

were frequently oppressed. In the days of Napoleon Bounaparte the Vaudois were given civil liberty and the maintenance of the Romish clergy was abolished by an imperial decree. The funds which up to this time were used for this purpose were handed over to the evangelical pastors. 1814 saw another setback for the Waldensians, when the King of Sardinia, after Bounaparte's fall, recovered his authority. The valleys once more lost their civil rights. The Vaudois came out to welcome the returning monarch, but within four months Victor Emanuel renewed against them the oppressive edicts.

Such was the condition of the Waldensian Church when a few years later the churches of Holland, Prussia, Scotland and England began to take an active interest in the religious condition of Italy. Christian gentlemen, such as Dr. Gilles and Col. Beckwith, visited the valleys. They found the pulse of the little church beating but feebly. Such was the inevitable result of centuries of the most cruel oppression. Encouraging words and active self-denying labor on the part of brethren from beyond the Alps stirred up a new life in the heart of the little band, and from that moment the Waldensian Church has gone forth conquering and to conquer. In 1831, in Turin, a Protestant chapel was opened at the Prussian embassy, and a Vaudois pastor was selected. At the Synod of St. Jean, 1839, the constitution of the Waldensian Church was revised on the basis of the decrees of the Synod of Angrogna, 1632. In 1848 Charles Albert, immediately after the promulgation of the new constitution of Italy, placed the Waldensians on an equal footing with the rest of his subjects. Then the heroic little church rose in her might. She established herself firmly at Turin, the capital. From Turin she moved on to Florence, and from Florence to Rome. Since 1870 her progress has been remarkable. Milton's "hundred fold" "o'er all th' Italian fields" has been more than realized.

Let us stop and consider the tremendous task this little communion places before itself. The home or mother church is confined to three Alpine valleys of Piedmont. In all Piedmont there are only about 25,000 adherents. Italy itself is a sort of foreign mission field to them, with its 30,000,000 people, held for the most part in the grasp of the most unscrupulous ecclesiastical organization the world has ever seen. To recover Italy to the pure gospel is the mighty task of the Waldensian Church. With her college at Torre Pellice, her theological school at Florence, her advanced schools for girls, and her primary schools scattered through Italy; with her "commission of Italian evangelization," with its 44 churches, 38 pastors, 8 evangelists, 67 evangelical teachers, 9 colporteurs, 6 Bible readers, besides her 24 ministers in the valleys, she calls upon the evangelical world for its prayers, its moral support, and its gifts into the treasury. We have no right to let her struggle alone. Let the 16th of August, 1889, then, be an occasion when this heroic little church shall receive a special baptism