

FRENCH PROTESTANTISM.

(From the London Tablet.)

THE end of the "Reformed Church of France" appears to be at hand. The effort of the late General Synod to secure the acceptance of even such a fundamental dogma of Christianity as the Divinity of the Saviour has so completely failed that 350,000 out of the total of 600,000 French Protestants have petitioned the Government, by their delegates, to authorise the formation of a fresh Protestant community on the basis of pure negation of all dogmas whatever, a sort of super-rationalized Unitarianism in fact. Our contemporary, the 'Spectator,' observes with truth that "when more than 300,000 of the descendants of the Huguenots refuse to make even the most general declaration of belief in the Divinity of Christ, the resurrection and the ascension, a fundamental change has indeed come over French Protestantism. The change was always contained in the very principles of French as of every other kind of Protestantism. However, from heresy to infidelity the descent is logical and certain. Protestant Christianity may now be said to have practically disappeared from every country of the world except the United Kingdom and some sections of society in North America. Even in England Christianity is fast fading away outside the inviolable bounds of the infallible Church.

THE SEVEN SACRED METALS.

In the discovery of the metals men first asserted their mastery over Nature; yet the discovery is still progressing. Before the fifteenth century only seven were positively known. They were each held sacred, among the ancients, to some ruling deity. Gold—indestructible, malleable, the richest in coloring, the most precious of decorations—was consecrated to Jupiter, or the sun, and had already assumed the supremacy which it has never lost. It was coined into the heavy darics of Persia and the aureus of Imperial Rome. It was used to gild temples and statues, was wrought into rich jewellery, and woven into delicate threads that enlivened the flowered stuffs of Babylon.

Gold mines and gold-bearing streams were found in Arabia, Syria, Greece, Italy and Spain, and the pursuit of the precious metal was carried on with various success by countless throngs of miners. The richest mines, at least in later ages, were those in Spain; and the enormous productiveness of the Spanish soil was slowly exhausted by the successive labors of the Carthaginians and the Romans. So successful was their industry, that but little gold or silver can now be found in a territory where the precious metal once lay scattered in boundless profusion on the surface of the earth.

Silver ranked next to gold, and was named from the soft light of the moon. The richest silver mines were those of Spain. It was wrought into cups, vases, lamps; adorned the helmets and shields of warriors; and formed the costly mirrors with which the Roman ladies shocked the austerity of Lactantius or Jerome. The beautiful silver coins of the Greek and Roman cities fill modern collections. Five other metals—iron, copper, mercury, lead, and tin—were employed by the ancients for various purposes; they made steel by a rude process, and brass without discovering zinc.

For many ages no addition was made to the sacred seven. Three thousand years passed away before it was suspected that the number could be increased—a memorable example of the slowness of human apprehension. At length, in 1490, antimony was added to the metallic family; and not far off from the period of the discovery of a new world, the chemists were about to enter upon fresh fields of science, scarcely less boundless or inviting.

A second metal, bismuth, came in almost with the Reformation. Zinc, perhaps the most important of the new family, may have preceded the others! it was certainly described long before. It is, indeed, quite curious to notice how the bright metal has been constantly forcing itself upon the attention of careful observers, and had yet been wholly overlooked, had been used by the ancients, in the form of an earth, to color copper into brass, and give it a shining surface like gold, was seen dropping from the furnaces of the Middle Ages, or melted in rich flakes from their walls.

Two Magicians, or philosophers, at last detected the error of ages! and Albertus Magnus and Paracelsus probably both discovered that zinc was as indestructible and as free from foreign substances as gold. It seemed a pure element. Paracelsus, who was fond of penetrating to the source of things, admits that he could not tell how the bright metal grew; nor in the height of their magic renown was it ever foreseen that the rare substance the sorcerers had discovered would one day shed knowledge, in tongues of fire, from London to Japan.

Two centuries followed, during which no metallic substance was discovered. Paracelsus found no successor; Albertus, almost the first man of science in Europe, was remembered only as a sorcerer. It was not until 1733 that the vast field of metallic discovery began to open upon man. Two valuable and well-known metals—platinum and nickel—among several others, first appeared about the middle of the 18th century. The number of the metals now rapidly enlarged; galvanism lent its aid to dissolve the hardest earths; and at length, in the opening of the 19th century, a cluster of brilliant discoveries aroused the curiosity of science.

Each eminent philosopher seemed to produce new metals. Berzelius discovered three; Davy, the Paracelsus of his age, is the scientific parent of five—potassium, sodium, barium, strontium, calcium. The numbers advanced, until already more than 50 metals, of various importance, have been given to the arts. The new experiments in light have added cesium and rubidium; and no limit can now be fixed for the metallic family, which for so many ages embrace only seven members, the emblems of the ruling gods.—'Once a Week.'

FORTUNATE IRISHMEN.

