

General Booth is nothing if not practical and concrete in his suggestions, and he stands in no awe of ridicule. Among his schemes for the amelioration of the wretched among mankind is a sort of registry office for the furtherance of matrimony. The idea is at first sight amusing enough, but Booth's suggestion indicates a difficulty which in the great cities is real and pressing. There are vast numbers of young men and young women, living in lodgings, who have no opportunity of becoming acquainted with each other. Young men who, if brought into social intercourse with respectable girls of their own class, would gladly marry and support a family, are so situated that from year's end to year's end they can meet on friendly terms no woman but the woman of the street. The result is inevitable degradation, and Booth's plan offers an escape from it. Equally practical and helpful is the suggestion of a training school where girls should be taught housewifery, and qualified to become wives. Booth not unreasonably claims that a month of thorough training in housewifery before marriage would do more for the steady happiness of married life than is to be accomplished by that month of honey that immediately succeeds the marriage ceremony. The success of this latter scheme would, we think, go far toward making the first scheme the unmitigated blessing that it ought to be.

A rumor comes from Germany that the Pope has decided to take active measures against Socialism. Such an intention is probable enough, for it needs far less keen eyes than those of Leo XIII and a far less acute Statesman than is his Holiness to discern that in the revolutionary spirit of Socialism lies the greatest danger to the Roman Catholic Church. Socialism, like Ultramontanism, claims a universal dominion, and is never tired of propagating its doctrine whenever there is the slightest chance of success. In no country has the Socialistic theory been more carefully elaborated, and in no country have Socialistic maxims been more readily received than in Germany. It is in Germany accordingly that the Pope is said to meditate a crusade against the common enemy of Church and State. It is alleged that from his accession Leo XIII has seen, or believed that he has seen, in the German Empire a Conservative power capable of entering on and conducting victoriously a struggle against Socialism in all its forms, and that long ago, without heeding religious difficulties, he made an offer to Germany to stop the struggle going on between that country and the Holy See, and to become an auxiliary who could give powerful help; but Bismarck doubted either the sincerity or the value of the alliance. Far from sharing the Chancellor's doubts it is asserted that the Emperor William II was so much impressed by his interview with Leo XIII that he has ever since treated him with the respect due to the personality of the Pontiff, and that the plan of common action against the Socialists is the outcome of frequent and important communications between Berlin and the Vatican. Secret orders, it is stated, have been already issued to the Catholic clergy to make war upon Socialism, both by lecture and by preaching. It is to be feared, however, that the most strenuous exertions of the German priesthood will be able to do little more than impede the further progress of the plague (if they do this they will do much), Socialists not having developed an abnormal taste for sermons.

Reports from the Inland Revenue Department as to certain condiments in daily use upon our tables are far from reassuring. Mustard, we were told a few weeks ago, is scarcely ever sold pure, and now in bulletin No. 20 the shortcomings of pepper are discussed. The seventy-two samples of which an analysis is given, were collected for the most part in Quebec and Ontario, and there are none from Nova Scotia. Of these seventy-two, thirty-nine are positively pronounced adulterated, and the greater number of those remaining are considered very poor or doubtful. Some of the adulterants sound very nasty, and one or two of the samples had small living worms in them! How pleasant. Mr Thomas Macfarlane, Chief Analyst, says that legal proceedings could, no doubt, be instituted against the vendors of these grossly adulterated peppers, but doing this would unduly tax the means at the disposal of that branch of the department owing to the great number of delinquents. In the meantime, and for the present cases, Mr. Macfarlane considered probable that some good may be accomplished by publishing the names of the vendors and alleged manufacturers of the adulterated goods, as is done in the bulletin before us. We trust it may have some such effect. It is decidedly unpleasant to think of seasoning our food with small living worms. If those who undertake to grind pepper for the public cannot do so honestly people will have to do it for themselves, which is after all the best way. We have ourselves used for some years a small table pepper mill. As it is a very useful and convenient article, and we have never seen one like it in Nova Scotia, a description of it may prove interesting, and induce some of our readers who prefer a pure article to try and get something of the same kind. The pepper mill in question was procured in France, where, we believe, they are commonly used. It is made of polished wood, stands about four inches high, and is ornamental in appearance. It is a little over two inches in diameter at the top and bottom, and somewhat less in the middle. By loosening a screw at the top the cover may be removed and the pepper corns, which are bought at the druggist's, put in. The cover is then replaced, and can be made as tight or as loose as may be desired by means of the screw. This regulates the grinder, which is at the bottom of the box. When you want pepper, all you have to do is to hold the mill over your plate and give the cover a turn sufficient to shake from the bottom of the box the quantity you require. It is rather an odd-looking contrivance, and few people would know what it is intended for without an explanation. However, nothing but pure pepper comes out of it, and it is on this account that we mention it, hoping that some ingenious person may make use of the idea, and have fresh, fragrant pepper instead of the basely adulterated trash sold in the shops. After once using it none would ever willingly return to the old way.

