

WOMAN:

HER GLORY, HER SHAME, AND HER GOD.

BY

SALADIN,

Author of "God and His Book," Etc.

Vol. II.

"It [Christianity] elevated the woman ; it shrouded as with a halo of sacred innocence the tender years of the child."—THE REV. ARCH-DEACON FARRAR.

Εχθρος γὰρ μοι κείνος ὁμῶς αἶδαο πύλῃσιν,
'Ο χ' ἑτέρον μὲν κεύθει ἐνὶ φρεσὶν, ἀλλο δὲ βαίνει.
—HOMER.



LONDON :

W. STEWART & Co., 41, FARRINGDON ST., E.C.

Reproduced in Electronic form
2007

Bank of Wisdom®
A LIMITED LIABILITY COMPANY

**P.O. Box 926
Louisville, KY 40201
U.S.A.**

The purpose of the Bank of Wisdom
is to again make the United States the
Free Marketplace of Ideas that the
American Founding Fathers
originally meant this Nation to be.

Emmett F. Fields
Bank of Wisdom, LLC

CONTENTS.

CHAPTER XXXII.—pp. 253-262.

How the Street-arab Knows his Mother—Baby Burial in Batches—Christianity in a Low Civilisation—Ante-Christian Morals—Parricide in China, Persia, Greece, Rome—Domesticity of Atticus, Sertorius, Glabrio, Agesilaus, Socrates, Cato—Selling of Women in Modern England—Selling of Women in Ancient Babylon—Deterioration of the Human Breed—Advice of Themistocles.

CHAPTER XXXIII.—pp. 263-269.

Women among the Parsees—The Absence of Divorce in Pagan and its Presence in Christian Rome—"Virgins till they are six"—Incurring Motherhood for Money—"The risk of being done to death by villains"—"You may as well invoke the moral sentiment of a clam, and attempt to inflame the chivalry of an oyster"—"Slag and Clinkers for Guilt and Hell."

CHAPTER XXXIV.—pp. 270-277.

Flogged for Being what it Cannot Help Being—"Marriage" in the Slums—The Flogging of Two Child-thieves—"It is necessary that Sham find an opponent and Hypocrisy a foe."

CHAPTER XXXV.—pp. 278-284.

Woman in "Holy Scotland"—The "Holy Fair" and "Hough-magandie"—Pious Excesses—"Fencing the Tables"—"The Big Ha' Bible"—Piety with the Candles Out—Piety when the Match was Struck.

CHAPTER XXXVI.—pp. 285-291.

The Solution to the Problem of the Exceptionally High Illegitimacy Rate in Scotland—Songs Alluding to a Certain National Custom—Farmers who Nailed Down the Windows—The Douce Old Cameronian and his Daughters—Scotch Legitimatising of Illegitimate Children—The "Cutty-stool"—Wedded and Bedded—Throwing of the Bride's Stocking—Hurlin.

CHAPTER XXXVII.—pp. 292-298.

Personal Experience of Holy Scotland—Biblical Ignorance the Leading Trait of Biblical Eulogists—Personal Experiences of the Sword of the Spirit, Aided by a Carnal Poker—Christian Ignorance of Mosheim and Neander, Fleury and Ranke—Polemical Make-believe—The Interests of Priestcraft *v.* the Interests of Humanity.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.—pp. 299-306.

Monogamy not Christian—The Roman Law of Marriage Contrasted with the Jewish—Traces of Roman Ceremonial in the Modern Christian Marriage Rites—Biblical Iniquities—The Talmud on Woman—State of Things Previous to the Passing of the Married Woman's Property Act—Testimony of Russell Gurney, Sir George Jessel, Hinde Palmer, Robert Lowe, and John Stuart Mill—Falsehood and Hypocrisy.

CHAPTER XXXIX.—pp. 307-315.

"With all my worldly goods I thee endow"!—"Serve him, love, honour, and keep him"!—"An Excellent Mystery"!—Practical Specimens of "the Spiritual Marriage and Unity between Christ and His Church"—"Nothing is sacred which caters to imposture."

CHAPTER XL.—pp. 316-324.

Pious Slandering of the Women of Heathen Lands in Order to Rob the Women of Christian England—"Those who are too ignorant for their environment are apt to lose their innocence as a penalty for their ignorance"—"The Poor Heathen"—Christ and Cockle's Pills—Missionary Slander *re* the Women of Japan—The Slander Refuted by those not "in the Bible and Brandy Line of Business"—The Falsehoods Necessary for the Purposes of Exeter Hall—Appeal.

CHAPTER XLI.—pp. 325-334.

The "Poor Heathen" to the Missionary—What the "Poor Heathen" may See in English Newspapers—The *Times* the Modern Herodotus—"Lies Told for the Kingdom of God's Sake"—An Orgie in Pious Scotland.

CHAPTER XLII.—pp. 335-342.

A Personal Experience of the Author—Possibility of being Very Christian and yet Very Brutal—Where Christianity is Highest, Woman is Lowest—Testimony of Maine—The Pretended Misogyny and Real Voluptuousness of the Priesthood—Partaking of the Sacrament Indispensable to the Profession of Harlotry—Testimony of Lecky.

CHAPTER XLIII.—pp. 343-350.

Testimony of Buckle to the Sale of Wives in England—The Infamous Law of *Marquette*—Woman's Position has Risen in England as Christianity Declined—Appeal to Women to Regard the Church as their Enemy—Michelet on *Marquette*—Bible Produced by Girls who have to Eke Out a Living on the Streets—The Missionary with his Bible Produced at the Cost of Prostitution—How "Ruby" Matches "Elevate" Woman.

CHAPTER XLIV.—pp. 351-357.

"Swopping" Wives—Staking and Losing a Wife and Child at the Card-table—The Aunt and Uncle in the Rue de Ruisseau—The Paris Fœtus-hatching Machine—Bartering Totty for Toddy in Tonga—"Attempt to Construct a Shakespeare out of Smithy Sparks and Asses' Hoofs."

CHAPTER XLV.—pp. 358-368.

Christian Drunkenness Contrasted with Mohammedan Sobriety—The Curse of Inebriety on Physiological, Social, and Domestic Life—Christian Arrogance in Attempting to Evangelise India—Christianity's Concomitants, Bible, Bayonet, Brandy, and Syphilis—Statistics of Christsian and Buddhist Crime—British *versus* Sepoy Regiments—Hindoo Prostitutes Purchased with English Gold—Effects of Christianity in China—The Decline of Mission Funds—Appeal.

CHAPTER XLVI.—pp. 369-375.

The Nearer the Present Hour we Estimate the Position of Woman, the Better for Christianity—A Child Played for at Cards—A Woman Sells her Husband for Dissection—Christian Raffling for Young Women in Calcutta—Suttee *versus* a Wife's Second Marriage—Mortality of Wives in the Fens of Kent and Essex—"At his Tenth Wife"—Marrying Wives as a Means of Living—"Laid there on the top of twenty murdered women 'in the sure and certain hope of a glorious resurrection.'"

CHAPTER XLVII.—pp. 376-384.

"Elevated" Women in Ireland and Scotland—Widow Kennedy and her Seven Orphans—Report of the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children—Touching a Blind Girl's Hand with a Red-hot Poker "for Fun"—Insured for £7, and Killed to Secure that Amount—Heaven Gets an Angel and the Parents Get £7—Canting and Profitable Hypocrisy—The Mother and her Eight Murdered Children—The Result of England Possessing a Higher Christian Civilisation than Hungary.

CHAPTER XLVIII.—pp. 385-392.

Pro Aris et Focis—The One Saint, and One Cherub—Allan Cunningham's "Bridal Song"—Uxorial Infidelity—From the Empress Theodora to Mrs. Edward Parmelee—An Episode of Shame and Death—"Cant about Christ overshadows and covers all this foulness."

CHAPTER XLIX.—pp. 393-402.

The Priests' Siege by Stealth of the Citadel of Woman's Honour—Difficulty of Christianising a Sane and Educated Non-Christian Adult—The Press as a Counteractant to the Priest—The School as a Christian Agency—How the Priest Obtains his Early and Insidious Influence—Asking a Girl in Marriage from the Priest—"I only wish that this girl, bought so dearly, may be really yours"—Mother Church as a Mother-in-Law—Father Chiniquy's Story of Shame.

CHAPTER L.—pp. 403-409.

Priestly Subterfuges to Effect the Ruin of Women—St. Patrick's Cave—How Patricia Became *Enceinte* by a Dead Saint—The "Pleasure House"—The Two "Ministering Spirits"—The Four Commands.

CHAPTER LI.—pp. 410-418.

"Come again after ten months' time"—The Gentleman's Wife in St. Patrick's Cave—The Pregnant Patricia Adored as a Saint—Attitude of Patricia's Husband—Patricia's Confessions as to what Passed in the "Earthly Paradise"—Birth of the Young St. Patrick—Numerous Women Apply for Admission to the Cave—Action of Patricia's Husband—Forcible Invasion of the Cave—Vengeance taken on "St. Patrick" and "the Ministering Spirits"—The Papal Fiat—The Cave Blown Up with Gunpowder.

CHAPTER LII.—pp. 419-427.

The Impress of the Mother upon her Offspring—Enfeeblement of the Feminine Intellect—"The hand that rocks the cradle is the hand that rules the world"—The Church and Barren Women—The Miracle of St. Antonio's Tomb—Dona Clara and Father Ambrose—The Miracle Exposed—Father Ambrose Disgraced—The Church's Method of Silencing Husbands.

CHAPTER LIII.—pp. 428-435.

The Facilities of the Clergy for Effecting the Moral Ruin of Women—The Capture of Arragon by the French—The Doors of the Inquisition Thrown Open—A Clerical Seraglio of Sixty Beautiful Young Women—The Narrative of One of the Ladies of the Seraglio—The Father Gives Up his Daughter to the Priest—Her Experiences—The Advances of Don Francisco Tirregon—The Conditions of Averting the Fate of being Burnt Alive in the Dry Pan,

CHAPTER LIV.—pp. 436-446.

The Lady of the Seraglio's Narrative continued—A Sight of the Dry Pan, the Wheel, &c.—The Immoral Command of Don Francisco Tirregon—The Alternatives of Dishonour or Death—Salutations of the Other Members of the Religious Seraglio—"Again Conducted to Don Francisco's Chamber"—Consigned to the Dungeon—The Communications of Leonora—The Secrets of the Religious Seraglio—Relieved by the French—The Testimony of the Torture Chamber of Nuremberg—Cant and Mammon.

CHAPTER LV.—pp. 447-454.

Sacred Embryology—The Baptism of the Fœtus—Craisson and Others on the Soul of the Fœtus—Immoral Influence of even the Protestant Clergy—Admissions of a Religious Journal—Clerical Scandals—Evidence of Lynn Linton and Buckle—The Child of the Family that is Trained for the Church.

CHAPTER LVI.—pp. 455-465.

Holy Harems—The Forlorn Hope—A Vision of the Coming Time—Conventual Infanticide—Non-conventual Infanticide—The Children of "Unfortunates"—Dying in an Old Tea-chest—Thrown in the Fire-place—"To a woman it is sweet to be loved"—Starvation and Desperation—"A terrible cut in the throat"—A Fiend Mother—Prospective Retribution.

CHAPTER LVII.—pp. 466-471.

The Fate of the Unwedded Wife—"Forsaken, Starved, Broken-hearted"—"Mr. Styles" and George IV.—Address of Mary Robinson—The Warranty for Legalised Marriage—Refining Influence of the Virgin Mary—Antecedent Virgins of Religious Myth—The Irish Massacre.

CHAPTER LVIII.—pp. 472-478.

Influence of the Ideal of the Virgin Mary—Macaulay on the Irish Massacre—"Mammy, Mammy, save me!"—Enactments of the Treaty of Limerick—Fees of the Pope's Chancery—Absolutions—Licences—Indulgences—The Deduction.

CHAPTER LIX.—pp. 479-488.

English Country Lanes—The Gipsy's Van—Smith of Coalville's Description of a Gipsy Camp—Children in the Canal Barges—Moral Heroism among the Poor—"John Anderson my jo"—Die Rather than Separate—The Abbess Jouare in the Plessis—Genevra Married from the Grave.

CHAPTER LX.—pp. 489-494.

The Purveying of Married Women—The Path to Dishonour—The Warranty of Alluding to Such Matters—The Extent of Christianity's Responsibility—Law of the Ancient Britons against Adultery—Moral Decadence of Modern Briton—Mass Performed to Lechers in Bed with their Concubines—The Dying Faith in its Last Stronghold.

CHAPTER LXI.—pp. 495-503.

'Arry of the Gutter—The Evidence of our Police-courts—Husbands Conniving at the Prostitution of their Wives—Method of Rearing Prostitutes—The Bishop of Durham's Admissions—Monogamy and Hypocrisy—"Regulation of Vice"—Appeal to the Manhood of England.

CHAPTER LXII.—pp. 504-512.

A Glance at the Iliad—Hector and Andromache—Jewish *v.* Heathen Morals—Ulysses and Penelope—Theoxener—Tarquin and Lucretia—Appius Claudius and Virginia—Arabella Churchill—A Contrast—Other Heathen Ladies—The Holy and Sublime Vocation of Woman.

CHAPTER XXXII.

How the Street-Arab Knows his Mother—Baby Burial in Batches—Christianity in a Low Civilisation—Ante-Christian Morals—Parricide in China, Persia, Greece, Rome—Domesticity of Atticus, Sertorius, Glabrio, Agesilaus, Socrates, Cato—Selling of Women in Modern England—Selling of Women in Ancient Babylon—Deterioration of the Human Breed—Advice of Themistocles.

IF it be the earnest prayer of Exeter Hall that all the earth become, like England, Christianised and civilised, then I enter my most earnest prayer against that of Exeter Hall that no such dire calamity should befall the human race. Christian civilisation seems to mean knocking down a million human beings for ten other human beings to wipe their feet upon. Christian civilisation has goats at the top of the social hill and swine at the bottom. At the top they are rich enough to indulge in the luxury of Divorce Courts ; at the bottom a quid of tobacco or a pot of beer would compensate for the foulest wrong that the Divorce Court ever avenged—nobody is the father of anybody in particular ; and the street Arab has a dim idea that the woman who knocks him about most is his mother—she *must* be, for she rifles his pockets for what he has won on the street by match-selling or larceny. The sow overlies and smothers one of her litter during the night, and, throwing aside all sentimentality on the matter, eats him in the morning. One or two of the human litter in the slums are often

enough overlain and smothered ; but they are too lean and miserable to be worth the eating. The ratepayers have to bury them, or, for a very trifle, the undertaker conveys them to his coal-cellar, and lets them lie till he has time to collect a dozen or so, that burying them all at once may pay. In hot weather the first comer is occasionally rotten before the last comer is ready ; and the stink of funeral economy assails the nasal organs on the street. This sort of thing has, over and over again, been indicted in London as a nuisance : in Christian London, with its “ halo of sacred innocence over the tender years of the child ”—the “ halo ” over the illicitly-begotten child, smothered by its drunken mother and locked up in the undertaker’s coal-cellar for sixpence, till it stinks the whole street into typhoid and takes three hundred with it to Avernus ! This, in the largest, wealthiest, wickedest, and most Christian city the world has ever seen !

Does the white lily of domestic sanctity bloom chaster and sweeter where Christianity is engrafted upon a lower and less complicated civilisation ? I reply that neither ancient civilisation nor in a modern one, has she hallowed in a high civilisation nor in a low one, neither in an the home. London is a specimen of high Christian civilisation ; Lima is a specimen of low Christian civilisation. We have seen what London is. Let us turn to Lima ; let us cite the following :—

“ *Washington (D. C.)*, April 9th, 1886.—Senor Gasten, the Chief of the Bureau of Mercantile Statistics in Lima (Peru), has prepared a document, the points of which Consul Brunt sends to the State Department. He says : There is a population of 100,000 in Lima, 34 per cent. of these are minors, 47 per cent. single and widowed, 19 per cent. married. This is not a matter of surprise, owing to economical features mentioned hereafter ; but it must be noted with pain that, from the great number

of minors, it clearly appears that unmarried persons take almost as active part in propagating their species as those in wedlock.

"Statistics show that 46 per cent. of the births in 1884 were the fruit of wedlock, and 54 per cent. illegitimate. It is, therefore, evident that over two-thirds of the population of Lima live in a state of concubinage, or something of that character, rather than in legal and family ties. According to census reports, there is an excess of 2,534 unmarried or widowed women over the same classes of males; and, as the women are less adapted or educated to gain their living by industry than the male portion, the only means of subsistence left to them is that of depending upon the stronger sex, without regard to law or morality. In a society of only 9,000 families the excess of 2,500 single women, urged by necessity, perverted through ignorance, and even influenced by the climate, is an element of danger to public morals and the general good. In a word, of the 100,000 people in Lima but little more than one-third live in family ties."*

Can "heathen," could people who lived before Christianity was invented, do better than this? Most distinctly, yes. That the reverse is the case is true enough for the pulpit, but is too false to be uttered anywhere else. So great and so sacred is the respect of the Bedouin Arab for the fair sex that the presence, the voice even, of a woman can arrest the uplifted scimitar charged with death, and bid it fall harmless. Whoever has committed a crime, even murder, is safe if a woman take him under her protection; and the right of pardoning is so completely established in favour of the sex that in some tribes where they never appear before men, and in others where they are occupied in the tents, if a criminal

can escape to their tent, he is saved. The moment he is near enough to be heard he cries aloud, "I am under the protection of the harem." At these words all the women reply, without appearing, "Fly from him!" and, were he condemned to death by the prince himself, and by the council of the principal persons of the tribe, the punishment of his crime is remitted, without hesitation, immediately, and he is allowed to go where he pleases.

In China, which we try so hard to convert to Christianity, filial ingratitude is so rare that, when a father accuses his son before a mandarin, there needs no proof of the accused one's guilt; for they cannot believe that any father would be so unnatural as to bring a false accusation against his own son. But, should a son be so insolent as to mock his father, or arrive at such a pitch of wickedness as to strike him, all the province where this shameful act of violence is committed is alarmed; it even becomes the concern of the whole empire—the Emperor himself judges the criminal. All the mandarins near the criminal's place of residence are turned out of their posts, especially those in the town where he lived, for having been so negligent in their instructions, as the occurrence of such a crime implies that they must have been; and all the neighbours are reprimanded for neglecting by former punishments to have rendered impossible the criminal's having attained to such an acme of crime. As regards the unhappy wretch himself, they cut him to a thousand pieces, burn his bones, raze the house in which he lived, as well as the houses that stand near it, in the presumption that there must be some hopeless depravity of manners in a community to which such a monster belonged. In China filial duty is as binding upon the prince as upon the peasant, and the Emperor, every New Year's Day, in the palace, pays a particular homage to his mother, assisted in the ceremony by all the great officers of State.

The Persians, according to Herodotus, held the crime of domestic rebellion in nearly as much detestation as do the Chinese; but they treated it after a more refined manner. They looked on the striking or slaying of a father as an *impossible* offence; and, when a crime of the kind occurred, they held that the criminal could not be the son of the party injured or slain, but must have been surreptitiously imposed upon him as such.

Cicero observes that Solon, the celebrated Athenian legislator, had provided no law against parricide, and that, being asked why he had not, he answered: "To make laws against and ordain punishments for a crime that has never been known or heard of is the way to introduce it rather than the way to prevent it." The criminal calendar shows this impossible crime of Solon, the Pagan, to be tragically frequent in Christendom. Under the sweetness and light of the Gospel we are not unacquainted with—

"The knife a father's throat had mangled,
Whom his ain son of life bereft,
The grey hairs yet stack to the heft."

In Rome no lesser a period than 600 years had elapsed from the founding of the city before so much as a name for the crime of parricide was known among the Romans. The punishment ordained for the first who stained his hands with the blood of the author of his being was that he should be scourged till he was flayed, then sewn up in a sack, together with a dog, a cock, a viper, and an ape, and so thrown headlong to the bottom of the sea.

Epaminondas, the Theban general, being asked what was the most pleasant thing that happened to him in the course of his whole life, replied that he remembered nothing more pleasant than that he had achieved the

Leuctrian victory while his father and mother were yet alive to be pleased with the glory of their son.

Pomponius Atticus, in making the funeral oration over the remains of his mother, protested that, although he had lived with her sixty-seven years, he had never been reconciled to her. The audience seemed struck with surprise at such a declaration. "No," continued Atticus, "for in all that time there has never happened the least jar between us that needed reconciliation."

The gallant Sertorius, though ambitious of a military career, and though in the position of general in Spain, with a liberal promise before him of distinction and renown, solicited permission from the Senate to return home to visit his mother whom he had learnt was ill. Before the Senate had had time to send a reply to his application news was brought him that his mother was no more. He was so prostrated by the news that he shut himself up in his tent for seven days, during the whole of which time he lay on the ground, lamenting and mourning, and would not suffer even his dearest friends to visit him in his sorrow.

The first gilded statue which was ever erected in Rome was by a son to the honour of his father. The son was M. Acilius Glabrio, a knight. The statue was erected to the memory of his father, who had achieved a triumph over Antiochus at the pass of Thermopylæ.

When the Romans were defeated by Hannibal in the Battle of Lake Thrasymene, and the news of the calamity was brought to Rome, the anxious multitude, men and women alike, flocked to the gates to learn the tidings of their respective friends who had been with the army. And Valerius Maximus assures us that one woman, meeting at the gate with her son whom she had given up for dead, died of joy in his arms as she embraced him. Another woman, having been erroneously informed that her son was among the slain,

retired to her home, overwhelmed with sorrow; and when, unexpectedly, she saw him approach her the sudden transition of her grief to excessive joy was such that she fell down at his feet and expired.

The warlike Agesilaus was, under the roof of his own house, one of the most tender-hearted and amiable of men. He used to join his children in all their innocent gambols, and was once discovered by a friend showing them how to ride on a hobby-horse. Upon the friend expressing some surprise at finding the great and celebrated Agesilaus so engaged, "Wait," said the hero, "till you are yourself a father; and, if you *then* blame me, I give you liberty to publish this act of mine to the world.'

The grave Socrates was once surprised by Alcibiades in a nearly similar situation, and made nearly the same answer. "You have not," said he, "such reason to laugh as you seem to imagine at a father playing with his children. You seem to know little of that tender affection which parents entertain for their offspring. Restrain your mirth till you have children of your own, when you will, perhaps, find yourself in the very act in which you have caught me."

The elder Cato, even in the busiest periods of his life, always found time to be present at the bathing and dressing of his little son; and, as the child grew up, he would not permit him to be under any other teacher save himself. Being advised to place the education of the boy in the hands of a certain learned slave, he replied that he could not bear that any person should pull his son by the ears, or that he should be indebted for his education and learning to any other than to his own father.

Here in Christian England the marriageable young women are trotted off to churches and to balls, and there practically set up for sale in the market of matrimony, the mamma skilfully doing the business of

auctioneer—doing it as if she did it not ; for Christian civilisation, from beginning to end, is a perfect Cretan Labyrinth of make-believe and sham. The Church would indignantly deny that it is a marriage-shop, and mamma would be shocked into hysterics if you were to hint to her that she set off her girls with superb boots and bonnets and sold them by public auction. But both counts are true, however vehemently they may be denied. The poor plain girl cannot “do herself up” so as to make going to church of any prospective matrimonial value ; the poor plain girl has neither the face, figure, jewels, nor millinery that are necessary for the successful attending of balls. So the poor plain girl, although she would frequently make one of the very best of wives, has, as a rule, to go unmarried ; and an indigent old maid who has to depend upon her relations, or an indigent old maid who has no relations to depend on, is certainly one of the most wretched and helpless of mortals ; and this Christian country of ours has tens of thousands of such.

In contrast to the foregoing, ancient Babylon was not Christian ; so, when she sold girls in marriage, she did so honestly and openly, and she made humane provision for poor and plain girls, the record of which should bring the blush of shame to the cheek of English inhumanity. According to Herodotus, the Babylonians, as also the Heniti, a people of Illyria, when girls reached a marriageable age they repaired at a certain date to a place where the unmarried men also assembled. The girls were then sold by the public crier, who first disposed of the most beautiful maiden in the entire bevy. When he had disposed of her he put the others, in succession, up to sale, according to their respective degrees of personal attractiveness. The rich Babylonians were emulous as to who should carry off the most beautiful women. But, as the young men who were poor could

not aspire to have the handsomest wives, they were content to have the plain, with the money that was awarded along with them; for, when the crier had sold the handsomest, he ordered the plainest of all to be brought, and asked if any one present was willing to take her along with the amount of dowry he named. Thus she became the wife of him who was satisfied with a small share of feminine attractions; and thus the finest women were disposed of; and thus, from the money which they brought, small fortunes were given along with those who otherwise would have had difficulty in obtaining husbands. No man was permitted to take home the girl he had bought without first giving a security that he would marry her. However, after the auction, if the parties were not mutually satisfied with each other, the law enjoined that the purchase-money should be returned to him who had paid it. I must not be understood as recommending the Babylonian marital code as one to be adopted; albeit I do say that English girls are as veritably sold as Babylonian girls were—not, however, so honestly and openly, but under the thin disguise of sermons and balls; and the Babylonian code made a considerate provision for plain but possibly estimable girls, whereas the English code leaves them nothing save celibacy and “genteel” or other starvation. For my part, I could submit to see a good many of our German princelets deprived of their pensions and the money expended in giving a little start in life to a poor but honest and deserving lad and lass. But, in this high and Christian civilisation, there is no humanity, only a merciless struggle, in which you are relentlessly forced to become either the hammer or the anvil.

Our breed here, too, is being woefully deteriorated by Love being so remorselessly choked by the grasp of Mammon. It is not, Who is he—who is she? but, What has he—what has she? In this high and Chris-

tian civilisation there is more attention paid to the breed of horses and dogs, and even pigeons and rabbits, than to the breed of human beings. Hence we have millions who believe the woman-and-snake story, the man-and-whale story, the stick-and-nail story, and such-like sacred monstrosities. The noblest of the ancients set their face against the sacred altar-flame of Love being degraded into a furnace to smelt the ore of Mammon. It was enacted by Lycurgus that no dowry whatever should be given with any young woman in marriage. When asked to justify this enactment he replied that her personal merit alone should be taken into consideration in the choice of a wife, and that the law was designed to prevent young women being chosen for their wealth or neglected for their poverty.

An Athenian who was hesitating whether to give his daughter in marriage to a man of worth with a small fortune, or to a rich man who had no recommendation except his wealth, consulted Themistocles on the subject. "I would bestow my daughter," said Themistocles, "upon a man without money rather than upon money without a man."

So much for a few embers from the hearth-stones of those who lived and died long ages before this specially "elevating" Christian faith had yet crawled forth from the Bethlehem stable.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

Women among the Parsees—The Absence of Divorce in Pagan and its Presence in Christian Rome—"Virgins till they are six"—Incurring Motherhood for Money—"The risk of being done to death by villains"—"You may as well invoke the moral sentiment of a clam, and attempt to inflame the chivalry of an oyster"—"Slag and Clinkers for Guilt and Hell."

IN Genesis the Christian Scriptures strike the keynote of woman's inferiority and submission; and the whole tune of Holy Writ is true to the keynote which has been struck. Far otherwise is it with the Scriptures of the Parsee.

"The equality of the sexes," says Samuel Laing,* "is distinctly laid down in the Zoroastrian Scriptures. Women are always mentioned as a necessary part of the religious community. They have the same religious rites as the men. The spirits of deceased women are invoked as well as those for men. Long contact with the other races of India, and necessity for some outward conformity to the practices of Hindoo and Mohammedan rulers, did something to impair the position of females as regards public appearances, though the Parsee wife and mother always remained a principal figure in the Parsee household; and latterly, under the security of English rule, Parsee ladies may be seen everywhere in public, enjoying just as much liberty as the ladies of Europe or America. Nor are they at all behind their

* "A Modern Zoroastrian," pp. 215-16.

Western sisters in education, accomplishments, and, it may be added, in daintiness of fashionable attire. In fact, an eager desire for education has become a prominent feature among all classes of the Parsee community, and they are quite on a par with the Scotch, German, and other European races in their efforts to establish schools, and in the numbers who attend, and especially of those who obtain distinguished places in the higher schools and colleges, such as the Elphinstone Institute and the Bombay University. Female education is also actively promoted, and no prejudices stand in the way of attendance at the numerous girls' schools which have been established, or even in studying in medical colleges, where Parsee women attend lectures on all branches of medical science along with male students."

In Christian countries divorce is very common ; but in ancient Rome (before the time of Christianity) it was almost unknown ; and yet Christians claim all the morals ! Gibbon refers, as a fact, to the virtue of the Romans, "who abstained from the exercise of this tempting privilege [divorce] about *five hundred years*." Mommsen, in his chapter on "The Commonwealth," says : "Divorce, formerly in Rome almost unheard of, was now [after the introduction of Christianity] a daily occurrence." Milman says : "The sixth century of Roman greatness is said to have begun before the public feeling was shocked by the repudiation of a virtuous but barren wife by Spurius Carvilius Ruga." Robertson says : "A Roman's own fireside and hearthstone were almost the most sacred spots on earth. There was no battle-cry that came so to his heart as that for the altar and the hearth. How firmly this was rooted in the nation's heart is plain from the tradition that, for five hundred years, no separation took place by law between those who had been united in wedlock." Woolsey, in "Divorce and Divorce Legislation," says : "It is almost

impossible to believe that no divorce occurred at Rome for more than five hundred years from its foundation, and yet there is no good reason for rejecting the story altogether." Indeed, every reason goes to induce us to accept it, when we read how the public sense seemed insulted by the first known instance of divorce; and Woolsey gives not a single fact to break the force of the historical tradition. Mommsen, referring to the home life, writes: "None has equalled the Roman in the simple but inexorable embodiment in law of the principles pointed out by Nature herself.....To the Roman citizen a house of his own and the blessing of children appeared the end and essence of life." This against our most Christian Divorce Court, reeking with a sensual obscenity, that, as an emetic, should make a satyr or even Priapus himself disgorge his breakfast. "Elevate!" Christianity has never "elevated" woman except to the horrible gibbet of Infamy, and to the revolting high altar of Lust.

"Halo of sacred innocence" indeed! Cesspool of accursed crime would be nearer the truth. You cannot bring a clean thing out of an unclean. Millions of our women, whom Christianity has had 1800 years to "elevate," are degraded till they lie outside the pale of womanhood, and even outside the pale of swinehood. Those who have inhaled the reek of the slums know this. A gulf deeper than hell lies between Dives and Lazarus. A river more impassable than Phlegethon flows between Belgravia and Bethnal Green. A wall more adamantine, and a hundred times higher than that of China, lies between Mayfair and Whitechapel. In the former the mothers bring forth boys for Eton and Harrow; in the latter, for the gallows and Dr. Barnardo's Homes. The former bear girls to be the wives of earls; the latter bear girls who are virgins till they are six, when they begin to be a compound of

prostitute and thief and squaw. They are sent out by their parents—although it is not always they have a recognised male parent—to sell matches or sell their persons or steal. They have all three alternatives before them ; and they are free to adopt any or all ; but they are *not* free to return without money, get it how they may. The School Board visitor has interfered with the earnings of these “elevated” women and their children ; but their unprincipled ingenuity and low cunning are often more than a match for the School Board officer ; and then there are those halcyon opportunities for money-making—the holidays.

For money the mothers of these children became mothers. Motherhood involved the mother in loss that the fee for incurring it did not indemnify ; and so she has to make the best of a bad bargain by taking the earliest opportunity of sending out her children to add what they can to the insufficient amount for her sin which she was paid for conceiving them. The boys are sent out to be Gibeonites and thieves. The girls are more profitable ; they have a third string to their bow—besides being Gibeonites and thieves, they can expose themselves in the flesh market. This fact is stated truthfully, but with bitter shame, by one who knows only too well what he is writing about, and who has read from its preface to its colophon the fearful Book of the Slums. When the children (round whom Christianity has had 1800 years to cast the “halo of sacred innocence”) return to the parental knee—or rather to the parental foot—they are eagerly asked what money they have got ; but few or no questions are asked as to how they got it. If the child return with no money at all, he or she goes supperless, and is frequently kicked or beaten till the thin criminal blood soils the dirty tatters and rags in which he or she is enveloped. The tongs describes a halo—but not one of “sacred innocence,” round the head of

the child. Even in the dreariest nights of a London winter I have found children of either sex sleeping under carts or on lonely doorsteps, the matches they have been attempting to sell wet with the hoar-frost or the chilling dew, and who durst not go home because, through the long lapse of a hungry and fearful day, they had not obtained sufficient coppers to warrant them in facing their loving and tender mother, whom, according to Archdeacon Farrar, Christianity has so humanised and elevated. Alas, how this Christianity began with a lie, and how down to the present hour of its senility and decay it loveth and maketh a lie! If it do not know the truths I am telling, it should know them; and, if it be too apathetical and high bred to know them as I have done, then, in the name of the eternal verities, let it hold its peace.

I have, more than once, gone "home" with children I have found sleeping under dark railway arches and under carts. "Home" has usually been a den of drunkenness and dirt. I have never once been thanked for bringing home a child from the frosty railway arch or from the frozen door-step. I have usually had to give the contents of my purse to prevent the child who had not earned or stolen sufficient coppers from getting beaten well-nigh to death; and, even after having given my last farthing, I have heard the dull and heavy thud of blows fall upon the children I had rescued before I had well got outside the door, and my heart has sickened under their terrible screams. I have sometimes returned to plead for mercy, and always at the risk of being done to death by villains without a gleam of human intelligence in their eye or a drop of human blood in their heart—villains that the great towns of England can furnish in hundreds of thousands, after more than eighteen centuries of the gospel of the Galilean. I should not advise Archdeacon Farrar, or those like him, to go into such locali-

ties ; but I should advise them to hold their peace about the effects of Christianity till they do. The entering of such localities is not for the halt, the maimed, the lame, or the blind. The entering of such localities is not for the mere scholar and fine gentleman, with flaccid muscles and attenuated thews ; but for one with, when put to it, a desperado's courage, and bones of iron and sinews of brass. I never stir out after sunset without a heavy oaken staff, the motto of which is "Defence, not Defiance." Not attacked, I would be the last to use it ; attacked, I would be the first. Grasping it in my right hand, I have, more than once, set out on my errand of mercy, and returned with it mercilessly encrusted with blood and hair—peradventure some of the blood my own. I have had, occasionally, to be very cruel in order to be kind. With those whom Christianity has allowed to sink lower than dogs or swine you have to argue with a poker ; you have to convince them by breaking their head with a broken chair. You need not attempt to make them understand any moral canon ; but, once with a broken chair and once with a poker, I succeeded in letting them know the plain, concrete fact that I objected to being murdered. Mere words, however kindly meant and kindly spoken, are simply wasted wind. They do not want your words ; they want your watch. When you appeal to their sense of right and truth you appeal to minus quantities ; you may as well invoke the moral sentiment of a clam, and attempt to inflame the chivalry of an oyster. Very many of them are the result of the lecherous whim of somebody in broadcloth—a lecherous whim which fructifies into destitution and disease, degradation, devilry, and danger. The toad that spawns on the margin of the pool is more careful of its young than are the parents who spawned these creatures in the centre of Debauchery's Lake of the Dismal Swamp. If emenagogues had not failed—if attempts to obtain abor-

tion had not proved abortive, they would not have been there. They owe nothing to the fabric of Society ; they are not of the fabric : they are stercorous and pestilent offal that lies around its base. They owe nothing to the world, and each man or woman of them would set the world on fire to cook his or her own particular herring. The begetting of children, the bearing of children—all the offices of nature, all the mean gutter-crawling of “ life,” and all the groaning squalor of death, not infrequently take place in the same den, and in the sight and hearing of all. Christianity has dropped them *through its riddle* as slag and clinkers for guilt and hell, and turned her pious attention to savages in foreign lands. One excuse for the clergy is that they do not know this as I know it ; but in one thing they are inexcusable : they do not want to know it. They turn away their polite eyes from London’s miles of misery and the Gomorrah of her docks of doom ; and, with hands encased in lavender kids, they write in rose-water about Joy and Jubilee and Jesus.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

*Flogged for Being what it Cannot Help Being—
"Marriage" in the Slums—The Flogging of Two
Child-thieves—"It is Necessary that Sham Find an
Opponent and Hypocrisy a Foe."*

No pen has yet written "The Biography of a Bloke," "The Reminiscences of a Rough," or "The Memoirs of a Mile-end Mole." The police can tell you of places to which, after a certain hour at least, the police never and dare not go. It is only mere spray drops from the waters of London's Styx that ever come under polite London's ken. A child who dare not go home without the necessary coppers steals with the clumsiness of desperation, and is caught in the act. Then London avenges itself. The waif is dragged off to prison and *flogged*; flogged for being what it cannot help being; flogged because somebody, God knows who, begot it; flogged to expiate the crimes of a society that trampled it into hell, and then punished it for being there.

"The Bitter Cry of Outcast London" predicates of one of the many degraded districts:—

"'Marriage,' it has been said, 'as an institution, is not fashionable in these districts.' And this is only the bare truth. Ask if the men and women living together in these rookeries are married, and your simplicity will cause a smile. Nobody knows. Nobody cares. Nobody expects they are. In exceptional cases only could your question be answered in the affirmative. Incest is common; and no form of vice and sensuality causes surprise or attracts attention. Those who appear to be married are often

separated by a mere quarrel, and they do not hesitate to form similar companionships immediately. One man was pointed out who for some years had lived with a woman, the mother of his three children. She died, and in less than a week he had taken another woman in her place. A man was living with a woman in the low district called 'The Mint.' He went out one morning with another man for the purpose of committing a burglary, and by that other man was murdered. The murderer returned, saying that his companion had been caught and taken away to prison; and the same night he (with the woman) took the place of the murdered man. The only check upon communism in this regard is jealousy, not virtue. The vilest practices are looked upon with the most matter-of-fact indifference. The low parts of London are the sink into which the filthy and abominable from all parts of the country seem to flow. Entire courts are filled with thieves, prostitutes, and liberated convicts. In one street are 35 houses, 32 of which are known to be brothels. In another of these districts are 42 of these houses, 428 fallen women and girls, many of them not more than 12 years of age. A neighbourhood whose population is returned at 10,100 contains 400 who follow this immoral traffic, their age varying from 15 to 50.

* * * *

"All kinds of depravity have here their schools. Children who can scarcely walk are taught to steal, and mercilessly beaten if they come back from their daily expeditions without money or money's worth. Many of them are taken by the hand or carried in the arms to the gin palace, and not seldom may you see mothers urging and compelling their tender infants to drink the fiery liquid. Lounging at the doors and lolling out of windows and prowling about street corners are pointed out many of the members of the notorious band of

'Forty Thieves,' who, often in conspiracy with abandoned women, go out after dark to rob people in Oxford Street, Regent Street, and other thoroughfares. Here you pass a coffee house, there a wardrobe shop, there a tobacconist's, and there a grocer's, carrying on a legitimate trade, no doubt, but a far different and more remunerative one as well, especially after evening sets in—all traps to catch the unwary. These particulars indicate but faintly the moral influences from which the dwellers in these squalid regions have no escape, and by which are bred 'infancy that knows no innocence, youth without modesty or shame, maturity that is mature in nothing but suffering and guilt, blasted old age that is a scandal on the name we bear.' "

Two child-thieves were recently arrested. A gentleman, in virtue of his being connected with the press, managed to be present when they were birched. "It was," writes he, "at one of the ordinary morning sittings of the Borough bench on a particular day some three or four years ago that a couple of youngsters about the ages of twelve and thirteen were brought up on a charge of theft. They were convicted, and sentenced to receive twelve strokes with a birch rod each. I immediately slipped round to the chief inspector's corner of the court, and asked if he could allow me to be present to witness the birching. 'Oh, yes, we can manage that. Be here about one o'clock.' Immediately the bench rose, about 12.30, I finished off my police 'copy' as quickly as possible, and put in my appearance at the charge-room at the time stated, where I found the two delinquents. 'Who performs the operation?' I whispered to one of the detectives. 'I do, and I've got a nice old rod in pickle for 'em to,' came back the reply in a tone of very great satisfaction. 'And,' continued the officer, 'I'll fetch blood out of the young devils this morning.' 'Oh; but you ought not to do-

that?' I suggested. 'Won't I; you'll see,' he sneered, and presently returned with the wretched instrument of torture in his hand—the birch. 'How's this? Feel it,' he said to me, holding out two or three of the twigs of which the delightful article was composed. I complied with the officer's request, and felt two or three of the lashes, which were wiry and wet, the birch having been in pickle an hour or two since the sentence was pronounced; and I must say I was greatly impressed with the idea that, if such lashes were to be applied to a boy's bare skin with any degree of vigour, birching was truly a barbarous punishment. A police birch is much like a school birch. It is made up, as everybody knows, of a bunch of long thin twigs, which serve as lashes, tied tightly to the end of a stick about a couple of feet long. The police birch, however, is of considerably better manufacture than the school birch, and more care is taken in its general make and get-up. We had not many minutes to wait before the big, burly magistrate who was to officially witness the operation (and, therefore, on behalf of the Queen, give her most gracious Majesty's sanction to it) arrived. Everybody and everything was ready, and a move was made to the court-yard at the back of the gaol—a dull, bare, and uninteresting piece of ground, surrounded by high walls, and used chiefly for the purpose of drilling the police force. Here a form like an old-fashioned school seat was already placed. The persons present were a magistrate, the chief superintendent of police, a detective (who administered the punishment), a couple of constables, myself, and, of course, the two poor little fellows who were to be so cruelly tortured, both of whom, it is hardly necessary to state, were crying bitterly. 'Now, then, down with your trousers, quick!' said one of the constables; and, although the two delinquents obeyed the command, their movements were not very rapid. One of the

constables quickly unbuttoned one of the poor little fellows' braces, and his trousers were pulled down so as to leave his buttocks bare. Almost with lightning rapidity he was placed on his stomach on the form ; one constable at one end held his hands with an iron grasp, and the other at the other end took the poor little wretch's legs. The official who held the birch stepped forward, the culprit yelling and screaming in unearthly tones, and, with all his might and main, both hands grasping the rod, commenced to administer the punishment, the distress of the other boy being by no means lightened at the sight of his comrade's treatment. At the first stroke the squealing, howling, and yelling of the culprit were heartrending, and the magistrate—who, being an admiral, could not have been altogether unused to that kind of thing—turned his back on the sickening sight. Immediately the birch had touched the poor little fellow's skin the weals or marks of the lashes were plainly visible ; and, after two or three strokes had been laid on, the culprit's right buttock resembled nothing so much as a piece of raw beef ; and when the whole complement of six strokes had been inflicted—I say it to the disgrace of the nation—blood was drawn, and, as his comrades viewed the matter, the official who held the birch had proved himself a clever fellow ; for it is the acme of ambition on the part of the officers who are told off to administer the punishment to draw blood. The detective with the birch then moved his precious body to the other side of the form and inflicted the remaining six strokes in a similar manner on the tiny culprit's left buttock, the other little boy being put through the same cruel ordeal, with exactly similar results. The agony caused to these two poor little mites by such barbarous treatment was simply indescribable, and their unearthly yells, the results of such punishment, are ringing in my ears at this time as plainly as if I were still watch-

ing the proceedings in the court-yard of that prison on the occasion of which I write. And here I may, perhaps, be allowed to allude to and denounce the fact that these whippings should be allowed to take place in private. The public know nothing of them ; for, except in the most isolated cases, reporters are powerless to obtain admittance to the prisons on such occasions, and the outside world have no more knowledge of what twelve strokes with the birch means than they have of hell itself. I contend that, whatever corporal punishment is allowed to be inflicted on criminals, reporters of the press, as the representatives and guardians of the public, should be allowed to be present. Had this been the custom with regard to birching, I do not hesitate to say birching would have been abolished years ago, or, at the most, practised only on adults. If what I saw were an exceptional, an isolated case, it might be possible, by a piece of clever special pleading, to defend this cruel system ; but I speak from my own knowledge that what took place in her Majesty's gaol at — is only what is taking place daily in the various Government prisons in the country. If the constable who administers the birch fails to draw blood, he is subjected to all the chaff and banter imaginable among his companions ; and, although police-constables can, as a rule, stand a good deal, a line must be drawn somewhere, and they are, according to my experience, generally found inclined to draw it at chaff. 'God, Jack, I did lay it on to that — kid that was to have the six strokes this morning ! I fetched blood out of him like —. The poor little — won't be able to sit down for a — month, I'll lay my life,' I heard a blackguard of a constable remark to another constable in a town a few miles from that in which the prison was situated in which I witnessed the birchings. 'But you haven't got half a — muscle,' rejoined his blackguardly companion ; 'I would have

killed the young —— if I had been on to him.' And these are the men who are told off to punish poor little defenceless mortals who have made a trivial transgression of the laws of their country, and who are led to the whipping-form like lambs in her Majesty's name ! The constable's remark that the boy would not have been able to sit down for a month is not greatly exaggerated, for I can bring forward several cases in which it has been impossible for children to sit down for two or three weeks after the punishment. The British public should not rest content until a Royal Commission is appointed to take into consideration the question of flogging in general."*

* *Pall Mall Gazette*, July 30th, 1887.—The foregoing exposure has already, it would seem, contributed in the direction of ameliorating a disgraceful survival of judicial barbarity. Sir Charles Warren, in a police order issued since the above was in type, requests the superintendents of the various divisions of the Metropolitan Police to report to him, through the chief constables, on any modifications which experience may suggest to them as desirable in reference to the punishment of certain classes of juvenile offenders by means of the birch-rod. In issuing this order, Sir Charles Warren calls attention to the following letter which he has received from the Home Office : " I am directed by the Secretary of State to inform you that he has had under his consideration the manner in which the punishment of birching is at present carried out in the case of young offenders. It is evident that, owing to differences in age and physical constitution, the effect of this punishment must necessarily vary in different cases, and the Secretary of State has reason to believe that, in some instances, the punishment may operate with excessive severity, and may possibly even occasion serious injury. With the view of preventing such consequences, the Secretary of State would suggest, for the consideration of the police authorities, that the rod used for birching children under ten should be lighter than that used in the case of older offenders ; and that, if there is reason to suppose that the child is in delicate health, or is naturally of a specially weak constitution, a medical man should be consulted as to the propriety of the punishment being carried out, or the severity with which it should be inflicted.— (Signed) GODFREY LUSHINGTON."

And whose blood was in the veins of these two boys? Whose blood reddened the twigs of the birch? Peradventure that of the magistrate himself, or of the chaplain of the prison. For mystical are the grinding of the wheels of the mill of misery. And God looks on and tolerates. And I am accounted a heretic, and my anti-Christian writings are produced against me in a Court of Justice to prevent my getting justice, because I fail to see in all this how Christianity "elevates" woman and casts a "halo of sacred innocence round the tender years of the child." So be it. I have flung down my gage of battle, and the force of bigotry may break me to death; but it shall never bend me to submission. Un-salaried and ill-supported, I fight as stubbornly as if the world flung at my feet its gold and laurels and huzzas; for the weak need a champion and the wronged an avenger. It is necessary that Sham find an opponent and Hypocrisy a foe: these they will find in me, be the consequences what they may.

