

# THE BIBLICAL RECORDER.

T. MEREDITH, EDITOR AND PROPRIETOR.

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### From the Ch. Observer.

#### THE REFORMATION IN FRANCE.

The following is an extract from the Rev. Mr. Howard's sermon at the dedication of the French Protestant Church in Charleston, S. C., noticed in our last. Seldom, if ever, have we seen so much true history, or that of equal interest and importance, compressed in so narrow a space, as will be found in this article.

France holds a distinguished position in reference to the Reformation. When Luther was actually engaged in a mission to the Pope, and Zuingli had not applied himself to the study of the Scriptures, Le Fevre had already propagated from the lecture rooms of Paris, the doctrines of the Reformation in the very bosom of the Sorbonne, he had proclaimed the cardinal truth of Justification by faith in Jesus Christ. Circumstances, however, gave such subsequent prominence to Luther, as to warrant for him the title of first Reformer; yet still the Reformation began its work in France—an honor which France may not heretofore have appreciated, but which will at one day be claimed as the most pregnant and glorious event which has illustrated her history.

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The doctrines of Le Fevre threw Paris into commotion. Rare, a noble of Dauphiny, had been attracted to the epistol by the fame of its university. He heard with profound interest the startling truths taught by the professor. They became his own, and his life was devoted to their dissemination. Success attended the efforts of these two noble men; the simple truth of the gospel were diffused with great rapidity. Unabashed by the presence of royalty, they entered the dissolute court of Francis I., and found an humble advocate in Margaret the lovely sister of the sovereign. The nobility in numbers followed the pious example of their prince. Anticipations of the speedy and entire reformation of France were awakened in the breasts of the Reformers. Their disappointment was fearful. The university, changing its ground, became hostile to them. Persecution was aroused. Driven successively from Meux and Metz, they found a temporary resting place in the South Eastern Provinces. Repulsed thence, they fled to Switzerland, and in the catholicity of the Reformation, received a cordial welcome from brethren. Having recruited their courage amidst the Christian sympathies of Geneva, they determined upon another assault upon the errors which had overspread their beloved country. Lyons was the first point of successful attack. Greater things were then attempted. The preaching of the word—by the distribution of the Bible—by the scattering of tracts—a powerful influence was brought to bear upon the kingdom. Amidst alternate hopes and fears, sometimes animated by success, sometimes overwhelmed by disaster, the men of God advanced steadily in the prosecution of their work. Providence raised up as their leader John Calvin—a man fallible, because human, yet of whom the learned Hooker has said, "though thousands were debtors to him, yet he to none, but only to God, the author of that most blessed fountain the book of life;" and who, in spotlessness of life, in strength of character, in purity of motive, in ardor of piety, hath scarcely been equalled—never surpassed. Shape and form were given by him to the doctrines of the Reformation in his Institutions—a work to which modern theology has added nothing. Under his direction the antiphonal chants of Rome were displaced by the simple songs of Marot—the ministry was disrobed of its gorgeous vestments, all outward adjuncts appealing alone to the senses were removed, and the entire worship of the house of God, stripped of its false adornments, was restored to primitive simplicity. And when the sentence had gone forth "burning alive" was the proper treatment of the heretic," and the multitude was thirsting for the blood of the Reformed, spurring the fear of death, in May, 1559, whose dauntless men convoked their first Synod in Paris, promulgated their Confession of Faith and adopted rules for the Government of the church. And thus with a distinct faith, and an instituted ministry and established form of worship and government, the French Reformed Church became an organized and efficient body.

### REVIVAL OF PERSECUTION.

Anterior to this period, this church had endured another general persecution. It was now dogged to another, twelve years in duration. This persecution was fiercer and relentless, sometimes twelve hundred in one place, yielding their lives in defence of their faith. Yet so rapid during these twelve years of persecution was the advance of Protestant principles that in 1571 there were 2,150 Protestant churches in France, in some of which there were five or even ten thousand members under the

spiritual guidance of two, and sometimes five pastors. Ecclesiastical history affords no parallel to this rapid advancement. Her day of prosperity was, however, of short duration. The adversary, goaded to madness, summoned up all his energies, that, in one dread blow, the truth might be annihilated. Under false pretences, the offending Protestants were collected in great numbers. At midnight of St. Bartholomew's day, 1572, the armed soldiery were turned loose upon them. A vast number of Protestants, with the admiral Coligny at their head, were murdered that dread night under circumstances of atrocity at which the heart sickens and turns away in horror. Other towns followed the bloody example of the capital, and uncounted thousands of the Huguenots fell victims to their love for the truth. Triumphant medals, struck by order of Pope Gregory XIII., perpetuated this event, as signally illustrating the period of his Pontificate.

