

as we were born." On some texts of Scripture were inscribed: "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sins of the world," "Save the little children to come unto me," and other similar passages. Inevitable indeed must have been, who could have witnessed such a scene without the liveliest feelings of delight. After proceeding through the streets, they were conducted to the spacious chapel, and opened service by singing the Jubilee hymn in the native language. The venerable old king then took the chair. He had been worshipped as a god, and had led fierce warriors to the "battle and the fight," but he evidently felt that he had never occupied a station so delightful or honourable as that of presiding at the examination of the children of his people. There were placed in the centre of the chapel, and the parents occupied the outer seats. Each class was then called up and examined; and after this, individuals from the different classes were selected, and questioned by the missionary. While this was proceeding, the appearance of the parents was most affecting. The eyes of some were gleaming with delight, as the father said to the mother, or the mother to the father, "What a mercy it is that we spared our dear girl!" Others, with saddened countenances, and faltering voices, lamented in bitterness that they had not saved theirs; and the silent tear, as it stole down the cheeks of many, told the painful tale that *all* their children were destroyed. In the midst of our proceedings, a venerable chieftain, gray with age, arose, and with impassioned look and manner, exclaimed, "Let me speak; I must speak!" On obtaining permission, he thus proceeded, "Oh that I had known that the gospel was coming! oh that I had known that these blessings were in store for us, then I should have saved my children, and they would have been among this happy group, ~~speaking their precious words~~; but, alas! I destroyed them all, I have not *one* left." Turning to the chairman, who was also a relative, he stretched out his arm and exclaimed, "You, my brother, saw me kill child after child, but you never seized this murderous hand, and said, 'Stay, brother, God is about to bless us; the Gospel of salvation is coming to our shores.'" Then he cursed the gods which they formerly worshipped, and added, "It was you that infused this savage disposition into us, and now I shall die childless, although I have been the father of *thirteen* children." After this he sat down, and in a flood of tears, gave vent to his agonized feelings.

This scene occurred in my own place of worship. I saw the man, and heard him utter those expressions. I shall leave the fact to speak for itself. Many other instances equally affecting might be added, but I shall content myself with mentioning but one more. This related to a chief woman, who had been united in marriage to a man of inferior rank; and it was the universal custom to destroy the children of such an union. The first babe was born and put to death. The father wished the second to be spared, but the mother, and the mother's relatives, demanded its destruction. The third was a fine girl. The father pleaded and entreated that it might be saved, for his bowels yearned over it; but the mother, and the mother's relatives, again carried their point, and the babe was doomed to die. One of the numerous modes of infanticide was, to put the babe in a hole covered with plank to keep the earth from pressing

it, and leave it there to perish. This method was adopted in the present instance. The father happened to be in the mountains at the time of the child's birth and interment; but, on his return, he hastened to the spot, opened the grave, and finding that the babe was not dead, he took her up, and gave her in charge to his brother and sister, by whom she was conveyed to the island of Aimeo, about seventy miles distant, where they trained her up. The husband died, without having informed his wife that their daughter was still alive. After Christianity was embraced, the mother was on one occasion bewailing most bitterly the destruction of her children; when a woman who happened to be present, and who was acquainted with the fact of the child's disinterment, astonished and overwhelmed her with the announcement, that her daughter had been saved, and was yet living at Aimeo. A short time after receiving this extraordinary intelligence, she sailed to Aimeo, and on reaching the shore, hurried with excited feelings to the house of her relatives, and as she approached it, beheld with wonder and delight a fine young girl standing in the door-way. At once she recognized her own image in the countenance of the child. It was her daughter. She clasped her to her bosom—but I must leave imagination to fill up the scene, as she exclaimed, "Rejoice with me, for this my daughter was dead and is alive again." The mother is gone to her rest, but her daughter is, at the present time, an active teacher in our schools, and a consistent member of a Christian church!

#### PRESENT STATE OF THE WALDENSES.

CONCLUDED.

