

History Traveled and Tortured.

Mr. Frondo wrote a history some three pages largely devoted to an effort to prove that Henry VIII. was not quite the lecherous and blood-thirsty ruffian he was generally believed to be; and other writers have exerted their ingenuity to show that Richard the Third instead of being a wry-necked and cruel murderer was couerly and amiable. Copying this example, we learn from Fraser's Magazine and The English Intelligencer that the "Christian Brothers," as certain English and Irish Jesuits style themselves, have prepared and are engaged in the work of still further editing and publishing a series of "Lesson Books" intended for Roman Catholic children and youths at school, which are to be a species of "erasers," intended to rub out from the pages of history all those blotches with which it has been defaced by the superstition or the sanguinary cruelty and intolerance of Roman Catholics.

The aim of these astute Jesuits is to create a denominational literature and place it in the hands of all their school children, in which the Romish Church is represented as having been distinguished ever by meekness and long suffering, by tolerance and brotherly love, and by an ardent admiration for and patronage of literature and science; while it is further shown to have been uniformly met by unprovoked cruelty, oppression, and the densest and most obstructive ignorance at the hands of Protestants. They dwell on the harshness of the English penal laws to Irishmen, and suppress the story of the massacres of Protestants. They take credit to Cardinal Langton for acting with the English nobles in opposition to King John, but say nothing of the fact that he was suspended by Pope Innocent III. for the stand which he made or of the further fact that this same Pope declared Magna Charta null and void, and anathematized all those who had taken part in wresting it from the tyrant. The "persecutions" under Elizabeth are grossly magnified, but the facts, to quote the language of Dr. Dollinger, that a "succession of Popes sanctioned the assassination of heretical sovereigns, and that one actually instigated attempts upon the life of Queen Elizabeth," are sedulously concealed. The "burnings" of the Protestant martyrs by Mary are softened down into mere "severities," the details of which are mendaciously suppressed, and even these are attributed to the civil authorities, who, it is alleged, were "influenced by political, not religious motives," in the face of the well-known historical fact that Romish archbishops and bishops, composing an ecclesiastical court, consigned the martyrs of that day to the flames. It is claimed that the fifty thousand persons who were hung, beheaded, or burnt to death in the Low Countries on account of their religion only suffered the natural consequences of a civil rebellion against the sovereign; and also that "religion had nothing to do with the massacre on St. Bartholomew's day; but they say nothing of the motives which led Philip to destroy the Protestants in the Low Countries, or of the fact that Pope Gregory issued a bull approving of the massacre on St. Bartholomew's day, and exhorting Charles IX. to complete the work which he had so well begun; nor that the cruel slaughter was depicted on the walls of the Sistina chapel, nor that a medal was struck by the Papacy in honor of the event. But even this miserable travesty of history seems tame alongside of the efforts of the "Christian Brothers" to paint the terrors of the Inquisition in enchanting colors. With unparalleled mendacity and audacity combined they undertake to show that the terrible imprisonments, mutilations, tortures, autos da fe, and other atrocities of the priests and Jesuits who inspired and controlled the Inquisition were simply "abuses," which must be ascribed "to the civil, but not to the ecclesiastical power," notwithstanding the infamous rescript of Innocent VIII.: "We enjoin and command the said secular officers, under penalty of excommunication, that within six days after they shall be legally required, they regularly execute the sentences pronounced against heretics, without seeing the said processes carried on by you, and without allowing any appeal."

We are curious to know if this scandalous and unblushing perversion of historical evidence is to be repeated in this country; and whether the children of the Romish Church in the United States are also to be nurtured on an aliment composed of impudence and fraud. As the old Inquisition tortured and killed its victims, so this new Inquisition puts history to the rack and the thumb-screw, and crushes out of it all the truth that gives it any vitality.—N. Y. Christian Intelligencer.