Up to this time, 1572, according to Dr. Edwards, there had been martyred in France, for the Protestant faith 39 princes 148 counts, 234 barons, 147,418 gentlemen, and 760,000 of the common people, constituting a grand total of nearly 1,000,000 suffered.

The effect of the massacre was disastrous. The leading Protestants were slain, and the people were a prey to their merciless foes. Many were frightened from their native land—some abandoned their faith, and all were disheartened. So that in 26 years following, in 1598, the church was diminished to one thousand congregations—a loss of one-half their number.

Henry, of Navarre, educated in the Protestant faith, promulgated in 1589 the edict of Nantz. By this edict a free exercise of religion, and access to temporal honors, were secured to the Protestants. Their ministers were recalled, and the persecuted church was once more in comparative safety.

Permanent security was however denied it.—Louis XIII. suffered and directed continued encroachments upon the edict. Louis XIV., his successor, under two combined influences, the most baleful which can be exercised upon man, licentiousness and superstition, violated habitually and upon slight pretences, its plainest provisions.—The church which had once more advanced, until it could number 2,000 ministers, was checked in its progress. The churches of the Protestants were pulled down whenever the faintest pretext could be found. In Poitou alone, in 1764, out of 61 churches, only one was spared, and by this act 80,000 Protestants were deprived of a place of worship. They were forbidden the singing of psalms even privately in their houses. They were compelled to bury their dead clandestinely in the darkness of night. Their children were forbidden access to the public schools. Pensions were given those children who apostatized. Debts were discharged by the simple act of becoming Roman Catholics. Protestants were declared incapable of acting as guardians, and therefore all Protestant minors were placed under Roman Catholic control. These are a portion of the "worrying and wearing out" influences, more to be dreaded than the sword or the faggot, which harassed these unhappy sufferers; influences which could have been endured only by the sustaining grace of Almighty God.

### RENEWED EFFORTS AGAINST HUGUENOTS.

To complete their wretchedness, on the 8th of October, 1685, the protecting edict, by an act of infamy, was formally and wholly repealed. It was then enacted that every place of worship belonging to the Reformed in France, should be demolished; that no assembly for the celebration of service should be permitted on any pretext; that all Huguenot ministers continuing to refuse conformity should quit the kingdom within fifteen days after the publication of the edict; that all Huguenot schools should be utterly suppressed; that all children hereafter born of Reformed parents, should be baptized and educated as Roman Catholics; and every attempt at emigration was prohibited under heavy penalty. On the other hand, ministers conforming were exempted from certain taxes, and a pension was assigned to them and their widows. Choosing to adopt the profession of advocates, the ordinary preparation was declared unnecessary. They were permitted at once to enter upon its duties. The laity were allowed to retain their property, provided they would consent to abstain in public and private from every profession of their faith and every form of worship.

Could measures of more satanic cunning be devised, by which to suppress and destroy the truth? Tearing down the churches, banishing the pastors, taking spiritual possession of the children offering rewards of money and place to the lapsed, and prohibiting departure to the determined.—If earthly power and worse than earthly sagacity could have destroyed the church in France, it must have fallen in this, its hour of dreadful trial. Louis boasted that he had exterminated the heresy. Vain man! We are reminded of the monarch to whom the rebellious waves were disobedient.—However much he might torture, banish, murderously destroy the unhappy Huguenots, the truth which they held was indestructible, and destined to an ultimate triumph. In despite of all prohibitions more than half a million of Protestants succeeded in their escape from France. The limits of this discourse will prevent our dwelling upon the horrors connected with the flight of such a multitude—the abandonment of home—the tedious and weary night journey—the poisoned atmosphere of the crowded ship—and the buffeting of the tempest. Stimulated by the prospect of successful flight, every thing in suffering which the human constitution could endure, was

cheerfully met, that their cherished end might be attained.

The position of those to whom flight was impossible, was one of great spiritual peril. Deprived of most of their pastors, and the most eminent of their lay readers, without houses of worship or opportunity of unreserved religious communication, the worst result was to be apprehended. Many actually gave up their faith, others outwardly confirmed, but the large number remained firm to the last.

