

Paragraphic.

News says—"We learn that it may be regarded as certain that a Welsh-speaking clergyman will be appointed to the vacant bishopric of Llandaff."

A paper watch has been exhibited by a Dresden watchmaker. The paper is prepared in such a manner that the watch is said to be as serviceable as those in ordinary use.

St. Mary's Episcopal school for young ladies at Knoxville, Ill., was burned to the ground on January 4. Most of the one hundred scholars were asleep when the flames were discovered, and had barely time to escape when the alarm was given.

Prof. Gulliver of Andover Seminary complains that the Institution is "quoted in Universalist pulpits, grog shops, and other low places as teaching a Doctrine which we abhor." He declares that no Andover professor believes in probation after death.

Eighty Frenchmen, assisted by 1,400 African laborers are about to begin the construction of a railway between the Niger and Senegal Rivers, in Africa. Their operations will be protected by a military column, which will plant the French flag and erect two forts on the Niger.

Harvard has students from every state in the Union except Nebraska, Oregon, and Virginia. Besides, there are students from the District of Columbia, Idaho, Montana, Utah, Armenia in Asia, Bahama Islands, Ontario, France, Germany, Ireland, Italy, Japan, New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, and Prussia.

There are twenty-nine Roman Catholic peers who have seats in the English House of Lords; there are four Roman Catholic Privy Councillors; there are forty-seven Roman Catholic Barons, the Premier being the "infant" Sir Henry Alfred Doughty Tichborne, and the last in rank Sir Maurice O'Connell.

The discovery of Roman remains is the Isle of Wight, at Brading, has led to the unearthing of a villa, which is regarded as the most important in Britain. Nearly thirty rooms have been already uncovered. Pottery, bones and coin continue to be brought to the surface from the excavations, which have reached a depth of sixty-five feet.

The existence of another Equatorial lake in Central Africa, far to the west of Albert Nyanza, rumours of which have reached Europe from time to time since Sir Samuel Baker's first Journey, is again reported, this time in a much more definite form. It is said to be in about 3deg. 40min. N. lat., and 23deg. E. long., and quite as large as Victoria Nyanza.

The Committee of the Evangelical Alliance had decided that a universal conference should be held at Stockholm in September, 1883; but the delegate who has visited Sweden (Mr. Arnold) having found obstacles arising out of disagreements between the congregations separated from it, it seems doubtful whether the proposal of the committee will be carried out.

Justin Martyr tells us that he was led from philosophy to religion by the godly lives of the early Christians. And when the native converts of Madagascar on presenting themselves for baptism were asked, "What first led you to think of becoming Christians? Was it some sermon or address, or the reading of God's word?" the answer usually was, "It was the changed conduct of those who had become Christians."

The Great St. Bernard establishment costs between \$6,000 and \$8,000 a year to maintain. It accommodates 16,000 to 20,000 visitors every year, to whom, according to old traditions, no charge is made, but in the hall stands a strong box, into which any one may put what seems to him a proper acknowledgment. It is a painful reflection on human nature that the sum found annually in the strong box barely represents what would be a moderate hotel charge for a thousand guests. In commenting on this miserable meanness, which falls very hardly on an establishment which can very ill afford it, a contributor to the *London Graphic* observes that the system pursued is quite inconsistent with the conditions of modern travel, Cook's tourists, etc. The monks are robbed and honest people made uncomfortable. Much better charge the rates of a moderate hotel.

The *Bishop of Lichfield*, in a recent pastoral, hopes that the sounds of party strife are dying away, and that the peace has been advanced through the intervention of Bishop Tait. He holds that in the late Primate's room a truly noble Archbishop has been chosen. He considers the great danger to the clergy is their forgetting the grandeur of their work, and he desires that this year should be one of especial evangelistic effort adapted to the wants of different localities.

This is from a Cairo paper: "The Bedouins were greatly puzzled by the garb of the Highlanders, who, they came to the conclusion, were not soldiers, but the wives of soldiers. Distance, of course, encouraged this delusion, as bare legs were obviously more discernible than the men's faces, covered as these were with veils. The Bedouins noticed that the soldiers' women camped by themselves, and they resolved to go down and spoil the infidel soldiers of their wives; and a body of them actually went, with a result which must have added to the wonderment of both, for the British harem turned out with rifle and bayonet, and very speedily thirty or forty of the amorous Bedouins bit the dust. After this episode, the soldiers' wives were not again attacked by Arab Sheikhs who wanted to replenish their harems with English moonfaces."

EASTERN CUSTOMS AND BIBLE TEXTS.

No. III.—CONTINUED.

But it is time that we return from this ramble in the fields. We come back, perhaps, the less willingly, because in our capacity as historians we come now to a sadder scene than any other we witnessed while in the country. You may remember that in our last paper we told you of witnessing on one occasion the sports of the young men as they amused themselves with their bows and arrows. They are able to send these arrows very swiftly, as well as straight, as, of course, it is to these, as well as to darts or spears, they trust both in the hunt and in war to take the lives of animals and of their enemies. On that day as one young man, the surest marksman of them all, was about to let his arrow fly to the mark, it, by sheer accident, caught upon the string of the bow, and glancing off, struck with great force a fine lad of about 13 years of age. He fell to the ground in great pain, and seemed almost at once to lose his consciousness. He was borne gently to his father's house, which was not far off. They were really able to apply no remedy, not only because the wound was exceedingly severe, but also because the medical knowledge of these people amounts to nothing at all.