CHAPTER XXXV.

Woman in "Holy Scotland"—The "Holy Fair" and "Houghmagandie"—Pious Excesses—"Fencing the Tables"—"The Big Ha' Bible"—Piety with the Candles Out—Piety when the Match was Struck.

AND now a word anent what Christianity has done to purify, refine, and elevate woman in holy Scotland, "my own, my native land." I refuse to plead any apology for writing what I am about to write. He who writes simply the truth has no reason to be apologetic. I, Scotland's son, have no reason to apologise to Scotland, my mother, for what I am about to record ; but I leave it to Scotland, my mother, to say whether she should not apologise to me, her son, for affording my pen such an ungracious subject.

Scotland's "Holy Fair," or Lord's Supper, was wont, some fifty or sixty years ago, to be held on the summer grass, with God's naked sky above for a canopy. Without troubling to look down through the roof of a church Christ could look down and behold the pious Scots eating his flesh and drinking his blood. This sacramental *fête champêtre* was a reverential relic of Covenanting times, and was supposed to lend a peculiar solemnity to the most awful of the Christian rites. In the parish of Irongray I have seen "the Communion stones," rude crags on which the Covenanters sat and partook of the sacrament of the Lord's Supper in the days when Scotland was passing through the seven-times heated fire of affliction, when—

“It was not for her heather
She was called the purple land.”

You would imagine that, engaged in the most sacred rite of the Christian Church, celebrated in a manner solemnly suggestive of Covenanting times, the Scotch Presbyterians would have felt that “this is the very house of God, the very gate of heaven,” and that they would have laid their souls open to the most elevated of spiritual influences, purged from the sin and the dross of earth. Yet I have it on indisputable evidence, on the evidence of more than a dozen independent witnesses, who in their youth had partaken of the Lord’s Supper in the open-air, that, by the young rustics, it was eagerly looked forward to as an occasion for carnal orgies. During the praying and the preaching the young couples lay together on the grass, often in indecent and most suggestive attitudes. Burns says of the end of the celebration of the Lord’s Supper in his day—

“Now some are fu’ o’ Gospel grace,
And some are fu’ o’ brandy,
And many deeds that day begun
May end in houghmagandie,*
Some ither day.”

Burns puts off the actual “houghmagandie” till “some ither day ;” but he is writing of the Sacrament as celebrated in the tent, not in the open-air among crags and bushes. By the testimony of many venerable men with whom I have conversed when a youth, and whose names and addresses I could, if necessary, give, the “deeds that day begun” did not wait till “some ither day” for consummation in “houghmagandie.”

Even after the publication of “The Holy Fair” the open-air drunkenness and carnality attendant upon the celebration of the Lord’s Supper were not surrendered

* Houghmagandie=fornication.

without a struggle. There is more than one instance of the elders absolutely refusing to "bring forward the elements" *inside* the church walls, and of elders having to be *borrowed* for that purpose from a neighbouring parish. "The abolition of tent preaching on sacramental occasions," writes the Rev. David Hogg, "was one of the greatest reforms in the Church, and for this we are in great measure indebted to Burns' satire, 'The Holy Fair.' The description there given of men and manners may be thought more plain than pleasant by some ; but thousands can bear testimony to the truthfulness of his representations, as having been witnessed in their own parishes on similar occasions. So far as we are aware, there is no such thing now in any of the Lowland parishes of Scotland. It is a thing of the past, and many of the present generation do not know it even by name. Would it had always been so ! Doubtless the clergy did not allow, far less approve of, the indecorous scenes which then took place ; and doubtless also they admonished, and exhorted, and rebuked, in no lenient degree, those accused of their participation ; but nevertheless the custom continued to prevail with unabated vigour, and amelioration was scarcely to be hoped for, if it could only be restrained from going further, *supposing that possible*. Burns was, however, longer-sighted. He saw the effect must continue as long as the cause existed, and therefore, taking one of his sharpest-pointed shafts, he aimed at both, and the world can now testify as to the result."*

I have been at a good many "Holy Fairs" of the modern kind. The concomitant whisky-booths had been abolished before my time, and no longer could it be said, as in the days of Burns,

"There racer Jess and twa three whores
Stan' blinkin' at the entry ;"

* "Life and Times of the Rev. John Wightman, D.D.," p. 53-

but I can testify that the humbug and hypocrisy were sickening. The way the Rev. Joseph C. Lorraine, of Caerlaverock, and the Rev. John Hope of Dunscore, "fenced the tables"—that is, showed who alone was worthy to approach them—if it meant anything, simply meant that no man or woman born could go forward and partake of the Lord's body and blood without "eating and drinking damnation to himself." Disposed to take matters in earnest, I was wont to feel absolutely appalled, and anticipated a hot cinder of hell yet sticking in my throat for my having, when on earth, eaten the Lord's body unworthily. It was never till I saw several of the hoary master-blackguards of the parish sit down at the table with pious confidence that I timidly ventured to approach it. The Rev. David Hogg, himself a Presbyterian minister, thus candidly refers to the "fencing": "In 'fencing the tables' what was called the *debarring* was also lengthened and minute, while the invitation was short and general. The *debarring* was so called from the several classes of sinners addressed being solemnly debarred or prohibited from partaking of the ordinance. So minute and comprehensive was the enumeration of these classes that one would have thought the tables were prepared in vain, as none could be entitled to come forward with impunity. Profane swearing was very particularly insisted on in all its forms, and especially in that of minced oaths, which were very common. One clergyman in the vicinity of Dumfries is reported to have said, when engaged in this part of the service: 'I debar from these tables all those who use any kind of minced oaths, such as heth, teth, feth, fegs, losh, gosh, or lovenenty.' No doubt the great object of such particularity was to preserve the purity of the ordinance and prevent the commission of aggravated sin, though there was a seeming inconsistency in what followed—the earnestness in inviting and urging com-

municants to come forward and partake of the memorials of redeeming love. Indeed, an instance is on record when, after the debarring, not a single individual would come forward till the minister, seeing his mistake, entreated them by saying that he did not altogether mean what he had said.”*

So much for, under the most awful solemnities that mortal can conceive, what Christianity has done to purify and elevate woman and to purge from the heart of man his grosser self, and place his feet upon the upward pathway to the higher instincts and lofty moral earnestness of his being.

Partaking of the Lord's Supper in the open-air was over before I was born ; but not so “the big ha' Bible” and “takin' the beuk”—*i.e.*, family worship. I have, when a child, knelt in that worship in my own father's house. There there was no hypocrisy, no cant, nothing but simple, pure, and, if you will, ignorant earnestness. The remembrance of these prayers still touches my soul with a sad but soothing memory, for they were the spontaneous expression of the heart of a father that loved me ; they were spoken with a voice that Death has now silenced ; and the knees that then knelt before God to implore a blessing upon my little brothers and sisters and me are mouldering to dust in the auld kirk-yaird of Caerlaverock.

But I have seen more ambitious and far other instances of “takin' the beuk.” I have seen young people gravitate to such farm-houses as still continued to “tak' the beuk.” In the presence of the auld guid-man and the auld guid-wife there was some harmless enough “tig-towin' wi' the lassies.” But, as the auld guid-man pronounced the words, “Let us worship God,” the candles were at once put out—ostensibly for solemnity,

* “Life and Times of the Rev. John Wightman, D.D.,” pp. 50-1.

but probably for economy. The lads and lassies, frequently including the daughters of the guid-man, knelt down together before chairs and tables and stools, and the "tig-towin'" and joking, which were harmless enough while the candles burnt and before the prayer began, lapsed into license now that the candles were extinguished and the prayer was being drawled. While the "sooplication," which was usually an exceedingly long one, was proceeding, it was utterly against decorum to make a noise of any kind ; but hardly anything else save this was against the decorum of the occasion. For any undue advances while the candles were aflame and before worship had begun, Jenny would give Anera a box on the ear ; but it was altogether against etiquette for her to disturb divine worship by resisting any familiarity whatever while the service of God was going on. The license family worship afforded for improper familiarities among the worshippers was generally understood and acted upon, and was not confined to rural districts, although it is from such districts that, for the most part, my experience has been drawn. I remember being at family worship at the house of a pious sea captain in Glasgow. When the prayer of the devout salt was about half-way through a devil-may-care student friend of mine who accompanied me—the man whose wasted life and untimely death I depict in the ballad "Leonore"—struck a match suddenly and maliciously. The match was extinguished in a moment ; but what was seen in the glance of that moment I will never express, not even with a view to the refutation of those who maintain that the Christian religion has a tendency to elevate and purify woman. Here I had inexpressible evidence of how it refined and purified her ; here, under the sanctities of the domestic altar ;

* See "Life of Saladin," pp. 58-61.

here where, with every attribute of earnestness, the father of the household was wrestling with God.

My native Scotland is, perhaps, the most priest-ridden country in Europe, Spain not excepted. The Christian tradition thrives in the ardent *lowe* of the *perfervidum ingenium Scotorum*. Presbyterianism is deeply engrained in the ascetic *dourness* of the Scottish character, and the pursuit of that "science" known as Theology, standing with her one foot on Mist and the other on Mystery, has a charm for the metaphysical and subjective instincts of the Scottish intellect. It may be that, in some countries, Christianity is a profession only; but in Scotland it is more than a profession—it has actual root in the national life. All the more, then, it is warrantable for us to take Scotland as an example of what Christianity has done to raise the status of woman and to purify and ennoble her character. We have seen what a sacred thing were her "Holy Fairs," when she was more pious than she is even now. We have seen what an exalted standard of purity she was exalted to, even on the solemnising occasion when the patriarch, "his lyart haffets wearing thin and bare," sent his supplication direct from the hearth of his home to the altar of his God.

CHAPTER XXXVI

THE Solution to the Problem of the Exceptionally High Illegitimacy Rate in Scotland—Songs Alluding to a Certain National Custom—Farmers who Nailed Down the Windows—The Douce Old Cameronian and his Daughters—Scotch Legitimatising of Illegitimate Children—The “Cutty-stool”—Wedded and Bedded—Throwing of the Bride’s Stocking—Hurlin.

IRREVERENCE for cant and hypocrisy, reverence for the eternal verities, induce me to thrust aside the frippery of false delicacy and admit that Scotland’s immersion in Christianity does not suffice to purge her from a debasement of sexual morals such as is, perhaps, unknown in any other civilised land. The Scottish illegitimacy rate has long been the paradox of moralists and the problem of statisticians. *The* solution to the problem lies in the fact that, in Scotland, rural courtships are conducted *in bed*. This is perfectly distinctly recognised and understood as a custom of the country. Jenny the nymph, by arrangement, leaves her bed-room window unfastened, and Archie, the swain, enters thereby after dusk, and retires a little before sunrise. Many of the best known songs in our Scottish minstrelsy refer to this custom—such songs as “Let me in this ae nicht,” “O are ye sleepin’, Maggie?” “Bonnie Lassie, I lie near ye,” “The tailor fell through the bed, thimbles and a’,” and “The Bonnie Lass made the Bed to me,” may serve as specimens. And, mark you, the songs referring to this custom are not by ribald rhymesters, but by Caledonia’s grandest singers, Allan Ramsay, Robert Burns, and

Robert Tannahill. He was a bard of whom Scotland and the world is proud who wrote the plaint of the too typical Scottish lass :—

“ Weary fa’ you, Duncan Gray—
 Ha, ha, the girdin o’t !
 Wae gie by you, Duncan Gray—
 Ha, ha, the girdin o’t !
 When a’ the lave gae to their play,
 Then I maun sit the lee-lang day,
 And jog the cradle wi’ my tae,
 And a’ for the girdin o’t !”

Even before I could read I could repeat many of the songs of Scotland and the psalms of Israel. I required to hear a song or a psalm only a time or two, and I could repeat it by rote. Thus many of the songs that the milk-maids sang in Galloway round the home of my childhood still linger in my memory. They were never for a moment suspected of being either obscene or improper when they referred to the only mode of wooing which was known to the milk-maids and their lovers—the mothers and fathers of those who, whether with bayonets or brains, have been the backbone of Britain. The following is a characteristic snatch which I have often heard lilted from the barn in winter, and in autumn from among the stooks of golden corn :—

“ When I gang to the kirk on Sabbath
 Many a braw wife I see
 Smilin’ by her husband’s side,
 And many a nicht she’s lain wi’ me,
 Lilty loorum, loorum laddie,
 Lilty loorum, loorum lay,
 Lilty loorum, loorum laddie,
 Lilty loorum lay.”

And the minister, even the holy Presbyterian man of God, in the light of Scottish fact and Scottish song is no whit better than the Papist monk whom William Langland satirised, whom Sir David Lindsay lampooned : the

dour clergy of the type of John Knox and George Wishart liked, and still like, their glass and their lass.

“We’re a’ dry wi’ drinkin’ o’t ;
 We’re a’ dry wi’ drinkin’ o’t ;
 The minister kissed the fiddler’s wife,
 An’ could na preach for thinkin’ o’t.”

But I require not to invoke the bards as my witnesses. In my early boyhood I lived for years in districts where the custom was carried out in all its integrity, and long before it had occurred to me that there might be other parts of the world where courting was conducted with more delicate sentiment and with purer morals.

Some farmers, to prevent themselves from being awakened by the yelping of dogs that was generally wont to herald the entrance and the exit of the hob-nailed Lothario, used to nail down the windows of their own daughters and the maid-servants. But such churlish farmers as these were few and far between, and they were generally, before long, induced to take out the nails by mysterious nocturnal hands overturning hay-ricks, putting turf on the top of the chimneys, and occasionally throwing stones through the windows. But, as I have said, the farmer very seldom interfered ; and he could interfere only at the sacrifice of his popularity. I have actually sat up late at night with a Cameronian farmer while he drawled to me long passages of Scripture and confuted my then incipient heresies by exhortation and prayer while both he and I knew perfectly well that, in the bed-room overhead, were the lads and the lassies, “puir things,” two of the said lassies being his own daughters. I do not for a moment seek to insinuate that the douce old Cameronian was a fraud and a hypocrite. It never occurred to him that his Bible and “Confession of Faith” which he knew by rote did not square with the clinical wooing which was going

on over his head ; and, boy as I was, I admit it never occurred to me. As I rose to higher conceptions of decency and refinement I was proportionably rising to a level from which I discovered Christianity to be a fraud, and its teachers more or less conscious impostors.

The seventh commandment seemed to have been set up in Scotland only to be broken. By the Scottish law—and herein it differed from the English—you could legitimatise any number of illegitimate children by simply at your leisure marrying their mother. On the day of your marriage you could sit down to your marriage breakfast with your wife and your half-a-dozen children, and pass off as a most respectable, god-fearing man, in full communion with the kirk. As was the custom, Jean Armour had borne more than one child to Robert Burns before that grandest and most national of Scotsmen saw fit to make her his wife. It was a point of Caledonian etiquette to get children in a hurry and to marry at leisure. For every child born out of wedlock the father and mother required to do penance at the kirk, before the congregation ; and the elders asked them some nasty questions in great detail ; but this was a small matter, an exceedingly common matter, and soon got over. The rustic Lothario and his fair and frail victim had to stand on a small bench, “the cutty-stool,” to single them out for the disapprobation of their fellow worshippers. Burns himself, to keep himself respectable, had to stand on this “cutty-stool” and endure the upbraidings of “Daddy Auld.” Although, as I have said, the “cutty-stool” has now been abolished, at least in all the kirks in which I have either prayed or been prayed at, the custom of rebuking young couples, the course of whose true love had not run smooth, has not been abolished. The rebuking is now, however, in many instances, not administered before the entire congregation, but in the presence of the minister and elders

only. In the kirk with which I am best acquainted the rebuke was wont to be public till the minister's own daughter had to come in for her share of it. She was dealt with *in camera*, and the public exposure has not since been revived. The country ministers are simply peasants with a university training, and, up till recently, they were in manners and pursuits very slightly exalted above the non-sacerdotal peasants around them. To run the gauntlet of the Kirk Session is such a common thing that, as soon as the ordeal is over, it is the subject of sneering and jeering and unutterably filthy repartee and badinage with the two individuals who were the central figures and their friends, male and female. It is not *very* disgraceful to be the parents of an illegitimate child; but it is execrably wicked and profane not to go to the kirk and acknowledge your fault and have done with it. If you do not go before the Session and do penance, when the sacrament of the Lord's Supper comes round, which it does twice a year, you are refused one of the little pewter "tokens" which is your indispensable passport to "the Lord's Table." To woo a trusting orphan lassie and ruin her is, in pious Scotland, no very flagrant crime; but to absent yourself from "the Lord's Table" is *anathema, maranatha*: everybody looks askance at you as if Satan were an angel to you, and hell too good for you. The odium attaching to such an abstention was too malignant to be faced by even the brave and unconventional Robert Burns, and, consequently, to square accounts with Jehovah for having been an idolator at the Shrine of Venus, he—

"Snooved awa before the Session
And made an honest, fair confession."

Many of the elders themselves had, at the altar of the Love Goddess, bent the unholy knee; but, then, for their folly they had consented to pass through the mild purgatorial fires of the kirk.

Scotch marriages, too, when Scotland was more intensely Christian than she is now, were indecent beyond the belief of the civilised modern world. When you went to a wedding you went to see the young couple "wedded and *bedded*." After partaking of the marriage supper, of which an important component part was whisky, and leading off the first dance, an "eight-some reel," the bridegroom and bride retired to the nuptial chamber, to which they were followed by the entire company, including such children of both sexes as were wedding guests. The happy pair undressed together before the spectators. It was important that the bride should not denude herself of her stockings till she was actually in bed. She took off the one stocking in a Babel of inebriated and hilarious ribaldry, and threw it out of bed among the assembled guests. Every one was emulous of being hit with the bride's stocking, for it was supposed to carry certain blessings with it, of which sterility was not one. If it was considered that there was anything unfair in the way the stocking was thrown, the bride had to put it on, take it off, and throw it again ; and, while putting it on, it was the etiquette for several, irrespective of sex, to leap into the bed to assist her and the bridegroom. I have heard my own grandmother, and men and women of her generation, tell of such nuptial orgies with high glee, and lament the degeneracy of modern weddings, which were, in their opinion, "not worth the going to." And this in the most Christian country in Europe, and in the lifetime of those still alive, or of those over whose graves the grass has hardly yet had time to grow green !

Moreover, in Scotland, to this very hour, there is publicly practised, particularly in the hay and harvest fields, a sort of sexual rite, if I may so call it, the nature of which, in mercy to the decency of my readers, I must cover with studied vagueness. The practice is popularly called *hurlin*. Of the etymology of the term I am

ignorant ; it is probably a corrupted derivative from the nomenclature of ancient Phallic worship. As far as I have read the classics of civilised heathendom, I have not been able to find trace of a practice so shameless ; and, as far as I have perused the works of modern travellers, the most abandoned races of the world afford no parallel. Even this unmentionable custom is, I am told, hastening to extinction ; but so is Christianity. All the old people, especially the old ministers, are ever assuring you that the Gospel of Christ has not nearly the hold now that it had when they were young, and that folk have lost the care they once entertained about their “ never-dying souls.”

I will not be so unfair as to allege that the shamelessness to which I have there referred, and of which I have here hinted, were introduced by Christianity. The customs were likely grey with eld before Christianity had been born ; but what I allege is that century upon century of the most intense Christianity did not extinguish them ; and it is only now, when Christianity itself is being explained away and extinguished, that they are being extinguished too. And yet the pulpit and the religious press are possessed of sufficient ignorance and effrontery to declare that Christianity has exalted the status of woman and sweetened and purified the atmosphere of social and domestic life !

CHAPTER XXXVII.

Personal Experiences of Holy Scotland—Biblical Ignorance the Leading Trait of Biblical Eulogists—Personal Experiences of the Sword of the Spirit, Aided by a Carnal Poker—Christian Ignorance of Mosheim and Neander, Fleury and Ranke—Polemical Make-believe—The Interests of Priestcraft v. the Interests of Humanity.

ONE word more in regard to my personal experiences of the holiness of holy Scotland. The rank-and-file Scot is, in certain respects, the meanest and sourest of God's creatures. Nothing short of an acid pessimist, bred among oatmeal and mist and peat bogs and itch, could ever have hugged Calvinism to his breast as the Scot has done. Well might Charles II. remark of that faith, "It is no religion for a gentleman." With its hypocrisy, ugliness, predestination, and infant damnation, it is a religion suited to nothing but a devil. The Scots are not devils enough to really receive it; but they are hypocrites enough to pretend that they do. I never met many saints in Scotland; but I have met with no end of sham saints. Hypocrisy, on the religious plane, is the moral blight of the country. The contrast between faith and practice is one of the most glaring contrasts imaginable. Down till recent times, fornication was punishable with death,* and yet, in so far as Scotland and fornication

* By a statute of James VI. See Hume's "Commentaries on the Laws of Scotland," vol. ii., p. 332. The statute was renewed during the Commonwealth period (see Blackstone, bk. iv., c. 4, No. II.), but abolished on the restoration of Charles II.

are concerned, it is proved by statistics that no country in Europe can hold a candle to her.

Then, with the display of much Scriptural knowledge, there is much Scriptural ignorance. Perhaps not one in a thousand to whom it is told that Christianity has tended to the elevation of woman has a single argument or even incident at hand with which to confront the mendacious assertion. Beyond a few hackneyed texts that are repeated as cabalistic charms rather than as aphorisms with any rational and specific meaning, the ordinary 'Presbyterian or Episcopalian Christian knows next to nothing of Christianity. He is utterly ignorant of its career through history, and he is not possessed of the power of generalisation necessary to recognise its aggregate effect upon the tone and the polity of modern life. The one thing the ordinary Christian is ignorant of is Christianity, and the most unqualified eulogists of the Bible are those who never read it.

More than once in past years, when my zeal was greatly in excess of my discretion, and my thirst for controversy vastly outweighed my sense of personal dignity, I was prone to break a lance with "followers of the Lamb," and male and female members of the elect whose sins had been washed away, and who had "found Jesus." On one memorable occasion, at a private prayer-meeting, in retort to some remark of mine—"There is no book like the Bible," whined six saints simultaneously.

"Granted," replied I; and from memory I quoted a passage, and then another passage, and then another, and finished by observing sarcastically: "True, 'there is no book like the Bible'—no other book contains such passages as these."

"There are no such passages in the blessed book," replied the six with the quiet and offensive self-conceit peculiar to those who have "found Jesus."

"Lend me your Bible," I demanded of one of the

elect ; and I turned up the passages and read them, quoting chapter and verse.

The baffled saints glared at me with that holy glare characteristic of those who are the followers of the Prince of Peace. And the member of the elect who had so triumphantly lent me his Bible laid down that sacred volume and lifted an unhallowed poker, with which he struck me over the head till stars flew out of both my eyes and the blood streamed down my back. For a moment I was stunned ; but, instantly recovering myself, I rushed wildly at the Lord's anointed, and with one murderous blow sent him and his carnal weapon reeling backwards into the fire-place. There, felled, he would have lain till he was roasted alive had not the spirit of the Lord moved two of his devout accomplices to drag their comrade from among the burning coals. In his backward career he had upset a table of crockery, and I regret to say the table and some splinters of the tea-set lay upon the prostrate form of a young and pretty she-saint—a Highland girl from Arran—who had been knocked nearly heels over head by the male-saint's resistless backward career.

Expecting the whole army of God to fall upon me and batter me with pokers, clasp-Bibles, and the sword of the spirit upon which the elect so much rely, I seized the fire-shovel, and, grasping it menacingly with both hands, placed my back against the wall. My blood was up, and the first saint who approached me would certainly have been sent to glory with his skull split with a fire-shovel. But the holy ones seemed to prefer Glasgow to glory, and they kept well away from the wall where the bleeding and desperate youth stood, armed with the shovel. The felled and frizzled saint of God, the upset virgin of the Most High, the dilapidated table and the broken crockery, brought the saints out of the realm of divine hallucination into the region of

common sense. The uninjured raised and soothed the hysterically shrieking maiden ; they poured vinegar on the head of the frizzled holy one and burnt feathers under his nose. This I saw as I stood, back to the wall, armed with the shovel, and with the blood running down my back to the floor. Then everything grew double, and everything swang and swam.

Next morning I found myself in bed at my apartments. I rose on my elbow to look at my watch. It had stopped, had not been wound up. I felt weak, dizzy, and dazed, and certain dark blood-stains on the pillow brought back my recollection, and the episode of my recent skirmish with God's saints passed through my brain like a fevered dream. I raised my hand to my head and found it bandaged. Spasmodically I tore off the bandage, though glued to the hair with coagulated blood. The inner lining of the bandage was a lady's handkerchief, and in an unreddened corner of it was the Celtic name of the girl from Arran.

I subsequently learnt that I had stood back to the wall till I fainted from hæmorrhage ; that thereupon the frizzled saint and the other members of God's elect, with the exception of the lass from Arran, muttered, "Served him right !" and left the room. To that Highland girl, who was better than her accursed creed, I probably owe it that I am alive to-day—that creed's avowed and resolute enemy. This incident may, intrinsically, be of little interest ; but I claim that it is significantly suggestive of Christian ignorance of Christianity, and the ungovernable tendency of Christian bigotry to stand in the breach and make up for the lack of Christian knowledge.

When the rank-and-file Protestant is so ignorant of the Bible itself, which he claims to be the very key-stone of the arch of his creed, we are hardly warranted to expect that his information is wider and his intelligence higher on subjects that only collaterally touch his religious belief.

In short, ignorant of the very Bible itself, he is more crassly ignorant still of ecclesiastical history. If he would read even the Bible, he would no longer be a Protestant ; and, if to the candid study of the Bible he would add honest research in ecclesiastical history, he would no longer be a Christian. When I am asked by anxious inquirers after truth : " Sir, what books shall I read ? " I never recommend what are known as heretical and sceptical authors. I answer : " Read with care the writings of the Holy Ghost, and those of Mosheim and Neander. " The normal Protestant knows a number of Biblical texts—knows them in a conventional and pulpit sense ; he is, however, seldom acquainted with a single page of Fleury or Ranke. But, crowing piously and clapping his wings sanctimoniously on the summit of this dunghill of his conceit, he is ready to proclaim that Christianity originated hospitals, and that Christianity has " elevated " woman. And why is he prepared to make such utterly baseless assertions ? Simply because he has heard some pulpit mountebank make them, and he risks his veracity—nay, more, the destiny of his so-called " immortal soul "—upon mere hearsay in regard to a subject which he is too indolent or too brainless to study for himself. What has the ordinary Christian to do with thought and study ? They require more self-abnegation and toil than he cares to command. Besides, in his fulness of the Holy Spirit he can dispense with thought and study. He can carry on a big debate with the sabre and conduct a domestic discussion with a poker ; why should he trouble to be thoughtful and studious ?

Ask the normal Christian how and in what way Christianity has exalted the character and status of woman, and you may as well put your question to your great-coat or to the door-post. But he will reiterate his assertion, and dislike you should you seem to doubt it. He

will assure you that, through all the centuries, Christianity has tended to sweetness and light, to the purity of woman, to the brotherhood of man. But when you fix him to some particular century, and ask him to define what Christianity did in that century for sweetness and light, for the purity of woman, for the brotherhood of man, he regards you as disagreeably inquisitive and sadly lacking in "the grace of God," whatever that may be.

I, for one, have taken pains to know what Christianity has done in every century, since its alleged birth in the manger down to the present hour; and I throw my gauntlet of challenge down in the face of all Christendom when I deny that Christianity has ever promoted the brotherhood of man, when I assert that Christianity has never tended to the purity of woman. Let the champions of Christism discuss this assertion of theirs with me who deny it, and cease from the base and cowardly policy of reiterating it to those who are confiding enough to take it upon trust. No scholar in Christendom will lift my gauntlet. Well all scholars know that the whole Christian fabric stands upon ignorance and assumption; that to discuss its minor theological points is mere polemical make-believe, which effectively throws dust in the eyes of the ignorant; but that, were they to be rash enough to debate with any competent opponent on the very basis of their faith, that basis would assuredly be proved to be of the stuff which dreams are made of, and their disillusioned dupes would be their dupes no more forever. The discussion of doctrinal points is utterly futile, except in the interests of priestcraft. Let us examine the very foundations of the system, not in the interests of priestcraft, but in the interests of mankind. I refuse to be drawn off to the performance of some subtle trickeries among the branches and *twigs*; I take off my coat, turn up my

sleeves, knot my braces round my waist, and, with all the strength that is in me, lay my axe to the *root* of the tree.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

Monogamy not Christian—The Roman Law of Marriage Contrasted with the Jewish—Traces of Roman Ceremonial in the Modern Christian Marriage Rites—Biblical Iniquities—The Talmud on Woman—State of Things Previous to the Passing of the Married Woman's Property Act—Testimony of Russell Gurney, Sir George Jessel, Hinde Palmer, Robert Lowe, and John Stuart Mill—Falsehood and Hypocrisy.

MARRIAGE—monogamic marriage—is, in this country, accepted as the earnest and safeguard of social and domestic life. Would the rank-and-file Christian be exceedingly enraged were I to tell him that the marriage of one wife is not a Christian institution at all, but a Pagan one? I tell him this without fear of refutation, and I leave him to be as angry as he pleases. God's chosen people were polygamists. God's sagacious monarch, Solomon, had 300 wives and 700 concubines. Julius Cæsar attempted to establish polygamy, but had to withdraw his proposal in deference to the enraged moral sense of the Roman people. In Pagan Rome polygamy was strictly prohibited, as every student of Roman history knows. But when Rome ceased to be Pagan she ceased to be socially and domestically pure. By an edict of the Christian emperor, Valentinian I., polygamy was declared legal, and the Emperor availed himself of his edict and had a plurality of wives,* like Jehovah's regal favourites, David and Solomon. But

* Socrat. Hist. Eccl., lib iv., cs. 26, 27.

the Roman empire was still too Pagan and too pure to permanently adopt the immoral innovation of that hybrid Judaism known as Christianity. Happily for Europe, Pagandom re-asserted itself as far as marital law and domestic purity were concerned.

As we have seen, under the theocracy of Jehovah a father could contract a marriage for his daughter without taking her at all into confidence in the matter ; and, should he be hard up for ready money, he was authorised by his maker to *sell her as a slave !* So much for "thus saith the Lord." Far otherwise was it in the legislation of Heathen Rome, before Christianity had crawled out from its manger to blight the world. By the old Roman law (*Lex Papia et Julia*), subsequently confirmed by Diocletian and incorporated by Justinian into his code, the free consent of the bride and bridegroom was absolutely necessary. Jehovah could force a girl to marry, whether she liked it or not. Heathen Rome enacted that no girl could be married without her free consent. The Christians represent Diocletian as a remorseless persecutor. Perhaps so he was ; but, as far as woman is concerned, he was certainly not such a monster as Jehovah. The early Christians (many of the modern ones seem lineal descendants) were such inveterate liars that it is impossible to determine whether Diocletian persecuted them or not. Be that as it may, if he failed to persecute them, he failed in his duty to his empire and to the human race. I myself, having enlisted under the standard of rebellion against the dominant superstition of my time, am fighting against desperate odds, and am no friend of persecution. In the interests of Truth, I would persecute no *opinion* ; but, in the interests of Humanity, I would, with reformatory motives, relentlessly persecute *crime*. The Christians had no opinions worth speaking about—they have little in the way of opinions even yet—but they were essen-

tially criminals ; they were, according to Tacitus, "a set of people who were held in abhorrence for their crimes."* Verily an illustrious "set of people" to promote and conserve the purity of woman !

Marriage is, undoubtedly, the saviour of society ; but not only the spirit of marriage among us, but also its external ceremonies, are copied from the civilised and refined heathen, and not from the barbarous and truculent Book of God. Even the marriage ring is Roman. The kiss to the bride, the lighted nuptial tapers, formerly part of the Christian marriage ceremony, were all Roman. The joining hands in espousals is Roman.† The husband's settling a dowry upon his wife that she might be provided for in the event of his death is Roman. Jehovah's plan for the wife, in the event of the husband's death, was to force her husband's brother to "go in unto her" and to "raise up seed to his brother," which custom is illustrated in God's Holy Word by the disgusting episode in regard to Onan.‡ To which does the widow owe more : to the Pagan legislator or to the Christian God ?

The bridal veil is Roman, so are the crowns and garlands still used in the Greek schism of the Christian Church to crown the bride and bridegroom, and so are the handfuls of rice and barley which are thrown after the happy couple as they drive away, leaving the wedding guests behind them.§ Nothing pertaining to a marriage either in spirit or in form could be borrowed from the writings of the Holy Ghost. Jehovah seems to have had but little to say about marriage. The incest of a father with his own daughters,¶ the murdering of women, and the ravishing of little girls,|| seem to have been more

* Ann. xv. 44.

† Gen. xxxviii, 8, 9.

¶ Gen. xix. 32 *et seq.*

‡ Tertull. *de Veland Virg.*, c. 11.

§ Catull. *Carm.* 62. Pers. *Sat.* i.

|| Numb. xxxi. 17, 18.

in his line. An unspeakably revolting test to be applied to wives,* the treacherous rape of maidens,† and filthy stories about concubinage,‡ appear to have so much occupied the attention of the Christian deity that he had no time to consider woman in her purer aspect as wife and mother, and he left all considerations on that head to the heathen, who, fortunately, knew him not. And yet, forsooth, it is to Christianity that woman owes all she possesses of personal purity, of domestic happiness, and of social consideration! O blind credulity, thy name is Christian!

After the lapse of several centuries, when the savage principles of Christianity had, to a greater extent, superseded Pagan culture, there set in a reversion towards Judaism as far as marriage was concerned. And not only by their Scriptures, but by their Talmud, the chosen people of God evinced their coarse disrespect for woman. The Talmud urges its readers to thank God that they had not been born Gentiles, or idiots, or *women*, and permits a husband to divorce his wife if she put too much or too little seasoning into his food.§ This reversion of Christendom to the Mosaic and Talmudic economy as regarded the relations of the sexes was also a reversion to the marital economy of ancient and uncivilised Rome and of certain Teutonic hordes. Christian brutality succeeded in trampling the just and even chivalrous marriage laws of civilised Rome under foot, and for long centuries of misogyny and degradation placed, by marriage, the women of Christendom in the position of felons or idiots. It was only in the lifetime of the youngest among my readers that the Married Woman's Property Act forced acceptance upon the public conscience. The insult and wrong to which

* *Vide* Numb. v. *passim*.

† Judges xxi. 19-23.

‡ *E.g. vide* Judges xix. *passim*.

§ See Barclay's "Talmud," p. 5.

Christian marriage subjected woman may be gathered in summary from extracts from the speeches of the mover and seconder of the Bill in the House of Commons. Mr. Russell Gurney, in moving the second reading of the Bill,* observed: "It is now proposed that, for the first time in our history, the property of one-half of the married people of this country should receive the protection of the law. Up to this time the property of a wife has had no protection from the law, or rather, he should say, in the eyes of the law it has had no existence. From the moment of her marriage the wife, in fact, possesses no property; whatever she may up to that time have possessed, by the very act of marriage passes from her, and any gift or bequest made to her becomes at once the property of the husband. Nay, even that which one might suppose to be her inalienable right, the fruit of her mental or bodily toil, is denied her. She may be gifted with powers which enable her to earn an ample fortune; but the moment it is earned it is not hers, it is her husband's. In fact, from the time of her entering into what is described as an honourable estate the law pronounces her unfit to hold any office whatever."

Sir George Jessel, late Master of the Rolls, said, in seconding the motion: "The existing law is a relic of slavery, and the House is now asked to abolish the last remains of slavery in England. In considering what ought to be the nature of the law, we cannot deny that no one should be deprived of the power of disposition, unless on proof of unfitness to exercise that power; and it is not intelligible on what principle a woman should be considered incapable of contracting immediately after she has, with the sanction of the law, entered into the most important contract conceivable. The slavery laws of antiquity are the origin of common law on the sub-

* April 14th, 1869.

ject. The Roman law originally regarded the position of a wife as similar to that of a daughter who had no property, and might be sold into slavery at the will of her father. When the Roman law became that of a civilised people the position of the wife was altogether changed.....The ancient Germans—from whom our law is derived—put the woman into the power of her husband in the same sense as the ancient Roman law did. She became his slave. The law of slavery—whether Roman or English, for we once had slaves and slave laws in England—gave to the master of a slave the two important rights of *flogging and imprisoning him*. A slave could not possess property of his own, and could not make contracts except for his master's benefit, and the master alone could sue for an injury to the slave; while the only liability of the master was that he must not starve his slave. This is exactly the position of the wife under the English law; the husband has the right of *flogging and imprisoning her*, as may be seen by those who read Blackstone's chapter on the relations of husband and wife. She cannot possess property; she cannot contract, except it is as his agent; and he alone can sue if she is libelled or suffers a personal injury; while all the husband is compellable to do for her is to pay for necessities. It is astonishing that a law founded on such principles should have survived to the nineteenth century."

In a subsequent stage of the debate* Mr. Hinde Palmer pointed out that, by her marriage, under the common law "the whole of a woman's personal property was immediately vested in her husband, and placed entirely at his disposal. By contracting in marriage a woman forfeited all her property. In 1868 the Chancellor of the Exchequer, Mr. Lowe, said: 'Show me what crime there

* February 19th, 1873.

is in matrimony that it should be visited by the same punishment as high treason—namely, confiscation ; for that is really the fact.’ Mr. Mill, too, speaking on that question, said that a large portion of the inhabitants of this country were in the anomalous position of having imposed on them, without having done anything to deserve it, what we inflicted on the worst criminals as a penalty : like felons, they were incapable of holding property.”

These extracts, supported as they are at every point by Blackstone, Archbold, and other high constitutional and legal authorities, will convey some idea of what disabilities a woman incurred by her contract in the “holy ordinance of matrimony.” She, by one fell act, made herself at once a wife and a pauper ; she and all she had became a chattel, an absolute piece of goods, belonging to her husband. And yet the Church, in its “solemnisation of matrimony,” in the bitterest mockery of irony makes the man say :

“With this ring I thee wed, with my body I thee worship, and *with all my worldly goods I thee endow* ! in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost—Amen.”

What do “the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Ghost—Amen” think of this unmitigated falsehood ? As truthfully may the bandit, when he has rifled your pockets and administered a few valedictory kicks to keep you quiet, remark : “I have, stranger, filled your heretofore empty pockets with the gold that was contained in mine, and, finding that some one had assaulted you, I have mollified your wounds and bruises with ointment.” If the bandit were to thus address the Christian wayfarer whom he had robbed and kicked, the said Christian wayfarer would not be slow to say to himself : “What brutal pleasantry ! The villain need not have mocked at my helplessness ; he might have

contented himself with stealing my purse and watch and clothes and with rattling his boots off my bones." But the said Christian wayfarer would discern no "brutal pleasantry" in "with all my worldly goods I thee endow," simply because the words are not uttered by the bandit, but are snivelled by the keeper of a gospel-shop. Often men who are born geniuses with the Ledger are suddenly transformed into idiots at the touch of the Bible or the Book of Common Prayer.

CHAPTER XXXIX.

"With all my worldly goods I thee endow" !—"Serve him, love, honour, and keep him!"—"An Excellent Mystery!"—Practical Specimens of "the Spiritual Marriage and Unity between Christ and His Church"—"Nothing is sacred which caters to imposture."

"WITH all my worldly goods I thee endow." Does the poor deluded slave to whom this is addressed believe it? Does she understand it? Does she even hear it? or is she so much absorbed in the hysterical flutter of *the* event in a woman's life that she would take no notice of what the gospel creature was mumbling for his fees, even should he mumble, "Wilt thou take this thy wife before the sun setteth to-night and pass her through a sausage-machine, and give her flesh to the beasts of the field and to the fowls of the air—in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost"? Why, poor helot, far from being endowed with her husband's "goods," she gives even her personal liberty into his keeping. By a provision of *Magna Charta*, no man can be imprisoned without much previous circumbendibus and formality; but, by the law of Christian England (and Christianity *has* done so much to purify and elevate woman!), the wife can be imprisoned at the mere caprice and whim of her husband. For her benefit he can make a gaol of his own house, and, by the common law of this Christian England (an open Bible is the secret of its greatness!), take a horse-whip and flog her, or put on his boots and amuse himself by

kicking her.* Not long ago, for instance, a husband at Spilsby chained his wife to the wall for two days. When his Christian squaw sought to prosecute the person, the Christian husband, at whose hands she had suffered such indignity and wrong, a Christian magistrate let him off scot free.

Conjugal floggings and kickings are too common to be allowed to occupy even a line of our space. It is only when they assume an exceedingly aggravated aspect that their record is dragged into a police-court ; and the punishment for breaking a wife's ribs is not so heavy as the punishment for stealing a turnip. "With all my worldly goods I thee endow." Why, even the wife's very body is not her own ; it belongs to her husband, just as much as does the body of his pig or his mare. Indeed, outrages which would, if inflicted upon his pig or his mare, render him liable to penal servitude, can be inflicted upon his wife with impunity. In sickness or in health, in gladness or in sorrow, she is his to command or to force, and the law affords her no redress. The law "holds it to be felony to force even a concubine or harlot,"† but in this respect leaves a wife utterly unprotected, even although her lord may be horrible with foul disease and in his instincts a disgrace to human kind. So much for the "serve him, love, honour, and keep him" of the hired mumblor of the pulpit. Is it inexplicable why women of the Mary Wolstonecraft and George Eliot type will let Mrs. Grundy wag her foulest tongue at them rather than become a tripartite compound of felon, idiot, and slave by having their finger cinctured by a ring placed there by a Christian husband ?

This sacred service by which the husband is chivalrously made to "endow" his wife with all his earthly

* See Blackstone's "Commentaries," pp. 444-5.

† Broom's "Commentaries," vol. iv., p. 255.

possessions further assures us that matrimony is "an excellent mystery ; that in it is signified and represented the spiritual marriage and unity between Christ and his Church." If this be so, then God help Christ and his Church ! This claimed analogy must take the responsibility of its claim. I speak sorrowfully but advisedly when I say that the majority of marriages result in more or less utter misery. "Christ and his Church !" So let the analogy stand. Does Christ blacken the eyes of his Church ? Does Christ drag his Church round the world by the hair of its head ? Does Christ break the ribs of his Church by kicking them with his boots ? Does Christ thrust a red-hot iron into the abdomen of his Church ? Does Christ batter his Church's brains out with an axe ? All these things, and more also, under the ægis of marriage, men do to their wives. Any weekly newspaper you like to glance at is a murderous and terrible witness to the truth of what I say. Were it not necessary to the support of my contention, I should eagerly excuse myself from reading such gruesome and revolting paragraphs as those which I will quote, just as specimens taken at random, without any pretence to selection. It would be easy to furnish many hundreds of like specimens, neither falling below nor rising above the mediocrity of misery which curses the married lives of millions in this Christian land :—

John Davies was remanded by the Cardiff magistrates on Wednesday on a charge of causing the death of his wife. Late at night the woman was heard groaning and screaming "Murder !" in her house. A neighbour went out, but was afraid to enter the dwelling. Shortly afterwards the door was opened. In a few minutes a splash was heard in a neighbouring canal, and the husband was seen coming away from the water. He was arrested by the police, who then proceeded to drag the canal, and in about three hours brought the dead body of the woman to the surface.

It is not I who claim the analogy ; it is my Christian.

fellow-countrymen. Matrimony, which is "an excellent mystery," represents "the spiritual marriage and unity between Christ and his Church." So be it. Then Christ has been remanded for causing the death of his Church. The Church was heard to cry "Murder!" and was seen to run into the house of a neighbour. Shortly after, a splash was heard in the canal, and Christ was seen coming away from the water. About three hours after the dead body of the Church was dragged to the surface. (May it be decently buried, and not rise again either on the third or any other day!)

James Hampton, horse dealer, was charged with threatening his wife, who asked that her husband should be bound over to keep the peace. Mr. Hallett represented the wife, and Mr. Kilby the defendant. The parties have been living apart, under an agreement, and, on the 2nd inst., he persuaded her to return to him, which she did, and the first night there was a row, he smashing all the things. She left him again, and on Monday, meeting her husband driving a mule, she spoke to him kindly. His reply was that he would smash her b—— brains in, at the same time flourishing a stick. She was frightened of her life. They had separated about twenty times, and she said she would not live with him again until she wanted to be killed.

So Christ has been charged with threatening his Church, which is desirous that he should be bound over to keep the peace. Christ and his Church have been living apart under an agreement. He persuaded her to return, and upon her returning there was a row, and he smashed all the things. She found him driving a mule (he used to ride upon an ass), she spoke to him kindly, whereupon he threatened to smash her b—— brains in. So much for the amiable courtesies that pass between Christ and his Church.

On Friday Mr. George P. Wyatt, deputy coroner for the Lambeth division of Surrey, held an inquiry in the Board Room at Lambeth Infirmary into the circumstances attending the death of Eliza Doyle, aged forty-nine years, lately residing at 9, Ashmore Place,

Clapham Road, South Lambeth, wife of Edward Doyle, aged forty-two years, a sweep, now on remand from the Lambeth Police Court, charged with a common assault on his wife. Owing to the atrocious nature of the case the court-room was crowded. The circumstances of the case have been reported more than once. Evidence having been given by Caroline Tapp, who lived in the same house with deceased and her husband, and who, after hearing sounds of a quarrel and the screams of the deceased, had subsequently found her, once in a nude state in the passage by the street door, and afterwards lying in a dreadful state of suffering by the fire-place in a lower room, the evidence of a neighbour and of the police was heard. Mr. Robert Hodgins Lloyd said he was the medical superintendent at the Lambeth Infirmary. He received the deceased on the evening of the 17th ult. Deceased was in a very exhausted condition, suffering from severe and extensive burns and scalds on the abdomen and lower part of her body. The injuries were of a fearful and shocking character. There was also a wound on the right forehead and a bruise over the left breast. He attended her until Monday last, when she died. He had since made post-mortem examination of the body, which was well nourished. The face was black and bruised all over; both eyes were blackened. The bruise over the left breast was of recent occurrence. Four of her ribs on the left side were fractured and six on the right side. He was of opinion that the six ribs on the right side had been fractured previous to the 13th ult. The witness then proceeded to describe the dreadful condition of the burns and scalds, and was surprised that the unfortunate woman could have lived so long after suffering such fearful injuries. It was ascertained that a large soldering-iron had been discovered by the police in the room where the alleged assault had been enacted. The cause of death was from exhaustion, consequent upon the burns and scalds. The jury, after a lengthened consultation, returned a verdict of "Manslaughter" against Edward Doyle, the husband, and the coroner issued his warrant for Doyle's committal to Wandsworth Prison.

