

Marly, more than four years since, he had told her he would grant any boon she at any time wished to ask of him.

I shall not say what boon she meant to ask; but her thoughts must be thus construed into words.

"I shall go to Paris, and then inquire where the King holds his court. If I can get speech of Madame de Maintenon I will, because the king will refuse her no favor she asks of him, though he has already passed his word to me to grant whatever boon I solicit. I shall then go to St. Germain. How surprised they will all be to see me again; and *he*, to whom I have been so long betrothed, what will *he* say when I give him the message I am sure to take him from King Louis?"

Do not blame her, too, that when her soliloquy was ended, her tears fell to the memory of Queen Mary. How little did she think that the queen, on that morning her hand had traced those lines, was thinking how she should at least remedy one wrong. She had decided on speaking to her husband, as it were, from the grave. Thus she secured to Florence her property, as well as her freedom. Probably when she begged her so earnestly to give the king the paper the day after her death, the thought may have occurred to her that permission would be refused if time were allowed to pass over, so as for the wound occasioned by her loss to heal up before the request was made.

There was no small surprise evinced by the ladies of the court at the departure of Florence; but with persons of greater importance, even as with Mary herself, she speedily passed out of the minds of those amongst whom she had moved.

Half fearing to put herself in the way of the king, and yet not liking to leave the palace without craving an audience, she begged one of the ladies in attendance on the Princess Anne to ask if she might have an interview with him. The king's boorish and uncouth message was worthy of himself—

"Tell her I do not want to see her."

### FETICH WORSHIP.

THE waters of a spring, the fruit of a tree, even the milk of a cow may be "tricked" for one person alone, and while they bring death to him, all others may use them with impunity. The fetich buried beneath his doorstep may nail the destined victim to his chair with paralysis, while his wife and children pass in and out over it in perfect safety. These misguided people place no limits to its power, except, indeed, that of distance, it cannot follow its object to another State. In the days of slavery men and women were known to beseech their owners, in mercy, to sell them away from home and kindred, as the only chance of escape from the doom which they were fully persuaded was before them. It is hard to tell what they will not believe of this terrible bugaboo. A colored woman, by no means lacking in natural intelligence, and even able to read a little, came to the writer one day during the past year, with a marvellous story of sickness and cure. A female friend who had suffered untold agonies from some mysterious disease, for which regular physicians could afford no relief, had at last applied to a "conjur" doctor. He had pronounced her "tricked," and had given her two remedies, to be employed conjointly—some pills, to be taken internally, and an ointment to be rubbed on the pit of the stomach, the seat of the greatest pain. After making use of these for a few days the patient was seized with violent nausea, and vomited a quart of hairy worms, receiving immediate relief. "Now," added my informant, triumphantly, "how dem worrums git thar, ef somebody didn' put em thar?" "M—," I said, mildly, "do you think that can be so?" "Well, my missis," was the answer, "I can't 'clar to it, 'cause I nudder see it mysef, but de ooman that tole me is a member ov de church, and I know she warnter gwine tell me no lie 'bout it.

Fetich worship has disappeared before the light of Christianity, and is now unknown, except, perhaps, in the swamps of the Far South, whence malaria banishes the white man, and where the negro flourishes in a state of semi-barbarism. Voudou charms or fetiches ("conjur bags," as most of the negroes call them) are, however, in much demand as talismans against evil. It is considered as essential to their efficacy that their possession should be kept secret, the mystery constituting part of the virtue of the charm. A friend of the writer was one night on a railroad train, when the engineer, in rounding a sudden curve, saw the body of a man lying on the track directly in front of the engine. To whistle down brakes and reverse the engine was the work of a moment, but it was done too late to save the poor fellow's life. He was found to be a negro, and the empty whisky bottle by his side told the story. Hidden in the bosom of his shirt, and hung to his neck, by a dirty string, was one of these little Voudou charms which, despite the wearer's faith in it, had proved inadequate to save him from destruction. Those who pursue the practice of Voudou—not the doctors whose trade it is to counteract its influence, and who must not be confounded with the witches themselves—are regarded as given over to the devil. When one of them dies his body and his grave are regarded with superstitious awe, and fearful tales are told of how the fiend has been seen by the terrified watchers to come in person to claim his prey at the death-bed, beside which none but church members with unusual claims for piety dare to keep vigil. Among the educated negroes this superstition is gradually dying out, yet its hold upon the race is deep and strong. Two hundred years ago witches were burned at Salem. Remembering this, one may not despair of the power of education and religion to cope with the negro giant Voudou.—N. Y. Tribune.

THE petroleum well discovered recently by a saloon-keeper of Urbana, Ohio, has been closed up on the advice of scientific authorities, who, after a full examination, concluded that a large pool of petroleum lies in immediate proximity, and, as it is in the centre of the city, would endanger the safety of the city by fire.

