

ern Asia would furnish an important and instructive theme for consideration, and lead us to the conclusion that it has impressed itself only where Roman imperial influences have prevailed; a political conclusion which, however, it contemptuously rejects.

Doubtless at the inception of the Reformation there were many persons who compared the existing social condition with what it had been in ancient times. Morals had not changed, intelligence had not advanced, society had little improved. From the Eternal City itself its splendors had vanished. The marble streets, of which Augustus had once boasted, had disappeared. Temples, broken columns, and the long, arcaded vistas of gigantic aqueducts bestriding the desolate Campagna, presented a mournful scene. From the uses to which they had been respectively put, the Capitol had been known as Goats' Hill, and the site of the Roman Forum, whence laws had been issued to the world, as Cows' Field. The palace of the Cæsars was hidden by mounds of earth, crested with flowering shrubs. The baths of Caracalla, with their porticoes, gardens, reservoirs, had long ago become useless through the destruction of their supplying aqueducts. On the ruins of that grand edifice, "flowery glades and thickets of odoriferous trees extended in ever-winding labyrinths upon immense platforms, and dizzy arches suspended in the air." Of the Coliseum, the most colossal of Roman ruins, only about one-third remained. Once capable of accommodating nearly ninety thousand spectators, it had, in succession, been turned into a fortress in the middle ages, and then into a stone-quarry to furnish material for the palaces of degenerate Roman princes. Some of the popes had occupied it as a woollen-mill, some as a saltpetre-factory; some had planned the conversion of its mag-

nificent arcades into shops for tradesmen. The iron clamps which bound its stones together had been stolen. The walls were fissured and falling. Even in our own times botanical works have been composed on the plants which have made this noble wreck their home. "The Flora of the Coliseum" contains four hundred and twenty species. Among the ruins of classical buildings might be seen broken columns, cypresses, and mouldy frescoes, dropping from the walls. Even the vegetable world participated in the melancholy change: the myrtle, which once flourished on the Aventine, had nearly become extinct; the laurel, which once gave its leaves to encircle the brows of emperors, had been replaced by ivy—the companion of death.

But perhaps it may be said the popes were not responsible for all this. Let it be remembered that in less than one hundred and forty years the city had been successively taken by Alaric, Genseric, Ricimer, Vitiges, Totila; that many of its great edifices had been converted into defensive works. The aqueducts were destroyed by Vitiges, who ruined the Campagna; the palace of the Cæsars was ravaged by Totila; then there had been the Lombard sieges; then Robert Guiscard and his Normans had burnt the city from the Antonine Column to the Flaminian Gate, from the Lateran to the Capitol; then it was sacked and mutilated by the Constable Bourbon; again and again it was flooded by inundations of the Tiber and shattered by earthquakes. We must, however, bear in mind the accusation of Machiavelli, who says, in his "History of Florence," that nearly all the barbarian invasions of Italy were by the invitations of the pontiffs, who called in those hordes! It was not the Goth, nor the Vandal, nor the Norman, nor the Saracen, but the popes and their neph-

ews, who produced the dilapidation of Rome! Limekilns had been fed from the ruins, classical buildings had become stone-quarries for the palaces of Italian princes, and churches were decorated from the old temples.

Churches decorated from the temples! It is for this and such as this that the popes must be held responsible. Superb Corinthian columns had been chiseled into images of the saints. Magnificent Egyptian obelisks had been dishonored by papal inscriptions. The Septizonium of Severus had been demolished to furnish materials for the building of St. Peter's; the bronze roof of the Pantheon had been melted into columns to ornament the apostle's tomb.

The great bell of Viterbo, in the tower of the Capitol, had announced the death of many a pope, and still desecration of the buildings and demoralization of the people went on. Papal Rome manifested no consideration, but rather hatred, for classical Rome. The pontiffs had been subordinates of the Byzantine sovereigns, then lieutenants of the Frankish kings, then arbiters of Europe; their government had changed as much as those of any of the surrounding nations; there had been complete metamorphoses in its maxims, objects, claims. In one point only it had never changed—in tolerance. Claiming to be the centre of the religious life of Europe, it steadfastly refused to recognize any religious existence outside of itself, yet both in a political and theological sense it was rotten to the core. Erasmus and Luther heard with amazement the blasphemies and witnessed with a shudder the atheism of the city.

