

work that will sweep it away. It may be safely left to the Abolition party of Brazil. They cannot fail to improve on the record we have made. It is the question of the day; and while it threatens the commercial prosperity, and disturbs profoundly the relations of society, there is another evil, inherited with slavery from the mother country, which is far more dangerous to the nation's existence, and that is Romanism. If there is in human history a dark, dismal failure anywhere, it is that of the church of Rome in Brazil. It has held for three centuries undisturbed sway over a docile, intelligent and naturally religious people, aided by all the prestige of the State and the power of the public coffers, being woven into the very texture of the Government, and with a result that is appalling. Among the common people it has planted ignorance and superstition, a paganism as repugnant as any in Africa; and in the higher classes religious indifference, skepticism and open atheism. Patriotic, thinking men are waking up to the fact that their children are not safe in the arms of Rome.

A WHOLE NATION KEPT IN IGNORANCE.

According to the last census, with a population of 9,930,470, there were 8,365,957 *analphabetos*—those who could not read or write! There is a growing sentiment among Brazilians that the Church is largely responsible for this condition of affairs. And when the vexed question of slavery is disposed of, that of divorcing the dead Church from the living nation will come up. Already a great step has been taken in making education free. The new and very liberal school law gives absolute freedom to any one to open schools anywhere, and contains an elaborate plan for the complete reorganization of the public-school system. The reform is most excellent, but for obvious reasons it now exists chiefly on paper. A class of teachers, a system of schools, a good series of text books, cannot be created by legislative enactment, but are of slow growth. An attempt has been made to organize normal schools for training teachers, with only partial success. The Imperial "Collegio" of Pedro II., the only academy in the empire, corresponds to one of our Eastern grammar and high schools. It has a seven-year course, and accommodates between 300 and 400 pupils; its course of studies is fearfully overloaded,

and according to a recent number of the *Paiz* the seventh year contains but a single pupil. There are two excellent medical colleges with a seven year course, two law schools, a well-equipped polytechnic, and several military and naval schools. What the empire lacks is schools for the people—primary schools, where their children may be educated through well-trained teachers in ordinary knowledge, and, through the Bible, in personal purity, in the love of country, of truth and justice, and in the hopes of the Gospel.

These statements are not made in a spirit of unfriendly criticism, for he who makes them loves the Brazilians and their country; but in order that the friends of Christian education may understand the situation.

HOPEFUL SIGNS.

During the twenty years referred to, Brazil has advanced with immense strides in every department of life. Many of the old Portuguese barriers to progress have been broken down. All efforts, from whatever source, to raise the standard of education are warmly seconded by all patriotic Brazilians. The persistent work of Gospel missionaries, with pulpit, press and school, has had much to do in bringing this about. When we know that one of the leading men of the empire, while not abjuring the State-Church, to which he is attached mainly by social ties and family tradition, declares openly that he would like to see the Gospel missions spread over the whole land and rescue the youth of this country from the demoralizing influence of priest-craft, and when we know that this is the feeling of many of the best men of the empire, we may justly claim that the way is open for Christian work. The question is not shall these fourteen millions of native-born Americans have an education—they have answered that themselves,—but shall it be a Christian education, or shall it be the rationalism of European growth?

THE RELIGIOUS INFLUENCE OF SCHOOLS.

As a means of evangelization, the value of school work cannot be over-estimated. Let the children be taught independent thought; give them the word of the living God for their sole text-book of faith and morals, and the seed of the kingdom is already sown.

The centre of the mission-school system is at present at Sao Paulo, where there is