

door to door; while others are confined to their rooms in their houses, the voluntary subjects of rules and customs the most superstitious and degrading. On the side of the hill which rises up in the midst of Naples, and which is surmounted by a strong fortification, is a monkish house. It is a very large establishment, making a hollow square, with the grave-yard in the centre; and each of the posts of the fence by which the grave-yard is enclosed is surmounted by a naked skull. These monks never speak, and never eat at the same table eave on the Sabbath! And these establishments you find every where in Italy. I visited one of their churches in Rome, where I witnessed the most revolting scenes I have ever beheld. It is the Church of the Capuchins, where is the magnificent painting of the Archangel by Guido. In a glass case, under one of the side altars, is the body of a monk laid out in his old robes, in a state of *miraculous* preservation. Whether it was dried flesh or wax, I could not tell; I suspected the latter. I asked the monk who attended on us why the flesh of this man was preserved, while that of others decayed. His reply was most ludicrous. Putting his hands together, and turning up his eyes like a duck in a thunder-storm, he answered, "Because he was a good fellow." The burying-place of these monks is a horrible sight. It seems to have been gotten up to outrage all the feelings of humanity. It is partly under the church, and is entered from the yard by a series of arches. The burial spot may be twenty or thirty feet by seven or eight. The clay of this bed, I was told, was brought from Palestine. In this bed the monks are buried, where they lie until the flesh falls from their bones. Then the bones are taken up, and some of them, after being jointed with wires into a perfect skeleton are dressed up in their old garbs, and hung up around the place, while the skulls and ribs of others are wrought into fantastical arches and candlesticks, which every where cover the walls and meet the eye. Even Rome does not present a more revolting spectacle. And shreds from an old dirty garment of that preserved monk, whose name was Crispini, are said to have wrought miracles, and have been sold at exorbitant prices. And in this revolting den of superstition and indolence are one hundred and fifteen of these dirty Capuchins, who, judging from their appearance, stand far more in need of a thorough washing than they do of victuals or wine!

These monks, who spend their time between praying, begging, sleeping and sinning, you meet everywhere. One of them was regularly stationed in the hall of the Hotel d'Angleterre every morning to beg alms from the strangers retiring from the breakfast-room. My travelling friend, who liked them about as much as I did, put his hand in his pocket, one morning, as if hunting for a franc for the shorn monk. Fingering his pocket, he went up stairs, and the monk after him, his eyes beaming with hope. At the top of the first stairs, he signified that he could not find anything to give him. He stopped a little, but cast a longing, begging look after him. Again my friend commenced to finger his pockets, and, again flushed with hope, the monk renewed his pursuit. But, while ascending the next flight, the incorrigible Protestant came down upon the lazy rogue with a thundering rebuke, under which he went down stairs, at least as fast as he ascended them.

And you, Sir, must well know how large a space in the history of Romanism is filled by the rise and the progress, the conflict and the crimes, of the various classes and orders of monks and friars.

It has also called into requisition female monks, called nuns, who have contributed not a little to the extending of its plans. The first of these persons I saw abroad, was on a funeral occasion, in the Madeline, in Paris. The deceased was obviously very poor, and the priest in waiting mumbled a service over the coffin so hurried and so heartless as to fill me with contempt for him. The nun, who, perhaps, was the nurse of the deceased, was there, and a more common or ugly woman no man need wish to see. There were three of them on the steamer from Lyons to Avignon, and, in appearance and manners, they were the very ditto of her I saw in Paris. The great vulgarity of their appearance in Italy put to flight all the images of beauty and delicacy and modesty which I had ever associated with them; nor could I account for what I observed until my visit to the Catacombs at Naples. As you approach the subterraneous graves, there are two large buildings on either hand; that on the left is devoted to the care of poor old men, and that on the right to poor young girls, who are deserted by their parents, or "who had no parents," as said our valet. This building is capable of containing between one and two thousand girls, and is usually full; and all of these are compelled to be nuns. The fact that they are taken from the very lowest walks of life, accounts for the commonness of their appearance; and it is the same fact which accounts for the yet more common, and dirty, and sensual appearance of most of the monks and friars that I saw abroad. Here and there a disappointed maiden may flee to a nunnery to hide her blushes or her shame, and become a lady-abbess; or a greatly criminal nobleman may flee to a monastery to hide his crimes, and to play the gentleman fanatic among boors; but as a rule, monks, friars, and nuns are from the very sweepings of society, and ever have been. Italian nuns, as far as they came under my observation, needed not the walls of a nunnery to protect them from marriage; for I have seen many females far prettier, enjoy the pleasures of single blessedness without any to disturb or make them afraid. And such are the monks and friars that are shipped here in cargoes to civilise and Christianize us!

