

expense, although almost all the bees have deserted them; and then we are complained of because we demur against contributing to the cost of providing fresh hives in distant quarters, when, so far as we know, there is no certainty that they will ever be filled, and no security that they may not remain as empty as our own."

The following brief allusion is to the *legal* robbery of the *quoad sacra* churches:—

"Nor are we, simple country folks, enabled to concur in rejoicing at the intelligence that, in other quarters, a number of swarms which had filled certain hives for many years, and displayed much skill and industry, have been dispossessed of their cherished tenements, in order that these may, if possible, be filled with other bees, which may or may not be forthcoming by and by."

The remainder of this letter is occupied with a statement of the fact, that his own mind and the minds of contemplative men generally, throughout Scotland, have, since the disruption, undergone a silent but perceptible change in regard to the desirableness of maintaining the Establishment.—And that, in spite of his almost superstitious veneration for it, and his repugnance to Dissenters, he wishes the latter term erased from our Ecclesiastical vocabulary.

In his *4th & 5th Letters*, Sir George Sinclair gives some of the considerations that led him to change his views and long cherished prepossessions in favour of lay-patronage, and which forced upon him the conclusion that the extensive secessions, prior to the disruption, were "entirely owing to laxity and want of faithfulness on the part of the office-bearers of the Establishment, and in no degree to fickleness, heterodoxy, or precipitation on the part of tens of thousands of her most pious children, by whom her communion was reluctantly but resolutely abandoned."

He was unable to discover a single instance in which a dissenting church had been built on account of the faithfulness with which the incumbent of the parish discharged his duty, and preached the gospel according to the standards of the church. And if there were districts in which no secession had taken place, and where a heterodox system was proclaimed, it was the poverty, not the will of the people, that prevented their building another church, and compelled them to travel many miles to listen to a faithful exposition of the of the gospel.

Another of the evils of lay-patronage, which operated upon his mind, and which still exists, is noticed, viz., that most of the patrons were indifferent as to the doctrine preached in the parish churches—many of them Episcopalians who never entered the churches which they had handed over to Arminian incumbents. The church thus became corrupted; these moderate ministers drove the pious people to seek for other pastors, who would "feed them with knowledge and understanding." When the late eminent Dr. McDonald was licensed, a minister said to his co-presbyters, "Be on your guard against that lad, or you will find him a dangerous man to deal with."

In reading these letters of a man whose eyes are opened, on whom so much light has burst forth, and who has the candour to admit it, the only regret we feel is, that he suffered himself to be so long misled on the subject, and especially that he still persists in striving "to cling to the convictions and predilections of his earlier years."

SIR JOHN FRANKLIN.

The hope is still indulged that Sir John Franklin and his brave associates, may be safe in the Polar regions. The whaling ships and the expedition under Sir James Ross, have returned without having seen any trace of the missing ships or their crews. Sir James Ross speaks confidently of the safety of Sir John Franklin's expedition—will recommend to the Admiralty to offer a reward of £50,000 for the recovery of the whole or a part of the officers and crews, and will proceed himself, next season, to the Arctic regions. A meeting of Arctic authorities will soon be held to see what is to be done. Some important points have not been examined.

THE BERMONDSEY MURDERERS.

The Mannings, husband and wife, have been executed for the murder of O'Connor. No doubt exists as to their guilt and the justice of their fate. Manning made a confession of his participation in the crime, but seemed to think that although he was aware of his wife's intention, and knew that she had the grave dug for their victim, and that he was invited to the house—although he completed the guilty deed and disposed of the body—because he had not struck the fatal blow, he was therefore, not guilty. Mrs. Manning protested her innocence to the last, and died with a lie upon her lips. The *Edinburgh Witness* says—

"The chances against confession on the part of women in such circumstances are considerably greater than those against confession on the part of men. In by much the larger number of cases the murderers perish unrepentant, clinging to the last to some miserable hope of escape; whereas the man usually realizes the desperate nature of the circumstances in which he is placed, and, ere he turns to ask forgiveness of Heaven, makes as a necessary act of preparation, confession to man. If, however, he be a Roman Catholic, the chances against public confession are greatly lessened. He makes a "clean breast" to his priest, under the seal of the confessional, and perishes with a lie in his mouth, yet not without hope.—Gleeson Wilson, for instance, the Irish Papist who was executed in September last, for the wholesale murder of a family, made no confession except a spiritual one; and his namesake and co-religionist the other Wilson, who lately suffered at Edinburgh, for the murder of the young shepherd, kept his secret equally well, and died denying the crime that brought him to the gallows.

