

The Provincial Wesleyan.

are you appointed? Have you not yet found it? Do you know before the Master, in the Lord, what will be the result of your obedience to the will of the Lord? He will be true to his promise, and his Spirit, that there may be truly incribed upon his tombstone this epitaph—

"A SERVANT OF THE CHURCH."

Provincial Wesleyan

THURSDAY, JULY 6, 1854.

It is a fact that the Wesleyan Missionary Society, in its efforts to spread the Gospel, has been successful in many parts of the world. The Society has been instrumental in the establishment of many churches and schools, and has been the means of converting many souls to the Christian faith. The Society's work is not confined to the present, but extends to the future, as it seeks to plant seeds of truth that will bear fruit in generations to come.

Decline of Spain.

FRANCE, April, 1854.

Spain, offers one of the most curious and instructive spectacles of our age. Behold a country, the soil of which has produced a very fertile soil, an excellent climate, an admirable geographical position, rich mines of every kind, but poor in the elements of a great prosperity, and notwithstanding all this, she is poor and feeble, with no internal prosperity, and no influence upon the world without. She seems to be condemned to an irreparable decline, while other countries, the United States, England, Russia, are growing in power and wealth. Whence comes this? Why are the Spaniards constantly declining while other nations are advancing? Is it the fault of the soil? No, it is a natural energy and industry. Is it the fault of the climate? No, it is the fault of the government. But circumstances depend upon men, and no nation is fatally condemned to perdition. The chief cause of this decline must be looked for elsewhere. It is in the religious—a backward, superstitious religion, which has perverted the intelligence, enervated the character, repressed the activity, and destroyed the fortunes of the noble classes of the country. If Spain had adopted the Protestant faith in the sixteenth century under the reign of Charles V., she might perhaps be today the first and most flourishing country of the globe; but she remained loyal beneath the yoke of the questions, priests, and monks, and has fallen to the lowest grade of civilized nations. Unhappy Spaniards! how much are they to be pitied!

A journal of Madrid, remarkable for its spirit and which has often been condemned by the tribunals for its independent ideas, the *Clamor Publico*, lately contained some curious statistical information concerning the peninsula. I shall analyze it, adding a few facts drawn from different sources no less authentic. Under the Roman domination, the Iberian peninsula, that is to say, Spain and Portugal combined, numbered about 40 million inhabitants, or nearly 40 inhabitants to the square mile. It is the proportion which now exists in the North of France and Belgium, comparatively the most thickly peopled countries of Europe. In ancient times the agricultural products were sufficient, not only for the consumption of the Spaniards, but also of the Romans. Spain was an abundant storehouse for Italy.

When the Visigoths, and after them the Moors or Saracens, governed the peninsula, the population increased to twenty-five or thirty million souls. To-day it has fallen to thirteen or fourteen millions; in other words, it is only a third of the number of inhabitants which Iberia possessed in the time of the Romans. There are provinces, that of *Extremadura*, for example, which resemble a vast desert, although situated under the climate most favourable for the increase of the human race, and where the soil produces the richest harvests, almost without labour. Whence comes this gradual depopulation. I have already said, it proceeds chiefly from the depopulation of the country. The Spaniards have been exterminated, banished, or incarcerated an immense multitude of individuals. Moreover, the clergy of the priests, monks and nuns, has exerted a disastrous influence. Finally, the number of emigrants to foreign countries has not been small, because no one likes to place himself under such a degrading despotism as the priestly rule. What would this depopulation be, if it were not for the depopulation of the country? It is the depopulation of the country, that is the cause of the depopulation of the country. It is the depopulation of the country, that is the cause of the depopulation of the country.

When the city of Granada was taken in 1492, by the Moors, it contained 400,000 inhabitants, of whom 60,000 carried arms. A long time afterwards the city numbered 200,000; it has now not 100,000. The kingdom of Granada had a population of three million individuals, or 400 inhabitants to the square mile. There were 32 cities of the first class and 97 of the second. All this prosperity has disappeared. The city of Malaga, in the seventh century, had 80,000 inhabitants; to-day, it numbers but 10,000. Malaga had 60,000 souls, when the seventh century had 60,000 souls, has but 6,000 at the present time. Malaga, which at the same epoch numbered 40,000 individuals, has now but 5,000. Seville, which in 1700 contained 5,000 families, contains now but 1,200. Seville had, in the seventh century, almost 400,000 inhabitants; to-day, the population of that city has fallen to 90,000 souls. Malaga, the seat of the Inquisition and of the archbishop, which in the twelfth century had 200,000 inhabitants, at present numbers but 15,000. Valencia, and the adjacent cantons, which in the beginning of the seventh century had a population of 1,000,000 souls, scarcely number 600,000 at the present time. It is the same with the adjacent cantons. You will find in every part of Spain, abandoned villages, half-cultivated fields, and everywhere the appearance of solitude and death. One would say that an inexorable decree from heaven had condemned this people to march downward to its tomb.