But the question again arises, Whence these orders of monks and friars? Whence these nuns of various names and various colored veils? There is nothing like them in the Old Testament—nothing certainly in the New. Celibacy is nowhere enjoined on man or woman, saint or

sinner, in the Bible. Seclusion from the world, like that practised in monasteries, is nowhere enjoined by the sacred books of our religion.—When Paul speaks of persons wandering in deserts and in mountains, in dens and in caves of the earth, he refers to those banished from their homes and friends by the ferocity of persecutors. Whence, then, these orders? They are all of pagan origin. You, Sir, need not be told how orders of priests abounded among the Egyptians and the Greeks, nor how they were copied by the Romans. The merest novice in mythology, will remember the Pagan confraternities, to which Franciscans, Benedictines, Dominicans, and Jesuits, so nearly correspond, and the Vestal Virgins, to which Popish nuns are so exact a counterpart. How exactly Homer and Plato painted the monks of La Trappa in their descriptions of the priests of Dodonean Jove! Anchorites, hermits, recluses and monks, existed in Asia long before the Christian era, and at the present time, the countries which profess the religion of Brahma, Fo, Lama, and Mohamed, are full of fakirs, and santons, toners, talapoms, and dervises, whose fanatical and absurd penances are the arts of deception, and not the fruits of piety. And in some of the countries of Asia, at this hour, you will find priests and monks under vows of celibacy, without keeping them, with shorn heads, with and without turbans, and wearing peculiar robes tied about their loins, as thick as under the shadow of St. Elmo, or as on the banks of the Tiber!

But why these monks and friars, and nuns? Has the question ever occurred to you? The bishops are generally engaged in the higher affairs of the State or the Church; the priests are saying masses in deserted churches, and faring sumptuously; and the monks and friars and nuns, collected from the common people, and sympathizing with them, are abroad among them, as the curates or assistants of the priests and bishops, for the purpose of filling their minds with fables, and keeping them in bondage. They are priestly spies among the people, save those that go into seclusion; and hence you find them begging for the people in the streets mingling with them in the market-places, lounging with the lazarons, and laughing with them, and all for the purpose of doing the dirty work of the priests, and filling their minds with superstitious legends. The object of importing to our shores monks and nuns cannot be mistaken; and as soon as public sentiment will allow it, you will see these lazy and wicked wretches sticking their shorn heads into the cottages of the poor, to warn them against all the elevating influences of Christianity, and flouting their coarse robes in our thorough-fares for the same purpose for which the Pharisees of old made broad their phylacteries. These monkish orders were, and are, the curse of Pagan nations; they wofully corrupted the Christian Church; they were mainly the authors of the lying legends of the Dark Ages, which Papal priests are endorsing even in America; they are now a grievous curse to the Papal nations of the world. O, Sir, will you not join me in the prayer that they may never curse either by their presence or their arts, our own happy, thrice happy country!—*Christian Union.*

THE MYSTERY SOLVED, OR IRELAND'S MISERIES; THE GRAND CAUSE AND CURE.

We beg our readers' attention to the following chapters taken from the admirable work of the Rev. Dr. Dill, recently published by the Carvers. They are the first three chapters of the work, and will give a good idea of it, as well as of the nature of the subject of which it treats. We hope that many of our readers will purchase and read this masterly production. It is certainly the best thing that has been written respecting unhappy, but still beautiful Ireland. Dr. Dill writes like a man who has a clear comprehension of his subject, an understanding able to grapple with it, and a heart deeply penetrated with the love of a vital Christianity, and a deep conviction of its being the panacea for the woes of Ireland. If our readers can read that book—we forewarn them—without being made to feel in their inmost souls a deep compassion for Ireland, and send up most fervent prayers that she may soon enjoy the blessings of a pure Gospel, we are entirely mistaken in our opinion of them.

GENERAL WRETCHEDNESS.

The first thing that strikes the traveller, is the air of desolation which begins to pervade whole districts—especially in Munster and Connaught. As he wanders through these provinces, he sees half decayed towns, which once were so flourishing as to send members to the Irish Parliament. He finds whole villages in ruins so complete, that nothing remains but a few tottering wall studs, to tell that the hum of life was ever there. In some cases, even these monuments of desolation have disappeared, and the coachman points to a bare deserted spot, as the site of a former hamlet. And as to the destruction of farmsteads and cabins, he can scarce move in any direction but the scene appears as if some invading army had passed by.

He finds, on enquiry, that this decadence had commenced long prior to the famine, and was only hastened by that fearful visitation. On the eve of that calamity, and while yet the tide of events flowed in its usual channels, Ireland contained one-third the population, with one-fourth the surface of the United Kingdom; and yet her national revenue was not one-eleventh, being £4,500,000 sterling, out of £52,000,000. The registered tonnage of her shipping was not one-twelfth, being 250,000 tons to near 3,250,000. And the proportion of her persons employed in her factories, was one twenty-third, being, in round numbers, 23,000 to 540,000; while her agricultural condition could scarce be compared to