

their being well received, whereas our object is precisely to go where nobody asks for us, or even knows of our existence. Our colporteurs are, in the truest sense of the word, pioneers, who sow the first seed in uncultivated ground; and when it increases, then the people who have, by the single reading of the Scriptures, received a first ray of light, ask for more light, and cry out for evangelists and pastors.

On the whole, the year's work has not either declined in extent, energy or fruitfulness. The number of colporteurs now stands at sixty.

BELGIUM.—In Belgium the great conflict between the Clergy and the 'Liberals' still continues, with the effect of dividing the population into two camps. In the one camp the watchword is 'Religion,' in the other the cry is 'Liberty.' The spectacle is dreary in the extreme. The religion contended for is a religion without the Gospel; the liberty so passionately demanded is a liberty without a God. Belgian Romanism is the most superstitious in Europe, and Belgian liberty the most vehement in its rejection of the supernatural. 'Instruments of a foolish shepherd' are in the hands of the leaders, and the sheep fare badly, and are objects of deep compassion. Meanwhile the world, which the best of men find 'too much with them,' asserts itself, plies its temptations, displays its charms, and draws into its net-veins of thousands who grow every day more and more disengaged to mind earthly things.

Fifty years ago Belgium obtained her independence, and this year she keeps high festival. She will bring the works of her skilful fingers and the fruits of her fertile soil, and offer proof plain to all eyes that her talents are many and her energy great. But Belgium sets little store by the merchandise which is better than the merchandise of silver, and holds too cheap the gain which is better than fine gold. It is a relief to the feelings excited by the aspect of religion in Belgium, to think of the quiet labours of your Society and other kindred institutions in the task so needful, and so beneficent, of leading souls redeemed by the Blood of Christ to read the plain story of His love in His own Word. The horizon of the materialist contracts upon him as life runs out and his energies decay, and it narrows at length to the bare dimensions of a grave. Men are not so much in love with