

The supremacy of Liverpool as an Atlantic Port—or at least as the great passenger port—is threatened by Milford Haven. A million of money has been expended there on docks and quays, alongside which the great ocean steamers can range while their passengers disembark, and immediately, if they choose, take the train for London. It is true Milford is an hour further from the metropolis than Liverpool, but it is independent of tides, there is no troublesome bar, as in the Mersey, the time and distance up that river would be saved, and passengers would altogether escape the vexatious transshipment of themselves and their baggage into a most uncomfortable tender, and the subsequent long drive to railway or hotel, which make Liverpool one of the most unpleasant ports in the world at which to be compelled to disembark.

Canada in general and Nova Scotia in particular, may well find fresh cause for gratitude from time to time in the dispensation of immunity from so many of the calamities that afflict other countries. While territories so far south as New Mexico, Texas and Colorado are undergoing the vigors of blizzards and floods, the late autumnal weather of the supposed Arctic climate of Canada is mild and altogether agreeable, and up to Friday last we have had but two or three days that could be called cold, and those only seasonably so. If we add to the blessing of our agreeable climatic conditions the boon of the great catches of mackerel we have been recently favored with, which are going so far to compensate for the deficiencies of the earlier part of the season, we shall indeed find ample reason for thankfulness that our lot is cast where it is.

There are indications that the racing of ocean steamers is becoming a nuisance, whether it involve an element of danger or not. "A Dislocated Passenger" pertinently asks—"Why should they race? Why, indeed? What is gained if the race is won? Half a day at the utmost; and the price you pay for getting in first (or even second for the matter of that) is a week's misery. To go full speed through a heavy sea, with the vessel shipping water by the ton, is very exciting, no doubt, to persons of a sporting disposition and with livers like adamant; but" (says the *St. James' Gazette*)—"People who like to be comfortable would prefer less speed and more security. It is sometimes supposed that the Atlantic is large enough for everybody; but the course between Liverpool and New York is really a narrow one, and the stupid and objectless racing is pretty certain, sooner or later, to result in a terrible disaster. The wise traveller, who values his bones and his inside, may come in time to select the slower ships which go half speed or even heave to in a gale. After all, the object of embarking upon a steamer is to arrive at your destination; not to run unnecessary risks of being sent to the bottom."

A very important judgment in the matter of "trusts" has been rendered by the Supreme Court of the State of New York, which may well afford precedent for imitation by Canadian legislation should occasion arise. The judgment dissolves a great sugar refining company that had become a part of the sugar trust, and settles the legality of trade combinations generally. As the evidence showed that the Sugar Refineries Company, or in other words the sugar trust, was a corporation having for its object "the removal of competition and the advancement of the prices of the necessities of life," the court held that it was "subject to the condemnation of the law, by which it is denounced as a criminal enterprise." The law of the State of New York appears to be very definite upon this point, as it declares it to be a misdemeanor for any persons to conspire together "to commit any act injurious to the public health, to public morals or to trade and commerce." The sugar trust was such a conspiracy, the utility of the particular company against which action had been brought was destroyed by the illegal nature of the trust into which it had entered, and as public franchises are only given that the public may be benefited, the court decided that its franchise should be taken from it. One clause of the judgment declares that a trust must be considered to be a monopoly because it has the power to destroy competitive industries in order to perpetuate its power. We take this to be a thoroughly equitable view of the question.

"Nothing," says Archdeacon Farrar in the article to which allusion is made in another note, "is more offensive in the modern preacher, especially when he is young, raw, and ignorant, than the assumption of any right to lay down the law on disputed topics." On the subject of "science," at which preachers are so prone to flaunt the red flag of defiance, he says:—"No one who is acquainted with the history of science, and has sufficient honesty to accept facts, can possibly deny that scarcely a single truth of capital importance in science has ever been enunciated without having to struggle for life against the fury of theological dogmatists, and in every instance the dogmatists have been ignominiously defeated." Coming to the subject of biblical criticism, he is equally outspoken in defence of the right of modern scholarship to be heard on many points over which the pulpit has asserted an exclusive claim. "The tone of some preachers, who adopt the title of orthodox upon these points of dispute, is thoroughly reprehensible. They assume that the results of the newer criticism are the consequence of something which they call 'unbelief,' and they stigmatize them as the fruit of moral perversity. The unbelief and the moral perversity rest rather with themselves. He is an unbeliever, he is morally perverse, who refuses to recognize the truths revealed to us by the widening light of knowledge. . . . A preacher is not bound to adopt the conclusions of modern critics, whether German or English, but what he is bound to do is to abstain from denouncing them until he has fully and fairly studied the grounds on which they rest." The article, coming from so eminent a Churchman, is one of the boldest and most remarkable contributions yet made to the discussion of the relations between religion and science.

