

compish infernal results; and they soon began to possess him like a legion of evil spirits.

If Shakespeare characterized the "invisible spirit of wine" as a "devil" in the unsophisticated days of old, when wine was wine, and not a hell-broth concocted of poisonous drugs, what unspeakable fiends must lurk in the grimy bottles whose contents, analyzed and explained, would appal some, at least, of the stolid and stony-hearted vendors.

Haldane soon felt himself capable of any wickedness, any crime. He became a human volcano, that might at any moment pass into violent and murderous action, regardless of consequences: indeed, as utterly incapable of foreseeing and realizing them as the mountain that belches destruction on vineyard and village.

We regard ourselves as a civilized and Christian people, and yet we tolerate in every corner places where men are transformed into incarnate devils, and sent forth to run amuck in our streets, and outrage the helpless women and children in their own homes. The naked inhabitants of Dahomey could do no worse in this direction.

But Haldane was not destined to end his orgie in the lurid glare of a tragedy, for as the sun declined, the miserable day was brought to a wretched and fitting close. Unconsciously he had strayed to the saloon on whose low step Messrs. Van Wink and Ketchum had left him on the memorable night from which he dated his downfall. Of course, he did not recognize the place, but there was one within that associated him inseparably with it, and also with misfortunes of his own. As Haldane leaned unsteadily against the bar, a seedy-looking man glared at him a moment, and then stepped to his side, saying,

"I'll take a few dhrinks wid ye. Faix! after all the trouble ye've been to me, ye oughter kape me in dhrink the year."

Turning to the speaker, the young man recognized Pat McCabe, whom he also associated with his evil fortunes, and toward whom he now felt a strong vindictiveness, the sudden and unreasoning anger of intoxication. In reply, therefore, he threw the contents of his glass into Pat's face, saying with a curse,

"That is the way I drink with such as you."

Instantly there was a bar-room brawl of the ordinary brutal type, from whose details we gladly escape. Attracted by the uproar, a policeman was soon on hand, and both the combatants were arrested and marched off to the nearest police station. Bruised, bleeding, dishevelled, and with rent garments, Haldane again passed through the streets as a criminal, with the rabble hooting after him. But now there was no intolerable sense of shame as at first. He had become a criminal at heart; he had deliberately and consciously degraded himself, and his whole aspect had come to be in keeping with his character.

It may be objected that the transformation had been too rapid. It had not been rapid. His mother had commenced preparing him for this in the nursery by her weak indulgence. She had sown the seeds of which his present deeds were the legitimate outgrowth. The weeds of his evil nature had been unchecked when little, and now they were growing so rank as to overshadow all.

Multitudes go to ruin who must trace their wrong bias back to cultivated and even Christian homes.

(To be continued.)

THE PREDICTED FATE OF THE EARTH.

The Apostle Peter, in his second epistle announced the time when "the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat; the earth, also, and the works that are therein shall be burnt up." What has modern science to say to the possibility of a catastrophe such as that shadowed forth in a comparatively unscientific age, eighteen centuries ago? Mr. R. A. Proctor, writing in his latest volume, "The Flowers of the Sky," remarks:

"It is no longer a mere fancy that each star is a sun—science has made this an assured fact, which no astronomer thinks of doubting. We know that in certain general respects each star resembles our sun. Each is glowing like our sun with an intense heat. We know that in each star processes resembling in violence those taking place in our own sun must be continually in progress, and that such processes must be accompanied by a noise and tumult, compared with which all the forms of uproar known upon our earth are as absolute silence. The crash of the thunderbolt, the bellowing of the volcano, the awful growling of the earthquake, the roar of the hurricane, the reverberating peals of loudest thunder, any of these, or all combined, are as nothing compared with the tumult raging over every square mile, every square yard, of the surface of each one among the stars."

He proceeds to describe with considerable circumstantiality, two appearances witnessed in the heavens within the last few years—in 1866, when the tenth magnitude star (that is, four magnitudes below the lowest limit of the naked-eye vision), in the constellation of the Northern Crown, suddenly shone as a second magnitude star, afterwards rapidly diminishing in lustre; and in 1876, when a new star became visible in the constellation Cygnus, subsequently fading again so as to be only perceptible by means of a telescope. After noting the conclusions deduced from the application of the most improved instruments to these observations, Mr. Proctor, whose authority is second to none among astronomers, remarks:

"A change in our own sun, such as affected the star in Cygnus, or that other star in the Northern Crown, would unquestionably destroy every living creature on the face of this earth; nor could any even escape which may exist on the other planet of the solar system. The star in the Northern Crown shone out with more than eight hundred times its former lustre, according as we take the highest possible estimate of its brightness before the catastrophe, or consider that it may have been very much brighter. Now, if our sun were to increase tenfold in brightness, all the higher forms of animal life, and nearly all vegetable life, would inevitably

be destroyed on this earth. A few stubborn animalcules might survive, and, possibly a few of the lowest forms of vegetation, but naught else. If the sun increased a hundred-fold in lustre, its heat would doubtless sterilize the whole earth. The same would happen in other planets. Science knows nothing of spontaneous generation, and believers in revelation reject the doctrine. Science knows nothing of the creation of living forms, but believers in revelation accept the doctrine. Certain it is that if our sun ever undergoes the baptism of fire which has affected some few among his brother suns, one or other of these processes (if creation can be called a process) must come into operation, or else our earth and her companion worlds would forever after remain devoid of life."—*Sunday Magazine*.