Caroline Tapp, in a spiritual sense, but the whole thing is to me "an excellent mystery," heard the screams of the Church and found the said Church in a nude state and in dreadful suffering by the fire-place. In the "excellent mystery" is this meant to be sublimely symbolical that the Church had gone to hell to suffer an excruciating

roasting in the flames thereof? Great is the mystery of godliness. The Church was found to be suffering from severe and excessive burns and scalds on the abdomen and lower part of her body ; in fact, it transpired in court that the location and nature of certain of the burns were unspeakable and unprintable. But, no doubt, to the eye of faith, all this has something to do with "the spiritual marriage and unity between Christ and his Church." We find that the Church died on Monday last. It is a pity that this is only in the sense of "an excellent mystery." If the Church had literally died last Monday without any "excellent mystery"—"excellent mystery" simply meaning imposture and falsehood—there would, indeed, have been glad tidings of great joy to all mankind—the gladdest tidings the earth has ever heard. But the earth, alas, is not ripe to receive the tidings. Wo to the slave who glories in his fetters, who regards his rusty chains as sacred, and who, although they have entered into his flesh and are corroded with his blood, deems them resplendent ornaments, bracelets of silver and anklets of gold, all flashing with the diamond and the ruby and the beryl.

The Church had two black eyes ; "my love, my dove, my undefiled," had had heavy blows on the face, blows administered by the fists of Christ. Four of the Church's ribs were fractured on the left side and six on the right—fractured by kicks from the sandals of Christ. Yea, verily, whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth ; and he hath in his divine goodness preordained that Christian husbands should chasten their Christian wives, just to keep an example before the world of the unity between himself and his Church. In this case, following the divine analogy, Christ was committed to Wandsworth prison. This murdering of his Church got Christ penal servitude. What a pity that this is only "an excellent mystery"! This Christ, 1800 years ago, got crucified as

a carpenter ; now he has got penal servitude as a sweep. But you may go on crucifying the whole trinity as carpenters and giving them penal servitude as sweeps ; as long as Humanity is determined to be deceived and is voracious after "excellent mystery" there will be enough of divine ignorance and excellent misery.

The Nottingham coroner held an inquest last night on the body of Marry Terry, 26, who was killed by her husband, Benjamin Terry, a miner, on the previous day. The evidence showed that Terry and his wife had lived on bad terms for some time. Early on Tuesday morning he knocked up some neighbours, and asked them to look after his children, telling them he had murdered his wife. He then gave himself up to the police. Two constables returned with him to his house, and found the woman's dead body on the floor of the bedroom. She was in her nightdress. Terry stated to the police that he had been driven to the crime by his wife's misconduct, and that he struck her with a poker, and had then strangled her. He added that he had intended killing her on the previous night, but he had had some gin and fell asleep, and so he murdered her as soon as he awoke in the morning. The medical evidence was to the effect that death was the result of strangulation. A verdict of wilful murder against Terry was returned.

Still following the analogy that orthodoxy insists upon ; Christ, on Tuesday morning, knocked up his neighbours and asked them to look after his children (feed my sheep), telling them that he had murdered his Church. The police found the Church lying dead in her nightdress. She had been gently admonished with a poker, and then strangled. Christ would have done for her the night before, but he had had some gin and fell asleep. But, chagrined to find that the gin had made him neglect his duty, when he got up in the morning he at once commenced to murder his Church. Christ got well hanged for this ; but he does not seem to mind hanging a single bit. He has got used to it, as the proverbial eels did to the skinning ; and he goes on all the same, blackening the eyes and breaking the ribs of his Church.

This may, possibly, gratify him and amuse his Church ; but, to me, it is "an excellent mystery." The "mystery" intensifies when we take it into account that the prison chaplain at Nottingham palavered over him, got his sins washed away, and got him put all square before he was taken out to the scaffold and jerked to Jesus. Jesus got jerked to Jesus and to his Church (Mary Terry), whom he had knocked to heaven before him with a poker.

Quite recently I read in a newspaper that Christ, no doubt to illustrate the spiritual unity, had taken his divine teeth and bitten off his Church's nose. His Church appeared in court, minus a nose, and accused Christ of the conjugal anthropophagism. The magistrate bound over Christ to "keep the *peace*," whereupon Christ replied that he could not "keep the *piece*," as he had "thrown it away," he meaning the piece of his Church's nose.

Is pushing this orthodox analogy to its legitimate limits profane? If it were not meant to be pushed to its legitimate limits, why was it instituted? Nothing is sacred which caters to Imposture; nothing can be profane which attempts to subserve the interests of Truth. Marriage I revere; and, in proportion as I revere it, I resent the pulpit cant which links it on to such pernicious figments as "Christ and his bride the Church." Let Christ and his Church and the interested impostors who make their living by them go to the limbo of exploded superstitions, and let matrimony stand upon its own legs and upon its own merits. Christianity exalt the status of woman! It has left our social and moral character in such a plight that not one man in a hundred is worthy to be the husband of a wife and the father of a family. All the thousands of monsters who blacken the uxorial eyes and break the uxorial ribs do so because the wife provokes them. Wives do not provoke strong and manly men. For such they have an involuntary and irrepressible affection and admiration. A woman will not pro-

voke a man she loves, and she never fails to love a man who really deserves to be loved. O Man, leave Christ and his Church alone ! Every healthy and pure-minded girl in England is holier than your Jesus and more sacred than your Church ; and the fire that burns upon the domestic hearth and flickers on the faces of your children is more hallowed than all the fires that ever since the world began burnt upon the altars of the gods, or all the incense that ever rose from the swinging censors in all the churches of the earth.

CHAPTER XL.

Pious Slandering of the Women of Heathen Lands in Order to Rob the Women of Christian England—“Those who are too ignorant for their environment are apt to lose their innocence as a penalty for their ignorance”—“The Poor Heathen”—Christ and Cockle’s Pills—Missionary Slander re the Women of Japan—The Slander Refuted by those not “in the Bible and Brandy Line of Business”—The Falsehoods Necessary for the Purposes of Exeter Hall—Appeal.

NOT only does the introduction of Christianity degrade and debauch the women of foreign lands in the manner we have just referred to, but, with the effrontery of canting falsehood, the Christian missionary pretends that the women of the regions he is sent to bring under the influence of “the blessed Gospel” are unspeakably vile and immoral. This falsehood suits his trade. If the women of England could not be induced to believe that the women of “heathen countries” are more vile and immoral than they, they would decline to subscribe to the missionary’s income; and, of all evils, that is *the* evil he fears. Most women know little, and most men wish that women knew less. They know not of the English Government’s licensed brothels in Hong Kong; they know not that the Austrian maiden must take the sacrament before the authorities will grant her her license as a prostitute; they do not know that Christian gold from the Christian English Government bribes the Hindoo girl to act as harlot to the British soldier, and that a

Christian surgeon is appointed to apportion the soldier his harlot, and that a Christian chaplain is selected to cant his prayers and mockeries over the fighting Joshua and the lascivious Rahab. The Englishwoman does not know that, in her own London, there are 100,000 professional prostitutes, and perhaps an equal number of amateurs. These things the English lady is not aware of. They are "too shocking, you know!" They are never heard of in her frivolous routine of balls and dresses and flirtations and twaddle. God knows, I should be the last man to knowingly write a word that should touch the veil of maidenly modesty or move woman's heart with even the faintest suggestion of impurity. But I must protest that this squeamishly delicate and hypocritically mock-modest age has too great a tendency to conclude that Ignorance is Innocence. This earth is not peopled by St. Anthonys. Those who are too ignorant for their environment are apt to lose their innocence as a penalty for their ignorance. Let woman know the naked truth about that, to her, curse of curses, the Christian Church—this done, the day of her redemption draweth nigh. The malignant creed, which, as the late Professor Clifford stated, has already destroyed two civilisations, and has bade fair to destroy a third, would be swept into the Lethe which flows over the Past's abandoned creeds and broken gods. Woman is now the last and only pillar of Christianity on the globe. Tell woman the sacred truth, and she will no longer make your children kneel at her knee to be branded indelibly in life's young morning with the mark of Galilean fables and the stigma of Alexandrian and neo-Platonic sophistries.

Dare to tell woman the truth, and, in a decade, that crawling creature, the priest, will not dare to leave his slime anywhere, even on the most benighted valley of God's green earth. The prospect cheers me that woman

shall become aware of the truth some day—some day when I am not alive to tell it. Then mine may be remembered as the voice of one who cried in the wilderness in vain ; and some maiden or mother may lament that I lived and lifted up my voice before my time, and may plant a snow-drop or shed a tear over my mouldering dust. Then may be the time to speak of a Republic and to discuss the extension of the franchise to women—then, but not till then. Then the age of hunger and iron shall have gone, and the age of bread and gold shall have come.

Not only does the professional Gospel-monger contend with Archdeacon Farrar that Christianity has “elevated” woman and hallowed childhood ; but, to lend countenance, as I have said, to that figment, he points not only to the “poor heathen” of ancient Greece and Rome, but to civilised nations of to-day, who, in his estimation, are also “poor heathen” because they have never heard of, or, having heard of, decline to accept, the rude and crude Christian mythology which grew, like a stercorous fungus, on the decaying ruins of the Roman empire. All who have not heard that the whale swallowed Jonah, or who, having heard of that phenomenon, do not lend it credence, are “poor heathen.” All who do not believe that somehow or other they will escape “the wrath to come” by laying emotional hysterics and prostituted intellects at the feet of a more than half-fabulous carpenter are “poor heathen.” The Christian missionary visits realms which are still civilised, and which were civilised in the dim ages when the savages of his own country ran naked in the wild-wood ; but he has the ignorant impudence to consider all such old civilisations unenlightened if he fail to persuade them that the Lord of glory came down from heaven and got hammered to a stick. If a people refuse to believe that the creator of the universe hung on Calvary by a nail

knocked into a piece of wood, then their women cannot be chaste and their children cannot be pure. The most mucus-brained missionary that ever bore a Bible and Cockle's pills has the arrogance, for Christ's sake, to rail against a moral standard which he has not the breadth of sympathy to understand, and a civilisation which he has not the historic culture to comprehend.

Even in apostolic times, and when the whole Church of Christ probably did not exceed two or three dozen illiterate zealots, the said Church could boast of its Ananias and its Sapphira, two notorious liars. Peter himself, who posed with an affectation of veracious dignity in the Ananias affair, was himself a more accomplished liar than Ananias : he denied that he knew his Lord, and, like a blasphemous demirep, denied it with an oath. Who denies the doctrine of Apostolic Succession? I affirm it. The Apostolic Succession of mendacity has come direct from Peter, not only to every bishop in ermine, but to every street preacher in fustian. On this rock, Peter, shall I found my Church, quoth Christ ; and Peter was a swearing liar, and the superstructure of the Church is apiece with its apostolic foundation. Paul admitted that he lied for the greater glory of God, so did Eusebius and several of the early fathers ; and the latest sons of these early fathers are greater liars still, for they lie without the prestine admission that they are doing so. He who takes to gospel-mongering as a business lies instinctively. He deems no statement non-veracious that tends to advance the interests of what he is pleased to call "the kingdom of God," and no statement veracious that militates with the extension and consolidation of that "kingdom." Chivalry is extinguished in the gospel prosaics, and gallantry annihilated in "the grace of God through his only son, Jesus Christ our Lord." To filthily slander non-Christian women for the purpose of exalting Christian women

is a favourite but diabolical subterfuge of our gospel missionaries. The following average specimen, which I cut from a Yokohama newspaper, is directed against the condition of sexual morals in Japan :—

While conducting a Sunday-school in a provincial city it was noticed that some girls belonging to families that could hardly be spoken of as “under the pressure of extreme indigence” soon dropped out of the classes. Inquiry showed that they were kept at home to receive lessons upon the *samisen* in order that, because of this accomplishment, they might be disposed of at a higher price than could otherwise be obtained. The girls professed not to care anything for the *samisen*, and to be averse to entering a house of ill-fame; but they must obey their fathers. Remonstrances with the parents availed nothing.

I have knowledge of two cases where girls, after the death of their parents, were sold by their brothers to pay the debts of the family.

Two or three years since, when travelling on a small Japanese steamer, a woman brought a girl, fifteen or sixteen years old, bared to the waist, into the cabin and commenced negotiating for her sale to one of the passengers who appeared to be connected with that branch of business. The indignation that I felt was only partially abated by the evident indifference of the girl. The matter was discussed in the most cold-blooded manner, as though it were a dog instead of a human being that was being bargained for. As the girl was unable to play any musical instrument, the man said she was not worth more than five or six *yen*, and he advised the woman to keep her until she had been sufficiently trained to sell at a higher price.

I was recently told by a Japanese lawyer of high standing that it would be very difficult to prove any violation of the law against such sales. The girls would be spoken of as owing money to the house of ill-fame, so that she must remain in its service until the debt was cancelled. So far as he knew, no interference was made by the officers except when a girl absolutely refused to obey her parents. How seldom this is likely to occur is evident when one remembers the Japanese idea of filial obedience. Moreover, a large proportion of the sales are made when the girls, being only ten or twelve years old, little realise the shame, and see only the attractive side of the life to which they are devoted.

Inmates of the houses of ill-fame often run away, but when dis-

covered are forced to return. A well-informed Japanese tells me that, even though the girl should resist and call upon a policeman for help against violence, he would not prevent her from being carried back. She has, at least, done wrong by absconding, and, if she has had any reason to complain of ill-treatment, she should make her appeal from the house where she belongs. The same gentleman tells me that many husbands sell their wives to houses of ill-fame.

So much for the Christian missionary. But all, except Christian missionaries, who know Japan will repudiate this picture as over-coloured and over-drawn. Even in the very journal in which this Christian but vile and unmanly libel appeared, there were published more than one rejoinder. One correspondent, not engaged in the Bible-and-Brandy line of business, replies :—

The missionary may labour in his way. He may represent the people among whom he works as wanting in all that comports with his standard, and as filled with all the attributes that own the devil as progenitor ; yet the years will witness but small return in the harvest of bigotry and narrow selfishness he would cultivate—saving a few, and consigning the remainder to eternal damnation. Whatever may be the destiny of the Japanese religiously, it is to be hoped that it will be an improvement upon any of the systems of faith and belief that they have offered to them to-day, either by the Church of Rome or by the numerous Protestant sects who are seeking to proselytise the multitude to their folds. There is not a missionary in Japan who could not find as urgent necessity for his labours in his home community or state or nation as he finds in Japan. The religion of the Japanese has that about it, whatever else it lacks, that makes the people law-abiding. It has made a nation of as patriotic men and devoted women as can be found anywhere, entirely devoid of cant and self-righteousness. It has developed a civilisation distinct from that of the Western world, and, although it has not eradicated the animal instincts and passions of humanity in greater or less degree than the civilisation of the West has done, there appears to be as much security for life and property here as elsewhere. All the fables that are published by those interested in the extension of their particular religious creeds, regarding the depravity centred in the Japanese, must be in a large measure either the outgrowth of intolerant and fanatical zeal, or studied misrepresentation on the part of those whose living and

comfortable sustenance depend upon the continuance of the undertaking to proselytise the world.

I have visited quite a number of the populous centres of Japan, and, having roamed somewhat over my own country as well as abroad, I can but bear testimony to what I have seen, as well as to what I have not seen. I have witnessed politeness and courtesy among the masses of the common people of Japan that would put to shame the vaunted high culture and breeding of many a Western land. I have not seen a tithe of the vice and corruption flaunted in the face of the wayfarer that is to be encountered in any of the populous cities of the New England States. This in justice to the women of Japan, who need not to veil their faces before their Western sisters when modesty and modest demeanour are in question.

Another writer—one other who does not make it his business to push crude Galilean fables down the throat of the nineteenth century—remarks :—

One thing I am certain of, and that is that the cause of missions is not helped by such pictures of heathen wretchedness, simply because they partake of the nature of exaggeration, any more than the same cause would be helped by exaggerated reports of the great advance of Christianity here. Let us have the sober truth, and nothing but the truth. The missionary knows full well that he would sleep with his door unlocked and his window open in Niigata with a far greater sense of security than he would in New England ; that he can walk into secluded places in Japan without fear ; that he can visit the lowest dens of Niigata so long as he is careful to be polite, and that he can be sure of being treated with politeness which must imply something more than that of words only ; that he can daily see orchards unprotected and not robbed, allotment grounds (in the midst of a poverty-stricken population) needing no policemen to guard them from night thieves. He can see children cheerfully providing for their aged parents, and giving them of their best ; husbands and wives living faithfully together without the protection of elaborate marriage laws.

And another writer, Dr. Simmons, of the National Hospital in Yokohama, says :—

The family in Japan is the corner-stone of the nation. The father and mother are regarded with reverence. Politeness and self-restraint are engrained in the children, and an uncivil word is

rarely heard. Marriage is a union of families rather than of individuals. The parties to it are chosen in family council. The relatives of the husband and wife jealously guard the honour of each. Celibacy is not permitted to the young men. The young girls receive no visits except from members of their own families, and are trained in all the minute details of household management. After marriage they are allowed almost as much influence as the husband in the concerns of the family, and their opinions are often consulted. Divorce is not so common in Japan as in America, and the reports of gross immorality are unfounded.

So far by way of contradiction to missionary aspersion for the glory of God. But a lie told for God's sake is not so easily killed as any ordinary laical lie. It is told in the interests of the kingdom of heaven, and the fleetest and truest contradictions of earth cannot overtake it. In Japan there is actually a law on the statute-book, and rigorously enforced, against illicit trade in young girls. Perhaps this follower of Christ and Cockle's pills from whom I have quoted borrowed the suggestion from Christian England *re* the trade in girl-children. He could have found traces of this monstrosity much easier in the Bible and the *Pall Mall Gazette* than among the civilised and warm-hearted people of Japan.

But such reports are of use to Exeter Hall, and, in the interests of "the poor heathen," they are not without effect in loosening the purse-strings of England's church-going rakes and of England's wives and mothers, who are so afflicted with moral presbyopia that they can see the priest-invented depravity of Japan, but are blind to the sweltering cauldron of dissipation and disease which boils and bubbles and gurgitates under the shadow of their own Church steeples, its unhallowed fires fed with their own flesh and blood. Christianity *lies* against the women of Japan and China in order that she may thereby *rob* the women of England and America. And thus the diabolical game is kept up in the interests of "the

everlasting gospel" and of a horde of needy and lazy adventurers who will not dig, but who are not ashamed to beg. They libel the women of the East in order that they may cheat the women of the West. They circulate tales too foul for the tongue of any creature save a satyr or a Christian minister, and then, forgetting that our ignorance is not quite so opaque or our credulity so voracious as they were in the Dark Ages, they assure us that their accursed creed has "elevated" woman!

Are we, the brothers, the lovers, the husbands, to stand passively aside and listen to this infamy? To the man who is manly every woman is his sister—his sister if her cheek is mantled with the peachy bloom of England, his sister if her brow is swart with the dusky copper of Japan. How long are we to endure this wrong and insult, O my brothers? How long shall the libellous impostors of a pretended heaven slander our sisters in the East to rob our sisters in the West? Is the blood of Arthur cold? Can the spirit of Charlemagne or Bayard fire no more the sluggish life-tide of a degenerate race? Arise! In the name of a God holier than ever the priest invoked; in the name of the mothers who bore us; in the name of the unborn mothers of the unborn, let us lay the knight-errant's lance in rest and charge down with the fury of Megæra upon the black phalanx of the Christian priesthood, break in sunder the ranks of Apollyon, and win the ARMAGEDDON of the world!

CHAPTER XLI.

The "Poor Heathen" to the Missionary—What the "Poor Heathen" may See in English Newspapers—The "Times" the Modern Herodotus—"Lies Told for the Kingdom of God's Sake"—An Orgie in Pious Scotland.

CHARITY should proverbially begin at home. So should Christianity; and, if it cannot succeed at home, there is a *primâ facie* reason established why it should not go abroad. It would be awkward if the "poor heathen" were to ask the missionary: "What sort of place is this England you come from? There, for hundreds and hundreds of years, your people have believed in Jesus Christ and him crucified. You have had more than a thousand years of this divine revelation, this creed direct from God. One thousand years is a considerable stretch of time. A religion direct from God, and which has had a thousand years to work its way, should surely by this time have exterminated sinners and left every inhabitant of England a saint. An able-bodied Man could do wonders in a thousand years; but an able-bodied God should surely in shorter time than that do anything he liked—if necessary, destroy fifty old earths and make a hundred new ones. Our family arrangements out here do not please you, and you assure us that they do not please God. If we adopt your religion, how long will it be before your God will put our family affairs all correct? I suppose a God such as you tell us of could put the whole thing right in a moment. Did he put your English social and domestic system all right

in a moment, and have you now had more than a thousand years of peace and love and happiness, of social faith and domestic purity? I suppose that, since in your country marriage is a 'divine mystery,' directly instituted by your God, and celebrated by his priests and ministers, marital infidelity is unheard of and conjugal infelicity unknown. Destitution must, of course; never overtake 'those whom God hath joined together,' and shame must never sully the innocence of your English maidenhood."

"Poor heathen"! "Poor heathen" indeed, and yet you have drawn a logical deduction enough from the premises which the missionary has given you. But, for his own sake, the missionary must not teach you to read English; and, if he do teach you to read English, it will be prudent on his part, if he ever have an English newspaper sent him, to take particular pains to keep it out of your sight.

I have a number of newspapers on my table. I lift the first one that comes to hand. If the "poor heathen" should chance to lift the same newspaper, he would find that in London, in the Christian missionary's country, there is a district known as Lambeth, and that there what is known as a Coroner's Inquest had been held. The subjects of the inquest were a husband and wife whom God had "joined together"—"joined together" in great and wealthy and civilised and Christian London, with its thousands of parsons, and with its British and Foreign Bible Society, which annually distributes hundreds of thousands of copies of "the Word of God" over the globe. Yet part of the report of the inquest reads thus:—

Dr. George Frederick Farr deposed that he was a surgeon in practice at Slade House, Kennington Road, and divisional surgeon to the L division of police. Last Friday morning he was requested by the police to visit No. 22, Glasshouse Street, and on entering a

small back room resembling a large dust-hole he discovered a woman lying on the floor on what appeared to be the rakings of a fireplace, and covered only with a few dirty rags, which were clinging to her. Witness examined her, and found that she was dead, but warm. The body was in a fearfully emaciated condition, and extremely filthy. He (the witness) was about to leave the room when he noticed something move under a piece of old sacking in the corner, and upon removing the sacking he was horrified at finding the old man doubled up, with his face, or head, between his knees, and in the same emaciated and filthy condition as his wife. He, however, was alive, but quite unconscious. Witness caused his immediate removal to the Lambeth Infirmary, where he died the following afternoon. He (the witness) had since made a post-mortem examination of the body of the woman. There was not a particle of fat on the body. The stomach and intestines were quite empty, and the walls of the stomach were only a quarter of an inch in thickness, whereas the average thickness should be from one to four inches. Deceased and her husband must have been starving for months to bring that state of affairs about. The deceased died from actual starvation through want of food, and there was no doubt that her husband had died from the same cause. The witness went on to state that in the room occupied by the old couple there was no furniture excepting a portion of an old iron broken bedstead and a few rags and dirty pieces of sacking, and the stench emanating from the room was horrible, and how any persons could live in the same house he (the witness) could not imagine.

The jury eventually returned a verdict of "Death from starvation through want of food, and destitution."

The "poor heathen" will read that these two people whom God had "joined together" were a Mr. and Mrs. Gonin; and is he not warranted in turning round upon "the man of God" with the stern expostulation: "Mr. Missionary, till you have secured a better state of things in your own land what the demon do you want here?"

Then as to the purity of woman and the sanctity of girlhood in that London where the Bible for "the poor heathen" was prined, I again lift an English newspaper. If this newspaper should inadvertently come under the eye of "the poor heathen," he will find that, in this Christian London that prints the Bibles, there is

a district known as Bethnal Green ; that there is a Mr. H. F. Charrington, of the Central Vigilance Society ; and that this Mr. Charrington has discovered that a—

Horrible practice was being carried on by two men in a certain house in Bethnal Green, aided by one or more agents in the neighbourhood. They make a practice of decoying young girls away by means of these agents, and, in many cases, resort to the process of going about in cabs, snatching the girls, placing them inside, and carrying them off to their den. The men own a vessel which, although ostensibly an ordinary trading vessel, yet carries from London to the North of England, and in some cases to the Continent, the girls thus decoyed, and hands them over to brothel-keepers for a pecuniary consideration, although more often than not they have already been outraged by the men before they are thus bartered.

A large number of letters, it may be added, from heart-broken parents have found their way to the Great Assembly Hall, asking for Mr. Charrington's assistance in trying to discover the whereabouts of daughters who have been some time missing.

Conversion, by God's grace, in a moment to a purer and better life by finding Jesus ! Why, here is a city which "found Jesus" more than a thousand years ago, which has kept on finding him ever since, and which has also found a cab or two to kidnap girl-children and a "trading vessel" to export them from their homes to a destiny from the contemplation of which the mind recoils with horror. Excellent practical reasons these English newspapers afford to "the poor heathen" why he should abandon his own God and adopt the God of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Jacob—the God who permits these cabs, the God who does not sink that ship.

"The poor heathen" suspects he must be dreaming. He passes his hand over his eyes and turns over the paper, and tests that his vision is normal and that he is sane. In another column he reads :—

Further and sad revelations have been made in connection with Mr. H. F. Charrington's descent on disorderly houses in the East—

end. In a narrow turning, dignified by the title of Lady Lake's Grove, about fifty houses of ill-fame were discovered, among the unfortunate occupants of the dens being many girls as young as twelve and thirteen years of age, who plied their wretched calling equally with their adult companions. By energetically availing himself of the powers of the law Mr. Charrington succeeded in clearing out this hot-bed of vice. Next he turned his attention to Oxford Street, another East-end purlicu. This thoroughfare, in the matter of the character of its inhabitants, is described as being even a greater disgrace to public decency than the "Grove," because, while the "sisterhood" of the latter carried on their shameless trade in comparative privacy, few people passing through it on account of its notorious character, Oxford Street is in the unfortunate position of being the only means of direct access to several important thoroughfares. The traffic, consequently, is considerable and continuous, and women and children have not been able to escape being witnesses of the revolting scenes arising out of the solicitation going on at every one of the houses. Two or three visits paid by Mr. Charrington for the purpose of collecting evidence, combined with the knowledge of the wholesale evictions that had been carried out in the "Grove," seem to have alarmed the miserable community, who cleared out of their own accord.

Mr. Charrington next turned his attention to Nelson Street, a turning containing some two dozen houses, the larger majority of which are, or were, dens of the worst description. Not only were the women of the very worst type of their degraded order, but they were "protected" by ruffians of the most desperate character. Mr. Charrington's visit to the locality gave the unmitigated villains an opportunity of exercising their innate brutality. He was assaulted with decomposed fish and other filth, and was so seriously threatened that finally the police had to escort him away from the place. On Sunday evening Mr. Charrington intended holding a short service in Nelson Street. The way, however, was blocked by several carts, containing men armed with sticks and stones; and, as it was obvious that a murderous attack had been arranged, Mr. Charrington prudently postponed his visit. It is current rumour that the bullies of Canal Road have threatened to drop Mr. Charrington into the water should he appear in that neighbourhood, while some of the lower class of publicans, whose trade has been seriously affected by the sweeping of the Augean stables, are vowing all sorts of vengeance upon the author of their ruin. The clearances which have taken place have brought to light some revolting facts, showing the extensive character of the shocking traffic which has so long been

carried on. Thus, in one house were discovered no less than 45 beds, which were let from 5s. to 15s. per night. More painful than surprising were other circumstances. Here is an instance : A gentleman well-known in West-end society, a year or so ago, missed his daughter. He had reason to believe that the girl was living in a disorderly house in the East-end ; but the most searching inquiries were fruitless to ascertain her whereabouts. In the clearance of Nelson Street, however, a young woman answering the description of the missing daughter was discovered. The gentleman and his wife were promptly on the spot, driving down in a handsomely-appointed brougham, attended by coachman and footman in powdered wigs. They identified their child, who, however, was proof against all parental expostulation and entreaty. She firmly refused to leave the people with whom she had connected herself.

“The poor heathen” peradventure concludes that this Christian London may possibly not be so hot, but that it is quite as criminal, as the Christian Bottomless Pit. The newspapers are current history, history running neck and neck, bridle to bridle, with the events they record. The *Times* is a modern Herodotus, the *Telegraph* a contemporaneous Livy. We have had more than a thousand years of this religion which came down from heaven ; but, if from the depths of the Dead Sea we should dredge up copies of the *Sodom Herald* and the *Gomorrhah Courier*—if with dynamite we could blast the lava and exhume the *Pompeii Gazette* and the *Hercoleum Standard*, I doubt if their columns would contain such evidence of sin and sorrow and hell as appears every day in the year in the newspaper which lies on our Christian breakfast-table.

What we have just seen pious slander do against the Japanese women pious slander has done and is doing against all women whom Christianity, in its pitying insolence, describes as “heathen.” Any aspersion against the purity of our sisters is legitimate if these sisters never heard of Adam and Eve and the rib, or, having heard of them, regard them as fabulous. If from the

cope of the blue heaven the eye of the common father of us all looked down upon his sons and daughters, would that eye behold more brutality and outrage where India's cavernous temples hollow out the everlasting hills, where the mosque's minarets flash in the oriental sun, or even among savages upon whose minds the idea of a God has never dawned, than in the valleys commanded by the mountains upon which the "glad feet" of the gospel have been trampling for well nigh two thousand years?

The calumnies against the heathen and their women are often, if not always, lies told for the kingdom of God's sake. We have seen that they can be, and have been, flatly contradicted. But here is a specimen from an Australian newspaper of the current record of Christian civilisation and an evidence of how Christianity "elevates" woman :—

Sentence of death has been passed upon nine young men convicted of outraging a servant girl sixteen years of age, near Moore Park, in the suburbs of Sydney, last September. The circumstances under which the crime was committed were revolting to the last degree. A young girl of sixteen, of good character, was decoyed into an unfrequented suburb of Sydney, and there was violently outraged by relays of youths from sixteen years old and over. As the child was alone, amid a gang of at least twelve strong young ruffians, her struggles, though violent, were unavailing. She was at first held down by her hands and feet ; but after the brutality had lasted some hours she became unconscious. One man who attempted to rescue the girl was overpowered by the gang, some of whom had knives, and while he fled to inform the police another man arrived on the scene and witnessed the crime without raising an alarm. After the last of the gang left her she was found by the police sitting crying on the bank of the creek. On being removed to the police-station it was found impossible to make a surgical examination. After a day in the hospital she was examined, and the evidence of her injuries confirmed. It was not for some time, however, that she was able to appear in the witness-box. When she did she identified her assailants, and the result is that nine of them are sentenced to death. The law of the colony prescribes death as a

penalty for this crime. The English Home Secretary has recommended that the sentence of three of the ruffians be commuted to imprisonment for life ; the other six will be hanged.

This is no missionary's lying tale. It is a plain Criminal Court record, told with as much regard as practicable to the decency which is yet left in human nature. Those nine men were not "heathen." It is likely each of them had been duly baptised in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost ; but this did not prevent their engaging in a crime such as I do not remember of nine "heathen" perpetrating, although my reading of ancient history and modern travel has been extensive. "Sydney is far away ; it is at the antipodes," say you. "True, it is Christian ; but you speak of a country where the fierce scramble for life has almost extinguished the torch of civilisation. Take Christianity in the olden realms of Europe, where the leaven has had time to work, and where, for fifteen centuries, there has been flung across the landscape the shadow of the spire of the Church of God."

Specious apologist, I will take you at your word. From Australia we will come home to pious Scotland, perhaps, at this moment, the most drunken, most incontinent, and most Christian country in Europe :—

In the Police Court, Dundee, before Bailie White, three lads, about fifteen or sixteen years of age, were charged with having assaulted a young woman named Jane Sinclair, a weaver, residing in Overgate, by jostling and pushing her about, knocking her down, and abusing her while in Euclid Crescent. One pleaded guilty, and the other two not guilty. Jane Sinclair deponed that, between eight and nine o'clock on Monday night, she was set upon in Commercial Street by a gang of young lads, the accused among the number. She was knocked down and abused by the mob. Her companion, a girl named Mary Downie, made her escape, and witness took refuge behind a shooting gallery. She remained in concealment for about ten minutes, but when she came out the crowd was still in waiting for her, and again she was attacked,

mobbed, and abused. The mob followed her up Commercial Street and around Albert Square. In Euclid Crescent she was knocked down and abused in an indecent manner. A man named John Garry deponed that he saw a mob of young lads, and some bearded men among them, following the girl and abusing her. There was a young man protecting her, and two policemen tried to disperse the crowd; but no heed was paid to their authority. When they got into a dark place in Euclid Crescent the mob set on the girl and knocked her down. Witness made a rush into the midst of them, and gripped one of the prisoners as he was in the act of behaving indecently. The other two were by his side, and they were secured by the police. James Sword stated that he saw a mob of about 200 boys following the girl. After she came out from hiding behind the shooting saloon witness accompanied her up Commercial Street on her way to the Police Office, as the only place where she could get protection from her persecutors. He tried to keep back the mob, and he was severely kicked about the legs. The mob were acting like savages. The girl was knocked down and abused in a shameful way in the midst of the crowd. In answer to the Court, witness said there was nothing peculiar in the girl's appearance. The evidence was corroborated by two police constables. In moving for sentence, Mr. Dewar said he thought he was justified in asking for a sharp punishment. Attacks of this kind were far too common in Dundee. *Last night, in another part of the town, another woman was attacked in a similar manner.* Young women were entitled to protection, and it was monstrous to think that, between eight and nine o'clock in the evening, a woman should be attacked in the public street and abused in a way which could scarcely be expected from savages. The Bailie found the charge proven, and fined the accused 20s., with the option of ten days in prison each.

In holy Scotland, the land of John Knox and the Kirk, for a fine of twenty shillings you may indecently assault a woman in open day, in the public street, and before several hundreds of spectators and accomplices. If you try this in Australia, you are, it would seem, jerked to Jesus for your crime. But, as saints pretend to elect to "depart and be with Christ, which is far better," they can, in Australia too, outrage women with impunity; for, if we are to believe the gaol chaplain—he is quite as reliable as any other genus of gospel-grinder—with hardly

an exception, those who go through his hands pass from guilt to glory. Man cuts the rope from the neck and God fastens wings to the shoulders, and he who was on earth a walking reprobate becomes, in heaven, a flying angel. So, in Christendom, even where death is the penalty for rape there is practically no penalty at all ; the mortal simply puts on immortality, what was corruptible becomes incorruptible, what was sown in weakness is raised in strength.

If any Christian missionary had found in some savage isle of the Indian Ocean such a public and brutal carnival as roared and yelled in two different places on the same night through the streets of Dundee, what would be the effect ? Why, Exeter Hall would hold up its holy hands in horror and howl its mendicant Jeremiads till, from Land's End to Cape Wrath, all the steeples of Hypocrisy poured their ringing gold into the plate in order that that savage isle in the Indian Ocean might have top-boots and blankets and bibles. Thou fool, take out the mote which is in thine own eye. In Dundee there are top-boots and blankets, and there are hundreds of thousands of bibles ; and poor Jane Sinclair, an honest weaver girl, will explain to you the effect that centuries of bibles have taken upon the debased and peccant savages of Scotland. The mob in heathen Rome, because the girl Virginia was seized by a debauchee, rose and, with red right hand, hurled the Tarquins to the infernal shades. The mob in Christian Dundee, when the girl Jane Sinclair is assaulted, join in the brutality and the indecent outrage, and, with the yells of hyena laughter and the ribaldry of satyr lust, join in their dirty and devilish hundreds to outrage a feeble and unprotected girl.

CHAPTER XLII.

A Personal Experience of the Author—Possibility of being Very Christian and yet Very Brutal—Where Christianity is Highest, Woman is Lowest—Testimony of Maine—The Pretended Misogyny and Real Voluptuousness of the Priesthood—Partaking of the Sacrament Indispensable to the Profession of Harlotry—Testimony of Lecky.

INSTEAD of sending missionaries abroad to lie, would it not be well to see them to stay at home and face the truth? Not long ago, in a suburb of London, I saw a defenceless woman assaulted in much the same manner as Jane Sinclair and another were indecently hounded by the rabble of Dundee. Grasping a heavy walking-stick significantly, I crushed through the crowd and linked the woman's arm in mine. The act was signalled by a wild shout of brutal derision. One ruffian ventured to draw his stercorous and filthy hand across my face. In a second he had lived to repent the deed. The multitude of hooting blackguards had learnt not to come within reach of my arm. Towering above them in stature—your *canaille* specimen of Christian is a stunted wretch—I walked with the woman on my arm for a quarter of a mile, almost deafened by the most hideous shouting and hooting, and feeling every now and again the impact of cowardly blows from behind with missiles flung by the sort of English yahoo that is the result of some fifteen centuries of Christian teaching.

For the last half of my journey I was supported by a solitary gentleman who linked the woman's other arm in

his. He, too, towered like a Saul over the seething sea of riff-raff that had reached the bathos of beastliness, which is, happily, only a step removed from racial extermination. When humanity in Christian civilisation (?) has bred itself down to dirty sterility, it boils up into sundry foetid bubblings preparatory to its being shovelled off to at once manure and pollute the earth. The only hopeful thing about 'Arry is that he is on his last legs. I had one friend, but every few minutes the mob was augmenting by dozens. At length we reached a cab-rank and placed the woman inside a cab, which we ordered to be driven to the address she gave.

When my volunteer friend and myself had got fairly away from the sleuth-hounds of howling brutality, we began to compare notes. We found that we were mutually thoughtful men who had utterly repudiated the Christian faith. Our apparel, particularly behind, was smeared over with spittle, mud, gravel, and the excrement of horses, all of which had been daubed upon us by wild beasts without the wild beasts' beauty and courage. Even my hair was dripping and horrible with tobacco spittle which had been squirted at me through the teeth of the rabble, not one of which, although they were there in their scores, dared to come within reach of the arm that had sent their comrade sprawling on the pavement. My friend was in nearly as deplorable a condition as myself, and he looked even more grotesque ; for a quantity of white-wash had been thrown upon his back, and the white background was relieved by sundry dark and ghastly lines where the blood had flowed from a wound which some coward had managed to inflict upon his neck. Shaking hands very heartily and exchanging cards, we wended off to our respective homes, unsavoury victims of nineteenth-century knight-errantry, two god-forsaken " Infidels," who, in an unromantic and brutal age, had dared to protect a helpless woman against

the very class of her fellow countrymen which fills the Tabernacle of Spurgeon and the Barracks of Booth.

Christianity has "elevated" woman, chimes in Arch-deacon Farrar, and all those whose interest it is, with audacity of assertion, to impose upon uninquiring and uncritical ignorance. We have seen how woman is elevated among the 'Arrys of England and the Aneras of Scotland. The Englishman can purchase the New Testament for a penny. Everywhere the churches and chapels are nearly as plentiful as the public-houses, and gospel is as common as gin, and cheaper. When he determines that he has an "immortal soul," and feels uneasy about it, he can go to the big cathedral hoary with eld and redolent of historic memories, or to any of the array of Bethels, down to the shabby gospel-shop of yesterday, with its sides and roof of corrugated iron, and with its Boanerges howling about "salvation," even as his neighbour the butcher, next door, is shouting about his sausages. And lower yet. If the Almighty is believed not to "dwell in temples made with hands," there is the devout blockhead ranting at the street corner, strong in gospel but weak in grammar, marvellous in illiteracy and mighty in ignorance. Everywhere the Englishman is, *volens volens*, saturated with the faith that has done so much for woman's purity and exaltation. And, as for Anera of Scotland, he is born with Jehovah in his bones and Jesus in his blood. Almost before he is weaned he is versed in the rudiments of theological disputation. Each scoundrel in those mobs at Dundee could inform you anent "the chief end of man," "the decrees of God," and all about "Justification," "Adoption," "Sanctification," and "Redemption," "Baptism," and "the Lord's Supper." But inborn centuries of this knowledge does not, apparently, ennoble the human character, even when backed by all the awful memories of "the killing time," and "the Cloud of Witnesses," and "the Covenant."

All the preaching, from the days of Kentigern to those of George Gilfillan, has been preached in vain ; and to-day we have more horrible mobs than that mob which, nearly 2,000 years ago, surged through the streets of Jerusalem, yelling "Crucify him ! Crucify him !" and which ceased not till the cross held aloft on its awful arms the agonising form of the son of Mary.

To this hour, wherever Christianity has had fewest of its fangs extracted by heresy and infidelity, woman is found in a more servile and degraded state than elsewhere. "In our recent journey through Southern France," writes a traveller,* "the entire circuit of Italy, through a considerable portion of Austria and Germany, and through Belgium and Northern France, the distance being nearly five thousand miles, we observed that much the largest portion of the labourers in the field were women. They were not only making hay, but ploughing, mowing, hoeing, grubbing, and planting. They were not only doing the work of men, but such work as men usually depend on horses to perform. In all the vast country we did not see a horse-rake, a cultivator, or any labour-saving implement. The only cultivator was the primitive hoe, and a line of women, mostly superintended by one or two men, bent their backs to the labour. The only ploughs looked as if they might have been modelled after the implements which Noah landed from the Ark. We did see one threshing-machine standing on a car at a depôt in Austria, which was the only labour-saving machine that attracted our attention." Woman doing "such work as men usually depend upon horses to perform" goes far to establish Christianity's claim to have refined and educated woman ! The least Christian countries of Europe are just the countries where woman is least degraded. Our struggle is to hark back, as far

* *Boston Investigator.*

as woman is concerned, to the ages before Europe had the misfortune to be Christian. "No society which preserves any tincture of Christian institutions is ever likely to restore to women the personal liberty conferred on them by the middle Roman law," writes Maine.* And the same eminent authority observes: "The situation of the Roman female, whether married or unmarried, became one of great personal and proprietary independence. *But Christianity tended somewhat from the very first to narrow this remarkable liberty.*"

But where Christianity curtailed woman's personal and proprietary liberty it made up for it by teaching her the personal liberty which is license; and, instead of giving her proprietary rights, it converted herself into property, and, from the fifth century downward, openly *sold* her for slavery and prostitution. St. Augustine, himself a reformed libertine, had in his youth debauched women till, in his riper years, he made amends by hating them and by inventing the doctrine of original sin. Women came to be regarded as such an evil (though a necessary evil) that no man whose life was devoted to the service of God could defile himself by marrying. But a priest could degrade woman as much as he pleased. In short, he could not degrade her below, according to Christian theology, her natural level of degradation. The only thing to be considered was that, by meddling with her—on the principle that, if you touch pitch, you will be defiled—you were apt to degrade yourself. But the Christian priesthood were always chivalrous enough to brave the pollution entailed by having anything to do with such a sinful creature as woman. For example, "the abbot elect of St. Augustine, at Canterbury, in 1171, was found on investigation to have seventeen illegitimate children in a single village. An abbot of St

* Maine's "Ancient Law," p. 158.

Pelayo, in Spain, in 1130, was proved to have kept no less than seventy mistresses. Henry III., Bishop of Liege, was deposed in 1274 for having sixty-five illegitimate children..... This same bishop boasted at a public banquet that in twenty-two months fourteen children had been born to him. A license to the clergy to keep concubines was, during several centuries, levied by princes.* So much for the Christian priest's intercourse with woman. She was, writes Lecky, by the Fathers "represented as the door of hell, the mother of all ills. She should be ashamed at the very thought that she is a woman. She should live in continual penance on account of the curse she has brought into the world. She should be ashamed of her dress, and especially ashamed of her beauty." How fearfully prone the saints were to sit down on the doorstep of the beautiful "door of hell" !

To such a height has Christianity "elevated" woman that, in certain Christian countries, at this very hour, her prostitution is publicly legalised and licensed. Occasionally gospel and harlotry get so inextricably mixed up—they seem to have a natural principle of assimilation—that you can hardly tell which is the one and which is the other. Church and State, Bible and Sceptre, fraternally combine to make woman a thing too loathsome for contemplation, and then they appeal to their dupes and helots to behold how they have "elevated" her. The Church, "in some places, as in the City of Berlin, so far recognises the sale of woman's bodies for the vilest purposes as part of the Christian religion that *license for this vocation* [that of a harlot] *is refused until they have partaken of the Sacrament* ; and demands of the 10,000 licensed women of the town of the City of Hamburg certificates showing that they regularly attend church,

* Lecky, "Hist. Europ. Morals."

and also partake of the Sacrament.”* The Church insists that these women swallow the very body of very God before they are qualified to offer up their own bodies for hire on the altar of Lust.

Well may Lecky remark that, under Christian auspices, “marriage was viewed in its coarsest and most degraded form ;” and John Stuart Mill has embodied in one or two pithy sentences a view of the state of servility and degradation of the Christian wife. “We are continually told,” remarks he, “that civilisation and Christianity have restored to woman her just rights. Meanwhile the wife is the actual bond-servant of her husband ; no less so, as far as legal obligation goes, than *slaves* commonly so called. She vows a life-long obedience to him at the altar, and is held to it all through her life by law. Casuists may say that the obligation of obedience stops short of participation in crime ; but it certainly extends to everything else. She can do no act whatever but by his permission, at least tacit. She can acquire no property but for him ; the instant it becomes hers, even if by inheritance, it becomes *ipso facto* his. In this respect the wife’s position under the common law of England is *worse than that of slaves* in the laws of many countries : by the Roman law, for example, a slave might have *peculium*, which, to a certain extent, the law guaranteed him for his exclusive use.” Would our womankind only critically *think* instead of sentimentally *feel*, they would renounce Christianity and refuse to bring up our children in its dogmas, even should we insist upon their doing so. Civilisation and refinement have done much to blunt the sharpness and hardness of Christianity’s tusks ; but, if it were not for this, the English woman is a slave without a slave’s peculiar privileges.

Edith Saville, author of “Romance of My Life,” etc.,

* M. J. Gage, “Woman, Church, and State.”

has assured me that she has, more than once, seen a wife sold in Barnsley when she was a girl. In her experience the wife for sale evinced brazen indifference or indulged in prurient jocularity. The onlookers and bidders were facetiously obscene ; and the purchaser led off his purchase by the halter round her neck. His purchase was cheap, if nasty ; for, as a rule, all that was paid was a pot of beer and a few ounces of tobacco. So much for the "elevation" of woman !

CHAPTER XLIII.

Testimony of Buckle to the Sale of Wives in England
—*The Infamous Law of Marquette—Woman's Position has Risen in England as Christianity Declined*
—*Appeal to Women to Regard the Church as their Enemy—Michelet on Marquette—Bible Produced by Girls who have to Eke Out a Living on the Streets*
—*The Missionary with his Bible Produced at the Cost of Prostitution—How "Ruby" Matches "Elevate" Woman.*

"IN England," says Buckle, "wives are still occasionally led to the market by a halter round the neck, to be sold by the husband to the highest bidder." "The sale of a wife," remarks Borrow, "with a halter round her neck is still a legal transaction in England. The sale must be made *in the cattle-market*, as if she were a mare, all women being considered as mares by old English law, and, indeed, *called* mares in certain counties where genuine old English law is still preserved."

