

ENGLAND IN THE 18th CENTURY.

AN HONEST HISTORY BY A GREAT PROTESTANT WRITER.

Acquaintance with what man has been about in all stages of his existence, fits us for our present duties, prepares us for what may come. However much art or science may engross the attention, philosophy or romance—historical research still finds leisure in the busiest life.

The reading public educated by such standards, are too critical to be duped. If brilliancy of style, or recklessness of assertion for the moment mislead, if love of paradox, parade of learning or other vanity, betray into speculation more specious than sound, neither ability nor genius atones for want of that cardinal virtue of historians, regard for truth, and many a name once famous has lost its lustre.

Compression—many ideas or facts in few words—present historians affect; and condensation without obscurity, method which omits nothing essential, yet never clogs, vigor and warmth, lend force to a spirit of candor and moderation which inspires confidence. Vast and varied as the information brought to bear upon the elucidation of so wide a field, it is too happily interwoven to become irksome, and in some instances his handling of multifarious details without confusion excites admiration.

Generous in the imputation of motive, and making due allowance for circumstances, the books abound in delineations of character which conform to established convictions, but which he invests with a new interest from later sources of information. Godolphin and Newcastle, Marlborough and Clive, Walpole and Chatham, Whitefield, and the Wesley, Bishop Berkeley and Dean Swift, are vividly drawn, while all the essayists from Addison to Johnson, play their part. The successive monarchs who ruled or reigned, William and Ann, and the first two Georges, are subjected to that scrutiny which none in high places can escape, a pillory through the ages, but a sorry equivalent for their glory or pleasure in the flesh.

Scotland and Ireland are represented as neither worse nor better than England, human nature being much the same everywhere under similar conditions which shape it for evil or for good, more than differences of race. In Ireland, from the influx from other kingdoms, the races were much commingled, and if less advanced in comfort or education, it was because her people were impoverished by oppressive laws.

By William Edward Hartpole Lecky, New York: D. Appleton & Co., 1878.

WHY WE FAST.

Our Lord fasted; this is a reason and a justification for our fasting. What was done by Him was done for an example. He was the great model after which we must all fashion our lives. He fasted forty days, and the Church orders an annual fast of like duration in imitation of Him, and in union of prayer with Him.

IRELAND.

A BITTER LESSON.

Great indignation has been excited by the absence of no fewer than 23 members of the party from the Division on the Municipal Franchise bill. It is one of the measures included in the programme for the Session, upon which the Aome Rulers were to act together and share the advantage of union and discipline. The smallness of the majority against the Bill has made the disappointment of its supporters the greater, and there is a "rod in pickle" for the absentees.

PIUS IX AND O'CONNELL.

O'Connell's dying utterance at Genoa was: "My soul to Heaven; my heart to Rome; my body to Ireland" a solemn testament that strikingly indicates the devoted loyalty of ages to the Chair of Peter, and the love and attachment, to the close of his memorable pontificate, of the Church of St. Patrick to Pius IX.

IRISH MISSIONARIES.

St. Patrick's bishops and priests were so ardent in their zeal that they carried the light of the Gospel into England, Scotland, Germany, France, even into Italy, regaining to the Church many of those people who had lost the faith on account of the incursions of barbarians and the breaking up of the Roman Empire. These holy missionaries from Ireland are invoked as patron saints in those countries. We have venerated their relics in cathedral churches, in monasteries, in rural parishes on the continent of Europe.

DRUNKENNESS.

ENGLAND, IRELAND AND SCOTLAND.

On the motion of Mr. Henley, a return has just been presented to Parliament setting forth the number of persons arrested for drunkenness in the principal cities and towns of the United Kingdom in the years 1851, 1861, 1871 and 1876. The return is full of gaps and breaks, and its value is considerably diminished. For 1871, for which the returns are tolerably complete, we find the following figures. In the principal cities and towns of Ireland 8 out of every 1,000 inhabitants were arrested for drunkenness in 1871; in the cities and towns of Scotland 55 per 1,000.

THE POLITICAL PRISONERS IN SPIKE ISLAND.

MORE ABOUT EDWARD O'CONNOR.

The Eunis correspondent of the Irish Times writes in Monday's issue of that journal:— I have just had an interview with Mrs. Cullinan, (not Cullen), who has returned from visiting her brother, Edward O'Connor, in Spike Island Convict Prison. Owing to the excitement and prostration caused by the gusty appearance of her brother, she says that she had not sufficient strength of mind or body to answer any questions that were put to her in Cork. In addition to what has already been reported in your columns, I gleaned the following from her lengthened statement to me.

THE FORTY DAYS OF LENT.

The word Lent in most languages signifies forty. It is easy to understand why this period of penance consists of forty days. Our Blessed Saviour fasted forty days and forty nights in the desert, and it was but natural that this number, which He had consecrated by His own fast, should be preferred. But besides this there is a deep mystification in the number of forty, which, as St. Jerome observes, denotes punishment and affliction.

PIETRO ANGELO SECCHI.

THE GREAT JESUIT ASTRONOMER.