EXPENSIVE PEOPLE.

Expensive people are very often not essentially extravagant, being perfectly capable of economy, and even of parsimony, after a certain limit, fixed in their own minds, has been reached or passed. They will not live, so to speak, upon a thousand a year; but if they have two thousand they are perfectly capable of putting away five hundred, their mental standard of needful expenditure being fifteen hundred. Men of this kind are ruined every year in heaps, and their friends denounce their extravagance; but they are not so much extravagant as unable to practise self-denial before an ideal standard of comfort or freedom existing in their own minds has been reached. They are not so much weak or incapable as dominated by an ideal.

What is the cure? There is none, except the cultivation of self-control, the want of which is in this matter very often not detected until it is too late. The boy is seen to throw away his money; but that is set down to foolishness, not abnormal wilfulness. In the man there is no cure except the strong constraint of circumstances, and to that the spendthrift should be left, as to the only benefactor who can do real good. A week's hunger may be a cure, but nothing short of that kind of pressure is of the least use, and even that very often fails. We doubt if hunger would have taught Leigh Hunt, as described by his friends, not by Charles Dickens, to keep his money. It is in most of us, we fear, this spendthrift instinct, but most of us keep it within bounds.

CHRISTIAN GENTLEMEN.

In order to benefit men, the believer must be in some respects like them. He should be courteous, gentlemanly, polite, in his intercourse with them. Paul did not think it beneath him to use language of the greatest respect to Agrippa, and he called Festus "most noble." He was in the highest sense of the word a gentleman, and whether you find him on the deck of the storm-tossed ship, or in the judgment hall, or on the sea-shore with the elders of Ephesus, you see in him the same self-adjustment to the circumstances of men which won to him the hearts of all; and this he did not for his own sake, but that he might bring them to the Lord. Now here is an example for us. Some think, apparently, that their Christianity gives them a right to set all social distinctions at defiance, and by way of asserting their equality to all, they treat all with contempt. Under pretence of being faithful, their are simply impudent, and under colour of asserting their brotherhood, they are only impertinent. They have no regard for politeness, and despise everything like courtesy. While again there are those in the wealthier circles who cannot endure the poorer, and treat them with disdain. Now all that conduct is utterly inconsistent with Christian principle, and shews that they who are guilty of it have entirely misunderstood the teachings of the Scriptures. The leading principle of the spiritual life is love, and where that exists there will be genuine courtesy and kindness. There may or there may not be polish—that is in itself a small matter—but what is of far higher importance, the reality will be there. The gentle life will manifest itself; and whether he wear the finest broadcloth or plain homespun, the man who shews that will have a right to

The grand old name of gentleman,
Defamed by every charlatan,
And soiled by all ignoble use.

—W. M. Taylor.

REFINEMENT.

True refinement is not mere outside polish. It goes deeper, and penetrates to the foundations of character. A really refined person does not speak or think of what is coarse, or low or immodest. Her words are pure and her acts delicate. As sensitive as a flower, she does not like to associate with those who are not clean in life and behaviour.

We have seen perfect refinement in women whose education had been limited, whose opportunities had been few, and whose lives had been a struggle with poverty and care. Homely in manner, and not always grammatical in speech, the sweetness of a delicate nature was visible in all they did and said, shining as the flame of a lamp through an alabaster shade. And we have seen ladies arrayed in velvet and furs, ladies of great elegance of acquired art, who were still so coarse that one was reminded constantly of the jackdaw who borrowed the peacock's plumes. Along with true refinement go graceful ways of conferring favours, ready and pleasing tact in helpfulness, and gentleness, which is the crown of womanly beauty.

THERE is not much of the dandy about Mr. Gladstone. Last session it came to pass that he appeared in Parliament with a white hat, a blue necktie, a pair of really well-made trousers and one lavender kid glove. He was never seen with more than one glove; he had probably dropped the other, after being carefully dressed at home and sent off to the House. His appearance created great sensation, and he maintained the disguise for nearly a week. Then he gladly got rid of the new clothes and returned to the familiar garments which date back "a-many years ago."

BRITISH AND FOREIGN ITEMS.

