

## HISTORY OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH IN SCOTLAND.

"PREJUDICE," as Dr Newman asserts in one of his invaluable works, "is the life of the Protestant view," and untrue tradition "its sustaining power." In diligently promoting the former, and in swelling the dark mass of the latter, false historians have taken a very prominent part. Scarcely a writer on the ecclesiastical history of England or Scotland has flourished since the time of the Reformation who has not prostituted his pen to the cause of wrong, and so lent his aid in thickening around his unfortunate fellow-countrymen the mist of ignorance and misapprehension by which they have been so long and fatally enveloped. The clouds, however, are at length becoming less opaque, the atmosphere is perceptibly lightening. Here and there rays of truth are piercing through the surrounding darkness, and by-and-by, we firmly believe, the obscurity will altogether vanish.

But in effecting His designs, however great, God acts ordinarily through human instrumentality, and there is no doubt that writers who, like Mr James Walsh, stand forth boldly to confront falsehood with truth, are to be amongst His honoured agents in the work of Britain's enlightenment. The volume before us, we are told by its author, was commenced more than twenty years ago, and had the whole of those years been occupied in its compilation we should not have deemed the time mispent. Evidence of laborious research and of painstaking industry in the collection of facts is stamped upon every page, authority is given for each assertion, Protestant authors are largely quoted, and the book is characterized by an impartiality and absence of bitterness which will render it very generally useful.

As the title states, the history commences with the first introduction of Christianity into North Britain, and interesting accounts, collated from various sources, are given of the earliest missionaries to the country. Amongst them appear the well-known names of St. Regulus, a Greek Bishop, who brought to Caledonia the relics of St. Andrew, St. Ninian, St. Palladius, St. Servanus, St. Columba, and the Monks of Iona. In a consecutive manner the Church's history is continued up to the time of the Reformation; immediately preceding which event Scotland is shown to have been in a flourishing condition, prosperous and wealthy, with universities and colleges, compulsory education established by Act of Parliament, virtuous and religious, and therefore happy.

The historical facts brought forward in this chapter (writes Mr Walsh) are more than sufficient to disprove the statements of superficial Protestant writers, who assert that the people of Scotland were "grossly ignorant," "wretchedly poor," and "miserable slaves" in Catholic times. On the contrary, we have seen Scotland become consolidated, prosperous, happy, free, and independent under the fostering care of the Catholic Church; her Catholic kings courageous and triumphant on the field; her Catholic Bishops and priests patriots of the truest and most unflinching kind; and the Catholic people heroic and brave, under every circumstance, in the long-continued and arduous struggle to free their native land from a foreign yoke. The names of Wallace and Bruce, of Douglas and Randolph, are imperishably recorded in the annals of Scottish history. We have seen trade and commerce flourishing, and the various arts of civilized life encouraged and protected by the Church.

Under her fostering care the hamlet grew into the village, the village into the town, and the town into the royal burgh and mercantile community. In short, the more the early records of Scottish history are investigated, the more clearly does it appear that the whole people of Scotland, but particularly those who lived by their labour, now called the working classes, were better instructed in religion, better fed, better clothed, better cared for, more easily worked, and in every way more virtuous, independent, happy, and free in Catholic times than they have ever been since the Protestant Reformation.

The reverse of this pleasant picture is given a little further on in the book, when the Protestant Reformation with its blighting effects on the moral, mental, and physical condition of the people was in progress:—

The condition of the country would have drawn pity from the hardest heart. The people engaged in a furious butchery of each other, constantly kept up by the infernal policy of Elizabeth. Every peaceful and useful art was entirely at a stand. Agriculture, manufactures, and commerce were neglected. Nothing was heard from one end of the country to the other but the clangour of arms and the roar of artillery; nothing seen but villages in flames, towns beleaguered by armed men, women and children flying from the cottages where their fathers or husbands had been massacred, the pulpits surrounded by armed men with their hands on their swords; whilst Knox and the preachers fanned the flame of discord by declaiming against the Queen as a Jezebel, a murderer, and an adulteress, deserving of instant death, threatening excommunication to all who supported her cause, and declaring that there could not be peace in the country until she and her partisans were punished with death.

No ecclesiastical history of the country could be complete without some account of the "Great Reformer," whom Protestants claim to this day as the chief founder of their religion in Scotland, and the life and character of John Knox is thus summed up by our author:—

His whole public life was spent in treason, conspiracy, rebellion, turbulence, and bloodshed. He was born of poor parents, educated by the charity of the Catholic Church, ordained a priest at the age of twenty-five, was admonished, and afterwards expelled from the office of the priesthood for his crimes of impurity and for teaching heresy.