Colonel Beckwith, a British soldier, and a truly pious Christian gentleman, has resided in these valleys since 1828 or 1829, and has spent his time, his strength, and his fortune, in behalf of the Vaudois; so that he has most justly earned for himself the title which these poor Protestants are proud to give him, "de Bienfaiteur des Vaudois." He has watched with indomitable perseverance the varied phases which, during that time, Popery has assumed towards them, and by his zeal and courage has been the instrument, under God, of averting or mitigating many evils which were prepared for them, as well as of bestowing upon them many lasting benefits, and his "work and labor of love" toward them entitles him to be known and highly esteemed in all the churches of Christ. Amongst other labors for the spiritual good of the Vaudois, Col. Beckwith began, some time ago, a Sabbath school, in the school house at La Tour, on Sabbath afternoons, and so great was the interest taken in it that it was filled to overflowing, both with young and old, and seemed to give promise of the most important results. But this raised anew the jealousy of the priests; and by dint of intrigues and incessant applications to high quarters, they induced Government *very lately* to send down a peremptory prohibition against that school, ordering it to be closed forthwith; an order which they were compelled to obey. This is a sad stroke for the poor people; and the interest which it had excited among them—let us hope also the good it had done—may be gathered from the freedom with which they express, even to strangers, their deep regret at its having been so abruptly put down. From this occurrence, which happened very recently, your readers will be able to judge for themselves, whether or not Popery is so greatly changed in its character as the false liberalism of the present day represents it to be. Another gratuitous and most malicious piece of persecution has also been enacted this summer on these simple unoffending people. In ascending the Val d'Angrogna to visit the Pradel Ter, where in early times their Barbes trained young men for the ministry, and where, still later, their heroes raised huge barricades across the valley, and nobly withstood the combined armies of France and Sardinia, the ancient church of Chabas was pointed out to me, in which Divine worship was formerly maintained—but which was shut up many years ago, by order of

Government, and allowed to fall to ruin, but which has lately been repaired. It is true that the edict of 1696 prohibits the erection of any new churches within their limits, (a most iniquitous law;) but as the church of Chabas existed as one of their places of worship before this edict was passed, and as there is but one clergyman for the extensive and thickly populated Val d'Angrogna, an application was made a year or two ago to Government by "The Table" of the Vaudois (a commission of their Synod) to have this church again opened for public worship, and a favourable answer was received. By subscriptions immediately raised among themselves, and friends interested in their welfare, a sufficient sum of money was raised for executing all necessary repairs; the church was put into proper order, and a day fixed for opening it last spring, when, through the Bishop of Pinerolo's influence, the Government suddenly withdrew its former permission, and the church has been shut up ever since, with little likelihood of permission being ever granted to open it; so that not only has the intended good been frustrated, but the money which these poor people with difficulty raised for this purpose has been absolutely thrown away.

The Protestant limits embrace the Val de Lucerna, with the small adjoining one of Ronca—the Val d'Angrogna, and the Val de Clusone, which have been long since overstocked, and are now actually groaning under the still increasing population—within these they have been shut up ever since the edict of 1653, prohibited their acquiring land beyond, and it has been all along the miserable policy of the priest-ridden Bourbon dynasty to keep them rigidly within their bounds. During Napoleon's occupation of Italy, he extended to the Vaudois the same privileges which their Popish countrymen enjoyed, and allowed them to acquire lands beyond their limits, of which permission they took immediate advantage. On the restoration of the Bourbons to the throne of Sardinia, one of the first acts of the late king was to revoke by edict this liberty, and to put the Vaudois on the same footing on which they had been before Napoleon's appearance among them; those who had acquired lands, however, were not driven out of them, the old king justifying himself by saying—It was not his fault that they had acquired the lands; but since they had them he would not turn them out. The present king, for a few years after his accession seemed friendly to the Vaudois, and during that time they still continued to acquire land without their limits; but "a change has now come over the spirit of his dream"—he has surrendered himself to the direction of the Jesuits in every thing (indeed it is openly said that he has become himself a Jesuit!) and last year an order was issued, ordering all who had thus acquired property to sell their lands forthwith, and to retire within the limits. "The Table" addressed a remonstrance to the king against this new act of tyranny, showing the incalculable evils that must result from it; and, in consequence, the persecution has been restricted for the present to those who have acquired property during the present reign—two years being the time allowed for the disposal of small, and four for large properties; and it now remains to be seen at the expiration of the two years whether these harsh measures will be prosecuted. None have as yet sold their lands, as they seem to entertain a vague hope the order will not be enforced; and were it not for priestly influence in the senate, they would probably be safe; but the priests rule everything in Sardinia, and the Waldenses have therefore every reason to fear.

These are by no means the *only*, though they are among the *most recent*, instances of the systematic persecution carried on by the priests against our fellow Protestants in the valleys of the Alps. They are enough, however, to give a fair specimen of Popery in the 19th century, where it has the power; and more might be tedious to your readers. It may be right to add that Colonel Beckwith described the system of daily, nay, hourly, *espionage*, and the petty harassments carried on by the priests and their tools, as disgusting in the extreme, and fitted to keep them in constant suspense, not knowing what may occur, and concluded by expressing an earnest wish that the whole race of Puseyites could be transferred for a short time to the valleys, to witness the operations of Popery there, as he was convinced nothing would more effectually cure

† This chief was an arjoi of the highest rank, and the laws of his class required the destruction of all his children. In this infamous society there were a variety of orders, not unlike those which exist among the Freemasons.