

Napier 'code of morals,' that like Bonnie Prince Charlie, is so lang a-comin'? But no-matter what agnostic or materialistic or atheistic 'moral' standard our northern contemporary may have 'in petto' (or locked and jealously guarded within its bosom), it can have no sanction or binding power beyond what mere brute force can give it.

Johnson put this idea in his own sturdy way when Boswell mentioned to him the name of 'a distinguished friend of ours' who 'had not the least notion of immortality.' Here is how Boswell records the incident:

Johnson: "Sir, if it were not for the notion of immortality, he would cut a throat to fill his pockets." When I quoted this to Beauclerk—who knew much more of the gentleman than we did—he said in his acid manner; "He would cut a throat to fill his pockets, if it were not for fear of being hanged."

The Christian 'code of morals' is based upon an unchanging and absolute standard, and its ultimate motive is the love of an infinitely perfect Being, Who is the Creator of all things. The agnostic 'code of morals' is an unstable, weathercock convention. Its ultimate motive is the fear of the hangman. Are we right in our surmise (it is only a surmise) that the 'Telegraph's' missing 'code of morals' is based upon the shallow Monism of Ingersoll—or, say, of Haeckel? If this be so, our Napier contemporary cannot consistently either commend or condemn any act of ours. For the system that we refer to utterly destroys all distinction between right and wrong, good and evil, truth and falsehood. It makes Jack the Ripper as good a citizen as Father Damien, Nero neither worse nor better than 'Good King Edward,' and places Deeming on as high a moral plane as Howard the Philanthropist. For (according to this hypothesis) all were equally bereft of free-will, all were alike the mere puppets of material forces, blindly and unavoidably believing and doing what it was predetermined they should believe and do. And, in any event, on what standard, or by what right, does the Napier 'Telegraph' presume to dictate a 'code' to fetter the actions and bind the consciences of people who do not recognise its competency as a teacher of morals—or even of plain Queen's English?

'Vain War with Heav'n'

There is no mistaking the diabolical temper and intent of the men who are carrying on the war against religion in France. It is not a 'jehad' or fanatical crusade against Catholicism as such, nor against Protestantism as such. The banded legions of the dark-lantern lodges are

'Insatiate to pursue
Vain war with heaven'

itself and God. In the course of a preface to a recently published work ('Le Satanisme et la Magie') the distinguished author, J. K. Huysmans, gives a hideous anthology of the anti-Christian crusade in France. Here are two quotations in point. The first is from a speech delivered by M. de Lanessan on June 18, 1905. 'The danger,' said this political fire-eater, 'is not clericalism, but God Himself, Who is absolutely infamous.' M. Aristide Briand is another standard-bearer in the war against the Almighty. Said he at Poitiers at the beginning of the present year: "We have driven God (nous avons chassé Dieu) out of the army, the navy, the schools, the hospitals, the mad-houses, the asylums, the law-courts, the wayside; and now we must kick Him out of the State altogether. He is infamous—even more so than Christ.' Yet in a recent issue of an Australian non-Catholic religious publication (the 'Messenger'—not the 'Messenger of the S.H.') a Christian clergyman apparently finds solace in the war against religion in France, as in part a set-off to the rapid expansion of the Catholic Church in Australia!

Italy, America, and Austria also supply the comfort—of bogus 'statistics' and of fables that have time

and again had the searchlight turned upon them in our editorial and news columns. "Rather cold and distant comfort," says the 'Tribune'; 'but it is the best he can afford.' In the United States (continues our Melbourne contemporary) the "Messenger," and other unconvincing preachers of the Roman downfall, try to cheer the spirits of their readers—depressed by the joyous swing of the Catholic advance in the Republic—by representing Catholicism in Australia as practically extinct. And so everywhere. The local progress cannot be denied, and must be offset by more or less imaginary decay in far-off foreign lands. There are in this connection, as a matter of fact, two distinct Popery schools. There are those who hold that 'Romanism' has the death-rattles in its throat and its coffin at the door. And there are those who keep vociferating that it is over-running the earth, that 'the reformed religion is in danger,' and that, to save it from impending ruin, the opponents of 'the Scarlet Woman' must urgently band themselves together in leagues and unions and 'defence' associations. One is generally safe in discounting estimates that are based either on scare or on pooh-pooh. Both sets of extremists mentioned above distort facts—the pooh-pooh party by what oculists term hour-glass distortion, the others by barrel-distortion. Well over a century ago, Doddridge wrote in England; 'The growth of Popery gives a general and just alarm.' Later on, Gibson thought it necessary to write his 'Preservation against Popery.' And when ladies began to wear Capuchin cloaks, was not the fashion (as Lecky shows) denounced because it was supposed to teach men 'to view the cowl not alone with patience, but with complacency'? And what is the cry that we hear on a hundred platforms when the annual access of hysteria seizes the Saffron Sashes in July? The encroachments of 'Rome'! 'Rome's advance seizes the brethren and shakes them till it shivers their timbers. And to what end is the non-Catholic religious press packed with warnings against 'Rome'? And are the myriad forms of anti-papal book and pamphlet and leaflet literature that come tumbling out of the press, printed and distributed merely for 'divarshun'? And why all those expensive 'missions to Romanists,' if the Reformed denominations have only to wait a little for the converts to drop to them of their own accord, like ripened pippins into open mouths? Is not all this effort and expenditure a woeful waste, on the supposition that 'Rome' is shrivelling up of her own accord? And what about the cry as to the widespread decline of dogmatic Christianity, and of belief in the Bible as an inspired record, not alone among the laity, but even among the clergy of the Reformed creeds? And why so many sermons and articles and symposiums among them on that fertile theme: 'Why people do not go to church?' With Catholics this is not a live problem. Are not those forebodings of 'Rome's' downfall dictated, in their last analysis, by the feeling that prompted the tailless fox to wish to see all other foxes without tails?

The writer in the 'Messenger' belongs to the pooh-pooh school. Only—he has sense enough not to bang his head against massive facts that are looking right into his eye-balls. He is less cautious in regard to facts that are too far off, to bump against him. A great English statesman gave up his life denouncing the employment of savage Indians against white men in North America. And is it not a strange sort of Christianity that, in effect, welcomes still more savage atheism as an ally in a crusade against the great faith of Christendom? Well, religious envy, like poverty, makes queer bedfellows. It cloaks itself full many a time under the disguise of zeal for religion. But that is the nature of the vice. It is (according to La Rochefoucauld) the most timid and shamefaced of all the passions. Few people dare to avow it. But oftentimes it glowers between the lines—like the face of a Bill Sikes behind his prison-bars.

DON'T be misled by coupons and gee-gaws! There's 1s 10d worth of Tea in every pound of Cook o' the North.

THERE'S as much difference in Teas as in human nature. The best is Hondai Lanka; it's genuine and trustworthy.