The historian Ranke, to whom I am indebted for many of these facts, has depicted in a very graphic man-

ner the demoralization of the great metropolis. The popes were, for the most part, at their election, aged men. Power was, therefore, incessantly passing into new hands. Every election was a revolution in prospects and expectations. In a community where all might rise, where all might aspire to all, it necessarily followed that every man was occupied in thrusting some other into the background. Though the population of the city at the inception of the Reformation had sunk to eighty thousand, there were vast crowds of placemen, and still greater ones of aspirants for place. The successful occupant of the pontificate had thousands of offices to give away—offices from many of which the incumbents had been remorselessly ejected; many had been created for the purpose of sale. The integrity and capacity of an applicant were never inquired into; the points considered were, what services has he rendered or can he render to the party? how much can he pay for the preferment? An American reader can thoroughly realize this state of things. At every presidential election he witnesses similar acts. The election of a pope by the Conclave is not unlike the nomination of an American president by a convention. In both cases there are many offices to give away.

William of Malmesbury says that in his day the Romans made a sale of whatever was righteous and sacred for gold. After his time there was no improvement; the Church degenerated into an instrument for the exploitation of money. Vast sums were collected in Italy; vast sums were drawn under all manner of pretenses from surrounding and reluctant countries. Of these the most nefarious was the sale of indulgences for the perpetration of sin. Italian religion had become the art of plundering the people.

For more than a thousand years the sovereign pontiffs had been rulers of the city. True, it had witnessed many scenes of devastation for which they were not responsible; but they were responsible for this, that they had never made any vigorous, any persistent effort for its material, its moral improvement. Instead of being in these respects an exemplar for the imitation of the world, it became an exemplar of a condition that ought to be shunned. Things steadily went on from bad to worse, until at the epoch of the Reformation no pious stranger could visit it without being shocked.

The papacy, repudiating science as absolutely incompatible with its pretensions, had in later years addressed itself to the encouragement of art. But music and painting, though they may be exquisite adornments of life, contain no living force that can develop a weak nation into a strong one; nothing that can permanently assure the material well-being or happiness of communities; and hence at the time of the Reformation, to one who thoughtfully considered her condition, Rome had lost all living energy. She was no longer the arbiter of the physical or the religious progress of the world. For the progressive maxims of the republic and the empire, she had substituted the stationary maxims of the papacy. She had the appearance of piety and the possession of art. In this she resembled one of those friar-corpses which we still see in their brown cowls in the vaults of the Cappuccini, with a breviary or some withered flowers in its hands.

From this view of the Eternal City, this survey of what Latin Christianity had done for Rome itself, let us turn to the whole European Continent. Let us try to determine the true value of the system that was guiding society; let us judge it by its fruits.

The condition of nations as to their well-being is most precisely represented by the variations of their population. Forms of government have very little influence on population, but policy may control it completely.

It has been very satisfactorily shown by authors who have given attention to the subject, that the variations of population depend upon the interbalancing of the generative force of society and the resistances to life.

By the generative force of society is meant that instinct which manifests itself in the multiplication of the race. To some extent it depends on climate; but, since the climate of Europe did not sensibly change between the fourth and the sixteenth centuries, we may regard this force as having been, on that continent, during the period under consideration, invariable.

By the resistances to life is meant whatever tends to make individual existence more difficult of support. Among such may be enumerated insufficient food, inadequate clothing, imperfect shelter.

It is also known that, if the resistances become inappreciable, the generative force will double a population in twenty-five years.

The resistances operate in two modes: 1. Physically; since they diminish the number of births, and shorten the term of the life of all. 2. Intellectually; since, in a moral, and particularly in a religious community, they postpone marriage, by causing individuals to decline its responsibilities until they feel that they are competent to meet the charges and cares of a family. Hence the explanation of a long-recognized fact, that the number of marriages during a given period has a connection with the price of food.

The increase of population keeps pace with the in-

crease of food; and, indeed, such being the power of the generative force, it overpasses the means of subsistence, establishing a constant pressure upon them. Under these circumstances, it necessarily happens that a certain amount of destitution must occur. Individuals have come into existence who must be starved.

As illustrations of the variations that have occurred in the population of different countries, may be mentioned the immense diminution of that of Italy in consequence of the wars of Justinian; the depopulation of North Africa in consequence of theological quarrels; its restoration through the establishment of Mohammedanism; the increase of that of all Europe through the feudal system, when estates became more valuable in proportion to the number of retainers they could supply. The crusades caused a sensible diminution, not only through the enormous army losses, but also by reason of the withdrawal of so many able-bodied men from marriage-life. Similar variations have occurred on the American Continent. The population of Mexico was very quickly diminished by two million through the rapacity and atrocious cruelty of the Spaniards, who drove the civilized Indians to despair. The same happened in Peru.

The population of England at the Norman conquest was about two million. In five hundred years it had scarcely doubled. It may be supposed that this stationary condition was to some extent induced by the papal policy of the enforcement of celibacy in the clergy. The "legal generative force" was doubtless affected by that policy, the "actual generative force" was not. For those who have made this subject their study have long ago been satisfied that public celibacy is private wickedness. This mainly determined the laity, as well as

the government in England, to suppress the monasteries. It was openly asserted that there were one hundred thousand women in England made dissolute by the clergy.

