

Thus, the historic Neanderthal skull was deemed by some to belong to some such ape-man. But it is long since understood that the peculiar formation of the Neanderthal brain-box was simply due to disease. Twenty years ago Professor Dubois claimed to have found some dead 'missing links' in the wilds of Java. But they have not yet 'materialised.' Darkest Africa has also been made the scene of some alleged discoveries of 'missing links.' But the links remain missing still. And, finally, one or two years ago (as stated) the cable announced a living specimen of the 'missing link' among a tribe of blacks in the Northern Territory of Australia. Examination and second thoughts, however, pretty promptly showed that the alleged half-ape, half-man, was in form a perfect man, gifted with the intelligence, the speech, and the other special human faculties that make an unbridgeable chasm between the highest ape and the most degraded of our fellow-creatures. Some hasty generaliser labelled that fine dark specimen of humanity a 'missing link' for no better reason than that the alleged 'link' had a deformed big toe! A well-known American humorist liked 'a good looking man'; 'not a pretty man,' added he, 'but one who looks well—into things, one whom you can't phule with a mare's nest, unless he sees the old mare on it.' That hasty Northern Territory observer did not look well into things, and discovered, not the 'missing link,' but merely a mare's nest.

'The mass of palæontological evidence,' says the late Mr. Mivart in his *Genesis of Species* (p. 129), 'is indeed overwhelmingly against minute and gradual modification' of animals and plants, which is demanded by genetic evolution. The gaps that exist in the animal kingdom correspond to the gaps that are found throughout all geological history, so far as it has been explored. Says Gérard, in his *The Old Riddle* (pp. 228-9): 'It is this total absence of graduated series, linking different forms together, that is the great and fundamental difficulty in the way of genetic evolution. Yet this seems seldom to be realised, and it seems constantly to be assumed that, in order to establish the genetic continuity of two creatures, no more is required than to discover another standing more or less between them. Thus, in the most famous of all instances, how often do we hear of "the missing link" between man and ape—as though, should a generalised form be disclosed, which might be considered a common ancestor, the question of man's simian [monkey] origin would be finally settled! In the same way, as we have seen, the existence of birds with reptilian features, is taken by some as conclusive proof that birds and reptiles have descended from one stock. But what is most imperatively wanted, is persistently wanting—namely, some evidence of a series in which one form passes to another, as in a dissolving view. And yet, genetic evolutionists must suppose such series to have been the universal rule throughout the whole course of life on earth.'

If their theory were true, the earth should be peppered all over with the various stages of the ape's efforts to become a man. But the 'missing links' are not alone missing; they are missing just where we should be stumbling over them in myriads. And the true scientist—who does not make a theory into a dogma of science—may well say as did Sir Charles Lyell (Darwin's close friend and admirer) after he had realised all the bearings of the Darwinian theory: 'I think the old "creation" is almost as much required as ever' (*Life of Darwin*, vol. ii., p. 193).

SEASONABLE PLEA

Help, Lord, the poor and suffering,
In hamlet and in city;
To all the poor give Patience,
To all the rich give Pity.

—Rev. Matthew Russell, S.J.

BEST GIFTS.

A thousand wishes I would send,
My thought of you confessing;
And all are in the boon I pray,
The little Christ-Child's blessing.

—Ave Maria.

THE GLEAMS OF HOPE FOR FRANCE

INTERESTING PARTICULARS BY THE ARCH-BISHOP OF HOBART

Writing from Paris on October 21 (says the Tasmanian *Monitor*) his Grace the Archbishop of Hobart gives some interesting impressions concerning present Church conditions in France. He writes: 'I arrived here last evening, accompanied by Father Cullen, whom I am taking to the University of Fribourg. We resume our journey tomorrow, but I must break it at Dijon to see my old attached friend of university years here in Paris, Bishop Dadolle. He is now reputed one of the leading men of the French Hierarchy. How wonderfully all things here seem changed to me! Thirty years must, of course, have brought changes of no small moment in any case, and then our own angle of vision widens out as time speeds by with accumulated experiences. But here the changes are quite unusual. And as you will readily anticipate the changes that engage my attention have to do with religion.

Increase of Practical Piety.

Early this grey misty morning we repaired to the nearest parish church, a fine structure in the round arch style, with deep triforium and lofty clerestory, and flanked with a goodly array of chapels. It was opened only five years ago. As we entered three Masses were being celebrated till well on towards 10 o'clock. Now, while we were in this church fresh worshippers were arriving, so that the total number who came this morning to this one parish church must have reached several hundreds. And, of course, it was but an ordinary week day. There was no special devotion whatever on this day. Furthermore, at each Mass celebrated at the altar in which the tabernacle stands a surprisingly large number communicated. I celebrated at that altar myself. And although you naturally will expect that women show up more numerous than men, still the number and quality of the pious men worshippers is really striking.

A Most Serious Symptom.

Yet the ugly fact remains uncontested that Clemenceau is the master; that in short there is no appreciable change in the political situation. Bye-elections in England have been going dead against a party which scored as high at the general elections as the Clemenceau-Briand party in this country. Yet here the bye elections indicate no real change in public opinion. The victims of the oppressive regime themselves seem to despair of safety from the electoral urns now or hereafter. And this is, to my thinking, a most unfortunate frame of mind and a most serious symptom. For the hardships inflicted in the name and by the authority of Parliament are almost beyond endurance, even for a people less emotional and less irascible than the French. And if the victims come to lose hope in the one means of redress which a Parliamentary regime affords, what remains to them but a wistful yearning—to put it the mildest—after some extraordinary development spelling ruin for the power that grinds them down so remorselessly? And then unhappily a third party—the party of monarchical ambitions, the Duke of Orleans' insatiate camp-followers, utterly regardless of the hardships they precipitate on defenceless priests, and yet more defenceless children given over to a system of education which has become increasingly an atheistic propaganda, fan the ready flames of anti-governmentism into the perilous fires of anti-republicanism. This puts Catholics into a wholly wrong, and a wholly inconsistent position. It is a wrong position, because, as Leo XIII. was at pains to insist in season and out of season, and as Catholic theology always implied, Republicanism is not inconsistent with Catholicism. A good Catholic may be an equally enthusiastic Republican. And they sin against consistency, because as Catholics they have been all along in strong condemnation of the great Revolution, and that, too, for being a revolution. Now, no one can deny that the monarchists aim at supplanting the form of government which actually, and for thirty odd years holds the field, and which came into existence through no republican violence whatever. It is all a sad additional illustration of men losing faith in constitutional measures, and in sheer desperation suffering themselves to be carried along against both their interest and their proper principles by self-appointed guides more astute and selfish than those they seduce.

College of St. Sulpice.

Here we are in the midst of ruins. The fine old College of St. Sulpice, in which I lived happy days, stares me to-day in sulkily emptiness. Indeed, I dare not enter its gates. It is black and neglected by the Government which has forcibly taken it over. Meanwhile, the former

'It's selling well, because it's satisfying well.' Hondai Lanka Tea represents 'the most for the money.'

'Be kind tae auld Graunie.' Ladies appreciate a box of Hondai Lanka as a Christmas present.