Within the last few years I have seen in the newspapers the record of several such sales as Buckle and Borrow refer to. There is an important difference between the sale of an English mare and the sale of an English wife: you pay a good round sum for the former; the latter you may purchase for a piece of tobacco and an old shirt.

"Women," says Gage,* "were taught by the Church and State alike that the Feudal Lord or Seigneur had a right to them, not only against themselves, but as against

* "Woman, Church, and State."

any claim of husband or father. The law known as *Marchetta*, or *Marquette*, compelled newly-married women to a most dishonourable servitude. They were regarded as the rightful prey of the Feudal Lord from one to three days after their marriage, and from this custom the eldest son of the serf was held as the son of the lord, 'as perchance it was he who begat him.' From this nefarious degradation of woman the custom of Borough English arose, in which the youngest son became the heir.....France, Germany, Prussia, England, Scotland, *and all Christian countries* where Feudalism existed, held to the enforcement of *Marquette*. The lord deemed this right as fully his as he did the claim to half the crops of the land, or to half the wool of the sheep. More than one reign of terror arose in France from the enforcement of this law, and the uprising of the peasantry over Europe during the *twelfth century*, and the fierce *Jacqueri*, or Peasant Wars, of the *fourteenth century*, in France, owed their origin, among other causes, to the enforcement of these claims by the lords upon the newly-married wife. The edicts of Marly transplanted that claim to America when Canada was under the control of France. To persons not conversant with the history of Feudalism, and of the Church for the first fifteen hundred years of its existence, it will seem impossible that such foulness could ever have been part of Christian civilisation. That the crimes they have been trained to consider the worst forms of heathendom could have existed in Christian Europe, *upheld by both Church and State*, for more than one thousand five hundred years, will strike most people with incredulity. Such, however, is the truth ; we can but admit well-attested facts of history, how severe a blow soever they strike at one's preconceived beliefs.

"Marquette was claimed by the lords spiritual as well

as by the lords temporal. *The Church, indeed, was the bulwark of this base feudal claim.* With the power of penance and excommunication in its grasp, this demand could neither have originated nor been sustained unless sanctioned by the Church.....These customs of Feudalism were the customs of Christianity during many centuries. (One of the Earls of Crawford, known as the 'Earl Brant,' in the sixteenth century, was probably among the last *who openly* claimed by right the literal translation of *droit de Jambage*.) These infamous outrages upon women were enforced under Christian law by both Church and State."

Does the apologist for the Galilean superstition urge that Christianity has got nothing to do with all this? It is indisputable that Christianity had a great deal to do with it, and that, as soon as Christianity became fairly established in England, the old Pagan respect for woman's purity disappeared, and the Christians began to sell their wives and daughters and sisters for slavery and prostitution. To this fact history bears ample testimony. The solitary wife here and there that can still be bought for a tankard of ale and a pair of old boots is simply the surviving representative of the numerous women that were wont to be exposed for sale in the English cattle-market. That the wife is now so seldom sold is in no way due to Christianity. That she is so seldom exposed with a halter round her neck we owe to the decline of that baleful creed. When England was truly Christian English women were sold in thousands. There was no scepticism then. The churches were full of worshippers. Nobody save the priest had the education and brains to be an unbeliever; and belief paid the priest so well, and doubt would have paid him so badly, that he was not mad enough to forsake the former and cleave to the latter. It was when Christianity was in her vigorous life that the mother of our race stood in the market-

place with a halter round her neck, while the seller gave her recommendations too indelicate for the ear of Priapus in order that he might obtain for her as *high* a price as possible ; while the buyer depreciated her in language too revolting for the ears of a satyr in order that he might have her knocked down to him at as *low* a figure as possible. This, O English women, is a glimpse at Christianity's record as far as you are concerned. How like you the picture? Have fourteen centuries of the numbing moral narcotic left you so stupid and spiritless that you cannot resent the dishonour done to you by this Galilean Tarquin? Are you too deeply drugged and so intellectually dead that you feel no impulse to set your heel upon the neck of this poisonous viper of a faith that has left the trail of its virulent slime upon the feeling and the thought of the highest racial promise of the world?

Women of England, do you doubt the evangel because I, the Agnostic, am its evangelist? If you do not find the ecclesiastical and civil history of Europe support me at every point, do not only doubt my evangel—reject it, and go on to suckle another generation of moral cowards and intellectual slaves. But it is from such as I the message must come when it does come. You will never hear it from your pastors. They have erected ecclesiastical toll-bars on and thrown theological hurdles across the thorny and steep, albeit glorious, pathway of independent thought. Expect nothing from them. Wherever the carcase of your ignorance is, there shall they, the eagles, be gathered together. They will resist all new ideas and tendencies till the public rams them down their throat with the staff of an expanding intelligence: Then, when they cannot help receiving the new ideas, they will turn round and tell you that they are not new, and that they had always entertained them. I do not say that all the clergy are dishonest ; they are as honest

as any class of men can be who follow a dishonest calling. But remember, O English women, that it was when the alb on their shoulders was unruven, when as yet the mitre on their head was unbattered, that you wore your halters and stood in the cattle-market to be knocked down to the highest bidder—the elder for slaves and the younger for a life of infamy. There was not an “Infidel” in England then from Cumberland to Cornwall. No Saladin then gave impious challenge by touching with his battle-axe the shields of the saints. No *Secular Review* then broke in with its “blasphemy” upon the orisons of the pious. Now, except among its women (*proh pudor!*) and its most illiterate rabble, England is hardly Christian at all. At this hour there is, perhaps, not in England a single eminent thinker who is an orthodox Christian. Æsthetic and ceremonial Christianity still survives among a section of the rich, and the howling order of gutter-worship asserts its existence among a section of the poor. But there is no staple and fixed Christianity; there are scores of conflicting heresies and schisms. There are hundreds of thousands of indifferents, and there are hundreds of thousands of “Infidels.” And yet, O sister, you do not stand in the cattle-market with a halter round your neck as you did in the days before civilisation had broken the teeth of Christianity and vindicated the real Rights of Man against the ideal Rights of God.

Christianity, as we have seen, still insists on a harlot partaking of the sacrament before she can have her professional license. But civilisation has arrested the sale of women in the cattle-market. Civilisation has also arrested the action of the old law of *Marchetta*, or *Marquette*. “In days to come,” says Michelet,* “people will be slow to believe that the law *among Christian*

* “La Sorcerie,” p. 62.

nations went beyond anything decreed concerning the olden slavery ; that it wrote down as an actual right the most grievous outrage that could ever wound man's heart. The Lords Spiritual had this right no less than the Lords 'Temporal. The parson, being a lord, expressly claimed the first fruits of the bride, but was willing to sell his right to the husband." Women may reply that it was not Christianity, but a travesty of Christianity, that allowed the church dignitary and the feudal lord to have the exclusive right to her for the first night or two after her marriage. In her vehement ignorance the modern Protestant maiden will protest that neither priest nor king has a right to keep back a newly-wedded wife from her husband till they are able to hand her over as an adultress. I reply, priest and king did this for centuries ; and pray what is Christianity apart from what priests and kings have made and make it? There are, of course, the Scriptures to fall back upon ; but they are so elastic and vague that scores of conflicting creeds appeal with equal confidence to Scripture for their support ; and then by far the stronger section of Christians, the Romanists, openly repudiate Scripture as the sole foundation of the Christian Church in faith and practice.

At this very hour not only the teaching of the Bible, but the multiplying of copies of the Bible, degrades and debases woman. A Mr. Frank Swift recently sent the following letter to the editor of the *Liberator* :—

SIR,—In your issue of the 27th July it was stated that the British and Foreign Bible Society had announced their intention of publishing a penny New Testament. Now, it appears that the work of getting up these cheap Bibles is for the most part done by young women ; and about thirty-seven years ago the females employed by the Society presented a petition to the heads of the department, in which they asked for a rise of wages, as the sum they were then receiving was not sufficient to procure them food, lodging, and clothing ; and that, as a number of the girls had no relations to assist them, they were obliged to go on the streets one or two

nights in the week to add to their wages as much as would pay their board and lodging. In answer to their petition, they were told that they could get no more wages; that, as the Bibles were for the saving of souls, they must be got up cheap. The *London Times*, in a leading article, commented strongly on the action of the Society, and a Mr. Campbell, a Scotch minister, who was at the time residing in London and was editor of the *Nonconformist* newspaper, sought out some of the girls and found their statements to be quite true.

What does the Holy Ghost think of this—his “blessed book” produced by the wages of prostitution? It is meet, after all, that some of the funds to produce a work which immortalises Lot and Judah and Rahab and Tamar and Aholibah should come from the wages of street infamy. But the hypocrisy and cant connected with the whole business is so nauseating and revolting as to leave an, if possible, still more foul and horrible stain upon the Christian escutcheon. Honesty should prompt the hireling and simpering wastrel of a missionary to say to the simple and comparatively pure “heathen,” who never sent for him, with his Bible and Brandy and Cockle’s Pills: “Dearly-beloved brethren, I have brought you, from a far country, a book as cheap as dirt—and greatly composed of dirt. It says something about a person who, long ago, was nailed to two sticks, that you might be *saved*; but, what is of more importance, many young girls, not long since, had to go into the streets and become prostitutes, that I might be able to let you have the volume at this ridiculously low price.” My blood boils. Accursed be every spot of this Christian leprosy! Better that Yaveh had been flayed alive, and that the whole race of Abraham had been nailed to crosses, than that our English maidenhood should have been bartered in the streets in infamy to contribute to the cheap production of, upon the whole, perhaps the most worthless volume for its bulk that was ever produced by man or god or devil!

Christians read their Bible with a shirt on, and they pay the woman who makes that shirt so little that they compel her to be either a suicide or a harlot. Christians light the gas or the candle to read their Bible, and for this they require a match, and they pay so little for their matches that they compel the woman who makes them to be either a suicide or a harlot. "The 'Ruby' match-boxes of Bryant and May cost the company 2½d. per gross boxes. The women who make them have to find paste, hemp, and firing for drying purposes. They can gain, if skilful, three farthings per hour, or less than 10d. for twelve hours' work. If they work eight hours per diem, and take a holiday on Sundays, they would realise the handsome salary of 3s. a week! The company pays its shareholders above twenty per cent. dividend!"* "Elevate" woman, indeed! Why, if the Avenging Demon could mingle facetiousness with justice, he would set these twenty per cent. shareholders, every man of them, down in hell upon an everlasting bon-fire of their own "Ruby" matches. But the shareholders pocket their twenty per cent. in this world and take their risk of being burnt with their own matches in the next.

* The *Rock*, August 5th, 1887.

CHAPTER XLIV.

“Swopping” Wives—Staking and Losing a Wife and Child at the Card-table—The Aunt and Uncle in the Rue de Ruisseau—The Paris Fetus-hatching Machine—Bartering Totty for Toddy in Tonga—“Attempt to Construct a Shakespeare out of Smithy Sparks and Asses’ Hoofs.”

NOT only selling, but, moreover, “swopping,” wives in English counties where civilisation is weak, and Christianity consequently strong, is not uncommon even at this hour. The last case that came under my notice I saw reported in a Gloucestershire newspaper.* Two men, named respectively Bullingham and Smith, both cab proprietors, had, it transpired in court, been negotiating for the mutual exchange of wives. Mrs. Bullingham is, it would seem, a superior property to Mrs. Smith ; for Smith was alleged to have offered Mrs. Smith *plus* a horse and cart in exchange for Mrs. Bullingham.

Now, I can personally testify that the district from which we have this record of wife-swopping is exceedingly pious. I once, in the vicinity of Stroud, took the chair at a Freethought lecture. My reception was warm, but not genial. An “Infidel” or two in front cheered some of my points, and were, in consequence, gently admonished by Christian walking-sticks from behind coming down upon their heads. They can swop wives quite formally, and they can swop wives clandestinely and say nothing about it ; but they are strong on the

* *The Stroud News*, October 29th, 1886.

Adam and Eve narrative, they have unshaken faith in the rib story, they are quite certain that a man lived three days and nights in the inside of a whale, and they attach the utmost importance to the hammer-and-nails business on Calvary. They have gospel-shops and sermon-spinners in abundance. They detest and pity "Infidels." They are excellent Christians of the big "babe and suckling" order. Anybody above their own mental and moral standard they are eager to pronounce a lunatic and have the payment of his cheques stopped; and they swop their wives just to show how much Christianity has done for the purity and "elevation" of woman.

America is the land of the Pilgrim Fathers. America has been, for some centuries, subjected to severe doses of Christianity, Papist and Protestant. America is the land of Moody and Sankey. America is the ranting-ground of De Witt Talmage, and many a pious mountebank besides; and yet, only a few weeks ago, the following appeared in an American newspaper* :—

"A sad page in the life of a certain well-known actress whom Boston has seen within the last two months has been made public. The person of whom we write was married about a decade ago to an actor, who soon proved himself an unprincipled scoundrel of the worst type, and who treated his beautiful wife in a manner that would rouse indignation in the breast of even an anthropophagous Fiji Islander. A child was born to this unhappy woman about a year after her marriage, and upon this little creature all the love of her outraged heart was centred. This, however, was not the case with the father. Brutal before, he now became ferocious, for the sight of the innocent child seemed to act only as a goad to the dark passions harboured in his shameless breast. Both mother and child were treated with a degree of cruelty

* *The Boston Commonwealth.*

almost surpassing belief, and the harrowing incidents of their wretched life soon became an open secret in 'professional' circles. Not content with personal abuse, the husband squandered the little possessions of the wife over the green cloth. Her wages, her diamonds—all her valuables, in fact—were confiscated by this voracious monster, and offered up on the altar of the card-table. So matters went on, the woman patient and long-suffering, the man brutal and totally unfeeling. One night, while the wife was playing at a New York theatre, the husband was sitting over the cards with another desperate gambler in the room of a 'club' of most unsavoury repute. Luck, with a propriety it sometimes observes, went steadily against the husband, until, at length, his last penny was shoved over the green cloth to his opponent. At the end of his resources, he cast about him for some expedient with which to 'raise the wind.'

" 'How much does that pile at your elbow foot up?' he asked his *vis-à-vis*.

" ' 'Bout five hundred dollars' (£100), answered the other.

" 'Well, I'll make you a proposition. You like my wife?'

" 'She's a taking woman,' was the non-committal reply.

" 'I'll tell you what I'll do. I'll put her up against your pile; if you win, you can have her, and'—with a wicked laugh—'I'll throw in the d——d kid to boot.'

" 'Done!' was the response to this proposition, and the game was continued. The husband lost.

" 'I wish you joy of your bargain,' was all he said as he left the room, bereft of money, wife, child, honour—everything that a man should prize in life.

" Later on that night, when the wife returned to her

home, she found in her apartments a man whom she well knew to be her husband's boon companion.

"'Get the child ready for the street,' said the man, nonchalantly. 'We are going to leave this hole. You belong to me—I won you fair and square with the cards—and I'm going to have my own.'

"The woman comprehended the situation in a moment, and without more ado took her child and quietly followed her new master. *Lift up your hands in horror at her course, O virtuous women with comfortable homes, with loving husbands and beloved children; shudder and recoil at the desperate step of a desperate woman who, alone in the world, unsheltered by loving arms, unprotected by loyal hands, stabbed to the heart by neglect, cruelty, and scorn, wounded in every fibre of her sensitive nature, plundered, mocked, reviled, and abjured, followed this man out into the night, caring little whither she went, with whom she went, only longing to escape from the scene of her heart's vile outrage and her soul's bitter desolation. And yet people wonder why this woman is to-day a misanthropic, reckless being, who pins her faith to no one, and measures man's worth only by his wealth !*"

France is Christian; but there, only quite recently, a notorious case was made public of her relatives attempting to sell a young girl to prostitution rather than be burdened with finding food for her. This tragical occurrence was recently under the investigation of the Paris police. A young lady of eighteen was lately left an orphan, and went to stay with an aunt and uncle in the Rue de Ruisseau. She tried to obtain employment in shops, but without success, and her relatives, fearing that she would remain a burden on them, attempted to persuade her to lead an improper life. A stranger was invited to dinner, after which the uncle and aunt retired, leaving, as no doubt had been previously arranged, the

visitor alone with their niece. The young girl, seeing the snare that had been laid for her, and finding no means of escape, opened the window and threw herself from it, a height of three storeys, into the street. She was not killed, and was taken to the Lariboisière Hospital.

You may reply that France is not *very* Christian. Granted; but it is still a great deal too Christian for my taste. Moreover, France has taken kindly to a contrivance that has a tendency to banish all sentiment off the face of the globe, and to transfer a child's love for its mother to a wooden tub filled with boiling water. It may not be generally known that hatching-machines have recently been introduced in the Paris lying-in hospitals for the saving of infants prematurely born or otherwise deficient in vitality. The system appears to be eminently successful. The object of the machine is to supply the weak little things with the heat necessary to attain to strength and maturity. New-born babes, weighing from two to two and a-half pounds, instead of four and a-half pounds, the average weight, and which were condemned to early death, have been placed in these machines, and in a short time they have come out "strong and healthy." The apparatus is similar to the egg-hatching machine. It is in the form of a large wooden box, divided into two compartments; one is filled with warm water, and the other contains a basket lined with wadding, into which the infant is deposited. The lid is supplied with a glass pane to enable the movements of the little inmates to be watched. The machine is under the constant surveillance of a nurse, who reports to the medical director the various phases of incubation. Dr. Pinard, of the Lariboisière Hospital, and Dr. Tarnier, of the Maternité, have several of these machines working under their care at the present moment. So now, when certain parties are asked their parentage and antecedents, if they care to speak the truth, they will say: "We were

conceived in iniquity and hatched by machinery." It is more than questionable if a person prematurely born in a pauper hospital should be considered as having been born at all. What sort of citizen are we to expect from a skinless wretch in wadding, sucking ass' milk through an india-rubber tube, and mewling its misery beside a hatching tub?

It is not on record that the people of the Tonga sold their women till the "blessed Gospel" had got deeply implanted among them. The Gospel was, of course, accompanied by its inevitable concomitant, the gin: the lush entered Amatonga cheek for jowl with the litany. The Amatonga deputation was received only the other day by the Archbishop of Canterbury, when Mr. Grantham, the mouthpiece of the deputation, assured his Grace that "the state of the country was so bad that fathers were constantly pledging their daughters as security for debts for liquor." Paterfamilias pledging his Totty for an extra glass of toddy, his Betsy Sarah for a brandy and soda, and his Nancy for negus, is the new and improved Christian mode of buying wine with women. The "blessed Gospel" has, in the Tonga, made it possible for a woman to be made a commercial counter, like a bank-note. To such a lofty plane of fiscal enterprise has the knowledge of "Christ and 'im crucerfied" raised the poor heathen, and that knowledge has actually succeeded in "elevating" women into a tally for toddy. And, O God of heaven and earth, you look down and allow this Christian canker to go on with its devilish hypocrisy and drunkenness, and lust and robbery!

And, Lord God of Sabaoth, is this what we are coming to? One set of us is preaching and practising pre-natal infanticide, murdering infants that were fit to live; and another set has taken to hatching the foetus in tubs, and by devilish deftness insuring the life of infants *not* fit to live. And this is civilisation, including the

“elevation” of woman! We shall hear next of some one taking out a patent for *anthropoiesis*, or man-making, and of making an attempt to construct a Shakespeare out of smithy sparks and asses’ hoofs. This sort of thing makes me weary of the world—this repulsive materialistic utilitarianism—and makes me fain to lose myself, if I could, in the sublime theology of a Thomas Aquinas, or in that weird and mystical mixture of Erebus and Iris which is yclept Theosophy.

“Shall tongues be mute when deeds are wrought

Which well might shame extremest hell?

Shall freemen lock the indignant thought?

Shall Pity’s bosom cease to swell?

Shall honour bleed? Shall truth succumb?

Shall pen, and press, and sword be dumb?

* * * * *

By all above, around, below,

Be our indignant answer, No!”

CHAPTER XLV

Christian Drunkenness Contrasted with Mohammedan Sobriety—The Curse of Inebriety on Physiological, Social, and Domestic Life—Christian Arrogance in Attempting to Evangelise India—Christianity's Concomitants, Bible, Bayonet, Brandy, and Syphilis—Statistics of Christian and Buddhist Crime—British versus Sepoy Regiments—Hindoo Prostitutes Purchased with English Gold—Effects of Christianity in China—The Decline of Mission Funds—Appeal.

IN the Mohammedan settlements in Africa and elsewhere intoxicating liquors are unknown. Is this the case in any Christian settlement in any region of the globe? Take India, for instance. Samuel Smith, M.P., lately published a letter from an Indian resident which conveys a serious charge against the English Government, and calls for an early legislative reform. In order to increase the revenue, the Government is fostering the vice of drunkenness among its Indian subjects by the increased facilities allowed to the liquor traffic. The central distillery system has now given way to private stills, and liquor which once cost two shillings a bottle can now be purchased for twopence. In Bengal alone the excise revenue rose by this means in seven years from £600,000 to £1,000,000. A united memorial, signed by thousands of natives and hundreds of Europeans, has in some small way lessened the evil; but the Indian Government still does all it can to encourage the drink trade for revenue purposes. It is the old story. The Executive cares nothing who suffers, provided it

can raise a large revenue. It forms an unholy alliance with the liquor traffic for this purpose, and sacrifices tens of thousands of English and Indian subjects annually for the benefit of brewers and distillers. According to the *Hindoo Patriot*, in Surat there are 100,000 drunkards of the higher and the middle classes, of whom 14,000 are females. Of the lower classes there are 15,000 drunkards, of whom 4,000 are females. In Broach there are 8,000 drunkards, of whom 3,000 are females. Of the lower classes there are 15,000 drunkards, of whom 4,000 are women. At Baroda the number of drunkards among the higher and middle classes is 24,000, of whom 9,000 are women; the number of drunkards among the lower classes being not less than 10,000. At Ahmedabad there are 11,000 drunkards among the higher and middle classes of whom 2,200 are women; the number of drunkards among the lower classes being 16,000.

So much for Christian as contrasted with Mohammedan influence and auspices, as far as the consumption of intoxicating liquors is concerned. Did ever mortal man see the standard of morals high where drunkenness obtained? Where Bacchus is virtually the god was woman ever respected—aye, or man either? Man must be taught to respect himself before he can be taught to respect aught else. But when drink depraves his intellect and deadens his moral sentiment man cannot respect himself. A debased man never loved a pure and virtuous woman as she deserves to be loved. It is only a healthy physical and moral nature that is susceptible of all the joy which love can yield. If man is to be happy, woman is to be wooed, woman is to be won, and home is to be made joyous with the simple soul warmed only by the Promethean fire caught direct from God, and not by the crazed or dazed simulacrum of animation which is engendered of alcoholic stimulants.

Theory aside, from practical observation, I say advisedly that, if a girl is emulous of being a happy wife, and has only the two alternatives of marriage, she had better marry a sober beggar than a drunken prince. This complicated and mysterious machine, man, this harp of ten thousand strings, emits the sublimest music when it is pressed close to nature's simple bosom. Man is a clock which admits of no tampering with its hands, or its pendulum, or its works. You may try pranks upon it, and make it go double quick and strike two hours at once by deftly exploding inside it small charges of gunpowder. But no longer can the clock be relied upon to indicate the correct time. The intellect may be stimulated and the emotion intensified by the deft administration of intoxicants. But the heart and brain are thereby thrown out of gear. The clock that is wound up to go steadily for seventy years ceases to go steadily before half of that period has elapsed. The down is rubbed from the wing of the butterfly; the red has grown pale on the petal of the rose. Life is lovely if well and simply lived, with an honest purpose and a single-hearted endeavour; but when, by intemperance, the springs of being are tainted or poisoned the joyous luxury of living never returns; the thought is more or less clouded, the feeling more or less deadened; the glory and the rapture have passed away, the pure love and the simple faith and the luxury of living are known no more. The days come and the years draw nigh in which the man who has lived unwisely finds that he has no pleasure in them. A drunkard's home was never happy: you may as reasonably expect a happy hell. Christianity is the only drunken religion—at least, Christians are the only drunken religionists—that curse the world; and Christianity has “elevated” and purified and refined woman!

There is much wo and lamentation in Zion that the

Church does not lengthen her cords and strengthen her stakes in India. The Christian cannon has done much to push its way; but the Christian canon—and the Christian vicar for that part—has done little to plant the creed of the Bethlehem manger in the land where Brahma, through divine esoterics, promulgated ethics, and where, pregnant with the Buddha, Maya travailed and gave to the race of Man a leader whose veins pulsed with the blood of the race of God. India has done service as the heart of the globe, and has driven the red current of intellectual life, philosophical aspiration, and religious zeal to the remote fingers and toes of the universe. Assyria and Egypt and Persia and Greece and Rome lit their torches at the vestal fire on her altar and rushed with them down the Via Dolorosa of the ages, till they were burnt out in the shuddering night of Ruin. Go to Elephanta's awful caves, go to the temples of Holy Benares, and your eye rests upon the systole and the diastole and the cardiac valves of the mentation and sentiment of the planet called Earth.

And yet the least philosophical, the most vulgar, and the meanest religion that ever civilisation knew—a leprous bastard of India's royal line—goes to India to vanquish it! It is weak in itself; its legs are shambling with rickets, and its lying lips are fetid with cancers; but it is strong in the panoply of bigotry, imposture, fraud, greed, and self-assertive ignorance. The missionary, fanatical fool or lazy knave, armed with the Bible and the gin bottle, goes out from this commonplace and mushroom land of yesterday with superstitions for the occipital and purgatives for the abdominal viscera; and the gospel pedlar leads an easier, lazier, and *genteeler* life than he would do in sweeping crossings or selling cheese or mending boots at home. He goes to abolish and supersede a religion older and grander and more reverent than his, even as Westminster Abbey is

older and grander and more reverent than a Wesleyan's corrugated iron howling-house in Brixton. And he meets with the amount of success he deserves ; and, according to Canon Isaac Taylor,* the evangelists of the Camel-driver of Mecca make 70 proselytes for his 1.

And it is God's strongest evidence of his mercy to the human race that the faith of the Nazarene carpenter has ceased to succeed. Where "Christ and 'im crucerfied" goes bayonet goes, brandy goes, syphilis goes, and all the black items in the calendar of Crime. We have the testimony of contemporary chroniclers that, in the Church's infancy, Christ and Crime were nearly synonyms. And now, in the dotage and decrepitude of the same Church, Christianity and Criminality go hand-in-hand. That the European and Christian quarters of such cities as Calcutta, Canton, and Constantinople are far more immoral than the native quarters of these cities is a mere truism. As far as India is concerned, according to figures recently published under Christian auspices, thus stand the statistics of crime :—

Among Europeans in India	...	...	1 in	274
Among native Christians	...	...	1 in	699
Among Hindoos	...	...	1 in	1,361
Among Buddhists	...	...	1 in	3,784

Christians have such a convenient subterfuge of casting all their sins on Jesus that they seem to commit sins at such a tremendous rate as if it were their intention to try how many sins Jesus can bear without breaking his back. Their motto verily is, "Let Sin abound that Grace may much more abound !" Races and religionists who have no Jesus to throw their sins upon are taught by the deprivation not to sin so recklessly. Well might Professor Flint† have the honesty to admit : "Its [Chris-

* At Church Congress at Wolverhampton, 1887.

† In address to the Divinity students in Edinburgh University in 1887.

tianity's] gains from among educated Brahmins, Buddhists, and Mohammedans are few and slight; its losses from among the scientists and thinkers of Europe are many and serious. It is a far more urgent problem at present how to keep the leaders of thought in Germany, France, and Britain Christian than how to make those of Turkey, India, and China Christian, for we are certainly much more rapidly losing the former than gaining the latter." Indeed, it is doubtful if now in all Europe there is an intellect of the first order on the side of Jesus of Nazareth. Ignorance and Salvation Armyism are yet on his side, mental lethargy is yet on his side, moral cowardice is yet on his side, and salaried self-interest is yet on his side. And yet this age, when in Europe's strongest brain, when in Europe's most heroic heart, Christianity is dead, is the very age in which the position of woman is more exalted than it has ever been since Christianity began.

Let us see how far Christianity in India has tended to elevate woman and purify the social and domestic relations. In the Indian native regiments every soldier must be permitted to marry. Even the tyranny of their conquerors finds it impossible to resist the Sepoy's determination to marry and to have his wife with him. In the Christian regiments in India very few of the soldiers are permitted to have a wife. A Christian regiment marches from one station to another accompanied by, say, two dozen wives and three hundred harlots—harlots paid for by the Christian ratepayers in England here; paid for by men who go to church to thank God that they are not as other men, neither as these poor heathen; men who expect their wives to be chaste and their daughters virtuous while they provide the funds to induce other men's wives and daughters to expose their persons for sale on the shambles of military lechery. It is thus Christianity "elevates" woman.

It is thus she guards chastity in thought, word, and deed by mixing up the soldier's wife with the soldier's courtesan, while she proclaims the Gospel of peace and goodwill from the hoarse throat of the cannon and from the sharp lips of the sword.

When our troops are in the field the Archbishop of Canterbury works for his £15,000 a year by drawing up a special form of prayer that tens of thousands of men may be huddled into red graves, and that nations may be blighted with widows and orphans and misery. This prayer of gore and rapine is whined from every church in the land. The savage piety of the Bible is in vogue. The Queen's Printer has a license to print the Bible, and he has a contract from Her Majesty's Stationery Office to print for the Horse Guards certain schedules. When a British regiment in India moves from one station to another these schedules are in use. This schedule leaves spaces in which the different requirements of the regiment are to be filled in. For instance, at the top of one column is "Provisions," another "Horses," another "Fodder," another "*Prostitutes*," all printed by the Queen's Printer, "by Her Majesty's most gracious command." The number of prostitutes the regiment requires is filled in by the surgeon; and, if the specified number be not readily obtained, procuresses are sent out to recruit for heathen victims to Christian lust, and to lure from the daughters of the Orient that which is above all price, with the glitter of English gold. In a Christian regiment the prostitute is as indispensable as the chaplain, and the brothel as essential as the church. This is the way we "elevate" woman. How unspeakable are the blessings of a free Gospel and an open Bible, and how inestimable the merit of Cant and the virtue of Hypocrisy!

So much for India's introduction to and acquaintance with Christianity and Christians! Can we wonder that

the Bible does not succeed in the land of the Uphanishad and the Vedas? Can we wonder that the Brahmin and the Buddhist and the Mohammedan and the Jew, with one particle of brain in his head, with one spark of soul in his breast, refuses to enter the Christian fold?

O where is the Eternal Influence that maketh for Righteousness that we may lay our hands on our hearts in earnest thankfulness that Humanity bids fair to live and that the Creeds bid fair to die! Well might the husband, or the lover, or the brother of India's dusky daughter exclaim with the Roman of old:—

“Spare us the unutterable wrong,
The inexpiable shame,
That turns the coward's heart to steel,
The coward's blood to flame,
Lest, having tasted of our hate,
Ye taste of our despair,
And learn by proof in some wild hour
How much the wretched dare.”

England, do you wonder that India has struggled to shatter the irons with which you have loaded her limbs, and that, to rivet the broken fetters, ye had to dance with Death at Delhi, to fight the fight of devils at Lucknow, and to rush on the fire of hell at Cawnpore over hills of corpses, the air black with smoke and rent with yells, and the streets slippery with brains and blood!

Turn we from the land of Sakyamuni to that of Confucius, and the result is the same; the native morals, sexual and general, are higher than those introduced by Christian Europeans. “In China,” writes a Christian lady, “we English rule in Hong Kong. And what spectacle does this little foothold won to Christendom present to the heathen? Sir John Pope Hennessey, the Governor, was suggesting not long ago to a wealthy Chinese, puzzled what to do with one of his sons, that he might place him in a bank in Hong Kong. ‘I could

not answer it to my conscience,' replied the Chinese ; ' Hong Kong is a sink of iniquity.' In Hong Kong the English Government not only license women of bad life in the Queen's name, '*for the use of Europeans only* ;' but, again, in the Queen's name, licenses houses of ill-fame, drawing therefrom a yearly revenue of about 50,000 dollars. Once, the keepers of these houses, which are officially ordered to have large numbers over their doors and lanterns hung out over them, so that they may be easily known, struck *work*. They were immediately ordered to light their lanterns and go on as usual, or the English Government would open houses of ill-fame on its own account. And what do we find in China is the state of Christianity ? At the end of the last century there are said to have been about a million Christians in China. Now, in spite of all subsequent missionary effort and the increase in population, there are only about 400,000. A Chinese of high position, whose family had been Christian for generations, said to Sir John Pope Hennessey : ' You do not know how difficult it is to bear up against the insults cast upon Christianity because of the opium and the legalised vice you English force upon us.' For, in China, Christianity is known as ' the English religion.' They see the English among them, for the most part, leading unchaste lives, and the laws making provision for their vices and drawing revenue therefrom."

The great Foundling Hospital on the east of Canton City collects and takes in castaway babies in large numbers, mostly girls. After nursing them for a short time, the institution sells out these little ones at a good profit. They used to be sold to respectable natives, who either adopted them or made them domestic slaves, the price varying from ten dollars to twenty dollars ; but now twice that sum can be got from crimps, who take them to Hong Kong and elsewhere, to be exported for the

vilest purposes. Thus works the great god Mammon, the real Jehovah of the Christian creed. The girls from the Foundling Hospital were formerly disposed of to Confucians for domestic service ; but it now pays better to dispose of them to Christians for purposes of infamy. And it is to promote this sort of thing, to foist upon the world a degrading superstition, associated, most likely wrongfully, with the name of a Galilean carpenter of some 2,000 years ago, that hectic appeals are made at Exeter Hall, and that begging ladles and plates are rattled importunately at our noses in church. And English women contribute in the well-meaning feebleness of their heads and the loving-kindness of their hearts. They contribute to the mission that their as yet innocent sisters in foreign lands may be initiated into the science of impurity and the art of harlotry, that lanterns and big figures over certain doors may attract the debauchee to where money may purchase the embrace which only love should win.

But, in this gloomy hour of superstitious ignorance, there is an omen of a better time. A cloud larger than the Tishbite of old beheld on the horizon gives cheering and hope to us who would save the world in the world's own bitter despite. The gold that supported the Christian menials who ruin "the poor heathen" is at last becoming dim. Canon Scott Robertson has completed his annual summary of British contributions to foreign mission work, and finds that for the year 1886 the British Isles contributed less by £33,237 to foreign missionary work than they did for 1885. The total for 1886 was £1,195,714. Of this amount, £486,082 was contributed through Church of England societies ; £193,617 through unsectarian or joint societies ; £330,128 through Nonconformist societies ; £177,184 through Scotch and Irish Presbyterian societies, and £8,703 through Roman Catholic societies. This is

poor cheer to the canting gospel hireling; but to the world at large it is glad tidings of great joy.

O women of England, leave the missionary impostor and sponge to do honest work for honest bread, and leave alone your far-off sisters on the banks of the Ho-an-Ho and the Ganges. What about your poor sisters at home, toiling, struggling, agonising to keep soul and body together, and to preserve their honour even in Destitution's Valley of the Shadow of Death? What about your brothers who, with gladness of heart, would apply their hard hands to the implements of honest toil, but who can find neither work nor bread, and who sleep on the flagstones of Trafalgar Square, in the cold heart of the Great City, with the blurred moon and stars looking down upon them through the mists—upon their hunger and rags and misery?

CHAPTER XLVI.

The Nearer the Present Hour we Estimate the Position of Woman, the Better for Christianity—A Child Played for at Cards—A Woman Sells her Husband for Dissection—Christian Raffling for Young Women in Calcutta—Suttee versus a Wife's Second Marriage—Mortality of Wives in the Fens of Kent and Essex—"At his Tenth Wife"—Marrying Wives as a Means of Living—"Laid there on the top of twenty murdered women 'in the sure and certain hope of a glorious resurrection.'"

IN my impeachment of the Christian faith for its sins of omission and commission against the purity and dignity of woman, it may be urged that I deal too largely with current and present-day instances of impurity and degradation. If I lay inordinate stress upon the depravity of the present hour, it is so much the better for Christianity. It is, I repeat, because Christianity is dying that the respect for woman and her social and domestic position are as high as they are. The further I might choose to go back, the worse would it be for the faith which bears the name of the Nazarene. I need not go as far back as the ages when the English landlords reared girls on their estates, just as they might rear calves now, that they might export them to the continent and sell them for purposes at the bare contemplation of which one is almost ashamed to acknowledge himself a member of the human race. I refrain to go so far back as to the records of the time when the noble, too lazy to get up and go to chapel, was wont to have the priest to come

to his bedside and tell him about "the blessed Jesus," even as he lay there in the arms of his mistress whom Christianity had so sanctified and "elevated." This ministration at the bedside is the sort of thing a *poor* priest will do; he is a sneaking, venal pander; and a *rich* priest is too often an arrogant, irreligious, and lascivious tyrant, as the record of the pontiffs and cardinals can testify.

Let us go back no farther than the last century. Whenever we turn up the sources in which social manners are likely to be recorded, items like the following stare us in the face :—

"In October, 1735, a child of James and Elizabeth Leesh, of Chester-le-Street, in the county of Durham, *was played for at cards*, at the sign of the 'Salmon,' one game, four shillings against the child, by Henry and John Trotter, Robert Thomson, and Thomas Ellison, which was won by the latter, and delivered to them accordingly."*

But the hireling advocate of a baleful superstition would probably pretend that he saw the five of diamonds and the ace of spades shed "a halo of sacred innocence" over the life of this child of James and Elizabeth Leesh.

Norfolk was Christian as far back as last century, and here is a specimen transaction of one of Norfolk's "elevated" women :—

"On October 17th, 1736, a man and his wife at Rushal, in Norfolk, 'had some words;' the man went out and hanged himself. The coroner's inquest found it 'self-murder,' and ordered him to be buried in the cross-ways; but his wife sent for a surgeon, and sold the body for half a guinea. The surgeon feeling about the body, the wife said, 'He is fit for your purpose; he is as fat as butter.' The deceased was thereupon put into a

* Syke's "Local Records," p. 79.

sack, with his legs hanging out, and, being thrown upon a cart, conveyed to the surgeon's."*

How glorious it is to live in a Christian land, and under the influences of the gospel dispensation ! Nothing but Christianity could have "elevated" that woman to sell her hanged husband for 10s. 6d. ; nothing but Christianity could have cast "a halo of sacred innocence" round his legs as they dangled out of the sack.

Here is a specimen of the manner in which Christian Europeans taught "the poor heathen" of Calcutta how to "elevate" and how to cast the "halo of sacred innocence round the tender life of the child :"—

"ADVERTISEMENT.

"Be it known that SIX FAIR PRETTY YOUNG LADIES, with *two sweet and engaging young children*, lately imported from Europe, having roses of health blooming on their cheeks and joy sparkling in their eyes, possessing amiable manners, and highly accomplished, whom the most indifferent cannot behold without expressions of rapture, are to be RAFFLED FOR next door to the British gallery. Scheme : *Twelve tickets* at twelve rupees each ; the highest of the three throws, doubtless, takes the most fascinating," etc.†

How the poor Hindoo must have called out for the space of three hours, "Great is Jehovah, the God of the Christians !" How inestimable the privileges of which these Hindoos were made partakers ! I trust they were truly grateful for being advised of the sublime fact that a man lived three days in a whale's belly, and for the ennobling spectacle of a raffle for women ! They would get some drink, too, to wash down the sublime fact of this elevating spectacle ; for in Christian London, in that age, several tavern sign-boards bore the divine

* *Gentleman's Magazine*, 1736.

† Communicated from a Calcutta newspaper of September 3rd, 1818, to Hone's "Every Day Book" for 1827.

legend : "*Drunk for a penny. Dead drunk for two-pence. Clean straw for nothing.*"*

The Hindoos had heard of suttee ; and the devoted wife had, with sublime devotion, flung herself upon her dead husband's funeral pyre. This stern, grim heroism of immolation in the Brahminical wife comes out in sublime contrast against the venal brutality of the Christian wife, who, with fiendish pleasantry, sold her husband's yet warm corpse for 10s. 6d. It has occurred to me that the supremest dregs of bitterness in the cup of Fate would be to look up from hell or down from heaven and see her who so often lay in your bosom now lying on the bosom of another—one who has sold your books and taken down your picture from the wall, but who wears your watch and sleeps with your wife. I have more sympathy with the voluntary suttee than I have with the involuntary raffle.

In Christian England, with its "open Bible," if you were a lazy, half-animated lout, that could soar to the dignified effort of pulling your forelock to the parson and the squire, it would have been advantageous to you to have been born in the fens of Kent or Essex. It would not have been necessary for you to have had more brain power than an ordinary calf ; but it would be necessary that you should go to the church regularly, and that you should be greedy for money, and have about the amount of sentiment that falls to the lot of a cod-fish. Then, in a country in which Christianity has "elevated" woman, you could make yourself passing rich by marrying in succession some eighteen or twenty wives. You could live by marrying them, going about all day with your hands in your pockets, marrying being your only occupation and source of income. Pity that, in the interests of the Christian respect for woman and

* *Gentleman's Magazine*, 1736.

the sanctities of home, the fens have now to a great extent been drained and are much more salubrious than they formerly were ! A letter to a London journal of last century* will show how of old the saintly game was played by the Bluebeards of the fens. Here is the letter :—

“SIR,—Nothing but that unaccountable variety of life which my stars have imposed upon me could have apologised for my taking a journey to the fens of Essex. Few strangers go into those scenes of desolation, and fewer still, I find, return from thence, as you shall hear.

“When I was walking one morning between two of the banks which restrain the waters in their proper bounds I met one of the inhabitants, a tall, emaciated figure, with whom I entered into conversation. We talked concerning the manners and peculiarities of the place, and I condoled with him very pathetically on his forlorn and meagre appearance. He gave me to understand, however, that his case was far from being so desperate as I seemed to apprehend it, for that he had never looked better since he buried the first of his nine wives.

“‘Nine wives !’ rejoined I, eager and astonished ; ‘have you buried nine wives ?’

“‘Yes,’ replied the fen-man, ‘and I hope to bury nine more.’

“‘Bravissimo !’ This was so far from allaying my astonishment that it increased it. I then begged him to explain the miraculous matter, which he did in the following words :—

“‘Lord, master,’ said he ; ‘we people in the fens here be such strange creatures that there be no creatures like us. We be like fish, or water-fowl, or others ; for we be able to live where other folks would die sure enough.’

“He then informed me that to reside in the fens was

a certain and quick death to people who had not lived among them ; that therefore, when any of the fen-men wanted a wife, they went into the upland country for one ; and that, after they had carried her down among the fens, she never survived long ; that after her death they went to the uplands for another, who also died ; then ‘another, and another, and another,’ for they all followed each other as regular as the change of the moon ; that by these means some ‘poor fellows’ had picked up a good living, and collected together from the whole a little snug fortune ; he himself had made more money this way than he ever could do by his labour, for that he was now at his tenth wife, and she could not possibly stand it out above three weeks longer ; that these proceedings were very equitable, for such girls as were born among themselves they sent into the uplands to get husbands, and that, in exchange, they took their young women as wives ; that he never knew a better custom in his life, and that the only comfort he ever had against the ill-nature and caprice of women was the fens. This woman-killer then concluded with desiring me, if I had a wife with whom I was not over head and ears in love, to bring her to his house, and it would kill her as effectually as any doctor in Christendom could do. This offer I waved, for you know, sir, that (thank God) I am not married.”

But in those fens the spires of the Church of Christ pointed to the sky. The parsons of those churches married the young women from adjoining counties to the marsh-boors and to Death. There was all the Prayer-Book cant anent marriage being “an excellent mystery” and “whom God hath joined let no man put asunder.” “Till death do us part” must surely have been uttered with a sardonic laugh or a Satanic leer. And when, at length, the husband was laid in the grave upon the top of his eighteen or twenty wives whom he

had virtually and knowingly *murdered* the Christian parson would twaddle with the usual complacence about his being laid there on the top of the twenty murdered women "in the sure and certain hope of a glorious resurrection." So much for the hollow mockery which finds its expression in clerical cant.

CHAPTER XLVII.

“Elevated” Women in Ireland and Scotland—Widow Kennedy and her Seven Orphans—Report of the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children—Touching a Blind Girl’s Hand with a Red-hot Poker “for Fun”—Insured for £7, and Killed to Secure that Amount—Heaven Gets an Angel and the Parents Get £7—Canting and Profitable Hypocrisy—The Mother and her Eight Murdered Children—The Result of England Possessing a Higher Christian Civilisation than Hungary.

BUT we are improving as we get along. We have drained the fens, and the women are likely enough now to outlive their husbands. And, when the wives of the poor outlive their husbands, the grave and hell would often be an improvement upon the hut and earth. The parson prefers to exercise his calling amid pianos and mirrors and the rustle of silken skirts. He leaves Christianity in the abstract to “elevate” the victim of hunger and rags and dirt. Jehovah gets the credit of being exceedingly generous to the widow and the fatherless, if they will only take the trouble to pray to him and give him an inkling of what they want and of what they would really like to be at. Leave England out altogether : Ireland is a pious, Papist country, and a tough hand at praying ; and yet Ireland to-day contains thousands of widows and orphans whom God seems to have forgotten, and to whom death would be a relief and the churchyard a welcome rest. Scotland is a pious Protestant country, and an exceedingly tough hand at praying ; yet

here is a specimen widow and seven orphans among the Scotch crofter folk. A special correspondent in Lewis* writes :—

“In a black hut, some three hundred yards from the Harris Road, Widow Donald Kennedy lives with her seven orphans. There is no furniture, and when the rain descends the straw roof does not prove a formidable barrier. In its way, there is in reality only one bed, because the miserable shake-down cannot be described by that term. Until November, Widow Kennedy received the magnificent sum of 7s. a month from the Parochial Board for the maintenance of herself and her seven children. Since November that sum has been reduced to 4s., and she is asked to clothe and feed herself and orphans with this. She has found this 4s., no matter how economical she may be, to be utterly inadequate even to keep the bodies and souls of herself and the little ones together. The Inspector was apprised of the fact, but Widow Kennedy is still allowed to literally starve. I am confident that, unless the Board or some kind of friend will come to her, she and her children must die for want of food. There are no blankets in the house. I saw some old canvas and bags in which the children were happed; but there were no blankets. Her eldest boy, who is seventeen years of age, and in delicate health, sleeps with his mother and two other children at the foot of the bed. The others sleep on a shake-down with their bodily clothing on; and, if the night is cold, as most nights here are in winter, they hover and creep like dogs round the peat fire. The poor widow, at the request of one of the Relief Committee, brought her children outside the hovel. Some of them were literally naked, except a piece of canvas which covered the upper portion of their body.”

* Of the *North British Daily Mail*.

What think ye of that Christian widow's "elevation" and of the "halo of sacred innocence round the tender lives" of her seven orphan children?

Archdeacon Farrar and the members of the Church in lavender kids cannot be expected to order their carriage and drive to a Pullman car that they may visit these seven orphans away among the far pcats and heather and mist. But London is not so far away as Lewis. Cannot Archdeacon Farrar get out of the cloisters of the abbey and take a look at London before he ventures to break forth into silken rhapsodies about haloes of sacred innocence? In an introduction to the third annual report of the London Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children, the Baroness Burdett-Coutts advocates the claims of that organisation for help in its attempts to cope with a terrible state of things.

