

the debtor in the matter of payment. It has the effect of drawing blood—and bad blood too!

DR. RAINSFORD ENCOURAGED.—The eloquent rector of St. George's, New York, has received a very speedy and liberal response to his plea for endowment of poor parishes generally and his own in particular. A lay member of the congregation has given him \$200,000 to extend the work of his parish among the poor. Such bright examples should attract imitators—especially when, like this one, *anonymous*. This is the way to show your light—and hide yourself under a bushel!

SACRIFICIO DELL' INTELLETO, Dollinger says, was so advocated by the Jesuits that they had "succeeded in raising mental sloth (in their pupils and dupes) to the dignity of a religious meritorious sacrifice." They deliberately *fabricated history* for the consumption of theological students. The veteran theologian took nine years to verify deliberately the counts in his indictment against papal falsifications. How different from the noodles who swallow (with eyes shut) all Rome's nonsense!

A STAR-BURST.—Scientific investigators in the region of Astrology, seem to have satisfied themselves that a large planet between Mars and Jupiter must have burst some time ago into hundreds of pieces (which they have been discovering during the present century); one of these, called "Flora," now being hurled 49 millions of miles nearer the sun, and another ("Euterpe") hurled 71 millions of miles the other way. The earth's fate may be similar one day.

AURICULAR CONFESSION IN IRELAND.—Attention has been called to the fact that in the Irish Convocation at Dublin 1634, a canon was passed to the effect that "The minister of every parish shall on the evening before the administration of the Holy Communion, give warning by the tolling of the bell, to the people to enter into a special examination of the state of their souls; and, finding themselves troubled in mind, to resort unto God's ministers to receive from them as well advice and counsel as the benefit of absolution by the power of the keys, which Christ hath committed to his ministers for the purpose." This is very different from the Dublin Synod of 1891!

OFFERTORY OBLIGATIONS.—It seems that the old custom of people offering bread and wine for the Communion at the time of celebration, still is kept up in the Metropolitan Cathedral of Milan. The ceremony appears to be a very impressive and appropriate one—very similar to that which used to prevail in the Church of England; instead of which we now have the offering of money (*oblaciones pecuniariae*) for the purchase of the elements by the curate and wardens. This is, of course, a virtual offering of the elements, and accounts for the present Rubric about the "decent" basin, "reverent" conveyance, and "humble" presentation of the alms, &c., by the priest at the offertory period of the service.

HYPNOTIC INFLUENCE.

The time has come when doctors, lawyers, judges and divines must face the question of the responsibility of subjects of hypnotism for the evil which they may be made to do while under its influence. Lately a portion of the press and professions seemed to wake up to the alarming importance and growing dimensions of this modern

question. One cannot read the accounts of the success of cool and calculating villains—possessed of strong and resolute wills in leading weaker minds astray—

WITHOUT A SHUDDER.

at the uncanny character of the whole proceeding. It looks very much like the Scriptural incidents connected with *demoniac possession*. At first glance it might almost seem that this is Satan's modern way of achieving substantially the same result; that the demon in pursuit, instead of dealing directly with his victim, reaches him or her through the medium of some third party to the business—a middleman, as it were! It looks as if, indeed, there were a *double action*, a coupled movement of two evils; the active vicious inclination and will of the hypnotizer and the passive weak will and moral helplessness of the hypnotized. There is, however, happily

ANOTHER SIDE

to the subject. Physicians are beginning to consider whether there has not been discovered in this hypnotic power of certain persons a *new agent* for the cure of disease by means of the process called "Suggestion." The Paris *Revue Philosophique* refers to well authenticated cases in orthodox practice where (in India, for instance) marsh-malaria, dysentery, affections of the liver, have been ameliorated or entirely cured by the action of suggestions pleasing to the imagination of the patient. The subject here begins to trench on the large subject of *Faith-cure*. A writer in the *Revue* (Beaunis) goes so far as to say that