How We Measure the Sun's Distance. Prof. R. A. Proctor, in his fourth lecture before the Brooklyn Academy, described the importance of the transit of Venus, as follows: You all know, of course, said he, that on this transit depend the best methods of determining the distance of the sun, and that upon determining the sun's distance depends our estimate of all the dimensions of the planetary system. Therefore that is the fundamental problem at starting, because when we pass on to the stars also our ideas depend on that one fundamental measurement of distance. Now it happens that the planet Venus, by coming between the earth and the sun enables us to measure that distance in a manner very easily explained. We know that the distance from Venus to the sun is to the distance of the earth from the sun as five to seven, and therefore, if observers at the north and at the south of the earth's globe look at Venus at a time when she is directly toward the sun, the southern observer will see Venus at the highest of these stations, and the northern observer at the lowest. It becomes a simple matter of geometry to determine in this way the required distances. The southern observer watches Venus going across the sun's face on the northern track, the northern observer sees her on the lower track and by noting how long she is they detect no how long those two tracks are, and then geometry settles the difficulty.

Bismarck and the Pope.

There are signs of war in Europe. The increasing quarrel between the Berlin Government and the Ultramontanists has assumed an aspect which threatens a war with France; and a revival of that war, in the shape of a religious conflict, would mean for the warring of the "seventh vial" for Europe. In another place we print an extract from a Paris letter, and a translation of an important article from the North German Gazette. This outspoken and threatening article is evidently the expression of Bismarck's and the Emperor's sentiments. Such an article would never have appeared were it not directly inspired from headquarters. In Europe it is the custom, in many places, for governments thus to make known their peace assurances and warlike warnings in a form which, while it is now nominally official, and therefore easy to disown in case unforeseen considerations arise to change the aspect of the situation, is nevertheless everywhere received as the accepted position of the government. Viewed in this its true light, the article of the North German Gazette will be found very interesting and significant. While in Paris everybody seems to fear that the danger of a row with Bismarck is imminent, and that the counsels of influential persons are emphatic that, to avoid war, MacMahon and the Assembly must take ground against the Ultramontanists (the Ultra Roman Catholics, and others feel that this is now impossible, in Germany the war talk is open and defiant. Bavaria, and certain sections of some of the other German States, are full of Ultra Roman Catholics; several millions in all. These have been gaining, in the recent elections to the German Parliament; and it will be no easy matter for Bismarck to inaugurate under regular governmental forms his proposed war upon the Church of Rome. The Catholic Bishops in France have sided very actively with their friends the German Catholics. Bismarck regards this as a just ground of offence, and if persisted in, a cause of war against France. He says, or his editor says so for him, that "a continual intervention of this kind will make a rupture inevitable." The interference, as he terms it, of the French Bishops in Germany, has "the irreligious aim of rendering several millions of pious subjects lax"—"lax in their devotion to Emperor Wilhelm, a zealous Protestant"—and he thinks the plan is "to gather together for the Pope, regarded as chief of a universal Theocracy, troops destined to do battle against the authority instituted by God and the national government."

Against the church of Rome the powers at Berlin are open and self-proclaimed enemies. The Romish church says the article we copy, "is the enemy with whom, as experience proves, there is no way to come to an understanding—the enemy with whom it is impossible to effect a reconciliation; and this enemy 'has become the master of France.'"

That is tolerably plain talk. It is not obscured by the fine dust of a vaguely diplomatic phraseology. It "means business," if words mean anything. The article goes on to tell us that France under Romish influences and France is known to be strongly on the side of the Pope, will be but "a satellite of Rome—a hostile government, with which we could not live in peace." Again, the writer declares that but for her weakness, France would at once make war upon Emperor Wilhelm; and he takes it for granted that as soon as that country recovers from her prostration and defeat, she will be ready to fall upon Germany. Bismarck is seeking to invoke Italy in the fight, as the most certain means of hastening the downfall of the Romish church. He was recently confronted by an Ultramontane member of the German Parliament, Herr Malckrodt, with a statement of a certain thing that he (Bismarck) had told an Italian General at the time of the Prussian and Austrian war. Bismarck excitedly and violently pronounced it "a lie." But the facts seem to partially justify the Jesuit disciple in his assertion. It is known that the German Chancellor is violent and unrelenting; and he will not probably stop in the war upon the Pope unless he finds himself unable to move. It would be a war, once fairly launched, that would open wider and vaster vistas of carnage than ever Bismarck dreamed of.