"In the third year's experience of the Society," says the report, "the ways of morbid and merciless men have landed 258 cases of various kinds of cruelty to children in the hands of the Society, involving the miseries, more or less, of 899 children." The variety of cruelty which the Committee has published and tried to punish is as follows:—Strapping a deaf and dumb boy, because it was so extremely difficult to make him understand; drawing a red-hot poker before the eyes of a blind girl and touching her hands with it (this was done by her brother, but in the presence of the parents, and for fun); after beating, locking-up for the night in a coal-cellar with rats; immersing a dying boy in a tub of cold water for nearly an hour "to get this dying done;" breaking a girl's arm while beating her with a broomstick, then setting her to scrub the floor with the broken arm folded to her breast, and whipping her for being so long about it; hanging a naked boy by tied hands from a hook at the ceiling, there flogging him; savagely beating with loin-belt, felling with fists, and

then kicking in the groin, on the abdomen, and face with working boots; lashing a three-year-old face and neck with drayman's whip; a three-year-old back beaten with whalebone riding-whip; throttling a boy, producing partial strangulation, to stop his screams of pain; beating on scarcely-healed old sores, then thrusting the knob of a poker into the lad's throat, and holding it there "to stop the row."

The analysis of the 258 cases is as follows:—131 injuries caused by blows and beatings; 22 deliberate starvation; 26 thoughtless neglect; 22 drunkard's children sent out into the streets to get money, naked and hungry; 14 children deserted; 17 various; 6 manslaughter. Cases of starvation have been of two kinds: (1) absolute indifference as to what happens to the child; (2) deliberate intention to kill it. The first class is of workers locking up children in rooms the whole day, often foodless and fireless. Others are of fathers and mothers off on mere drinking-bouts. Here is a case of another class. When found the child sat in the passage on the bare oilcloth, alone, hungry and cold, shivering and ill, in nothing but its nightgown. It was the depth of winter; a thorough draught ran from the front door to the back. On the other side of the door opening into the passage was a room with a fire, and a breakfast-table spread, and that child's mother sitting at it, eating a meal of hot coffee, frizzled bacon, and bread. The child had been deliberately excluded from the food and the warmth. When brought downstairs it had been placed and left where it was by that mother. She had then gone in to her own breakfast, and shut the door. The child could not get up, could not even stand. It was five years old, *and insured for £7*. In another case which the Society found out—too late—the little victim had become a dried-up five-year-old skeleton, with two black bruises on its brow. Months of feeble moanings

had preceded death. To one neighbour, who had gone into the house unasked and unwanted, it was explained, and others testified, that the child was "in a decline." It was alone upstairs, without food or water. She begged to be allowed to go to it and nurse it ; but permission was declined. At the sound of its father's footsteps on the stairs, she observed that the moans immediately subsided. He called it "a little devil" for attracting neighbours. What happened upstairs nobody knows. But when dead the child had two bruises on its brow. The man and his wife await their trial. The committee find that this cruelty is wholly independent of surroundings and wages. "It is the work of haters of children ; of cultivators of sullen, pitiless, intolerant dispositions towards them ; of men whom there is no pleasing. The father of one boy took refreshments twice before he had done beating the lad. Another sent his child upstairs to strip, and, before following her to inflict his tortures, lay down on the sofa. He was too tired then to proceed to his work. The child meanwhile flung herself out of the window, and was taken up dead."

That red-hot poker drawn before the blind girl's eyes is a brilliant specimen of the "halo of sacred innocence;" and that said red-hot poker drawn across her naked hand would no doubt vividly impress her with a sense of the privilege of being born in a Christian land, and in a city blessed by the ministrations of the Rev. Archdeacon Farrar.

To breed children and insure their lives, and then kill them to get the insurance, is a peculiarly Christian policy, which is not mentioned by either the solemn croakers or the lightsome mountebanks of the pulpit. "Suffer little children to come unto me" the reputed son of God is reputed to have said. Does this son of God, who liveth forever and ever, take note of how many of the children who come unto him have been

begotten for the very purpose of having their lives insured? He gets an angel, and the parents get seven pounds or more; and I trust both he and the parents are satisfied.

The Baroness Burdett-Coutts and her Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children should be suppressed in the interests of the polished and optimist platitudes the Christian priesthood delight in enunciating. The polite and genteel and devout tendency is to suppress all reference to anything that would lead ourselves or others to infer that we are not a race of saints, and that the best precepts of the Lord Jesus Christ have not taken deep root in our hearts, to bring forth peace and purity and holiness in our lives. But this pestilent Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children plays havoc with Archdeacon Farrar's "halo of sacred innocence," and gives us in lieu the lurid flicker of infernal wickedness. The Society has put its finger upon the miseries of 899 children. How many hundreds or thousands more cases of cruelty and torture have escaped the Society's vigilance? If the Society go on as it is going, Archdeacon Farrar will have to write a new and revised "Life of Christ," and the Church will feel compelled to abandon its canting and profitable hypocrisy and admit that 1800 years of "the blessed gospel" leave under the thin surface of cant and sham the deep abysses revelled in by a race of demons, of fathers turned into brutes, mothers into fiends, and children into tortured Damians.

Do I write extravagantly on the subject? Nay, I do not; and I could not even if I would. Under the auspices of this noble but Christianity-accusing Society, the jury at the Derbyshire Quarter Sessions recently* returned a verdict of "Guilty"

* January 4th, 1888.

against Alice Clay, wife of a veterinary surgeon at Cromford, for inflicting grievous bodily harm on her daughter in August, 1884. A servant named Riley, who was in the service of the prisoner at the time, said she heard the child, aged about six, screaming, and went into the bedroom, where she found Mrs. Clay just putting down the poker, which was hot. She afterwards found bits of flesh adhering to the poker. The child was evidently in great pain, and was taken to the nursery, where witness shortly after found Mrs. Clay beating her with a whip. She afterwards found the child blistered between the legs (*the whole of the evidence cannot be published*), and she had weals on the arms and body. It was proved by medical evidence that the child had many bruises and scars, and was permanently injured. The jury recommended the prisoner to mercy on account of the lapse of time and in consideration for her family. The chairman, Sir W. Evans, in sentencing her to six months' hard labour, said she had been guilty of a horrible and atrocious crime, and, if it had not been for the recommendation of the jury, the sentence would have been twelve months. The prisoner fainted, and was carried from the court. This Mrs. Clay's name is not on the subscription list of the *Secular Review*. She had the vaunted "open Bible" in her home, but no copy of the execrated "God and His Book." To Archdeacon Farrar and his Church belong "the halo of sacred innocence" which her red-hot poker described and the hell-marks which it branded into the tender flesh of her child.

They have no Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children in Hungary ; but, being an exceedingly Christian country, it is, of course, sorely in need of some such Society. I draw attention to only one straw on the surface which will show the direction in which the river flows. A woman of Csoka, from being strongly pious,

became intensely pious, and resolved to join a super-devout sect known as the Nazarenes. As the prelude to joining this sect, she went to see one of the priests residing at Zenta. Proselytes have, upon joining the Nazarenes, to make a full confession of their past sins extending over their whole lives. That of the new convert ran thus: "I have had eight children, and have killed them all. My first, a boy, named Victor, born in 1874, was four months old when he died. Another was born in 1879. I forget what we called him; but he did not live more than a few days. On February 29th, 1880, I had twins—Peter and Rosa. I killed them a week after their birth. My daughter Juliana was born April 11th, 1881, and was dead two days later. Agnes, of whom I was confined on March 29th, 1882, also lived only a few days. On May 5th, 1883, I again had twins: one was still-born, and I killed the other a month afterwards. My last child came in May, 1884. I disposed of it in two days. I poisoned all my children with a decoction of poppies. They were all previously baptised. I did not want any children. My husband knew nothing of what I had done. I lived on bad terms with him, and wanted to vex him." The confession somehow reached the ears of the police, and, instead of joining the Nazarenes, the murderess was safely lodged in prison, where she voluntarily and calmly repeated the ghastly details of her criminal career.*

This truly pious woman in Hungary does not seem to have taken the precaution of insuring the lives of her eight children. The Lord who looks on and tolerates all this has got his angels—they were all baptised; but the mother has not got her £56, which she might have had for insuring her doomed babies at only £7 a piece. But in Hungary they apparently attend only to the King-

* *Daily Telegraph*, January 14th, 1888.

dom of God and His Righteousness, while in England they attend to the Kingdom of God and His Righteousness *plus* the Insurance Office. But, then, England boasts of the resources of a higher Christian civilisation than exists in Hungary. That makes the difference. And so the times go on, playing the hurdy-gurdy of Guilt to the dance of Sham.

CHAPTER XLVIII.

Pro Aris et Focis—*The One Saint, and One Cherub—Allan Cunningham's "Bridal Song"—Uxorial Infidelity—From the Empress Theodora to Mrs. Edward Parmelee—An Episode of Shame and Death—"Cant about Christ Overshadows and Covers all this Foulness."*

I WHO write have trodden much in the highways and much in the bye-ways marked by the feet of mortal man ; and I solemnly announce it as the result of my experience that, if happiness is not to be found in wedded love, it is to be found nowhere on earth. *Pro aris et focis* was the watchword of the noblest race of men that ever left their impress upon this globe with the glory of their art and the splendour of their arms ; and *Pro aris et focis*, uttered or unexpressed, is yet, in every realm, the watchword of the good and great. Take care of the hearth, and the altar will take care of itself. The hearth is an altar, and pure devotion to it is worship of the highest God. I believe in the trinity—not in the juggle of theologians, but in the sacred trinity of Father, Mother, and Child, one and indivisible. When these three are one—one in aspiration, one in sentiment, one in interest, one in love—the home, however humble, is a temple of the Most High. Irrespective of creed or no creed, there religion is, the purest, the sublimest, the religion that finds its expression in right conduct, in mutual affection, and not in prayer or psalm.

I know one saint and one alone : he is the man who, after a generation of married life, can truly say :

“As a husband and a father I have done my duty : my wife and I have grown old together, but we have never yet had a quarrel.” I know one goddess and one alone : she is the wife virtuous in deed and pure in heart, who has never given her husband a moment’s pain,* and who, through abundance and through want, through joy and through sorrow, in sickness and in health, has brought up her sons and daughters in the light of a father’s advice, sanctified with the sanction of a mother’s love. I know one cherub and one alone : the child of a father and mother untainted in body and pure in soul. I take that child tenderly on my knee, and see in it the future hope and promise of the race : in its incipient hands lie the fulcrum that will move the globe and the keys of heaven and hell.

Our poets have, from immemorial time, sung of youthful love with its sighs and kisses in the moonlight under the myrtle bough or the hawthorn shade. But I remember of only one bard who has attuned his lyre with faithful tenderness to his wife stricken in years. That bard is the old favourite of my boyhood, Allan Cunningham. As his “Bridal Song” is not nearly so well known as it deserves to be, I make no apology for quoting it here. I am not alone in admiring its Wordsworthian simplicity and Burns-like pathos ; Mrs. Hemans, in a letter to the author, pronounced it “beautiful” :—

“Oh, my love’s like the steadfast sun,
Or streams that deepen as they run ;
Nor hoary hairs, nor forty years,
Nor moments between sighs and tears,
Nor nights of thought, nor days of pain,
Nor dreams of glory dream’d in vain ;

* Ἡπερ μεγιστὴ γέγνεται σότηρια,
Ὅταν πυνή προς ἀνδρα μηδισοσταρη.

—*Euripides.*

Nor mirth, nor sweetest song that flows
 To sober joys and soften woes,
 Can make my heart or fancy flee
 One moment, my sweet wife, from thee.

“E'en when I muse I see thee sit
 In maiden bloom and matron wit ;
 Fair, gentle as when first I sued,
 Ye seem, but of sedater mood ;
 Yet my heart leaps as fond for thee
 As, when beneath Arbigland tree,
 We stay'd and woo'd, and thought the moon
 Set on the sea an hour too soon,
 Or linger'd 'mid the falling dew,
 When looks were fond and words were few.

“ Though I see smiling at thy feet
 Five sons and one fair daughter sweet,
 And time and care and birthtime woes
 Have dimm'd thine eye and touched thy rose,
 To thee and thoughts of thee belong
 Whate'er charms me in tale or song.
 When words descend like dews unsought,
 With gleams of deep enthusiast thought,
 And fancy in her heaven flies free,
 They come, my love, they come from thee.

“ O, when more thought we gave of old
 To silver than some give to gold,
 'Twas sweet to sit and ponder o'er
 How we should deck our humble bower :
 'Twas sweet to pull in hope with thee
 The golden fruit of Fortune's tree ;
 And sweeter still to choose and twine
 A garland for that brow of thine :
 A song-wreath which may grace my Jean,
 While rivers flow and woods grow green.

“ At times there come, as come there ought,
 Grave moments of sedater thought,
 When Fortune frowns, nor lends our night
 One gleam of her inconstant light ;
 And hope that decks the peasant's bower
 Shines like a rainbow through the shower :

O then I see, while seated nigh,
A mother's heart shine in thine eye,
And proud resolve and purpose meek
Speak of thee more than words can speak.
I think this wedded wife of mine
The best of all things not divine."

But, alas, all through Christendom there are abundant instances where women are fiends and where home is hell. Christianity is powerless to restrain uxorial infidelity—nay, more, as I have shown elsewhere,* the practice of auricular confession has done much to foster it.

And where woman is unfaithful to her noblest trust, and man feels the cable broken which was attached to the anchor of his soul sure and steadfast, there is bitterness and woe and misery such as neither loss of riches, the ruin of reputation, nor the deadliest slings and arrows of outrageous fortune can compass. The well-springs of life are poisoned at their fountain: where there was the fragrance of lilies there is the venom of asps, the sun is blotted from the meridian of day and the moon from the arch of night, and love and aspiration and hope are lost in hatred and abandonment and despair. On a wide ocean filled with the bitterness of the waters of Marah the barque of life drifts shattered and rudderless. She who was all, she who was selected from the teeming millions of the women of the world to lay her head on your bosom, to know the deepest secrets of your heart, to be the object of the holiest passions of your soul, and to convey the honour of your blood and name to conquests yet undreamt of and to ages yet unborn, has proved false; then misery has no deeper abyss, and suffering no more terrible agony. The grave may not close over its willing prey, the years

* "The Confessional, Romish and Anglican: An Exposure."

may roll on ; but a cloud has darkened the sun, and the pale and pure white roses of life have lost their lustre and fragrance forever.

“ Oh, glorious youth that once was mine,
 Oh, high ideal, all in vain !
 Ye enter at this ruined shrine,
 Whence worship ne'er shall rise again :
 The bat, the owl, inhabit here,
 The snake rests on the altar stone,
 The sacred vessels moulder near,
 The image of the God is gone !”

In this land which the Gospel of Christ has had so many centuries to sanctify with its influence there is a wealth of social crime more ineffably horrible, if not so fiendishly cruel, as is the insuring of children for a few pounds apiece and compassing their death in order to secure the sum for which their lives are insured. The lasciviousness of matrons is an even more revolting subject than the interested murder of children. Whatever Christianity may have done, it has certainly not abolished uxorial infidelity. In the ninth century the pious Empress Theodora held up to all subsequent Christian ages an example which only too many wives have emulated, but which, perhaps, none has, as yet, excelled. Theodora was a supremely beautiful and exceptionally lascivious courtesan, in spite of her belief in the Nazarene and her saintly intercourse with his monks. Every night she prostituted her person—of unrivalled beauty though it was—to acquaintances and strangers promiscuously, irrespective of age, physical attraction, or social rank. All were received and welcome who ministered to the desires of this lady of imperial status and more than imperial charms. Over all the divorce courts, over all the intervening millions of unfaithful but Christian wives, we will vault from the ninth century to the nineteenth, from Constantinople to New York, from Theodora, the

Empress of the East, to Mrs. Edward Parmelee, a society lady and leader of fashion in the West. Mrs. Parmelee was a woman whose great wealth, social graces, and distinguished family connections made her a prominent figure in the highest circles of American society.

About four o'clock on Saturday afternoon* a lady, accompanied by a tall man of distinguished appearance, called at a house in West Twenty-eighth Street, and were conducted to a suite of luxurious apartments by Madame Rosie Fisher, a noted *demi-mondaine*. Two hours later a man came rushing downstairs, and, exclaiming, "My friend is dying; I will go for a doctor," hurried from the house. From that moment to this no one has done anything more than guess at his identity. The physician, summoned by the frightened inmates of the house, reached the side of the stricken woman. He found her in the last throes of heart disease. An octoroon, the maid of one of Madame Fisher's women, was bathing the dying woman's face with brandy, and told the doctor that she had begged but a few minutes before to be dressed and carried into the street to die. She had implored them with sobs not to let her be found there. Even while the octoroon was urging the doctor to use desperate means to enable the woman to be taken out of the house of shame, the patient, after making a supreme effort to rise from the couch, expired in great agony. The refined beauty of her face, the delicate texture of her clothing, which lay scattered about the room, and the extravagant quality of the jewellery with which her person and dress were adorned, all showed the heroine of this wretched story to be some one belonging to the highest rank of life. Meanwhile the people who surrounded the death-bed of the mysterious stranger awaited the return of the escort who had left so suddenly.

* January 14th, 1888.

An hour passed without a word from him, and the police were summoned to remove the body. A clue to the woman's identity came from the costly watch found on the mantleshef of the apartment. An inscription on its case, set with diamonds, showed it to have been the gift to "Emma Louise Parmelee, from her Mother." Further search disclosed a purse, in which the owner's address was given, 327, Jefferson Avenue, Brooklyn. The remains were taken to the undertaker's shop, and word was sent to the Parmelee residence announcing the tragedy. No effort was made to conceal the frightful details of the affair, and Mrs. Parmelee's husband and children were forced to hear the awful story of a wife's and a mother's disgrace. It is plainly hinted in the American newspapers that Mrs. Parmelee's friend was a near neighbour of her husband, whose intimacy with the dead lady had been remarked, "though the position which both held in church and social circles kept the relations free from scandal." Mrs. Parmelee's wealth came from her mother, who was a near relative of the English Sir Rowland Hill.

It transpires that Mrs. Parmelee had frequently visited this fashionable *maison de rendezvous*; but the keeper of the den of shame was not acquainted with her name and position. So much for the Roman Christian matron of the ninth, so much for the American Christian matron of the nineteenth, century after the Christ, whose advent acted so powerfully to "elevate" woman and to hallow the innocent life of the child!

The sudden death of Mrs. Parmelee from heart disease is the only exceptional incident in this revolting tragedy, and to it we are indebted for the sight of the ghastly and hideous depravity which is among us, even in our very midst, and which is only too terribly apparent whenever the thin veil of theological cant and social hypocrisy is lifted. There

are walls—nay, there are tongues, in London society, which could a tale unfold beside which that of the New York adultress would appear one of comparative innocence. And London is not alone in her unhallowed Temples of the *Hetairæ*. I know for certain of at least one provincial town of fashionable resort where there is a “high-class” house that purveys married women only; and the women do not by any means belong to the lower and poorer social orders.

But, in the name of God, let us abandon a theme so abhorrent. Alas that, in rending away the veil of social hypocrisy, we should undrape such a sickening exhibition of social leprosy! And cant about Christ overshadows and covers all this foulness, and allows the cancer with impunity to eat its way into the very heart of our human race. It is for this, in the interests of mankind, I war against Christ. It is for this I exclaim with Emerson: “We must get rid of this Christ! we must get rid of this Christ!”

CHAPTER XLIX.

The Priests' Siege by Stealth of the Citadel of Woman's Honour—Difficulty of Christianising a Sane and Educated Non-Christian Adult—The Press as a Counter-actant to the Priest—The School as a Christian Agency—How the Priest Obtains his Early and Insidious Influence—Asking a Girl in Marriage from the Priest—"I only wish that this girl, bought so dearly, may be really yours"—Mother Church as a Mother-in-Law—Father Chiniquy's Story of Shame.

CHRISTIAN apologists have frequently demurred against my allegations as to the degrading and debauching of women by the Christian priesthood. Even if the priesthood, they urge, were as sinister and peccant as their enemies paint them, are women, they ask, indeed so frail? Do our mothers and sisters and wives and daughters really submit to let the natural modesty of woman be abased and her honour laid in the dust before the seducer, whether clerical or laical?

I reply that I am willing to believe that there are tens—nay, hundreds—of thousands of Christian women belonging to the Roman Catholic and to the Ritualistic branch of the Anglican Church who would sheath the dagger of Lucretia in their own hearts rather than be the victim of any Tarquin living. This when siege is openly laid to the mind's purity and the heart's devotion. But, by the Church, siege is *not* openly laid. There is a world of pains taken to conceal the fact that siege is being laid at all. Through centuries Europe's

keenest intellects and most subtile casuists have prepared the almost imperceptibly-inclined plane down which Christendom has to walk to the slough of mental impotence and moral obliquity. You cannot bring a clean thing out of an unclean, nor a noble and heroic race out of the medium of a vitiated motherhood.

The one end of the inclined plane rests upon the cradle ; the other finds support upon the coffin. You may teach any moderately sound-headed person mathematics after he is an adult, and Cato successfully studied Greek at eighty ; but rolling to the hill-top the stone of Sisyphus would not be a more hopeless task than that of the Christian priest who would make a Christian out of any sane adult. The Church through the mother begins with the child. The mother is a Christian. It is hardly a grammatical figure to say that her very milk is vitiated with the virus of priestcraft. The child's earliest memories of existence are of Christian words and symbols. The first hero of the plastic imagination is Jesus, and the first heroine Mary : they are names made sacred by a mother's love, made holy by a mother's kiss. Accorded the first empery of the as yet pure and unblighted affections, they rise to an altitude which throws all the subsequent phenomena of thought into incongruity and disproportion. So rooted and obstinate becomes the impression, so cruelly branded upon the white tablet of the infant soul, that not in one case in a thousand can the secularising influences of subsequent experience erase it. Not even the book and newspaper press, with all its power drawing in another direction, can remove the curse and the mark of the Cain of priestcraft and superstition from the mind of him or her who first heard of the baleful Christ from a mother's lips, and who first prayed to the fiendish Jehovah at a mother's knee.

“ What ! will not the library and the press, the great

over-ruling power of our own days, give a stronger educational impulse than the former one? Do not rely on this. The influence of the press partly annuls itself; it has a thousand voices to speak, and a thousand others to answer and destroy what it has said.* While a thousand newspapers shout "Whig," a thousand others cry "Tory." The idea of oracular accuracy of utterance is thus destroyed. The press does not teach with imperial authority. It states and it contradicts, and thereby partly annuls its own influence as a teacher. But no one contradicted the mother as she pressed your infant cheek to hers, and, while your judgment was yet unborn, enlisted the full intensity of your childish sympathy for Him who had not where to lay his head, who wore in mockery a crown of thorns, who had cruel nails driven into his hands and feet, and all because he loved *you* and was anxious, even unto death, to save *you* from a terrible doom. All this was told you amid the holiest associations of motherhood and childhood, when the heart was pure and its impressions imperishable, and no one whispered, "The story is not true." No one objected: "This Jesus is a fabulous personage, and the faith that bears his name has been perverted and tortured till it is glad tidings of great joy to the priesthood, but a curse to all besides."

No, not even in the school to which the child passes is there even one sceptical whisper to shake the authority of what the mother taught with all the earnestness of conviction to the child of her love. At the school "education does not make so much noise [as the press]. It does not talk; it reigns. Look, in that little class, without control or contradiction, a man is speaking; he is master, an absolute master, invested with the most ample power to punish and chastise. His voice, not

* Michelet's "Priests, Women, and Families," p. 152.

his hand, has the power of a rod ; the little trembling and believing creature, who has just left her mother's apron, receives his weighty words, which enter the soft tablet of her memory and stick into it, like so many nails of iron.

“This is true in speaking of the school ; but how much more so as regards the church, especially in the case of the daughter, who is more docile and timid, and certainly retains more faithfully her early impressions ! What she heard the first time in that grand church, under those resounding roofs, and the words, pronounced with a solemn voice by that man in black, which then frightened her so, being addressed to *herself* ; —ah ! be not afraid of her ever forgetting them. But, even if she should forget them, she would be reminded of them every week : woman is all her life at school,* finding in the Confessional her school-bench, her school-master, the only man she fears, and the only one, as we have said, who, in the present state of our manners, can threaten a woman.

“What an advantage has he in being able to take her quite young, in the convent where they have placed her, to be the first to take in hand her young soul, and to be the first to exercise upon her the earliest severity ; and also the earliest indulgence which is so akin to affectionate tenderness, to be the father and friend of a child taken so soon from her mother's arms. The confidant of her first thoughts will long be associated with her private reveries. He has had one especial and singular privilege which the husband may envy : what ?—why, the virginity of the soul and the first fruits of the will.

“This is the man of whom, young bachelors, you must ask the girl in marriage before you speak to her

* Especially with the *Catechisms of Perseverance*, Mouth of Mary, &c., which keep girls under the hand of the priest.

parents. Do not deceive yourselves, or you will lose all chance. You shake your heads, proud children of the age; you think you can never be induced to humble yourselves so far. All I hope, then, is that you may be able to live single and wed philosophy; otherwise I can see you, even now, in spite of all your fine speeches, gliding stealthily, sneaking by twilight into the church, and kneeling down before the priests. There they were lying in wait for you, and there they catch you. You had not foreseen it. Now you are a lover, poor young man, and will do whatever they wish.

"I only wish that this girl, bought so dearly, may be really yours.* But, what with that mother and that priest, the same influence, though diminished for a moment, will resume its strength. You will have a wife, minus heart and soul, and you will understand, when it is too late, that he who now gives her away knows well how to keep her."†

"*I only wish*," writes Michelet, "*that this girl, bought so dearly, may be really yours.*" This is a minatory sentence of the most appalling significance. You receive a bright, innocent, and impressionable girl from the hands of the Christian Church, and with that Church's blessing, which is a curse; and the girl becomes at once a layman's wife and a priest's courtesan:—this is what Michelet means. A girl you receive to wife from the bosom of Mother Church is a girl with bad antecedents. The girl, of herself, may be virtuous in conduct and pure in heart; but beware of her mother—Mother Church is not a desirable mother-in-law for any man. Again let Michelet repeat: "*I only wish that*

* For the moral weakness of women brought up in convents, for the precarious state of the family, and the miserable and insulated condition of the husband, read Sismondi's "*Républiques Italiennes*," xvi. 222, 227, and especially 450.

† Michelet's "*Priests, Women, and Families*," pp. 152-3.

this girl, bought so dearly, may be really yours." And read Michelet's mournful warning in the light of the following narrative from the pen of a man of unimpeachable honour, and who, as an apostate Roman Catholic priest, knew only too well and too bitterly what he was writing about.

"Many would be the folio volumes," remarks Father Chiniquy, "which I should have to write were I to publish all that my twenty-five years' experience in the Confessional has taught me of the unspeakable secret corruption of the *greatest* part of the so-called respectable ladies who have unconditionally surrendered themselves into the hands of their holy (?) confessors. But the following fact will suffice for those who have eyes to see, ears to hear, and an intelligence to understand :—

"In one of the most beautiful and thriving towns along the St. Lawrence River lived a rich merchant. He was young, and his marriage with a most lovely, rich, and accomplished young lady had made him one of the happiest men in the land.

"A few years after his marriage the Bishop appointed to that town a young priest, really remarkable for his eloquence, zeal, and amiable qualities ; and the merchant and the priest soon became connected by links of the most sincere friendship.

"The young, accomplished wife of the merchant soon became the model woman of the place, under the direction of her new confessor.

"Many and long were the hours she used to pass by the side of her spiritual father, to be purified and enlightened by his godly advices. She soon was seen at the head of the few who had the privilege of receiving the holy communion once a week. The husband, who was a good Roman Catholic himself, blessed God and the Virgin Mary that he had the privilege of living with such an angel of piety.

"Nobody had the least suspicion of what was going on under that holy and white mantle of the most exalted piety. For nearly one year both the young priest and his spiritual patient enjoyed, in those intimate and secret conversations, all the pleasure which lovers feel when they can speak freely to each other of their secret thoughts and love.

"But this was not enough for them ; they both wanted something more real, though the difficulties were great and seemed insurmountable. The priest had his mother and sister with him, whose eyes were too sharp to allow him to invite the lady to his own house for any criminal object ; and the young husband had no business at a distance which could keep him long enough out of his happy home to allow the Pope's confessor to accomplish his diabolical designs.

"But, when a poor fallen daughter of Eve has a mind to do a thing, she very soon finds the means, particularly if high education has added to her natural shrewdness.

"And in this case, as in many others of a similar nature which have been revealed to me, she soon found out how to attain her object without compromising herself or her holy (?) confessor. A plan was soon found and cordially agreed to, and both patiently awaited their opportunity.

" 'Why have you not gone to mass to-day, and received the holy communion, my dear ?' said the husband. 'I had ordered the servant-man to put the horse in the buggy for you as usual.'

" 'I am not very well, my beloved ; I have passed a sleepless night from headache.'

" 'I will send for the physician,' replied the husband.

" 'Yes, my dear ; do send for the physician. Perhaps he will do me good.'

"One hour after the physician was called. He found

his fair patient a little feverish, pronounced that there was nothing serious, and that she would soon be well. He gave her a little powder, to be taken three times a day, and left ; but at 9 p.m. she complained of a great pain in the chest, and soon fainted and fell on the floor.

“The doctor was again immediately sent for ; but he was from home. It took nearly half-an-hour before he could come. When he arrived the alarming crisis was over ; she was sitting in an arm-chair, with some neighbouring women, who were applying cold water and vinegar to her forehead.

“The physician was really at a loss what to say of the cause of such a sudden illness. At last he said that it might be an attack of ‘*ver solitaire*’ (tape-worm). He declared that it was not dangerous ; that he knew how to cure her. He ordered some new powder to be taken, and left, after having promised to return the next day. Half-an-hour after she began to complain of a most terrible pain in her chest, and fainted again ; but before doing so she said to her husband :

“‘My dear, you see that the physician understands absolutely nothing of the nature of my disease. I have not the least confidence in him ; for I feel that his powders make me worse. I do not want to see him any more. I suffer more than you suspect, my beloved ; and, if there is not soon a change, I may be dead to-morrow. The only physician I want is our holy confessor ; please make haste to go and get him. I want to make a general confession, and to receive the holy *viaticum* (communion) and extreme unction before I grow worse.’

“Beside himself with anxiety, the distracted husband ordered the horse to be put in the buggy, and made his servant accompany him on horseback to ring the bell while his pastor carried ‘the good God’ (*Le Bon Dieu*) to his dear sick wife.

"He found the priest piously reading his *breviarium* (his book of daily prayers), and admired the charity and promptitude with which his good pastor, in that dark and chilly night, was ready to leave his warm and comfortable parsonage at the first appeal of the sick. In less than an hour the husband had taken the priest with 'the good God' from the church to the bedroom of his wife.

"All along the way the servant-man had rung a big hand-bell to awaken the sleeping farmers, who, at the noise, had to jump, half-naked, out of their beds and worship, on their knees, with their faces prostrate in the dust, 'the good God' which was being carried to the sick by the holy (?) priest.

"On his arrival the confessor, with every appearance of sincere piety, deposited 'the good God' (*Le Bon Dieu*) on a table, richly prepared for such a solemn occasion, and, approaching the bed, leaned his head towards his penitent and inquired how she felt.

"She answered him: 'I am very sick, and I want to make a general confession before I die.'

"Speaking to her husband, she said, with a fainting voice: 'Please, my dear, tell my friends to withdraw from the room that I may not be distracted when making what may be my last confession.'

"The husband respectfully requested the friends to leave the room with him, and shut the door that the holy confessor might be *alone* with his penitent during the general confession.

"One of the most diabolical schemes under the cover of auricular confession had perfectly succeeded. The mother of harlots, the great enchantress of souls, whose seat is on the city of the Seven Hills, had there her priest to bring shame, disgrace, and damnation under the mask of Christianity.

"The destroyer of souls, whose masterpiece is auricular confession, had there, for the millionth time, a

fresh opportunity of insulting the God of purity through one of the most criminal actions which the dark shades of night can conceal.

"But let us draw the veil over the abominations of that hour of iniquity, and let us leave to hell its dark secrets.

"After he had accomplished the ruin of his victim, and most cruelly and sacrilegiously abused the confidence of his friend, the young priest opened the door of the room and said, with a sanctimonious air: 'You may now enter and pray with me while I give the last sacrament to our dear sick sister.'

"They came in. 'The good God' (*Le Bon Dieu*) was given to the woman; and the husband, full of gratitude for the considerate attention of the priest, took him back to the parsonage, and thanked him most sincerely for having so kindly come to visit his wife in so chilly a night.

"Ten years later I was called to preach a retreat (a kind of revival) in that same parish. That lady, then an absolute stranger to me, came to my confessional-box and confessed to me those details as I now give them. She seemed to be really penitent, and I gave her absolution and the entire pardon of her sins, as my Church told me to do. On the last day of the revival the merchant invited me to a grand dinner. Then it was that I came to know who my penitent had been. I must not forget to mention that she had confessed to me that, of her four children, the last three belonged to the confessor."

And thus writes a man whose unflinching integrity and sterling honesty cannot be questioned even by those who wince the most painfully under the lash of the revelations he has felt it his duty to his God and his conscience to make. While he remained in the Romish Church he received from clerics of high influence in that hierarchy unequivocal credentials as to the purity and dignity of his character and the no mean range of his attainments. Yea, verily, Christianity *has* "elevated" woman.

CHAPTER L.

Priestly Subterfuges to Effect the Ruin of Women—St. Patrick's Cave—How Patricia Became Enceinte by a Dead Saint—The "Pleasure House"—The Two "Ministering Spirits"—The Four Commands.

MARRIAGE, with the Papist—by far the strongest and most important section of the Christian Church—is not a civil contract, but a holy sacrament. I have given only one instance where, from Christian sources, I might give hundreds of the Church's trampling the holy sacrament of marriage under foot, betraying husbands and debauching wives by subterfuges as devilish in ingenuity as in crime. The priests did not rely upon the Confessional alone to enable them to revel in broken vows and outraged honour and the conversion of the layman's home into a cruel deception and a disgraceful misery. The subtlest intellect that theology could vitiate and lust could stimulate was engaged for centuries in making ingenious lasciviousness a priestly accomplishment and seduction a sacred art.* To crush the hideous lie that Christianity has "elevated" woman it is not my fault that I have to resort to the reference to exceedingly hideous facts—facts placed at my disposal in revolting abundance by Christian pens. Be honest, cease to lie, O Christian, for the sake of the loaves and fishes you have by following Christ, and then it will not devolve upon me to confront you with your stercorous record.

* See the ingeniously horrible extracts from
"The Confessional, Romish and Anglican : an Exposure."

of cruelty and hypocrisy and infamy and shame. But dare to inflict your ulcerous falsehood upon Humanity's right arm, and then I shall be cruel to be kind. Trampling mere squeamishness in the dust, I shall grapple the throat of Error and try to place the laurel on the brow of Truth. Inoculate your priestly and ulcerous lie upon Humanity's arm ; then, to save Humanity's moral life, above the ulcer, my knife shall cut away the flesh and my saw shall rasp its red and bloody way through the hard bone and the agonising marrow, let Humanity shriek as it may and protest that it prefers the ulcer to the saw. The roughest truth that can be uttered is more beautiful than the most polished lie.

I go to holy Spain for one poor instance among hundreds of what Christianity has done to "elevate" woman. My authority in regard to the fecund virtues of St. Patrick's Cave in Ireland, from a good Christian point of view, is of the highest order ;* and I give, almost in the very words of the Rev. Dr. Gavin, who was for many years a Roman Catholic priest in Spain, an incident connected with the Spanish copy of the Irish St. Patrick's Cave, as it is only a fair specimen of priestly machination, deception, and lasciviousness. There was, in the vicinity of Saragossa, a cave sacred to St. Patrick. This cave became one of the many sacred places in which, by prayer and penance, barren wives might be rendered fruitful. Many, many Rachels, with the consent or at the instigation of their pious and trustful husbands, visited this holy cave dedicated to St. Patrick.

At last there was a young woman, Dr. Gavin's quaint narrative informs us, whose husband was in the army ; and, though he was at that time with her, she had no children by him, and, desirous to have a child, she vowed

* Flo Sanctorum.

to go into St. Patrick's Cave, hoping by that means to obtain her desires. She did all she could to prepare herself before with fasting and prayer, and, after she had made a general confession to the Father Prior and received the sacrament at his hands, she went into the cave, and the door was shut after her.

The Prior immediately ran to the garden to open the Pleasure House door to let in the poor penitent, who, full of devotion, and not dreading any deception, went out of the narrow cave into the Pleasure House, where the reverend Father, dressed in an episcopal habit, like St. Patrick, received her in his arms and addressed her thus :

"My beloved innocent dove, God has heard your prayer, and has been well pleased with your preparation by fasting ; and, to let you know and feel the pleasures of a terrestrial Paradise, he has sent me to entertain you in this earthly tabernacle till we hear more of his sacred will and pleasure. You have not long endured the terrors of my cave, because your innocence has preserved you from them. Since your desire is only to be fruitful, God has granted your request ; attend to nothing in this garden but your pleasure, and heaven will afford you a rich table while you are here. You shall have a bed made by the hands of angels to take your rest on, and, if some corporeal apparition comes to visit you in your sleep, do not resist the power of heaven, for to do so would be your ruin."

Then the Rev. Father Prior left her in deep amazement (the poor creature thinking she was in Paradise, as the story of St. Patrick went at that time).

A little while after the supposed St. Patrick left the poor penitent there appeared two young winged angels (she thought them so, though really they were two young friars) that came to her with an exquisite, delicate dinner, which they laid on a table, and said, "Thou darling of

St. Patrick, come and eat," and then they went away. The poor wife, thinking everything came from heaven, knelt down and began to thank God and the glorious St. Patrick for that singular favour; and soon after she sat at table and ate, believing herself all the while to be in the terrestrial Paradise.

After dinner the two angels returned to clear the table, and told her that they would come to her within half-an-hour and declare unto her the will of God and that of St. Patrick. With this she was left alone, her thoughts full of heavenly things, desiring every moment the return of her ministering spirits; but she did not long wait for them, for they appeared unto her before the time appointed, and one of them spoke to her in the following manner :—

"I am Gabriel, the messenger of the most High God, who rules heaven and earth, and am commanded to come and tell you that your fasting and prayers have gone up to heaven, and that St. Patrick, the favourite of God, will fulfil your good desire; and that by him you shall conceive a child, whom you shall call St. Patrick's son; and mind not the world, but the will of him that sends me to you."

Then the second angel spoke to her saying: "And I am sent by the glorious St. Patrick to tell you that, though he has spoken to you this morning, he cannot do it again till you have some proof of conception. But that, while you continue in this Paradise, he will appear unto you in the night and will carry out his promise, which, if you refuse, all the infernal furies will carry you into the dark region, to use you there according to your deserts. There is a bed in the second room whereon you may take your rest; and I will come to you again to-morrow morning, for we have orders to tell you this and no more."

With this the two strange men left the poor peni-

tent alone, and she spent the afternoon in the room and garden very comfortably, waiting for the celestial apparition of St. Patrick, with full resolution to obey his commands for fear of the infernal furies.

After so good a dinner she expected to have a supper ; but as she waited till dark evening, and saw none of the ministering spirits come to her, she began to believe that it was the custom of the terrestrial Paradise to have only one meal a day, and in this thought she went to bed, not doubting in the least but that St. Patrick would be as good as his word, as his ambassador had told her. And she was not disappointed in her expectations, for about nine o'clock the supposed St. Patrick, the real Father Prior, came into the room, accompanied by the two angels, who undressed him and put him in bed, without speaking one word, and then went away. The poor penitent, full of fear of the infernal furies, and of ready obedience to the will of St. Patrick, dared not speak one word, and so passed the night in deep silence. In the morning the apparition disappeared from the room ; but, soon after, the two ministering spirits came to attend her, and to give her breakfast. St. Patrick's spirit asked her whether she had obtained the inexpressible favour she expected. And the penitent replied : " There is a great difference between earthly and heavenly comforts, and I wish I could live always here, and never return into the miserable world, where a poor woman finds nothing but vanity and vexation of spirit. How can I live, after this celestial apparition, with a common earthly husband ? " " You render yourself unworthy of this place, and of the pleasures you have begun to enjoy," replied the spirit, " by making such complaints. It is not allowed you to speak here, but to obey our voice, and after dinner we will give you further directions about what you ought to do, and till then amuse

yourself in the garden." Then the two spirits left her, anything but satisfied, however, with her replies. She amused herself till dinner time in hopes of a second apparition, which she felt to be her greatest happiness, and for which she was willing to renounce the world and all its fading vanities.

At dinner time the two ambassadors came again with the dinner for all three ; so she had the happiness to dine in company with the two ministering spirits. What their discourse was I do not know ; but she owned afterwards that, after dinner, the two spirits ministered unto her as having the full power of the supposed St. Patrick, commanding her to keep a perpetual silence, or else to remember the infernal furies ; and, taking their leave of her, they left her with hopes of a second apparition the following night.

I come now to the common world, before I bring that penitent out of the Pleasure House. Many men had entered the cave, and had found the second door shut, and that the Friars would not permit them to go further without due spiritual preparation. Now, this woman having entered the cave, and remained there two days, it was thought a wonder, and many people of both sexes, of the neighbourhood, went to the convent, to wait till the good woman should come out of the cave, believing that the privilege and happiness of going into it was for women only. Many desired the Father Prior to let them enter, and offered many presents to him to get by this means the preference. This importunity obliged the Prior to give his word and permission to a young lady whom he liked better than the rest, to let her go into the cave the next morning after the woman who was in should come out, and in the meantime he bade her prepare herself by fasting and prayer and by receiving the sacrament.

When the Prior, or supposed St. Patrick, was sure of another fresh penitent he ordered his two ministering spirits to command the penitent of the cave to come out of it the next morning. Nevertheless, he did not fail that night to appear unto her the second time with the same pomp and magnificence as on the first night, in order to finish the work begun, in case of necessity, for he did not know of the assistance he had in the matter from his two ministering spirits. He spent that second night in the same guilty silence, and in the morning he left her as on the former occasion.

The two ambassadors soon came to her with dull, dismal, and disconsolate tidings, for St. Patrick's spirit told her that, all the desires of human creatures ceasing with the possession of the thing desired, her request was accomplished, and that it was the order from heaven to command her back again into the common world; and that she might not lose the happiness which she had enjoyed, and was to enjoy still at a certain time, she was to observe the following commands and directions:—

“1. When you go out of the cave many people will ask you what you have seen, and you must answer, ‘Heavenly things,’ and no more.

“2. That you were going to pass over the bridge of glass, but that St. Patrick came and broke it, and you could not go over it.

“3. That you have had two apparitions, and it was revealed unto you that you should obtain your request and have a child.

“4. That you have leave to tell no more till you have come again into the cave, which you must do after you have been delivered of a child. And, if all the world should ask you more questions, you are to give no other answer, not even to your husband, and, if you do, the same moment you shall be carried into hell by the infernal furies.”

CHAPTER LI.

“Come again after ten months’ time”—The Gentleman’s Wife in St. Patrick’s Cave—The Pregnant Patricia Adored as a Saint—Attitude of Patricia’s Husband—Patricia’s Confessions as to what Passed in the “Earthly Paradise”—Birth of the Young St. Patrick—Numerous Women Apply for Admission to the Cave—Action of Patricia’s Husband—Forcible Invasion of the Cave—Vengeance taken on “St. Patrick” and “the Ministering Spirits”—The Papal Fiat—The Cave Blown Up with Gunpowder.

“Now, to show you,” quoth the two ministering angels, “that you are the favourite of this place, before we convey you to the cave’s door we will give you a second token of our esteem for you, to make you remember that you ought to come again after ten months’ time to enjoy the same happiness.”

The poor creature received the last farewell with all cordiality, and afterwards she was carried to the cave ; and, shutting the door after her, she came out of it, and found her husband and crowds of people waiting for her. She appeared gay and full of inward satisfaction. Though she was asked many questions, she gave no other answer but that which the ministering spirits had taught her ; so she was carried home as a saint, blessed forever, and held as such by the neighbours. I shall leave her at home now, to come to my story of the second penitent.

Though the young lady had had but little time to prepare herself to go into the cave the Father Prior gave

her a full dispensation to enter immediately. So, with a contrite heart, she went in, and was treated in the same way as her predecessor had been by the spurious St. Patrick and by the two ministering spirits. She was in the pleasure-house no longer than the former penitent had been, for she had to make room for a successor; and such was the clever deception of the Reverend Prior and of the two ministering spirits that none of the many women who went into the cave suspected the infamous artifice, but obeyed the commands and directions which the ambassadors had taught them. Thus did the Prior and his friars continue their vile machinations, making St. Patrick the pretext.

Now I come again to the first penitent at home, much honoured by her neighbours; and here the wonderful miracle begins to be canvassed.

After the unconsciously dishonoured wife came home from St. Patrick's Cave she was, by her neighbours, almost adored as a saint, especially as she gave it out that St. Patrick had visited her twice in a gorgeous mansion near the garden of the terrestrial Paradise, and that the two winged spirits had ministered to her many times. Eventually she was asked so many questions by her husband and neighbours that gradually she disregarded the directions which St. Patrick's spirit had given her. To humour her vanity, she induced her neighbours and friends to credit her with the character and bestow upon her the name of saint.

Everybody called her "Patricia" since she had returned from the cave. Not long after her return she had perceived that she was with child, and then her pious fame increased, and she gave it out that she was pregnant by St. Patrick and two angels. This report being spread abroad, many people went to see the divine Patricia, thinking it a great favour to be permitted to talk with her of heavenly things she had seen

in the terrestrial Paradise. This gave her a good opportunity to receive many presents from her adorers, and afforded the friars facilities to establish their deception on a still more solid foundation ; they published the miracle of the divine Patricia, and made a picture of her, which they placed at the right hand of the very patron saint on the high altar.

The publication of the wonder drew hundreds of people to the convent while the deception held sway. No *man* could enter the cave, because all men were sinners, and stood in need of due preparation for this honour ; but the fair sex, being more devout, were admitted to the cave, and, having made a brief and hurried spiritual preparation for the pleasure-house, the door of it was open to them ; and they had the happiness to be in the terrestrial Paradise visited by ministering spirits and honoured with two apparitions in the night, and by the holy St. Patrick. Have women had no privileges under the Christian *régime* ? Why, they alone had the privilege of entering this sacred cave, that ecclesiastical Christianity might “elevate” them and cast “a halo of sacred innocence” round the child adulterously begotten by the priest of God.

