

parable, 'So is the kingdom of God, as if a man should cast seed into the ground, and should sleep and rise, night and day, and the seed should spring up, he knoweth not how.' The circulation of the year shows an increase of 8,000 copies, and 6,000 of them are in the sales by colporteurs.

"A wider toleration is still needed in Austria proper; for in almost every part local authorities forbid real Bible colportage, and in the Tyrol even orders for Bibles may not be taken. But in spite of all troublesome restrictions one colporteur has sold 2,946 books, and another 3,120. Six books were sold in a priest's house with his approval, and a hundred New Testaments were bought in a monastery."

#### ITALY.

"Very soon after your last anniversary there came the sad news from Italy that your Society had lost the Agent who had won himself such esteem there for twenty-one years of large-hearted Bible work. In 1870 Mr. Thomas H. Bruce took care that on the very day on which the King's troops entered Rome, the Bible should be carried within it, too, by your colporteurs. On the first Sunday after the entry, he read aloud to the bystanders in the Coliseum a passage from St. Paul's Epistle to the Romans.

"It was very much owing to the generous aid of the Committee of the Religious Tract Society, and its late Secretary, the Rev. Dr. Manning, that your Committee were provided with such an able and suitable successor to Mr. Bruce as the Rev. Auguste Meille. Italy has thus become one of the countries in which your Society is represented by a native; and there is a special charm in the fact that the Bible Agent for Italy is a Waldensian. Within the year your forty colporteurs have sold 39,000 copies, which is considerably more than in the previous year. The Exhibition at Milan and the purchases of other Societies have also increased the circulation. And your Committee have undertaken an outlay of several hundreds of pounds to provide Italy with a cheap Bible of far better type and quality than it has ever yet had."

#### BELGIUM, HOLLAND, DENMARK, NORWAY, AND SWEDEN.

"In Belgium, the battle between superstition on the one hand and worldliness and atheism on the other, continues. Between these conflicting extremes it is the blessed office of the Society and of others to step in and ask a hearing of God's own words to man. The Society has circulated since the beginning of its operations, 674,000 Bibles, Testaments, and portions, and has eight colporteurs working there at present. The work in Holland was going on, and the direct sales from the depot had increased. The work in Denmark was progressing with increased facilities, as some restrictions as to the printing of the Scriptures have been removed. In Norway the circulation had decreased; the cause was thought to be the reduced condition of the farmers, and the strong tide of emigration. In Sweden the event of the year had been the publication of the Gospel of St. Matthew in Swedish-Lapp, prepared by Pastor Laestadius."

#### SPAIN AND PORTUGAL.

"In Spain the sales of the Society's twenty-three colporteurs had increased, as had also the whole number of issues; but the latter was principally due to increased purchases by the Scotch Bible Society. In Portugal the Agent reports a decrease, but is unable to assign a cause for it. A year ago the opening of a shop-front with a display of Scriptures in the public street of Lisbon was reported as a notable event. The opening of similar depot-shops in Oporto and Funchal is a yet more notable event in the past year."