed at a distance, she seems large and imposing. Her gigantic arms extend from the banks of the Danube to those of the Po. She reckons 300,000 soldiers, and ranks with the first powers of Europe. But her greatness is more apparent than real. Austria is stationary, immoveable, and her very immoveableness is her ruin. When she shall be forced to stir, she will fall to pieces, like a dead body exposed to the air. No cohesion between the different parts of the Austrian empire: no national spirit. Hungary is completely incongruous with the Lombardo-Venetian kingdom; Bohemia has no congeniality with the hereditary possessions of the imperial government. They are heterogeneous elements, and Prince de Metternich applies all his skill to retard the threatening catastrophe. In these vast countries is no intellectual movement, no political progress. All is languid, decaying, extinct. *Austria declines, she is on the brink of ruin, she is enslaved, because she is Papist.*

Belgium, being near to France, has derived from her contact with the men of 1789 and 1830 a little more life. Favorable circumstances have given to her a free constitution. But she has suffered much since her late revolution, under the rule of the priest or jesuit party. Her commerce and manufactures have been obstructed, her industry checked, the country impoverished, the most sacred rights of her citizens trampled upon, and the evil is become so intolerable that the majority of electors have at last broken the priests' power. If the Belgians had delayed longer to make these resolute efforts, they would have sunk to the level of Spain and Portugal. But they will need much wisdom, zeal and patience to heal the wounds which the Romish clergy have inflicted upon them. *Belgium is troubled, is full of mendicants and paupers because she is Papist.*

A word on South America; your readers know this country better than I do. What are the governments of Mexico, of Peru, Buenos Ayres, Chili, and all those states which once belonged to Spain? What are the laws and customs of the inhabitants? what is the condition of commerce, agriculture, sciences, schools, and all that

constitutes a civilized people? In these countries the churches are rich, and the citizens poor. The monks, the priests revel in abundance, and the mass of the people are entirely destitute; there are images of the Virgin all covered with gold and precious stones, and not one good road in the land; the poverty, the anarchy are indescribable. The rulers of these States pass off the stage one after another, as in a theatrical play. *South America is given up to the saddest public and private demoralization, because it is Papist.*

I repeat it, these are not fictions; they are facts, positive, indisputable facts. What Roman catholic nation is there now in the world, which enjoys true liberty, and which is making progress? What Roman Catholic nation which offers to others the example of growing industry and prosperity? I seek in vain to find one. France cannot be cited as an exception.

France, for several generations, has ceased to be Roman Catholic. It only bears the name, but it does not believe in the doctrines of popery. Open our history. Were they Romanists, the eminent men who, in the Constitutional Assembly of '89, laid the basis of our new social order? No, no; they had rejected with disdain the superstitions, the fanaticism and ridiculous practices of their ancestors. I do not say that they were Protestants; I affirm only that the Romish faith had entirely left them. They proclaimed openly the right of examination, freedom of conscience, equality of religions, liberty of thought, and those principles are in flagrant contradiction, every one will admit, with those of popery.

Did they belong to the Romish church, the intrepid citizens who, in 1830, achieved a glorious victory over the satellites of Charles X? No, the fact is undeniable that they cried: *Down with the Jesuits! Down with the Priests!* The popish ecclesiastics were forced to hide themselves in obscure retreats, so convinced were the French people that the Romish priesthood were the implacable enemies of liberty!

And now too we must not deceive ourselves. Women, children, peasants are attached to the popish faith; some nobles, some scholars, from fashion rather than from conviction, show zeal and devotedness for this church. The government favors it from political motives. But, in reality, the best French citizens, the voters, the teachers in colleges and academies, the rich, the magistrates, lawyers, &c., are not Romanists. Our laws, our customs, our opinions, our literature are in direct opposition with the Romish communion. Far from weakening our argument, France serves but to confirm it. The days of popery are numbered. It preserves still a nominal power, but it no longer has nor can have real authority. In proportion as nations shall understand better their true interests, they will abandon this religion which does not answer to the wants of our age. Look at Italy: it is just now agitated; but this movement is essentially anti-catholic, though the cry of *Live Pius IX!* resounds in all the peninsula. Wait for further disclosures, and it will be seen that every nation in order to rise to power, must necessarily adopt the principles of protestantism.

POPE IN CHINA.—The Papists are evidently intending to make vigorous efforts in China, during the present year. Their Agent at Hong Kong has contracted with the Steam Navigation Company to transport one hundred priests to the Celestial Empire, during the year.

Sicily has been the theatre of a general insurrection, which has terminated in a complete revolution.

Novel Reading—Its Pernicious Effects.

Messrs. Editors:—A few Sabbaths since in addressing my people from the text 'One sinner destroyeth much good'—I took occasion to speak of one method of destroying good, that of publishing and circulating pernicious books.—This led me to notice the confessions of those who had fallen from the position of virtue and respectability, by the reading of Novels. On leaving the house of God, a gentleman addressed me, who said, 'I know from my innocent heart the truth of your remarks on novel reading; for I have suffered beyond all description by that practice.' He subsequently sent me the following facts in his history which I give you in his own language. 'With a sincere and agonized spirit would I warn the young, of the destructive influence of novel reading. I was religiously educated and in early life became a member of an evangelical church with fair prospects of a happy and useful life. My mind was free from moral taint, and I turned with horror from every expression of licentiousness and infidelity—and as to strong drink, though I unfortunately contracted a love of it when quite young, yet at the time of which I speak I wholly abstained from its use from principle. But unhappily owing to the great reputation of Scott's Novels, and my taste for reading—I bought and read them; and well do I remember their pernicious effects upon my mind.

'The wit, which made the peculiar devotion of the Scottish Covenanters appear so ridiculous, absurd and superstitious, jostled the very corner stone of my faith, because I was young and my mind undisciplined and had ever been taught such things with reverence. After Scott I read Marryatt, which is far coarser and more undisguised in its immorality and blasphemy, and so much so that I could not have been induced to read it, had not a taste for such reading, and a feeling that a strict experimental religion, was fully believed in, by the ignorant only—been induced by the perusal of Scott's works. After reading Marryatt I was prepared to read Thomas Payne or anything else however licentious, blasphemous or deistical it might be; but had Paine's works been presented to me before reading any of these novels, I should have shrunk from them with horror. From open infidelity the mind of the young, religiously educated, turn; as from deadly poison! but the same evil spirit disguised and diluted in these novels, imperceptibly and gradually insinuates itself. It is like giving medicine to a child, disguised in sugar. The child sees nothing but what is pleasant to the taste, and believes there is nothing but sugar in what he is about to swallow! but the poison is there nevertheless, and it will surely operate. In short my religious principles were destroyed; I yielded to my inclination to drink! and utterly ruined myself.

'The bad effects of novel reading are manifested in various ways. They turn the mind of the young against the ordinary pursuits of life. The heroes of these novels, by an untrod, adventurous, exciting and romantic course, speedily arrive to honors and fortune; and the minds of the young readers turn with disgust from the monotonous and beaten road to wealth and usefulness; resolving to be something or nothing in the world and that pretty soon. This practice also destroys all taste for useful reading, and the most useful book becomes insipid and dull, and though I was trained to habits of reading, it was two or three years after I abandoned novel reading, before I could read anything more substantial than a common newspaper, and I