

the record of events is condensed into small space, there is little opportunity for picturesque description, for glowing portrayal of character or of famous scenes, and these he has not attempted. His review of Louis XIV.'s reign is eminently correct and just in its general outlines, it is free from prejudice, and will make a useful addition to the series to which it belongs.

JAMES BRECK PERKINS.

*The Huguenots and the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes.* By HENRY M. BAIRD. (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. 1895. Two vols., pp. 566, 580.)

IN *The Huguenots and the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes* Professor Baird closes the series, in which he has narrated the history of the Huguenot party in France. It represents the labor of thirty years, and the author can count as the fruit of the large part of his active life which he has devoted to this subject, the honorable position that his books have gained for him among American historians.

His last work possesses the merits of its predecessors and is subject to the same criticisms. Professor Baird is of Huguenot descent; he is Huguenot in his religious beliefs; he has devoted much of his life to the study of the Huguenot cause. It is natural that he should be a Protestant from strong conviction. There are few acts of the Huguenot party in which he finds aught to blame, and little in the conduct of their opponents in which he finds anything to praise.

It is not always easy to decide how much a decided bias in the writer affects the value of historical writings. In most great historical questions there is a right and a wrong, and the man who is not able to discover where lies the right is not a useful teacher for posterity. A vehement conviction of the justice of a cause may make an historical recital glow with life; strict impartiality, a perfectly calm and well-balanced judgment, sometimes produce only a chilly and passionless record of the past, from which the reader gains little except weariness. *The Rise of the Dutch Republic* was the work of an intense partisan. The history of the same period, written by some cool and indifferent critic, who saw defects in the character of William of Orange and merits in that of Philip II., would not have possessed the fascination of Motley's dramatic narration.

During the early part of the seventeenth century the Huguenot party was involved in frequent contests with the general government; they ceased only when its power was broken by Richelieu and it was no longer an important element in French politics. In this protracted controversy Professor Baird's sympathies are with those of his own faith; he finds justification for their conduct, and regrets the success of Richelieu's policy. It is only just to say that he presents the facts with fairness. If, indeed, there is an issue between a Protestant and a Catholic authority,

it would be hard for Professor Baird to accept the latter, but there is no great dispute about the facts. The details of brutal and illegal acts by members of the dominant party are often exaggerated by the writers of the persecuted faith; the unruliness of the Huguenots is often exaggerated by their opponents. But no one disputes that the members of the reformed faith wished to make of their religious body a political organization; that they were strenuous in obtaining means of protection against interference by the government; that they assumed the right to raise soldiers and levy war against the king when, in their judgment, their rights were infringed upon. In short, their position was much like that of some of the great and turbulent nobles when Richelieu became the ruler of France.

There is as little doubt about the views of the cardinal, for they are repeatedly stated in his own writings. He was resolved that the Huguenots should be reduced to the same condition as other subjects of the king, that they should no longer constitute a separate body within the state, that they should render to the sovereign the same prompt obedience that was yielded by all other French citizens. Such a purpose was certainly justifiable; there was no distinction between feudal disturbance and religious disturbance; a fortified camp in La Rochelle or Montauban, which refused obedience to the orders of the general government, was as much an obstacle to any effective administration as a fortified castle held by the Prince of Condé or the Duke of Bouillon. If France was to become a powerful and an orderly monarchy, it was as necessary that the Huguenots should cease to be turbulent, as that the nobles should cease to be unruly.

Not only did the Huguenot party interpose a vigorous resistance to the fulfilment of Richelieu's plans, but they were often the aggressors. It was, indeed, on the claim that their privileges had been invaded, but such disturbances checked Richelieu in his foreign policy, and he resolved to put an end to them. When the Huguenot leaders had aided an insurrection instigated by a selfish and unruly nobleman like Condé, when they had sought the assistance of the King of Spain with which to oppose the King of France, it is hard to see how they could justly complain if their power to do such things was destroyed. The development, the good order, the power and glory of the kingdom as a whole, were the ends for which Richelieu strove, and he would not allow any religious sect to stand in his way.

Nor did the overthrow of the political power of the reformed party at all interfere with the religious freedom which the Edict of Nantes secured for them. After La Rochelle was captured, the cardinal made his solemn declaration that all loyal subjects of the king should receive equal treatment, that members of either creed should find the same favor with him. Professor Baird admits that Richelieu was true to his word. He himself says that from the fall of La Rochelle until Louis XIV. in person assumed the reins of government, there was a period of tranquillity and contentment for the Huguenot party. These were indeed the halcyon days for

those of the reformed faith in France. They had ceased to be turbulent, they received the just protection of wise and patriotic ministers like Richelieu and Mazarin. The overthrow of their unruly power brought thirty years of peace and prosperity to the Protestants, while the misfortunes that were in store for them could not have been averted by political assemblies or cities of defence.

