

are made," and these words of Napoleon to his atheistic captains silenced them. And the same impression is made the world over. Go to-day into the heart of Africa, or to the centre of New Holland; select the most imbruted pagan that can be found; take him out under a clear, starlit heaven, and ask him who made all that, and the idea of a Superior Being, superior to all his fetishes and idols, possessing eternal power and godhead, immediately emerges in his consciousness. The instant the missionary takes this lustful idolater away from the circle of idols, and brings him face to face with the heavens and the earth, as Napoleon brought his captains, the constitutional idea dawns again, and the pagan trembles before the unseen power.

—Prof. Shedd.

ORIGIN OF HAND SHAKING.

The Romans had a goddess whose name was Fides or Fidelity—a goddess of "faith and honesty," to whom Numa was the first to pay divine honours. Her only dress was a white veil, expressive of frankness, candor and modesty; and her symbol was two right hands joined; or sometimes two female figures holding each other by the right hands, whence in all agreements by the Greeks and Romans it was usual for the parties to take each other by the right hand, as a token of their intention to adhere to the compact; and this custom is in more general use even among ourselves, at the present day, than would at first thought be realized.

NEW TRIAL OF CHRISTIANITY.

Let us not disguise the gravity of this new trial of Christianity. In some respects it is the most serious crisis that our faith has ever known. To intelligent and especially to studious Christians, it is, perhaps, the most perilous ordeal that ever tried the personal faith of the church. Christianity has never been without some great form of trial, persecution and martyrdom in its primitive ages; terrible distortions of opinion, mysticism, priestly supremacy and oppression, during its mediæval history; contentions and the shaking of the nations at the outbreak of the Reformation; but in none of these trials was personal faith in essential Christianity seriously disturbed, in none of them were its historical facts or dogmatic truths formally assailed; through all of them men believed with the confidence of children.

To-day our most advanced intelligence is appealed to by unbelief, and the appeal is made

with amenity and compliment, made, if we may so say, by Christianized skepticism. Persecution and martyrdom imposed no such trial; they needed to confirm faith and produce Christian saintliness and heroism. The trial of our age is insidious, enervating and disarming, snatching from us some of our own best weapons; while, felt generally, it can be mastered only by the few who have scientific competence to investigate its scientific logic. But the strongest security of Christianity is in the religious consciousness of its followers, and this may be as profound in the illiterate as in the cultivated. There is in this moral consciousness of an inestimable and a legitimate wisdom, a wonderful discernment, we might almost say, intuition. Schleiermacher founded upon it the reaction of German Rationalism, which has saved from utter infidelity the Protestantism of all Europe. The Methodist movement was founded by Wesley in the same great moral force. It is the basis of Guizot's high argument. The devout soul feels the legitimacy, the truthfulness of its spiritual life; it knows that to be contrite for sin, to be 'meek and lowly in heart,' to be pure, and patient, and truthful, and charitable, to 'watch and pray,' to walk humbly, do justly, love mercy, and to keep itself 'unspotted from the world,' is assuredly right; and it finds, moreover, that in order to do so, it must live by 'faith in the Son of God.' Its spiritual life thus spontaneously leads into all essential truth, be it dogmatical or ethical. This is God's method of saving the world, and it is divinely wise.

Let then all good men who are troubled by the 'religious questions of the day,' find here their refuge; they cannot be fatally endangered here. Let them have 'perfect holiness in the fear of God,' for this is the highest significance of their religion, and with this will certainly co-exist all essential orthodoxy, and from it will assuredly come a safe death and eternal life. And let all skeptics know that they can never shake away this religious consciousness, this foundation of the moral world.—Dr. Stevens in *Methodist Quarterly Review*.

BOOKSELLERS AND AUTHORS.

The following anecdote is related of the late distinguished writer, Balzac: A bookseller who had heard of Balzac as a young writer of great promise resolved to offer him 3,000 francs for a novel, but on being told that he lived in an obscure street in the old part of Paris, he observed that he must be a plebeian, and that he would

offer him but 2,000 francs. On arriving at the house he was told that Balzac lived on the fourth floor. "Oh! in that case," said the bookseller, "I will offer him but 1,500 francs." But when he entered a poorly-furnished room, and saw a young man steeping a penny roll in a glass of water, he offered but 300 francs, and for this sum received the manuscript of what was afterwards considered a *chef d'œuvre*—*the Derniere Fee*.

THE UNION OF THE B. AND B. O. GOOD TEMPLARS.

Mr. MacNab's circular to the Primary Lodges in Nova Scotia has, we are glad to see, been answered by J. N. Freeman, Esq., G. W. O. of the B. Order in that Province, at the request of many of the members of both the B. and B. American Orders. His views of the matter and our own are similar, and for the benefit of both parties we give the following extracts:

"I have no hesitancy in saying that the circular is, mainly, false in its statements—malicious in its design, and altogether deceptive as to the question at issue between the 'British' and 'British American' Templars. I have received letters from Canada which fully bear me out in this statement. The Rev. James Scott, Supreme G. S., who is a member of the G. L. of the 'American' Order in Canada West, and met our Nova Scotia delegate in that Lodge, describes the defeat of the Gillean Executive as complete. He also represents the appointment of two Representatives by that Lodge (himself one) to meet two Representatives from each of the other G. Lodges, on the day previous to the meeting of the Supreme in St. John, N. B., to unite all the Grand Lodges under one Executive head, (not to form a head) as a great success for the Supreme; and anticipates an early and complete adjustment of all differences."

"A very superficial examination of the circular will reveal the object for which it was written. Who will believe that Mr. McNab did not know the object of the meeting of the second Grand Lodge in Stratford, and yet he says he did 'not know for what purpose it was held.' And who cannot see that the 'two thirds' of the Representatives which he says knew nothing about the contumacious conduct of the Gillean Executive, and it appears by him could not learn anything of it, are not as likely