### THE SIGNATURE OF THE CROSS.

THE mark which persons who are unable to write are required to make instead of their signatures, is in the form of a cross; and this practice, having formerly been followed by kings and nobles, is constantly referred to as an instance of the ignorance of ancient times. This signature is not, however, invariably a proof of such ignorance. Anciently the use of the mark was not confined to illiterate persons; for among the Saxons the mark of the cross, as an attestation of the good faith of the person signing, was required to be attached to the signature of those who could write. In those times, if a man could write, or even read, his knowledge was considered proof presumptive that he was in holy orders. The clericus, or clerk, was synonymous with penman, and the laity, or people who were not clerks, did not feel any urgent necessity for the use of letters. The ancient use of the cross was therefore universal, alike by those who could, and those who could not write; it was indeed the symbol of an oath, from its sacred associations, as well as the mark generally adopted. Hence the origin of the expression, "God save the mark," as a form of ejaculation approaching the character of an oath.

### CARDINAL MANNING ON CATHOLIC PROSPECTS.

HIS Eminence the Cardinal, replying to an address of congratulation presented to him by the Catholic Association of Bolton, recently said he believed that within the last few years, and more especially within the last twelve months, the people of England had become convinced of the error of regarding the Catholic Church as an antagonist, and that they no longer looked upon her as an enemy, an invader, or a conspirator. Ultramontane conspiracies were now classed with Mother Hubbard's fables. All the classes of the population were coming to be persuaded that the mission of the Catholic Church in England was one of faith and piety, and that her pastors were makers of peace. He asked for nothing in this world to aid him in preaching the Catholic faith except that for which all Englishmen professed a desire—a fair field and no favor. If the Catholic Church extended in England by its own native force—if, by the power of intellectual conviction, and the power of charitable persuasion, and the grace of Almighty God, it should spread its supernatural unity and gather the multitude into one fold—he hoped they would lay aside all feelings of animosity against the poor pastors who, laboring in poverty, had achieved that success.

### LIFE AMONG THE VIRGINIAN NEGROES.

#### POISONS AND MEDICINES.

THAT the ignorant negroes poison each other few people acquainted with the lower grades of the race can doubt. Indeed, a colored "doctor" is now serving out a term in the Virginia Penitentiary under sentence for poisoning a negro woman. Many of them have knowledge of the properties of every tree and plant, leaf and root, found in their native fields and forests. From these they distil healing balms or deadly poisons. I have known a violent sprain cured in a day by a lotion prepared by an old negro woman, who refused to tell the secret of its composition, and a severe cold disappear like magic before a dose of a bitter black tea whereof the patient knew nothing save that it "was made out of a root," the sole information the giver designed to vouchsafe. One of their poisons is distilled from the Jamestown weed; another from the deadly nightshade; yet another is common green glass beaten fine and sifted through muslin. This is administered in food or drink, and the finy particles, working their way into the intestines, cause inflammation and lingering death. Most of the deaths from Voudou are, however, the result of sheer imagination, and the story told by Abercrombie of the Scottish student who, while in perfect health, was rendered ill simply by imagining himself so, finds a frequent parallel among this race. They believe fully in the power of the evil eye, and it is only necessary to convince one of them that its baleful influence is upon him to produce all its accredited effects. Not to every negro is given skill in Voudou, and if one not so gifted desires to bewitch his neighbor he must seek a Voudou man or woman for the purpose. The wise one will perhaps give him a mixture wherewith to anoint his enemy's tools or door-sill; perhaps a packet to bury under his doorstep or in his daily path; perhaps, surer still, a subtle poison acting by slow degrees. Of the poison an idea has already been given. The ointment is probably a mixture rivalling the witches' cauldron in Macbeth. "Eye of newt and toe of frog." The packet may contain a "bloody hand," done on white paper, in the blood of some animal, or a charcoal sketch supposed to represent the victim. This is wrapped around a dead toad, a snake's head, lizard, or some such reptile, to which is added a little earth from a graveyard and anything from the person of the victim that can be obtained—such as a lock of hair, nail clippings, or a fragment of clothing. This constitutes the magic employed, and the negro who believes himself the object of such arts may be left to his own fears for the rest. There is many a grave in the South which has been filled by just such agency. He who is fully convinced that the Angel of Death is upon his track has a short lease of life, and strong men "Fade away like snow when it is thaw," under the power of this fearful superstition. They shudder in its grasp; they scarcely dare speak of it, and they yield themselves its victims with the apathy of despair. White men are impatient of their belief in it; to us it seems so childish, so wholly incredible; but to them it is the inheritance of their African origin, to which they have clung through all these years, guarding it from the ridicule of the whites as the devotee guards his religion. Argue with them about it and you receive the answer, "White folks don' b'lieve in these things, but they kills colored folks all de same," and your arguments fall on deaf ears.