In my history of the "American Civil War," I have presented some reflections on this point, which I will take the liberty of quoting here: "What, then, does this stationary condition of the population mean? It means, food obtained with hardship, insufficient clothing, personal uncleanness, cabins that could not keep out the weather, the destructive effects of cold and heat, miasm, want of sanitary provisions, absence of physicians, uselessness of shrine-cure, the deceptiveness of miracles, in which society was putting its trust; or, to sum up a long catalogue of sorrows, wants, and sufferings; in one term—it means a high death-rate.

"But more; it means deficient births. And what does that point out? Marriage postponed, licentious life, private wickedness, demoralized society.

"To an American, who lives in a country that was yesterday an interminable and impenetrable desert, but which to-day is filling with a population doubling itself every twenty-five years at the prescribed rate, this awful waste of actual and contingent life cannot but be a most surprising fact. His curiosity will lead him to inquire what kind of system that could have been which was pretending to guide and develop society, but which must be held responsible for this prodigious destruction, excelling, in its insidious result, war, pestilence, and famine combined; insidious, for men were actually believing that it secured their highest temporal interests. How different now! In England, the same geographical surface is sustaining ten times the population of that day, and sending forth its emigrating swarms. Let him, who

looks back with veneration on the past, settle in his own mind what such a system could have been worth."

These variations in the population of Europe have been attended with changes in distribution. The centre of population has passed northward since the establishment of Christianity in the Roman Empire. It has since passed westward, in consequence of the development of manufacturing industry.

We may now examine somewhat more minutely the character of the resistances which thus, for a thousand years, kept the population of Europe stationary. The surface of the Continent was for the most part covered with pathless forests; here and there it was dotted with monasteries and towns. In the lowlands and along the river-courses were fens, sometimes hundreds of miles in extent, exhaling their pestiferous miasms, and spreading agues far and wide. In Paris and London, the houses were of wood daubed with clay, and thatched with straw or reeds. They had no windows, and, until the invention of the saw-mill, very few had wooden floors. The luxury of a carpet was unknown; some straw, scattered in the room, supplied its place. There were no chimneys; the smoke of the ill-fed, cheerless fire escaped through a hole in the roof. In such habitations there was scarcely any protection from the weather. No attempt was made at drainage, but the putrefying garbage and rubbish were simply thrown out of the door. Men, women, and children, slept in the same apartment; not unfrequently, domestic animals were their companions; in such a confusion of the family, it was impossible that modesty or morality could be maintained. The bed was usually a bag of straw, a wooden log served as a pillow. Personal cleanliness

was utterly unknown; great officers of state, even dignitaries so high as the Archbishop of Canterbury, swarmed with vermin; such, it is related, was the condition of Thomas à Becket, the antagonist of an English king. To conceal personal impurity, perfumes were necessarily and profusely used. The citizen clothed himself in leather, a garment which, with its ever-accumulating impurity, might last for many years. He was considered to be in circumstances of ease, if he could procure fresh meat once a week for his dinner. The streets had no sewers; they were without pavement or lamps. After nightfall, the chamber-shutters were thrown open, and slops unceremoniously emptied down, to the discomfiture of the wayfarer tracking his path through the narrow streets, with his dismal lantern in his hand.

Æneas Sylvius, who afterward became Pope Pius II., and was therefore a very competent and impartial writer, has left us a graphic account of a journey he made to the British Islands, about 1430. He describes the houses of the peasantry as constructed of stones put together without mortar; the roofs were of turf, a stiffened bull's-hide served for a door. The food consisted of coarse vegetable products, such as peas, and even the bark of trees. In some places they were unacquainted with bread.

Cabins of reeds plastered with mud, houses of wattled stakes, chimneyless peat-fires from which there was scarcely an escape for the smoke, dens of physical and moral pollution swarming with vermin, wisps of straw twisted round the limbs to keep off the cold, the ague-stricken peasant with no help except shrine-cure! How was it possible that the population could increase?

Shall we, then, wonder that, in the famine of 1030,

human flesh was cooked and sold; or that, in that of 1258, fifteen thousand persons died of hunger in London? Shall we wonder that, in some of the invasions of the plague, the deaths were so frightfully numerous that the living could hardly bury the dead? By that of 1348, which came from the East along the lines of commercial travel, and spread all over Europe, one-third of the population of France was destroyed.

Such was the condition of the peasantry, and of the common inhabitants of cities. Not much better was that of the nobles. William of Malmesbury, speaking of the degraded manners of the Anglo-Saxons, says: "Their nobles, devoted to gluttony and voluptuousness, never visited the church, but the matins and the mass were read over to them by a hurrying priest in their bedchambers, before they rose, themselves not listening. The common people were a prey to the more powerful; their property was seized, their bodies dragged away to distant countries; their maidens were either thrown into a brothel, or sold for slaves. Drinking, day and night, was the general pursuit; vices, the companions of inebriety, followed, effeminating the manly mind." The baronial castles were dens of robbers. The Saxon chronicler records how men and women were caught and dragged into those strongholds, hung up by their thumbs or feet, fire applied to them, knotted strings twisted round their heads, and many other torments inflicted to extort ransom.

