

DE MENDACIO HISTORICO.

The Reverend Dr. Reuben Parsons, well known as a hitherto frequent contributor to the very excellent Catholic magazine *The Ave Maria* and as the author of an "History of the Church" has collected sometime since many of his articles to the above-mentioned magazine and given them to the reading world in a work styled "Some Lies and Errors of History." As the title of the book will suggest it is purely historical and treats mainly of those many atrocious charges which are and have been so often made against the Church of Rome. The first article found in the work referred to is one which deals with the alleged immorality of Pope Alexander VI. and so successfully does the learned author dispel the cloud of infamy in which many historians would have the Pontiff enveloped, that it really makes one ask the question, "why, in truth, have men of supposed learning favoured such illusions?" The reader of the article cannot but be convinced that Dr. Parsons knows whereof he speaks, for he quotes freely from the historians who blacken the memory of the pontiff and also from those who, with a sense of justice about them, have treated their subject in such a way as to base their assertions on facts, not wild and hateful and carping imaginings.

It would be an infringement on the space of the College monthly to have the article reprinted in toto. We shall therefore try to gather the leading points and present them to EXCELSIOR readers. It is not surprising to find that the sources of the accusations against Pope Alexander are far from reliable. "The 'Diary' of Burkhard, a master of ceremonies at Alexander's court, is," says Gregorovius, the Protestant historian, "with the exception of the journal of Infessura, the only work concerning Alexander's Court composed at Rome. And it has an official character about it. . . . He never repeats mere rumors." If the "Diary" has an official character about it, it is indeed surprising for the reason that a humble master of ceremonies could hardly become acquainted with the court secrets. And, again, it is known that on almost every page of the "Diary" is read "si recte memini," or "si vera mihi relata sunt," or "fertur," which shows that the work of Burkhard must lack an official character and, on the contrary, assume the character of something not very much above conjecture.