He joined the band of assassins who murdered Cardinal Beaton, and became their chaplain, was condemned to the galleys in France as one of the criminals, where he remained for nineteen months, and was then liberated. Knox then came to England, where he became a preacher of Lutheranism and Episcopalianism, although he professed to be a sort of Calvinist in Scotland. . . . In 1559 he returned to Scotland still a rebel; he at once joined the rebellion going on against the regent Mary of Guise. He wrote letters to the English Government under a feigned name, soliciting money to aid the rebels,

and an English army to invade and lay waste his native land. He urged the people to destroy and ruin the churches, abbeys, and religious establishments, and to burn all the civil and ecclesiastical histories, documents, charters, and records of the country. He was a course, vulgar and vindictive rebel and traitor to his queen and country from the day Mary landed until she was dethroned. . . . He was at all times a despicable coward, who fled from that danger which was the consequence of his crimes. In his writings he defended and praised the assassination of Cardinal Beaton, the Duke of Guise, and David Rizzio, as being the work of God; he also maintained that all Catholics, clergy and laity, kings and subjects, ought to be put to death, so that he was thus the advocate of murder and the fiercest intolerance. He was unsettled in his own creed, or else acted the hypocrite, as he was an Episcopalian during his stay in England, whilst in Scotland he was a Calvinist and Presbyterian. He was a calumniator and slanderer of the worst kind, as he in his writings and sermons distorted facts, misrepresented passing events, falsified history, and defamed the best of men and the most virtuous of women.

Mr Walsh's valuable history is continued down to the present year, and ends with an encouraging report of the present condition of Catholicism in Scotland, and a hopeful augury for the future of the Church in that country. In conclusion, we would say, that as a book for reference, no more useful publication has of late issued from the press, and we have no doubt that it will become, as it well deserves to do, a standard work. The materials contained in it have been thrown together in an attractive form, and the style is altogether pleasant and readable.—'Tablet.'

## PRESS CARRIER PIGEONS.

ONE of the most curious incidents connected with modern journalism is the regular employment of carrier pigeons in collecting intelligence for the daily and weekly newspapers. In the competitive exertions to procure the "Latest Intelligence," it has been found that for short distances newspaper reports can be sent readier, cheaper, and quicker, by press carrier pigeons, flying a mile per minute, than by the Postal Telegraph. These aerial postmen are entrusted to resident correspondents in various places, ready to be despatched at any moment, whilst others are sent out by reporters to places where important events are transpiring. It is now no uncommon thing to see reporters at police courts, inquests, public meetings, &c., dispatch folio after folio of "copy" by press carrier pigeons tossed through the nearest window, or thrown out of a train or steamer going at full speed. The attachment of these birds to the place of their birth, and their ability to find their homes from marvellous distances, are, of course, their distinguishing characteristics. A "columbier" or home is established at the various newspaper offices, and whenever a bird arrives with a message the act of the pigeon entering its cot sets a call-bell ringing in the editor's room, the bell machinery continuing in motion until attended to. Being expressly bred for press purposes—conveying news to our . . . at cities—they are not the pure carrier pigeon (which is larger, heavier, and slower on the wing, and not so well adapted for press purposes), but are of a special pedigree, bred by Messrs Hartley and Sons, of the 'Woolwich Gazetteer,' Woolwich, from prize birds imported from the best lofts of Antwerp, Brussels, and Liege; all "producteurs" being rejected which have not won a 300 mile "concouts." Press carrier pigeons owe their origin to Darwin's principle of "natural selection," or the "survival of the fittest." In the struggle for life in connection with the compulsory flying of long distances, the homing and flying powers of the pigeons are developed to a large degree, whilst the birds which cannot do the distance are necessarily lost and eliminated. The surviving or winning voyageurs become thus educated to the highest standard of perfection, and this system being continued through many generations (the flying distances increasing every year) a race of pigeons has been produced with powers which a few years ago would have been deemed impossible. Press carrier pigeons, though as a rule only used for short distances, in competition with the electric telegraph, can be specially trained to distances of 500 miles, and frequently fly to England from Dublin, Brussels, Paris, Lisbon, and even Rome. The utilisation of the instincts of birds is being carried even further than this. An ocean homing bird, of great docility, intelligence, and spirit, has been found in Iceland, which flies at a meteor-like speed of 150 miles an hour, and is able to find its home over sea and land, from any part of the habitable world. A pair of these birds a few days ago brought despatches from Paris to a lonely spot, congenial to their nature, in a wild and rocky part of Kent, within ten miles of London, in 1½ hour. Press carrier pigeons took the despatches on to the City, the whole distance from Paris to London, by actual parcel mode of conveyance, being done within 1½ hour. If the experiments at present being made in training and educating them continue successful, it is hoped by next summer to establish a daily miniature ocean mail between America and Europe, the whole distance to be traversed between sunrise in one hemisphere and sunset in the other.

Of all nations in the world the United States is most systematically robbed by its public functionaries. San Francisco is no exception to the rest of the State, and the system of auditing requires improvement.

The San Francisco 'Chronicle,' of September 8, states that a new Catholic paper has been published in San Salvador, called the 'Independiente'; also, that a new paper, the 'Estandarte Catolica' has just made its appearance in Santiago. The latter paper has been received with eager curiosity by the representatives of the various parties in the republic.

A Californian farmer has twelve acres of hops from which he expects to pick about 26,000 lbs.

The West Point alumni proposes to invite all the graduates of the institution to meet and celebrate the Bunker Hill Centenary.