Determined to worship God, the faithful met in caves or in the forest. In the darkness of the night, lights were hung upon the trees, to enable them to read the Scriptures, and the psalms which they sung. And when in the solemn act of their worship, the old and the young freely gave up their lives. Slaughtered at last became weary of its labors. Policy foresaw the ruin of the kingdom in the depopulation caused by flight, and sword, and the work of general persecution ceased. But the truth had outlasted it all, and still lived in the hearts of God's believing children.

Louis XIV. was summoned to another world in 1724. During the reign of Louis XV., his successor, the history of the Protestant Church in France is melancholy—sometimes it is scarcely distinguishable in the errors which pervaded it—at other times, recovering its purity traceable only by the blood of its martyrs. At length indications of the rising of a more tolerant day were manifest. In 1788, twelve years from the accession of Louis XVI., an edict was granted by which Protestants were allowed to assemble for worship and to enjoy a tolerable share of religious freedom. Two millions of Protestants instantly rallied around the Reformed Church, once more an acknowledged body.

But hopes of permanent peace were soon destroyed. The revolution trampled all religion under its feet. Infidelity, with its arrogant pretensions to liberality, was not more lenient than the superstition it professed to despise. Rousseau, while he praises pacific dispositions, states, in the same letter, that in dealing with fanaticism, "you must lay aside philosophy, shut up your books, and take up the sword." And this is the spirit of the sect. The Sabbath was abolished—religious worship prohibited—the Bible burned—and Christianity nationally condemned, and for ten years France was destitute of almost every form of religious worship.

### THE CHURCH UNDER NAPOLEON.

Napoleon, however, saw that a nation could not exist without a religion; and his sagacious mind determined upon the restoration of Christianity.—A Romanist himself, the first consul granted toleration to the Reformed—professing to consider Roman Catholics and Protestants as branches from the same trunk. This toleration was almost counterbalanced by the injurious interference of Napoleon in the administration of the affairs of the church. No doctrine could be taught without the sanction of government—no pastors were permitted to resign without its approbation. All elections were to be approved by the first consul.—The professors in seminaries were nominated by him. No Synod was suffered to assemble without permission, and no synodal assembly could last more than six days. And all matters proposed for discussion were to be submitted previously to the proper officers of State. The injurious effect of this interference of the civil power can be readily apprehended. It naturally resulted in coldness, worldliness, and error, both in the ministry and the churches. Upon the restoration of the Bourbons, the protestants suffered severely, for a short period. Their situation, however, gradually improved, and upon the accession of the present king, the charter sworn to by him, in 1830, characterizes the Romish religion, not as the religion of the State, but as the faith professed by the majority of Frenchmen. When peace was declared in 1815, many devoted Christians flocked to the continent from Great Britain, and ardently engaged in labors for the restoration of the French Reformed Church to its former purity. From that period dates its revival. In 1815 there were in France 564 pastors of the Reformed, in 1843, 677, and in 1845 there are upwards of 700. The Protestant population of that kingdom now numbers between four and five millions. Purifying itself from the errors which have infested it, and reanimated by the zeal of former years, we must regard this church with lively hopes for the future. By the distribution of the Bible and Protestant Tracts, and by the labor of evangelical missionaries, they have commenced a renewed effort for the spread of the truth. Nor are they alone in this work. Protestant Christendom cannot forget the land of Calvin and the martyrs for truth, and has aroused her energies to their assistance. Even in our own country an effective society, directed by the wisdom of our most worthy men, is wielding a powerful instrumentality for the regeneration of France.

America, with the roll of her illustrious sons before her, can never forget the ennobling, elevating influence of the Huguenots, in forming her own high character, and it is meet and fitting that she should gratefully give of her treasures, and humbly supplicate in her prayers, that the children of the Huguenots in France should be strengthened in their weakness, and the truth which they hold, be triumphant over its antagonistic error. Before such combined instrumentalities at home and abroad, accompanied, as we trust they will be, by the energy and demonstration of the Holy Spirit, error must recede and disappear; and the cheerful light of the glorious gospel be reflected from every mountain, and illumine every valley of that lovely, but benighted kingdom.

