

teeth." Mr. E. Crossley suggests as the origin of the word "humbug" the Irish "uim-beg," pronounced "um-bug," literally "soft-copper" or "worthless money." James II. issued from the Dublin Mint a mixture of lead, copper, and brass, so worthless that a sovereign was intrinsically worth only two pence, and might have been bought after the revaluation for a halfpenny. Sterling and um-bug were therefore expressions of real and fictitious worth—merit and humbug.

PRESTER JOHN.—During the middle ages, much was written concerning a prince, called Priest John. An active controversy was carried on respecting his origin, his native place, his religion. He was thought to be a Christian, but tainted with heresy. The truth is that the Tartar chief of the Keraites tribe, dwelling near the desert of Gobi, had been converted to the faith by the Nestorians driven from China. The name of John given him was a corruption of *Khan*, the title borne by all Tartar princes; hence the never-ending life of Prince John. They spoke of him during two centuries as if he had been immortal. He had not the character of a priest, but had usurped the title, as the Pagan emperors, who caused themselves to be called Supreme Pontiffs.—'Annals of the Holy Childhood.'

WONDERS OF INSECT LIFE.—So varied and wonderful are these beings in their operations that an author has described them under the following heads: architects, masons, upholsterers, papermakers, joiners, paste-board makers, hydraulic engineers. Some dislike work, and are veritable pirates, being always engaged in war or pillage; others are of immense size—five and six inches long; then they are formed so small as only to be seen by the aid of the magnifying glass. Some appear exactly like the leaves of trees, so that they deceive the very birds while moving on the ground, they look so like animated leaves. Their brilliancy is such that they can only be compared to the most beautiful jewels. The purest gold and silver glisten on their wings and corsages; their tints mingle and imperceptibly shade into each other. Many of them—such as the "Buprestidæ" and "Carabi"—are used in India and China as trinkets for women. The wonderful organisation of the sting of a gnat is well worth describing. The weapon with which the insect makes its attack is a long and slender proboscis, which projects from the mouth, like a very fine bristle, appearing to the naked eye quite simple. Under the magnifying glass, however, it is seen to be a flexible sheath inclosing six distinct pieces: two of these are cutting blades or lancets, two are notched like a saw with reverted teeth, and of the remaining two, one is a tubular canal, and the other—the central one—has an excessively fine point, which is tubular. The way the gnat brings this formidable compound weapon into operation is as follows. The tip of the weapon with the sheath is brought to press upon the skin into which it presently enters, the sheath remaining without and bending into an angle as the lancets descend. When the weapon has penetrated to its base, a distance of one-sixth of an inch or more, the lancets move laterally, the saws moving up and down at the same time, and thus cut the flesh on either side, producing a flow of blood; at the same time an irritant fluid is poured into the wound, which, by diluting the blood, renders it more capable of flowing up the central tube into the throat of the insect. It then sucks to repletion, if undisturbed, and leaves a painful tumour accompanied with an intolerable itching.

THE SAME OLD CHURCH.—The Church is not only one and unchanging from age to age in her doctrine, spirit, sacraments, and morals, but she is unchanging in the opposition to her from without. Her Founder was slandered first, and delivered to death next, and time has shown that the disciple is not above his Master. There are many bodies professing to be Christian. The Catholic Church is the only one that has the opposition of all. The pagans of China and Japan make martyrs of her priests and faithful lay people; the crowned heads of Europe unite to oppress her; the wild beast brood of atheistic communists—Garibaldi's mob—cry "crucify!" The power of Satan which unites these jarring elements of hate, as well as the power of Jesus Christ which resists and shatters them, seems to us an open manifestation of the supernatural.—'Columbian.'

DAILY LIFE OF THE POPE.—The daily life of the Pope is thus sketched by an Italian paper:—His Holiness is stirring at 5.30 a.m., and by 7 o'clock he enters the private chapel, where he celebrates one Mass and hears another. After chapel he has his early breakfast. By 9 o'clock the Pope is always to be found sitting in his arm chair under his canopy, before a large writing table, on which stands a crucifix and an Immaculate Conception, besides papers, and an inkstand. Then comes Cardinal Antonelli, who communicates despatches, receives instructions, collects the pious oblations of the preceding day, and withdraws in half-an-hour, with his hands full of gold and bank notes. Then arrives the post, with letters and papers. A prelate, on service, opens and reads the letters; some journals the Pope glances over himself with his eyeglass. The audiences follow, but last until noon only. The Pope takes a little exercise in the long galleries until dinner time. The pontifical dinner hour is about 2 o'clock, after which he retires for the afternoon *siesta* of two hours.

A correspondent of the 'New York World' has been visiting Keeley—he of the wonderful motor—and says that his workshop was strewn with broken models and pieces of machinery twisted as though a Titan had played with them. Being asked what force curled up iron in this way, Keeley recited the familiar phrases, "latent power in water," "multiplication of force," "generation of vapor." Keeley is forty-five years old. From boyhood he has had an affinity for mechanics. At twelve he made a steam engine; at fourteen he made another; then he became a clerk in a drug store, then a locomotive engineer, and then a gymnast. He has been blown into the water from a steamboat, has made two balloon ascensions, lived out West in Minnesota, been a rover, a troubadour, a restless seeker after something new and strange. He will toss a cigar to the ceiling and catch the right end in his teeth, fling across the yard a weight that would

break the backs of three ordinary men, vault a fence, and is, in fact, a queer fellow. He may be the greatest discoverer, or the greatest crackbrain of the time.

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MISSING FRIENDS.

INFORMATION wanted of Mrs. MARY CULITY, maiden name Mary Lyons, who left London in 1865, for Auckland, N.Z. When last heard of she was living in Auckland (about a year since), in which city her husband died. Any information concerning her, by which her present address may be traced, will be thankfully received if forwarded to this office; or to Mr. Patrick O'Brien, No. 2, Chapman place, Chapman street, Charleston, Massachusetts, United States.

INFORMATION wanted of Mrs. MARY JONSON, maiden name Mary Wadden, native of Coolross, Parish of Durrah, Lower Ormand, County Tipperary, Ireland. Any information concerning her will be thankfully received by Mrs. Sherlock, Westport. Letters from home await her.

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Branches are established at Invercargill, Lawrence, Dunedin, Naseby, Oamaru, Christchurch, Greyouth, Charleston, Addisons, Brighton, Greenstone, Waimea, Hokitika, Wellington, Reefton, Onehunga, Otahuhu Auckland, Napier, Akaroa, Lyttelton, Grahamstown and Nelsons.