As agriculture is a miserable condition. Modern inventiveness which has increased tenfold the produce of the soil, has never penetrated to the Peninsula. The peasants still cultivate the earth as did their fathers, and the barbarism of the middle ages. If the inhabitants were more intelligent and industrious, they could give an incalculable value to landed property; for besides the various grains, the vine, the mulberry, the cotton, the orange, the cotton-plant, and the sugarcane, grow and ripen in the fields; but the Spaniards continue in which the population of the open country is plunged chiefly into idleness, and the Peninsula scarcely produces enough for its own consumption in the good seasons. The priests have wished only to secure a credulous and docile nation. There are no schools, no means of instruction in the majority of the villages. Can it be surprising that everything remains stationary, or is on the decline?

The means of communication are very little advanced. The emperor Charles V. commenced the construction of a canal destined to unite the Mediterranean to the Ocean; its length was to be 420 miles; but during three centuries only 60 miles have been completed. It has apparently seemed more useful to fill the churches with precious stones and golden ornaments than to dig canals! In this respect, the Chinese themselves are superior to the Spaniards. The most badly situated cities, not only kept, and the secondary means of communication only exist nominally, so that there are important localities in an almost absolute state of isolation. The government has undertaken to make a railroad which shall connect the city of Madrid with the French frontier. This necessary work advances very slowly; the capital and also good workmen are wanting. Spain has been forced to have recourse to the intervention of English engineers in order to be able to realize her project.

The mines of precious metals, which were formerly explored with much success by the Spaniards, and which have been generally abandoned, are not sufficiently cultivated, because the Spaniards are not sufficiently acquainted with them, and also had laws repress the freedom of labour. The Spaniards could extract silver, mercury, lead, iron, &c., in immense quantities; but they do not.

Manufactures flourished under the Moors, and bore away the palm for excellence in all the departments of Europe. But the total exclusion of these manufactures, the monopoly of the government extending over a large number of important articles, the system of excessive taxation, and other like causes, have exhausted this source of public prosperity.

Industry is now concentrated in Barcelona, and the province of Catalonia, peopled by English or French manufacturers. The population engaged in manufactures is from 500 to 600,000 individuals; that is to say, it does not form the twentieth part of the nation. On the other hand, there are in the peninsula, 300,000 vagabonds, beggars, smugglers, and that kind of people who live in idleness, or by dishonest means. What country could prosper under such conditions?

The navy is almost nothing. The whole fleet consists of a few poorly equipped vessels, which transmit the orders of the metropolis to the colonies. If Spain had been capable of arming a squadron she would have claimed the honor of figuring in the Eastern war, since the interests of Roman Catholicism are so much implicated therein; but she has been constrained to yield her place to France and England.

The religious condition of the Peninsula is sad. Among the enlightened and elevated classes, there is no religion; they disbelieve in and scorn all religious forms. The lower classes are very superstitious. To give you an idea of the ruling opinions in Spain, I shall relate, that the *Queen Isabella* having made a vow, I know not on what occasion, attended one of the churches of Madrid, accompanied by a numerous train, in order to play the part of an image of the Virgin, the decoration of the order of the golden fleece. She therefore brought a necklace to which was attached a golden sheep, and pompously adorned the image of the Virgin with this decoration. The priests performed this extravagant ceremony with imperturbable gravity; the ministers of state and the generals took part in it, as a duty, but internally scorning the disgusting farce; and the populace participated in it with puerile devotion. What a religion! and what people! The secular clergy, 100,000 included, some years ago, more than 200,000 individuals and owned one-fourth of the lands of the country. Since then the number of priests, monks, nuns, &c., has diminished, and a portion of the ecclesiastical property has been sold for the benefit of the public treasury. The title tax has also been abolished. Notwithstanding these reforms, the monks and priests still retain enormous revenues, and their wealth contributes to the depopulation of the country.

I shall say but little concerning the political and moral condition of the peninsula, because I have frequently spoken of it in my preceding letters. The Constitution exists upon paper, but not in fact. Not one budget has been regularly presented since the establishment of the parliamentary government. The Senate and Chamber of Deputies are convoked or dissolved according to the pleasure of the court and the ministry. Several members of the legislative bodies have recently been arbitrarily exiled or imprisoned, and the only reason was that their votes did not suit the awariness of the power. At present the time of the Spanish parliament is dissolved and the government arranges everything without control. A military tumult has taken place at Seville, and an insurrection of working men at Barcelona. Both these movements were repressed by physical force; but who knows what may happen tomorrow? Pronounced, or revolutions, abound in this unhappy country. As to the morality of the Spaniards, it is sufficient to remember what is the conduct of the Queen Isabella. Acts, openly committed, which she disapproved to place before modest readers. The priests follow all this without reproach. The Queen Isabella practices regularly the Popish forms, which is all they ask for. Let us await the judgement of God upon this perverted dynasty and degenerate nation. Oh! if the Spaniards could embrace the Christian truth, and enter the new road! But the past of this nation yields us but little hope for the future. —*French Court of the New York Observer.*

National Magazine.

