

Egyptian desert. But all agree that he holds in his hands the destiny of Europe. Whether the great crisis is to come now, or again be postponed while the diplomats maneuver for position, rests with him and his advisers.

IS CIVILIZED MAN MORIBUND?

Speaking of the alarming decrease of births in France, Jacques Bertillon in the *Temps* points out that the condition threatens the country with ruin in every respect. The political and military consequences are easily perceived, since of necessity the army must decrease while those of other countries are increasing. The wealth of the nation is also affected. The exports during the years of 1867-76 reached an average of 3,306,000,000 francs; in 1895 they increased to 3,374,000,000. During the same period the German exports increased from 2,974,000,000 francs (the average for 1872-76) to 4,500,000,000. The reason for this is that the number of French workmen does not increase, while in Germany the population has jumped from 41,000,000 to 52,000,000. In the same way the intellectual influence of French writers is on the decrease. A book written in French may be read by 46,000,000, while one written in German is within the reach of 97,000,000, and one in English of 115,000,000 people. The evils of a decrease of the birthrate are indeed far-reaching.

Another French author, Professor Foullee, quoted by the *Literary Digest*, asserts, however, that this evil is spreading throughout the civilized world and not only in France. The United States, Canada, Australia, Great Britain, Belgium, Switzerland and the Scandinavian countries are very much alike, he asserts, in this respect; with regard to the United States, he affirms that the New England states show about the same birthrate as France. The reason he assigns for this general decrease in the countries noted is that civilization is itself on the decrease, and he gives some appalling proofs in support of his statement:

Since 1881 the number of criminal cases in France has increased by 30,000, although practically the population has not increased at all. Especially has the number of murders and homicides increased. Up to recent times Italy reported the largest percentage of criminals of this kind, namely, from 250 to 300 each year. France has now the sad distinction of being in the lead, the average in late years being about 700. While Italy reported annually about 80 child murderers, France now averages 180. Taking all the data together, the criminality of France has just about doubled in the last fifty years. The saddest feature about this increase is the fact that it is proportionally greatest among the youth of the country. The actual fact is that the number of criminals who are yet children or youths is twice as large as the number of adult criminals, although France has only about seven million children and youths and twenty million adults. In Paris more than one-half of the criminals arrested are less than 21 years of age. Prostitution among children is alarmingly on the increase. During the last ten years an average of 4,000 of such cases were brought to the attention of

the authorities every year. In 1830 there were but five suicides to every 100,000 inhabitants; in 1892 there were twenty-four, and the rate is increasing. Suicides of children under 16 were formerly unknown in France; now there are on an average fifty-five each year. And in 1875 there were 375 suicides between 16 and 21.

M. Foullee then goes on to prove that the root of the evil may be found in the educational system of France, and his reasoning on this point is applicable to other countries. He says:

The fundamental error of the French system of education is the predominance of purely intellectual and rationalistic ideas which we have inherited from the last century, and which assign to scientific knowledge a superiority over and above moral principle in the training of men. Rabelais has already said that "Knowledge without conscience is the ruin of the soul." On all sides the warmest friends of education in France are entirely discouraged. To cram the memory with names and dates and facts does not supply the soul with thoughts that produce great feelings and crowd back vices. It is not the duty of the teacher to educate memories, but to train consciences. Our present system of schools dissipates instead of concentrates; it superficially skims over everything, but penetrates nothing. The abnormal development of the purely intellectual faculties characteristic of our day is a superficial semi-education and is a detriment to our youth. It does not supply the children with the principles that still strengthen them against temptation. The true purpose of the school is neither mere imparting nor mere training, but is training through imparting. Education is not a trade nor a mere function, least of all a political function, but is a moral and social mission.

If this be admitted the remedy is plainly suggested: It is not so-called "morality" but true Christianity that the civilized world needs. That alone can stay the decay that is threatening destruction to the very life of the nations.

WAKING THEM UP.

William E. Curtis, the Chicago *Record's* Washington correspondent, gives his paper the following information:

There has been a consultation among the leaders of religious organizations in the East within the last few weeks concerning the adoption of measures to resist the missionary movement of the Mormons in this section of the country, and particularly in the South. It is asserted by those who claim to have accurate information that there are now in the field between 2,300 and 2,400 Mormon missionaries, and that their propaganda has been carried on so actively and successfully that there are churches of that sect in all but nine states and territories of the Union. In order to avoid observation the work is carried on from headquarters in Brooklyn and Chattanooga, instead of Salt Lake City. And it is said that in both these cities are not only committees of able men directing affairs, but printing offices and other agencies for missionary work. A Mormon Church has recently been organized in the District of Columbia, and over in Maryland and Virginia, almost within sight of the Capitol, are several flourishing missionary stations. The most extensive work is being done in the South.

Mormon missionaries are said to be swarming into Virginia, North Carolina, Tennessee and Georgia. Formerly the practice of the Church was to colonize its converts in Utah, but the old plan seems to have been changed, and wherever its agents drive a stake they remain to cultivate the ground. While polygamy is not preached or practiced in these eastern colonies, it still remains an article of faith in the canons of the Church.

No wonder the "leaders of religious organizations" are worried at such vitality and energy on the part of the Mormons in this age of growing unbelief and spiritual indifference; but why they should feel called upon to "resist" this active missionary movement, it might puzzle the *Record's* correspondent to tell. It ought to be interesting to his readers for him to ascertain just what the aforesaid "religious leaders" offer by way of explanation, also a hint as to what particular form their resistance is going to assume.

NOT A SIGN OF CIVILIZATION.

Monday's *Sacramento Bee* contains this announcement:

Staid merchants and professional men, and white-haired members of the various prominent clubs of San Francisco, are vying with one another in beseeching letters to the state board of prison directors to obtain cards of admission to the execution of Dr. Durrant.

It is a sad commentary on the morale of a civilization that induces leading members of society to display a curiosity to witness the execution of a human being. If the society in which those people move were in a healthy condition morally, the very thought of a hanging would be so repulsive as to exclude all desire to be a spectator. One trouble is that there is too much familiarity with crime, through the readiness with which details thereof are attainable to all classes of people. When men become conversant, as spectators, with the processes of wrongdoing, either by imagination or by actual observation, there appears to be such a fascination that it is but a little step to actual participation. This is particularly the case with crimes that can be covered or condoned. Hence the flood of dissemination of news concerning details of these is prominent in the tendency of modern social relations. To make the execution of murderers a public or semi-public affair would but accelerate the movement toward immorality. Our modern civilization civilizes when its higher influence is given that prominence which leads people thereto; but it brutalizes when its debasing necessities are held up to the view of the morbidly curious. It would be better for the country if every execution of a condemned criminal were to take place as secretly as possible, and if the detail and sensationalism of every offense against good morals were kept from all who did not absolutely have to know of them in the administration of justice. The *Sacramento* incident is not a sign of civilization, but of a tendency to barbarism.

WHEN GREEK meets Turk, then comes the ugly diplomacy.