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London, Saturday, Dec. 29, 1894.

CHRISTMAS.

The very thought of Christmas steals into the human soul, calming the feverish brain and weary heart and lifting us from out ourselves into the regions of peace and happiness. We see in spirit the shepherds, men of simple minds and pure hearts, keeping their lonely vigil on the hills of Galilee, and hear the heavenly music that entranced their wondering ears. Down from heaven, clad in robes of dazzling whiteness, descends an angel in rapid flight, and the bright. ness of God shines round about them and they fear with a great fear. "Fear not," said the angel, "for behold I bring you good tidings of great joy." After the long waiting the Christ had come.

They were indeed good tidings that thrilled the heart of humanity, announcing that the sway of death was over, that love reigned in place of fear, that the compassionate heart of a God-man was ours forever for our solace and consolation, that the hope of a lasting city where joy and eternal peace abide could reanimate the courage of the sons of men and render insignificant the sorrows and miseries of this earthly pilgrimage, and that faith banished ignorance and made them aware of their duties to themselves, to their neighbors and to God. Were they not good tidings?

Humanity, like the poor prodigal, had gone out from the father's house of truth, and in the far off country of doubt and despair had squandered its noble dowry of intellect and will in the pursuit of error and in the satisfaction of passion. Enfeebled in body and spirit, it waited in sullen despair for the end. But God had mercy upon it, and with inconceivable love sent His only begotten Son to search out the poor wanderer, to bind up the wounds that sin had made so that he who died in Adam might be raised up and strength. ened and made to live unto God.

We who live in the sunshine of God's truth may not well imagine the holy joy conveyed by the word of the angel unless we understand the condition of the world at that time.

When our first parents, endowed with wondrous gifts of nature and grace, flung them away at the suggestion of the tempter, and so bereft themselves and their posterity of all grace and hope of glory, the darkness of death overshadowed the world. The original sin was fast blighting the face of creation.

Men knew they had immortal souls and that above them was a God who could reward or punish them, but passion had dimmed the remembrance of this teaching and blended it with so many errors and superstitions that the fair form of truth could scarce be recognized in the monstrous systems of idolatry that infested the world.

The world of sense was around about them, and to extract its every pleasure, no matter how vile and debasing, became the chief object of their existence. The scene of the degradation of individuals and nations before the coming of Christ shows well to what depths of infamy men without the grace of God may descend. We see them crouching in abject fear before senseless idols of gold and silver and defiling their immortal souls with every species of sensual gratification. We behold woman shorn of her dignity and purity, and myriads of human beings dragged into slavery and sold like cattle on the marts of commerce. Verily, in the words of the prophet, the 'Lord looked down from heaven to see if there be any that seek after God. They are all gone aside. Their mouth is full of cursing and bitterness; destruction and unhappiness are in have not known."

them, and, convinced that its aspira- souls the messengers of peace and Schism of the Eastern Churches should tions for immortality could not be truth.

and the same

silenced by an eternal death, strove with all the power and energy of their nature to discover the truth. We see it was looked upon as the flowering of nations and times, and it was always peror is or has been unwilling to rethem grappling with the problems of misguided enthusiasm, destined to be an essential feature of the Christian sign his headship of the Church. their origin and destiny and nothing born only to be buried. It is, howmore interesting and more unutterably sad than their varying answers. Acute and subtle, earnest and energetic, they were, and yet, despite these advantages, they were groping in the dark; and again and again do we hear them confessing their doubts and ignorance and declaring there was no hope for man but from a Redeemer.

And the Redeemer was to come. Adown the generations from father to son, from generation to generation, was handed the blessed promise that was the only gleam of light during forty centuries of darkness.

Prophets saw Him afar and re-animated the courage of hearts, weary of waiting by proclaiming the glory of His coming. And as the years went by and the time foretold by the prophets was at hand, God came quietly and without ostentation.

Mary and Joseph, in the cold, dark time of mid-winter, go in obedience to the Roman Emperor, who was enumerating and taking the census of his provinces, to the little town of Bethlehem.

