

beginning, ten distinguished, these Christian miners soon began to converse with their French fellow-labourers about the gospel. The consequence has been that forty families have bidden farewell to Romanism, and the whole mining village is enjoying at this hour a revival from heaven. I myself have remarked that congregations which I saw only five years since, have within that short period considerably more than doubled their numbers.

I have been delighted to find one feature of a reviving religion noticeable in other countries beginning to display itself in this country; I refer to the promotion of young men's Christian associations. There are already twenty-five of these scattered over France, and maintaining a regular correspondence with each other. They are increasing every month, and promise to be productive of incalculable benefit. The Sabbath-school system is also beginning to be appreciated. Thirty-two years ago the first Sabbath-school in Paris was opened by Mr. Frederick Monod; not long since his eloquent brother Adolphe addressed 4000 Sabbath-school children in the Oratoire; and, indeed, one of the numerous band of ministers connected with the Oratoire—Mentandon—has his entire time occupied with the care of the young.

In the important French city from which I now write, we have a remarkable instance of the steady progress of the gospel. There are about 9000 Germans in Lyons. An evangelical minister has lately been obtained to labour among them. He began with eight hearers; he has now 200 in regular attendance on his ministry. But the labours of Mr. Tysch are the most remarkable. He is about to build a new church that will accommodate 1000 or 1200 persons; his present place of worship having become inconveniently small, though it so happens that architectural improvements have been decreed by the authorities that require it to be pulled down. Around this place of worship, at a greater or less distance, there are eight missionary chapels, which are the centre of evangelistic efforts for the districts in which they respectively stand. Along with two beloved Christian friends from Scotland, I visited one of these last night, with the view of witnessing a work-evening service; we were conducted into a back court, then up lofty stairs and along winding passages, when of a sudden, to our agreeable surprise, there opened before us a large hall, very plain, but clean, and well lighted with oil-lamps, and with a neat little pulpit at the extremity. The hall was excellently filled with working men in blouses, soldiers, women tastefully but humbly dressed, perhaps amounting in all to seventy. The meeting not many months since began with four persons, and I learned that with one exception, all of them had not long before been Romanists. After the usual services were ended, I addressed the people for nearly twenty minutes in English, Mr. Tysch interpreting, and never, I am sure, did I speak to a more attentive people. After the beautiful French hymn had been sung, with that pathos which is so characteristic of Protestant worship in France, many of the people came up, and taking me warmly by the hand, thanked me for what I had spoken. I liked to be thus received by the tough soldier and bloused *ouvrier*. O that the message may have received an equal welcome! This message is what France needs; and when the gospel has once revolutionised France, she will need no other revolution. How often did I feel this as, passing in a journey of several hundred miles amid vine-covered mountains, acacia hedges, blooming pomegranates and ocalanders and all other beauties of an August in the south of France, the thought constantly arose to damp the enjoyment that this great and beautiful land was so under the triple curse of Romanism, infidelity, and indifference! The only way by which France is to find true liberty, is by taking back the true religion which she cast away from her on the fatal St Bartholomew's eve.

STATE OF THE CHURCH IN HOLLAND.

The following extract from a letter in the *News of the Churches*, will no doubt, tend to to awaken a prayerful interest in the present position and future prospects of the once famous church in Holland:—

The rationalist party is evidently increasing in courage and boldness as it progresses. Already has the Provincial Synod of North Holland removed all the ancient landmarks, and virtually proclaimed that there exists no test or standard by which to prove the orthodoxy of candidates for the holy ministry. Whilst this leaves the decision in every case in the hands of the candidate himself, provision is made in the newly-proposed formula, which has been signed previous to ordination, for advancing one step further, and thus completing the circle of defection from the faith once held so dear and maintained so steadfastly by the church of Holland. As stated in my last, it vests the power taken from the confessions in the church courts. Whilst professing to give unlimited freedom from the tyranny of law, it covertly hands over the aspirant for office to the tender mercies of a judge who is bound by nothing but his own inspirations of truth and duty. Should this proposal be adopted, and there is every likelihood that it will, unless events interfere, the impossibility of excluding unfaithful ministers will be followed by the possibility of excluding faithful ones. The power taken from the dead confession, being transferred to the living Synod, would undoubtedly be used by that body, as at present constituted, first to protect error, then to discourage truth, and ultimately to cast it out.