"HOMEOPATHIC PRACTICE

is nothing but 'Suggestive therapeutics' on a grand scale." We are not sure whether the advocates of Homeopathy will consider this as a compliment, or as the reverse. It may be a sly hit on the medical value of the drugs used in that branch of medical science. On the other hand, there seems no valid reason why medical men should abstain from playing on the imagination of patients, if the effect be beneficial to their physical health. This, again, is treading on delicate ground—the propriety (morally) of *suggestio falsi* and *suppressio veri* under any circumstances. *Is it doing evil that good may come?* So we come back to the same ground again, the *moral aspect* of the whole question, of which the responsibility of the patient (or victim) is one development. One may, however, lay down the axiom that no man is really responsible for what he *cannot help doing*. The French writer already quoted goes into this line of thought, and deals with the general question of *environment*. How far is man the "creature of circumstances" after all? There remains somewhere an element of personal responsibility! We remember reading in our own pages not long since a selected story entitled

RESPONSIBLE FOR HIS IRRESPONSIBILITIES,

which contained a very wholesome moral, that deserves to be repeated and emphasized very liberally. It treated of the way in which people *slide* into great evils by indulging in small ones carelessly. Over-indulgence in stimulants, careless handling of fire-arms, "playing with fire" generally (literally and figuratively), leaving the stable-door unlocked, loosening the reins of reason, weakening the power of will, trifling with (minor) duties—all these things and many others lead to *frightful disasters* in innumerable cases. There should be no doubt that the man or woman who trifles with such matters, knowing the risks of possible consequences, is to be held largely responsible for the ultimate results.

BACCARAT, ETC.

The prominence given to the practice of gambling in society by the Cranby Croft incident on account of the eminence of the principal characters in the scene, may serve to direct public attention to a very serious and insidious form of evil, which has been taking possession of people at large with extraordinary unanimity—gambling in its various forms. It cannot be said that the minds of the leaders of public thought have been insensible to the fact, or that their pens or voices have been inactive in regard to the matter. There has been a great deal *said and written* for a year or two past on this subject. It seems to us, however, that the process of thought in general has been rather superficial in its movement. People do not seem to have realized that a great deal of harmless fun is

PLAYING WITH FIRE.

Many even of English bishops and deans have—in their speeches and addresses against betting and gambling (an almost daily or weekly title of debates and meetings in Church and other papers)—seen fit to introduce a saving clause in favour of certain innocent (so-called) forms of this hydra-headed evil; rather, one should say, certain *lower degrees* of its development. To royal princes, lords, and ladies, merchant princes, generals and *geunnesse doree*, a few turns with £5 counters at a favourite game of chance seems, indeed, a very innocent form of amusement for such persons, a mere trifling pastime for them. A little lower down in the scale of plutocracy (for aristocracy is now a misnomer) we have to use counters to represent dollars or shillings or pence; but the principle and action of the evil *virus* or poison is the same. Even a gallant general—a noble man in every other way—may not be proof against its action, and falls a victim to its power.

THE DANGER IS THE CHARM.

The stakes are by common consent, in such parties, placed just so high that one would much rather not lose the game! The next step is to take measures not to lose the shilling, the dollar or the pound, as the case may be. Here and there—perhaps more generally than is supposed or at least discovered—another step is taken. One should say, rather, the step of taking measures to prevent loss in gambling is only possible in one direction—cheating. Say nine out of ten persons so engaged in baccarat, or whatever it may be called, would not be suspected of any such declension from social rectitude and morality; this fact forms a *cover* for the actual cheat. It is only by accident that cheating can be discovered under such circumstances, for no one dreams of its existence or thinks of looking for it. Each one would rather not believe his eyes, than believe the fact before them. That, however, such things are possible at all, reveals

THE FIRST STEP IN EVIL.

as having been taken, not in cheating, but in the practice which makes cheating to be the only intellectual proceeding upon such occasions, as well as the only way of escape for him who hates to lose. To risk *anything at all* on mere chance is in itself an unreasonable, unintellectual, and criminal action against which one's higher instincts revolt. Break down those higher instincts, remove the barrier of conscious virtue, and you make the way easy of access for other developments of vice. To risk—to cheat; that is a natural sequence! Having reached this point, we may next ask ourselves, whence then has this vice of betting and gambling so wide a range,