

King of England, with his true wife's miniature upon his breast. He left no direct heirs. The crown therefore went to William IV., with whom, as with his family, Mrs. Fitzherbert remained on terms of close and intimate friendship—her servants even being, by special authorisation, allowed to wear the royal livery. Her relations with George IV. have been on and off—ever since her marriage in 1785—the subject of head-shaking, curious speculation, and even of open ill-report. Her vindication is now complete and final. Some one has compared scandal to fuller's earth—it daubs your coat a little for a time, but when it is rubbed off, your coat is so much the cleaner. The Coutts's Bank documents and the rest of the work of Mr. Wilkins not alone rub off the fuller's earth of the suspicion-monger, but show Mrs. Fitzherbert to have been an innocent and much-wronged woman.

Their Real Object

The object of the French Freemason-Radical 'Bloc' is once more set forth with the customary brutal directness—this time by an anti-clerical journalist at Lille. 'In a few weeks,' said this 'candid friend,' 'the separation of Church and State will be an accomplished legislative fact. That legislative fact constitutes the first stage—and a very modest stage it is—towards that final and complete opposition to all Churches and dogmas of religion.' In another quarter of the country—Grenoble, to wit—M. Combes has been singing a paean of rejoicing over the plunder and banishment of so many religious of both sexes whose sole crime was the free and devoted services which they rendered to the cause of charity and education. And yet

'The Ten Commandments will not budge,
And stealing will continue stealing'

despite ministerial majorities, whether in or out of France.

'Torpedo' Whitehead

An intending biographer once asked Emile Augier, the great French dramatist, for some notes about his life. 'Sir,' replied Augier, 'I was born in 1820. Since then nothing has happened to me.' The biography of Mr. Whitehead—who passed to the majority some weeks ago—might be written in terms as brief. He invented a new torpedo nearly forty years ago. After that nothing happened to him—except his taking-off. And even the cable-man paid no attention to that, although he is a faithful chronicler of such small beer as the death of a greyhound, or the latest limp of a race-horse, or the amours of a ballerina. 'And this is fame!'—as the late Mr. Vincent Crummies used to say.

The late Mr. Whitehead was one of the many men of peace who invented the most deadly weapons of war. Who, for instance, has not heard of the blood-letting devices of Lord Armstrong, Mr. Gatling, Mr. Maxim, Mr. T. E. Vickers, and the man from Galway—'Torpedo' Brennan? Before the days of Mr. Whitehead's invention, the torpedo was a crude bombshell—a sort of big iron pot filled with gunpowder and perhaps some scrap-iron, and tied to the end of a stick. It was used on sundry occasions, and with somewhat variegated results, during the great American Civil War of the sixties. But the Thing had an uncanny trick of hoisting friend as well as enemy, with a serene but discouraging impartiality. Sometimes the friend went up first and furthest. This was, for instance, the case when the Confederates crept up and exploded an iron-pot torpedo under the ribs of the 'New Ironsides' (Federal) off Charleston in 1863. The big puff set the 'Ironsides' rocking and dancing about like a wounded boar. But the water did not get beneath her skin, and the attacking torpedo-boat was crushed into smithereens. Three months later the Confederates sank the Federal 'Housatonic' off Charleston; but the

torpedo-boat accompanied her to the floor of the Atlantic. A few days later, however, Lieutenant Cushing blew up the Confederate ram 'Albemarle' in Roanoke River; and he got back with a whole skin in an undamaged launch. In 1866 the old torpedo was again successfully used on the Paraná River, when Brazil, Argentina, and Uruguay were banded together and trying to convince Paraguay with hypodermic injections of iron and lead. The allied ironclad, the 'Rio Janeiro,' struck her nose against two anchored torpedoes laid by the Paraguayans, took a 'header' to the bottom, and stayed there.

As a rule, good blood-letting devices are introduced slowly, and at the point of the bayonet, so to speak, into the British army and navy. Sighted and rifled guns, for instance, were not introduced into the navy for long years after these inventions, in the hands of Americans, has sent balls through the British ships 'as a knife goes through cheese' in the war of 1812-15. The British War Office clung to the old muzzle-loader until it had been flung on the scrap-heap by almost every army in Europe. Its 'experts' rejected the Maxim gun, the new rifle-sights, the magazine rifle, and the Vickers-Maxim or 'Pom-pom'—which is now voted 'the handiest piece of light artillery in existence.' In the case of the Maxim gun and of the Whitehead torpedo, however, the naval authorities were wiser in their generation. But the world has moved at the speed of the Scotch express since the days when Whitehead invented his travelling torpedo at Fiume, on the Adriatic. The torpedo of the Russo-Japanese war, with its two hundred pounds or more of high explosives, was a much more formidable dealer of destruction and death. When the Japanese torpedoers got to work on the Russian ships in the Straits of Tsushima, they sent seven costly warships to the bottom in an incredibly short time. That famous battle bore out the verdict passed some years ago by a United States naval commission, which (says Bloch in his 'Modern Weapons and Modern War') 'came to the almost unanimous conclusion that torpedo-boats will certainly destroy an armor-clad if they escape destruction during the two minutes in the course of which the vessel attacked will be able to use its quick-firing guns. But,' adds Bloch, 'the effectiveness of defence is weakened by the fact that in all navies the number of torpedo boats is from three to seven times greater than the number of armor-clads, and the loss of several torpedo-boats cannot be compared in gravity with the loss of a single armor-clad carrying an incomparably larger crew, and costing an incomparably larger sum.'

This remarkable revolution in naval warfare was made possible by Whitehead. And yet his passing goes unchronicled by the cable-man. Well, after all, fame is a relative thing. Ruskin, for instance, was known to a certain class as 'the old gent wot teaches drawin' at the Tylorlan.' Among the simple folk of Haslemere, Tennyson's reputation is said to have largely depended on the fact of his being a lord and wearing 'an 'at big enough for onythin'.' And once on a time a literary stranger was introduced to James Carlyle, the youngest brother of the sage of Chelsea. The stranger ventured the remark: 'You'll be proud of your great brother?' But James replied in his broad Annandale: 'Me proud o' him! I think he should be proud o' me!' Which leads us back once more to Mr. Crummies' remark: 'And this is fame!'

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