

ralics and "dead mens' bones" upon her altars, gathered, by pious hands, from every corner of the earth,—for each and all of which she exacts the veneration of the faithful. Any delusion, however preposterous in itself, has been, and still is, the policy of that church to encourage, provided it promises to extend her influence. A curious instance of this sort, which has recently occurred, is worth relating, inasmuch as it proves two things: First, that the traditional policy of the Catholic church, in these matters, has undergone no change; and, in the second place, that such is the proneness of man to be imposed upon by the illusive and miraculous, that he will rather disbelieve the evidences of his own senses than part with the delusion.

Some time about the year 1850, two children, a boy and a girl, were tending their father's cattle on the top of the mountain La Sallette, in the diocese of Grenoble in France. One day, a lady, gorgeously dressed, appeared to them, and announced herself to be the *Virgin Mary*, come from heaven to threaten terrible calamities on the people of the surrounding country for the coldness and indifference of their devotions to her. The children were greatly frightened, and told all they had seen to their parents on their return. The story of the apparition spread, and excited immense sensation far and near. It came to the ears of the priests, and the children were immediately removed to a convent. There they were put under proper training until the story acquired orthodox shape and consistency. The result was, that, the next year, on the anniversary of the apparition, from forty to fifty thousand of the people, headed by a number of priests, ascended the mountain to offer their devotions to the Lady of La Sallette. It seems that miraculous virtue had been communicated by the lady to a small spring of pure water which gushes out of the mountain, the water of which is sold to the faithful as a sovereign cure for all diseases. It is said that the sale of the water yields a yearly revenue of over a thousand pounds sterling to the church.

We owe the exposure of this preposterous imposture to the industry and honesty of some Catholic priests of that place. The Abbe Deleon, with some other priests, felt that the credit of their church, and the interests of true religion, alike demanded a thorough searching into the alleged facts. With this view, he got hold of the two children to whom the apparition was said to have appeared, and, after strict investigation of all the circumstances, the imposture was publicly exposed. The "*Virgin Mary*" turned out to be a certain *Madam Lameille*, a woman once a lady of fashion, but who became crazed, and was, a few days before her appearance on the mountain, turned out of a convent for some irregularities. Upon this exposure, *Madam*, by the instigation of the priests, brought an action for defamation against the

Abbe. The whole matter was fully investigated before the Court, and *Madam* was nonsuited. An appeal was taken in her behalf, and the whole case was again investigated before the Imperial Court of Grenoble, and the Lady of La Sallette was again mulcted in the costs.

Strange, however, to say—notwithstanding this public exposure—the visitors to the shrine on the mountain are as numerous as devoted as ever, nor is her service confined to Grenoble or to France. It has been introduced into England. Here is the recommendation of Ullathorne, the Catholic Bishop of Birmingham, to a Manual for the service of that imposture, written by one of the priests in 1857:—"I have read the book entitled 'The Manual of the Confraternity of La Sallette,' and find nothing in it contrary to faith and good morals. On the contrary I consider it calculated to promote piety and devotion, especially to the Mother of God."

Let it not be supposed, however, that such gross delusions as these are confined to Roman Catholics. It is not so. They are rampant, only in a different phase, among Presbyterians, especially in the Highlands of Scotland. We have now before us a book recently published by a popular Gaelic minister, the Rev. John Kennedy of Kilearn, entitled, "The days of the Fathers in Ross-shire"—a book containing many things which require no ordinary strain on our faith to believe. Mr. Kennedy affirms that many of the "Ross-shire Fathers" "lived so near to God, and had so much of His mind, that the spirit of prophecy was conferred upon them, and they could predict future events." Of a certain crazed woman, "*Foolish Mary*" (*Mair Ghoraich*), he speaks in this fashion:—"Of all I ever knew, she seemed to enjoy the greatest nearness to God in prayer. The whole case of one whom she carried on her spirit to the throne of grace, seemed to be uncovered before her. She could follow him with the choicest sympathies in his cares and sorrows during his whole course of life, without no information regarding him, but such as was given her in her intercourse with God." Again:—"Coming to me once" (*Mair Ghoraich*) "with an anxious expression of face, she asked if there was a minister in a certain district, which she could only indicate by telling 'it was not far from a place of which she knew the name.' I told her then: 'Why do you ask?' 'I saw him yesterday,' she replied, 'fixing a wing to each of his sides, and rising upon these wings into the air till he was very high; and suddenly he fell, and was dashed to pieces on the ground.' And she added: 'I think if there is such a minister, that he has but a borrowed godliness, and that his end is near.' There was just such a minister, and his end was near, for, before a week had passed, I received the tidings of his death." We, ourselves, could almost venture the prophecy that the