In this village there was no one who even called himself a physician. In the larger towns there were men who practised with some success the art of healing; but they came mostly from Egypt, and were not numerous. Gen. i. 2, and Jer. lvi. 11. There were dabblers in the science—men and women throughout the country as in Western lands; but their principal success seemed to be in keeping the patients sick, rather than curing them. Were it written elsewhere we would say there was something of grim humor in that expression. St. Mark v. 26. Almost the only remedies they knew of were outward applications such as ointments (Isaiah i. 6) and salves, etc. Jer. viii. 22; Isaiah xxxviii. 21, etc. (St. Luke was a physician, but we have no means of knowing how far he was successful in his profession. Col. iv. 14.) In the case of this young man however, the most advanced human skill, even if it could have been obtained, would have been unavailing, for it was evident he was growing weaker every moment. As evening drew on his companions seemed unwilling to quit the courtyard, and remained there in respectful silence. Had it been in older days of the country's former history, the young man whose arrow, though it was altogether an accident, had done the work, would have instantly fled to the nearest city of refuge to escape the vengeance of the nearest of kin. Deut. xix. 1-13. But this right of refuge, after being greatly abused in intervening years, had been gradually replaced by the more ordinary processes of justice; and so the young marksman was there, full of sorrow and

anxiety. The father's grief particularly was painful to witness. He threw himself upon the floor (2 Sam. xii. 15, 16); he tore his garment, and plucked out the hair from his beard in token of his genuine sorrow. Ezra ix. 3; Jer. lxi. 5. It may be mentioned, in passing, that this expression of grief, which is impulsive with these people, was not practised except the cause of sorrow were deep, and was expressly forbidden to the High Priest, even in the case of the death of his father or mother. Lev. xxi. 10. Our young friend here was unconscious of his pain, and about midnight ceased to breathe. Almost instantly there was a cry that can only be called fierce in its agony; and was taken up by all within the house and courtyard. We could not, even at the moment, but think what a terrible night must that of the exodus have been in Egypt; and how awful the wailing, since "there was not a house in which there was not one dead." Exod. xii. 30. After a few moments the father seemed to regain command of himself, and went to the couch on which lay the now dead body of his son, and gently placed his fingers upon his eyes to close the lids—a service which is always performed by the nearest of kin (Gen. lxi. 4; and then with an affection which was touching to see he bent over and kissed the young lips that had not yet lost their freshness (Gen. i. 1), an act which was repeated by each one of the family in their turn. Then most of them retired from the room,—the body was washed with water, and was with quiet reverence taken to the guest chamber, or upper room (Acts ix. 37) of the house. As we saw it here, a napkin covered the face (as was the case with the sacred body of the Saviour, St. John xx. 7), and the limbs were wound round with a linen sheet. We call it a sheet for want of another name; it was rather narrow, and wound round and round the body and limbs. Acts v. 6, and St. John xi. 44. A most agreeable perfume pervaded the entire room, which we soon found came from the spices, which were wound up with the body. Thus it was that affection and respect prompted Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus to treat the Body of Christ ere it was laid in the tomb. St. John xix. 39, 40.) And as though to add to this generous provision the women, you remember, in the early morning of the day after their Sabbath, on our "Lord's Day," brought yet more to complete the act performed, by necessity with something of haste, on the previous Friday evening. St. Luke xxiii. 56 and xxiv. 1. This using of spices is not intended only as a mark of reverence for the dead, though perhaps principally that in most cases, since there were certain instances where it is recorded in Scripture that it was omitted (2 Chron. xxi. 19 for example), because the life had been worthy only of scorn; but it was also intended as a preservation of the body in a perfect state until after interment, at least. This is no easy matter, because of the climate particularly in the hotter part of the year. St. John xi. 39. Just as the day dawned the sounds of grief broke out afresh, until, what with loud lamentations and shrill cries from an ever increasing number of men and women, the whole scene was one of such confusion that it could only be justly described as a "tumult." St. Mark v. 35. The excessive expression of grief is frequently referred to in Scripture. Jer. xxxi. 15 and Ps. lxxviii. 64, etc. The tears of the father seemed genuine enough, and we have no doubt he was truly stricken in his grief; yet fashion even here had established a rule, and it was with a pain, in which we could not prevent disgust having some share, that we noticed "professional mourners" who we knew were hired for the occasion, performing their howls, for such certainly were their cries, rocking themselves from side to side in their mimic grief. Such persons are referred to in 2 Chron. xxxv. 25; but there at a royal funeral they might, perhaps, seem less out of place than in the greater privacy of domestic sorrow. Such, too, are the "mourning women" spoken of in Jer. ix. 17, and Amos v. 16. These were the individuals whose presence aroused the Saviour's displeasure to such an extent, when he entered the ruler's house that He would not abide them, but put them out, while their own grief was so deep (!) that "they laughed Him to scorn." St. Matt. ix. 23, 24.

(To be continued.)