The July number of this excellent Magazine is already on our table. If utility is allowed to be the basis of calculation, we should pronounce this the best number of the Magazine, taken as a whole, which has yet appeared. The articles are more instructive, and more edifying to the serious reader than any of its predecessors, and yet they do not lack vivacity, or fail to attract and chain the attention. As far as ever removed from sectarianism, the nationalism is more distinctly the main object, and this we think should be the chief design of all our Book Room publications. The "table of contents" will present a rich repast to the patrons of the Magazine, and we hope will contribute largely to swell their number. It commences with a Trip from St. Petersburg to Constantinople, giving a graphic description of the metropolis of Russia, illustrated by ten engravings. In describing scenes, places, and buildings, the author writes for common readers, and tells the truth in a plain and easy style, and in the plainest language, yet always in good taste. He had not yet left St. Petersburg when he indicated the last paragraph of this article, but we shall have him again when he returns to St. Petersburg, at length in the capital of the Ottoman Empire. Meanwhile the reader will willingly linger with him, and accompany him in his visits to all the interesting scenes which present objects that fill us with more amazement than the creations of Allah and his wonderful lamp.

Another and no less interesting is continued, preserving the character which it assumed at first; rather a selection of incidents in the life of the great Reformer which afford the best subjects for delineation by the graphic art. Those who are well informed in the history of the Reformation will not be much inspired by these articles, but the young folks will be interested by the engravings to read the history of these events. To Daubigne, which, of all modern history, will tend to impart the most useful information. Next we have the life of the Rev. William Jay, a narrative which will impart lessons both timely and important. Who has not read with delight the writings of William Jay, and heard of his fame and success as a preacher of the Gospel? How desirable to know how he was called from the most humble life to be a herald of salvation, and what means he prepared for usefulness in his calling. The reader of the life of Jay, will find at the head of page six, then follow "The Catacombs; their inscriptions and lessons." Truth is sometimes stranger than fiction, and certainly no fiction, which maintains the least appearance of plausibility, is half so strange as the well-attested history of the Catacombs of Rome. The "Summe" by Smith, Ely, is, in point, and breathes the true spirit of poetry. "The Reformed, a true story," is excellent both in design and execution. The downward path to interdependence and ruin is well illustrated by the story, and then the recovery and ascent to a higher and nobler life are portrayed so graphically as to make the way clear—full of hope and encouragement to all the fallen. It exhibits paradise lost and regained. "The Rev. Richard M. Allen," is a brief but well-written memoir of a Methodist preacher of note in his day. His conversion, the opposition he encountered, his perseverance, his call to the ministry, his labors, his success, all are given in a most interesting manner, as they all go to show the difference between the man-made minister and the preacher who is called and qualified for his work by the Holy Ghost. "An Awkward Adventurer," a short but thrilling story, and to be true, "The Religion of the Poets" is an interesting investigation into the causes which have so often perverted the most highly-gifted and richly-endowed spirits to the lowest depths of moral degradation. Sentimentalism is shown to be a dangerous phase of religion, and it affords a striking illustration. We confess we do not think the illustration well chosen. Burns was not a very prominent specimen of sentimentalism; on the contrary, few poets have possessed more robust common sense. His aberrations from the path of rectitude are not attributable to any natural endowment which led him into fondle notions of virtue, but to a more potent cause, which we may express in his own language:— "Tell me, which is the name in Greek, I tell thee the reason." His poetic talents raised him to the notice of the rich and the noble, and the nobles which they taught him to abuse, and which they exchanged for his wit and humor, listened upon him habits of intemperance which drowned all that was good within him, and triumphed over the pious instructions he received from his parents, so well described in his "Cotter's Saturday Night." Yet it is not to be said that he will amply repay the perusal—"The Bell of St. Regis," by Rev. Mark Traill, is a specimen of real good poetry—a scarce article in modern times. "Signers of the Declaration of Independence," old acquaintances with whom the reader will delight to shake hands again in this new but appropriate sketch, "The English in Europe." In these days of locomotion and travel, with the attendant "Sketches," "Dottings by the Way," &c., readers are pretty generally satisfied, with guide-book descriptions of palaces, museums, picture galleries, theatrical exhibitions, &c., &c., that they have seen in Europe are not intended to depict artificial life. They present the state and condition of the "lower orders," as well as the "higher classes." The reader will be highly interested in accompanying the writer to the grave of Gray, to whom we are indebted for the "English in Europe." The country churchman, which contains the remains of the poet, is the very same which inspired his muse. We hope the "Sketches" are not yet finished. — If we are trespassing on our reader's time, it is because we are so much interested in the "English in Europe," and if not, we do not wish to do more than to give in him a desire to read the original instead of the description. But we must not omit to notice the next article in order—"The Model Pastor." If we had not found it ascribed to the Rev. E. Ely, we should have credited it to the editor, it is so ideal in spirit, and so full of object with the "Preaching for the Times," in a former number of the National. We rejoice that the National is growing rich in every way. It has now two, instead of one contributor, capable of doing anything, and the character of the editor, it is so ideal in spirit, and so full of object with the "Preaching for the Times," in a former number of the National. We rejoice that the National is growing rich in every way. It has now two, instead of one contributor, capable of doing anything, and the character of the editor, it is so ideal in spirit, and so full of object with the "Preaching for the Times," in a former number of the National. We rejoice that the National is growing rich in every way. 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