

The war in Chili still continues, but progress on either side is slow. Most of the "special" and other reports we receive are false, or so mixed as to be of little value. Evidently the "monumental liar" is not confined to the northern hemisphere.

The *Inventive Age* says it is strange but true that in this 19th century of Christ and his gospel of peace, the most highly valued inventions are those which add to a nation's facilities for killing men. They are also, we judge, the best assurances against war.

Two weeks ago we made a reference in these columns to the charge of plagiarism against the Bishop of Iowa, saying at the same time that all judgment must be reserved until a thorough investigation is made. In another column of this issue we publish an article on the subject, taken from the *Living Church*, which presents the other side of the question, and we feel confident that the readers of THE CRITIC will be glad to hear what Dr. Perry has to say on his own behalf.

The complete census returns for England and Wales give some interesting facts; perhaps the most startling being the news that there are nearly a million more women than men. The total population of the United Kingdom (37,700,000) now nearly equals that of France. London, with its 4,211,056 souls, exceeds the population of Scotland by 211,056. Glasgow still maintains its position of being the second city in the United Kingdom. The actual increase in England and Wales is 3,026,572.

We are pleased to see that the *Bridgetown Monitor* recently copied a note on the check-rein from our columns. We are also glad to be able to say that during a trip through the Annapolis Valley this summer we took particular notice of the horses, and we saw very few wearing check-reins, and not many with blinkers. Evidently the people of the Valley know how to treat horseflesh. Another thing we discovered was that a great many people had read "Black Beauty," a book that all owners of horses should read. The few check-reins we saw were on horses attached to stylish traps, in which, not infrequently, a lady sat.

We always like to see a maiden servant neatly attired, with her costume becomingly completed with a white cap and apron, and we always thought that the custom was one appreciated by the girls themselves. It seems we are mistaken. A strike is imminent in London among domestic servants over this very point, and a test case brought into court has resulted in a verdict for wrongful dismissal. She was told to go or wear the cap, which she and the other servants who are revolting considered a badge of servitude. This may be said to cap the climax. It is expected that a serious outbreak against home rule will result on this victory.

Even in the Salvation Army we hear of friction, and female vanity, allied to an old superstition, is at the bottom of it. The rules of the organization prohibit display in dress, and the lassies generally admit that it is sinful to wear jewelry. The wearing of earrings, is, however, a practice which many of them cling to, claiming that the practice is good for the eyes. This is an old superstition that still survives among the lower class even in Nova Scotia. An order from the Salvation head quarters has been issued forbidding any further infringement of the rules on this point, and announcing that no further excuses will be listened to. The strife will not be long.

It is somewhat of a coincidence that after an absence of twenty-five years from the British shores the visit to Portsmouth of the French Evolutionary Fleet, which will take place during the last week of the present month, should almost follow the visit of the German Emperor. In official circles in England much satisfaction on that account is felt at the extensive preparations which are being made for receiving the strangers warmly. The Mayor of Portsmouth will banquet the officers in the Town Hall; the crews will be feasted at the expense of the citizens, and both the navy and the army are projecting separate entertainments on an elaborate scale. An effort is also being made to induce the Admiralty to add to the good effect of these hospitalities by sending a fleet to the Solent to meet the Frenchmen.

The discussion over the picture "St. Elizabeth of Hungary's Great Act of Renunciation" actually reached the House of Lords. Lord Stanley of Alderney declared the picture to be objectionable and offensive to the feelings of Roman Catholics, and questioned the action of the committee of the Chautrey Trustees in purchasing it. Viscount Hardinge, as one of the Committee, explained that they were empowered to purchase any pictures belonging to the British School, and the Marquis of Salisbury, who disavowed any responsibility on the part of the Government for the action of the Trustees, made a humorous speech with regard to the matter. He said he had not seen the picture in question, his only idea of it being derived from the sketch in *Punch* representing Zaco exhibiting her back to the London County Council. He alluded to the fact that in France and Italy a great many paintings of sacred subjects which fall far short of the nineteenth century idea of clothes are exhibited without shocking the feelings of the public, and expressed his belief that the painter of the picture under discussion had not the slightest intention of wounding the religious susceptibilities of any section of his fellow-countrymen. It appears to be a tempest in a teapot, and we cannot see why such a storm should be raised over a painting that, from all accounts, is no worse than many another.