Timidly they go from house to house

seeking a shelter, but there is no room for such travel stained and poorly dressed travellers. Houseless and desolate they wander until they find a bleak unsheltered cave, and there was born the long expected of nations, the Saviour of the world. The angels are present in myriad bands singing in strains of divinest triumph the love of God for man. Out over the sleeping city rings their jubilee of praise and glory to God in the highest and peace on earth to men of good will, announcing the good tidings that the Word was made Flesh and dwelt amongst us. The light which enlighteneth every man that cometh into the world shone forth from that poor stable of Bethlehem upon the face of the earth and all the myriads that sat in darkness and proclaimed: "I am the light of the world. He that followeth Me walketh not in darkness but shall have the light of life." That heavenly light shone upon man, dissipating his ignorance, strengthening his will and teaching him that he was destined for an eternity of happiness. It shone upon the home that had been desecrated, bathing it in a splendor of purity by sanctifying the marriage tie and the relations between parents and children. It fell upon society, purifying it from corruption, banishing tyranny and re-establishing the reign of truth and justice, and upon human minds and hearts, solving all

doubts and healing all sorrows. Such were the tidings that ushered n a new and lasting era of peace and happiness to a world that had well nigh lost all hope of deliverance. We have indeed reason to rejoice, not vainly, bu twith a joy that will produce strenuous good works.

The mind shrinks back affrighted at the idea of the infinite abasement and curse wrung from the justice of God by humiliation undergone by the Eternal Son of God to bring that heavenly light to mankind.

> Though He framed the Universe with its countless worlds, yet was He born so poor that He had not whereon to lay His head. Though He was the source of boundless wisdom, He came into the world a speechless Infant; and though He was the Uncreated Eternal God, He became a weak, puny Child, with a human body and soul, with a human heart and will. The human reason may well be baffled by such a mystery. Our gratitude tells us all that to make recompense to this prodigality of love, we must bring out in our souls the fair image of the God of Bethlehem by our charity, by our purity, by the practice of every Christian virtue. This is our life work. and though we may be rich and honored, yet if we are not like unto the image of Jesus Christ our years are but a mockery and utter failure.

MISSIONS TO PROTESTANTS.

The interest in Father Elliot's work grows apace. He is warmly welcomed wherever he goes, and this indeed is a proof to the liberty - loving spirit of our separated brethren. Calumny and misrepresentation stand out their ways and the way of peace they in all their repulsiveness when exposed to the search light of investigation. Still, amidst all this gloom of sin, He has met with opposition, but the procurator to re-enact such atrocithere were some who rose superior to he has the consolation of knowing that ties as he has been responsible for in the common ideas, and who, feeling his efforts have unbarred the door of that an immortal soul was within prejudice that shut out from honest

sions to Protestants was first broached, unborn may not witness its funeral.

It must not be imagined that Father Elliot's work is something new to the Paulists. It was the plan conceived by their venerable founder, Father Hecker, and would ere this have been in operation but for inability to furnish men for the work. The keen eye of Father Hecker saw in the trend of events and detected in the multifarious and contradictory opinions of his age the longing for better and higher things, and that there is no mission nobler than to guide and to direct them. He was prevented from carrying out his idea, but he bequeathed it to his spiritual children. They formed after his own heart, have gone out with the glad tidings of the Gospel, and the good seed sown has already

been productive of fruit. The great success is due to the truth enunciated, to the personal magnetism, and to the plain, virile language of Father Elliot. He is a man who knows how to think and to express his thoughts in true and luminous words. He wastes no time in the frippery and affectation of a vain rhetoric. He makes no attack on buried systems and theories, and leaves Pilate and the Pharisees in peace. But he speaks of the crimes that the every-day work a day world knows of, and his auditors are certain that they are listening to a man who speaks because he has something to

THE CZAR AND THE RUSSIAN CHURCH.

