

ther than the men of any other country; and that its women can kick up the devil generally to a greater extent than the women of any other country. Recent news from across the Pacific would seem to indicate that the Cincinnati journal's bufflesque is not all burlesque. Take, for instance, the 1,200,000 divorces in twenty years, for which the cables vouch. These returns would furnish some justification for the statement that, in one vital point of morality, numbers of married men and married women in the United States have been 'kicking up the devil generally to a greater extent than those of other countries'. Here are some figures which we condense from returns for 1906: Murders and homicides, 9350; suicides, 10,125; legal executions, 123; lynchings, 69 (wholesale killings by mobs not included here); killed by automobiles, 209 (injured, 851); killed by hunters or while hunting, 178 (wounded, 187); killed on railroads (passengers and persons crossing tracks), 3,295 (injured, 9561); killed on electric lines (including employees), 674 (injured, 2953); killed by fires, explosions, cyclones and storms, lightning, electricity, drowning, and in mines, 6,489. Total violent deaths (exclusive of the red handiwork of mobs), 30,512. The steamboat contribution is not stated. But even without it, the figures for 1906 represent a pretty lively dance of death—a terrible record of the number of souls and bodies that were torn apart with a wrench of agony between New Year's Day and St. Sylvester's. Here is an item of much significance: 'The record of embezzlement, forgery, defaulting, and bank wrecking aggregated \$13,734,863' (nearly £3,000,000), 'an increase of more than \$5,000,000' (£1,000,000) 'over 1905'.

'Beware! Take Care!'

Those who have followed the conflict between the Lodge and the Church in France do not need to be reminded that the anti-Christian press of Paris does not greatly burden itself with the luxury of a conscience. This is especially true of the 'Matin', which, though poorly written and badly printed, sways the anti-Christian forces of Paris and gives the keynote to the campaign against religion throughout France. Its proprietors are Freemasons of the extreme Continental type, Jews in race but aggressively atheistic in their attitude towards religion. Moreover, the 'Matin' is not an independent organ, even of French Masonic atheism. It is a subsidised Government organ—a 'reptile' paper, as it would be termed in this country of cleaner political methods. For a long time it was edited by the adopted son of the Paris Jewish correspondent of the London 'Times'. In connection with the official war upon religion in France, the last-mentioned gentleman has made the 'Times' merely the London echo of the sort of 'news' and views that appear in the 'Matin'. Mark Twain has somewhere remarked that the habit of truth-telling grows upon you, if you are not careful. In all that relates to the Church, the 'Matin' is, so to speak, microscopically careful. Its amazing resourcefulness in untruth in connection with the Pope and the French bishops is, for instance, a matter of sufficient notoriety. The recent papal encyclical, however, and M. Combes' enfant terrible admissions in the Vienna press, made even the 'Times' withdraw from some of the views which it had adopted at second-hand from the 'Matin'. The 'Times' and other English correspondents in Paris are, however (as the 'Glasgow Observer' remarks), careful never to publish 'those extracts from the "Matin" which would shock English Protestant opinion', but which 'accurately reflect the opinion of the clique of Freemasons who are for the moment in power' in France. Fragments of Monsignor Montagnini's stolen letters appear to have somehow got into the French papers. They—and especially his accusations of bribe-seeking—seem to have touched the leaders

of the 'Bloc' on the marrow and raised them to a controversial temperature like that of an electric furnace. Thus far, we in New Zealand have only the 'Matin's' version of the facts, through the Paris correspondent of the 'Times'. We ask our readers to suspend judgment upon the case until slow-plodding truth comes to our shores in the hold of the mail-boat. Then we shall be in a position to judge whether the 'Matin' has been at its usual tricks.

The Great Robbery

The French revolutionaries of 1789 despoiled the Church of much; the atheistic Christ-hunters of 1907 are stripping her to the bone. On page 11 of this issue we reproduce the calm and sober analysis which a learned American Protestant judge makes of the great act of wholesale plunder which the enemies of religion are now perpetrating in unhappy and distracted France. A similar verdict as to the illegality of the French spoliation was given a few weeks ago in a Baltimore paper by the Hon. A. Leo Knott, Professor of International Law in that city. Two eminent American judicial authorities, thus, unite in declaring, in effect, that the spoliation of the Church in France is a rank illegality, and on the same moral level as a vast case of organised highway robbery. 'Mr. Knott', says the 'Ave Maria', 'cites opinions of Chief Justice Marshall and Justice Story on questions of similar import that came up years ago in United States courts, and concludes his article with this statement:—

"It will be thus seen that on this great question of the indefeasible rights of property, and the incompetency either of the King or the Legislature to annul them, and also corporate franchises when once granted, there is no difference between the Common Law of England and of this country and the Civil Law prevailing in France. Both of these systems of jurisprudence therefore condemn and reprobate the flagrant violations of these rights now being perpetrated by the French Chambers in their war against Christianity and the Church in France."

In Virginia there long existed a union between the State and the Protestant Episcopal Church. Churches, schools, and other institutions were built for that denomination by taxes levied upon citizens of every creed. Disestablishment came in due course. In 1789 and 1801 the State Legislature passed a law to seize this property and devote it to other uses. This gave rise to the historic case *Tennett et al. vs. Taylor et al.* The case was ultimately decided by the United States Supreme Court, which declared that the Virginian Legislature had no power to enact such laws, and that they were void and of no effect.

When disestablishment took place in Brazil in 1890, and in the Philippines a few years ago, the Church was in each case left in undisturbed possession of her property. No robber hand was stretched against her either by Brazilian revolutionaries or by American conquerors. Nay, in the case of the Philippines, the Supreme Court ordered the restitution of the Church property which had been seized by the usurper Aglipay and devoted to the uses of a schismatical cult. Between the years 1800 and 1844 the Protestant Church in Ireland received (according to Godkin's 'Ireland and Her Churches') in grants from the public Treasury the enormous sum of £2,301,725. Aubrey de Vere shows in his 'Church Settlement of Ireland' that the same religious organisation—the Church of one-tenth of the people—received from Parliament and church and parish rates £1,710,134 for the erection of churches and of residences for the clergy. The vastly greater part of the church rates and parochial taxation was picked out of the unwilling pockets of Catholics, often at the point of the bayonet. Yet no Irish Catholic suggested, when Disestablishment was coming, the con-

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