There are various important purposes which might be served by a carefully prepared digest of the statistics of crime. It would estimate on fixed principles, instead of by vague opinion, the various degrees of guilt which attach to various classes of felons; and to direct honest juries, uninfluenced by unwelcome crochets regarding the punishment-of-death question,—when to recommend to mercy and in what cases to suffer the law to take its course. It will be found as a general rule, that criminals are guilty in the degree in which, ere they could become such, they had to set aside or overcome the barriers to crime set in their way by the force of sentiment or of circumstances.

Another point to which we would advert is what may be termed the religion of Mrs. Manning. In her lodgings in Edinburgh she expounded the Scriptures to the servants of the household; in the conclusion of her letter to her husband there is a certain amount of nonsense which takes the religious form; and last, and most extraordinary of all, she made it a subject of regret to her accomplice that she had not read the burial service over the body of her victim. This last we regard as a stroke in the tragedy almost beyond the reach of genius. Shakespeare might have anticipated it, but we know of no other dramatist that could. It serves, too, to throw some light on her religious character. Much of the latter resulted, no doubt, from sheer pretence and hypocrisy; but we do not see that there could be nought of pretence or hypocrisy in the regret expressed, that O'Connor should have been committed to his grave without the customary prayers.

Our readers must have heard of the Continental robber who was so good a Catholic that he never murdered on a Friday. Even in the case of the Mannings we may see how the miserable want of discipline which exists in the Church of England, and that revived superstition within her pale which led to the recent decision of Sir Herbert Jenner Fust, should operate as a premium in creating a religion without morals. Mrs. Manning, with the blood of her murdered paramour on her hands, would fain have read the burial service over his murdered body; and we shudder at the bare idea of so frightful a desecration. But the Church of England, in the person of one of its chaplains, visits this same Mrs. Manning in her cell, and finding her hard and unrepentant as a demon, actually administers to her the sacrament of the Supper. He recognizes her as a member of the Church, regenerated in baptism,—as a converted christian, in short, just a little out of order; and, as the sacrament possesses an inherent virtue,—for such is the revived doctrine,—he gives her the bread and the wine, in the hope of ministering to her soul's health, as a mother gives rhubarb or senna to a sick child. If the Church be in the right in communicating the sacrament to Mrs. Manning, we do not see why it should not be equally right in Mrs. Manning to read prayers over O'Connor. The individual worthy of the sacrament must have been equally worthy, in the absence of a clergyman, to read the prayers; and the objection to the reading of the one,—viz: that it involved a sacrilegious introduction of the religious element wholly dissociated from morals,—bears with at least equal force against the administration of the other.

HOME EVANGELIZATION.

In our last we noticed a Tract bearing this title, recently published by the American Tract Society. We found it so interesting, and were so much pleased both with the subject itself and the manner in which it is handled, that we so far exceeded the bounds to which we would desire to restrict any single article, that the following brief description of the Society's Publishing Establishment, although in type, had to be laid over:—

"Fronting the Park, and looking out on the City Hall, stands a building of simple architecture, eighty by seventy feet, five stories in height, owned and occupied by the American Tract Society. On the first floor are four stores, the largest of which is occupied as the general place of business of the Society, with offices for the Treasurer and the Messenger in the rear. On the second floor, several benevolent societies are accommodated in the twelve apartments into which it is divided. The third floor furnishes convenient rooms for the secretaries and their assistants, for the meeting of committees, and a spacious apartment for a general depository, in which boxes are packed for the country and the world. The fourth and part of the fifth stories are devoted to the *bindery*, where more than one hundred females, and forty men, pursue their busy task, folding, stitching, covering, and finishing more than 2,000 books and 25,000 smaller publications each day. Ascending to the fifth floor, you witness a strange scene. The mere exhibitions of mechanical genius are wonderful. Ponderous presses seem to have become instinct with intelligence and Christian zeal. They seize the moistened sheet with their iron fingers, draw it over the waiting type, stamp it with immortal truth, and place it on a wooden