

An earnest appeal has been published for the erection of a slab, monument, or memorial of some sort, over the still unmarked resting-place of Father Prout in Shandon Churchyard—beneath the shadow of the church whose bells were the subject of his famous lyric, "The Bells of Shandon." Several literary gentlemen have already subscribed.

The *Freeman* has been officially informed that the Chair of Chemistry, vacated by the retirement of Professor Sullivan, has been filled by the appointment of Dr. J. Campbell, M.B., M.R.I.A., who for several years past has occupied the Chair of Chemistry in the Carmichael School for Medicine.

The Earl of Lisburne.—We have to announce the demise of Lord Lisburne, at Crosswood, his seat in Cardiganshire, on Nov. 8. The Right Hon. Ernest Augustus Vaughan, fourth Earl of Lisburne, in the peerage of Ireland, Viscount Lisburne, of Lisburne, in Antrim, and Lord Vaughan, Baron of Fethard, in the county of Tipperary, was the eldest son of John, third Earl, by Lucy, daughter of William, second Viscount Courtenay, and sister of the ninth Earl of Devon. He was born in Oct. 1800, so that he has just completed his seventy-third year.

The Rev. Dr. Spratt.—A most elegant and appropriate monument has just been erected over the honoured ashes of this great philanthropist, social reformer, and exemplary priest. Above the vault, to which the remains have recently been removed from their temporary resting-place, the monument has been erected, adjacent to that where the dust of his illustrious fellow labourer, the Very Rev. Monsignor Yore, reposes, under the shadow of the O'Connell Tower, in Glasnevin Cemetery. The vault was built in what is known as the "new circle," at the expense of the Cemetery Committee, and the monument was erected by the Rev. James Spratt, O.S.A., the pious and worthy brother of the deceased. It consists of a finely chiselled Irish cross, eighteen feet high, most graceful in its proportions. On the North side of the base the Rev. Dr. Spratt administering the pledge to persons kneeling is represented in *relievo*. On the east side, also in relief, the front of St. Joseph's Night Refuge is well displayed. On the south side, in a similar style, the exterior view of the Carmelite Church, Whitefriar street, is carved, and on the west side is engraved a happily-chosen inscription.

SPAIN.

Carlist advices from San Sebastian announce that a great battle, in which the Carlists were victorious, took place near Tafalla, in Navarre, on Nov. 7. The battle, it is stated, commenced at 6 o'clock in the morning. Fighting between the Carlists and Republicans was resumed on Saturday morning, Nov. 8, but shortly afterwards was interrupted by the rain. The engagement recommenced in the afternoon and continued till nightfall. Further fighting took place on Sunday morning, and ended towards noon. The Carlist loss was 217 killed and wounded. That of the Republicans is estimated at about 1300 killed and wounded. General Moriones is said to have left about twenty waggons of ammunition in the hands of the Carlists. A *Te Deum* was sung on Sunday at the church in Estella by the Bishop of Urgel.

That the battle of Monte Jurra was a fatal one to General Moriones there can now be no doubt. In his despatch he asserted that he had succeeded in driving the Carlists from their positions—a falsehood such as no really brave soldier would have ever condescended to write. In fact, the Carlist leaders were so well assured of victory that they only brought seven battalions, or 8,000 men, against Moriones, although they had at Estella fifteen battalions, all of which might have been brought into the field. The great superiority of the Royal forces, both in discipline and courage, may be measured by the fact that the Republican array consisted of 18,000 foot, 2,000 horse, and 28 guns. Almost all the country north of the Ebro now acknowledges the authority of Charles VII.

It is announced from Mondays that on Nov. 14, between Andoain and Villabona, near Estella, General Loma, while endeavoring to re-victual Tolosa, was surprised by a Carlist force under Lizarraga. An engagement ensued, in which General Loma lost about 200 killed and wounded, and was compelled to return to San Sebastian without being able to effect his purpose of getting supplies into Tolosa.

Advices from Estella state that the Carlists have manufactured at their own foundry a new steel gun, which, on being tried, has proved satisfactory. They are also said to be producing 1,000 muskets weekly in their own manufactories.

HISTORY OF OUR SAVIOUR JESUS CHRIST.

