

## MISSIONS TO ROMANISTS.

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**THEIR NECESSITY.**—It would not be necessary to discuss this point if Protestant Christians were more generally acquainted with the moral and religious condition of the millions who people papal countries, and the teaching they receive from the Roman Church; but as a matter of fact great ignorance prevails among the great mass of evangelical Christians with regard to these two points. Romanism as it is seen in England and the United States, where it is influenced by enlightened Protestant practice and opinion, is, externally at least, a very different thing from Romanism in Spain, Cuba, South America, or Mexico, where during the course of centuries it has had free course to permeate and influence every class of society, being itself uninfluenced by any of the more salutary conditions which obtain in other lands. Romanism is indeed nothing else but paganism in a Christian dress. The pagan names have been changed, but the paganism itself remains. The Pontifex Maximus, the official head of paganism, still lives in the person of the triple-crowned monarch of the Vatican—God's representative—the universal bishop and head of the Church—new Christ, new Saviour, as he has recently been termed. Isis, Astarte, or Venus is still adored with the greatest reverence under the title of the Virgin Mary, and many of the titles applied to her by papal writers are identical with those by which Venus was known and worshipped by ancient paganism. The Mother and Child so often met with in pagan records, and so universally worshipped in pagan countries, is still the chief object of worship in thousands of Roman Catholic churches throughout the world. Here we meet with the obscene worship which was so often condemned in the Old Testament. Let those who have the time and opportunity trace the origin and meaning of the tonsure, the nimbus, the use of wax candles in religious ceremonies, holy water, prayers for the dead, purgatory, baptismal regeneration, extreme unction, celibacy of the clergy and asceticism, and they will find their origin not in God's blessed book, but in ancient Babylonian, Egyptian, Greek, and Roman religions. The explanation given of these rites and practices is essentially pagan. In one word, in the Roman Church we have the essence of all idolatry—the exaltation of the creature above the Creator. God and Christ are practically dethroned and a creature exalted to the throne of Deity. God's one and only way of salvation is entirely set aside, and men are taught to seek grace and salvation through the sacraments of the Church, to receive pardon from the lips of a sinful mortal like themselves, and to hope for eternal life and felicity not through the blood of Christ, but through the intercession of the Virgin Mary.

Such, in a very few words, is the doctrine of the Roman Church. What is its effect on the social and moral condition of the millions under