It is gratifying to find that the new Czar of Russia, Nicholas II., is adopting a policy of toleration which has hitherto been a thing unknown in the Empire. The latest intelligence is to the effect that the laws enforcing the expulsion of Jews from Russia have been modified to such an extent that already the condition of the Hebrew race is very much ameliorated. A few days earlier we were informed that the Emperor had telegraphed to General Gourko in Warsaw that he is not to molest any further the Catholic clergy and laity in the practice of their religion. General Gourko has been the military governor of that district for a couple of years, and during that time has shown a readiness to become a tool of the fanaticism of M. Pobzendoff, the procurator of the Holy Synod, who is full of hate against Catholics, because they will not admit his right to govern the Catholic Church,

It was General Gourko who commanded the Cossacks to make the assault upon the poor peasants of Kruze who resisted the desecration of their church. This deed rivalled in barbarity the atrocities committed by the Turks in Armenia, and at an earlier date in Bulgaria, with the'exception that the butchery committed in Kruze was on a smaller scale.

the Polish Catholics, and it will be no matter of regret that he has been so much humiliated by the Emperor's command to be more merciful, that he has given in his resignation of the governorship. It cannot be that any one so brutal as he will be appointed to succeed him, and so the cause of humanity will necessarily be a gainer by the change.

The Emperor's action in this matter will be taken as an indication that a new era of toleration is to be inaugurated in Russia, in which case we may hope that the unfortunate peasants who were recently consigned to Siberia by the late Czar will be restored to their homes. If this be not done, the reparation offered to the Poles will be very inadequate and partial, and it cannot be expected that confidence in the St. Petersburg Government will be restored.

It was stated just after the accession of Nicholas that the procurator of the holy synod was also to be dismissed and a new one appointed. If this had been done it would have been a further assurance that a more liberal policy is to be followed, but the report has not been confirmed. It is possible that M. Pobzendoff has submitted to adopt a more tolerant course than he has hitherto followed and has thus staved off the humiliation of a dismissal. At all events, there is good reason to believe that the Czar will not allow the past.

There is no valid reason why the

When the scheme of giving mis- such reason. The Church which Christ ance of this article of faith of Catho has been demonstrated by the numer-Church that there should be a bond of ever, full of vitality, and generations union uniting all its parts under one has predominated; but to this day the whole Church must be subject, and ments. with which it must hold communion.

There is no foundation, whether in scripture, tradition, or reason, for the newfangled theory of a system of independent national Christian Churches with a fictitious union existing between them, such as Anglicanism, Presbyterianism, Methodism, etc., present, and such a system must result, as it has resulted in all these cases, in a multiplicity of sects teaching different doctrines. Quite independently of the internal divisions existing between High, Low, Broad, and Erastian Churchism within Anglicanism, there are already divergencies in doctrine between that Church in England and the United States, inasmuch as the standards of belief have already been changed in the latter country to suit the differences of character and manner of thought of the two nations. Methodism and Presbyterianism in Japan are essentially different from these isms as they exist in the Englishspeaking countries which established them through their missions, and the current of events makes it evident that there will soon be a diversity of standards in use in the different countries where they have a foothold.

The Catholic Church, on the other hand, has kept everywhere that unity of faith which would be impossible without unity of headship.

The Russians and other Eastern schismatics have preserved, in spite of their separation, all the most important doctrines which the Catholic Church holds, though it is more than a thousand years since Photius, the Patriarch of Constantinople, began the work of schism by refusing to submit to the authority of the Popes-a refusal which culminated afterwards in the unfortunate separation of the East from the West, just at the time when the Mahometan tribes were preparing to invade the Christian world in order to impose Mahometanism on the East and West alike.

The West was finally saved from this infliction by the influence of the Popes, who succeeded in uniting the Catholic powers sufficiently to prevent the onward march of the barbaric hordes, though it was with great difficulty this end was gained, owing to the national and private jealousies which existed. The East would not co-operate with the Western powers, and so it was over run by the Moslems, and only of late years were Greece and the Balkan Provinces delivered wholly or in part from a sway which civilized nations could no nger tolerate.