We are not, on many points, in accord with our esteemed city contemporary the *Chronicle*, but we do honor the intrepidity with which it treats some matters of opinion that most journals shirk or palter with. Its latest allusion of this sort is to an article of Archdeacon Farrar's in the *Forum* on "The Modern Claims of the Pulpit." "The manner," says our contemporary "in which the distinguished preacher cuts down the privileges of his class may not be greatly relished by people of that class, but there is much in what he says that they may profitably consider. Preaching, he says, always has been, and always will be, an important part of the work of the church, but the times have changed, and preachers must change with them. They must remember that they are no longer teachers of the ignorant. Reading and education have become so general that many in the congregation know as much as the preacher about many of the topics discussed, if not more."

The new asteroid discovered by Dr. Peters, of Hamilton College Observatory, on the 25th of August, may prove to be the most interesting of the whole group. The first computation of the orbit indicated that part of the path was inside the orbit of the planet Mars. Dr. Peters is making another computation from later observations, and he thinks the path may be outside that of Mars, but still near enough to distinguish the new asteroid as the nearest of all to the sun. In view of the discovery, astronomers may be inclined to adopt the view that the moons of Mars were picked up by that planet from the asteroids near his orbit. It is possible that the earth picked up its satellite in the same way. The moon has the appearance of having received a heavy blow which cracked the shell in every direction from the crater Tycho. The moon might have struck the earth in a way to cause the fracture of the moon's shell, which was afterward cemented again by the outflow of melted matter. The lines of apparent fracture are intensely white, like new matter pushed up through the older portions of the moon's surface. The central point, or crater of Tycho, is almost intensely white, and is very large and shallow. This is no doubt a highly speculative, and may appear an extravagant theory; nevertheless, if the impact of such a collision, supposing it ever to have occurred, should be demonstrated to be sufficient to cause the moon to rebound from it to her mean distance from the earth of 240,000 miles, it would, we should imagine, be not altogether impossible one.

We have heard a great deal for the last year or two about the efficacy of oil in stilling tempestuous waters. The evidence, though it has come from many sources, has always seemed to us to be somewhat lacking in precision, but the American Government Departments are so practical that it may be safely assumed that what they deal with seriously must possess a practical value. In this matter the U. S. hydrographer says:—"As the season of winter storms on the North Atlantic is approaching, navigators should note the many instances where serious danger and damage have been avoided by using oil to prevent heavy seas from breaking on board. It will be remembered that on the pilot chart for last March a full explanation was published, with diagrams, as to the best methods of using oil. Reprints of this explanation and accompanying diagrams can be obtained at any branch hydrographic office. There are many other cases where oil may be used to advantage, such as lowering and hoisting boats, riding to a sea anchor, crossing rollers or surf on a bar and from lifeboats and stranded vessels. Thick and heavy oils are the best. Mineral oils are not so effective as animal or vegetable oils. Raw petroleum has given favorable results, but not so good when it is refined. Certain oils, like coconut oil and some kinds of fish oil, congeal in cold weather and are therefore useless, but may be mixed with mineral oil to advantage. The simplest and best method of distributing oil is by means of canvas bags about one foot long, filled with oakum and oil, pierced with holes by means of a coarse sail-net he and held by a lanyard." This authoritative endorsement would therefore appear to be well worth the attention of our mariners.

Great interest attaches to the work of the commission for the improvement of the city of Rome. The works have been very extensive, the city having in large part been remodelled, while 82 miles of new streets have been opened, paved, drained and lighted. It was inevitable that, in such sweeping alterations, some landmarks of antiquity should be destroyed, but the Italian Government has on the whole exercised a wise supervision, and such loss as there has been, has been compensated by great finds of statuary, and the laying bare of houses, etc., of unique interest, such as that from which Cæsar issued forth to his assassination, the Home of the Vestal Virgins, and the Temple of Castor and Pollux, which dates back to the battle of Lake Regillus, five centuries before the Christian era. But the most interesting revelations are after all those which reveal the simplest details of domestic life and civic organization. Among these are the systems of heating, flues, baths and water pipes, house sewer pipes, and the general ornamentation mostly borrowed in idea from the Greeks. The commission has, through a curious custom of stamping the lead pipes as they were laid down by the plumber, with the name of the owner of the house, the year of the plumbing, the names of the consuls for the year, the name of the reigning emperor, obtained the names and age of hundreds of villas put up in the Augustan age. In fact, so numerous have been the discoveries that the commission has been enabled to furnish a thousand details concerning the water supply of Rome in the time of the Cæsars, the organization of the police and fire brigades, and the system of service in the public baths, all of which is valuable in a supplementary way to what has long been known of the great aqueducts and sewers of the ancient city. The Roman municipality, however, finds difficulty in resisting the schemes of grasping speculators, which would neutralize the value of the discoveries and which actually meet with encouragement.