Principalship of the F. C. College, Edinburgh.

Since the death of Dr. Candlish a number of the Free Church Presbyteries have recommended to the Assembly the names of those whom they desire should be appointed as successor, the majority being in favour of Dr. Rainy. The Principalship is all but an honorary position, the duties being light, and can be easily discharged by any of the professors. It is, perhaps, the highest honour which the Free Church can bestow, and should undoubtedly be bestowed on the most outstanding name in her communion. It appears that Dr. Duff had been at once thought of as the most deserving of this honour, both on account of his distinguished services to the Church, and from the fact that after the death of Dr. Chalmers he had been offered the Principalship, but which he had then for certain reasons declined. A feeling, however, again prevailed that if Dr. Duff was again offered this honour he would again decline, and consequently Dr. Rainy has appeared the most deserving upon whom it should be conferred. The grounds upon which he is nominated are—that he has the confidence of the Church as an able, sound, and accomplished theologian, who has in his crusading reply to Dean Stanley's caricature of Scotch Church History and in other ways proved his thorough competency to deal with the errors and heresies of the times. We regret to notice a disposition in the discussions in several of the Presbyteries to import a feeling of antagonism to Dr. Rainy on account of the part he took in the Union controversy; but we feel assured that the General Assembly will confer this honour on broad grounds, and will not be influenced by other considerations than those of honouring that man who will equally reflect the honour back on the Free Church.

Presbyterianism of New South Wales.

We take the following extract from a letter from New South Wales:—"Presbyterianism, I am sorry to say, is not in the front in New South Wales. Episcopacy and Papacy are far in the advance. There are about three Papists to one Presbyterian, if you can rely upon our census. The Presbyteries are in two sections—one comparatively large, called the Presbyterian Church of New South Wales; the other comparatively small, the Presbyterian Church of Eastern Australia. The latter formed a minority of the Free Church Synod at the Union eight years ago. In the Union Church there is neither uniformity in doctrine nor worship. One congregation uses an organ, another abhors instrumental music; one uses the hymn-book, another keeps to the old Psalms; one minister is an ardent Erastian, another says that he is Free Church in principle. Lascivious has gone so far that the Moderator of the last Synod declared from the chair that it was 'only highly probable that Calvinism, infant baptism, and Presbyterianism were taught in Scripture. Several called him to account, but he tried to justify himself, and the matter was allowed to drop."

India.

Hinduism is a decaying faith. Christianity, however, is not alone in seeking to prove it. Mohammedanism, which already comprises thirty millions of believers in India, is full of zeal and the spirit of propagandism. The Brahmo Somaj, also, is having no little success, especially with educated Hindoos. An exchange says:

The Brahmo Somaj, which is beginning to exert a powerful influence in India, was organized in its present form in 1830, under the leadership of Baboo Keshub Chunder Sen, who, at that time a member of a Somaj established in 1831, and conservative in its tendencies, desired a more radical separation from Hinduism than could be effected in the original body. The first Somaj was originated by Rajah Ram Mohun Roy, who was almost a Christian. His successor was Baboo Debendra Nath Tagore, who became leader in 1841, and who is still at the head of the conservative party, which is now known as the Adi Somaj, and, going back into Hinduism, has become as a religious movement almost exhausted. Chunder Sen is eclectic in his theology, and in a large degree a mystic. He and his followers believe in the unity and fatherhood of God and the need of conversion to God, beginning with repentance, carried on by faith and prayer, and completed in the heavenly kingdom by divine grace. They deny the eternal portion of sinners. In their views of God they are pure theists. Standing with Christianity in its opposition to idolatry, caste, materialism, positivism and immorality; and in its belief in the fatherhood of God and brotherhood of man standing squarely on Christian ground; and, farther still, accepting many of the truths taught by Christ, they shrank from regarding Him as the Way, the Truth and the Life. The number of Brahmo Somajes in India is about one hundred. The number of members is unknown. The Indian Mirror, which is their organ, states that several of the leading Brahmos have undertaken a missionary tour through North-west India.

