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"BY PURENESS, BY KNOWLEDGE—BY LOVE UNFEIGNED."—ST. PAUL.

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MONITION.

BY E. R. PLACE.

Bear up, faint heart—the way is long.

And clouded skies are o'er thee;

Ring loud and strong

The battle-song,

For Victory lies before thee!

Cling to the ship—the storm she'll ride,

'Mid bolts and flashing arrows,

And float in pride

A peaceful tide,

Just thro' the fearful narrows!

Look not behind—the past is o'er—

Nor downward, weighed with sorrow;

But look before—

There lies the shore

Of a victorious morrow?

Tread down the gathering ills that rise

Like dragons to defy thee!

Heed not the spies

Whose envious cries

Pretend a danger nigh thee.

Shake off the lure that tempts astray,

Yield not the hour to pleasure!

Who sows the day

With thriftless play.

Shall reap a star'ling treasure!

Press on—press on! leave vales below,

And climb the lofty mountain;

Here brooklets slow

All dimly flow,

There leaps the sunny fountain.

Then bravely on—and firmly breast

The ills that thee environ;

Till thou shalt rest

Supremely blest

Within thy victory—Zion!

THE REFORMATION IN ITALY.

Intimately connected with the revival of learning in Italy, of which Petrarch was so zealous a promoter, was the origin and progress of Reformation in that country. Italy and Spain are justly regarded throughout the Protestant world as the strongest fortresses of the Papacy, and indeed are usually spoken of as countries in which none have ever dared to breathe the doctrines of the Reformation.—This opinion is far more correct when applied to Spain than when applied to Italy, for in this latter country the corruptions in the doctrine and practice of the Church were loudly complained of and denounced even before the voice of the great Reformer had been raised in Germany. The literary spirit which had been awakened in Italy during the fourteenth century had proved unfriendly to that implicit faith in the dogmas of the Church which the Papacy always demands, and by the beginning of the sixteenth century it had created in the minds of many leading scholars and ecclesiastics a settled unbelief with respect to the foundations of Christianity itself. This is said to have forced itself on the attention of Luther when in youth he visited that country, and to have excited his amazement more than any other fact which he observed in the condition of the people. He found that in every circle there were those who spoke in derision alike of the authority of the Papal See, the institutions of the Church, and of the doctrines and evidences of religion. But though this scoffing infidelity was widely spread among the literary and scientific men of Italy, there were those in every leading city over whom it had no power, but who, while they saw and condemned the abominations of Popery, still clung

with unyielding faith to the truth of divine revelation and to many of the institutions of the Catholic Church. These men maintained in the discussions of their literary societies, and not a few of them promulgated in their writings, doctrines analogous to those of Protestantism; and when the voice of the Reformation was heard from beyond the Alps, the sentiments it proclaimed found an echo in many a conclave of scholars in every city of Italy and even around the very walls of the Vatican.

It was on the borders of Italy too that the Waldenses had for unknown ages maintained their simple worship, and amid their mountain homes had kept uncorrupted the faith they had received from the earliest fathers of the Christian Church. Content with their own primitive independence, and careless of the ecclesiastical struggles which had divided the world, they had hitherto dwelt unharmed while the tumults of war and the relentless vengeance of persecution were raging around them. But the influence of their quiet example and of their spiritual doctrines had not been wholly unfelt, and wherever it was extended it was sure to weaken the hold of the Papacy upon the consciences of men.

The agency of causes like these, in conjunction with the political events of the time, had prepared the way for the Reformation in Italy; and when its doctrines began to be promulgated, they found a ready reception in nearly every portion of the country. In Ferrara they were embraced by the princess who sat upon the ducal throne, and the persecuted Protestants who took refuge within her jurisdiction found in her a powerful protector and a liberal patron. In Modena they were cherished by a large body of scholars who became their teachers among the people, and in Bologna they ranked among their disciples many of the brightest names of the University as well as some of the most distinguished citizens. In Naples they were boldly preached by Bernardino Ochino, a devout and enthusiastic monk, first of the Franciscan and afterwards of the Capuchin order, whose whole nature was kindled by his enlivening faith in the doctrine of justification by grace. He travelled over Italy everywhere proclaiming the new opinions.—“The cities,” says Ranke, “poured out their multitudes to hear him preach; the churches were too small to contain them; the learned and the common people, both sexes, old and young, all were gratified. His coarse garb, his beard that swept his breast, his gray hairs, his pallid, meagre countenance, and the feebleness he had contracted from his obstinate fasts, gave him the aspect of a saint.” In Venice and in Lucca the Lutheran doctrines spread even more widely among the people; they were eagerly embraced by leading scholars and ecclesiastics, who republished the works of the Reformers of Germany and Switzerland and openly applauded the principles of spiritual independence which they contained. Both these States were well nigh won to Protestantism, and were on the eve of declaring against the Papal See, when a complication of political events made the support of the Pontiff necessary to their security, and decided their governments to continue an allegiance which, however it might be hated, could not now be safely dispensed with.

So widely had the Reformation spread its influence among the States of Italy. In some of them it seemed already triumphant. In others its principles had taken strong hold of the minds of the people, had altered the tone of the ecclesiastics, and even penetrated the seclusion of the monasteries, and infused a new spirit into the vigils and devotions of the cloistered monks.

