

thirds of the children in the States of the Church are "growing up in complete ignorance of letters." A few years ago, the reigning Pope forbade, by a special bull, the establishment of Infant Schools in his dominions.

The ignorance of the Parish Priests and Monks is almost incredible. Most of them read nothing but their breviary. Great numbers of them never composed a sermon: when they preach, which is but seldom, they avail themselves of published discourses. Corruption of life is very common, and many members of the clerical order are infidels.

As for the monasteries, they are too frequently the abodes of gluttony, intemperance, and shameful vices.

Confessions, indulgences, and dispensations open wide the doors of iniquity, sear the conscience, and harden the heart; while the sickening sentimentalism of saint-worship, and the gross idolatry connected with the veneration of images and relics, prevent the access of the gospel to the soul, and keep the sinner from the Saviour.

"Including popes, cardinals, patriarchs, archbishops, bishops, generals of orders, superiors, priors, monks, nuns, it has been computed that there is in Italy one person consecrated to religion, on an average, for forty-five inhabitants. Now, possessing such a moral force as this, if Rome is indeed the true and only Church of Christ, and He really dwells in her, Italy ought to be the holiest land on earth, for no other country is so abundantly provided for, as it regards religious teachers. But is Italy the holiest land on the earth? If it be so, all we have to say is, that she is the most enormously slandered country in the world; for nothing is more certain than that she is believed to be one of the most immoral, if not the most so, of all portions of Christendom, at least so far as the Old World is concerned.

"And what is absolutely confounding is the fact, that in proportion as you approach the City of Rome, come from which end of Italy you may, bad government, physical desolation, poverty, ignorance, irreligion, vice, crime, all increase! This is inexplicable. And when you reach Rome, and enter within the walls of the Eternal City, you will find less of true piety and purity of morals

than in any other city in all Christendom, if we may credit the testimony of Romans themselves.

"When we visited Rome, in the year 1837, one of the first things we heard the distinguished individuals, both natives and foreigners, to whom we bore letters of introduction, say, was, that we had come to the worst place within all the limits of the Roman Catholic world to see what religion is. This remark is heard by strangers from all quarters, upon their arrival in Rome. And yet that city is the abode of the so-styled Vicar of Christ, the centre of the whole Christian world, the seat of all the mighty influences which the Vatican sends forth throughout the earth! Why is this? We leave to others to assign the reasons, for we cannot, upon the supposition that the Roman Catholic religion is a true type and expression of the gospel."—P. 256.

We are gratified to learn that this is the first of a series of volumes, illustrative of the state of religion in Europe. The arrival of the next in order will be greeted by us with a hearty welcome.

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*Appleton's Illustrated Editions of the Poets:*

1. *The Vision; or Hell, Purgatory, and Paradise, of Dante Alighièri.* Translated by the Rev. HENRY FRANCIS CARY, A.M. *With the Life of Dante and Notes. Illustrated with twelve fine steel engravings.* 16mo. pp. 587.
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Dante was born at Florence, in May, 1265, and died at Ravenna, in July, 1321. His 'Vision' was published in 1300, the year of the first jubilee, when the infamous Boniface VIII. occupied the Papal throne. Of its just delineations of character, its keen satire, and its bold rebukes of reigning vices, we need not speak. The perusal of the