By the Abbé J. E. DARRAS.

(Translated from the French for the NEW ZEALAND TABLET.)

EXTRINSIC PROOFS OF THE GOSPEL NARRATIVE—ANTIQUITY OF THE PILGRIMAGE TO BETHLEHEM.

THE more we study the letter of the Gospel, the more we discover in it intrinsic proofs of authenticity. Had we no other monument than the sacred text, it would be sufficient in itself to overturn the efforts of Rationalism. But, parallel with its recital, we possess a complete series of testimonies which it is important to make known. The "Pæresepium" of Bethlehem, from the first dawn of the Christian ages, attracted the pious veneration of the faithful, and the persecution of Roman paganism. St. Justin had followed the footsteps of the shepherds; he had gone to visit the spot where Jesus Christ was born. "At the entrance of Bethlehem," he says, "is to be seen a cave; it was there that Joseph, who had not been able to find a place in the *Dicersorium*, was forced to take up his abode." (1) Origen, nearly about the same time, said to the philosopher Celsus: "If the prophecy of Micah, and its admirable agreement with the Gospel narrative are still insufficient to convince the most incredulous; if a more decisive proof of the reality of the birth of Jesus Christ is wanting, let them bear in mind that at the present day is shown, in Bethlehem itself, the cave where He was born, and in that cave the manger where he was wrapped in swaddling clothes. The monuments are there, in perfect conformity with the Gospel narrative. The fact is of public notoriety throughout the country; it is well established, even among the enemies of our faith, who are unanimous in proclaiming that in this cave was born Jesus, He whom

Christians venerate and adore." (2) Apart from their exegetical value, to which we shall soon have to return, these declarations, made in the year 200, of the Christian era, carry with them, in a dogmatical point of view, a weight to which we mean simply to call attention here. Every day we hear Protestants censuring as superstition, idolatry even, the respect with which the Church surrounds the holy places, and the piety of Catholic pilgrims. It is no rare occurrence, in Palestine, to meet men, who adore Jesus Christ as God, yet who would blush to bare the head, or to prostrate before the Cave of Bethlehem, where the infant Jesus was wrapped in swaddling clothes,—before the stone of the sepulchre, where the body of Jesus, taken down from the Cross, was bound in the winding sheet of death. These men pretend to maintain in their piety, the faith and worship of the first ages, impaired they say, by Catholicism. Now in the time of Origen and St. Justin, the Cave of Bethlehem was venerated as we venerate it today. Will they have the hardihood to protest against the piety of the primitive Church, so solemnly attested by illustrious contemporaries! St. Justin, Origen, and, later on, St. Jerome, were they guilty of idolatry, in venerating the Crib of Bethlehem? No more than are the Catholics of the nineteenth century, proud of following, according to their measure, the great examples of their fathers in the faith.

7.—HISTORICAL TESTIMONIES—Conclusion

In order to check the piety of the primitive Christians, who resorted in crowds to the Cave of Bethlehem, the Emperor Adrian, in the year 135, of our era, caused this august monument to be profaned. By his order, a statue of Adonis was erected on the very spot where Jesus had uttered the first cries of a new-born child; and the pagan colonists, transplanted by Roman Cæsar, to the soil of Judea, assembled to celebrate their impure rites on those same plains which heretofore had resounded with the chants of the Angels. (3) "This sacrilege," says M. de Vogue, "far from effacing the nativity, according to the intention of the pagans, contributed to confirm the tradition." (4) Origen, in the passage above quoted, rested, in effect, on the testimony of the pagan populations, established half a century before at Bethlehem, to prove beyond a doubt the authenticity of the evangelical tradition. (5) In presence of such undoubted facts, of a significance, clear, precise, irrefragable, it was really needful to speculate on the levity which characterises our epoch, and on a lamentable forgetfulness of all religious history, to dare, without fear of stirring up the popular conscience, to write the incredible affirmation: "Jesus was born at Nazareth, a small town of Judea, which before his time had no celebrity." The annals of the world in their *ensemble* do not present us with a fact more solidly established than is the fact of the birth of Jesus Christ at Bethlehem. The soil itself, were all other monuments to fail, would proclaim the veracity of the traditions. And here we may recall a recent discovery, due to the accident of a fortuitous circumstance. In 1859, the ruins of a monastery, raised in the time of St. Jerome, and St. Paula, were discovered on the site where the Angel appeared to the Shepherds. (6) So true is it that in our epoch, harassed as it is by Rationalistic incredulity, the very stones themselves speak, and proclaim the authenticity of the Gospel narrative. And now, turning aside our thoughts from these miserable objections, let us adore the divine marvels of the crib. Let us say with St. Epiphanius: "the stable of Bethlehem is Heaven come down to earth. The Virgin brings forth, without pain, the Master of Heaven and earth. Glory to God in the highest Heavens, and peace to men of good will!" (7) "O, miracle! O, prodigy! O, mystery!" cries out St. Augustine; "the order of nature is suspended; God is born a man; a virgin becomes fruitful while preserving her immaculate virginity; ineffable alliance of the word of God with her who knows not man! A mother remains a virgin; maternity in no wise impairs the flower of Israel. God—He who is, and was Creator—now becomes a creature; immensity puts on littleness, to be clasped in our arms; eternal riches becomes poverty; the invisible becomes visible; the impalpable becomes palpable; the immeasurable is measured; He who is the joy of Heaven and earth, is laid in the narrow space of a crib!" (8)

