

NEWS BY THE SAN FRANCISCO MAIL.

(From our Exchanges.)

We regret and yet rejoice to hear that the report of the martyrdom of three French missionaries, Fathers Bouchard, Menoret, and Paulinier, at Timbuctoo, is gaining confirmation. We say "rejoice," for, being martyrs to the faith, they are with God. These excellent men were on their way from Algiers to the interior and fell victims to the Touaregs, one of the wildest of the many savage tribes that dwell on the borders of the great Sahara.

A convention of the Catholic committees of France has been sitting at Paris under the presidency of the Cardinal-Archbishop, who, on the opening night, spoke of the attempt to wrest the instruction of children from the able hands of the Christian Brothers, and to vest superior instruction in free-thinkers alone. To meet this conspiracy against the Church he counselled firmness combined with charity and an inviolable attachment to the doctrines of Catholicity. The delegates from the various committees were strongly representative of the state of feeling throughout the country, where the infidel propagandism of the enemies of religion in the large cities has obtained no hold, and a firm and unanimous expression of opinion on the proposed education measures will not be without effect.

A clergyman from the West of Ireland who has been sojourning at Lourdes, writes to a clerical friend at home an account of a remarkable cure which lately occurred at the famous shrine. The particulars are these: On the Feast of the Annunciation a woman was brought to the chapel at Lourdes by her friends. She had been for the ten previous years afflicted with paralysis, scarcely able to move her limbs. Having joined fervently in the religious exercises, she was taken below to the famous grotto, and at her own request was for a few moments immersed in the waters. She arose perfectly restored, and walked without help from the grotto. The writer avers that he saw the woman a quarter of an hour before this wonderful manifestation took place, when she was helplessly crippled with disease, and immediately after the event, when she was thus miraculously restored to health.

The Catholic University College at Kensington, under the rectorship of Mgr. Capel, appears to be progressing favorably. From the report recently submitted to the English bishops, it appears that the new buildings of the college consist of a college chapel, a complete zoological museum, a chemical laboratory, and professors' rooms, while the pre-existing structure has been converted into a spacious library and convenient lecture halls. Besides this group of buildings, another has been utilized in the grounds of the college for the purposes of billiard and reading-rooms, and for a debating society or union as soon as it can be formed. For the advancement of the students in art and sciences, the rector has provided an original and valuable library, the gift of Mr. O'Fallon Pope, an additional library of 8,000 volumes, recently added, 80,000 botanical specimens, just arrived, the geological specimens collected by Professor Morris, and the plant of the museum and laboratories. All this has been done at a cost of £26,000. The annual expenditure is £5,000, so that on the day when the number of students reaches one hundred, the University College will have become self-supporting. The college began its career with sixteen students: the number has now reached thirty-six, a rate of progress sufficiently rapid, if all the difficulties which have had to be surmounted be taken into account.

M. Victor Hugo, to put it mildly, as the 'Pall Mall Gazette' says, has been recently making "a fool" of himself. Some few days back he made an address to the working men of Paris, who visit the Philadelphia Exhibition, on the "peace of the revolution," at the Chateau d'Eau Theatre, Paris. Amongst other curious phrases contained in the very curious speech we note the following: "I have in myself the concern of the whole human race. Men of Paris, you are the men of the world, you are going to the review of the Prussians. They invaded with arms and cannon a civilized country, that is barbarism. You are going to invade America with the products of commerce, that is civilisation. Men of Paris, you are the youth of the human race. Philadelphia awaits you with impatience, you will teach her industry," &c., &c. The working men responded to this rubbish with repeated shouts of "Long live the great Hugo."

About 3,122,000 pounds of horse, ass, and mule flesh have been sold for human consumption in Paris by the butchers there, who deal in that commodity, during the past year. The number of the above animals killed to produce this amount of meat was 6,865.

At the reception, at the Vatican, by the Holy Father, of the Plenipotentiary Persian Ambassador, General Nazare Agha, accompanied by the Secretary of the Embassy, Mirza Ahmed Khan, the Eastern envoys kept on their high Astrakhan caps, but bowed low in the Oriental manner before Pius IX., and kissed his hand. General Nazare Agha then addressed the Holy Father, expatiating on his happiness at having been chosen the messenger of the Shah of Persia, and being thus enabled to crave the Pope's blessing for himself and family, for they were all Catholics. The surprise of the Holy Father and all those present was equalled by their emotion at this unexpected announcement of the religion of Nazare Agha. The General then presented his Sovereign's letter to the Holy Father, and, from the French translation of this epistle of a Moslem, and a semi-barbaric potentate, many an European potentate would be shamed from the liberality of opinion it expresses, and the kind protection it earnestly promises towards the Catholics of Persia. The Shah addresses his Holiness as a Sovereign, not as the prisoner of the Vatican. The Pope gave the Persian envoy a cross, and a watch encased in an elegant casket. "The cross," said his Holiness, "represents the one I bear, and which we all must bear to gain entrance to heaven. The watch will mark the passing hours between this and eternity, which will open to us our real home." General Nazare Agha was much moved, and expressed his heartfelt gratitude to the Holy Father, who blessed him ere he retired.