The Cause of Success.

Whether we syllable out wants in prayer, or whether we present to God the dumb, mute appeals of our needs we pray. We have no joy, no comfort but what He gives. We toil all day surrounded by His protecting care; we return at night to enjoy His tender loving-kindness. We lie down under the shadow of His protecting wing. Not an iota, not a tittle, do we possess save as His gift. And more! He gave His Son to die. He gave His Spirit to strive with us, to dwell in us. He gives us peace that is passeth understanding, and joy unspeakable and full of glory. He gives us heaven as our home, and all freely, without money or price. Oh, if we were bound to recognize our Father in heaven in one aspect more than another, it is as the Giver of every good thing. And yet it is a maxim of almost universal acceptance that a man is the architect of his own fortune. A man starts with no special advantages; but he toils hard and perseveres. Gradually he rises above the throng. He makes himself a name; he wins his way into the glittering circles of the affluent; his voice is heard in the councils of his country; his opinions command respect; he has attained eminence, and people say, "He is a self-made man." Indeed! Who kept him alive all these years? Who gave him talents and opportunities? Who endowed him with wisdom to avail himself of these? It is true he has been industrious and self-denying; but none the less true that to God alone is he indebted for every penny he has earned, for every advantage he has secured. The pen is not to be praised for the poem indited by its means; the sword is not to be credited with the feats of heroism performed by the hand that wielded it; so God alone gave the man the power to use them. It has been said that the battle of life is a battle for bread. All are in search of bread. All men were only half as anxious for the bread of life, thousands might have gone up to everlasting glory who have gone down to shame and everlasting contempt. Men and women have died whilst seeking, asking, bread. But never shall it be thus with those who seek the bread of heaven—who seek Christ. Whosoever will may take the bread that cometh down from heaven, Oh, believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, the bread of heaven, the bread of life, and you will be happy here, and happy when you come to die.—Rev. J. W. Carter.

A complaint was once made to Martin Luther:—"Dear Herr Doctor, things are issuing and happening nowhere as we would have them." "Well," he said, "that is precisely right. Have you not given up your will to our Lord God, praying every day, 'Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven?'"

Old Letters.

Never burn kindly-written letters; it is so pleasant to read them over when the ink is brown, the paper is yellow with age, and the hand that traced the friendly words are folded over the hearts that prompted them, under the green sod. Above all, never burn love-letters. To read them in after years is like a resurrection to one's youth. The elderly spinster finds, in the impassioned offer she foolishly rejected twenty years ago, a fountain of juvenescence. Glancing over it she realizes that she was once a belle and a beauty, and beholds her former self in a mirror much more congenial to her tastes than the one that confronts her in her dressing-room. The "widow indeed" derives a sweet and solemn consolation from the letters of the beloved one who has journeyed before her to the far-off land, from which there comes no message, and where she hopes one day to join him. No photographs can so vividly recall to the memory of the mother the tenderness and devotion of children who have left at the call of heaven, as the epistolary outpouring of their love. The letter of a true son or daughter to a true mother is something better than an image of the features—it is a reflex of the writer's soul. Keep all loving letters; burn only the harsh ones, and, in burning them, forgive and forget them.—Northwestern.

Political and Social Changes in Japan.