The distinguished Italian mathematician, astronomer, and physicist, Pietro Angelo Secchi, died on the 26th of February. The death of such a man in the meridian of life is a great public loss, and among no class will this be more deeply felt and mourned than by learned scientists among whom he held a high rank.

He was born in Reggio, on July 29, 1818, educated for the Church, joined the order of Jesuits in 1833, studied mathematics, physics in the college of Loreto from 1841 to 1843, began his course of theology in the Roman College in 1844, and in 1848 came to the United States, where he pursued his theological studies, at the same time teaching physics and mathematics in the Georgetown College, in the District of Columbia, where he remained until 1850, when he recalled to Rome, when and where he entered upon his public career as an astronomer and physicist.

He was commissioned by Pius IX. to complete the trigonometrical survey of the Papal States, begun by Boscovich in 1851, in order to rectify the measurements already made of the meridional arc; he also superintended and successfully executed a commission to supply Rome with water from Frasine, forty-eight miles distant. After the expulsion of the Jesuits and the closing of the Roman College from 1870 to 1873, he was allowed to retain his post, and he continued to lecture on astronomy in the church schools in Rome, and in 1875 was sent by the Italian Government on a scientific mission to Sicily.

Such is a brief sketch of a distinguished mathematician, physicist, and astronomer, a man of remarkable industry and assiduity. His scientific papers were published in the journals of Italy, France, Germany, England, and the "Smithsonian Contributions to Knowledge" in this country. He was well known in the scientific world for his discoveries in Spectroscopic analysis; also in solar and stellar physics, the most important of which were his "Spectrum Observations on the Rotation of the Sun," published in 1870; the same year he published a large work on the sun, and so highly appreciated was it, that it was immediately translated into French, German, and other languages.

It is sometimes said by persons not well informed on this subject that Catholics are opposed to science; that they are opposed "to science falsely so-called" is true; that they are the genuine friends of true and its ardent promoters, no better proof need be furnished than the foregoing biographical sketch of Pietro Angelo Secchi, honored alike by both the Head of the Church, and the most distinguished Protestant scientists.

O'LEARY CHALLENGED.

William Howes, the pedestrian, has challenged O'Leary the winner of six days' contest that ended Saturday night last, to a match for the champion belt and \$2,500.

Howes is the man who won a silver belt and \$500 in money at a competition in Agricultural Hall, London, a little over a fortnight ago. There were 45 entries in all, but as this number might have proved inconveniently large, 20 of the most celebrated were selected and started. The contest was to last 26 hours, the men who covered the longest distance to receive the champion belt. The start was made at 8.37 o'clock on Friday evening, and Howes, who was last to leave the track, walked until 8.58 o'clock on Saturday evening. In these 24 hours and 21 minutes he covered 129 miles, which is the best on record. He covered 100 miles in 18 hours, 7 minutes, and 57 seconds, which is the fastest time yet accomplished.

A FALSE AND MALICIOUS STORY.

It has been falsely said that Gregory XVI created Pecci a Cardinal in pectore before he died, and that Pius IX delayed seven years before he gave effect to the nomination made in pectore by his predecessor. This false and malicious story was often made, and so often contradicted. When Cardinal Pecci was made Camerlengo the story was related in the Times and in most of the London newspapers in an offensive manner, and scarcely any notice was taken of the contradictions which then appeared in our columns and those of other Catholic journals.

The Roman Special Correspondent of the Times has lately repeated in the Roman letter the old calumny, and told the world that Pecci was created a Cardinal in pectore by Gregory XVI, and kept out of his promotion to the purple by Pius IX. Yet a glance at any Catholic almanac suffices to show the falsity of this calumnious fabrication. Joachim Pecci was created and proclaimed a Cardinal-priest with the title of St. Crisogonus in the consistory of December 19, 1853. There is not a word about the alleged creation in pectore, and it is known to every tyro in ecclesiastical knowledge that if Pecci had been created a Cardinal in pectore by Gregory he would have taken rank before all Cardinals created by Pius IX, and next after Cardinal Riarlo-Sforza, the last Cardinal created by Gregory XVI. But more than a dozen Cardinals created by Pius IX, took precedence of Cardinal Pecci, and not a scrap of evidence can be produced to countenance the fiction that a wrong was done to the Archbishop-Bishop of Perugia by Pius IX. In fact, Archbishop Pecci was still young, and but forty-three years of age when he was made a member of the Sacred College. To Cardinal Pecci himself this hateful story gave especial annoyance.

THE LATE WAR.

LOSSES, CAPTURE AND HORRORS.

Official returns state that the Russian losses in killed and wounded during the late war amounted to \$9,394 officers and men. Among these were ten Generals killed and eleven wounded. One Prince of the Imperial family and thirty-four members of the higher nobility of Russia fell on the field of battle. Of the wounded, 36,824 are already perfectly recovered, and 10,676 more will be able to leave the hospitals during the next few weeks. The proportion of killed and wounded to the total number engaged was very large, one out of every six men who went into action being either injured or left dead on the field of battle. In the great actions of the late Franco-German war the proportion of killed and wounded to men engaged was very nearly the same, being one-sixth in the battles of Worth and Spicheren, and one-eighth in the battle of Mars-la-Tour. The returns also show that one out of every eleven wounded men received into the Russian hospitals died from the effects of the injuries received.