Divine Patricia’s husband, being a soldier, could not quite accept this holy miracle ; but the many presents he received from the devout tempted him for a while to stifle his doubts. He was anxious to raise sufficient money to compass the object of his ambition—the purchase of a captain’s commission. But when there is a new miracle of the same character, the old one is soon forgotten. As the cave was never shut against the fair sex, anti-sterile miracles of the Zacharias-Elizabeth kind followed in rapid succession, and the name “Patricia” among married ladies became so piously common that there was hardly room enough on the walls of the church to accommodate their pictures. By this time

our first divine Patricia was no longer an object of popular attention, and her husband, disappointed in his pecuniary expectations, began to wax jealous and to ask her many embarrassing questions.

"Patricia, or Diabolicia," said he to her, "how is it that you were with child? Pray tell me the truth of the matter, for I have been in the king's army, and I have courage enough to take satisfaction of any man in the world, and even of St. Patrick himself, if he has outraged you. Do not give me silly answers, for I know well that the saints of heaven cannot work this special sort of *miracle*. Men only can do that; and, if the blessed virgin was overshadowed by the Holy Ghost, this is not a reason for you, wicked creature, to pretend to be the second blessed virgin; and, besides, you hear how many women, since you went into the cave, are now in the condition you were in. Do you believe that heaven will multiply miracles without necessity, and effect through saints and angels what can be effected by the most wretched specimens of mankind? No. What necessity is there to make a wife to be with child by ministering spirits, or by St. Patrick himself, when the same may be done without a miracle by a tinker or a tailor? Leave off deceptions, Patricia, and tell me the true story; and if you, out of ignorance, have committed a sin, I will forgive you, provided you help me to put an end to those villanies enacted in St. Patrick's Cave. I swear that, if you do not tell me the truth, neither friar nor saint nor angel shall prevent my passing this sword through your heart."

This unexpected attitude on the part of her husband inspired Patricia with such fear that she detailed every item of her experience in the cave, protesting at the same time that she truly believed that the holy St. Patrick himself had slept with her two nights, and that the two ambassador spirits had twice given her a token

of their esteem ; and she stated how they had ordered her to return when she had been delivered of St. Patrick's son.

"Well," said the husband, "you believe it so, and you must tell the same till you have permission from me to speak otherwise. Then I will give you directions, which, if you observe, shall save your life, and, if not, you shall be made an example to the world."

The soldier made a virtue of a necessity till he could be revenged upon the friars, believing certainly that they were the workers of the "damnable miracles," which he felt determined to expose and abolish. In the meantime he dissembled his grief and sided in appearance with the popular voice. When at last the time had come for Patricia to give to the world a little Patrick the Prior and the friars omitted nothing which should tend to advertise this heavenly child, the pride and wonder of the world. The Viceroy and the Lord Chancellor were by proxies godfathers, and their ladies godmothers. The Archbishop sent orders to the Father Prior to officiate in his name. If the Pope had been upon the spot, undoubtedly he too would have been a ministering spirit.

The child was baptised in the Convent Church before a multitude of people, and with much pomp and rejoicing. The people kissed and adored the little St. Patrick (this name was given to him), because *qualis Pater, talis Filius*, as the old monks have it. His picture was soon after placed between his mother's and that of the saint on the altar ; and these facts increased the devotion of the women so much that crowds of them came every day to the convent to intercede with the Father Prior to allow them to enter the cave. Certainly, if there had been fifty caves, the number would have been insufficient to have accommodated the great number of ladies that solicited the favour of entrance.

The days of Patricia's purification accomplished, her husband began to be very zealous in the visitation of his vengeance upon the spurious St. Patrick and his ministering spirits; and, knowing that at that very time there was in the cave and in the terrestrial Paradise a young and handsome lady, whose husband was one of the richest and best reputed gentlemen of the neighbourhood, he went to him, and asked to see him in private. The gentleman conducted him into his closet, and there the soldier thus addressed him:

"Sir, you have heard the whole story of my wife and of her son, who is actually adored by the people as the little St. Patrick. Now, I am told that your lady is in the cave (I should say in hell, to speak the truth), and I am come to you to ask your help and assistance to take revenge both for your own and my injuries. My wife has confessed to me the truth of the diabolical conduct in the cave, and I am certain the friars impose upon us. If you will but assist me, we two shall find out for ourselves the truth of these accursed miracles, and of the shame and infamy entailed upon us by "heavenly apparitions." Certainly your lady is now with one of the friars, effecting your and her own disgrace; so, if you will rely upon me, follow me to vengeance."

The gentleman opened his eyes at this very specious speech, and complied with the soldier's request. Taking a number of his servants well armed along with him, he accompanied the soldier to the convent; and when they had entered they shut the door after them, and went up to the Prior's room; but, not finding him there, they returned to the cave, and spoke to the two ministering spirits (who were the doorkeepers) with such fierce resolution that they elected to open the door rather than lose their lives. So the gentleman and the soldier alone went in, and upon coming to the second door they forced it, and before the supposed St. Patrick could get out of

the room of his apparition they were upon him, and found him, as suspected, in bed with the young lady. His and the young lady's countenance presented a very different aspect, for he waxed pale with guilty terror ; but his penitent lady deemed her husband now as happy as herself, since he too had come to the terrestrial Paradise. She was, however, soon convinced of her delusion by the explanation of the soldier, and by the transformation of St. Patrick into the Prior of the convent. She was so terribly ashamed and inspired with wrath that she assisted her husband and the soldier to take a just revenge upon the Prior and his infamous accomplices.

But the soldier, being of a judicial turn of mind, prevented the sudden and mortal vengeance insisted on by the gentleman against the Father Prior, and opined that it would be better first to carry him into his own cell, and there, before the friars, read the story of his crimes, and to afterwards pronounce and execute the sentence ; and, to convict him with the evidence of fact, it was thought necessary to carry along the young lady as a shameful evidence of the "miracles" wrought in the terrestrial Paradise. This project was agreed upon, and, accordingly, the Prior was dragged into his cell and all the friars were called (the servants of the gentleman the while guarding the convent door), and when all were assembled the soldier, performing the office of speaker and judge, told the tale of infamy before the community, including the two ministering spirits.

This done, he called for all the money the convent had earned by this infernal cave, and for all the plate received in virtue of the pretended miracles ; and afterwards he, with his own hands, emasculated the Prior, the spurious St. Patrick, and the two ministering spirits, and then took his leave.

The day following, according to the Rev. Dr. Gavin,*

* "A Master Key to Popery," vol. iii., pp. 194-5.

the gentleman and his wife and the soldier and his Patricia went straight to the Inquisition and told their tale of the adulterous devilry in the bowels of the earth at St. Patrick's Cave. The four complainants undoubtedly went with their lives in their hands, for any aggrieved husband who dared to whisper a word against priest, monk, or friar was immediately sent where his tongue could wag no more forever against the Lord's anointed servants. And thus thousands of wronged and indignant husbands had, every year, to pretend not to know what they knew only too poignantly and too bitterly; for the utterance of a word of exposure and complaint meant torture and death as the prelude to the vengeance of God and the eternal torment of hell. And thus the Christian Church "elevated" wives by rendering their husbands silent and submissive under the keenest insult that man can feel, the most shameful wrong under which man can suffer. But suffer in silence he must, under penalty of prolonged torture in this world and eternal damnation in the next. Can Archdeacon Farrar deny this? Can Cardinal Manning deny it? Can any student of ecclesiastical history deny it? If this cannot be denied, then, in the name of the mothers who bore us, in the name of the sisters we love, who, we demand, dares to say a word of apology for this accursed Church, with machinations more horrible than those of its own devils, with crimes more horrible than ever polluted its own hell?

But, for once—likely for some hidden and diabolical reason of policy, or some hatred which the local Inquisitor may have borne the Prior—the Inquisition gave ear to the complaint of the two wronged husbands and their two degraded wives. The Inquisitors communicated with the Pope, who, deeming it a wise policy to display much righteous wrath at a flagrant instance of this kind so unmistakably thrust under his notice, ordered that

the cave should be blown up with gunpowder, and that the convent should be dismantled *perpetuam rei Memoriam*. Under the papal order, brand and crowbar brought the masonry crashing down, and, in an explosive burst of flame and thunder, the cave was shattered, and the holy light of the Iberian heaven fell in through the rent roof of rock which had so long spanned the atrium of hell. The Prior died of grief and shame and of the horrible but condign punishment which the avenging husbands had inflicted upon him. The two friars fled, and as to their subsequent fortunes and ultimate fate the records of infamy are dumb. When the Rev. Dr. Gavin visited the ill-starred spot he found there a chapel dedicated, most appropriately, to St. Mary Magdalene. What remained of the cave was the headquarters of a gang of thieves. Near the chapel of the Magdalene the clear waters of a medicinal spring threaded its way through the grass overshadowed with groves of orange and olive, murmuring its homily of this beautiful world which the creeds of man have cursed.

CHAPTER LII.

The Impress of the Mother upon her Offspring—Enfeeblement of the Feminine Intellect—"The hand that rocks the cradle is the hand that rules the world"—The Church and Barren Women—The Miracle of St Antonio's Tomb—Dona Clara and Father Ambrose—The Miracle Exposed—Father Ambrose Disgraced—The Church's Method of Silencing Husbands.

A DEGRADED and unchaste world is the best world imaginable for specious drones and insinuating tyrants. It is hardly hyperbolical to say that this earth of ours is spanned by woman's garter and is suspended from woman's apron-string. We are each and all of us simply what our mothers have made us. If our mothers, with all their faults, were not, as a rule, more chaste and pure and lovely than our fathers, we should be little more or less than a race of devils. If we could rescue our mothers out of the clutches of the so-called priests of God, we could be developed into a race of angels. Read the biographies of the men who have had the strength to be the leaders of our race, the archons who, with their pen, have made the earth vocal with song, or who, with their sword, have half drowned the world in blood, and you will find that, in each case, it was from the latent potentialities of his mother the son drew his force and genius. Ladies of the pavement do not bear sages, and it is not from a bevy of harlots you gather a race of heroes. Never through all the cycles may you expect a Cromwell from a painted giglet of foul

deeds, and never hope to rejoice in a Walter Scott from a woman of vitiated blood and unholy desire.

It is because for centuries the Christian Church has polluted the bodies of our women with their debaucheries and enfeebled their minds with their superstitions that we have such a worldful of ninnies—hardly a man (?) in a thousand being capable of any sublimer function than to clip clouts with a pair of scissors or cut cheese with a wire. Where we might have had millions of women proper we have only giggling gawkies, thin-waisted, high-heeled abortions ; frivolous flirts and parsons' puppets, and all that that involves. The she-ninny, to please God and the he-noodle, gives the screwed stalk of the piano-stool sundry preliminary swirls, fluffs down upon it, sets her fingers to flying ostentatiously to show her skill and her rings, and then squeals some amorous drivel, or descends still lower, taking instrumental and vocal notice of such objects as "the Lord" and "the Lamb." When they become sane, here is a song for women to sing till they find a better :—

They say man rules the universe,
That subject shore and main
Kneel down and bless the empery
Of his majestic reign ;
But a sovereign, gentler, mightier,
Man from his throne has hurled,
For the hand that rocks the cradle
Is the hand that rules the world.

In deep mysterious conclave
With philosophic minds
Solving portentous problems
His bootless task man finds ;
Yet all his dreams of dare and do
To heaven's four winds are hurled,
For the hand that rocks the cradle
Is the hand that rules the world.

Amid the reel of gore and steel
 Behold the hero stand,
 Behold the blade of victory
 Clenched in his dying hand :
 That hero hand for ages rules—
 Mail rent and standard furled—
 But the hand that rocks the cradle
 Is the hand that rules the world.

Great statesmen sway the nations,
 Kings mould a people's fate,
 But the unseen hand of velvet
 These giants regulate.
 The nation's doom hangs on the babe
 In that wee blanket curled,
 And the hand that rocks the cradle
 Is the hand that rules the world.

'Tis ours to bring back Eden,
 To vanquish hate and crime,
 Till all curses turn to kisses
 On the rosy path of Time.
 Proclaim 'it 'neath the spangled sky,
 The flag of God unfurled,
THE HAND THAT ROCKS THE CRADLE
IS THE HAND THAT RULES THE WORLD.

Well the Christian Church knows the sentiment of this song's refrain, without its being either sung or said. All subterfuges in all times the ministers of Christ have used to get hold and guidance of the hand that rocks the cradle and rules the world. The establishment of compulsory Auricular Confession at the Fourth Lateran Council, in 1215, was the most daring bid for this gentle but tremendous hand. I have, in the two preceding chapters, glanced at the adoption of a more irregular subterfuge. Those irregular subterfuges of the hierarchy to ruin women, and thereby make it easier for they themselves to effectually hold their supernatural terrors over a debauched and degraded community, are numerous and

ingenious; the bye-paths of ecclesiastical history are foetid with the record of them. Once more to holy Spain. There is in Saragossa a convent of Victorian friars, or Paulinos, under the Rule and Constitution of St. Antonio de Paula. In the cloister of the convent there is a chapel dedicated to this St. Antonio. He, like St. Patrick, was a saint specially invoked by barren women. A saint having a peculiar holy virtue in the fecundity line was always a most profitable saint to the Church, and one that threw abundance of amorous intrigue in the way of the Church's celibate priesthood. This sort of saint had a distinctively scriptural basis to stand upon. Barren Sarah had been advised by an angel that she would yet bear a child; barren Elizabeth was the recipient of a similar evangel; and had not Christianity's great God and Carpenter, been begotten by a Ghost—a ghost said to be "Holy," although such ghosts are not accounted "holy" now? So there was abundant sanction for belief in the mysteries of sacred pregnancy.

Well, in the chapel in the cloister, this St. Antonio, after the manner of saints, lay in stone effigy on his tomb, dressed in the habit of his religious order, and with his pastoral staff by his side, and his hands piously crossed upon his breast. The effigy was, however, not attached to the masonry of the tomb, but could be removed at pleasure, and the diabolical purpose this fact was made to subserve the sequel will show.

Among many devout barren ladies who applied to St. Antonio's tomb, to implore the saint's gracious influence that they might become fruitful, there was a certain lady of quality and of great beauty, Dona Clara by name. The custom was that only one lady must go into the chapel at a time, and while she was within the door was shut after her, and then she, on her knees, said her prayers, and afterwards walked

three times round about St. Antonio's tomb. The friars, knowing that they could not be interrupted by any accident whatever, made use of their safe opportunity. Some of them that could not easily see a lady in her home or anywhere else without exposing the lady's reputation advised her to come and make the three turns round St. Antonio's tomb, and thus they obtained the desired end.

The "miracle" being wrought, the lady, well instructed by the holy father, gives it out as a wonderful operation of the spirit of God, in spite of the occasional jealousy of the husband. These friars, let it be observed, visit only the barren ladies, or those that become fruitful by the intercession of their patron, St. Antonio; and it is noticed that, when once a lady becomes fruitful, she remains fruitful afterwards; for this saint, or his stewards, bestow their pious favours with generosity, not once, but at any time, and upon any request, especially if the lady be young and prepossessing.

In the convent there was a handsome young friar named Father Ambrose, who was much impressed with Dona Clara's devotion. The lady had been married only two years, and, being very desirous to have an heir to her husband's estates, she thought to obtain one by having recourse to supernatural means and the intercession of St. Antonio. Accordingly, she went several times to hear mass in the Convent of Paulinos, but saw so many devotees enter the chapel that she could not get an opportunity to make her request known to the doorkeeper. Father Ambrose, whose business it was to receive the money which the devout gave for masses, seeing Dona Clara come several times and give nothing, spoke to her in the church, and said: "Madam, your modesty and devotion cannot but edify the servants of God and inspire in their hearts a desire to pray to St. Antonio to gratify you in your special wish, if you have

any ; and, since you are so good as to frequent our church, I think I cannot do less than offer you, through the grace of God, whatever you should desire to possess."

The modest and bashful Dona Clara returned thanks to Father Ambrose for his condescending civility, and told him that she would be very much obliged to him if, by his means, she could get into St. Antonio's Chapel to visit the saint's tomb and ask his intercession. "O Madam! you ask me as a favour a thing that is yours by right," said the holy Father, "and I shall have great pleasure in complying with your request. If convenient for you, to-morrow morning you shall enter the chapel ; and, if you are bashful as to being seen, you may keep your veil over your face, and no one shall know who you are." This extremely gratified Dona Clara, who promised to come the next day, which she did, and upon asking for Father Ambrose he came to her, and advised her to attend mass first, and to summon up all her courage to speak to and answer St. Antonio, in case he should ask her any questions. After mass the doorkeeper would come and convey her to the chapel, and take her into his charge. So Father Ambrose left Dona Clara full of inward satisfaction, and while she was listening to the service of the mass he went into the chapel, having before instructed the doorkeeper (for they carefully connive at one another's villainies), and, lifting St. Antonio's movable effigy off the tomb, he hid it under the altar, and he himself took the effigy's place on the tomb. St. Antonio in effigy is dressed exactly like one of the friars, therefore Father Ambrose could play the trick without fear of detection, the chapel being only partially lighted ; and thus he waited for Dona Clara, who entered the holy place full of faith, yet hardly daring to expect so high a favour as to be considered worthy to speak with St. Antonio. She knelt down before the altar and poured forth a

fervent prayer to the saint that she might be the mother of an heir to her husband's estate ; which done, she went to make the three turns round the tomb where St. Antonio lay, when lo ! the dead saint spoke to her in grave and awful accents, and said : " My well-beloved Clara, God has heard your prayers, and has granted, by my intercession, your request. But it must be bestowed upon you by my dear son Father Ambrose's application, whom Heaven hath appointed to carry out your desire, following his directions with all secrecy, for heavenly orders cannot be divulged without incurring the indignation of the Lord, and maybe a sudden and terrible death."

Dona Clara heard the voice, and was so overwhelmed with fear that she could give no articulate answer to the saint ; but she promised, in her heart, to obey the celestial oracle ; and as she went to offer a prayer of thanksgiving before the altar Father Ambrose, having risen from his recumbent position on the tomb, appeared before her. Her pious bewilderment was such that she believed all she had experienced was the result of miraculous intervention. The Rev. Father did not fail to give her to understand that he was sent to her by the revealed will of God ; and, having first impressed upon her the necessary directions, he laid down that morning the foundation for the commencement of the " miracle," and devised sure measures for its future process and final consummation.

Thus Dona Clara went home fully instructed by Father Ambrose in point of secrecy ; and, though she was willing to perfect the work begun, she could not find opportunity for the necessary divine operations at home ; so she continued to go to the tomb once a week : she could not go oftener, on account of the number of barren ladies who presented themselves daily. Dona Clara's devotion increased every day under the saintly rules of Father Ambrose. After a time they contrived that she

should say at home that she was sick, and that she should keep her bed, and during the absence of her husband send for St. Antonio's relics. This was done, and the poor creature from that day did not enjoy an hour's health. By these means they continued to carry on the "miracle" until she was certain of its due completion. She, eventually, told her husband about the "miracle." He at first believed in the supernatural conception; but he ultimately unmasked the cruel imposture by this extraordinary accident. One day the gentleman went out, and St. Antonio's steward proceeded to the lady's bedroom. Soon after he heard, to his alarm, the husband's voice, and in great haste he got up; but in his flurry he left his drawers on the pillow, and made his escape without them. The gentleman, not unsuspectingly, went in to see his wife (who, in her fright, had not observed the Father's garment left behind), and asked her what was the meaning of those drawers being on the pillow. She answered that these were St. Antonio's own sacred drawers, brought to her as a relic, and that her being with child was due to that fact.

The gentleman said nothing, and appeared perfectly satisfied with the answer; but, after some inquiries, he sent for Father Ambrose in a friendly manner, and the Father came to him. There was a procession that day, which was to pass before his house, and in which all the friars were to take part. So, conducting the Reverend Father into the parlour, he had him stripped naked, and then ordered him to put on St. Antonio's drawers, which he did, in terror of his life; and in this garment only, when the procession was passing the door, Father Ambrose was turned out into the street. This great scandal and offence to all the order was resented by the Inquisitors, who secured the offended husband, who was never again let out of the clutches of the diabolical tribunal. The Inquisitors acted in their normal fashion this time,

and made the husband suffer for exposing the villany that had laid only too successful siege to the honour of his wife. The cry of "Heretic!" could always be raised against him who might dare to breathe a syllable against a bishop, priest, or monk; and the cry of "Heretic!" once raised could die away only in the dungeon with the expiring groan of the wretch who had fallen into the Church's pious but merciless hands. The Church gave a husband his wife, not under the temporal obligations of a civil contract, but under the solemn and eternal obligations of a religious sacrament; and then, if he attempted to protect that wife's honour against that very Church which had given her the fagot, the axe, the cord, the rack, or the wheel were the arguments that very Church used against him in her sublime effort to "elevate the woman" and to cast "a halo of sacred innocence round the tender years of the child."

This famous "miracle" of St. Antonio being exposed, the friars lost their patronesses for a time; but the ladies, having such belief in the holy Fathers, began soon again to visit the tomb, as Dona Clara had done; for woman is ever liable to be the dupe of pious imposture, and has an ineradicable aversion to being childless. None know these weaknesses of the feminine character better than the clergy, and they have taken of these weaknesses abundance of malicious advantage.

CHAPTER LIII.

The Facilities of the Clergy for Effecting the Moral Ruin of Women—The Capture of Arragon by the French—The Doors of the Inquisition Thrown Open—A Clerical Seraglio of Sixty Beautiful Young Women—The Narrative of One of the Ladies of the Seraglio—The Father Gives Up his Daughter to the Priests—Her Experiences—The Advances of Don Francisco Tirregon—The Conditions of Averting the Fate of being Burnt Alive in the Dry Pan.

I WILL not dilate too copiously upon the peculiar facilities afforded a Christian minister for seizing upon a woman's holiest emotions and thereby effecting her degradation and moral ruin. Elsewhere* I have expatiated upon this repellent theme, and the necessary recognition that man is only a human being and vulnerable to the force of erotic passion, whether he wear the helmet of the soldier or the cowl of the monk. But I cannot do even the most meagre justice to my subject and omit to lay considerable stress upon the clergy's active and special influence to the detriment of feminine chastity. That the position of minister or priest of Christ is used, and has been used, to effect woman's degradation is, however, too notorious, too obvious, to warrant over-voluminous comment. But, in the interest of readers who may not have had their attention definitely turned to this topic, I furnish in this work one or two typical examples of clerical machinations ; and when

* See "The Confessional, Romish and Anglican : An Exposure."

it is remembered that they are selected from thousands which could be furnished, and not vouched for by writers of my school of thought, but recorded and verified by Christians themselves, I will have performed a task I personally shrink from; but when the task becomes a duty I am able to stifle my personal repugnance. Christianity claims to have "elevated" woman. That is her thesis. I maintain the antithesis; and if, in the very nature of things, the weapons that lie in the armoury of history, with their hilts inviting the grasp of my right hand, are not the unsullied weapons which even a breath would stain, they are nevertheless the indispensable weapons with which to assault and storm that redoubt of Ecclesiasticism, with every stone an imposture and every trowelful of mortar a lie, which she erects when she proclaims from her pulpits that it is to her we are indebted for the modesty and purity of woman and for the hallowed tenderness of the home.

In the early part of last century the crown of Spain was competed for by two claimants. France took the side of the one competitor; and, of course, her old enemy, England, took the side of the other. The English were defeated in the battle of Almanza, and the victorious army pushed on to the conquest of Arragon. The walls of the city of Arragon were breached by French cannon, and Lieutenant-General De Legal, himself a Catholic, was left to the task of levying some 5,000 pistoles upon the different monkish fraternities of the town. The Dominicans, in virtue of their immediate association with "the Holy Inquisition," claimed exemption from payment. De Legal was a soldier first and a Catholic afterwards. He determined that, if the Dominican inquisitors refused to pay their quota of 1,000 pistoles, he would have to take the levy from them by force of arms and face the consequences. At the head of four regiments of troops he burst into the monas-

tery, and, tearing down the massive silver statues of the saints, he sent them off to the mint to be coined into money. This done, he opened all the doors of the Inquisition, and set at liberty no fewer than 400 prisoners, *among whom were sixty beautiful young women, who composed the seraglio of the three principal inquisitors.* The narrative of one of the sixty young ladies I append, by way of verifying the Church's claim to have "elevated" woman. The narrative is on excellent Christian authority, is of quite a common type, as those who are acquainted with the literature dealing with monastic usages will readily recognise, and it is translated from the Spanish, the language spoken by the most Christian nation now left in Europe.

"I went one day," says the lady, "with my mother to visit the Countess of Attarass, and I met there Don Francisco Tirregon, her confessor, and second inquisitor of the holy office.

"After we had drunk chocolate, he asked me my age, my confessor's name, and many intricate questions about religion. The severity of his countenance frightened me, which he perceiving, told the countess to inform me that he was not so severe as he seemed to be. He then caressed me in the most tender manner, presented his hand, which I kissed with great reverence and modesty; and, as he went away, he made use of this remarkable expression: 'My dear child, I shall remember you till the next time.' I did not, at the time, note the sense of the words; for I was inexperienced in matters of gallantry, being then but fifteen years old. Indeed, he unfortunately did remember me, for the very same night, when our whole family were in bed, we heard a great knocking at the door.

"The maid, who slept in the same room with me, went to the window and inquired who was there. The answer was, 'The holy Inquisition.' On hearing this I

screamed out : ‘ Father ! father ! dear father, I am ruined forever !’ My father got up and came to me to know the occasion of my crying out. I told him the Inquisition were at the door. On hearing this, instead of protecting me, he hurried me downstairs as fast as possible, and, lest the maid should be too slow, opened the street door himself : such abject and slavish fears possess bigoted minds ! As soon as he knew they had come for me he fetched me with great solemnity, and delivered me to the officers with much submission.

“ I was hurried into a coach with no other clothing than a petticoat and a mantle ; for they would not let me stay to take anything else. My fright was great, as I expected to die that very night ; but judge of my surprise when I was ushered into an apartment decorated with all the elegance that taste, united with opulence, could produce.

“ Soon after the officers left me a maid-servant appeared with a silver salver, on which were sweet-meats and cinnamon-water. She desired me to take some refreshments before I went to bed. I told her I could not, but should be glad if she could inform me whether I was to be put to death that night or not. ‘ To be put to death !’ exclaimed she ; ‘ you do not come here to be put to death, but to live like a princess ; and you shall want for nothing but the liberty of going out ; so pray don’t be afraid, but go to bed and sleep easy, for to-morrow you shall see wonders within this house ; and, as I am chosen to be your waiting-maid, I hope you will be very kind to me.’

“ I was going to ask some questions ; but she told me she must not answer anything more till the next day, but assured me that nobody would come to disturb me. ‘ I am going,’ said she, ‘ about a little business ; but I will come back presently, for my bed is in the closet next yours.’ So she left me for about a quarter of an

hour, and then returned. She then said : ' Madam, pray let me know when you will be pleased to have your chocolate ready in the morning.'

"This greatly surprised me ; so that, without replying to her question, I asked her name. She said : ' My name is Mary.' ' Mary, then,' said I, ' for heaven's sake, tell me whether I am brought here to die or not.' ' I have told you already,' replied she, ' that you come here to be one of the happiest ladies in the world.'

"Now we went to bed ; but the fear of death prevented me the whole night from sleeping. Mary waked ; she was surprised to find me up, but soon rose ; and, after leaving me for about half an hour, she brought in two cups of chocolate and some biscuits on a silver plate. I drank one cup of chocolate, and desired her to drink the other, which she did. When we had done I said : ' Well, Mary, can you give me any account of the reasons for my being brought here ?' To which she answered : ' Not yet, Madam ; you must have patience,' and immediately slipped out of the room.

"In about half an hour after she brought a great quantity of elegant clothes, suitable to a lady of the highest rank, and told me I must dress myself. Among several trinkets which accompanied the clothes I observed, with surprise, a snuff-box, on the lid of which was a picture of Don Francisco Tirregon. This unravelled to me the mystery of my confinement, and, at the same time, roused my imagination to contrive how to evade receiving the present. If I absolutely refused it, I thought immediate death must ensue ; and to accept it was giving him too much encouragement against my honour. At length I hit upon a device, and said to Mary : ' Pray present my respects to Don Francisco Tirregon, and tell him that, as I could not bring my clothes along with me last night, modesty permits me to accept of these garments, which are requisite to keep me decent ; but, since I do

not take snuff, I hope his Lordship will excuse me in not accepting his box.'

"Mary went with my answer, and soon returned with Don Francisco's picture, elegantly set in gold and richly embellished with diamonds. This message accompanied it: that his Lordship had made a mistake; his intent not being to send me a snuff-box, but his picture. I was at a great loss what to do, when Mary said: 'Pray, Madam, take my poor advice. Accept of the picture, and everything else which his Lordship sends you; for, if you do not, he can compel you to do what he pleases, and put you to death when he thinks proper, without anybody being able to defend you. But, if you are obliging to him,' continued she, 'he will be very kind, and you will be as happy as a queen. You will have elegant apartments to live in, beautiful gardens to range in, and agreeable ladies to visit you; therefore I advise you to send a civil answer, and not even to decline a visit from his Lordship, or perhaps you may repent of your disrespect.'

"'Oh, my God!' exclaimed I; 'must I sacrifice my honour to my fears, and give up my virtue to his despotic power? Alas! what can I do? To resist is vain. If I oppose his desires, force will obtain what chastity refuses.' I now fell into the greatest distress, and told Mary to return what answer she thought proper.

"She said she was glad of my humble submission, and ran to acquaint Don Francisco with it. In a few minutes she returned, with joy in her countenance, telling me his Lordship would honour me with his company to supper. 'And now give me leave, Madame,' says she, 'to call you mistress, for I am to wait upon you. I have been in the holy office fourteen years, and know all the customs perfectly well; but, as silence is imposed upon me, under pain of death, I can answer only such questions as immediately relate to your own person.

But I would advise you never to oppose the holy father's will ; and, if you see any young ladies about, never ask them any questions. You may divert yourself sometimes among them, but must never tell them anything. Three days hence you will dine with them, and at all times you may have music and other amenities. In fine, you will be so happy that you will not wish to go abroad ; and, when your time has expired, the holy fathers will send you out of this country and marry you to some nobleman.'

"After saying these words she left me, overwhelmed with astonishment, and scarcely knowing what to think. As soon as I recovered myself, I began to look about, and, finding a closet, I opened it, and perceived that it was filled with books. They were chiefly upon historical and profane subjects ; none on religious matters. I selected a book of history, and so passed the interval, with some degree of satisfaction, till dinner time.

"Dinner was served up with the greatest elegance, and consisted of all that could gratify the most luxurious appetite. When dinner was over, Mary left me, and told me if I wanted anything I might ring a bell, which she pointed out to me.

"I read a book to amuse myself during the afternoon, and at seven in the evening *Don Francisco* came to visit me in his night-gown and cap, not with the gravity of an inquisitor, but with the gaiety of a gallant.

"He saluted me with great respect, and told me that he came to see me in order to show the great regard he had for my family, and to inform me that it was one of my lovers who had procured my confinement, having accused me in matters of religion ; and that the informations were taken, and the sentence pronounced against me, to be burnt alive in a dry pan, with a gradual fire ; but that he (*Don Francisco*), out of pity and love to my family, had stopped the execution of it.

"These words were like daggers. I dropped at his feet, and said: 'Ah, my lord; have you stopped the execution forever?'

"He replied: 'That belongs to yourself only,' and abruptly wished me good night.

"When he was gone I burst into tears. Mary entered and asked what could make me cry so bitterly. I answered: 'Oh, Mary! what is the meaning of the dry pan and gradual fire; for I am to die by them?'

"'Alas, Madam,' said she, 'never fear; you shall see, ere long, the dry pan and gradual fire; but they are made for those who oppose the holy father's will, not for you who are so good as to obey it. But, pray,' said she, 'was Don Francisco very obliging?'

"'I don't know,' said I; 'for he frightened me out of my wits by his discourse. He saluted me with civility, but left me in an abrupt manner.'

"'Well,' said Mary, 'you do not know his temper. He is extremely obliging to them that are kind to him; but, if they are disobedient, he is as unmerciful as Nero; so, for your own sake, take care to oblige him in all respects; and now, dear Madam, pray go to supper and be easy.'

"I went to supper, indeed, and afterwards to bed; but I could neither eat nor sleep; for the thoughts of the dry pan and gradual fire deprived me of appetite and banished drowsiness.

CHAPTER LIV.

The Lady of the Seraglio's Narrative continued—A Sight of the Dry Pan, the Wheel, &c.—The Immoral Command of Don Francisco Tirregon—The Alternatives of Dishonour or Death—Salutations of the Other Members of the Religious Seraglio—"Again Conducted to Don Francisco's Chamber"—Consigned to the Dungeon—The Communications of Leonora—The Secrets of the Religious Seraglio—Relieved by the French—The Testimony of the Torture Chamber of Nuremberg—Cant and Mammon.

"EARLY the next morning Mary said that, as nobody was stirring, if I would promise her secrecy, she would show me the dry pan and gradual fire; so, taking me downstairs, she brought me to a large room, with a heavy iron door, which she opened. Within was an oven, with a fire in at the time, and a large brass pan upon it, with a cover of the same, and a lock affixed. In the next room there was a great wheel, covered on both sides with thick boards. Opening a little window in the centre, Mary desired me to look in with a candle: there I saw all the circumference of the wheel set with sharp razors, which made me shudder.

"Mary then took me to a pit, which was full of venomous animals. On my expressing great horror at the sight, she said: 'Now, my good mistress, I'll tell you the use of these things. The dry pan is for heretics and those who oppose the holy fathers' will and pleasure. They are thrown alive into the pan, being first stripped

naked ; and, the cover being locked down, the executioner begins putting a small fire into the oven, and by degrees he augments it, till the body is reduced to ashes. The wheel is designed for those who speak against the Pope, or the holy fathers of the Inquisition ; they are put into that machine through the little door, which is locked after them, and then the wheel is turned swiftly round, till they are cut to pieces. The pit is for those who condemn the images and refuse to give proper respect to ecclesiastical personages ; they are thrown into the pit, and so become the food of poisonous reptiles.’

“ We went back again to my chamber, and Mary said that another day she would show me the torments designed for other transgressors ; but I was in such agonies at what I had already seen that I begged to be terrified with no more such sights. She soon after left me, but not without enjoining my strict obedience to Don Francisco ; ‘ for, if you do not comply with his will,’ says she, ‘ the dry pan and gradual fire will be your fate.’ ”

“ The horrors which the sight of these things, and Mary’s expressions, impressed on my mind almost bereft me of my senses, and left me in such a state of stupefaction that I seemed to have no manner of will of my own.

“ The next morning Mary said : ‘ Now let me dress you as attractively as possible, for you must go and wish Don Francisco good morning and breakfast with him.’ When I was dressed she conveyed me through a gallery into his apartment, where I found he was in bed. He ordered Mary to withdraw, and to serve up breakfast in about two hours’ time. When Mary was gone he commanded me to undress myself and come to bed to him. The manner in which he spoke and the dreadful ideas with which my mind was filled so terribly frightened me that I undressed myself, without knowing what I did,

and stepped into bed, insensible of the indecency I was transacting ; so totally had the instinct of self-preservation absorbed all else, and so entirely were the ideas of delicacy obliterated by the force of terror.

“ Thus, to avoid the dry pan, did I entail upon myself perpetual infamy, and, to escape the so-much-dreaded gradual fire, give myself up to the flames of lust. Wretched alternative where the only choice is an excruciating death or shameless pollution !

“ Mary came at the expiration of two hours, and served us with chocolate in the most submissive manner, kneeling down by the bedside to present it. When I was dressed Mary took me into a very delightful apartment, which I had not yet seen. It was furnished with the most costly elegance ; but what gave me the greatest astonishment was the prospect from its windows of a beautiful garden and a fine meandering river. Mary told me that the young ladies she had mentioned would come to pay their compliments to me before dinner, and begged of me to remember her advice as to keeping a prudent guard over my tongue.

“ In a few minutes a great number of very beautiful young ladies, richly dressed, entered the room, and, successively embracing me, wished me joy. I was so surprised that I was unable to reply to their compliments, which one of them perceiving said : ‘ Madam, the solitude of this place will affect you in the beginning ; but when you begin to feel the pleasures and amusements you may enjoy you will abandon your pensive thoughts. We, at present, beg the honour of your company to dine with us to-day, and henceforward three days in the week.’ I returned the ladies suitable thanks in general terms, and went to dinner, in which the most exquisite and savoury dishes were served up, with the most delicate and pleasant fruits and comfits. The room was long, with two tables on each side, and a third in.

the front. I reckoned fifty-two young ladies, the eldest not exceeding twenty-four years of age. There were five maid-servants, besides Mary, to wait upon us ; but Mary confined her attention to me only. After dinner we retired to a capacious gallery, where some of the ladies played on musical instruments, a few diverted themselves with cards, and the rest amused themselves by walking about. Mary, at length, entered the gallery, and said : ‘Ladies, this is a day of recreation, and so you may go into whichever rooms you please, till eight o’clock in the evening.’

“The ladies unanimously agreed to adjourn to my apartment. Here we found a most elegant cold collation, of which all partook, passing the time in innocent conversation and harmless mirth ; but no one mentioned a word concerning the Inquisition or the holy fathers, or gave even the most distant hint concerning the cause of her confinement.

“At eight o’clock Mary rang a bell, which was a signal for each and all to retire to their respective apartments ; and I was conducted to the chamber of Don Francisco, where I slept as before.

“The next morning Mary brought me a richer dress than any I had yet had ; and, as soon as I retired to my apartment, all the ladies came to wish me good morning, dressed much richer than on the preceding day. We passed the time till eight o’clock in the evening in much the same manner as on the previous day. At that time the bell rung, the separation took place, and I was again conducted to Don Francisco’s chamber. The next morning I had a garment richer than any of the former, and the ladies accosted me in apparel still more sumptuous than ever. The transactions of the two former days were repeated on the third, and the evening concluded in a similar manner.

“On the fourth morning Mary came into Don Fran-

cisco's chamber, and told me I must immediately rise, for a lady desired to see me in her own chamber. Mary spoke with a kind of authority which surprised me ; but, as Don Francisco did not utter a syllable, I got up and obeyed. Mary then conveyed me to a dismal dungeon, not eight feet in length ; and said, sternly, to me : ' This is your room, and this lady your bed-fellow and companion.' Having thus delivered herself, she bounced out of the room, and left me in the utmost consternation.

" After remaining any considerable time in the most dreadful agonies, tears came to my relief, and I exclaimed : ' What is this place, dear lady ! Is it merely a scene of enchantment, or is it a real hell upon earth ? Alas ! I have lost my honour and my soul forever !'

" The lady took me by the hand, and said, in a sympathising tone of voice : ' Dear sister—for this is the name I shall henceforth give you—forbear to weep and grieve ; for you can only by such extravagant conduct draw upon yourself the tortures of a cruel death. Your misfortunes, and those of all the ladies you have seen here, are exactly of a piece. You suffer nothing we have not suffered before you ; but we dare not show our grief for fear of greater evils. Pray take courage, and hope in God, for he will surely deliver us from this hellish place ; but be sure you display no uneasiness before Mary, who is the only instrument either of our torment or comfort. Have patience until we go to bed, and then I will venture to tell you more of the matter.

" My perplexity and vexation were inexpressible ; but my new companion, Leonora, prevailed on me to disguise my misery from Mary. I dissembled tolerably well when she came to bring our dinner ; but I could not help remarking, in my own mind, the difference between this repast and those I had before partaken of.

This consisted of plain, common food only, and of that a scanty allowance, with one plate and one knife only and a fork for each, which she took away as soon as we had dined.

“When we were in bed, Leonora was as good as her word ; and, upon my solemn promise of secresy, thus began to open her mind to me : ‘My dear sister, you think your case very hard ; but all the ladies in the house have gone through the same shame and misery. In time you will know all their stories, as they hope to know yours. I suppose Mary has been the chief instrument of your fear, as she has been of ours ; and I warrant she has shown you some of the horrible places, and that, at the very thought of them, you were so terrified that you chose, as we have done, by shame to redeem yourself from death. By what has happened to us, we know that Don Francisco has been your tyrant ; for the three colours of raiment are the distinguishing tokens of the three holy fathers. The red silk belongs to Don Francisco, the blue to Don Guerrero, and the green to Don Aliaga ; and they always give these colours (after the farce of changing garments and the short-lived gallantries are over) to those ladies whom they bring here for their respective uses. We are strictly commanded to express all the demonstrations of joy, and to be very merry for three days, when a young lady first comes among us, as we did in your case, and as you must do in the case of others. But, afterwards, we live like the most wretched prisoners, without seeing any body save Mary and the other maid-servants, over whom Mary exercises a kind of superiority, acting as housekeeper. We all dine in the great hall three days in the week ; and when any one of the inquisitors has a mind for any one of his slaves, Mary comes about nine o’clock and leads her to his apartment. Certain nights Mary leaves the doors of our chambers open, and that is a token that one of the

inquisitors has a mind to come during the night ; but he comes so silently that we are ignorant whether he is our patron or not. If one of us happen to be with child, she is removed into a better chamber till she is delivered ; but during the whole of her pregnancy she never sees anybody save the person appointed to attend her. As soon as the child is born it is taken away and carried we know not whither ; for we never hear a syllable mentioned about it afterwards. I have been in this house six years, was not fourteen when the officers took me from my father's house, and I have had one child. There are, at this present time, fifty-two young ladies in the house ; but we annually lose six or eight, though we know not what becomes of them, or whither they are sent. This, however, does not diminish our number, for new victims are always brought in to supply the places of those who are removed hence ; and I remember at one time to have seen seventy-three ladies here together. Our continual torment is to reflect that, when the holy fathers are tired of any of the ladies, they certainly put to death those they pretend to send away ; for it is only natural to suppose that they are too politic to suffer their atrocious and infernal villainies to be discovered by permitting their deflowered and degraded victims to go out into the world and possibly divulge the secrets of pious hypocrisy and shameless infamy. Hence our situation is miserable indeed, and we can only pray that the Almighty will pardon those crimes we are compelled to commit. Therefore, my dear sister, arm yourself with patience, for that is the only palliative to give you comfort ; and put a firm confidence in the providence of Almighty God.'

" 'This discourse of Leonora greatly affected me ; but I found everything to be as she told me in the course of time, and I took care to appear as cheerful as possible before Mary. In this loathsome place and plight I con-

tinued eighteen months, during which time eleven ladies were taken from the house ; but, in lieu of them, we got nineteen new ones, which made our number just sixty at the time we were so happily relieved by the French officers, and providentially restored to the pleasures of society and to the arms of our parents and friends.

“On that happy day of our delivery by the French troops the door of my dungeon was opened by the gentleman who is now my husband, who, with the utmost expedition, sent both Leonora and me to his father’s ; and (soon after the campaign was over) when he returned home he thought proper to make me his wife, in which position I enjoy a recompense for all the miseries I have suffered.”

And thus closes a simple and unadorned tale of ignominy, which might make God abdicate heaven in shame and the fiercest Gehenna of hell blush redder at the recital of human guilt. To those who know only the nineteenth century and its silken shams, the tale, with its frightful references to torture-engines, to ovens burning out human life under conditions in which every moment was an agonised eternity, may seem the night mare of a morbid brain rather than a palpable fact that ever obtained in the world of living men. The hollow revolving cylinder, with its inside armoury of fixed razors, may, to those easily soothed invertebrates who believe all they are told and look only as far as they are advised, seem merely an unreal horror in an anti-Christian student’s morbid dream. But, by heaven, it is not so. That oven actually burned the throbbing life out of human beings like you and me ; these revolving razors were clogged with human flesh, tangled with human hair, and rank with human gore, and all in the name of the terrible Nazarene, whom I am asked to bless, and whose memory I anathematise.

With regard to Christianity’s hells of torment which.

she built upon earth, the written word remaineth. And this written word is vouched for with horrid emphasis by the relics of earth's pandemonia which yet remain. True, for the most part, the torture-engines are now dust and rust, and mingled with the indistinguishable *débris* of the joints they dislocated and the bones they shattered. The yellow corn waves over the site of the *auto-da-fé*, and the flaming sunflower sways in the wind where the *san benito* was known of yore. In and around ruins, shapeless, roofless, the green grass waves and the wild-flower blows where there was blackness around the stake ; and, on the fearful floor where the dark blood of agony fell drop by drop, on the green moss and weeds, morning and evening the dew-drops of mercy fall. And in the hush of her more peaceful to-day, Christianity tries to forget the guilt of her appalling yesterday. But Nuremberg in Bavaria remains, and will not allow her to forget. There, if nowhere else, is still an olden torture establishment intact.* Let the Bavarian city speak, and tell whether the testimony of the woman of Arragon which I have just given is likely to be a fable or no. From Nuremberg let the Iron Virgin speak. Let the Spiked Rollers cry aloud. Let the Iron Chair with the two great stones lift up their voices and cry over all the nations. Let the ladles for the molten lead, let the cradles with the spikes, let the upright and the horizontal rack, let the memory of the blood-stained Pegnitz and the deadly Rhine, chant aloud their palinode of damnation.

And such instruments were used by the Christian Church to compel woman, whom this said Christian Church has "elevated," to yield to dishonour ! "Oh," say you invertebrate apologist, "you are confounding

* See Saladin's "Historical Pamphlets : The Inquisition" and Wylie's "History of Protestantism."

the Church with Christianity. It was not Christianity that did all this ; it was the Church." Was it indeed? But, if the Church was not practically Christianity, where, in the name of God, was Christianity? For weary century upon century the Church held undisputed sway. If the Church during all these centuries was not the exponent and expression of Christianity, who or what was that exponent and expression? Was that exponent an ignorant, rapacious, and bloodthirsty nobility, whose business was a mutual cutting of throats? Was the expression of Christianity an utterly illiterate vassalage, hardly elevated, if at all, above the beasts of the field? If none of these were the exponent or expression of Christianity, who was, what was—what else existed through the long lapse of the Dark Ages?

I have been told that Christianity is not responsible for the malign indictments I have laid to her charge. I have been assured that I have accused her of guilt for which she is not responsible, but the innate turpitude of human nature. He who told me expressed a falsehood ; he who assured me uttered a lie. The innate turpitude of human nature has found its foulest venue in her convents and confessionals, and its cruellest and bloodiest outlet in her Crusaders and Dragonnades and Inquisitions and Persecutions. She is the vicious wet-nurse of Superstition and the twin-sister of Ignorance. And in no attitude is she more conspicuously a canting sham and a living lie than when she claims to have "elevated" woman. She has "elevated" her by resorting to the oven to terrify her out of her virtue ; she has "elevated" her by using the rack in the interests of rape even in the churches and abbeys whose organs thundered forth the anthem to Christ, and whose windows were emblazoned with the heraldry of God. In the interests of Cant and Mammon let them be silent who may ; but I will not be silent. Confront the fiendish mockery of the Chris-

tian Church who may, I shall do so to the last drop or my blood, to the last sigh of my breath. Against her I have registered the verdict of relentless and unending war. Against her my every thought shall be excogitated under a helmet, my every line written with a sword, and my every period rounded with a battle-axe.

CHAPTER LV.