"DAY after day," says the 'San Francisco Chronicle' of Dec. 20, "the advices from the Big Bonanza mine show increased values by more extensive development, proving riches before which the treasures of Alladin's palace and Monte Christo's fabulous island pale. The operators who all along have had faith in the developments of the Comstock are in a position to-day to reap rich rewards, while those who sold their stock securities curse not loud but very deep. The discovery of this immense body of ore has already spread far and wide, and before many days roll around there will be representatives of the whole world's wealth knocking at the door of Consolidated Virginia, exporting the bonanza for the benefit of science."

On Dec. 19 Consolidated Virginia stocks sold at the enormous price of 400dol. per share, and California at 360dol. The fortunate owners of these stocks have become wealthy at a stroke. Some men who held large quantities have cleared millions of dollars. The Irish firm of Flood & O'Brien, of San Francisco, owns 60,000 shares of each kind of stock in these mines, which is worth 45,600,000dol. and a trifle over. As there are four members of the firm, this gives them over eleven million dollars apiece!

In the midst of their vast increase of wealth, these men have not forgotten their poor friends, and the 'San Francisco Chronicle' says:—"There are scores of men, and women too, in San Francisco who have been suddenly lifted out of poverty's iron grip by a timely hint from Flood and O'Brien."

May they live to enjoy their wealth, will be the wish of every poor man who hears it.

We are able to give the names of a few of those who have profited by this shower of gold. From a general list of about 60 names, we select those of fortunate Irishmen:—

Flood and O'Brien	...	...	...	\$45,000,000
P. A. Finnigan	...	...	...	750,000
J. R. Keene	...	...	...	500,000
J. C. Morrison, junr.	...	...	...	500,000
P. J. Hickey	...	...	...	350,000
C. D. O'Sullivan	...	...	...	350,000
Mark L. McDonald	...	...	...	150,000
P. Crowley	...	...	...	100,000
Con. O'Connor	...	...	...	100,000
W. T. Higgins	...	...	...	100,000
T. B. Shannon	...	...	...	100,000
James Gannon	...	...	...	80,000
Edward Cahill	...	...	...	50,000
Lewis Cohen	...	...	...	45,000
P. McGovern	...	...	...	40,000
G. P. Buckley	...	...	...	30,000
T. Brennan	...	...	...	25,000
J. Martin	...	...	...	16,000
N. Reynolds	...	...	...	10,000
Pat. Connor	...	...	...	10,000
P. Finnegan	...	...	...	10,000

These are large figures, and we are glad to find them tacked to Irish names. May the fortunate owners of "Big Bonanza" make a good use of their money. For our own part, we only wish to be moderately rich, but we should like to be intimately acquainted with Flood & O'Brien, in case of another windfall.

WAIFS AND STRAYS.

A HAIR REPAIRER.—An establishment for the "repair" of the human hair has lately been started by a hair-dresser in Rampart-street, New Louisiana. The proprietor does not boast that he can restore hair which has gone, but he simply offers to plant a new crop. Hair, he says, being a vegetable, can be planted anywhere, and if the soil be fruitful, will grow luxuriantly. The operation, however, of grafting hair is rather painful. It is necessary to sew the new hair into the head with needles. The most astonishing results are, it is stated, produced by this system of hair-planting. Any coloured hair may be grafted on anybody's head. Brunettes may have red, blondes, black hair; old persons black, and young, grey hair, or a person may, if he likes, have his head "terraced," that is, laid out in patches of various coloured hair—red, white, black, or brown, and in almost any sort of pattern or design. This style has been adopted rather largely in New Orleans, and seldom fails to produce a profound sensation. To those who cannot afford human hair, the professor supplies, at a reduced rate, horsehair, which is found quite as useful as a covering, and able to stand an immense amount of wear and tear, with the additional advantage that it never requires combing or brushing. Many of the coloured citizens of New Orleans will, it is confidently anticipated, take advantage of the hair-grafting art into that city to get rid of the wool that disfigures their heads and replace it by more becoming locks, thus fitting themselves for the duties of American citizens.—'Pall Mall Gazette.'

FAIR PLAY.—An Irishman, who was very near sighted, about to fight a duel, insisted that he should stand six paces nearer his antagonist than the latter did to him, and that they were both to fire at the same time.

THE SEA MOUSE.—The sea mouse is one of the prettiest creatures that live under the water. It sparkles like a diamond, and is radiant with all the colors of the rainbow, although it lives in the bottom of the ocean. It should not have been called a mouse, for it is larger than a big rat. It is covered with scales that move up and down as it breathes, and glitters like gold shining through a flocky down, from which fine silky bristles wave that constantly change from one brilliant tint to another, so that, as Currier, the great naturalist, says, the plumage of the humming-bird is not more beautiful. Sea mice are sometimes thrown up on the beach by storms.