During the past two months a number of notable people have been gathered to their rest. Among these are the English Historian Kinglake, the American Historian Bancroft, and Emma Abbott, the beautiful and good prima donna. Belgium's heir apparent, Prince Bandouin, died at Brussels on Friday last of hemorrhage, followed by a severe attack of bronchitis. Prince Albert Leopold Clement Marie Meriad, who was born in 1875, is now heir to the throne of Belgium.

The Montreal *Witness* relieves itself of its feelings on Provincial claims upon federal funds as follows:—"An attempt is now being made to induce the people of Prince Edward Island to make a raid on the Dominion treasury for money enough to build a subway, from six to eleven miles long, and at a cost of from five to twelve millions of dollars, to connect the island with the mainland. By the time Mr. Mercier is ready to begin operations for securing an increased subsidy from the Dominion, Prince Edward Island will probably be ready to demand its tunnel under the Straits of Northumberland as its share of the spoils, and there will not be a single Province that will be without a tunnel scheme or a better terms demand of some sort which nothing but federation money will satisfy." This is scarcely dictated by the spirit of justice we naturally expect from the *Witness*. Prince Edward Island has a legitimate claim upon the Dominion, the providing of a subway being one of the conditions of this Province entering the federation. As for an attempt being made to induce the people of the Island to make a raid, etc., we think that if we, or the Editor of the *Witness*, lived in Prince Edward and experienced the difficulty, inconvenience and discomfort of winter communication with the main land as at present conducted, it would not take much to induce us to cry out for the fulfilment of promises and redemption of pledges given by the federal authorities.

Farmers all over the country will be interested in the circular re seed-testing at the Central Experimental Farm, Ottawa, sent out by the Director, Mr. Wm. Saunders. Inasmuch as the quality of seed sown greatly affects quality of the product, and as the past season was an unfavorable one in many localities for the perfect maturing of grain, provision has been made by the Government to enable farmers to have the grain they are holding for seed tested free of cost. The importance of ascertaining whether seed grain possesses the necessary vitality to bring good results next year need scarcely be urged upon intelligent men, and we need only mention the opportunity held out to have it taken advantage of. Any farmer in the Dominion who may have any varieties which he desires to have tested, may obtain the information he seeks by forwarding to the Central Experimental Farm at Ottawa samples of such grain or other agricultural seeds. A special testing house has been built for this work, which affords ample capacity. Samples may be sent free through the mail; an ounce or two is sufficient for the purpose, and about two weeks are required to complete a test. Since November, when the season opened for this work, the vitality of more than eleven hundred samples has been ascertained, and it is hoped that all who desire to avail themselves of the provision offered will send in their samples early, so that there may be time to complete the work and supply the needed information before seeding begins.

A trial of great interest to church people was concluded three weeks ago in the Court of the Diocesan Convention of Ohio. A clergyman of the Episcopal Church, Rev. Howard MacQueary, was charged with heresy, and the trial before the Ecclesiastical Court is something unprecedented in the history of the American branch of the Anglican Church. While particularly concerning the church to which he belongs, the proceedings and the judgment upon Mr. MacQueary's opinions are of interest to all Christians. The offence consisted in a denial, in his book "The Evolution of Man and Christianity," recently published, of belief in the miraculous Conception and Resurrection of Jesus. Mr. MacQueary, as far as we can make out, holds that Jesus was born on the lines of ordinary human generation, but qualifies this by the theory that the infusion of Divine Spirit in Christ was equivalent to the Divine incarnation, without any violation of the natural law of life, and he justifies his denial of a material resurrection by citing St. Paul as his authority for the distinction between a natural and a spiritual body. Mr. MacQueary made a long speech in his own defence upon the lines that a minister of the Episcopal Church has the right to construe the Scriptures and the Articles of Faith of his Church according to his own conscientious understanding of the language, and that where the traditional interpretation is inconsistent with his view of the possible or reasonable, he may reject the traditional for the reasonable interpretation. It was also claimed on his behalf that these views are not in conflict with those held in part, at least, by the early Christians, and that they are countenanced by many distinguished Episcopalian clergymen, and by a large part of the membership of the church at the present time. The defence is acknowledged to have been such an able one that Mr. MacQueary will be sure to stand better in public estimation than he did before the trial. While orthodox Christians must consider the gentleman's offence as against the fundamental doctrines of Christianity as taught by the churches, no one can fail to admire the manliness that has braved the ordeal in defence of principle. The only wonder is that such a stand has not long ago been taken by some thinker who declines to be bound by traditional beliefs. Mr. MacQueary is a young man with brains, who has the courage of his convictions. Holding the opinions he does, he is, of course, a heretic, but we wonder how many of the religious teachers of the day could stand the test of the trial through which Mr. MacQueary has passed. Mr. MacQueary intends carrying the case further, and in these days of criticism and applying the test of human reason to religious belief, there is small doubt but that he will command the respect, if not the concurrence, of thousands of good men and women in this plain spoken expression of his views.