From recently published official returns it appears that between the day on which war was declared and the signing of the armistice, the Russian army of the Danube captured 15 pashas, 113,000 officers and men, 606 guns of different calibres, 9,460 tents, 140,200 muskets, and 24,000 horses. In addition, 200,000 small arms, yataghans, and pistols were taken from Turkish irregular troops, and also 13,000 lances and daggers. The Russian army in Asia captured during the war fourteen pashas and 50,000 officers and men, 663 guns, 14,000 tents, 42,000 muskets, 18,000 horses, and immense stores of ammunition and provisions of all kinds. The number of firearms and miscellaneous weapons taken from the Asiatic irregular troops of the Forie was also, it is stated, exceedingly large, but no details are given. The Servian troops also acquired a large booty during the short time they were engaged, their trophies being returned as 238 guns, 10,000 muskets, and 37 standards, besides ammunition, provisions, and horses.

A. O'KEY HALL.

O'CONNELL, PARNELL, AND THE IRISH OBSTRUCTIONISTS.

Mr. A. O'Key Hall repeated his lecture on "O'Connell, Parnell, and the Irish Obstructionists," at St. Andrew's Hall. The proceeds were for the benefit of St. Vincent's Hospital. The lecturer first alluded to Washington and the patriots of the Revolutionary War, whom he classed among the "obstructionists" of England's policy at that time. He placed O'Connell, Parnell, and other Irish members of Parliament in the same category, and illustrated how they had "obstructed" England's design and by their patience and perseverance won many triumphs for Ireland. He closed by narrating in a graphic manner the all-night debates in the British Parliament last July on the question of uniting the Dutch Republic to the English colony Cape Town.

IRON-CLAD SHIPS.

While the praises of the inflexible are being sung in the House of Commons and elsewhere, it may be well to note what other nations are doing to be even with us in the construction of monster iron-clads. The two types of armoured vessels in favour nowadays are the turret, or clifid ships, with decks but a few feet above the water line, and the broad-side masted ironclad like the Alexandria and the Sultan, in which we put our trust as ocean-going craft. Of the former class, the Inflexible, which is to be armed some day with four 80 ton guns, represents the powerful man of war in the British Navy; it has, as the First Lord of the Admiralty told us, iron walls twenty-four inches in thickness, and its speed is at least equal to most other ironclads. The Inflexible has, however, two rivals in the form of the Dandolo and Duilio, Italian turret vessels. The armour of these, it is true, is two inches less thick than that of the Inflexible, but this disadvantage is more than compensated for by the fact that the foreign men-of-war will be armed with 100-ton guns instead of 80-ton weapons. Indeed, it was only a few days since that we announced the arrival at Spezzia, from Sir William Armstrong's works at Elswick, of two of these monster cannon, of which there is no equal among British ordnances. But it is not solely in the matter of turret vessels that foreign nations appear to be going ahead of us; they are in advance of us also with broadside ironclads. The heaviest cannon carried by our biggest masted battle ships weigh no more than 25 tons, and metal of this calibre is borne only by first-class ocean-going ships such as the Alexandria and the Temeraire. But the French announce their intention of fitting their last ship of this type with 40 ton guns and the Devastation, now fast approaching completion at Toulon, will carry four of these weapons in her broadsides. The centre of the ship, it appears, is an oblong battery, the angles of which project, and four guns placed at these angles are capable of firing broadsides as well as ahead and astern. Thus the Devastation will take rang before and broadside in the British navy, and if her sea-going qualities are only as good as her armament we may have in her a more formidable rival than any that has yet been brought against us.

LUCKY SPANISH BULL-FIGHTERS.

Spanish bull-fighters find their dangerous calling a very lucrative profession. Thus the favorite matador of Madrid, Frascole, possesses a fortune of \$400,000, a magnificent house, and a wife considered the prettiest woman in Madrid, and is a member of one of the most aristocratic clubs in the city. On the day of a bull-fight he sends a messenger to his wife after each of his performances in the arena, the destruction of six bulls being his usual task, and twice he has been brought home seriously injured. Frascole took part in the late bull-fight before the King and Queen, and his costume was literally covered with diamonds. Most interest was felt, however, in the amateur matadors, cavalry officers chosen by the different provinces, who showed themselves fully as skillful as the professionals.

YOUNG POPES.

Eight of the Popes were elected at a very early age, the youngest of them being John II who was crowned in his seventeenth year. If any one is inclined to be scandalized at the youthfulness of some of the Popes, let them remember that it would be a waste of time to search in documents worthy of credit for any traces of ignorance, inexperience or lack of tact which may be attributed to these young Pontiffs. Still, these premature elections, were not in all cases happy. God perhaps permitted them to prove that the Church does not depend for its perpetuity in the least upon man.