

of society seek.' In these countries and in America the situation is aggravated by the purely, secular education under which the great majority of the children of mixed marriages are dragged up. Just over three years ago the agents of the (Protestant) Young Men's Christian Association in the United States, acting in co-operation with the Federal Census Bureau, collected statistics on the subject under consideration. They were summarised in 'Association Men,' the organ of the Young Men's Christian Association. Here is an extract from the summary which tells its own tale (the capitals are ours).—

'In families where the father and mother belong to the same Church, 78 per cent. of the young men are Church members. In families where the father and mother are Church members, but do not belong to the same Church, only 55 per cent. of the young men are Church members. In families where but one of the parents is a Church member, only 50 per cent. of the young men are members of Churches. Where the father and mother are both Catholics, only 8 PER CENT. of the young men are not Church members. Where the father and mother are both Protestants, 32 per cent. of the young men are not Church members. Where one of the parents is a Catholic and the other a Protestant, 66 per cent. of the young men do not belong to a Church. Where the parents are members of Protestant Churches, but do not belong to the same Church, 50 per cent. of the young men of these families are not Church members. Where one of the parents is a Catholic, 41 per cent. of the young men do not belong to Church. Where one of the parents is a Protestant, 51 per cent. do not belong to Church.'

Our young men and women would do well to cut out these extracts and paste them, the former in their hats, the latter on their mirrors. And when they contemplate a mixed marriage, let them, like the cautious young Parisian, seek out some 'aged and experienced' person who will dissuade them from taking the fatal step.'

Biography of a Lie

We have not an abiding faith either in the journalism that is yellow or in the journalism that is 'true blue.' With both truth is at as great a discount as were Cuban bonds in 1897. But the lowest depths of journalistic dishonor is, perhaps, touched by certain tatterdemalion no-Popery 'religious' organs that cater for a certain taste in the monstrous and the impossible. One of these shameless sheets is the 'Christian Herald'—which is controlled by an individual ycleped 'Prophet Baxter,' who from time to time announces to a sarcastic public the urgent imminence of the crack o' doom. Some time ago, in pursuit of its customary no-Popery policy, the 'Christian Herald' published the following wild and gruesome tale for the benefit of the marines among its subscribers:—

* A gentleman travelling in South America visited a cathedral in the city in which he was staying, and became engrossed in copying some carving in a corner of the edifice. The hour for closing passed, and when he made for the door he found it barred for the night. Making the best of his predicament, he by and by lay down to sleep. During the night he was aroused by the opening of a door behind the high altar, and saw two priests drag the gagged and bound form of a nun to a spot where they raised a stone; then they tossed the nun into what was evidently a vault below, and then, closing the trap, they went away. Next morning he went and told the British Consul of the occurrence. The Consul said he could do nothing, and advised him, if he valued his life, to leave the place at once.'

The pious romancer who invented this Rawhead-and-bloody-bones story followed the usual custom of such gentry in suppressing names of persons and places and all other details that would facilitate investigation and exposure. The 'Christian Herald' went one step farther in the vile business: it published a picture showing the two anonymous monks of this fairy-tale from a far-off land throwing the roped-up body of the anonymous nun into the vault of the anonymous cathedral.

The Edinburgh 'Catholic Herald' then came upon the scene. Our valued Scottish contemporary has rendered meritorious service to the cause of truth and decency by the admirable persistence with which it exposes no-Popery freaks and 'fakes' and frauds and bestrewn the path of the calumniator with nails and thorns and broken glass. It characterised the story as 'a disgraceful and gross invention, printed for the purpose of selling that gutter publication,' the 'Christian Herald.' It defied 'Prophet' Baxter and his colleagues to name the town where that 'creepy' incident is alleged to have occurred, the person who is stated to have witnessed it, or the name of the British Consul referred to in the story. 'We are prepared,' said the 'Catholic Herald,' 'to deposit a sum of £100 in the hands of any reputable person, to be paid over to any charitable object we may name, if any evidence can be produced by the "Christian Herald" or its proprietary to prove their story.'

This application of the journalistic horsewhip brought the 'Christian Herald' so far to the right-about that it, in effect, owned up to having not so much as a scrap of fact or a rag of evidence in support of the story which it had sent upon its evil rounds. 'Our paragraph,' it pleaded, 'was quoted from a circumstantial article in the "Protestant Woman," stated to be on unimpeachable authority.' So far good. The lie was being traced upwards. The remainder of the biography of the slander was told in the first January issue of London 'Truth.' It runs as follows:—

'In March last a paper called "The Protestant Woman," the organ of the Women's Protestant Union, published a sensational article under the heading, "The True Story of a Nun." A gentleman whose wife was a subscriber to the paper happened to read the story, and deeming it incredible, he wrote to the secretary of the Union asking whether there was any evidence of its authenticity. This led to a correspondence which only terminated a week or two ago, and which has now been sent to me for notice. At first the inquirer was told, on the authority of the author of the story, that "it could be fully substantiated if needful," but that the incident it related "occurred some while ago" in South America. More precise details as to the date and place were requested, and the secretary replied that the author of the story had asked her informant for these particulars. No such particulars were ever forthcoming, and it was finally admitted that the lady who wrote the article in "The Protestant Woman" heard the story from a Presbyterian minister, who heard it from "some people," who in their turn heard it "from friends of the man who witnessed the deed." This eyewitness could not be traced, and it was explained that his friends would be exceedingly unlikely to give any details, lest they should "embarrass their relations" with their Roman Catholic neighbors. In fairness to the Presbyterian minister, it should be added that he says that when he told the story "quite casually" he mentioned that he had no guarantee of its truth.

'Such was the genesis of "The True Story of a Nun" with which the members of the Women's Protestant Union were regaled. Most of them probably swallowed it as gospel, being ready to believe any evil of Roman Catholics. Even when he was being interrogated as to the evidence in support of the story, the secretary of the Union urged that it should be remembered and passed on "as a glaring instance of Rome's inhumanity and cruelty." It seems to me that the affair rather deserves to be passed on as a glaring instance of the credulity and uncharitableness of the Protestant bigots who circulated this cock-and-bull story.'

'The whole thing,' says the 'Catholic Herald,' 'is a lovely sample of the methods of the no-Popery press. Someone tells someone else something, and then someone else prints it in the "Protestant Woman," the "Christian Herald" grabs at the thing, sets it forth as fact, and to give the lie the semblance of truth, invents and prints a lurid picture which readers would no doubt swallow as being the very delineation of a ghastly deed. . . The facts set forth prove that the anti-Catholic newspapers of Great Britain recklessly print any lie that comes their way, sell it for truth, and take no heed of the consequences. That is a discreditable and disgraceful practice.'

And so say all of us.