

men of such metal as the Rev. Dr. Begg, in praising up his own Church and detracting from all others, as the sweetest music that can charm their ears. It may be that the liberality of Dr. Hanna's sentiments is not the immediate cause of his return to the Established, but there can be no doubt that it is the primary cause of his leaving the Free Church."

[The above report has since been contradicted in the most positive terms. Ed. of Pres.]

FRANCE.—It is curious to observe the various practices to which the Ultramontane party now have recourse, in order to revive or confirm the devotion of their flocks. Whilst the Pantheists, the Materialists, and other adversaries of the Christian Church, multiply their attacks upon the fundamental truths of the Gospel, the priests find nothing better to do than to revert to the grossest superstitions. They do not appeal to the understanding or the conscience of the people, but labour to influence the ignorant, and to inflame their imagination by pompous shows.

I know not how far this method can produce any wide-spread or durable results. In any event, it proves that the defenders of the Romish communion have, in our age, fallen very low. Bossuet, Pascal and Fenelon defended their faith by the aid of learning and of logic; but their successors, apparently hopeless of victory on such ground, have substituted for logical arguments mere outward forms and puerile ceremonies. Amongst other practices of this sort, I may refer to the coronations of the Virgin. What are these? your readers may probably inquire. The following explanations will enlighten them: There exist, in several of our provincial cities, *Madonnas*, or statues of the Virgin, consecrated by ancient legends, and especially venerable in the eyes of bigots. Numerous miracles are attributed to the intervention of these *Madonnas*. Well, the high dignitaries of the Papal Church are reviving these popular superstitions, not reflecting that they are thus exciting the contempt of the enlightened part of the community.

It is clear that the worship of Mary is taking more and more an exclusive place in the Romish religion. The Virgin rules everything, inspires everything, does everything, is everything. Christ is subordinate to His mother, and awaits the intervention of Mary before He answers the prayers of the faithful. What would the apostles and the Christians of the primitive Church have said had they been witnesses of this Mariolatry?

An instance of the Popish persecuting spirit, in reference to the interment of the dead, may be added, as illustrating the unchanged and unchanging character of Romanism. On the 14th of August a young man died at St. Girons (l'Ariège). Permission for the interment was sought from the mayor, who referred the demand to the *curé*. The decision was that the young man could only be buried in the portion of the cemetery assigned to criminals that had been executed. The sorrowing parents, their hearts smarting with this cruel insult, appealed to the prefect of the department, who directed that the deceased Protestant's remains should be interred in the ordinary place of sepulture

in the cemetery. But the fanatical *curé* had wrought up his bigoted followers to such a pitch, that if the prefect's orders had been enforced, in all probability there would have been a riot. The parents were therefore compelled to convey the body of their son to a Protestant cemetery at a considerable distance. All the Protestants of the department are indignant at this infringement of their rights as citizens, and as the facts become known, the adherents of the Reformed faith will strongly sympathise with them.

ITALY.—A Turin telegram states that the Minister of the Interior, in a circular to the prefects relative to the approaching elections, announces that shortly after the assembling of Parliament the Ministry will bring forward a measure for the suppression of religious bodies and the re-adjustment of ecclesiastical property. This measure will ameliorate the position of the clergy in the country districts. In the division of the ecclesiastical wealth, a portion will be assigned to elementary and middle-class education, and a portion to the communes where the religious bodies resided, for works of public utility and for educational purposes. The Ministry will also bring forward bills for reforming the system of primary, secondary, and superior instruction.

The *Nazione* of Florence says: "We believe we can assert that the Minister of the Interior, wisely designing to prevent the renewal of the disorders which in some parts of the kingdom have been shown to arise from public religious performances, has ordered that henceforth processions in the public streets cannot take place without previous license from the civil authority, which will be able to prohibit them as often as there be reason to fear a disturbance of public order. Suitable instructions to this effect will have been sent to all the local prefects."

The whole sum raised last year for religious purposes by native Christians in South India amounted to 22,000 rupees. In 1860 it was little more than half that amount, or 11,965 rupees.

CHINA.—The hospital in connexion with the London Mission at Peking continues a useful adjunct to direct spiritual work. Among those who have applied for relief from suffering, not a few have found their way to the knowledge of Christianity; and now a respectable church exists, consisting of upwards of forty baptized persons, a large number of inquirers and applicants for baptism, with two flourishing boys' schools. A new dispensary has been opened in the west, and another is about to be established in the east of the city. "The most hopeful sign of any station," says Dr. Dudgeon, "whether medical or otherwise, in China, is the large attendance of women. When we get the women, we necessarily have the children, and the men soon follow—prejudice, pride, and exclusiveness soon disappear." Recently a countryman came in from a town 150 miles distant, and reported that there were more than 100 persons residing in his neighbourhood desirous of receiving Christian instruction. On further inquiry eight respectable persons were discovered who might be relied on as sincerely wishing to be taught, and one of them has since proceeded to the