Sacred Embryology—The Baptism of the Fœtus—Craisson and Others on the Soul of the Fœtus—Immoral Influence of even the Protestant Clergy—Admissions of a Religious Journal—Clerical Scandals—Evidence of Lynn Linton and Buckle—The Child of the Family that is Trained for the Church.

I COULD occupy volumes in showing that no coryphæus of crime ever equalled the Church in sounding every note in the devilish gamut of nastiness. She not only found sanction and mandate in "our most holy religion" to debauch woman in the midst of life, but to outrage her on the verge of death. In the religious houses the priest could, with impunity, storm the citadel of virtue with the rack, the wheel, and the oven; and from the cloister he could come out into the world, and with his syringe and pious jugglery enter the chamber of death and desecrate it with his disgusting and horrible rites. In the opinion of the Church orthodox, baptism is indispensable to salvation: the child that is not *damped* shall be *damned*. Sprinkling water on a babe with mean and miserable incantation will make it too wet to burn and render it incombustible in the flames of hell. Therefore, if a pregnant woman were on the point of death, the unborn child must be baptised by injection.

But, even more barbarous, if less disgusting, the "elevated" woman was not infrequently cut open before she expired, and possibly when she would have survived, in order that the fœtus might be extracted and baptised. It is a fundamental dogma of Catholicism that the child

born and dying without baptism cannot be saved. The doctrine is further taught that the soul is joined to the foetus before birth. The teaching of Catholic theologians is that a pregnant woman in danger of death is bound, after duly receiving the sacraments, to submit to the Cæsarian operation, in order that her offspring may be brought forth alive and baptised. "*Ipsa* [the mother] *tenetur vitam spiritualem proliis vite temporali præferre.*" These are Liguori's own words. Craisson, whose work on sacred embryology is much more recent than Liguori's, declares that every pregnant woman should be opened after death, as soon as possible, and the extracted foetus baptised. Craisson declares that the post-mortem extraction and baptism of the foetus should, whenever possible, be performed by doctors; in default of doctors, midwives, he declares, are bound to do so. If there are no midwives, any ordinary person is bound to secure the soul of the foetus and render it happy for eternity by baptism. The Jesuit theologian, Rousselot, declares that priests themselves should learn how to perform the operation, in order to teach others when occasion arises. Craisson discusses the question as to whether the priest should perform the Cæsarian operation on the dead woman, in case no other person can or will. On this point he is a little doubtful, as there are authorities for and against. Cardinal Gousset, it appears, is against the priest performing the operation, as he might be pursued by the civil tribunals. But, on the other hand, Monsignor Bovier, Dens, and Monsignor Deschamps, Archbishop of Malines, in Belgium, would not dispense priests from this obligation. Deschamps, in a letter to the *Univers* (March 15th, 1869), expressed himself affirmatively on the matter. Craisson gives full particulars as to the performance of the Cæsarian operation, and we are informed, if more suitable instruments are not at hand, it may be performed with a razor. Craisson devotes several pages to

the post-mortem extraction of the foetus. Debreyne, in his work, "Examen de Deux Questions" (1846), declares that the foetus should be baptised even if it were no larger than a grain of barley.

Of course, it must be understood that theologians declare it to be the duty of the mother to sacrifice her life in order that the child may be baptised *only* in extreme cases, where the medical attendants declare that, if they are to save the mother, the child must die, and *vice versa*. In these terrible alternatives, Catholic theologians hold it to be the duty of the mother, after duly preparing herself for death, to sacrifice her life, in order that she may confer eternal salvation on her offspring by enabling it to be baptised alive.

Moreover, although the Confessional and its adjuncts are the master-trap by which Priestcraft seizes and strangles the virtue of the maidens and matrons of Christendom, Priestcraft can fight its way hell-ward right effectively without the aid of this sharp, poisoned, and deadly instrument. The sleek and canting but essentially ignorant evangelist who bans Papistry and Ritualism and denounces the Confessional is, nevertheless, dangerous in his way to the purity and highest interests of woman. I, the enemy of the clerical imposture, allege this, with a positive knowledge and experience that what I allege is true; but, occasionally, the clergy themselves, in, for their order, fatuous candour, admit the terrible impeachment. Only recently a clerical organ published in New York* exculpated as follows the ministers of the faith that has done so much to "elevate" woman:—

"We infer from what we hear in private conversation, and what we read in the public journals, that the public think it very marvellous that so many of the clergy are

* *The Pulpit*, November, 1867.

wrecked upon the rock of sensuality. The astonishment is not astonishing. People who do not make a habit of thinking will hardly be thoughtful enough to know the fact in reference to this matter. The fact is, there is no profession, class, or avocation so exposed to or tempted by the devil of sensuality as the ministry.....No man in the world has so few conditions imposed upon him at the threshold of society as the clergyman. His passport to society is almost a *carte blanche*. Women of both states and all ages are his companions, socially and professionally. The rules of social intercommunication between the sexes are, in this case, virtually suspended. What would be indiscretion with other men is a matter of course with him. He shares or is alternately admitted to the privacy of the sick room with the physician.

"Whenever spiritual advice is called for, there he reigns alone and unmolested. And he is a sedentary man, of nervous, sanguine temperament, and, like all men of this sort and life, feels the law of his flesh warring against the law of his religion. None have such passions as those of a sedentary life. In proportion to the idleness of the muscles is the activity of the passions. The devil tempts the industrious; idle men tempt the devil. The clergy should give more earnest heed to 'muscular Christianity.' But not only is their life afflicted with deficiency in bodily exercise, but it is additionally cursed with temptations that take advantage of this physical feebleness. Considering, then, this sandy-haired composition, this nervous combustibility, this superabundance of sexual heat from a deficiency in physical exertion, and this extraordinary exposure to the wiles of the wicked, and the insinuating influences of unsuspicion, the marvel—nay, the miracle—is *that not so many, but so few, of the clergy fall into the sins of sensuality. The wonder is, not that so many yield, but that so many stand firm.*"

The foregoing is significant as appearing in a devout organ, run in the interests of the Christian Church, and appealing to the clergy for support, and no biassed and envenomed utterance of mine. The appalling truth is, the priests of the Scarlet Lady may slay their tens of thousands, but the ministers of the Reformation Frump succeed in slaying their thousands. Have what newspaper you will laid upon your breakfast-table, you meet with paragraphs of which the following* is a mild specimen, with a truly lamentable frequency :—

The Shropshire clerical scandal, which has for the past two months created such a sensation throughout the county, has entered on a new and final stage. It will be remembered that, two months ago, the Rev. H. G. Wakefield, Chaplain of the Shrewsbury Prison, was accused in the columns of the *Wellington Journal* with sending a number of abominably obscene letters to servant girls in Shrewsbury, and that, as a consequence of such conduct, three or four of them were now leading lives of open immorality. The rev. gentleman indignantly denied the accusation, and at once instituted legal proceedings against the paper in question, claiming heavy damages for libel. The case was to have come on at Shropshire assizes at the beginning of March. On Monday last, however, the rev. gentleman mysteriously left Shrewsbury, and this morning the editor of the Shropshire *Evening News* received a communication from him, in which he makes a clean confession of his guilt. He further states that he does not urge anything in extenuation of his "horrible and diabolical" conduct. The Governor of Shrewsbury prison also received a letter this morning from the accused, in which he states that, so far as he is concerned, the chaplaincy is vacant, and that he does not intend to return to his post again. Intense excitement has been caused in Shrewsbury by the turn of affairs, as it had all along been thought that the rev. gentleman was innocent of the charge. The high position he held in the town to a great extent accounted for this sceptical spirit, and, consequently, the public sentiment has been greatly shocked by these revelations. The accused has a wife and children, and his father, who is over ninety years of age, holds a prominent position in the county.

* From London newspapers of February 2nd, 1888.

Here is another merely specimen minute in that awful minute-book of the passing hour, the newspaper. Many of the sins of the clergy could not be commented on by any of God's creatures except a pole-cat. We give the specimen paragraph, but can give no word of comment :—

To-day,* at the Guildhall Police Court, Charles Hart Burleigh and Francis George Widdows were charged before Alderman Sir J. C. Lawrence with conspiring together to commit a criminal offence with a boy named Charles Day and others.

Mr. Humphreys, instructed by the Governors of Christ's Hospital, appeared to prosecute. He said the charge against the prisoners related to acts committed in January, February, and March, and he was afraid that, before the investigation closed, very much more serious charges would be proved—namely, the commission of the offences. One of the prisoners called himself the Rev. Charles Hart Burleigh and the Rev. Charles Burleigh Hart, while the other described himself as an ex-Franciscan monk, and as being connected with the Church of St. Martin Luther, King Edward Road, South Hackney. He had in his possession a handbill announcing a lecture by that person. Three boys, who were scholars of Christ's Hospital, would be called. The Governors of Christ's Hospital had considered it their duty to place the matter before the Public Prosecutor, and, in the event of his declining to take it up, they themselves would continue the prosecution.

Burleigh here stated that he was not in London on the dates mentioned.

Detective-Sergeant Mitchell stated that he arrested Burleigh about four o'clock yesterday afternoon, just as he left a house in the Hampstead Road with a young man. He refused his address. About seven o'clock the same evening he arrested Widdows in South Hackney.

Both prisoners asked for bail, Widdows mentioning that he had engagements every evening this week which he would like to keep.

The Alderman : I think, under the circumstances, it would be better to forego them. (Laughter.)

Widdows : That is a matter of opinion.

Mr. Humphreys opposed the application, and the prisoners were accordingly remanded without bail.

It is always the piety of the miscreant that is his or her sheet-anchor when acting the pirate on the high seas of iniquity. It was because Mrs. Edward Parmelee was so godly that she could afford with impunity to be so shameless ; and the sacred calling and "high position" of the Rev. H. G. Wakefield inspired grave doubt in the public mind as to the truth of the statement in the local press as to the rev. gentleman's sensuality and villany. To the Daughter of Man the most dangerous enemy is the Minister of God.

In the horrid string of dirty parsons, a small specimen of which is given in a former part of this work* is composed almost entirely of hemp from the blessed field of the Reformation. The great majority in Mr. Billing's muster-roll of dirt belong, not to the Scarlet Lady, but to the Azure Frump.

Well may E. Lynn Linton† exclaim : "Alas, for the main body of clerical proselytisers if the personal love of their female disciples were accounted to them for sin ! and good-bye to the influence of the priesthood if it might deal only with the intellect of man, and not trade on the heart of woman !—that heart, with all its strength and weakness, its hopes, its fears, its passions, its desires, on which they build their stronghold and found their empire. That would, indeed, be the lamp without the oil—the thorns laid beneath the pot and no fire at hand to make them burn."

Well may Buckle‡ remark : "The increase of the power of the clergy is incompatible with the interests of civilisation. If, therefore, any religion adopt as its creed the necessity of such an increase, it becomes the bounden duty of every friend to humanity to do his

* See "Woman," vol i., pp. 240-2.

† "Under which Lord?"

‡ "History of Civilisation."

utmost either to destroy the creed, or, failing that, to overturn the religion."

Paul must have had the Christian minister prophetically in view when he penned the words: "Of this sort are they which creep into houses and lead captive silly women, laden with sins, led away with divers lusts."*

The clerical dogs that have pretended to watch the sheep are they themselves the very wolves that have devoured them. The very heredity of the parson militates against his being a manly man, strong and valorous in conserving the honour of either man or woman. He is, as a rule, the wastrel of the family, unfitted for the profession of arms, of medicine, or law. Instead of fighting his way valiantly among men, he becomes a sort of privileged, whining poodle among women. Only the other day an honest man, in spite of his being a parson,† spake thus: "It must be admitted that in many pulpits there is moral cowardice and mental inaptitude. The trouble lies largely away back in the home. If a boy has ready adaptation to figures, the father says he shall be a merchant. If another boy has a creative genius and is ready with his pencil, he is trained for an architect. If another boy has large language (to use a phrenological term) and good argumentative powers, the father says he shall be a lawyer. If another boy loves pictures and cares more for the beautiful than anything else, he is made an artist. But if in that family of strong and healthy sons there should be a narrow-chested, hollow-eyed, sickly, moping, lazy, pious boy who cries easily, the doting mother says he is called to the ministry, and they make him a preacher.....Emasculated men, with insufficient brains to be a lawyer and insufficient nerve to be a surgeon, drift into the pulpit and preach humdrum and humbug to a disgusted pew."

* 2 Timothy iii. 6.

† Rev. C. B. Mitchell, of Pittsburg.

CHAPTER LVI.

Holy Harems—The Forlorn Hope—A Vision of the Coming Time—Conventual Infanticide—Non-conventual Infanticide—The Children of “Unfortunates”—Dying in an Old Tea-chest—Thrown into the Fireplace—“To a woman it is sweet to be loved”—Starvation and Desperation—“A terrible cut in the throat”—A Fiend Mother—Prospective Retribution.

FROM Boccaccio's "Decameron" down to Michelet's "La Sorcière," the typical voluptuary is a monk and the best equipped harem is the convent. To this fact we have the testimony of hundreds of writers during hundreds of years. There is no teaching in all the pages of history more obvious to and more generally known than this by all those who have even glanced at the literature and annals of Europe; and yet, in the interests of tuft-hunting mawkishness and the repulsive insincerity of conventional sham, there are abundance of sleek Ananiases in our cathedrals and chapels ready to turn up their eyes and whine that Christianity has "elevated the woman and cast a halo of sacred innocence round the tender years of the child."

Apparently one of the first duties of a Christian minister is to sear his moral conscience, and, relying upon the impotence of ignorance, establish the pulpit firmly upon a foundation of fraud. Well may Grote say of the clergy: "They have the strongest interest in the depravation of the human intellect. For the demand for their services as agents for the temporal aid of the

Deity altogether depends upon human ignorance and incapacity, and is exactly proportional to it."

I, in the straggling file which marches a hundred years in advance of the age in which I live, brandish the sword round my lonely and forsaken head, and, in the name of the handful of heroes of the forlorn hope who rank around me, I cry to the battalions of the race to follow and help me to storm the citadel of Priestcraft ; and I reckon not if, when the day close, my heart's blood is red on my broken sword if, by the unconquerable valour of my comrades and me, the mock temple of the Lord has been ruined and razed, and priestcraft has been hurled to hell. Witness, High God, whose name Religion has vulgarised and degraded, that I am no venal writer, who burns the midnight oil for the sheen of Mammon's gold or the green chaplet of Ambition's laurel. I write because I love mankind and would redeem them from the dungeon into which they have been thrown by their pseudo "Redeemer." He who cannot hate cannot love. Hate and Love are the reverse and obverse sides of the same medal. Loving humanity, I hate humanity's enemies ; and, therefore, bitter, rancorous, and implacable, I assault priestcraft with foot, horse, and artillery, with studied research, with righteous rage, with pitiless ridicule.

On a rock, in the gloom, I sit on the cismortal shore of the sea of Time, and the wild wind waves around me the mantle of the prophetic seer. 'Through a rift in the clouds there falls a glimmer of light from the stars. And, in the Mystery-realm that the flash of the prophet's eye kindles into being, I behold the dawn from the horizon of a new heaven upon the rim of a new earth. That heaven holds no God who is a tyrant ; that earth holds no Man who is a slave. And, away back on the dark and trampled path which Humanity trod from the Then to the Now, I behold my own grave amid the

ruined altars of ten thousand churches—an appropriate funeral cairn.

It has been alleged against the clerical or convent brothels* that they are more criminal than the ordinary lay brothels, in that they involve a wholesale infanticide. This extenuating plea on behalf of the lay establishments I am willing to admit, because the ordinary lay “unfortunate” is, or shortly becomes, sterile. But “the halo of sacred innocence” which Christianity has cast over millions of children has been to strangle them as soon as born and bury them in quicklime in the convent grounds,† the grounds which the priests of God had “consecrated” to God, “with candle, with book, and with knell.”

“Holy Mary, we believe
Without sin thou didst conceive ;
Holy Mary, thus believing,
May we sin without conceiving ”

formed, in monkish Latinity, part of a hymnal prayer of the nuns ; but in spite of it they *did* conceive !

Still, although the earthquake of the Reformation shook the foundations of the Christian Church, infanticide is an abundant horror in Christendom. In Christian Russia the mother places a plank upon her child, and sits quietly down upon the plank till she presses out of the babe the life she gave it.‡ Is the babe likely to mistake that plank for the “halo of sacred innocence” ? The inmates of even the laical houses of ill-fame are not always sterile ; and, in a city like this from amid the abominations of which I write, there are thousands upon thousands of women who are not regular and professional prostitutes, but who are continent till ever and

* See D'Aubigné's “Hist. Ref.,” vol. i., pp. 18, 19.

† See, “The Confessional, Romish and Anglican : An Exposure,” *passim*.

‡ See Tolstoi's “The Powers of Darkness.”

anon absolute want stares them in the face. Many of these pawn nearly every article of their attire for bread to keep soul and body together, and it is only when they have nothing else to sell that they sell their starved and attenuated bodies to Christian men in a country which has been Christian for far over a thousand years. I have met more than one woman breakfastless, dinnerless, supperless, shoeless, and more than half-naked, and even yet resisting the merciless hand of want that was thrusting her into the abyss of shame which her soul abhorred. It is on such occasions as these that I wish I were rich. How often have I cursed my evil star that I was able to save a heroic sister only for to-day from the gulf into which she must inevitably fall to-morrow. O maids and matrons of England, if you only knew what I know, you would judge more kindly of many of the erring. You know that they have fallen ; but, without offence, God only knows whether you yourselves could have stood in the heroic conflict in which they fell. These women frequently have children : I have seen many of them in their dens of squalor, and have watched their doom of hopeless misery. The following, cut from a newspaper which lies before me, is only a fair specimen of their birth and life, and death and epitaph :—

Dr. George Danford Thomas held an inquest at St. Pancras Coroner's Court relative to the death of William Keeling, aged eight months, son of a single woman, whose death took place at 13, Brighton Street, Gray's Inn Road, under the following circumstances. Alice Keeling, the mother, who described herself as an unfortunate, stated that she was confined in the St. Pancras Workhouse, and she left there when the deceased was six weeks old, and at first she put it out to nurse, after which she took the child to live with her. For the last two months witness had been living in an empty room in an empty house, and it was her practice to go out nightly and leave the child in the room, and a person who was staying in another room of the house used to see to it when she

was out if she heard it cry. On Wednesday week she went out, and on her returning to the room the following day she heard it was dead.

The Coroner said that the information he received about this case was that the deceased's mother was in the habit of going about at night leading an immoral life, and that she left the child alone for hours together. At last a person went into the room, and found the child lying on a pillow on a box, and in a neglected condition; and, that person being alarmed about its condition, she went and informed the relieving officer, who got the medical officer to see it. It did seem to him that the mother, knowing her condition, should have stayed in the workhouse.

Dr. Sidney Lloyd Smith, one of the medical officers of St. Pancras, stated that he was called to see the deceased, whom he found lying in a dirty box in an empty room, and it was quite dead. The body was much emaciated, and it weighed only $7\frac{1}{2}$ lbs., whereas it should weigh double that weight. He had since made a post-mortem examination, and found that death had resulted from exhaustion while suffering from tubercular meningitis. He found that there was a heap of rags in the room, which he understood was what the mother slept on. The child certainly did not receive that care and attention that it should have received. It would have been impossible for the deceased to have lived, owing to the diseases it was suffering from.

The jury returned a verdict in accordance with the medical evidence, adding that the mother was deserving of censure for having left the child without care and attention.

The coroner censured the mother, and said that he hoped it would be a lesson for her for life.

That child of Alice Keeling dying among filth in an old tea-chest in that empty room is only a specimen drop in the horrible bucket of crime and sorrow which we have among us after we have had tens of thousands of Christian pulpits for century upon century. Where was the "halo of sacred innocence" here "round the tender years of the child"? Was the "halo" the filth in the old tea-chest, was it the poor young mother's bed of rags, was it her life of flaunting infamy?

Another cutting from the same newspaper of the same date is an evidence of the sanctity in which infant life is

held when the existence of the infant entails some disgrace and, what is a far more serious consideration, some expense :—

At Birmingham, James Albert Flint, a painter, was sentenced to three months' hard labour for assaulting his illegitimate son, an infant eleven months old. When the woman who nurses the child called on him for payment he took the infant from her and threw it into the fireplace. When it was rescued from the fireplace Flint threw the child on the floor, kicked it, and attempted to jump on it, but was knocked down by an indignant bystander, who thereby saved its life. It appeared that Flint had previously offered the woman a sovereign to make away with the child.

In this Christian land, illumined and refined by "the blessed Gospel," there are very numerous pious church-going men who have married one wife publicly before the altar and married one or more wives privately before God, asking heaven to witness that he pledged his honour to faithfully observe a sacrament of dishonour. The unlawful wife, often incomparably superior to the lawful wife, but who is minus a dowery, listens to the impassioned pleadings of him who woos her. To a woman it is sweet to be loved. Her heart is an *Æolian* harp, whose strings, touched by the breath of the faintest sigh of the lover, throb and ring and respond in ecstatic melody. Earth hath no joy like that of the maiden when the hitherto vague longings of her being are realised and the thrilling tendrils of her pure and exalted soul twine themselves around the wooer who has wooed and won. Sober forethought is trampled under foot, discretion lifts up her voice in vain. The whisper of "What-will-the-world-say?" is drowned in the sirocco whirlwind of her emotion ; and there is no dream that the apples of Gomorrah may grow upon the myrtle-tree of love. She throws at the feet of her conqueror her honour, her life, her all, and waits not to think that its

being illicit can stain a passion so high and holy as hers. And—the following is the record of her fate :—

Mr. C. C. Lewis, the coroner for South Essex, opened an inquest on the bodies of Bertie Morris Aston, aged two, and Frank Morris Aston, aged one, who were alleged to have been murdered by their mother, a single woman, at 36, Whitfield Road, Upton Park, East Ham, on Monday morning last.*

Miss Alice Jones, of 36, Whitfield Road, Upton Park, deposed that she lived at the address given, with her mother, who was a widow. The mother of the two deceased children came to her house about eight months ago as a Mrs. Styles, and they had always known her by that name. She hired a front room and two back rooms, the back rooms being a kitchen and a scullery. No one visited the woman except a Mrs. Scrivens, who had come with her to hire the apartments. Styles said that her husband was a traveller, that he was at Manchester, and that he was seldom at home. During the eight months she had lived at 36, Whitfield Road no man had come to see her. She never said how she was living. At first she received a letter each week ; but they had not come so regularly since a short time before Christmas. She had waited in suspense for letters to come, and during the last few weeks, while her children had been ill, she had wanted money very badly, and appeared to feel herself neglected. Latterly, however, she had got behind ; and, from what she saw on Monday, it seemed that she had had a hard struggle of it. She had only made general remarks about being neglected. By the last post on Saturday night she received a letter containing a postal order for £1. She then owed five weeks' rent at 3s. 9d. She owed witness 12s., and on the Monday she expected to have to pay the doctor, while she also had to meet a baker's bill. On Sunday morning, after service, witness saw her with the baby, and she did not again see her till Monday morning. On Sunday witness's sister took up a hot dinner to the woman, who remarked, " Why do you trouble about me ? " That day she had nothing in the house. On the Saturday night the order came so late that she was unable to get anything. Each day that week they had given her a meal, knowing that she had nothing herself except a loaf of bread, which she got daily from the baker for the children. On the Monday morning, between half-past seven and eight o'clock, witness found Mrs. Styles sitting on the sofa by the side of the kitchen fire-place. No fire had been lighted. She

* February 20th, 1888.

was in a reclining position, resting her head on her right arm. She was dressed, and had a shawl around her head and shoulders. She was crying. On her saying she had killed her children, witness called Mr. Boocock, the lodger, and all three went up to the bedroom, where the children were lying in the bed. In the room Mrs. Styles said : " I am not married, and I know, if I went to that man this morning, he would not give me any money." She then went on to say : " I tried to cut Frank's throat, and, finding the knife was blunt, I put my hand over his mouth. He was not long in dying." Witness further understood her to say that she put the bedclothes over Bertie, and, as that was not sufficient, she put the pillow on him. Information was afterwards given to the police. After she came downstairs, Mrs. Styles said she was very sorry she had done it ; but something impelled her. She said : " Oh, my poor, dear little babies—to think I loved you so much, and then to have taken your lives." She was a most devoted mother. She spent nearly all her time with her children, and seldom went out. Witness did not think she had ever neglected the children. She thought she gave them their bread and milk, even if she went without food herself.

" I am not married, and I know, if I went to that man this morning, he would not give me any money." Thus the flood of man's faith flows and ebbs. Thus the soul's oblation sinks to the venal obolus. Thus the babes, the blossoms of Eden on the tree of Love, are changed to the black grapes on the vine of Death. Thus does unrequited affection and faith rush into desperation and flame into madness.

The one child of " Mrs. Styles " was aged two years and the other child one. Children born under such an evil star do not, as a rule, live to such a mature age. In the newspapers, the record of the passing hour, there are paragraphs daily, of which the following is one of the least revolting specimens :—

At the " Crown Tavern," Lambeth Road, Mr. William Carter, the East Surrey coroner, held an inquest on the body of a newly-born female child, which was discovered dead with the head severed from the body.

Alfred Furnstan, 32, Langton Road, deposed that on the afternoon of the 2nd inst. he took some manure from some ground which he hired in Holland Grove, Vassal Road, when his attention was called to a bundle lying in the garden. He secured the bundle, which contained something tied up in a piece of grey linsey. Witness opened it, and found it to contain the dead body of a female child, with a terrible cut in the throat.

Police-constable John O'Brien, 164 W Division, deposed to receiving the bundle from the last witness, and removing it to Brixton Police Station, where it was seen and examined by Dr. Knight, the divisional surgeon to the police, who pronounced it to be the dead body of a newly-born female child, with its head nearly severed from the body as by some sharp instrument, and which child had not been attended to at birth in any manner. The body weighed $6\frac{1}{2}$ lbs.

The jury found a verdict that the deceased was found dead with its throat cut.

"Found dead with his throat cut," as recorded of an illegitimate child, indicates that the baby, nameless and unknown, had a merciful fate compared with certain of its compeers begotten outside wedlock and outside love, and simply the mournful result of the human brute's instinct to procreate his horrible species. Henry Smith was ushered into this England and introduced to "the halo of sacred innocence" without being at all consulted on the matter. His outside must be of iron and his inside of ben leather, or (being unbaptised) he would have left earth for hell long ago, owing to the devilish injuries he has sustained at the hands of his "elevated" mother. When he does get to hell he will find few tortures there with which he has not already become acquainted. His record on the roll of fame reads thus :—

At the Middlesex Sessions to-day,* Theresa Smith was indicted for assaulting and causing grievous bodily harm to Henry Smith. The evidence showed that the prisoner had been living with a man called Wright at Catherine Buildings, Cartwright Street, White-

chapel, and that the prosecutor was her child, aged five years. Acts of cruelty to the child were deposed to, including knocking him down and forcibly filling his mouth with his own faeces; and, in the early part of March, a woman, named Annie Edwards, living next door, saw a wound on his back, which was bleeding freely. On asking the prisoner why she did it, she said because the boy had helped himself to a lump of sugar. She saw the prisoner burn the child with a poker, deliberately holding the hot iron for several minutes upon his shrivelling flesh. Edward Edwards spoke to seeing blood flowing from the child's ears on February 23rd. Its face and calves were covered with bruises, and one side of the head was much swollen and the hair off. At another time he saw the prisoner take the child by the hair and throw him across the room, when he was bumped against the wall with great violence. Further evidence showed that in February the prisoner struck the boy on the head a violent blow, knocking him down. The prisoner said the boy was so dirty in his habits that she had to beat him. Dr. Macintosh stated that the child was imperfectly nourished. The features were pinched, and his weight was only 26½lb. There was a large blister on the right side of the head, and the hairs about it were removed at the roots. On the left shoulder was a large cicatrix two inches long, and on the right and left elbows sores. There were also wounds and scars on the hands, and scars and wounds were scattered all over the limbs. On the right foot there were symptoms of burning. The jury found the prisoner guilty, and a police officer stated that she was the mother of three illegitimate children.

And thus the gilded car of Christian hypocrisy rolls on amid the groan of prayers and the howl of psalms, while Lust finds refuge behind the bloody hands of Murder—hands red with the gore of countless infants, infants born only as the result of their parents' shame, and slaughtered that their parents may indulge in lascivious sin without incurring financial sacrifice. Thus, in our unspeakably tragic midst, does Christianity "elevate the woman and cast a halo of sacred innocence round the tender years of the child"! And the flowers continue to bloom on the earth's green bosom, and the stars look down as of old from the silent sky. When will retribution come, when will vengeance awake? Cry

aloud, O woman's trampled honour and the spilt blood of the babe ! Be assured that they who sow shall yet reap what they have sown, and cant shall not save them, and hypocrisy shall be their refuge no more. The grass and the flowers of earth shall yet wither under the tramp of the fire-shod feet of Retribution ; and, on the black concave of a starless sky, "Vengeance is mine, saith the Lord," shall glare forth in the characters of hell and in the handwriting of Doom.

CHAPTER LVII.

The Fate of the Unwedded Wife—"Forsaken, Starved, Broken-hearted"—"Mr. Styles" and George IV.—Address of Mary Robinson—The Warrant for Legalised Marriage—Refining Influence of the Virgin Mary—Antecedent Virgins of Religious Myth—The Irish Massacre.

I HAVE shown, in colours lurid, but not untruthfully intense, the fate that almost inevitably awaits the woman who gives her heart, but is not asked to give her hand. The light I have thrown upon illicit conjugality and its concomitant guilt and misery has shone only athwart the modest tenements and the foetid dens of the humbler and shadier walks of life. Illicit marriage prospers no better even at the highest point in the social scale. "Forsaken, Starved, Broken-hearted" is the legend written by inexorable fate upon the future of the "kept-miss" of the costermonger and the concubine of the king. The fate of "Mrs. Styles" was the fate of Jane Shore. "Mr. Styles," the commercial tramp, was only an exceedingly human copy of Edward IV., King of Great Britain, France, and Ireland. "Mrs. Styles" is only a humble post-type of Mrs. Mary Robinson, who, in lieu of waiting, waiting by a bundle of dirty rags and an old tea-chest in a wretched attic, was wont to bask beneath the grandeur of a throne and in the flash of a diadem. And hers was the form of a goddess, the passion of a woman, and the talent of a poet. In a state of society where intrinsic worth was the only test of merit she would have been set down as a queen and

George IV. as a swine. And yet George IV. was her lord, and she was only—his mistress. Her published volume of poems, with which I have long been familiar, evinces delicacy of sentiment and deftness of literary execution, and gives here and there a gentle and pleasing echo of the pastorals of Shenstone. Her “Bosworth Field” induces one to wonder and lament that she should have become the ephemeral plaything of a royal libertine. I have long admired the constrained but veraciously passionate lines of Moore in which, after she had been flung aside as a faded flower, she gave expression to her sadness, her scorn, and her love :—

When first I met thee, warm and young,
 There shone such truth about thee,
 And on thy lips such promise hung,
 I did not dare to doubt thee.
 I saw thee change, but still relied,
 Still clung with hope the fonder,
 And thought, though false to all beside,
 From me thou could'st not wander.
 But go, deceiver ! go ;
 The heart whose hopes could make it
 Trust one so false, so low,
 Deserves that thou should'st break it !

When every tongue thy follies named
 I fled the unwelcome story ;
 Or found in even the faults they blamed
 Some gleams of future glory.
 I still was true, when nearer friends
 Conspired to wrong, to slight thee ;
 The heart that now thy falsehood rends
 Would then have bled to right thee.
 But go, deceiver ! go ;
 Some day, perhaps, thou'lt waken
 From pleasure's dream to know
 The grief of hearts forsaken.

Even now, though youth its bloom has shed,
 No lights of age adorn thee ;

The few who loved thee once have fled,
 And they who flatter scorn thee.
 Thy midnight cup is pledged to slaves,
 No genial ties enwreath it ;
 The smiling there, like light on graves,
 Has rank, cold hearts beneath it !
 Go, go ! though worlds were thine,
 I would not now surrender
 One taintless tear of mine
 For all thy guilty splendour !

And days may come, thou false one, yet,
 When even those ties shall sever,
 When thou wilt call, with vain regret,
 On her thou'st lost forever ;
 On her who, in thy fortune's fall,
 With smiles had still received thee,
 And gladly died to prove thee all
 Her fancy first believed thee.
 Go, go ! 'tis vain to curse,
 'Tis weakness to upbraid thee ;
 Hate cannot wish thee worse
 Than guilt and shame have made thee.

While no one is more keenly conscious than I am of the unhappiness and the wrong that the obligations of legal marriage only too frequently perpetuate, yet, as a system, marriage is incomparably preferable to concubinage, in the highest interests of mankind. Man is, at best, an animal of varying moods and fitful caprice, and the obligatory character of legal marriage prevents him, in the whim of an hour, with impunity, abandoning an unprotected woman and his and her helpless progeny.

It is in vain you hold up to me instances of more or less felicitous concubinage, and remind me of Shelley and Mary Godwin, of George Henry Lewes and Marian Evans (George Eliot), of Comte and Clothilde de Vaux. You simply point to certain individuals who have been characterful enough, self-sustained enough, to be a law unto themselves ; but the masses of mankind are neither

ethereal poets, who soar on pinions torn from the warp and woof of the rainbow, nor trained thinkers who cerebrate with brains of polished steel, but are only very weak and very erring creatures, who, in their own best interests, have to bind themselves up with solemn vows and voluntarily load themselves with stringent obligations. We have to deal with man as he is, not with man as he should be, and that woman stands on the brink of red ruin who will to-day take his word without his bond, even after he has been preached at and Christianised for nearly 2,000 years.

I have been assured by more than one Christian apologist that the adoration paid by Christianity to the "Virgin Mary" is of itself a special guarantee for Christianity's devotional gallantry and a pledge that woman should occupy a social eminence illumed by the hallowed light of poetic and religious fervour. The only man who will venture to stand as an apologist for Christianity is the ignorantly valorous man, who knows no religion save his own, and who knows only the chapel echoes and pulpit catch-words of that.

It is notorious with all except the psalm-singing masses, who, from their knowledge of a few hymns and howls, can dispense with all knowledge of history, that the "Virgin Mary" is a modern adaptation—that sacred virgins who bore god-sons were common to religions that were grey with age before Christianity was born. May I venture to cast a ray of light through the ignorance-fog of God's people by referring them to Brahm, the androgenous creator; to the virgin Isis, with her son Horus; to the Vedic virgin, Indrance, mother of the saviour-god, Indra; to Lakshmi, the virgin-mother of the god, Vishnu; to the virgin, Devaki, and her divine child, Chrishna, of whom Christ is a copy, spoilt in the copying; to the virgin, Parvati, mother of the god, Siva; and to the Assyrian virgin, Ishtar? The

“Virgin Mary” is one of the stalest and meanest of plagiarisms ; and, if her ideal was sufficient to ennoble religious aspiration and refine religious sentiment, then should religious aspiration have been ennobled and religious sentiment refined thousands of years before she emanated from piratical superstition and mimetic ignorance.

But, pirated or not pirated, plagiarised or not plagiarised, did the existence of the “Virgin Mary” as an integral part of the Christian myth sweeten and brighten what would otherwise have been the acerbities and the asperities of the Christian life ? O that it had ! Then I, for one, would have loved that myth more than I ever loved earthly maid. Had this Mary been only fable, phantasy, vision, but yet a lamp that lit the desolation of men’s souls, that strewed more roses on the life-path of woman, that flung an additional ray of happiness on the careless curls of the child, then would I have been a Christian and Mariolater, and bowed the devotional knee to one in the highest sense Mother of God and Queen of Heaven. Then should I have gazed into her eyes in visions, kissed her hand in reveries, and clasped her jewelled anklets in dreams. In vain you should have argued with me that such a person never existed. I should have spurned your reasonings, and should have thrust your historic scrolls into the fire, and have exclaimed : “Away ! Tempt me not : what is good must be true !”

But has the presence of the plagiarised “Virgin Mary” in the Christian myth ever raised man to his purer and nobler manhood ; has it ever made maidenhood or motherhood more joyous and more beautiful ; has it ever softened the hue of the tender light that flickers on the path of childhood and innocence ? Never, never ! Proof ? Proof would be supererogation to all who know the Christian faith, and, through the ages, its harsh and

horrible career. The ideal of the "Virgin Mary" soften and humanise! In the Irish Massacre the Popish Christians made candles out of the fat of the Protestant Christians they had murdered, and burnt these candles on the shrines of the Virgin. The fat of loved and lovable women, the fat of prattling and innocent children, was made into candles and burnt on the altars of the Mother of God—on the altars of that faith which has "elevated the woman" and "shrouded as with a halo of sacred innocence the tender years of the child," and which owes so much to the fact of its having had a woman for the mother of its Christ.

CHAPTER LVIII.

Influence of the Ideal of the Virgin Mary—Macaulay on the Irish Massacre—"Mammy, Mammy, save me!" Enactments of the Treaty of Limerick—Fees of the Pope's Chancery—Absolutions—Licences—Indulgences—The Deduction.

THE ideal of the "Virgin Mary" incite Christians to tenderness and love! We have seen that it inspired some of the most genuine Christians and Mariolaters in Europe to burn upon the shrine of Our Lady candles made out of the tallow of Christians whom they had murdered in tens of thousands. Let us glance at the sweetness and light, the loving kindness and tender mercy, the delicacy of sentiment of those who were the votaries of the Virgin. Let us see how, under the auspices of the Virgin, with these candles burning upon her shrine, man was ennobled, woman elevated, and children sanctified.

"Nor age, nor sex," writes Macaulay, "nor infancy were spared; all conditions were involved in one general ruin. In vain did the unhappy victim appeal to the sacred ties of humanity, hospitality, family connection, and all the tender obligations of social commerce; companions, friends, relations, not only denied protection, but dealt with their own hands the fatal blow. In vain did the pious son plead for his devoted parent; himself was doomed to suffer a more premature mortality. In vain did the tender mother attempt to soften the obdurate heart of the assassin in behalf of her helpless children; she was reserved to behold them cruelly butchered,

and then to undergo a like fate. The weeping wife, lamenting over the mangled carcase of her husband, experienced a death no less horrid than that which she deplored. This scene of blood received yet a deeper stain from the wanton exercise of more execrable cruelty than had ever yet occurred to the warm and fertile imagination of Eastern barbarians. Women whose feeble minds received a yet stronger impression of religious frenzy were more ferocious than the men; and children, excited by the example and exhortation of their parents, stained their innocent age with the blackest deeds of human butchery.

“Some thousands of English were burnt in their houses, others were stripped naked, and, in hundreds in a drove, pricked forwards with swords and pikes to river sides, and from thence pushed headlong into the stream; some were manacled and thrown into dungeons, and there left to perish at leisure; others were mangled, and left to languish in the highways; some were happy enough to suffer the milder death of hanging; other more unfortunate wretches were buried alive—this was the fate of a poor little infant, who, while he was being put in the grave, cried out to his dead parent, ‘Mammy, mammy, save me!’ yet could not his innocent cry pierce the heart of the hardened wretch from whom he received his fate; some were mangled and hung upon tenter-hooks; some, with ropes round their necks, were dragged through woods, bogs, and ditches, till they died; some were hanged up by the arms, and then cut and slashed; some were ripped up, and their entrails left hanging about their heels. These kinds of cruelties were exercised on children of all ages, and many women with child suffered the same fate. Children were forced to carry their sick and aged parents to the place of slaughter: there were of these barbarians some so ingenious in their cruelty as to tempt their prisoners, with

the hope of preserving their lives, to imbrue their hands in the blood of their relations. Children were, in this manner, impelled to be executioners of their parents, wives of their husbands, mothers of their children ; and then, when they were thus rendered accomplices in guilt, they were deprived of that life they endeavoured to purchase at so horrid a price. Children were boiled to death in cauldrons ; some were flayed alive ; others were stoned to death ; others had their eyes plucked out, their ears, nose, cheeks, and hands cut off, and thus rendered spectacles to satiate the malice of their enemies ; some were buried up to their chin, and were left to perish by degrees. Parents were roasted to death before their children, and children before their parents. When any one on the brink of mortality desired to say a short prayer the bigoted barbarians would exult over the fearful wretch, and tell him that the agonies to be inflicted were but the beginning of infinite and eternal torments. If any escaped the murdering hands of these human fiends, they were hunted, baited, and worried to death by their dogs ; nor could the miserable condition of these wretches' excruciating pangs, their anguish of mind, their agony of despair, assuage the lust of cruelty which precept, bigotry, national prejudice, and the contagion of example had kindled in the depraved nature of their brutal enemies. In the last stroke of death they expressed their malice with the following valediction, 'Thy soul to the Devil!' and, at the hazard of a contagion, obstinately refused burial to their mangled bodies."

These Christian women with child ripped open with Christian knives call to us over the bloody gulf of two centuries, and give the Christian Church the lie when it claims to have elevated their sex : but for the rancours of this baleful faith they had never been outraged and massacred. The words, "*Mammy, mammy, save me !*"

from the lips of the Christian child being buried alive by Christian grave-diggers, still echo through the vaults of the ages in shuddering soprano, and shall do so when the guilty faith that doomed that child and millions of others shall have passed away into the limbo in which it shall be only thought of with a shudder and remembered with a curse. Break into rhapsody about your crucified Jesus; my sympathies are with this prattling and innocent English child, who, for the sake of this Jesus, and by his followers, was buried alive. *Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani!* if you like, for you; but for me the more sublime and terrible words of the child in a realm which Jesus and his creed had cursed: "MAMMY, MAMMY, SAVE ME!"

"Oh, but," I hear such of my readers as are Protestants exclaim, "persecution rests entirely upon the head of the horrible Papists. It is opposed to the teachings of the meek and lowly Jesus." Indeed! If this be so, the meek and lowly Jesus must have remarkably few followers for Papist and Protestant alike, according to their power and opportunity, have persecuted in the name of this meek and lowly Jesus. We have seen what the Papists did in Ireland when they had the entire ascendancy; now let us see what the Protestants did when, in their turn, they had the partial ascendancy. By the Treaty of Limerick (1692) it was enacted that—

1. The Catholic peers were deprived of their right to sit in Parliament.

2. Catholic gentlemen were forbidden to be elected as Members of Parliament.

3. Catholics were denied the liberty of voting, and were excluded from all offices of trust; and, indeed, from all remunerative employment, however insignificant.

4. They were fined £60 a month for absence from the Protestant form of worship.

5. They were forbidden to travel five miles from their

houses, to keep arms, to maintain suits-at-law, or to be guardians or executors.

6. Any four justices of the peace could, without further trial, banish any man for life if he refused to attend the Protestant service.

7. Any two justices of the peace could call any man over sixteen before them ; and, if he refused to abjure the Catholic religion, they could bestow his property on the next-of-kin.

8. No Catholic could employ a Catholic schoolmaster to educate his children ; and, if he sent his child abroad for education, he was subject to a fine of £100, and the child could not inherit any property, either in England or Ireland.

9. Any Catholic priest who came to the country should be hanged.

10. Any Protestant suspecting any other Protestant of holding property in trust for any Catholic might file a bill against the suspected trustee, and take the estate or property from him.

11. Any Protestant seeing a Catholic tenant-at-will on a farm which, in his opinion, yielded one-third more than the yearly rent might enter on that farm, and, by simply swearing to the fact, take possession.

12. Any Protestant might take away the horse of a Catholic, no matter how valuable, by simply paying him £5.

13. Horses and waggons belonging to Catholics were in all cases seized for the use of the militia.

14. Any Catholic gentleman's child who became a Protestant could at once take possession of his father's property.*

So much for a specimen of Protestant peace, goodwill, and toleration, all for the sake of the gentle Jesus,

* See J. Morrison Davidson's "Book of Erin."

and his mother who, being a woman, yet bore a God and thereby rendered woman exalted and holy.

The introduction of a woman as the mother of the divine Redeemer has ensured that the faith that bears that Redeemer's name shall teach with exceptional force the virtue of chastity and of purity in thought, word, and deed, and place every outrage upon the modesty of woman in the black list of the most unpardonable of sins. Let us see :—

FEES OF THE POPE'S CHANCERY.

Absolutions.

	Grossos
For fornication in the Church	6
For wilful perjury	6
A priest for simony	7
A layman for murdering a layman	5
For murdering father, mother, or kinsman ...	7
For a priest to keep a concubine	7
For defiling a virgin	6
For lying with mother, sister, godmother, etc. ...	5
For robbery, or burning a neighbour's house ...	8
For forging letters apostolical	17 or 18
A king going to the holy sepulchre without licence ...	100

Licences.

To change a vow of going to Rome	12
That a king, on Christmas Day morning, may have a naked sword borne before him, as the Pope has ...	150
To have a portable altar	10
To eat flesh in Lent, etc.	12 or 16
That one who preaches before a king may give indul- gences to all his hearers	12

Indulgences.

For a remission of a third part of one's sins	100
For an hospital or chapel for seven years	50
That a layman may remove the relics of saints to his own chapel	56*

* From "Taxa S. Cancellariæ Apostolicæ."

The Church that claims to have elevated woman and to have had a woman for the mother of its God safeguarded feminine purity by making Absolution for "fornication *in the church*" 6 grossos, while "going to the holy sepulchre without licence" was a more than sixteen times more enormous offence, and could be atoned for only by the payment of 100 grossos. The religion that is so pure because the mother of its God was a woman would allow its votaries to defile a virgin for 6 grossos, but enjoined that 150 grossos must be paid for the empty privilege in the ceremonial of carrying a naked sword before the king on Christmas Day. This Church that had a woman for the mother of the *third part* of its God, and which was at the same time the *whole* of its God, permitted its saints to commit incest with their own mother or sister for 5 grossos, but charged them 16 grossos for eating flesh in Lent! This, mark you, is the religion that "elevated the woman;" this is the creed which "shrouded as with a halo of sacred innocence the tender years of the child."

CHAPTER LIX.

English Country Lanes—The Gipsy's Van—Smith of Coalville's Description of a Gipsy Camp—Children in the Canal Barges—Moral Heroism among the Poor—"John Anderson my jo"—Die Rather than Separate—The Abbess Jouare in the Plessis—Ginevra Married from the Grave.

PERCHANCE Archdeacon Farrar, like myself, accounts it a halcyon day when he can escape from the city's dust and glare, the blazing street and the roaring wheels, to wander in England's country lanes, such as till lately lay round Dulwich, and in which John Ruskin, like myself, loved to saunter, but which are now no more. One can wander into England's rural lanes and breathe the air of Paradise before the Fall. Over the path, with its wheel-ruts nearly hidden with matted grass and creeping moss, the old elm and the older oak shake hands and mingle their verdure into one variegated mass of foliage, that throws back the sunlight from the track below. There the hedge of hawthorn is green and trim; but there it is blighted and stunted and brown and rough with weather-worn shreds of wool, which evince that the roving sheep have crept through it in quest of clearer streams and fresher pastures. And next, for fence, there is a mound of turf, surmounted by dead thorns, and behind it the field is full to the brim with deep, waving rye-grass, and the heavy heads of the red clover nod drowsily over the grey and decaying ridge of thorns. The breeze whispers, and there is the more audible murmur of the stream, and by it stands the alder, half-

killed by the heavy mass of ivy that has climbed almost to its top, darkly verdant, nearly black below, but at top shooting up into delicate leaves of a light and tender green. And there, mixed up inextricably with the leafy mass, is the honeysuckle with its deep red bursting into yellow, and the dog-rose which has strewn the grass with its petals, making a carpet ethereal enough for Oberon and too grand for Solomon. There is the faint boom of the vesper-bell falling on the ear like a far-off echo of the hymns of heaven ; and in the solitude the soul mingles with the universe, and is akin to the wild flowers and the stream, the sweep of the fields and the majesty of the trees, the mystery of the clouds and the glory of the sun.

