

effect is the written thought of M. Emile Flourens, former French Minister for Foreign Affairs, in the course of an article published during last October in the London 'Daily Telegraph.' 'By sap and mine,' writes he, 'the enemies of the Church are pursuing their work of destruction. Nothing stops the Government—neither troubles at home nor dangers abroad. The country may perish, if only under her ruins, covered even with her blood, religion can be stifled.'

Compared with French officials atheists, there was wisdom among the scheming visionaries of Laputa, who merely allowed their land to run to waste, and their people to fall into poverty, in their efforts to extract sunbeams from cucumbers, to soften marble for pillows and pincushions, and to petrify the hooves of living horses to keep them from foundering. The philosophers of Laputa had, for all their folly, the saving grace not to attempt to destroy religion and the sanctions of morality from the hearts of their people.

Notes

Divorce

In his 'Conversion of the Northern Nations', Merivale says:—

'If a man denies Christianity, he will straightway deny the spiritual claims of woman. So threaten all modern unbelief and scepticism. To the woman the denial of the Gospel would be at once a fall from the consideration she now holds among us. She would descend again to be the mere plaything of man, the transient companion of his leisure hour, to be held loosely as the chance gift of a capricious fortune.'

Rousseau—and with him the French Revolution—sought to degrade woman to the position she held under paganism. His words are scarcely quotable in a journal intended for family reading. But the spirit which shuffles off Christian faith and practice tends of itself to get back to the pagan or 'chattel' view of woman and wife that was revived by the apostles of 'emancipation' that headed the great Revolution. It finds its expression in the impaired sanctity of domestic life, the weakening of the wedding bond, and the rapid spread of that rodent ulcer of our day, divorce. The current issue of the 'New Zealand Official Year-Book' shows that, with the increased facilities for divorce provided by our Act of 1898, the number of divorces rose from 46 in 1899 to 126 in 1905. The amending Act of this year, directed against collusion, may somewhat stem the rising tide of divorce.

In the meantime the diversity of legislation on the subject in the Commonwealth and the Dominion may create a situation akin, in a mild way, to that which exists in the United States. A story—or parable—in the 'Chicago Tribune' tells as follows how things are under the Stars and Stripes:—

'The census-taker: "Your name, mum?"

"I don't know."

"Beg pardon, mum."

"I've been divorced. At present my name is Mrs. Jones in this State. In several States it is Miss Smith, my maiden name, and in three States it is Mrs. Brown, my first husband's name."

"This your residence, mum?"

"I eat and sleep here, but I have a trunk in a neighboring State, where I am getting a divorce from my present husband."

"Then you're married at present?"

"I'm married in Texas, New York, and Massachusetts; divorced in South Dakota, Missouri, Alaska, Oklahoma, and California; a bigamist in three other States, and a single woman in eight others."

The 'Tribune's' story is well told.

A Sectarianising Government

The Wade-Waddell Government in New South Wales have lately (says the 'Catholic Press') been 'putting grants for several sectarian institutions on the Estimates, and rigidly excluding all Catholic charities.' This scandal has succeeded another, which was exposed in scathing terms by the Cardinal Archbishop of Sydney. We refer to the manner in which a sectarian institution (the City Mission) was put upon the ratepayers of Sydney by the corporation of that city, to the exclusion of the St. Vincent de Paul Society and the many other Catholic charities operating there. In the course of a documented discourse, and of a letter to the daily papers, his Eminence showed that the City Mission was a sectarian association, for sectarian purposes, distributing sectarian tracts, and acting as a proselytising agency. Catholic charities distributed nothing in salaries; in the case of the City Mission, 'while £7000 had been disbursed, of that sum no less than £2147 was paid in salaries, £2500 in Bible hall entertainments and such like, while the whole amount disbursed in charity amounted to the magnificent sum of £845.'

Some Catholic Emancipation is evidently wanted in New South Wales.

Science and Faith

Science and Lord Kelvin demolished the natural selection theory of Darwin. Huxley declared that 'the old hypothesis of special creations is more consistent and more comprehensible'. And in 'The Last Link' (p. 76) even Haeckel gave it as his opinion that 'it would be better to accept a mysterious creation of all the species, as described in the Mosaic account'. The decline of Darwinism has been marked by what may be broadly described as a revival of religious faith among men in the foremost ranks of scientific research. Thus, in his 'Substance of Faith', Sir Oliver Lodge, approaching Christianity from the purely human side, uses language hardly distinguishable from that of the orthodox believer. The devout Pasteur, one of the foremost scientists of any age or country, died a few years ago with one hand holding the crucifix, the other clasping the hand of his pious Catholic wife. And, to mention only one more out of many instances that might be adduced, a writer in the New York 'Sun' recently told as follows the story of another great Catholic scientist, M. Lapperant. 'The French Academy of Sciences itself', says he, 'has lately given the very best answer, and a very direct one to the supposed opposition between science and religion by electing to perpetual secretaryship—an office which is usually considered as probably the most important in the domain of science in France and perhaps in the world—M. A. Lapperant, who is a Catholic prominent in his public adhesion to the old Church, and who besides is known as one of the most distinguished geologists in the world. Mr. Lapperant's treatise on geology is considered one of the most authoritative text-books on the subject ever published, has been widely read, and is referred to by writers on geology in all languages. Besides this he has written on mineralogy and is acknowledged to be one of the world's authorities on everything relating to science as it concerns things beneath the earth. The honor which the Academy has conferred on a distinguished Catholic gentleman proves that faith may be maintained in all its purity while scientific questions may be faced in such manner as to enable the pursuer of knowledge to make great discoveries for the benefit of the world.'

Mr. J. Casey, Princess Street, Dunedin, has a well assorted stock of gentlemen's summer underwear, hats, etc., at prices to suit all pockets.

Holiday excursion tickets in connection with the Christmas holidays will be issued on the New Zealand Railways (Hurunui-Bluff section) from December 16 to January 2.

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