

authority for which (as regards her own acceptance of it) the Church of England plainly states to consist in that it is "grounded on most certain warranty of Holy Scripture" (Art. VIII.). The truth of its contents is a question not of historical enquiry but of Scriptural exegesis. As regards the name attached to it, whether by design or mistake, this creed stands in precisely the same position as the Apostles' Creed, and, in the opinion of a large and increasing proportion of scholars of all denominations, the Epistle to the Hebrews. Whether the latter document is to be classed with the Forged Decretals, and its authority repudiated accordingly, I leave your readers to decide.

The theological questions raised by "Bystander," with all the vast area of controversy which they open out—the doctrines of Eternal Generation and Procession, the Incarnation, the duty, or otherwise, of uttering Gospel denunciations as well as Gospel promises, and the *virtual* agreement, or otherwise, between eastern and western churches on the subject of the Double Procession, though dismissed with a few airy touches from his graceful and facile pen, are scarcely to be dealt with within the limits of a single letter.

F. J. B. ALLNATT.

Drummondville, Jan. 31, 1885.

[We insert the above letter, from our respected correspondent, that a "misrepresentation" may be corrected; but with this the discussion must positively close for the present.—ED.]

### DOWN AT THE CARNIVAL.

I HAVE met you in the Park  
Every day,  
In your 'witching blanket suit,  
Just as gay  
As the gayest, and as sweet  
Nice a girl I'll never meet,  
In the cold or in the heat,  
Anyway.

When I saw you once or twice  
At the slide,  
You were twenty times more fair :  
I'd have died  
To have made the flashing flight  
All alone, half out of sight,  
Down the snow so crisp and light,  
By your side.

At the Ball you once were my  
Vis-à-vis,  
And I know one truant smile  
Was for me,  
Once our eyes, as if by chance,  
Met, 'twas in another dance,  
But I got—a passing glance—  
Then from thee.

NATHANAEL NIX.

### ANONYMOUS LETTERS.

PROBABLY few of my mature readers have attained middle age without receiving a number of anonymous letters. Such letters are not always offensive, sometimes they are amusing, sometimes considerate and kind, yet there is in all cases a feeling of annoyance on receiving them, because the writer has made himself inaccessible to a reply. It is as if a man in a mask whispered a word in your ear and then vanished suddenly in a crowd. You wish to answer a calumny or acknowledge a kindness, and you may talk to the winds and streams.

Anonymous letters of the worst kind have a certain value to the student of human nature, because they afford him glimpses of the evil spirit that disguises itself under the fair seemings of society. You believe with child-like simplicity and innocence that, as you have never done any intentional injury to a human being, you cannot have a human enemy, and you make the startling discovery that somewhere in the world, perhaps even amongst the smiling people you meet at dances and dinners, there are creatures who will have recourse to the foulest slanders if thereby they may hope to do you an injury. What can you have done to excite such bitter animosity? You may both have done much and neglected much. You may have had some superiority of body, mind, or fortune; you may have neglected to soothe some jealous vanity by the flattery it craved with tormenting hunger.

The envious or jealous man can throw his vitriol in the dark and slip away unperceived—he can write an anonymous letter. Has the reader ever really tried to picture to himself the state of that man's or woman's mind (for women write these things also) who can sit down, take a sheet of paper, make a rough draft of any anonymous letter, copy it out in a very legible yet carefully disguised hand, and make arrangements for having it posted at a distance from the place where it was written? Such things are constantly done. At this minute there are a certain number of men and women in the world who are vile enough to do all that simply in order to spoil the happiness of some person whom they regard with "envy, hatred, malice, and all uncharitableness." I see in my mind's eye the gentleman—the man having all the apparent delicacy and refinement of a gentleman—who is writing a letter intended to blast the character of an acquaintance. Perhaps he meets that acquaintance in society, and shakes hands with him, and pretends to take an interest in his health. Meanwhile he secretly reflects upon the particular sort of calumny that will have the greatest degree of verisimilitude. Everything depends upon his talent in devising the most credible sort of calumny—not the calumny most likely

to meet general credence—but that which is most likely to be believed by the person to whom it is addressed, and most likely to do injury when believed.

