

degrading, in their consequences. Where was the germ?

The great historian, Hume, says, that when a people have sunk to the lowest possible degree of degradation, a reaction takes place,—and Robertson mentions the eleventh century as that period, and dates from that era the commencement of a better order of things. Here, then, where reform was less to be expected than among the Romans, (for the Romans had not reached the *lowest* condition of demoralization—the present was that period) among THE PEOPLE, the most degraded portion, did the spirit of reform suddenly break out. What were the causes? It was impossible for *human* beings, perhaps, farther to descend in the abuse of their immortal minds,—they gained, in the Crusades, a knowledge of other countries, and received an impulse to action,—the spirit of energy combined,—ambition and enterprise sprung up in the mind,—moral courage returned,—oppression was resisted,—privileges were wrested from the nobles, and government shared by the governed.

If we glance at the condition of the Europeans previous to their subjection by the Romans, we shall find them to be all brave, hardy, warlike races: without the arms or discipline of the enemy, they resisted their invasions, often, with success,—and it was not till after repeated attacks and great bloodshed, that they were entirely subdued. They then remained under the tyranny of the Romans till they had lost their ancient character for independence and bravery.—When the barbarians invaded Europe, wanting the more gentle nature of these nations, their character was, in other respects, similar. Yet, before civilization re-appeared in Europe, these invading hordes had sunk to a state more degrading than that of the ancient Britons,—and if so, why could not light and liberty have succeeded the Roman tyranny, more especially when christianity was

beginning to shed its genial beams upon the earth? “Where was reform to spring from?” asked Mr. Tupper, glancing at the condition of the Roman dominions:—“Where *did it* spring from?” we reply, and point to Europe in the eleventh century.

Can it be said that “the germ” slept for four centuries, and re-appeared in the good institutions and commercial prosperity and wonderful inventions which succeeded? If so, the metaphor is a most unhappy one. We know that seeds, in general, need tender treatment to come to maturity,—and, farther, that when they are planted, almost immediately do they commence their growth. Now these “fierce barbarians” either never brought any germ with them at all,—or if they did, it never slept four centuries without expanding its plumule above the surface: it must have been crushed amid the feuds of the barons. Among the ten mentioned causes of the revival of intelligence, we find none of them a fruit which is likely to have been of four centuries’ growth: but we find a remnant of Roman civilization, Constantinople, which had escaped the fury of the northmen, greatly assisting in the great work of the reformation of mankind.

We are ourselves the descendants of these barbarians, of whom we have been speaking and writing: it is, perhaps, natural, then, that the benefits of their invasion should be so seemingly palpable. Why should *we* mourn the slaughtered Roman,—or why should *we* chaunt the requiem of the ancient Briton? Alas! for us, however, if we deny justice to their character! Alas! for us, if, glancing at their degradation, we exclaim, “Where was reform to spring from?” and yet be forced to acknowledge that it sprang from a far darker source!

BEP.

Halifax, March 9th, 1842.

ORIGINAL.

EPITAPH ON A CHILD.

Tho’ a young mother mourns o’er thy premature tomb,
And a fond father’s brow is o’ersadow’d with gloom,
They’d recall not their flow’ret fair;

Tho’ it budded and blew in this cold earth of ours:

It was only intended for Eden’s bright bow’rs,—
And ’twill bloom ever there—ever there!

E. W.