

most important. For a long time, enlightened by the most sublime truths of Christianity, and generally observing the laws and morality dictated by the Gospel, the various nations had been opening out new roads and shaping for themselves fresh careers; but, as they had not all equally applied themselves to seeking "first the Kingdom of God and His Righteousness," they had not all escaped falling into the abyss of error, as regards religion, philosophy, and government.

The period of *Regeneration of Arts and Literature* coincided with that of the so-called Reformation which brought about the *Religious Wars*. Next, the Protestant nations were recognized and received as European governments by the famous Treaty of Westphalia. Then, a materialistic *Philosophy* helped along those false ideas of government, which sprang from the absence of religious principles, and, the *Revolutionary Erea* set in, only to cease when the nations shall have made up their minds to return to the narrow but sure path which God has traced for them.

During this period, comparatively speaking, a restricted one, there are, doubtless, many striking and glorious deeds which cannot be overlooked: faith, hope, and charity, are still working wonders; but, if sometimes there is room for admiration, too often also, unfortunately, deeds are to be met with, which deeply grieve the devout Christian.

Unquestionably, all the fruits which we have just hastily indicated, cannot be gathered from the study of a simple manual of history; for, after all, an *abridgment* is no more a *course* than a *summary* is a *science*, or a *plan*, an *edifice*; however, it is necessary,—in history as in everything else,—to proceed from the simple to the more intricate, from the easy to the more difficult. Undoubtedly, for want of considering this, certain persons of limited acquirements look down disdainfully on all abridgements in general, and of history in particular. Of what use, they say, to cram children's heads with so many facts which they do not understand, and so many dates, forgotten as soon as learned? According to this reasoning, they would require nothing less, than doing away with all elementary works. Perhaps, for example, it would be well to commence studying history in *Ségur* and *Rollin*, taking *Roërbacher* on the way. To be logical, one might as well place in the hands of children the *Grammar of Grammars*, the *Universal Dictionary of the English Language*, the *Cosmos* of Humboldt, or the *Arithmetical Machine* of Pascal.

If we only look at the answer, sometimes very short, which is to be formed in this Abridgement, and which the pupil should, as