

meets with due chastisement; but it is often the highway to honor.' Yet

'Murder may pass unpunish'd for a time,
But tardy justice will o'take the crime.'

at last. 'Say not,' says the Wise Man, 'I have sinned, and what harm hath befallen me? For the Most High is a patient rewarder.'

A Blood Accusation

One of the most pestiferous of the microscopical things that sap the leaning walls of human life is gifted with such marvellous vitality that it survives after being frozen for months in solid blocks of ice, crushed under a pressure that should reduce it to lifeless pulp, and boiled at a temperature that should convert it into jelly. History tells us of a few odd hundreds of lies that are gifted with an almost equal power of resistance to destruction. One of these is the monstrous calumny which charges the Jewish people with having, from time to time, slain Christian children in order to use their blood for ritual purposes. During long ages the Jew was to the ignoble herd of avaricious or over-credulous Christians what the 'Jesuit in disguise' is to this day among the rag-tag-and-bobtail writers of no-Popery fiction. Avarice was ever the chief weapon of the crusade against the Hebrew people in Christian times and countries. And falsehood was the handle that fitted it. The German Catholic historian Alzog says that, in order to justify the plundering of the Jews as far back as five centuries ago, they 'were accused of being at the bottom of all public calamities, of causing pestilence and earthquakes, and were charged of being guilty of vices the most infamous, and of committing crimes the most horrid, among which were poisoning wells, murdering Christian children and drinking the blood at their pascal festivals, bewitching the atmosphere, and others equally absurd, if less atrocious. In this way,' he adds, 'was popular feeling roused against them.'

A large class of no-Popery fictions has been (to use Macaulay's saying) 'abandoned by statesmen to aldermen, by aldermen to clergymen, by clergymen to old women, and by old women to Sir Harcourt Lees,' the embodiment of the unquestioning and open-mouthed gullibility of the Orange lodge. It is, heaven knows, high time that the charge of ritual murder against the Jewish people should 'gang the same gait.' But

'Alas! for the rarity
Of Christian charity
Under the sun'

there are still people who—like the Queen in Alice's adventures—believe 'as many as six impossible things before breakfast' and who swallow—or pretend to swallow—the story of the blood accusation against the people of Israel as they do that of the 'Popish Plot' and the 'disclosures' of Maria Monk or Margaret Shepherd. A cable message from London published in the daily papers of New Zealand towards the close of last week, goes to show that, despite frequent and triumphant exposures, the charge of ritual murder still lives and plagues the earth like a pernicious microbe. The message just referred to runs as follows: 'The Right Hon. Sir Horace Rumbold, formerly Ambassador to Austria, in a letter to the "Times," urges that efforts be made to secure from the Czar and the Pope a public and official repudiation of the fables regarding Jewish human sacrifices.' From this it would appear that this atrocious calumny has been playing an active part in the savage and inhuman persecutions to which the Jews have been recently subjected in Southern Russia.

In the red and struggling days of the infant Church, a similar deed of blood was laid to the charge of the early Christians in pagan Rome. Nearly four years ago we told the melancholy history of the woe and desolation which, from time to time, the evil tale of ritual murder has brought upon the Jewish people. For the present let it suffice for us to state that it has met with 'public and official repudiation' from no fewer than seven Popes. Five of these condemned it by Bull—namely, Gregory IX. in 1247, Gregory X. in 1272, Martin IV. in 1123, and Paul III. in 1510. One of these Bulls is to be found in the work of the continuators of Baronius. The remainder are in the Papal Regesta and the archives of the Vatican. Most, if not all of them, were published in full, with an English

translation, in the 'Jewish Chronicle' about three years ago. To the list of the Popes mentioned above we might add the name of Benedict XIV., who sent Cardinal Ganganelli (afterwards Clement XIV.) as Papal Commissioner to investigate certain charges of ritual murder in Poland towards the close of the eighteenth century. Cardinal Ganganelli's report is a luminously clear and closely reasoned document, and it completely clears the Jewish people from the odious accusations which had been levelled against them. In this connection there is one fact that is worthy of special note: The authors of all these documents strongly insisted on the fact that it was a fundamental law of the people of Israel, and a practice that was intimately bound up with the details of their daily life, to shrink from contact with blood—above all from contact with human blood. For this reason, coupled with the complete lack of any trustworthy evidence of ritual murder, Pope Gregory X. issued a decree forbidding the receiving of the evidence of Christians in connection with this accusation unless corroborated by unexceptionable Jewish testimony, and ordering that persons of Jewish faith should not be arrested or detained on the charge of killing a Christian child 'unless, perchance—which we do not believe possible—they should be caught in the act.' No God-fearing man would cuff a child or hang a dog on the 'evidence' which has been adduced against the unhappy victims of this insane legend of ritual murder. And yet, to the discredit of our common humanity, it lives and does its foul work even to this day.

SKETCHES OF TRAVEL

XI.—ON THE CARS

By the Editor.

An educated and patriotic Egyptian (so the story runs) was 'doing' the sights and scenes of Great Britain. With a sense of national pride he remarked to an English fellow tourist: 'You have no wonderful hieroglyphics in your country, sir—no mysterious inscriptions, no undecipherable relics of an ancient literature whose secrets the wise men of the world have tried for ages to discover.' 'No,' said the Briton despondingly, 'we haven't any of those things. But,' he added, brightening up as a happy thought struck him, 'we've got our "Railway Guides." ' This was, I think, practically the idea that Tennyson had of the railway time tables of his native country. He regarded them as unreadable riddles. Lord Salisbury is, I understand, in the same case. He frankly 'guys them up' and relies for information on his body-servant or the expectant porter. Much of the undoubted confusion in those melancholy publications is caused by the difficulty of distinguishing between the hours that are a.m. and those that are p.m. Some railway corporations endeavor to surmount this difficulty by printing the 'night' hours—from 6 p.m. to 6 a.m.—in blacker figures. This is an instalment of mercy and justice to the puzzled traveller. According to Sir Boyle Roche's philosophy, 'the best way to avoid a difficulty is to meet it plump.' The Italian railway authorities met squarely the difficulty of distinguishing between the twin sets of twelve hours of day and twelve of night by an expedient of charming simplicity: they adopted outright the

Twenty-four Hour System

of the astronomers. By this arrangement the only one o'clock in the time-table is that which begins, as now, next after the witching hour of midnight. The hours run on, as under the old system, to twelve o'clock, which is, as now, noontide. And here beginneth the new departure: Our one o'clock in the afternoon is thirteen o'clock in Italy; our two p.m. is fourteen o'clock with them, and so on to midnight, which is twenty-four o'clock. The convenience of the twenty-four hour system in the making up of railway time-tables is too obvious to be insisted on. Belgium has adopted it. So has Western Canada. So have many of the American railroad corporations, and I understand it is being introduced into India. A very little experience suffices to give one an easy familiarity with the system and a warm appreciation of the complete absence of the puzzling method of time-table construction which sends you back a page or two to calculate whether the '4.10' at which your train is tuned to start spells the pleasant afternoon of to-day or a knock at your door and an early and uncomfortable rise in the wee sma' hours of to-morrow's probably bitter winter morning.