An English paper says that in consequence of the insurance action recently brought to recover the amount insured on the late Mr. Maybrick's life, in which the Maybrick children have a revisionary interest, Mrs. Maybrick will be able to have practically a new trial in a civil court on the charge of murdering her husband. According to the law, supported by a large number of decided cases, the fact of the conviction of an accused person is not proof as between other parties, and only as between the prosecutor and the prisoner. This fact will enable Mrs. Maybrick at the trial of the action, which is not finally disposed of, to compel the Insurance Company to prove that she did murder her husband, and they will be obliged to produce the doctors and other witnesses called as to the arsenical poisoning of Mr. Maybrick, and Mrs. Maybrick herself could be produced as a witness. Unless the Insurance withdraw their defence, the trial, which will take place during the November sittings, will be one of the most sensational and unprecedented on record, and will be practically a new trial of a charge of murder in a civil court.

The general dissemination of literature antagonistic to the prevailing religious beliefs of the various Christian denominations of the day, is a thing that ought to be frowned down. Without the bond of common belief and gathering for worship, the majority of mankind would fall into a state of depravity far below the condition of affairs, and we are thoroughly convinced that the spread of literature calculated to weaken or obliterate the religious belief of such people as may come in contact with it would be productive of great evil to a state or nation. Apropos of this, we have received, addressed to "Editor CRITIC, Halifax, Nova Scotia, N. B.," a pamphlet bearing the following on its title page:—"A Lecture by Prof. W. J. Woolsey, entitled *The Churches and the Pews*, before a large audience in St. Paul, Minnesota." We erroneously imagined that this pamphlet was of a religious nature, but were speedily undeceived. It contains enough of truth to enable it to have serious effect on minds easily swayed, and thus the hideousness of the way in which subjects regarded as sacred by the greater number of people are treated of might be passed over by those who are inclined to be unorthodox. We have no quarrel with the man who conscientiously believes or disbelieves anything with regard to religion, but we most energetically protest against anyone trying to rob his fellow men of any of the consolations of religion as they accept it. Agnosticism can be of little comfort to anyone, and why men who have arrived at that condition of hapless unbelief and unfaith in anything wish to influence others is more than we can understand. Pure religion and undefiled is what the world requires, but even the religion of to-day, worldly, corrupted and overgrown with superstitions as it may be, is a better thing than no religion, or a religion such as many iconoclasts would recommend. The pamphlet under consideration is not of agnostic tendencies, but it would fain sweep away the dearest beliefs of the Christian church and treats them with contempt and ridicule; at the same time it holds up as a substitute a church of humanity that will grow in unison with the principle of the fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man. This proposition would come with a better grace from some other source than the pamphlet before us, which turns a battery of fluent blatancy upon belief in orthodox religion. Those who wish to purify religion must see to it first that they and their methods are pure.

The need now is for uniformity in divorce laws. This want is the more plainly recognised when we consider the startling diversity among those now on the statute books of the neighboring republic. If the practice is to be permitted at all, for goodness' sake let us have some uniformity. That the institution of marriage is in the very greatest danger appears to us beyond dispute, and the subject requires the immediate and thoughtful consideration of our Statesmen. Unless some action is taken, and such action should be restrictive, we will rapidly drift back to most primitive habits—very pleasing to some, as we have been brought to think from the present conduct of a certain part of the population whose lax ideas are evidently supported by the majority, for the majority indirectly give their support by tolerating the present disgraceful state of affairs. Something must be utterly wrong if a man, well-known in New York society, is enabled to remove to a western State for the express purpose of ridding himself of a wife, because he had become infatuated by another woman, and not for the slightest crime on the part of the wife. Such cases can be easily brought to mind, and there are hundreds whose shocking motives never come to light. In Wisconsin, a married person who has resided in the State for twelve months after desertion by his or her spouse, is, as a matter of course, granted a divorce, while in Colorado a separation may be obtained still more easily. It is conceded that the so-called model republic furnishes more divorces than any other nation on the face of the earth. While five hundred couples are being there married, it is estimated that thirty-one couples are being divorced. The worst is, that the number is steadily increasing, and other countries are becoming far more lax than is desirable. As things are, marriage has little solemnity; we can try married life for a time, say a couple of years, it will be a change, and if it becomes at all irksome, by establishing residence in a certain State we can break the bond and, pleasant prospect! become again married as soon as convenient. What a charming, archaic state of affairs such is! A fair proportion of the evil is caused by the present practice in the States of bringing up the daughters to regard matrimony as a mere bargain, to be driven with the coolest mercantile shrewdness. The results of such unions are evident. We must try to remember that marriage is just as sacred as ever. The present laxity is repulsive in the extreme.

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