

remarks of ours. Yet, do we feel that a mere "literary notice" will be doing but scant justice to their merits. Comprehensive in their arrangement, accurate in their detail, and not deficient in power, they present themselves to the Protestant reader in that familiar and attractive guise that so peculiarly distinguishes the productions of their author. And while specially designed for the stray members of the fold, they may be read with profit by many a one within its precincts who would give a reason for the faith that is in him.

Premising that we may again refer to these lectures, we content ourselves for the present with the following pertinent extract :—

"So much for the first part—sectarian intolerance. What shall I say of the second—popular prejudice, which bases itself in a great measure on the falsehood that the Roman Catholic people are prohibited the use of the sacred scriptures? Now how often, in the course of the last winter, in lecturing upon these subjects, did I not insist upon the fallacy of this assertion? Over and over again do the ministers of the Catholic religion contend and declare that the use of the sacred scriptures never was forbidden—that the abuse of the sacred scriptures was and is forbidden. And here is the great distinction. If you use the sacred scriptures properly, then are you entitled to an indiscriminate perusal of them. If you abuse them then it is evident to any man of common sense that the Bible should be closed against your abuse. And this is the wise system of the Catholic religion which has brought upon us so much abuse; and in the language of the author of the Acts of the Apostles, has "caused people to throw dust into the air." But it is said—"you will not allow the Bible to go into the hands of the people without note and comment." Well, we do not allow the Bible to go into the hands of the people without note and comment, because we believe that they cannot understand it unless they have an explanation. Recollect that there is no book more difficult to be understood than the sacred scriptures. Now, if I place in the hands of a youth the works of an ancient classic writer, he may perfectly understand the words—he may comprehend the substance—therefore, I might argue it is utterly unnecessary for any classic critic to annex notes and comments to such a work. We have notes and comments to the sacred scriptures on the very same principle. And if you take the trouble to enter on a dispassionate examination of the necessity of such notes and comments, I believe that you will all, whether Catholics or otherwise, agree with me that as far as an indiscriminate perusal of the Bible goes, it would be proper that people should be guided by landmarks, as it were—by notes and comments. Let me give you a few

instances. On reading the Acts of the Apostles, you find in the xxii. chap. and 19th v., this passage: "And they that were with me, saw, indeed, the light, but heard not the voice of him that spoke with me." Then pass to the ix. chap. and 7th v. of the same book, and you read—"And the Lord said unto him, arise, and go into the city, and there it will be told thou what thou must do:—now the men stood amazed, hearing, indeed, a voice, but seeing no man." Now, here is apparently a flat contradiction which would puzzle any young reader of the Bible. What, then, does the church do? The church says, publish the Bible in the language of the people, but give notes, so that the young mind may not be perplexed—explain these apparent contradictions, so that they may not give up Christianity altogether, on the ground of contradictions in the sacred scriptures. We have, then, in our Bible, a note on the passage just quoted, and we recur to it as we would to the explanatory comment appended to the text of a classic writer, and we find this explanation—"They heard not the voice, that is, they distinguished not the words, though they heard the voice." This at once reconciles the apparent contradiction. In another place—the 5th chapter of Romans, 20th v.—a young man reading the chapter falls upon this text, which to him must appear very contradictory—"Now the law entered in that sin might abound." When the young mind pauses on this text, it will naturally become bewildered. What! was the law given in order that we might commit more sin? He would present it to his neighbour and find him equally bewildered, but the church has foreseen and provided for this difficulty. The reader finds an explanatory note, appended to the text—"not as if the law were given on purpose that sin might abound, but that it so happened, through man's perversity, taking occasion to sin more from the prohibition of sin." I merely adduce these texts, with the accompanying comment, to show you the character of the notes, and to show you at the same time the propriety, as we conceive, of having these notes and comments for the explanation and understanding of those otherwise difficult and obscure passages.

"But is it true—as our enemies assert—that the Catholic church has ever proscribed the proper use of the Bible? Was not the Bible permitted to be read by the people after the reformation? Was not this the spring of liberty in England? Was not this the cause of the discovery of the "errors, superstitions, and abominations of Popery?" Was it not in consequence of this universal indulgence, that all the heresies which preceded that event were discovered? It is indeed generally believed by those who have not investigated