

Missionary Department.

ITALY.

THE opening of Italy to Protestant missions caused many churches both in England and America to direct their attention thither. Dr. Luther H. Gulick has made much effort to obtain the statistics of Protestant churches and missionary operations there. He has compiled a table giving the numerical strength of the Waldensian, Free Italian Church, English Methodists, American Methodists, and English and American Baptists. We extract the following summary. There are in all 136 stations and 25 out-stations, making a total of 161; 56 of these stations and out-stations represent only 21 different localities. The Doctor thinks that an early division of the fields would have obviated this unhappy fact. At least $\frac{1}{2}$ of the places are capital cities, and 10 of them have a population at least of 100,000. It is believed that there are 4,822 communicants, 104 pastors and evangelists, and about 3,000 pupils attending the mission schools.

Should any be disposed to question the propriety of sending so many missionaries to Italy, let them remember that the census of 1860 proved beyond a doubt that the ignorance of the country was most appalling. By the addition of the Venetian and Roman provinces the population rose to 26,801,154, and of these 19,553,792 are unable to read and write! Seventy-three per cent. then, or three out of every four persons in Italy, are ignorant of the "three R's." In thirty out of fifty-six departments, the average exceeds 73 per cent., being in some 80 per cent., and one reaching above 90 per cent. As was to be expected, most of these provinces belong to the former possessions of the Holy See and the kingdom of the two Sicilies, yet some of them form part of the most civilised portions of Italy. To the surprise of many, it is found that the rich and flourishing city of Milan, with a population of 200,000, contains 45,613 persons who can neither read nor write!

The American Methodist or M. E. Church, has twelve native Italian preachers, and four others are preparing to become such. Each of these preaches several times a week, and some of them average a sermon for nearly every day in the month. They are all converted men, and having gifts, grace and usefulness, bear the Methodistic evidence of a divine call to the holy ministry. They are all fully equal to the average of the preachers in our own country, and some of them are men of very superior talents.