In this imperfect review of the history of the French Reformed Church, who can fail to recog-

nize a constant and direct interposition of Divine Providence in its behalf. Other Churches of protestant Christendom have endured sore persecutions, but upon no one has such a combination of adverse influences operated, as upon this branch of Zion, rendered illustrious by its trials. At one time, so fierce has been the tempest which has assailed it, that the flame of piety has almost been blown out, and again it has righted itself against the blast, and burned with an upward and steady light. At other times temptation has assumed the place of persecution, but temptation could not ensnare where the sword had failed to intimidate. Through persecution and temptation, it has lived, it has revived, it prospers. Surely the Lord, who made heaven and earth, hath been her help in times past, and now he will not forsake her, nor her branches, though reaching across the breadth of the wide Atlantic.

### From the Ch. Watchman.

#### THE BIBLE.

(By the late Mr. Emerson Adams, of Franklin, Me.)

Eternal truth! what tongue can tell  
The worth that in these pages dwell!  
Without thee, what would mortals know?  
No light would beam on them below.

In darkness such as heathen are,  
Who worship sun, and moon, and star—  
Like them we all should bow to clay,  
And pay such homage day by day.

But this discovers nature's God,  
Who spread the firmament abroad,  
And bade the systems onward roll,  
Then form'd in dust the human soul.

This heavenly Book shall never fail,  
But be our guide through life's dark vale  
If made our study eve and morn,  
To embrace its rose without the thorn.

Yes, Sharon's fair and lovely rose,  
His worth, what mortal fully knows?  
Without him what would rebels be,  
But heirs of future misery.

The Saviour, then, may all embrace,  
And learn the gospel's heavenly grace,  
And then the rest its truths disclose  
Shall end this life and all our woes.

### From the Raleigh Register.

#### TO PARENTS AND TEACHERS.

Those readers of the Register, who have thus far accompanied us in the development of our views, first in regard to the importance of attending to the education, or at least the influencing of the moral nature of children at a much earlier period than is commonly believed necessary; and secondly, on the advantage of keeping the young (after the manner of the Second great Empire of Antiquity, so beautifully described by Xenophon in his Cyropædia,) during the most impressive period of life, from every thing debasing; those, we say, who have entered into our views on these two heads, have probably, like us, arrived at some new ideas, or at least to a stronger conception of received ones on the subject of training youth. They will, probably, be willing to admit that it is doing no violence to fair logic to infer that a failure to attend to the two obligations resting upon Parents, and already stated, may serve to explain, why it is that so many "Prodigies," "precocious geniuses" and "embryo warriors, statesmen, and poets have failed to realize expectations, perhaps, probably highly raised; doubtless in many cases, the very fulness of promise of the blossom furnishes the explanation of the premature blasting of the fruit, for why should "warriors," "statesmen," and "poets"—in swathing clothes and jump-jackets—need any care? No, let them go out to learn human nature—and get sugar candy. Such a course of conduct on the part of Parents, does certainly redeem our Colleges from the disgrace of having spoilt many a nascent Cicero and Byron—poor creatures! they are to be pitied then, because they certainly have been spoilt twice, for when they came from home they exhibited all the signs of "spoilt meat."

We also think that the views presented in Nos. 1 and 2, and in the foregoing part of this, furnish some hints that may be useful in determining to what sort of person, the temporal, and by consequence the immortal interests of youth should be intrusted; and here we remark that the carelessness of parents in making this selection is another evidence that we estimate the seen above the unseen, the physical above the mental; if we do not so, how does it happen that the profession of Teaching yields less emolument to its votaries than any other? that a man going to build a fine house is more particular and liberal in choosing an Architect than he who is going to give his son a fine education, is in employing a Teacher? that Head Blacksmiths and Carpenters get larger salaries than Head Teachers or Professors? and this is done although the preparation of the former has required only hundreds and months, while the preparation of the latter has required the expenditure of thousands through years of toil! We know very well that there are many men in the Teacher's place, not worth the salary that is given them, but this culpable indifference of the Public to their qualification has placed them there, but there never was a human want that was not supplied sooner or later precisely according to the demand. Let then there be a demand for first rate teachers and they will be had, of course, at a liberal compensation. Perhaps it may be expected that something should here be said on the qualifications desirable in an Instructor of youth; we promise that the realization of a beautiful ideal is not

