

the old judge who during his leisure hours reads over the evidence on which he based his judgments in former trials. Like over him, an indistinct sense of doubt occasionally creeps over us, which in the secret of our hearts, now and again forces on our attention the following questions:—Have we thoroughly sifted in all its bearings the subject on which we have adjudicated? Have those same middle ages, brought before our tribunal, had a fair trial? Have we not perchance given too much weight to the crown witnesses, and not enough to those summoned for the defence? Has the defendant had an opportunity of bringing into court all the documentary evidence available in such a momentous inquiry? In other words, when we lavish such wholesale abuse on our ancestors, are we sure we fully understand, truly appreciate the hidden motives which actuated their actions? Are we certain some designing men have not for a purpose traduced this eventful period of the world's history, purposely vilified its institutions, knowingly libelled its actors? Fortunately it is not our province to answer satisfactorily and fully these grave inquiries. We will be quite content for the present with merely raising a corner of the veil which stands between us and the past; and reader, if perchance during the operation, your peering eye should detect the nakedness of some of our forefathers' queer conceits, we beseech you not to judge of them by the standard of to-day, but rather look on like Shem and Japheth, *i. e.* with charity. Rest assured, little analogy can exist between the customs and manners of a period in which it was not considered out of place to lavish stores of the most recondite learning in solving the unimportant problem "how many spirits can stand on the point of a needle without jostling one another?" Another subject of deep research at one time, but which will doubtless appear of secondary moment to the general welfare of mankind, was "what was the color of the Virgin Mary's hair?" Some profound thinkers, by elaborate arguments, showed that it must have been red; we would have preferred auburn.

We are led to the present inquiry by the perusal of a cleverly written book, compiled by Louis Veuillot, ex-redacteur of the *Univers*, a Paris newspaper recently suppressed by the elect of thirty-two millions of free men, either because his people were not sufficiently advanced to have a free press, or that a free press was a *malum per se*; we know of some of his subjects in Canada who, in their writings, deny both these doctrines.

But, says the utilitarian, practically, what have we in Canada to do with Louis Veuillot or his book? Nothing, certainly, more than this: it