All over Europe, the great and profitable political offices were filled by ecclesiastics. In every country there was a dual government: 1. That of a local kind, represented by a temporal sovereign; 2. That of a foreign kind, acknowledging the authority of the pope. This Roman influence was, in the nature of things, su-

perior to the local; it expressed the sovereign will of one man over all the nations of the continent conjointly, and gathered overwhelming power from its compactness and unity. The local influence was necessarily of a feeble nature, since it was commonly weakened by the rivalries of conterminous states, and the dissensions dexterously provoked by its competitor. On not a single occasion could the various European states form a coalition against their common antagonist. Whenever a question arose, they were skillfully taken in detail, and commonly mastered. The ostensible object of papal intrusion was to secure for the different peoples moral well-being; the real object was to obtain large revenues, and give support to vast bodies of ecclesiastics. The revenues thus abstracted were not infrequently many times greater than those passing into the treasury of the local power. Thus, on the occasion of Innocent IV. demanding provision to be made for three hundred additional Italian clergy by the Church of England, and that one of his nephews—a mere boy—should have a stall in Lincoln Cathedral, it was found that the sum already annually abstracted by foreign ecclesiastics from Eng^land was thrice that which went into the coffers of the king.

While thus the higher clergy secured every political appointment worth having, and abbots vied with counts in the herds of slaves they possessed—some, it is said, owned not fewer than twenty thousand—begging friars pervaded society in all directions, picking up a share of what still remained to the poor. There was a vast body of non-producers, living in idleness and owning a foreign allegiance, who were subsisting on the fruits of the toil of the laborers. It could not be otherwise than that small farms should be unceasingly merged into the

larger estates; that the poor should steadily become poorer; that society, far from improving, should exhibit a continually increasing demoralization. Outside the monastic institutions no attempt at intellectual advancement was made; indeed, so far as the laity were concerned, the influence of the Church was directed to an opposite result, for the maxim universally received was, that "ignorance is the mother of devotion."

The settled practice of republican and imperial Rome was to have swift communication with all her outlying provinces, by means of substantial bridges and roads. One of the prime duties of the legions was to construct them and keep them in repair. By this, her military authority was assured. But the dominion of papal Rome, depending upon a different principle, had no exigencies of that kind, and this duty accordingly was left for the local powers to neglect. And so, in all directions, the roads were almost impassable for a large part of the year. A common means of transportation was in clumsy carts drawn by oxen, going at the most but three or four miles an hour. Where boat-conveyance along rivers could not be had, pack-horses and mules were resorted to for the transportation of merchandise, an adequate means for the slender commerce of the times. When large bodies of men had to be moved, the difficulties became almost insuperable. Of this, perhaps, one of the best illustrations may be found in the story of the march of the first Crusaders. These restraints upon intercommunication tended powerfully to promote the general benighted condition. Journeys by individuals could not be undertaken without much risk, for there was scarcely a moor or a forest that had not its highwaymen.

An illiterate condition everywhere prevailing, gave

opportunity for the development of superstition. Europe was full of disgraceful miracles. On all the roads pilgrims were wending their way to the shrines of saints, renowned for the cures they had wrought. It had always been the policy of the Church to discourage the physician and his art; he interfered too much with the gifts and profits of the shrines. Time has brought this once lucrative imposture to its proper value. How many shrines are there now in successful operation in Europe?

For patients too sick to move or be moved, there were no remedies except those of a ghostly kind—the Pater-noster or the Ave. For the prevention of diseases, prayers were put up in the churches, but no sanitary measures were resorted to. From cities reeking with putrefying filth it was thought that the plague might be stayed by the prayers of the priests, by them rain and dry weather might be secured, and deliverance obtained from the baleful influences of eclipses and comets. But when Halley's comet came, in 1456, so tremendous was its apparition that it was necessary for the pope himself to interfere. He exorcised and expelled it from the skies. It slunk away into the abysses of space, terror-stricken by the maledictions of Calixtus III., and did not venture back for seventy-five years!

The physical value of shrine-cures and ghostly remedies is measured by the death-rate. In those days it was, probably, about one in twenty-three, under the present more material practice it is about one in forty.

The moral condition of Europe was signally illustrated when syphilis was introduced from the West Indies by the companions of Columbus. It spread with wonderful rapidity; all ranks of persons, from the Holy Father Leo X. to the beggar by the wayside, contracting the shameful disease. Many excused their misfor-