(1) Dialog. cum Tryphone, 78. Patrol. grace. tom. xi. (2) Origen, Contra Celsum, lib. 1, cap. li; Patrol. grace. tom. xi. (3) S. Hieron.; Epist. lviii, ad Pauliniana. Patrol. lat. tom. i. (4) M. de Vogue, *Eglises de la Terre-Sainte*, pag. 51, note. (5) To the testimonies of St. Justin and Origen, who give to the *Pæresepium* of Bethlehem the name of *Epitaphion*, we may join those of Eusebius of Cæsarea, St. Epiphanius, and St. Jerome, who all give it the same name. *In hoc parvo foramine ceterorum conditor natus est* (S. Hieronymus, Epist. xlvii). This description, reconciling, as it does, the Gospel narrative with the very aspect of the place, enables us to form fixed ideas on the *Dicersorium* and the *Pæresepium* of Bethlehem. The soil of Palestine, says Dr. Sepp, is chiefly composed of calcareous earth, and consequently full of natural hollows. From the beginning these natural excavations had been used as shelters for men and animals. Such was the caravansary of Bethlehem. The part destined for the use of the animals forms a special grotto, small, low, and having the floor two feet lower than that of the principal grotto, upon which it opens on the right hand towards the east. This is the Crib or *Pæresepium*. The part destined for the use of the men, the *Katakoma* of St. Luke, the *Dicersorium* of the Vulgate, is an irregular apartment, of a trapezoid form, being 35 feet long, 11 broad, and 9 in height. *Vie de notre Seigneur Jésus Christ*, by Dr. Sepp. (6) It is thus described in a letter from Jerusalem, dated 17th February 1859: A discovery of great importance has just been made in the environs of Beth-Lehem, on the spot recognized as that where the Angel appeared to the shepherds. At the east of Beth-Lehem, at an equal distance from the traditional sanctuary of the apparition of the Angel to the Shepherds, while making an excavation several metres deep, the interesting ruins of an immense convent, of the time of St. Jerome, and St. Paula, have been discovered; subsequent repairs made by the Crusaders are also discernible. The reservoirs are immense, regular, and in a perfect state of preservation. Already, the pavement in mosaic of several chambers is uncovered, and the marble pavement of the church is being traced, as well as the entrance to the vaults. The enthusiasm caused by this discovery is so great that from the village of Beth-Sakour (of the Shepherds) the people are hastening to work gratuitously. The site of the ruins is known to the Arabs under the name of *Star-el-gamen* (sheep-path). A considerable number of very deep grottoes surround it, and up to this time, the shepherds were accustomed to seek shelter for themselves and their flocks in this spot. Close to these grottoes is a large Jewish reservoir. *De Vie de Jésus*, Dict. des Antiq. bibl. col. 895. (7) St. Epiphanius, *Œsa* de Doipara. (8) St. Augustine, *De Nativitate*, serm. ix.