Russia has been, down to the present time, in a backward state, owing largely to its isolation from the great body of Christendom. Religiously it has little life, and its clergy are in a deplorable moral condition, owing to the fact that they are almost entirely now an hereditary class or cas te. The faith of the people is strong, notwithstanding the debilitating in duence of such a body of clergy as they are supplied with, but a reunion with the Catholic Church would undou btedly infuse new life into the whole religious system of the country.

The total population of the empire is now estimated at about on e hundred and fifteen million and seventy-seven thousand. Eighty-two mullion four hundred and seventy eight thousand belong to the Schismatic al Russian Church, which is officially called the Orthodox Catholic Church. Among these, however, a number of Dissent ing bodies are included. There are nine million sixty-nine tho usand Catholics in communion with the Pope. These are known as uniates or members of the United Catholic Church.

The Protestants or Sturidists of the empire number about five millions three hundred and eleven thousand, the Mahometans thirteen million three hundred and forty-nine thousand, and the remainder of the population is divided between Jews ar id Pagans.

The union of the Orth odox with the Catholic Church would present no difficulty on the part of the people, as their devotions and belief are in almost every respect the same, except in reference to the authority of the continue to exist, nor was there ever Pope. The chief obstracle to accept-

established on earth was one for all lics is the political one that the Em- ous fatalities which have occurred from

The Patriarchs and Bishops also assume to fear that their liberties and head. It is not distinctively Latin or powers would be circumscribed if a Greek, Italian, French, Russian or union was effected. This would not German, though it has happened in be the case. The rite in which Mass subject, and we rejoice to find that the the course of time that the Latin rite is celebrated would be preserved, as well as the general discipline of the other rites have wisely been preserved | Church, though there would necessarin the Church's liturgy. There are in ily be certain reforms introduced to the Church many languages, but one correct abuses among the clergy, and faith and one supreme head, to which in the administration of the sacra-

The Holy Father, Pope Leo XIII., desires earnestly this union, and much will depend upon the Emperor whether it is to be accomplished during his reign. It is to be hoped that the new liberal policy which he seems to be adopting is an indication that he will agree to a measure from which so great a benefit will accrue to his Empire as well as to the whole Christian world.

BRUTAL SPORTS.

There has been another of the brutal exhibitions known as prize fights, terminating fatally within the last few days. This time the tragic occurrence took place at New Orleans on the evening of the 14th inst., the death of the unfortunate combatant taking place on the morning of the 15th.

Andy Bowen, well known throughout the Southern States as the " New Orleans Lightweight," fought with George Lavigne, otherwise called the Saginaw Kid," for a purse of \$3,000.

Sometimes these fights are with soft gloves, and are intended merely as an exhibition of comparative prowess, but even in such cases the encounter sometimes proves fatal. This was the case two months ago at Syracuse when Fitzimmons caused the death of his sparring partner, Con. Riordan, by a severe blow. Riordan was in poor condition for fighting, and his strength was overtaxed, otherwise the encounter would probably not have ended fatally.

The encounter at New Orleans was of a different character, as it was with hard gloves which were intended to inflict severe blows. The number of rounds arranged for the fight was twenty-five, and it was expected from the beginning that it would be a " fight to a finish," as those interested in the pugilistic ring are accustomed to term it.

The fatal blow was given at the eighteenth round, and was delivered on Bowen's jaw, causing him to fall prostrate, his head striking the platform with great force. Every effort was made to restore him, but without success, and at 7 o'clock next morning he was dead. This is the fourth death caused by

prize-fighting within a year. We have already referred to one, that of Riordan at Syracuse. Another occured alse in Syracuse some time before, when Dunfee killed Donovan by a hard blow, and another in England, where George Smith was killed by a professional fighter known as "Dummy" Winters A fifth fight took place at St. Louis about two months ago which has not yet proved fatal, but one of the combatants, Dan. Daily, has been since dangerously ill from having his jaw broken, and the report is now that he is threatened with gangrene, which is likely to prove fatal.