A turn in the lane, and we at once plunge to the neck into the earth earthy. The fragrance of the clover and the honeysuckle is rank with the effluvium of stale herrings being fried in rancid oil. A rope extends across the lane from the elm on the one side to the chestnut on the other, and from this rope are suspended under-articles of male and female attire, yellow and half-washed, and horrible stockings with ghastly holes in their toes and in their heels. The grass is trampled, dusky with ashes, bumpy with cinders, desecrated with scraps of old shoes, and glittering meretriciously with clippings of tin. Amid the ashes and the cinders, the bits of old boots and the shavings of tin, graze four emphatically osseous horses, tethered to pegs driven into the ground. And high over the clothes-rope towers the summit of the gipsy's van. In its kennel-like but dirtier inside, "elevated" specimens of women are begotten and born, and there they live and there they die ; and outside are fastened, reel-rall, chairs and baskets and cradles, all constructed from peeled willows ; and there, on another van, blazing in the sunlight, so as to bewilder the eye, is a collection of pots and ladles

cut out of glittering tin. Questionable-looking tramps lie under the hedge smoking their black pipes and watching their horses. A number of European squaws wash rags and scrape potatoes and swear, and a number of wild-looking children of both sexes—each child, of course, radiant with “a halo of sacred innocence”—glower through rags and dirt and matted hair, and scratch themselves, and swear in a tongue which may possibly be understood in hell, but which, strictly speaking, does not belong to any of the languages written or spoken on the face of the earth. I have spoken to many of these children; but I never found one who knew or cared whether Jesus was a “saviour” or a “peeler,” or a tinker or a jailor. They know nothing of Jesus of Nazareth, and, what is worse, they never heard of Farrar of Westminster!

George Smith, of Coalville, who has devoted as much generous zeal to the humanising of the poor van waifs as Howard did to ameliorating the evils of the prison system, and as Wilberforce did to the liberation of our West Indian slaves, recently expressed himself thus in a letter written to the newspapers: “In visiting a camp of so-called English gipsies in the East of London a week or two ago, I had to wade through slush and mud a foot deep to get at them. There were thirty-nine families in tents and rickety vans, consisting of eighty adults and one hundred poor children, of whom only about six could read and write a little. In two of the vans there were infectious diseases. A mile from this camp there were eighteen families of town-bred English gipsies in tents and vans, surrounded by good houses, and not one of the children was going to school; and, so far as I could learn, not more than two or three of the adults could read and write. A thin wood fence only separated them from a large public day-school, and a church into which neither the forty or fifty children

nor the adults ever entered. In one tent, about three feet high, there were a man, a woman, and eight children; in another, adjoining, there were a man, woman, and six children, some of them big girls. The man and woman in this tent have recently spent £50 in drink. There were no sanitary arrangements of any kind. Births were taking place frequently—some on straw, some on the mud floor, and others in the vans. At the last Northampton races I found in one van a man, a woman, and eight children, seven of whom were of school age. What the future of these poor children will be no one can imagine, and neither our statesmen, Christians, nor philanthropists want or care to know, or they would not pass by our 30,000 lost English gipsy and van dwellers, with their eyes shut and their hearts steeled against the cries of the little ones. At the sound of the school bells the State guides and helps other children into school; but it passes by the gipsy and van children, and leaves them to die in the ditch."

And then, along our English canals, crawl the lazy barges, which harbour an, if possible, less civilised community than the vans. The same philanthropic George Smith recently read a paper* entitled "Our Canal, Gipsy, Van, and Other Travelling Children." In the course of a painfully interesting address the philanthropist urged that "many cabins in the barges were in a most filthy state, and births and deaths took place in these little floating boxes under most revolting circumstances. There was a fearful amount of cruelty to child life, and children of tender years, from three, four, five, and six upwards, were put upon the towing-paths to drive the horses and donkeys. He had known cases where boys had been sold to boatmen, like slaves, for drink. A vast amount of immorality existed in the

* Before the Association of Public Sanitary Inspectors.

cabins, and the marriage laws were openly violated without shame or remorse. As a consequent result of the want of any sanitary arrangements on board the barges, there was considerably more sickness and disease among the boatmen and their children than among householders, and in some instances the death-rate was almost double.....There were close upon 30,000 children of school age, in England, living in vans, tents, shows, and like places, not five per cent. of whom could read and write, and about fifty per cent. of the gipsy parents were living in an unmarried state."

Fifty per cent. are living in an unmarried state, and with the other fifty per cent. the marriage is merely nominal and decency is utterly unknown. I do not wish to drag ethics down to depend absolutely upon how many cubic feet are devoted to its action; but I say truthfully and mournfully, there is *no accommodation for morals*. So here are some thousands of English women not quite so decent as cows, and some 30,000 children of school age who have not even a sham "halo of sacred innocence," but whom Christianity has never yet reached, although the country to which they belong spend £1,050,000 a year in sending the gospel to distant regions of the earth, and to peoples who neither desire the said gospel nor require it.

And yet, amid the ragged and the squalid poor, there are not infrequent instances of moral heroism, incorruptible fidelity, filial affection, and marital love as lofty as ever consecrated the halls of princes and the palaces of kings. They are, indeed, bound together with bands of steel, who have fought together for long years through poverty and toil and sorrow, who have eaten the same poor crust and travelled with bleeding feet on the same rough road of woe, who have dandled the same children on their knees, watched over them when sick, and watered their little graves with tears. If there is any

moral phenomenon more beautiful than the love of two young lovers in life's rosy morn, it is the love of a venerable wedded pair in life's closing eve. In all the minstrelsy of love and home there is no sentiment higher, holier, than—

“John Anderson my jo, John,
We've seen our bairns' bairns,
And yet, my dear John Anderson,
I'm happy in your arms.”

And when the Elohim, after six days' work, had “created” the world, and had then sat down to congratulate themselves upon its being “all very good,” they had not as solemnly beautiful a song of gratulation to sing as—

“John Anderson my jo, John,
We've clamb the hill together,
An' mony a canty day, John,
We've had wi' anc anither.
Noo we maun totter down, John,
But hand in hand we'll go,
An' sleep thegither at the foot,
John Anderson my jo.”

When “age and want, O ill-matched pair,” accompany John Anderson and his dearie down the hill to the kirk-yaird that lies below, a career of honest struggle ends in the gloom of tragedy. The following paragraph, which appeared in the newspapers last year, about the merry Christmas time, depicts only too terribly the too frequent end of the modern John Anderson :—

On Wednesday afternoon Mr. Carttar, the West Kent Coroner, held an inquest at the City Arms, High Street, Deptford, on the body of Thomas Ansell, aged eighty-eight, of 27, Griffin Street, Deptford.

Ann Ansell, aged seventy-seven, said deceased was her husband, and they lived in a furnished room. They had 3s. 6d. a week from the parish, out of which they paid 2s. rent. They had nothing else to live upon. She used to go out with a basket and laces ;

but her hawker's licence expired six months ago, and she could not raise 5s. to renew it. Deceased, who was taken ill about a fortnight ago, had not left the house for twelve months. It was arranged they should go into the workhouse on Tuesday. On Boxing Day, however, she got out of bed to get him a cup of tea, and then he "closed his poor, dear eyes," and she sent for a neighbour. All she had was a cup of tea and a piece of bread. Her husband had said if he went into the workhouse he would not live a week. The relieving officer had never suggested he should go there. She intended to enter Greenwich Union Infirmary now; but not before the funeral. On Christmas Day she had a little meat given to her, but had very little firing last week. She owed no rent.

Mrs. Murphy, the landlady of the house, said she let the room furnished, and reduced the rent from 3s. to 2s. The wife worked hard with her basket, but, being very feeble, did not sell much. Ansell had told witness that, if he and his wife could be together, they would go into the "house;" but, if they could not, they would die together. The wife was very devoted to the deceased.

Mr. Pilcher, Relieving Officer, stated that he had told Ansell he would be better off in the workhouse; but he would not listen to it. There were wards at the house for old married couples; but they were not kept together if one were sick. He did not tell deceased he could be with his wife in the workhouse.

A jurymen said nineteen old couples out of twenty would not enter the house for fear of being separated at the door.

Police-constable Woodings, Coroner's officer, declared, on opening the door of the room, that the stench was dreadful, and he had the window opened before entering. He found Ansell lying on the bed terribly emaciated, and concluded that it was a case of starvation.

The Coroner said it appeared to him that the case was one of sheer destitution and starvation, and that the old man would not enter the workhouse for fear of being separated from his wife.

Mr. Pender, a jurymen, deposed that Ansell had told him that, sooner than enter the workhouse and be separated from his wife, he would die on the doorstep. He (Mr. Pender) had been ill through going into the room. The only food he ever saw there was dry bread, with a little dripping, perhaps a herring, and, in season, a pennyworth of sprats between the old couple. They were married when the wife was twenty-one (fifty-six years ago).

The jury returned a verdict of death from decay of nature, death being accelerated by the want of sufficient nourishment.

Such paragraphs strike the eye with pity and the heart with pain ; but they have their use in this frivolous and venal age in showing that affection can live even in the bleakest blast of penury, and that moral endurance and the heroic virtues are not dead.

It is only in the moments that try men's souls that we find what heights of tragic woe can be reached by men and women who, even themselves, never suspected that they had within them aught of the hero and the heroine. It is only the stress and storm of Fate that can bring into relief, like a dark pine tree against the background of the midnight lightning, the Love that can conquer Death. Who that has read that record written with gore on the parchment of terror, and known as the French Revolution, does not remember the tragically romantic story of the Abbess of Jouare* and her lover ? The Abbess and the man she loved were each condemned to death, and were thrown together for the night into the dismal prison of the Plessis to await the death-cart in the morning to take them to the guillotine. In that dreary gaol they dedicated the night to Love and left the morning to Death. God alone, who is the searcher of hearts, would know how that night had been spent ; but it would be dark forever to the sons of men, for the Abbess and her lover would be mouldering together in the grave long before their love in the dungeon could blossom into a child that could witness to earth what was known only to heaven. They clasped each other's necks, they kissed each other's lips, they spake only in whispers and in ardent sighs—necks which the bloody knife must crunch through on the morrow ; lips which, in an hour, must be pale and cold ; whispers and sighs which so soon must sink into the solemn silence of the voiceless Past.

* Ernest Renan has written a tale with this Abbess for heroine.

The morrow came, and, in the weird, sardonic irony of Fate, the death-cart took away her lover and left the Abbess of Jouare: she had been reprieved. They who had loved in life were in death to be divided. Her head was not destined to roll with his into the basket, with its crimsoned and smoking saw-dust. She lived and bore his child—the tragic glory overmastering the meretricious shame. Even a gross age had to speak with reverence of her elevated passion, her pure life, her stainless soul, her devotion to her babe, the sweet, sad earnest of her love for him whom she had loved with the love which only a noble, passionate, and heroic woman can know. Through poverty, through what the uncharitable ones of the world called disgrace, she clasped to her intense heart her child—the pledge which he had flung to her while his foot was already upon the bloody road which led out to the awfulness of the Eternal.

Those who have read the “Italy” of the banker poet, Samuel Rogers, are acquainted with the pathetic story of Ginevra; but a story of another Ginevra, an almost equally wild romance of Love and Death with the romance of the Abbess of Jouare, is on record. The story has been epitomised thus:—Married to Francesco degli Agolanti, the one of her two lovers who loved her least, Ginevra was buried alive during a trance or collapse which looked like death. Waking up to consciousness in the moonlight, she freed herself from her grave-clothes and crawled to the house of her husband for shelter. He, sorrowful for her death as he was, refused to believe that this pale *revenante*, crying at his door, was his living wife, and superstitiously denied her admittance. So did her mother; so did her uncle. Then, nearly dying in good earnest, she, true to the instinct of love too real to be conventional, betook her to the house of her other truer lover, Antonio di Rondinelli,

and sank fainting on the threshold, after she had cried aloud for help. And Rondinelli, enlightened by love's mystic monition, recognised her voice, took her in, warmed, fed, comforted her, and eventually married her as by right. The bishop consented to the divorce as having been made by death, and to the re-marriage as having been consecrated by love ; and faith gained what fear had lost. It is ever thus

“O woman, in our hours of ease
Uncertain, coy, and hard to please,
And varying as the shade
By the light quivering aspen made.”

But in life's tremendous crises, whether in the gipsy van or the pauper's cellar, whether amid the desolations of Doom or the dismalness of Death, woman is ever woman, irrespective of rank or creed or clime, and the moral force which in the sunshine seems feeble as webs of gossamer becomes in the storm strong as bands of steel.

CHAPTER LX.

The Purveying of Married Women—The Path to Dishonour—The Warranty for Alluding to such Matters—The Extent of Christianity's Responsibility—Law of the Ancient Britons against Adultery—Moral Decadence of Modern Britain—Mass Performed to Lechers in Bed with their Concubines—The Dying Faith in its Last Stronghold.

WE are ever being asked by the pulpiteer to be grateful that we were born "in a Christian land and under the gospel dispensation." Yet truly might the moralist ask :

"What sin in Sodom ever grew
That Britain's people never knew?"

Christianity, that has "elevated" woman, has from the press or the pulpit not dared to stigmatise and offend its wealthy patrons, who can afford all the ingenuities of incontinence and the luxuries of lust. The purveying of female children for the wealthy lecher is not by any means Christian England's only commercial refinement of debauchery. No minister of the gospel dare say it, and consequently I feel it devolves upon me to say it, and tell the revolting truth in the presence of Man and God : married women living with their husbands are as strongly desiderated by one class of sensualists as girl children are by another class. To my certain knowledge, there is a select establishment in a certain fashionable English town the speciality of which is to purvey married women. The procuress is notoriously

well known by a familiar name, which Christian *gentlemen* over their wine are not ashamed to mention ; nor are they reluctant to relate their experiences in her house, which is surely not the vestibule, but the very atrium, of hell. No women are kept on the premises. If you desire to enter, you use, as pass-word, the name of some patron of the establishment—for the secret of the existence of this vortex of iniquity is kept pretty well by a “set,” and that a wealthy one—and you describe the sort of woman you wish introduced to you ; and the one that comes closest to the description is immediately sent for. In the books of the establishment is kept a record of the hours in which each married woman on the list can leave home without attracting suspicion—in other words, the hours during which her husband is absent at business. The women belong, as a rule, to the *respectable* middle classes, and, with their husbands, they attend church or chapel, and have their children (by whom?) solemnly baptised in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. A guarantee that the women are married, are living with their husbands, and are of *respectable* position must be given to the customer ; and upon the purveyor’s integrity and truth in this respect depends the success of her establishment. The customer is frequently seized with a morbid desire to visit the husband’s place of business, and to make some trifling purchase the excuse for seeing the man whose wife he has debauched.

Can, in this England of the open bible, married women be had on such terms ? They can, with shame be it admitted, be had in abundance. Every woman has some friend or friends deep in her confidence. She cannot divulge a secret like her visit to this establishment all at once, but she can proceed step by step with her insidious poison, and when it is deemed prurient passion is sufficiently excited she tells the

whole damning tale, showing the glittering gold for which she has bartered her honour, and she finds her lady friend not only willing, but eager, to participate in her crime. This is no hypothetical theory ; it is the actual admission of the women themselves when they can be induced to speak on the subject.

There may be some who read these words who may, in the light of experience, recognise them to be true—true as far as they go, but only half the truth, the other half being beyond the adaptability of treatment by the pen of mortal. On the other hand, there may be those who may question the truth of my words : let them do so ; I am willing to be discredited rather than willing to give them names and addresses, that they may find out the sickening truth for themselves by walking, as I have done, through the darkness in the Valley of Devils, agitated with loathing and pity and bitterness and despair. The subject is one of such ineffable repulsiveness that I cannot dilate upon it. To my own certain personal knowledge, there is more than one who will read these lines who *knows* that what I say is true, but that I have left much untold, and that, if I liked, I could give names and addresses, and these names and addresses not in hell either, but on earth, and in no mean city and in no malodorous slum ; and, moreover, the names are known and *respected* in religious, social, civic, and political circles.

Do you tell me I should not allude to such matters, even if they be true ? I answer, the most fearful truth that was ever announced is preferable to the politest lie that was ever uttered. Invoke not my rage with hypocritical canting about Christianity “elevating” woman, and then I may cease, with hand as ruthless as the spread paw of the tiger, to rend the masque of Sham from off the hideous face of Hypocrisy. Truth is always the daughter of God, even when, to the squeam-

ish, her red skirts seem to drip with stercorous fire from the blast-furnaces of hell. There is something sound in our England yet; but beneath much of what seems holiest and brightest and fairest there lies a substratum of leprosy and cancer and gangrene and rottenness, and he who knows this and fears to say it is not England's friend, and he is treacherous to Humanity and a traitor to Truth.

Is Christianity responsible for *all* of the unspeakable moral evils to which I allude? Those who answer "Yes" push their argument against the barbaric and baleful creed farther than I do; but surely it cannot be denied that where Christianity is not potent to damn it is at least impotent to save. Why, then, not acknowledge this? Why pay churches and chapels to teach us to lean upon a broken staff which, when we depend upon it for support, we get stabbed by its sharp and poisonous splinters? If, on this plane of existence, we cannot know upon what to safely lean, it is at least useful to know upon what *not* to implicitly depend. If we cannot be what we should be, it may surely yet be ours to claim the honest merit of not having canted ourselves into the deception that we are better than we really are.

England owes the purity and fidelity of her daughters to Christianity—does she? It would be quite as true to say that she owes that purity and fidelity to logarithms, to Grimm's Law, or to the vernal equinox. If the cleric would admit that public opinion demanded a far higher code of morals in pre-Christian than in Christian England, he would tell only the truth; but, alas, his "gospel" is a fable, and it is his business to keep it from coming anywhere in contact with the truth. The Christian cleric dare not tell us that a law obtained among the Ancient Britons which enacted that, "if an unmarried woman were once frail, she should be thrown

from a precipice and her paramour beheaded ; among the Saxons that she should be buried alive, and her accomplice hanged over her grave ; or she should else become a common prostitute, and be compelled to submit to every one's will ; in other words, to be degraded to the lowest depths of infamy, and thereby banished from all respectable society.”*

How high Christian England has risen above that Pagan standard let any modern man of the world say. Let the Christian England who went into hysterics over Sarah Bernhardt say. Let England stand on her Bible, the source of her greatness, and point to this woman and her commission to chisel a bust of the English Prime Minister, and her *entrée* into the highest circles of English society, *openly accompanied by her illegitimate son!* O druidical Briton with your awful Hesus, O Saxon with your tremendous Thor, yours was a higher conception of the sacred obligations of sexual ethics than enters the brain of our modern Christian system, with its moribund falsehood and leprous hypocrisy.

After they had had for some centuries the advantage of the “blessed gospel” of Christianity, our English forefathers seem to have lost much, if not all, of their high ideal of the purity and fidelity of woman. At the time of the Norman conquest “such was their degradation and such the irreverence with which the half-converted barbarians conformed to the religious usages of the age, that the nobles, instead of attending at church, would have matins and mass performed in the chambers where they were in bed with their wives *and concubines*..... It was common for these petty tyrants to sell their female vassals for prostitution at home, or to foreign traders, even though they were pregnant by themselves.”† So

* “Europe in the Middle Ages,” vol. iv., pp. 64-5.

† Southey, “Book of the Church,” vol. i., p. 115.

much for the attitude of the England that was Pagan against the England that was Christian, in so far as public opinion as to sexual morals was concerned.

It was this Christianity that had its masses and matins said and sung by the bed where she lay as a courtesan that the Englishwoman supports to-day. It was this Christianity that reared her for prostitution for the home and foreign market for debauchery that the English woman believes in till this hour. It is for this faith, that has degraded and betrayed her, that she brings up her children in the way of the Lord, that, when they are old, they may not depart from it. Christianity found the Englishwoman ignorant and credulous, and it has kept her so. I am free to admit that she is still amiable and loveable after more than a thousand years of Christian degradation. The dash and romance of feudal chivalry and the delicacy of modern culture have done much to cancel the mark of Cain writ upon her brow by Jesus and Paul and the Christian Fathers. Yet she is ignorant, ill-educated, and credulous even now, compared with the male Christians, and hence she is a better Christian than they. She still, in baptism, dedicates her children to the Moloch of a dying faith ; she still, with a pathos and religious sublimity worthy of a better cause, teaches our offspring to kneel at her knee and lisp in the innocence of their earliest speech, "Our Father which art in heaven."

But a house built upon sand cannot possibly endure. For well nigh two thousand years this Christian creed has stood on the sand of Ignorance and Tyranny ; but two thousand years is a small matter in the endless age of the World. What antecedent religions have held their empery longer we know not and cannot know. The very names of Time's olden gods are lost ; the winter snow lies cold on the spot where their altars flamed, and, where their anthems rang, the whispering winds of

autumn waft the breath of the meadows and the down of the thistle. Christianity is following them into the Silence. Virile man has deserted her temple. It now rests on a basis of petticoats—frail and unstable foundation for an edifice which pretends to reach from earth to heaven. Precarious is the faith that hangs from an apron string. That, whatever it may be, will not long colour the destinies of mankind when once the brains of the thinkers have deserted it and the throbbings of the noblest hearts have burst the withes of its pseudo-morals. Wo worth the fate of the system which woman holds on to and man practically deserts. For, ere a long time pass, woman follows wherever man leads the way.

God forbid that mine should be the ungallant pen that should write a single unchivalrous sentence. But God forbid that even gallantry itself should have claims upon me paramount to those of truth. Woman is too frivolous to, on her own shoulders, permanently support an anachronistic faith. Hers is the grace of the sylph, but not the fibre of the titan. She has often been burnt as a witch, seldom burnt as a martyr. She has much heart, but little backbone. She has keenness of instinct, but lacks in solidity of thought. For grim and patient determination she has only sentimental ebullition. Her passion evaporates in phrenzy and her zeal effervesces into hysterics. A glorious and a loveable creature, but too weak in the shoulders and the loins to be the Atlas to bear the globe of the Christian faith. Let the minister of Christ twaddle ever so divinely, and an April shower suddenly patter against the windows of his church, and two or three hundred women who have not brought umbrellas will think more about the dragging of their spring bonnets than about the jeopardy of their immortal souls. Long-legged Tim, with perfumed handkerchief, with diamond studs and shirt-front from chin

to navel, with particularly well-brushed hair outside his head and no brains in particular inside his head, attends church. And Araminta the pious is drawn to "the house of God" by this powdered and scented dandy, and not by Jesus Christ the carpenter. Peter, the fisherman of Galilee, may have something to do with taking women to church ; but another Peter, Peter Robinson, of Oxford Street, has more. An outpouring of the Holy Spirit may be languidly desired ; but an outpouring from the summer cloud is vehemently dreaded. Woman's Christianity is sadly mixed up, redemption and sanctification and adoption being curiously blended with parasols and lace and feathers, rings and bracelets and six-buttoned gloves. All this is too unstable a basis for thy throne, O pale Galilean ; and, amid a medley of fur-jackets, high-heeled boots, necklaces and scented handkerchiefs, you are already disappearing from the world, forever and forever, and the eagles of Intelligence rejoice and the owls of Superstition mourn.

CHAPTER LXI.

'Arry of the Gutter—The Evidence of our Police-courts—Husbands Conniving at the Prostitution of their Wives—Method of Rearing Prostitutes—The Bishop of Durham's Admission—Monogamy and Hypocrisy—"Regulation of Vice"—Appeal to the Manhood of England.

VIRTUOUS blockheadism is shocked at my revelation *re* the high-class establishment for certain married ladies, upon whom lasciviousness sits heavily, and upon whom the sanctity of their marriage vows sits lightly. This establishment, which is most likely typical of many others throughout the land, is admittedly "high class." There are lies everywhere; but our conventional democratic lie, that the humbler orders are more virtuous than "their betters," is one of the most repulsive of our conventional falsehoods. Of course, the wives of the men of the "masses"—the women of the Spurgeon and Booth type of gospel culture—are virtuous as Lucretia and chaste as Diana. O 'Arry of the gutter, if you say so, you are an Ananias, and you know it. As a rule, the husbands of the wives of the men of the "classes" do not know of the delinquencies of their wives; but, as a rule, the husbands of the wives of the men of the "masses" not only know of the delinquencies, but actually connive at them. I am one of those who master my subject before I begin to write upon it, and I say authoritatively that there are thousands of married women on the streets of London after sunset. The husband is often drinking in a public-house hard

by, and waiting till his wife come in with her gains in order to enable him to settle his score.

If, disguised as a tramp, but with his eyes wide open, the Rev. Archdeacon Farrar had seen what I have seen, he would not have written the passage in his "Life of Christ" which I impugn. I could, in a single night, show him that which would forever dispel his optimist dream about the prevalence of woman's "elevation" and childhood's "halo of sacred innocence." Very frequently our police-courts confirm, with unmistakable voice, the truth of what I say about husbands voluntarily bartering the honour of their wives for a pint of "Burton and Bitter" and a quid of tobacco. Society does not wish to be made aware of such facts, for Society is a lying sham, and does not know how to face them. Even when now and again they are forced upon Society's notice, Society regards them with averted eyes as merely sporadic and exceptional instances of moral debasement, upon which it would be illogical to found any wide and comprehensive generalisation. Not one case in a thousand ever comes up for discussion in a police-court, and yet, as I have said, the police-court revelations are far from infrequent. In the first weekly newspaper I find to hand* I read two such instances. They are as follows :—

Charles Kitt, aged 21, was charged with assaulting his wife. Alice Kitt, of Vine Court, Great Pearl Street, Spitalfields, said : "Last night I was in a public-house in Leman Street, when the prisoner called me out and asked me if I had any money, and I gave him sixpence. Ten minutes afterwards he again called me out, and asked me for money, and, on telling him that I had not got any, he struck me how in the mouth. Three months after I was married he hinted how I could earn money, and I have since gone on the streets to keep him." Francis Simes, 50H, deposed to taking the prisoner into custody. In answer to the charge, he

* May 6th, 1888.

made no reply. Mr. Lushington sentenced the prisoner to two months' hard labour.

Frederick James Woods, 43, of James Street, Camden Town, was charged at Marylebone on a warrant with violently assaulting Elizabeth Woods, his wife, on the 2nd inst. and other days. Mr. Freke Palmer, solicitor, prosecuted, and, from his statement and the evidence of the prosecutrix, it appeared that the prisoner had been ill-using his wife for a long period. Last Easter Monday the accused wanted her to supply him with money, but she had none to give him, and, when she told him so, he kicked her in the ribs with great violence. Next day she went to the North London Hospital, when the surgeons found her ribs were broken. From there she went into the parish infirmary, and remained until the following Friday, when she went home. Her husband, in spite of her delicate condition, ordered her to wash the room out with cold water, and, although she refused to do so for some time, she at length submitted, and commenced the work. When on her knees her husband dealt her a very dangerous kick. She screamed with the pain, and he at once threw a bucket of water over her, and afterwards thrust her head into the pail to prevent her screaming. As he dragged it off the handle caused a long wound on the face. Subsequently to that he demanded money of her, and because she had none for him he took her boots off and pawned them. The next day he threw her down some stairs and struck her, cutting her lip and cracking her teeth. Last Tuesday week he dragged her out of bed by the hair, and said, holding up a knife the while, that she must give him money, and if she had none she must go into the streets and earn some, or else rob some one. She refused to live an immoral life or to thieve, and then he stabbed her in the body with the knife. He had also bitten her finger. A girl named Casey gave corroborative evidence, and said the prisoner had purchased paint and powder for his wife to put on her face in order to get her living on the streets, which she had refused to do. Detective-Sergeant Fox, S Division, having proved the arrest of the defendant, the case was remanded.

Facts such as these paragraphs reveal are as accessible to the Rev. Archdeacon Farrar and the clergy as they are to me. If, as a preacher of righteousness, he does not know them, he should know them. Whether the disease be physical or moral, the first duty of the thera-

peut is to diagnose the disease, and know exactly its character and virulency. If the diagnosis be wrong, the treatment can hardly be right. They who dream, in a fool's paradise, that we live in a pure and virtuous age, can never possibly do much to alleviate the ghastly moral evils with which the age is sick, even unto death. Richard Cobden is reputed to have said that, for us, there is more to be learnt from a single issue of the *Times* newspaper than from all the writings of Thucydides. Would the crude and dainty clergy in their libraries and their studies only take the spirit of this aphorism to heart, their practical life, instead of being wasted among the classical shadows of a dead Past, might be useful to the living man of the living Present. One of the most useless creatures that eats the world's bread is your academical *doctrinaire*.

Since the days of the Saxons and of Norman William much has come and gone, and a civilisation which, with much standing still and much staggering, has been pushed on in spite of Christianity, has contributed to exalt the status of woman. English noblemen do not now overtly rear, on their estates, young women to be offered for sale on the shambles of lust in the home or foreign market. Eight hundred years intervene between our days and the days of the Conqueror—eight hundred years of Christianity—and the method of rearing prostitutes has somewhat differentiated. After century upon century of Christianity somebody rears them still, for they are yet to be had in any number by those able and willing to buy them. Hundreds upon hundreds of years of Christianity have differentiated the commerce in licentiousness ; but to differentiate does not mean to abolish. Moreover, Christian England still, as in Saxon times, ships prostitutes to the foreign market ; and so flagrant is this fact that, in this Christian London, there is a periodical published the *raison d'être* of which seems to

be to inveigh against this export of English girls to Antwerp and elsewhere.

I have said that, although recent refinements have been added to Christian debauchery, the old standard lines have not been neglected and forgotten. The Lord Bishop of Durham, some little while ago, admitted at Bradford that Christian England has 180,000 professional prostitutes, and that London has 60,000* all to herself. My brothers, there is no blinking the fact that, under this piebald social garment of ours, made of the prim petticoat of Grundy and the seamless coat of Christ, monogamy alone is legalised; but, practically, bigamy, trigamy, and downright polygamy are winked at. This comes of the refined nastiness that sets its laws against the canons of nature. A number of male Londoners have one wife a piece, and, assisted by a few boys and bachelors, they maintain an army of 60,000 courtesans. They raise the dyke of conventional etiquette against the ocean of the passions. Against this ocean they erect the dyke of monogamy; but the moles have burrowed in it and the rats have sapped it, and the ocean rushes in 60,000 strong. Still, we are such a good people, so moral and so pious, that we go on from age to age pretending that the dyke remains effective and intact, although the sea bursts through it at every point and the billows leap over it and seethe and boil and roar. Rather than honestly and overtly admit this dyke to be a sham, we go on consigning tens of thousands of our women to misery, with our fingers stained with the blood of infanticide, and with our manhood damned and dwarfed by disease that must be suffered, but cannot be named. O England, if there be a corner in hell specially set apart for the slow roasting, the cremacausis of Hypocrites, that corner is yours against all competitors!

* A more recent calculation states the number as 80,000.

Earl Shaftesbury's motion in the House of Lords empowering the police to arrest men "who habitually or persistently importune or solicit women or girls" is a secular groping in the dark, but in the right direction, by a man of correct and elevated, albeit of religiously-distorted, instincts. But, O Lords and Commons, there must be no measures for "the regulation of vice." It is not for your august assemblies to even tacitly admit that the "vices" of mankind, of the nature of which we speak, can be "regulated" only, and cannot be eradicated. To "regulate vice" sounds like contracting to supply fuel to hell that it may cease to smoulder on the one hand, or flare on the other, but may burn with a steady, uniform intensity. "Regulate" virtue, O my masters, and thereby let vice perish. Look the subject in the face with a bold, clear eye, with no fear of social aversion and domestic prejudice. Begin with first principles, physiological and sociological, and look upon nothing as right simply because it at present obtains, and Grundy, in the light, sings its sacredness, and, in the dark, ever subjects it to violation. Let us cease to have a formal and written code of morals for overt use, and an informal and unwritten counter-code, of which our 180,000 Magdalenes, and far more, are the appalling evidence. Let us cease to be sneaks and hypocrites, with one moral code for the light of day and another for the shadows of night.

Men of England, ye support the 180,000 in idleness; could ye not support them in domestic industry? Ye support them in shame; cannot ye support them in honour? These poor girls are all somebody's daughters, and there was the time, in their young lives, when, in sweetness and purity and innocence, they were as irreproachable as are the wives of your bosoms. Their blood is on your head: are ye patriots, are ye men, are your hearts of flesh or steel? Ye made them what they

are. The reins of legislation are in your hands, and so is the forming of public opinion. You made laws by which vast numbers of the noblest and best of our women can never possibly be wives ; then you proceed to make them the ministers of your passions, and when, at your mercy, they have become so you turn round and socially damn them. Yours is the guilt, not theirs. They, in their poor, weak way, bear your sins, and they hide your iniquities in lock-hospitals and dishonoured graves. Englishmen, is this what the women of England deserve at your hands ? Is this your vaunted *Christian* charity ? If so, I am afforded one more reason to rejoice that I am not a Christian. But, O my brothers, for your own sakes, if not for the sakes of the dishonoured and fallen, at last, at the eleventh hour, begin to set your house in order. The most sacred feature of mundane life is woman's tenderness and devotion and love. If you desire to make your lives true and noble, heroic and sublime, utilise the best heart qualities of your women, even if you should cease to utilise your coal-fields. Ye do not mean ill ; but ye are so busy that ye go on with olden customs without looking into them or being tolerant to those who do. Ye might have had 180,000 blessings in your hearts and homes ; instead, ye have domestic hypocrisy and social blight and mildew, and the curses of some two hundred thousand women whom ye have degraded and ruined !

CHAPTER LXII.

A Glance at the Iliad—Hector and Andromache—Jewish v. Heathen Morals—Ulysses and Penelope—Theoxener—Tarquin and Lucretia—Appius Claudius and Virginia—Arabella Churchill—A Contrast—Other Heathen Ladies—The Holy and Sublime Vocation of Woman.

WHEREVER man has risen, even approximately to the standard of his own being, a chivalrous tenderness towards woman has been the charm and the grace of existence. Wherever there has been a civilisation that developed a settled government, literature, arts, and arms, the general degradation of woman has been impossible; she has been the joy of the citizen's home, the subject of the poet's ecstatic vision, the glory of the painter's dream, the rapture of the sculptor's ideal, and her love the guerdon that invested with valour and romance the soldier and his sword.

We will take a glance at a book that lays a more valid claim to antiquity than the Bible can, and where woman is a nobler figure than the Bible limns. Who that in his boyhood has read Homer has not, in spirit, leant against the Dardan gate and mingled his tears with those of Andromache, while, round Ilium, three circles were being traced in the bloody dust with Hector's mangled remains? Who remembers not how, all unconscious that the javelin was quivering in the throat of Hector, she sat at the "melancholy loom" where—

"A growing work employed her secret hours,
Confusedly gay with intermingled flowers.

Her fair-haired handmaids heat the brazen urn,
 The bath preparing for her lord's return :
 In vain, alas ! her lord returns no more !
 Unbathed he lies and bleeds along the shore !”*

Where in all the works of the Holy Ghost is there one flash of woman's passionate fidelity like that struck from the lyre of the blind old Greek when he pours from the lips of his heroine the pathos of dolour and woe : the tale that told of her father and mother in the grave and the helpless friendlessness that followed the event of her seven brothers being mown down by the sword ? The afflicted Andromache exclaims at parting :—

“ Yet, while my Hector still survives, I see
 My father, mother, brethren, all in thee :
 Alas ! my parents, brothers, kindred all,
 Once more shall perish if my Hector fall.
 Thy wife, thy infant, in thy danger share :
 O prove a husband's and a father's care !”

The hero gloomily forebodes the event of his wife falling into the hands of his enemies, and exclaims :—

“ May I lie cold before that dreadful day,
 Pressed with a load of monumental clay !
 Thy Hector, wrapt in everlasting sleep,
 Shall neither hear thee sigh nor see thee weep.
 Thus having spoke, the illustrious chief of Troy
 Stretched his fond arms to clasp the lovely boy.
 The babe clung circling to his nurse's breast,
 Scared at the dazzling helm and nodding crest.
 With secret pleasure each fond parent smiled,
 And Hector hastened to relieve his child ;
 The glittering terrors from his brows unbound,
 And placed the beaming helmet on the ground,
 Then kissed the child, and, lifting high in air,
 Thus to the gods preferred a father's prayer.’ †

Where is there in all the writings of the Lord, where

* “ *Iliad*,” bk. xxii.

† *Ibid*, bk. vi.

is there in all the lying sanctities of the Fathers, a passage like that I have quoted? The Greeks and their adversaries could fight and did fight after a fashion, compared with which the military feats of the Jews look like vulgar and bloodthirsty riots at a country fair. The Pagan Greeks were men, beside whom Jehovah-tsdkenu's pampered Jews could no more be compared than you can compare the most stalwart guardsman at Whitehall with the most hulking old-clothes man in Houndsditch. And see how the Homeric conception of woman towers like a Norway pine over the nauseous toad-stool of the Mosaic ideal. Against this incident from the Greek, passionate and tearful in its stately tenderness, what incident shall we place from the Hebrew? Shall we refer to Abraham twice over pocketing the gains from his wife's prostitution? Shall we allude to Lot and his daughters, to Judah and his daughter-in-law, on the day when she sat by the wayside and played the part of a harlot? Shall we refer to Onan, to Tamar, to the Levite and his concubine, to David and Bathsheba, to Ruth, to Rahab, to Aholibah, to Mary of Bethlehem, to Mary of Magdala? Take your choice of these men and women of the Bible, and place them anyway you like, as best you can, against the man and woman, Hector and Andromache of the "Iliad," and then dare to tell me that woman and the home owe their beauty, love, and sanctity to the Scriptures and to Christianity.

In the presence of its mother, whom he loved with manhood's noblest love, Hector took his child and hers in his arms. It cried in fright at the brazen helm and nodding plume. He doffed these, and placed them on the ground, then held the babe aloft, and, looking heavenward, called upon the immortal gods to bless his boy. From "Holy Writ" what are ye going to place against this, ye hireling buffoons of the pulpit? Will ye place

Zipporah raving with rage and denouncing Moses as "a bloody husband"? Will ye place Abraham sending off his child and its mother into the desert to die; or will you quote to me the case of the Jewish parents who *boiled their children and ate them*? We owe so much of all that is manly in man and womanly in woman to the Scriptures: do we? I have given you a picture of Father, Mother, and Child from Homer. Give me a parallel picture from "The Book of God."

Many were the lovers that her exquisite grace and beauty brought to the feet of the lonely Penelope. "Why wait for your husband Ulysses; Ulysses is dead," urged they. Even her own parents upbraided her as foolish for refusing princely suitors and waiting for the return of her lord, while there was a probability, amounting almost to certainty, that he lay in some distant and bloody grave, or that his bones were mouldering on the floor of the sea. Twenty summers touched the flowery plains of Hymetus with glory; twenty winters flung their snows against the brow of Olympus in desolation; and, still putting off her lovers with the *ruse* of the never-ending web, the faithful Penelope waited for the return of her absent lord.

At length, weary and worn out with storm and battle and hardship and time, a frail old man, penniless, scarred with wounds and covered with rags, arrived in Ithica. That tottering step was once the gallant stride of one of the most stately of the Greeks. That feeble arm was wont to wield a glaive, terrible as the bolt of Jove. That ill-shod and faltering foot has been red over the ankle in the best blood of Troy. That voice, so tremulous and thin, has shouted the battle-cry of the Hellenes, where the hosts dashed together like clouds of exploding thunder, while the earth reeled like a drunkard—drunk with the red vintage of the sword—and phalanx and line crashed and rose and ebbcd and flowed and sank

and staggered and surged like the boiling waves of hell. And that voice had whispered in the ear of the daughter of Icarius the whisper that is born of love's young dream. Could the maiden who had heard it plead for the empery of her heart ever forget its tones? Weak, yes; tremulous, aye. But it is the voice that once whispered love to a maid under the moonlight and the myrtle. O gods, it is the voice of Ulysses—her Ulysses; and the desolate woman who had refused the hand of kings utters a scream of joy, and clasps the old man in rags to her heart—her husband, her life, her long-lost Ulysses! And this Pagan Penelope was a woman who lived and died some ten centuries before Christianity had been heard of, and who owed nothing to the precepts of Jesus and the apothegms of Paul.

It was not because she was deeply imbued with the spirit of the Scriptures and Christianity that Theoxener, a noble lady of Thessaly, when pursued by the soldiers of Philip of Macedonia, voluntarily rushed into the sea and drowned herself, preferring death to life retained at the sacrifice of her chastity.

Sextus, son of Tarquin the Proud, learnt that the Roman matron, Lucretia, sat up late in her chamber at her embroidery during the absence of her husband. He stealthily invaded that chamber, and attempted to persuade the lady to be faithless to her marital vows. Finding that, in spite of his being the son of the King of Rome, he had set himself an impossible task, he resorted to force. He drew his sword, and threatened, if she would not minister to his lust, to stab the faithful wife through the heart and then kill one of his own slaves and lay him on the same couch with her in a manner which should support his statement that he had found her lying in the embraces of the slave, and that, in the interests of outraged honour, he had slain them both. Resolved that her husband and friends should not

hear the infamous falsehood of her dishonour when her tongue and that of the slave on the couch with her should be speechless in death, she fell a victim to Tarquin's villainy—not that she feared death in such a crisis, but that she shrank with horror from shame being associated with her name and memory.

As soon as Sextus had gone Lucretia sent for her husband and her father, and with sobs and tears admitted to them her involuntary act of adultery. Before they had recovered from their stupor of commingled rage and bewilderment, snatching a dagger which she had concealed under her clothes, she struck it to the hilt into her own breast, determined not to outlive the chastity she had been unable to defend. This Pagan lady had no Bible, and the wondrous star in the East had not yet led the shepherds to the Bethlehem manger. Mrs. Donald Crawford had a Bible. Christianity, which has done so much to ennoble and purify woman, has had far over a thousand years to ennoble and purify Mrs. Donald Crawford's native land. And how high the moral tone of Christian England is above that of Pagan Rome the records of the Divorce Courts tell us with a thousand tongues.

Appius Claudius, the decemvir, had a strong desire to possess, with a view to illicit amours, the young Virginia, daughter of a Roman centurion. He had to resort to false and nefarious measures in order to bring her into his power. Learning that his daughter must inevitably fall into the meshes of the high-born lecher, the centurion left the army and hurried back to Rome. He demanded to see his child. On his demand being complied with, he seized a knife, and exclaiming, "*This is all, my dearest daughter, I can give thee to preserve thy chastity from the lust and violence of a tyrant,*" he plunged the knife into the maiden's heart.

A certain English king, as lustful and a meaner crea-

ture than this Roman decemvir, desired, for the purpose of illicit amours, a young English woman of the name of Arabella Churchill. He did not require to resort to mean and nefarious measures to secure her. He had her for the holding up of his little finger. No Churchills, burning under a sense of their kinswoman's disgrace, sought to plunge a knife into the breast of Arabella. They rejoiced that their relative had become the mistress of so influential a personage, as it gave them a pretext for pestering her paramour for favours and preferment to themselves; they blessed their stars for their good luck, and expressed their surprise that his Majesty should have had a fancy for such a plain girl as Arabella.

So much for old Rome, so much for modern England, as far as the honour of woman is concerned. Virginia and her father were heathens; Arabella and her kindred were Christians. Virginia had no Bible; Arabella had, or might have had, a barrowful of Bibles. To avenge the insult offered to the chastity of Virginia, heathen Rome took up the sword, and in one bloody surge of righteous rage hurled the Appian line from the throne to the grave. Christian England drew no sword of vengeance to wipe out the insult offered to the honour of her maidenhood. She fawned upon and licked the feet of the dull beast who had seduced Arabella Churchill;* and from that harlotry to the present hour Churchills have had money from the public purse, and Churchills have had a voice in the government of this England, which is so jealous for the purity and honour of woman, and which has a Bible for the source of her greatness. Virginia was born in Pagan Rome nearly five centuries before Christ; Arabella was born in Christian England some seventeen centuries after Christ. And remember

* Her father actually wrote a volume in praise of monarchs and monarchy (*vide* Macaulay, "Hist. of Eng.," vol. i., p. 218).

it is from Christ and Christianity we have derived all our ideas of the "elevation" and nobility and purity of woman !

In dealing with noble and virtuous but *heathen* womanhood, time fails me to speak of Pandora and Protogenia, of Hipparchia, of Cornelia, of Arria, of Pompeia Plautina, of Plotina, and of Pompeia Paulina. These are a few stately figures culled from the temple of Pagan antiquity. These are women whose hair floated on the zephyrs that kissed the Isles of Greece, or whose sandals trod the shores of Ausonia long centuries before the Jordan had murmured itself into immortality, long ages before the halo of sacred romance had shed a glory on the hills of Galilee. I think not so lightly of woman as to be of opinion that Christ could either damn or save her. O Christian, she is holier than your Christ and mightier than your God. After weary centuries of suppression and debasement, she, and she alone, is the salt of the earth. Your brothers are debauched, your sons incontinent. It is that healthy and innocent, even if simple and uneducated, girl that bears on her fair shoulders and rounded bosom the weight of the destiny of your nation and your race. It is her pure and unvitiated blood that must bear the barque of Human Kind down the river of Time. Untainted by alcohol and narcotics, unpoisoned by nicotine, undefiled by the lewd language which is the index of corrupted thought, she stands in the pass of Humanity's Thermopylæ and beats back the demons that would ruin and exterminate Man.

Physical dwarfs, shambling abortions, mental imbeciles, and moral cowards fill our streets and do their vermin-crawl to dusty death on this globe to-day. But, long ago, the crawling would have been over if woman had not infused her more delicate morals and purer veins into the mystery which evolves from embryo into foetus, from

foetus into child, from child into man. Verily woman is an Elinor of Castille that, with her holy lips, sucks the poison from the arrow-wound, and thereby keeps restoring strength to the right arm of the world's Edward of manhood and valour. The galaxy, the mythic milk of Juno, is resplendent with the sheen of stars. But the galaxy of England is the milk of England's motherhood; from thence shine her stars the holiest and the mildest, the fiercest and the wildest; thence the pale lustre of Venus, thence the red shimmer of Mars; thence the might that has carried England's language into every zone, that has borne her banner to the uttermost sea; and thence the enterprise that has, in its efforts, dotted every land with her graves and belted the globe with her bones.

THE END.