Kido Takayoshi, who is at present acting as Prime Minister in Japan during the illness of Sanjo, has published a pamphlet explanatory of the causes of the recent social and political changes in Japan. "The name of the author," says the Japan Mail, "stands high, possibly without parallel, in the estimation of the people. The paper evinces a modest, kindly, considerate, and gentle spirit, to which he unites the highest courage and determination. Loyalty to his master, tenderness towards the people, grief for the bloodshed which attended the revolution—an event in which he took a prominent part—are strikingly developed. The candid avowals he makes of the impossibility of yet classing Japan among the prosperous and enlightened States of the world must have cost him some sacrifice of pride, though he does not forget to rebuke the superficial pretensions of the more shallow of his countrymen, who imagine that a mere imitation of the externals of the Western nations is the sign of a solid and equal civilisation. It is easy to see that the matters uppermost in his mind are the Revolution of 1868, and the measures it now behoves the Government to take in order to secure the legitimate fruits of that event. He argues that the revolution was necessitated by the altered tendencies of the age and the new relations which had sprung between Japan and the Western nations. He betrays a strong desire to justify the measures of that critical period, and if he hedges somewhat over them it is clearly from a sense of the responsibility incurred by himself and the reformers. He then proceeds to what may be called the constructive portion of his task, and by way of introducing refers shortly to the parliamentary system as known to us in Europe. But he conceals that Japan is in no sense ripe for such a form of government, and that meanwhile the Sovereign must anticipate by his own discernment the wishes of the people, and entrust the execution of those wishes to the officials."

Duties of Elders.

In Edinburgh Mr. Moody was asked what he would recommend should be done in the case of elders who were obviously disinclined to work for Christ, and he replied that those elders in the Church of an opposite character should seek to raise the tone of the elder-ship by earnest and indefatigable labour amongst the congregation, and by this means either stir up the dunes, or make the elder-ship too hot for them. They would either be led to join with the willing workers, or they would be driven to resign their posts when the disparity between what they did for the Master became so obvious. In answer to another question, Mr. Moody expressed a decided opinion against a church amongst its members any unconverted persons. It should be the care of the elders to use every precaution against the admission of any such persons into the membership of the church. Of course absolute certainty in this matter was impossible, but nothing should be left undone to discover the real state of the case before so momentous a step as the admission of a person to the membership of a Christian Church was taken. Mr. Moody expressed his opinion that the visits of the elders to the homes of the people might be made much more agreeable and profitable. The mode of visiting was so generally cold, stiff, and formal that the approach of the elder to a house was often the signal for all the youngsters of the family to decamp until the affliction, as they thought it, was over. Now he had been in the habit, when he visited a family, of pulling out his Bible, and asking some of them if they had been doing anything in the way of studying this or that book of life; and when he found out what they had been reading last, he endeavoured to lead them into a familiar conversation on the subject. In this way he had an interchange of thought, and very often light was thrown on a book of the Bible or a Scripture character. In such ways, instead of the visit being regarded as tedious and uninteresting, it was welcomed and made profitable. Mr. Moody also spoke of the importance of the elders looking well after the young—giving youthful strangers in their churches a cordial greeting and kindly encouragement. He spoke too of the importance of setting the young members of the Church to work, saying that a minister who set fifty young men to work around him was a much wiser man than he who sought to do the work of fifty men and killed himself.

Six years ago there were only thirteen unmarried ladies employed by the American Board of Missions, now there are fifty-six in the foreign field alone.

How Dr. Guthrie Studied.

For the sake of students and others we quote the following from Dr. Guthrie's autobiography. When I went to Aberdeen, I know pretty well how to speak German, but very little about how to compose them; so I set myself vigorously to study how to illustrate the great truths of the Gospel, and to make them, so that there should be a shepherd to the church, no wandering eyes, but everywhere an eager attention. Sincerely to convert my hearers was not within my power; but to command their attention, to awake their interest, to touch their feelings, and instruct their minds, was—an I determined to do it.