It is stated that in consequence of the New Orleans fatality, prize fights will henceforth not be allowed there. From New York, Buffalo and Chicago the news comes that prize fights which had been arranged have been prohibited by the authorities. It is right that this prohibition should be put into effect, but all such barbarous encounters should have been stopped long ago, as they have been in California owing to a similar fatal termin ation to a fight which occurred there at an earlier date than we have here indicated.

The friends of this so called sport maintain that death does not occur oftener from prize fighing than from other sports, but it must be remem bered that the object of most other sports is not the injury of the human body, so that if death occurs in them sometimes it is really an accident, but in this brutal, so-called sport, every blow aims at destroying some part of the human system, and has therefore a natural tendency to destroy life.

We cannot believe that the ordinary sports which form part of the exercises of athletics are as fatal as prize fighting, but if some are so dangerous as represented they should be stopped also.

Two wrongs do not make a right,

it should be stopped once for all, and with it any other so called sport which may be shown to be equally dangerous, or whose tendency is to the injury of the human system. There should be stringent legislation on this authorities have been stirred up by the recent occurrence to apply an effectual remedy. _

THE ATROCITIES IN ARMENIA.

It is now stated on apparently good authority that the atrocities perpetrated by the Turkish soldiers in Armenia exceeded in horror the worst which has hitherto been said of them. The consuls of Great Britain, France and Russia at Erzeroun have been directed by their Governments to proceed at once to the district to make enquiries into the transaction simultaneously with the Turkish investigating commission, of which they will be independent. It is not for the purpose of assuming any special authority beyond other European nations in the matter that these; three powers send their consuls, but because they are the only powers whose representatives are near enough to the spot to take immediate action. They will not take part directly in the Turkish investigation, because they are supposed to presume that the Turkish Government will do its duty in making their enquiries, but that they will watch the proceedings to see that they are not a mere pretence: thus the people of Armenia will have more confidence in the investigation.

The committee of consuls will make their own reports to their respective Governments, and thus, it is presumed. Europe will have a correct report of the truth of the matter, at the same time that the Turkish Government will fear to make its investigation a mere sham, as has been the case on former similar occasions. The Government will, in fact, be on trial, and the course to be taken by the European Governments will be decided on when the facts are fully known. It may be presumed that the Governments thus taking part in the investigation will take decisive measures to ensure the Armenians against future Turkish oppression, or that if they show any disinclination to act, public opinion will force them to do so.

It is asserted by the officers of the Armenian Patriotic Association that the Powers have already given one great advantage to the Turks by the delays which have so far occurred in prosecuting the investigation, as the country is now covered with snow, or will be before the arrival of the consuls at the spot, so that it will be impossible for them to see for themselves the traces of the outrages in all their horrid reality. The dead bodies and the blood which has been shed will be buried under the snow. For this delay the Powers taking part in the investigation are blamed; but the Armenians say that if their grievances are not redressed by the Powers acting in concert, they will appeal to Russia to act alone and deliver them from the Turks.

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The case is rendered more complicated from the fact that news has been received by Armenian refugees at Athens to the effect that new atrocities have been committed by Bakir Pasha, the Kurd Governor of Van, who on November 11 led his troops to attack two additional Armenian villages in the district of Erdejki and laid them in ruins. Similar excesses to those already committed were also perpetrated on this occasion, and one hundred and twenty six peasants were maltreated and imprisoned at Van on pretence that they were insurgents.

THE ORIENTAL CHURCH.

Among the decisions arrived at by the Conferences held at Rome to consider the question of the Eastern and Western Churches, there are several which it is hoped will convince the schismatical Orientals that it is not the desire of the Pope to Latinize the East, or to abolish the Oriental rites used in the celebration of the holy offices of the Church. It is one of the objections made by the Orientals against reunion, that the Pope aims at abolishing their rites, and Latinizing the wnole Church. It is not merely for the purpose of convincing them that their fears are groundless that these decisions have been reached, but rather for the purpose of preserving the ancient rites which, though differing from the Latin, attest the perpetuity of the one faith handed down from the Apostolic age amid all the diversities of race and and the wrong of prize-fighting which language. With such a grand object