There is little room for any disagreement with Professor Baird's views as to the treatment of the Protestants by Louis XIV. The Huguenot persecution, the revocation of the Edict of Nantes, the unwise and impotent attempt to turn Huguenots into good Catholics, form one of the most lamentable chapters in the history of that king. For nothing did he receive more adulation in his lifetime than for the pretended conversion of a million and a half of Protestants; for no act has he been more condemned by posterity than for a persecution which would have been odious in the thirteenth century, and was much more odious in the seventeenth century.

There is nothing to be said in favor of Louis XIV.; his conduct was neither just, nor generous, nor wise, nor effective, and if Professor Baird finds no good in the monarch, so far as his treatment of the Protestants goes, he cannot be charged with overstating the case. The record of this long and futile effort at conversion is one of the most curious chapters in the history of bigotry. It was a phase of persecution which can find no defenders, even among the most zealous of persecutors; it had not the poor justification that it accomplished its end. Never did a long course of ill treatment, visited upon the members of any sect, produce so scanty results. In Spain the fury of persecution was greater, and it accomplished its purpose; however great the cost to national character and national wealth, the state was purged of heresy. The dragonnades and the galleys under Louis XIV. were enough to injure the prosperity of the country, to outrage the rights of good citizens, and to incur the condemnation of posterity; they were not conducted with sufficient judgment or continued with sufficient pertinacity, to drive the wanderers into the fold of the Church.

A hundred years were occupied in these futile efforts at conversion. In the eighteenth century attempts at persecution were sporadic, and on the whole the condition of the Protestants in France improved. New ideas had moderated the intense Catholicism of the last century, and bigotry was becoming out of date. The Huguenots again met to join in the services of their faith, at first with danger, at last almost unnoticed by the government.

In 1787 the work of repression at last ceased, and the efforts of Louis XIV. to make all Frenchmen of one religion were abandoned. The edict of Louis XVI., if it granted only scanty privileges to those of the Protestant faith, was a formal announcement that the era of persecution had ended.

Professor Baird treats the history of the Huguenots with much ful-

ness. He covers, indeed, a long period ; from the death of Henry IV. until religious privileges were again granted to those of the Protestant faith, almost two centuries passed. Yet the Huguenot movement constituted only one chapter in the history of the French people, and in two large volumes, of almost 600 pages each, the successive phases of religious conflict and religious persecution are delineated in considerable detail.

What is the just measure of space to give to any period is an embarrassing question for an historical writer. The most readable histories owe their interest to their fulness of detail; the bare outlines of the past are often repellent; it is to the sketches of individual character, the pictures of bygone society, the anecdote and incident, that the historical page usually owes its life and charm. Wealth of detail has indeed its perils; if it is delightful when the narrator is a Macaulay or a Parkman, it is far otherwise when the tale is tamely told, and the wearied reader toils through a tedious recital of uninteresting facts.

Professor Baird writes well and clearly, though sometimes the general situation is slightly obscured; the varied incidents of persecution do not always assist in giving a clear idea of the varying conditions of the Huguenot movement.

To the large body of earnest believers, for whom the sufferings and the heroism of their ancestors possess far greater interest than the wars of Louis XIV. or the writings of the philosophical school, this work, with the sketches of many a renowned leader of the cause, the accounts of many a famous temple of the faith, the narrations of danger and distress patiently endured in the name of the Lord, will seem none too full.

In this all will agree: that Professor Baird has now completed a history of the Huguenot party in France which, in scholarship, in conscientious investigation, in comprehensive treatment of every phase of a movement spread over almost three centuries, is not equalled by any work on this subject, either in French or in English.

JAMES BRECK PERKINS.

*The Private Life of Warren Hastings, First Governor-General of India.* By Sir CHARLES LAWSON. (London and New York: Macmillan and Co. 1895. Pp. viii, 254.)

MUCH has been written of recent years upon the life and achievements of Warren Hastings, the great statesman who laid the foundations of the British Empire in India. But in spite of the labors of his apologists, Hastings is still mainly known to the world from the glowing pages of the famous essay which Macaulay wrote upon the appearance of the first biography of the Governor-General, written by Mr. G. R. Gleig. So great is the fascination of Macaulay's style, that subsequent writers upon Hastings have been apt to start with the assumption that they must devote themselves to a refutation of Macaulay's statements, instead of working upon and supplementing the materials supplied and quoted by Gleig. That the brilliant