With this end, I used the simplest, plainest terms, avoiding anything vulgar, but always, where possible, employing the Saxon tongue—the mother-tongue of my hearers. I studied the style of the address which the ancient and inspired prophets delivered to the people of Israel, and how, differing from dry disquisitions, or naked statement of truths, they abound in metaphors, figures and illustrations. I turned to the Gospels, and found that He who knew what was in man, what could best illuminate a subject, win the attentive, and move the heart, used parables or illustrations, stories, comparisons, drawn from the scenes of nature and familiar life, to a large extent in His teaching; in regard to which a woman—type of the masses—said, "The parts of the Bible I like best are the *lives*."

Taught by such models, and encouraged in my resolution by such authorities I resolved to follow, though it should be at a vast distance, these ancient masters of the art of preaching, being all the more ready to do so, as it would be in harmony with the natural turn and bias of my own mind.

I was careful to observe by the faces of my hearers, and also by the account the more intelligent of my Sunday class gave of my discourses, the style and character of those parts which had made the deepest impression, that I might cultivate.

After my discourse was written, I spent hours in correcting it; latterly always for that purpose keeping a blank page on my manuscript opposite a written one, cutting out dry bits, giving point to dull ones, making clear any obscurity, and narrative parts more graphic, throwing more pathos into appeals, and copying God in his works by adding the ornamental to the useful. The longer I have lived and composed, I have acted more and more according to the saying of Sir Joshua Reynolds in his "Lectures on Painting," that God does not give excellence to men but as the reward of labor.

To this, with my style of delivery, and self-possession, and command and flexibility of voice, and power of throwing myself into the characters I was depicting—thereby feeling their emotions, and expressing them in such language, and looks, and tones as they would themselves have done—I attribute the "popularity" which I early gained, and maintained for well-nigh forty years of a public ministry.

These things I mention for the instruction and encouragement of others. If, as in other spheres, "pains and prayer" will do anything.

A little girl was once asked the following question, "What is faith?" She replied, "Doing God's will and asking no questions."

The first edition of the the third volume of Mr. Forester's "Life of Dickens" consisted of 10,000 copies. It was sold out within ten days of publication, and a second edition is now in the press.

A conservative young man has wound up his life before it was unrolled. We expect old men to be conservative, but when a nation's young men are so, its funeral bell is already rung.—Becher's.

If you have ever tried it you must have been struck with the few solid thoughts, the few suggestive ideas which survive the perusal of the most brilliant of human books. Few of them can stand three readings, and of the memorabilia which you have marked in your first reading, on returning to them you find many of them were not striking, or weighty, or original as you thought. But the Word of God is striking; it will stand a thousand readings, and the man who has gone over it the most frequently and carefully is the surest of finding new wonders there.—Rev. James Hamilton.

When men live to themselves, and are satisfied that they do no hurt, though they do no good, are scarce, selfish, wrathful, angry, peevish, or have their kindness confined to their relations, or otherwise are but little useful but in what they are pressed into, and therein come off with difficulty in their own minds; who esteem all lost that is done for others, and the greatest part of wisdom to be cautious, and disapprove the necessities of men; that make self and its concerns the end of their lives; whatever otherwise their professions may be, or their diligence in religious duties, they do very little either represent or glorify God in the world.—Dr. Owen.

A sensible mother writing of children's clothing, says, "I see many children whose legs are too much exposed for health or comfort. It is a curious fact that in the statistics laid by teachers of public and private schools of this city before the ladies who have recently lectured on the subject of dress, it was proved that the children of a mission school in the lower part of the city wore more underwear and were more comfortably dressed than those of an up-town private school. The wife of the Scotch and German mechanic, and even the hard-working Irish wash-woman, will contrive to get hoods, leggings, and mittens to keep her darling warm, while your little Miss Gentilly will be beautifully supplied with sashes and beads, through shivering with the cold for want of proper winter clothing."