to be found on this Earth, but it is easy to draw a delineation of such an Instructor as would recognize and endeavor to carry out our leading principles of early instruction and elevation of character, though the first is more properly incumbent upon the mother and the nurse. Our Instructor then would be one who had chosen his profession with a proper sense of its importance and responsibilities, who had no ulterior or altogether selfish views, who felt that he was educating his pupil not only for time, but for eternity, not only for the individual, but also for his country; that he was (what Judge Gaston has decided all Teachers to be) in loco parentis; he would have gone through the whole circle of the Arts and Sciences, and therefore not one sided, but liberal, magnanimous; he would be firm, diligent, discriminating, impartial, patient as (we were about to write more poetical than, but this would be irreverent.) Job; if possible, he should have chosen his vocation con amore; he should himself not only appreciate but delight in what he imparts; the lofty eloquence of Demosthenes and Tully should stir him like a war-trumpet; he should be able to fraternize with the soul of the ethereal Plato, and to soar with the Mantuan Swain. If around such a character, Religion throws her benign halo, there results the unexceptionable Teacher. Of course such a one is seldom, perhaps never found, but in proportion as he approaches this standard the better he is; at least, some whose duty it may hereafter be to select Teachers for classical Schools, may get a hint that may be useful to them from the foregoing enumeration of qualifications. But if he be the reverse of all this, sordid, subject to prejudices, passionate, unkind; if he follow his profession from motives of "filthy lucre" only, he is convicted of being no genuine votary of the Muses, no son of Apollo, but a bastard, a pretender, never baptized in the pure dew of Castalia; to all such a deeply interested Public should say, "Procul, O procul, este profani"—lay not your unhallowed hands upon the living Ark of human hopes, freighted with its rich cargo of generous affections, noble aspirations and embryo virtues, that may save a sinking State, or give renown to a prosperous one; and why should the hand of such an unworthy Preceptor be thus dreaded? because as surely as effect follows cause, as pottery bears the stamp of the potter, as the thing moulded is like the mould, so surely will the ductile and dependent mind of youth assimilate itself to the character and manners of its moral and intellectual guide.

### WAKE FOREST.

Sept. 22d, 1845.

#### FRUITS OF INFIDELITY AND THE BIBLE.

ROUSSEAU, the French Infidel, in his return to Paris, (says Lord Brougham, in his Sketches of Men of Letters,) went to live at an inferior hotel, or rather lodging-house, near the Luxembourg, and there dining at the table with the family, he became acquainted with a female servant, a girl from Orleans, where her father held a place in the mint, and her mother had been a shop-keeper, but both were reduced to distress. Their name was Le Vasseur, and the girl's Theresa. She was about twenty-three, of modest demeanor, and so much without education, that, even after living with him for many years, she never could read the figures on the dial-plate of a clock, or tell in what order the months succeeded each other. He became attached to her; she cohabited with him, and bore him five children, all of which he sent one after the other to the Foundling Hospital, regardless of the poor mother's tears; and after twenty-five years of this intercourse he married her. The mother, a vulgar and affected woman, lived with them; and the father, whom he could not endure, but of whom Theresa was very fond, was, on the pretext of economy, sent at the age of eighty to the workhouse, where the disgrace of this treatment immediately broke his heart.

THOMAS PAINE was another infidel, as some yet alive in this city know, yielded up his spirit in a tempest of agony and despair; alternately uttering fearful curses, and calling for help on the insulted name of Christ! An aged gentleman, well acquainted with him, says,—"One evening I found Paine harranguing a company of his disciples, on the great mischief done to mankind, by the Bible and Christianity. When he paused, I said—'Mr. Paine, you have been in Scotland; you know there is not a more rigid set of people in the world than they are in their attachment to the Bible; is it not their school-book? When a young man leaves his father's house, his mother always in packing his chest puts a Bible on the top of his clothes.' He said it was true. I continued—'You have been in Spain and Portugal, where they have no Bible.' He assented. 'You have been in districts in Europe, where not one man in fifty can read; and you have been in Ireland, where the majority never saw a Bible. Now you know it is an historical fact, that in one county in England or Ireland there are many more capital convictions in six months, than there are in the whole population of Scotland in twelve. Besides, this day there is not one Scotchman in the Alms-house, State Prison, Bridewell, or Penitentiary of New York.' Now then, if the Bible was so bad a book as you represent it to be, those who use it would be the worst members of society; but the contrary is the fact; for our prisons, alms-houses, and penitentiaries are filled with men and women whose ignorance or unbelief prevents them from reading the Bible.' It was now near ten o'clock at night. Paine answered not a word; but taking a candle from the table, walked up stairs, leaving his friends and myself staring at one another."

When such are seen to be the fruits of infidelity, contrasted with those of the Bible, can it be considered of no consequence what children read, or what a man believes?—New York Telegraph.