Hitherto, it must be confessed, the policy of the rationalists has triumphed. It has been bold, unscrupulous, and daring. Whilst damaging itself, no doubt, by wounding the sensibilities of some, it possesses, on the other hand, the force derived from unity of object, and unity of mind internally among those who prosecute it. It is the policy of men who know what they wish, and avow it openly. Its boldness is in fact both its weakness and its strength,—its weakness, by shocking and alienating those who sympathise indeed with its principle, but shrink from accepting its fruits; and its strength, in giving concentration and unity to those who are neither scared by a full inward consciousness, or by a full public avowal both of its principle and its fruits. Whether its weakness or strength shall prove the predominating element depends of course on the yet unknown and unspoken mind of the community. It evidently, however, bears the character of a policy which is either hastening on to victory, or preparing for a signal and unexpected overthrow.

I wish I could say that the evangelical or orthodox party presented the same united front and uncompromising attitude as their opponents. But it is not so. The two principles of cure, the medical and the judicial, of which I spoke in a former letter, remain as yet unreconciled, and the two parties representing them remain at the same distance from each other as before. The harmonious union of these two principles and these two parties might, humanly speaking, effect the salvation of the Church of Holland. But notwithstanding all that has been spoken and written on either side, I cannot see that an approach to reconciliation has yet been made. It is true that those who advocate the medical method and expect deliverance from the unfaithful preaching of the gospel by each in his own sphere, do not propose that the confessions should be set aside and all discipline abolished. Nor have those who take the opposite side the courage to maintain that the confession should be used as a strict code of law on which to judge and cast out all who differ from it in subordinate doctrines. But then, if slighter deviations are permitted, who is to adjudicate on the more and less which is to form the

basis of such opposite conclusions as the rejection or admission of a minister? It seems to me if the two parties, instead of dwelling on the great benefits and blessings to be derived from the application of their respective principles, would address themselves simply to the resolution of the above problem, and show how they could be practically harmonized, they would take a mighty step in advance towards the attainment of their common object. As it is, however, they stand aloof from each other—at least any attempted advances on the side of the party of discipline, have been respectfully rejected by the other, who are afraid that, if they were once involved in the exercise of judicial procedure, they would be hurried along by a necessary consequence to acts implying an entire sacrifice of favourite principle. I have spoken to individuals belonging to both these parties on the unspeakable importance of their fusion, and have asked if they did not think that such a thing was possible, at least if an attempt were made to come to mutual understanding, there being nothing really antagonistic in the contrasted principles, which are both founded on truth, and the only difficulty lying in their joint and harmonious application. The invariable answer I got from both sides was, that such a fusion was impossible. I believe that some obstacles exist in the position and antecedents of the parties themselves, but I cannot but think if the principles they represent were reconciled, the parties would dissolve and melt into one, whilst the history of their separate existence would be speedily forgotten.

The case as it now stands presents a problem of great interest to Christendom in general; and whatsoever should be found able to provide for it a satisfactory solution, founded on broad principles of universal application, would confer a great benefit not only on the Church of Holland, but on the church at large throughout the world. How, for example, discipline is to be restored to a congregation fallen away in whole or in part from the faith and practice of the gospel, so as neither to give ground for the charge of unfaithfulness on the one hand, nor of useless severity on the other. The process has been often gone through practically, with success, under judicious guidance. But what are the principles on which it ought to be conducted? Preaching, and at least incipient discipline, are both necessary; the creative power of love, and the repressing hand of justice, must both come into play. But where is the point of junction? On what reflective principle does an instructive sound sense combine them? Time may furnish the answer, and perhaps, through the Church of Holland, to the other churches.

THE MARTYRDOM OF ARCHBISHOP CRANMER.

The following morning was dark and cheerless, and the rain fell heavily. Cranmer's time was come, and he was led forth to St. Mary's Church. Clothed in coarse and squalid garments, and walking between two friars, the Primate of all England passed through the streets on his way to that spot where his two beloved friends, Ridley and Latimer, had been burnt as martyrs to the faith not many months before.

But first, probably according to the arrangement of that morning, to shelter his persecutors from the inclemency of the weather, the sermon was to be preached, and his expected recantation to be made in St. Mary's Church. Notwithstanding the meanness of his apparel, the mild gravity of that sorrowful countenance, and the long white beard of the venerable Archbishop, touched the hearts of the spectators with sincere commiseration, as he was led to a lofty platform which had been raised opposite the pulpit, that he might be seen by every one. There he knelt down and continued for a short time in silent