To the growth of these new doctrines among his own subjects a Pontiff like Leo X. was not likely to be long indifferent. The pernicious

heresies which had hitherto been threatening the Catholic faith beyond the Alps seemed now to be springing up around the very seat of the Papacy, and to be menacing with destruction the most sacred monuments of its power.—Leo X. however soon passed away, and was succeeded by Adrian, a Pontiff of milder and more generous qualities, whose attachments to the Christian faith were of a far purer character. The hopes of those who sought to reform the abuses which existed in the Church were now raised to the highest pitch, as they saw Adrian seated in the pontifical chair.—But they were destined never to be realized, for though the Pope himself eagerly endeavored to effect a reconciliation between the contending parties, his courtiers and cardinals arrayed a steady and powerful opposition against all his plans, and the pontificate soon passed into the hands of those who, bent on securing every element both of spiritual and of civil power that lay within their reach, were determined to suppress the Reformation in Italy at every hazard and by any means that could be put in requisition. Among these means, by far the most effectual was the Inquisition, which had already been successfully established in Spain, and by its agency there had clothed itself with frightful terrors to the imagination of every people of Christendom. It was now introduced into Italy, and though it met with violent opposition both from the people and the governments of several of the States, yet the Papal power was at length everywhere triumphant, and the terrors of the “Holy Office” soon silenced the voice of the reformer in every portion of the land. Then began the dismal reign of that unmitigated despotism which has so often followed the triumphs of the Romish Church. Who can describe the wrongs and the woes which are wrought into the history of that gloomy period in which the tribunals of the Inquisition were employed in punishing the innocent disciples of the Reformation in Italy? Their secret agents were everywhere at work, and, often stimulated by private enmity, were constantly bringing forth for accusation and for trial persons of the most blameless lives, whose Protestant faith had been cherished in the sanctuary of their own hearts, and had scarcely been breathed save in the privacy of their holiest devotions. No social rank was so elevated as to be exempt from the ceaseless espionage of the Inquisition. No domestic hearth was so sacred as to escape its remorseless scrutiny. Its racks were constantly occupied with the victims of its torture, and its deep dungeons, more gloomy and terrific than have ever been built for other purposes, were crowded with those whom neither rank nor age nor sex could protect, and whose unrecorded sufferings were witnessed only by the dreary walls within which they were immured.

Thus perished the Reformation in Italy, and in its ruins was extinguished every spark of the Protestant religion among the people. What the tortures of the Inquisition could not effect on account of the number of victims who were to be sacrificed, was finally accomplished by the flames of the stake and by the ravages of the sword. The Waldenses from Piedmont who had planted their quiet colonies in Calabria, were driven to the forests and mountains by a relentless persecution, where, “hunted like beasts of prey, some fell by the sword and others, less happy, perished by famine in the desolate caverns which had afforded them a temporary asylum. The greater portion being thus cut off, the few who had fallen alive into the hands of their enemies were reserved for every species of torture, perishing by the knife, or precipitated from the summits of lofty towers, or stifled by the foul air of damp and crowded dungeons.”—*Christian Review*, April, 1850.

Italy and Scotland Contrasted.

There are two countries in Europe which, as it appears to us, Providence has set up before the eyes of the world to teach great lessons to mankind. In almost every point these two countries form as perfect a contrast as it is possible to imagine. The one is placed at nearly the southern extremity of the European continent—the other at nearly its northern extremity. The one is encompassed by calm seas, and beautified by a sky of balmy serenity—a stormy ocean breaks on the shores of the other, and perpetual fogs gather in its atmosphere. The one is covered with a soil of unrivalled fertility, which from the base of the mighty mountain-barrier that defends it on the north, to the shores of the delightful island which joins it on the south, presents a wide, unbroken scene of varied and luxuriant beauty—the soil of the other is at the best but indifferently fertile, and its cultivatable surface is sadly encroached upon by moors of vast extent, and mighty chains of rocky mountains. The history of the country runs up into ages of empire and glory—that of the other lands us at no remote period, amid scenes of subjection and barbarism. The one country notwithstanding all the advantages of its position, the beauty of its climate, the riches of its soil, and the glorious inheritance it has received from the past, is, at this day wretched and enslaved; while the other, which can boast of none of these advantages, is free and powerful. Why is this? The true explanation of the secret is, that Popery is the religion of one country—Protestantism is the religion of the other. Than Italy, it would have been impossible to select in Europe a country in which the genius of Popery could better develop itself—its power to furnish all that is glorious, and to overthrow all that is strong. Than Scotland it would have been impossible to fix on a country where Protestantism would have had so much scope to display its character and tendency—its power to exalt to greatness the smallest nation, and enable it to overcome all the disadvantages of its position. God never leaves himself without a witness. We may close his word, or silence his preachers; still he continues to proclaim, by the great dispensations of his providence, the eternal distinctions between truth and error. When of old the world was sunk in idolatry, God ceased not to testify of his own existence and supremacy, “in that he gave rain from heaven, and fruitful seasons.” In like manner, so long as Italy and Scotland stand before the world, men can be at no loss to judge between Popery and Protestantism, or have any difficulty in determining which is fitted to draw down the curse, and which, the blessing, of the Great Ruler of nations. Might not our statesmen find this subject worthy of their study, and one fitted to teach them some of the first principles of government, and to throw not a little light on certain measures believed to be in contemplation? If we wish to sink ourselves to the degradation of Italy, let us endow the religion of Italy.—*Edinburgh Christian Witness*.

THE GREAT ITALIAN PAWN SHOP.—The *Monte di Pietà* was established in Rome in 1585. It is the greatest pawnbroker's shop in the world, and one of the noblest character.—Any person who brings a pawn can borrow from sixpence to thirty crowns without paying any interest, but all that is lent above that sum pays two per cent., per annum. At the end of the year the borrower may renew, without any expense, but at the end of two years, if the pledge be not redeemed, nor interest of the money paid, the pledge is sold, and the overplus of the debt is laid by for the owner, who has it in his power to demand it any time within one hundred years.