The anonymous calumniator has the immense advantage on his side that most people are prone to believe evil, and that good people are unfortunately the most prone, as they hate evil so intensely that even the very phantom of it arouses their anger, and they too frequently do not stop to enquire whether it is a phantom or a reality. The clever calumniator is careful not to go too far; he will advance something that might be or that might have been; he does not love *le vrai*, but he is a careful student of *le vraisemblable*. He will assume an appearance of reluctance; he will drop hints more terrible than assertions, because they are vague, mysterious, disquieting. When he thinks he has done enough he stops in time; he has inoculated the drops of poison, and can wait till it takes effect.

It must be rather an anxious time for the anonymous letter-writer when he has sent off his missive. In the nature of things he cannot receive an answer, and it is not easy for him to ascertain very soon what has been the result of his enterprise.

An anonymous letter is sometimes written in collaboration by two persons of different degrees of ability. When this is done one of the slanderers supplies the basis of fact necessary to give an appearance of knowledge, and the other supplies or improves the imaginative part of the common performance and its literary style. Sometimes one of the two may be detected by the nature of the references to fact, or by the supposed writer's personal interest in bringing about a certain result.

It is very difficult at the first glance entirely to resist the effect of a clever anonymous letter, and perhaps it is only men of clear strong sense and long experience who at once overcome the first shock. In a very short time, however, the phantom evil grows thin and disappears, and the motive of the writer is guessed at or discerned.

The torture that an anonymous letter may inflict depends far more on the nature of the person who receives it than on the circumstances it relates. A callous and suspicious nature, not opened by such experience or knowledge of the world, is the predestined victim of the anonymous torturer. Such a nature jumps at evil reports like a fish at an artificial fly, and feels the anguish of it immediately. By a law that seems really cruel such natures seize with most avidity on those very slanders that cause them the most pain.

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As there are malevolent anonymous letters intended to inflict the most wearing anxiety, so there are benevolent ones written to save our souls. Some theologically minded person, often of the female sex, is alarmed for our spiritual state because she fears that we have doubts about the supernatural, and so she sends us books that only make us wonder at the mental conditions for which such literature can be suitable. I remember one of my female anonymous correspondents who took it for granted that I was like a ship drifting about without compass or rudder (a great mistake on her part), and so she offered me the safe and spacious haven of Swedenborgianism. Others will tell you of the "great pain" with which they have read this or that passage of your writings, to which an author may always reply that as there is no Act of Parliament compelling British subjects to read the books, the sufferers have only to let them alone in order to spare themselves the dolorous sensations they complain of.—*Human Intercourse*, by Philip Gilbert Hamerton.

### THE SCRAP BOOK.

TWO STORIES OF FELINE SAGACITY.

EVERY day, after breakfast, I made it a rule to throw a bit of bread into an adjoining room, as far off as I could, so as to induce my cat to run after it as it rolled away. This custom I kept up for several months, and the cat always regarded that piece of bread as the tit-bit of its dessert. Even after it had eaten meat, it would await with attentive interest the minute when it was to start in pursuit of the morsel of soft bread. One day I held the coveted scrap in my hand, and swung it about for a long time, while the cat eyed it with a kind of patient eagerness, and then, instead of throwing it into the next room, I threw it behind the upper portion of a picture which was slightly inclined forwards from the wall. The surprise of the cat, who, closely following my movements, had observed the direction in which I threw the bread, and its disappearance, was extreme. The uneasy look of the animal indicated its consciousness that a material object traversing space could not be annihilated. For some time the cat considered the matter, then it started off into the next room, evidently guided by the reflection that the piece of bread having disappeared, it must have gone through the wall, and the cat returned disappointed. The animal's logic was at fault. I again attracted its attention by my gestures, and sent a second piece of bread to join the first behind the picture. This time the cat jumped upon a divan and went straight to the hiding place. Having inspected the frame on both sides it began to manoeuvre so dexterously with its paw that it shifted the lower edge of the picture away from the wall, and thus got at the two pieces of bread. A German diplomatist of the last century has recorded a similar observation respecting a favourite female cat, and advances it as proof of consecutive and conclusive reasoning on the part of the animal. "I noticed," says Baron von Gleichen, "that she was constantly looking at herself in the glass, retreating from her own image and running back to it again, and especially scratching at the frames, for all my glasses were inserted in panels. This suggested to me the idea of placing a toilet mirror in the middle of the room, so that my cat might have the pleasure