

concluded that the failure to reply was due to inability to reply satisfactorily."

WHY IS HE A  
HEATHEN.

WONG CHING FOO, a native of China, (says the *Boston Pilot*) undertakes to answer, in the *North American Review* for August, the question, "Why am I a Heathen?" He says that when he was about

seventeen years old he came to this country and was tempted to become a Christian, but for reasons which he considered sufficient he decided to remain a heathen. He presents a picture of the happiness and the virtues of his countrymen at home which is not borne out by the testimony either of foreign missionaries or of disinterested travellers. In this he betrays an Oriental aptness in special pleading; but when he touches upon the relations of China with the Christian powers he makes out a case which should cause Christendom to blush for shame. Speaking of one episode he says: "When the Englishman wanted the Chinaman's gold and trade, they said they 'wanted to open China to their missionaries.' And opium was the chief, in fact only, missionary they looked after when they forced the ports open. And this infamous Christian introduction among Chinamen has done more injury, social and moral, in China than all the humanitarian agencies of Christianity could remedy in two hundred years. And on you, Christians, and on your greed of gold, we lay the burden of crime resulting of tens of millions of honest, useful men and women sent thereby to premature death after a short miserable life, besides the physical and moral prostration it entails even when it does not prematurely kill! And this great national curse was thrust upon us at the points of Christian bayonets. And you wonder why we are heathen!" The heathen does not exaggerate the infamy of England's opium war on the unoffending people of China. General James H. Wilson, in his excellent work on China, just published, details the whole shameful story. The Chinese Government did its utmost to suppress the damnable traffic, but the English sent a fleet, slow and plundered the helpless people, and extorted an indemnity of 21,000,000 as their butchers' bill. The countrymen of Wong Chin Foo are not to be blamed for confounding the iniquity of England with the Christianity which England so loudly professes; for even an American officer (he naturally became a traitor to his country afterwards), without any justification, in 1859 helped the English to murder the Chinamen and gave utterance to the words which have since become the shibboleth of Anglomaniacs, "Blood is thicker than water." But genuine Christianity is not to be held responsible for the pharisaism which masquerades in its name; and Wong Chin Foo has lived long enough in America to know that the English practice of prostituting the name of religion to the interest of trade has not been among our national faults. And when this rather smart heathen tells us how much more virtuous and happy and law-abiding are his countrymen than the Christians of America, we can only wonder why they are so very, very anxious to come here, and why, when they have come, they so unanimously forget to bring some of their native virtue in their baggage.

A GREAT  
SPEECH.

ONE of the finest speeches delivered lately, or perhaps during the whole course of his Irish campaign by Mr. Gladstone was that which he made on July 29, at the meeting of the Council of the Liberal

and Radical Union in Farringdon street, London. Here Mr. Gladstone stood as it were face to face with the people of the 'city, who had returned a large majority of members in opposition to him, and he made the most of the opportunity of explaining to them his position and the facts of the cause he was championing. With consummate art he began his speech by an appeal to the sympathies of his hearers as sharers in a common interest with the Irish nation, and as themselves, though constituting the very heart of the great British Empire being as sorely in need of a system of local government as was the despised dependency whose fate it was so much in their power to influence. The friends of monopoly and privilege, he pointed out, would moreover, be those to resist the cause of London's interests, as they were now the men who opposed the interests of Ireland. The most striking portions, however, of Mr. Gladstone's speech were those perhaps, in which he dealt with the dissentient Liberals and tracing their history in the past, exposed their present position. These were the men, he said, who were described by Mr. Bright in 1866 as inhabiting the Cave of Adullam, and who, later on, had their share in the jingoism that prevailed. There were among them some of those who destroyed the Reform Bill of 1866, who brought in the Tories and caused the destruction of the Government of reform. The idea had been, said the speaker, that these Liberals would continue Liberal in everything but that which related to the cause of Home Rule.—But they had proved themselves to be simply a more efficient wing of the Tory party than they would have been, had they openly joined the ranks in question.—Lord Hartington had exhorted the Liberals at Spalding to support the Tory candidate, and Mr. Chamberlain had done the same with regard to the election for Coventry.—Lord Hartington's explanation, again, that by remaining on the Liberal benches, he would do