A monument is to be erected in Rome to Giordano Bruno, a famous apostate, of whom the celebrated but by no means orthodox writer, Carlo Botta, said in his Italian history: "Giordano Bruno was the author and propagator of many blasphemous and mad doctrines. He was vacillating in his opinion. In Germany he was a Lutheran, in Geneva, a Calvinist, and he turned Catholic at the signal of danger when in a Catholic country." He used to call the Pope "The Vicar of the Devil," and once he styled the infamous Elizabeth of England, "The only Diann, the real Virgin. Botta tells us that he even called the 'Devil' a good fellow, and preached him up in a favorable light." Such was the man to whom the "regenerators" of Italy propose erecting a monument in the capital of the Catholic Church, and under the windows of the Vatican.

News from Milan gives us a sad picture of the state of morals in that lovely capital, which only a few years back was distinguished for the piety and good manners of its inhabitants. This year the churches in Holy Week were scarcely visited by men—women alone filled them. The theatres were opened, and some most indecent spectacles were tolerated; and on Good Friday a new opera bouffe of the most infamous description was given for the first time. Societies, however, are rapidly being formed for preventing the increase of crime and immorality. These are, of course, founded by Catholics, and conducted by conspicuous members of the clergy. The venerable Archbishop of Milan received some weeks ago a distinguished member of the Lutheran Church into the faith. In the meantime, the anti-Christian burial society, as it is called, is losing all ground, and will soon be heard of no more. The object of this association, which a month or so back made a great stir, was the re-introduction of the pagan custom of cremating or burning the dead. The people disapprove of this manner of disposing of the dead, and condemn it to such an extent that on several occasions funeral processions conducting bodies to be burnt have been loudly hissed as they passed along. Notwithstanding every imaginable device for the perversion of the people of this country, the infidels are not likely to make any very enduring impression, and a powerful reaction in favor of Catholicism is setting in. It is, however, noticed that Milan is now the most corrupt city in the land, and many letters have been lately published from English and American ladies, complaining of the shameful manner in which they are treated, even in day time, in the streets of the Lombard capital.

The wholesale defection of Protestants from common Christianity in Germany takes place quietly and without much demonstration; people simply abstain from frequenting places of worship and refuse all ministrations from their clergymen. "But, now and then, the intellectual leaders of infidelity, in order to spread their destructive doctrines, make a show of their numbers. Thus quite recently an assembly of 3,000 persons in Berlin declared openly and unanimously that they had separated from all religion, believed in no God, and promised to exercise all their influence to destroy among the people the absurd notions of the existence of a Divinity." In Prussia God may be blasphemed and denied with impunity; only those feel the severity of the law who speak disrespectfully of Bismarck and his officials.

A despatch to the 'Evening Post' under date April 27 says:—"The despatches received to-day respecting the burning of a theatre in Rouen, France, tell a sad story of murder by architectural design. The story is an old one, oft repeated in the history of buildings designed to hold large audiences; but in the present case the conditions of disaster seem to have been more positive than usual. The fire was discovered before the public were admitted to the building, and there were only about 75 persons, members of the opera company, within the walls at the time, and yet the means of exit were so inadequate that this small body of persons, every one of whom must have been familiar with the passages of the building, were unable to escape. Eight corpses have been removed from the ruins, and 50 persons—two-thirds of the whole number in the house—were so badly injured that it was necessary to send them to the hospitals."

The Easter services in Paris were attended this year by enormous congregations. At Notre Dame the distribution of Holy Communion occupied eight priests for more than two hours. The other churches were equally well attended, and the principal ones so excessively crowded that at times entry to them was almost impossible. The throng at Notre Dame des Victoires was indeed so prodigious that thousands were unable to gain admittance, and at last a squad of police was found necessary to protect the entry and prevent accidents. It is noted by the French papers that religion, notwithstanding the change in Government, has never been so influential as at present in France.

A Maltese Catholic writes to the London 'Weekly Register' an account of the much-talked-of "refusal" by the Prince of Wales to lay the corner-stone of a "purely Catholic institution," which gives quite a different coloring to the affair. The correspondent, whose letter bears the date of April 24, says that the "Maltese millionaire" who founded the institution in question was so anxious that the Prince should lay its first stone that he telegraphed to India to obtain the consent of his Royal Highness, and received it in due time. His own Archbishop he appears not to have thought of consulting, and it was not until about ten days before the ceremony was to take place that his Grace, whose co-operation had evidently been taken for granted, was invited to bless the first stone with the usual rites. The Archbishop at once declined, and, moreover, refused either to be present himself or to sanction the official presence of any of his clergy at a ceremonial, the chief actor in which was to be the head of the sect of Freemasons in the Queen's dominions. Here was a dilemma which nobody had foreseen, and on the Governor of Malta telegraphing to England for instructions, her Majesty the Queen at once sent back a peremptory command that the Prince should not be allowed to fulfil his proposed engagement. All this happened before the arrival of his Royal Highness, and the affair wears, in consequence, quite another aspect than that which it first assumed. The 'Register's' correspondent adds that nobody attributes any unworthy motive to the founder of the charity. He was simply indiscreet in allowing himself to be made a tool of by the Freemasons, who were anticipating with great glee the