MUCH sickness among the British Troops in Afghanistan. THE ex-Empress Eugenie leaves on the 25th of March for the scene of her son's death.

TAY bridge disaster is attributed in many Scotch pulpits to violation of the Sabbath by its victims.

IN Scotland the Cameronians are preparing to celebrate the bi-centennial of their church organization.

TIFRE is great excitement among the Boers owing to the arrest of the late President of the Republic for high treason.

PRINCE BISMARCK's illness has developed into hypochondria, and his death is regarded as a probable event of the near future.

A ROME correspondent announces that the Pope has summoned all the German bishops to Rome to confer upon the affairs of their respective dioceses.

REV. C. CHINISTY left Queensland in the beginning of October, after a very successful visit. Everywhere he was received with enthusiasm.

PROFESSOR NORDENSKJÖLD, the Arctic explorer, is expected to reach Naples by the end of this month, and the citizens propose giving him a hearty welcome.

THE Abolition Society of Madrid have placarded the city with a petition to the Cortes for the immediate and complete abolition of slavery in all the Spanish possessions.

THE great English work, says the London "Spectator," is to govern Asiatics, and Englishmen will never do it either easily or successfully unless they thoroughly understand them, which is certainly not the case yet.

IT is considered certain that Lord Derby is in friendly accord with the Liberal party on the question of the Government's foreign policy, and that he will take an attitude of cordial association with the Liberals when Parliament meets.

PERSONS conversant with Russian military affairs do not think that Russia is preparing for war in the immediate future, however significant the concentration of troops and the orders for war material may be of what may happen ten years hence.

PROF. COLLADON, of Geneva, has improved on the contrivance lately invented in America for enabling deaf-mutes to hear through the teeth. For the somewhat costly India rubber apparatus used by the American inventor, the Geneva professor substitutes a piece of elastic cardboard.

CARLYLE, Froude, Darwin, Huxley, Leslie Stephen, and other literati of distinction, are on the Liberal Election Committee, endeavouring to secure the return to Parliament, from Westminster, of Sir A. Hobhouse and Mr. John Morley. It is the first time the venerable Carlyle has ever sided publicly with either of the great English parties.

THE wife of one of the St. Johnsbury, Vt., pastors heard her husband preach last Sabbath for the first time in eleven and a half years. This was accomplished by means of a telephone connecting the pulpit of the South Church with the house of the pastor. The entire morning service was in this way transmitted; every word uttered was distinctly heard.

THERE is reason to believe that upon the opening of Parliament the attitude of Lord Derby in relation to the Liberal party will assume the character of cordial association, especially in regard to the great question which in the coming election is to be decided, the question of confidence in the foreign policy of the Government. Lord Derby has left no doubt in the minds of the responsible leaders of the Liberal party of his friendly accord and sympathy with their opposition to the policy of the Government.

AT the Vatican it is asserted that the Pope conceives himself to have reason to fear fresh disturbances in France and some other countries, and that, greatly exercised in his mind by the present condition of Europe, instructions are being sent to all bishops to do their utmost for the preservation of tranquility. Meantime a diversity of opinion among the members of the Sacred College, and the opposition of certain groups of Cardinals to the policy of the Pope, have been acquiring intensity. The Holy Father has pointed out to them "officially" the absolute necessity that, for the welfare of society, all should support him in his difficult task.

FROM the Cape Colony there will perhaps soon start an interesting expedition. Doctor Holub, already known by many explorations, has formed the plan of travelling across Africa from south to north, from Port Elizabeth to Egypt, with a view to facilitate the colonization of the countries upon the route, particularly those lying between the Vaal and the Zambezi. Dr. Holub has returned to Europe to collect the funds necessary to the execution of his project. The white personnel of the caravan must be composed of twelve travellers, representing as many nations, and their expenses will be borne by their respective governments if they adhere to the plan which we have indicated.

A JUBILEE volume, entitled "Fifty Years of Foreign Mission," has just been issued, under the auspices of the Free Church of Scotland. The following facts are culled from its opening pages.—Fifty years ago, in 1829-30, the foreign missionary enterprise of the Church of Scotland was begun by three men—Dr. Chalmers, Dr. Inglis and Dr. Duff. On the 12th of August, 1829, Dr. Chalmers presided at the ordination of Alexander Duff to be the first foreign missionary sent forth by the church as such; although, in 1860, John Knox had pledged the Reformed Kirk to "preche this glad tydings of the Kyngdome through the hail world." On the 13th July, 1830, the young missionary of twenty-four founded his great evangelizing institution in the native quarter of Calcutta. "It is not without significance," we further read, "that the jubilee of our foreign mission coincides with the centenary of the birth of Thomas Chalmers. So early as 1812 and 1814 he preached and published two sermons, which, on his death in 1847, led Dr. Duff to pronounce him 'the leading missionary spirit of Christendom.'"