

Our object in that country is in no sense merely to make a show or a noise. It is not to gather a large crowd of people in our places of worship, or to assemble a given number of hundreds in our schools. If by dealing with one tithe of the numbers, and contenting ourselves with the humblest accommodation, we can, under God, bring one more soul to Christ, we are bound to be thankful to Him for the *smaller* number in attendance, and the meaner buildings, and to remember His own words, that the kingdom cometh not with observation. You will observe I do not affirm that a meagre attendance at our church meetings and schools is the preferable alternative; but I do say that we are liable to be greatly deceived, and most bitterly disappointed, if, in a country like Spain (where many people are apt to suppose that their mere anti-Popery and Republicanism and love of political freedom are entirely akin to our evangelical Protestantism), we are satisfied with crowds of listeners. By all means be thankful for numerous audiences and crowded schools, but bear with us when we say beware of what may be fictitious and illusory in mere multitude; for were circumstances to arise which would disperse the crowd so that it should never return, the only permanent good that would survive would be in the few (perhaps very few) who had come to Christ, as well as to you and to your places of worship. I say all these things, being strongly convinced (1) that we are not called to expend thousands of pounds on attractive church buildings, to draw crowds who may only come and go; and (2) that we might perhaps see better what good we are really doing by a less ambitious system. To go into very plain and if necessary limited accommodation, with those who will follow you there, may enable you more easily to discriminate between those who are drawn by your message, and those who are prompted by curiosity, or dislike the priests, or by fancied political affinity."

We quote these words because they have been verified in different parts of Spain since they were written, and have in more than one instance been fulfilled to the letter. The most popular preachers in Spain ceased to retain the crowds who gathered around them at the beginning. Even Carrasco's congregation did not retain its earlier dimensions, and the same remark may be made of that of Senor Cabrera. As a general rule, attendance on Protestant service has largely declined; and yet we believe the cause of Spanish Protestantism is at this hour more healthy and promising than ever it has been. We found this conclusion on what we believe to be an improved selectness in the character of the communicants, and on the advance of native agents in Christian knowledge and experience as well as in number. In about twenty different towns and cities in Spain small congregations have been established; in these places about twenty-five missionaries from Europe and America are labouring in various forms, and a rather larger number of native Spaniards are employed in preaching. Not a few promising schools under qualified teachers have been established, affording a Christian education to an increasing number of the young. The grand desideratum is a more advanced and earnest Christian life; and therefore our primary duty is to wait prayerfully upon the Lord, and to cry, "Come from the four winds, O breath! Breathe upon these slain, that they may live."