

ITALY.

Your Committee feel that it is a subject of much congratulation that in a country in which some obstacles still exist to the free circulation of the Word of God, they should be able to report an increase in the issues of the past year, as well as a small addition to their staff of Colporteurs. The progress of the truth in Italy is not, perhaps, so rapid as some would desire, but the day of small things must not be despised, and those who long for its regeneration must be content to work on amidst much discouragement and frequent disappointment.

It is not always that hopes which at first have risen high are destined to be speedily realized, or that the promise which a bright dawn inspires is succeeded by the sunshine of a calm and genial day. Clouds will darken the prospect which at one time was radiant with light, and the bursting storm leave only desolation in its train, after sweeping over a country which the prospect of approaching harvest had filled with gladness. God's ways are not our ways, and the trial of faith and the exhibition of patience are often objects which He, has in view when we in our haste and heedlessness take but little notice of them. Individuals as well as nations have to be cast again and again into the furnace before they come forth as gold. When any people have for a long time been trodden down beneath the iron heel of spiritual despotism, can it be a matter of astonishment if they bear in continual remembrance the tyranny to which they have been subject, and if fear still occupies their minds lest the reign of terror should again return? And when in addition to this we know that the Italian mind is intensely agitated by questions of a political aspect, as well as those which relate to the development of their country's material resources,—when to the long indulged and pernicious habit of leaving the concerns of their immortal souls in the hands of the priests, we add the indifference of all men by nature to spiritual things, and the opposition of the carnal mind, which is enmity against God, can we be astonished if the work of evangelization proceeds but slowly, and the struggle between light and darkness is often severe? It is however most cheering to call to mind that they who have the Lord and His truth on their side have nothing to fear and everything to hope. Their duty is to work on in faith and patience, their privilege to believe that God will do exceeding abundantly for them above all that they can ask or think.

The issues during the past year have amounted to 28,267 copies, being 1,200 in excess of those of the year preceding; and though where such large numbers are concerned, such an increase of circulation may not be considered a very striking feature in our work, it yet proves that the good seed is being scattered plentifully and perseveringly; and gives hope that the gospel message is winning its way to the hearts and homes of many who have hitherto been strangers to peace.

TURKEY.

It is much to be regretted that the Hatti Humayoom of 1856, by which Turkey is supposed to have guaranteed to her people liberty of conscience and freedom of worship, has been made dependent, so far as the attainment of any beneficial results are concerned, upon the will of individual Pashas or the caprice of unenlightened priests. By this means your Colporteurs have been