more good to the Government than if he took office simply meant that he would thus do more harm to Liberalism. Mr. Gladstone spoke in a most cheerful tone, and with a buoyancy and light heartedness that might have been remarkable in a man much less advanced in life, and bearing none of the scars of a great, and what had been regarded as a completely crushing, defeat. We can well understand, indeed, the readiness with which he accredited that Conservative lady friend of his, who, on being reminded by him that the fact of his having been completely extinguished should have removed all Lord Salisbury's fears as to the results of a dissolution, replied "Yes, but you are popping up again."—There does, indeed, appear to be an elasticity in this Great Old Man that cannot be repressed. Mr. Gladstone's spirits, however, had been justly raised by the returns of the recent by-elections,—and, since his speech, was made, that for the Northwich division of Cheshire has occurred to confirm all his hopeful predictions, in a still stronger manner. The concession granted, besides, by Lord Salisbury to his fears of a dissolution in the matter of the revision of judicial rents had just taken place—and gave good cause for the brilliant castigation it received. Our readers will remember that the rents in question, as Mr. Gladstone also explained, were those that had been judicially fixed for a period of 15 years, but which a more recent fall in prices had made exorbitant. The Tories had excluded these from the relief proposed by their Land Bill, and, above all, had vigorously opposed the Land Bill demanded by Mr. Parnell in September, 1886, in which their revision was included, declaring that no circumstances whatever could justify any such revision, and that these rents must stand unless all that was honourable, and just, and holy must utterly perish. But what actually happened? "It was simply due," said Mr. Gladstone, "to the process familiarly described as the counting of noses. (Laughter.) Lord Salisbury counted noses in the House of Commons. Having so done, he found that if he had adhered to these provisions he might be beaten. He assembled his friends at the Carlton, and said, 'I give you the choice, and it is for you to take it. On the one hand, the abandonment of that which we have been invoking all the gods as to our determination to observe, and on the other hand the dissolution of Parliament.'—And they chose, as their leader desired, that which was not the dissolution of Parliament. Mr. Gladstone, therefore, had reason to speak with lightness of heart and all the buoyancy of certain hope. His opponents were at his mercy before an audience in whose power their ultimate destiny lay very largely, and whose interests, as he plainly showed, demanded their fall. It was an easy task for him to unveil their dishonesty to a city and a country, one of whose most cherished qualities is an appreciation of that which is honest and a contempt and hatred, as well as a distrust, for deceit. The voice of the people had been recently heard pronouncing strongly again and again in his favour, and his great opponent had turned at the head of his party, and led the way over a path where he had sworn that neither he nor they would ever set a foot—because he feared to meet the verdict of the nation. All the circumstances, therefore, were favourable to the speaker, and full of encouragement and hope for him.

THE  
FERRY-BERT  
HARVEST.

THE statistics recently published in France by the Minister of Justice throw a very sinister light on the progress of civilisation under the Republic. The very figures, indeed, which might seem to the superficial or uninformed observer to show some traces of improvement may be reasonably understood as adding to the gravity of the sum total. The figures we allude to are those relating to the offences which are technically known as "contraventions," and which are of a light and trifling character. These show a diminution for the nine years ending with 1885; but as this is most probably to be accounted for by the decreased vigilance of the police it may reflect unfavourably on the detection of heavier crime and go to show that the record would have been still more gloomy but for a similar neglect. The record, nevertheless, is of sufficient gravity as it is, and proves an increase that may be regarded as most alarming for the unfortunate country concerned, and, in fact, for the whole of Europe over whose condition that of France must always exercise a certain influence. Nay, even we ourselves in these colonies are concerned at learning that an enormous increase has taken place in the number of criminals reconvicted. The recidivists with whose neighbourhood we are threatened are evidently growing rapidly in numbers, and who shall say how the consequences may not affect the future of this hemisphere. Homicide, including wilful murder, has increased largely, and suicide almost beyond all bounds. The Minister, moreover, adds the comforting suggestion that the table of suicides might be augmented were it not for the concealment of numerous cases as those of death by natural means.—It is not, however, only by its returns of direct crime that France presents a melancholy picture to the world. Something of this is also to be seen, for example, in the fact alluded to by the Minister as accounting in some degree for the large number of murders, that is, the readiness with which juries find the criminal excused by extenuating circumstances. And, although, perhaps, this may be partly explained