

held co-responsible, and was made amenable for the fines and the whole expenses of the law suit. The parties appealed to the higher court at Lucca; but the court of appeal confirmed the sentence of the lower court. This punishment is exemplary, but it will not stop the tribe of scribbling calumniators. The demand for their stuff exists, and they will go on satisfying it. This sentence will make some of their more cautious and more vague in their attacks; but not less malicious, virulent, and active. The business, nasty though it is, pays. The calumniator has his public. Extraordinary the density of the cloud of prejudice and bigotry inherited from the strifes and controversies of 200 and 300 years ago. Time and men of learning and fair minds are doing something to enlighten those dark places; but how slowly.

Father Ohrwalder.

News has come to hand of the death of the famous African missionary, Pere Ohrwalder of the congregation of the Sacred Heart. Pere Ohrwalder was born in the Tyrol in 1856. In 1875 he entered the congregation of the Sacred Heart at Verona in Italy; when ordained in 1879 he was sent to Cairo in Egypt. He was soon taken prisoner by that fierce fanatic the Mahdi and conducted to Omdurman, the Mahdi's capital, where he was kept for ten years. During these years of captivity the young missionary was subjected to very rough treatment, but the worst of it was witnessing the atrocious tortures inflicted on the prisoners carried home of the Mahdi. Repeated efforts were made by his superiors to release Pere Ohrwalder, the Emperor of Austria supplying money several times for the purpose, but all failed until October, 1891, when the prisoner succeeded in escaping disguised as an Arab merchant. Broken down in health he returned to Verona to recruit. He spent his leisure time writing his book, *The Revolution and Empire of the Mahdi*—the best and fullest account we have of the transactions of that Mahomedan fanatic. On the completion of his book Father Ohrwalder returned to Egypt, and spent his life in that very Omdurman—now under British protection—where he had spent so many years in captivity. He died recently at Khartoum. May his soul rest in peace. He was a hero, one of those glories of our poor fallen race; one of those who show that aided by heavenly grace, our sin-smitten humanity is still capable of mighty things; one of that wondrous class of men, the foreign missionaries of the Catholic Church, who literally leave father and mother, home and country, and all things to bring the light of the faith and the blessings of Christian civilisation even to barbarians lying in wait in their deserts and jungles to spring upon them, imprison them, torture them, and slay them.

#### Sunday Church-Attendance in Germany.

There is a body of free-thinkers in Germany who call themselves 'Confessionslos.' They hold that the vast majority of the German people is like themselves—free-thinking, agnostic, even atheistic, and that the country should declare itself such and cease keeping up a pretence of religion—a pure sham. With a view to show how few have any practical devotion to Churches and religion these people made a census of church attendance on Trinity Sunday in three large industrial German cities—Berlin, Nuremberg in Bavaria, and Chemnitz in Saxony. Of the 1,700,000 so-called Protestants in Berlin only 11,252 attended the mid-day or principal service on last Trinity Sunday. At one of the most beautiful of the Berlin Protestant churches the census-takers counted at the principal service six men and 28 women! The choir was more numerous than the congregation; but the choir was paid to attend. It was noticed that the members of the choir and the sacristans left the church during the sermon, and walked up and down outside until it was finished. Mayhap the preacher was a very poor one? It is a heavy trial on one's religious staying powers to listen to some preachers for even twenty or thirty minutes. The poverty of present-day preaching in both Protestant and Catholic churches is not taken sufficiently into account when people are calculating our modern

church-emptying forces. No one cares to hear, a second time, an ill-prepared, platitudinous preacher trying to get through his half-hour, trying to keep on through the appointed time saying something. Well, at Nuremberg there are about 300,000 Protestants, but only 7597 were counted in its fifteen Protestant churches. At Chemnitz, also a city of 300,000 Protestant inhabitants, only 2248 attended church on Trinity Sunday. The debacle of German Protestantism is symbolised by these figures. It is quite unnecessary to state the well-known fact that the Catholic churches of Germany are full on Sundays, and that in many places—where Catholicity is strong—most of the people attend Mass on week days—in some places the whole congregation. But then our free-thinking census-takers do not take the Catholics into account; they do not belong to the great army of progress and advancing civilisation; they, poor people, have their heads still in the murky clouds of the Dark Ages! Hopeless obscurantists, they can be left out of a census made to show that the German people have ceased to be Christians, and are really agnostics, Haeckelists, and atheists—hastening on to the age of communism, collectivism, general comfort, universal sensuality, the higher civilisation, and the 'superman.'

Another sign of the times in Germany comes from the little country town of Gera. The *Monistische Jahrhundert* reports that the Monists or Haeckelites and the Protestant modernists of the town have petitioned the city fathers to remove Christian dogmatic teaching from the public schools, and to replace it with non-dogmatic, scientific, moral teaching. They say it is not fair that the vast body of parents, who have already openly abandoned the official Lutheran Church, should be compelled to send their children to schools where the teaching of Lutheranism is obligatory. Just fancy this state of things! Luther brought these people his 'gospel of liberty'; no necessity any more for prayers and penances and good works; salvation by sentiment or faith alone; all the glories of heaven with the least effort imaginable and all the blessings on earth by his glorious reformation! And now they will not hear of him; they kick out his blessed 'gospel' and bring in something they call 'undogmatic, scientific, ethic'! Verily there is no such thing as gratitude left in the hearts of these creatures! No, even though they claim to be nearing the altruistic, all-in-common, every-man-for-his-neighbor stage of civilisation. There is Fichtian antinomy somewhere.

#### La Consolation de l'Alcoolisme.

One of the candidates in the recent elections for Caen was M. Picard, a big wine and spirit merchant. He has had the support of the radical influence. I read in the radical newspaper *La Guerre Sociale* that M. Picard, in his election address, declared: 'We must not deny the workman and his children the consolation of alcoholism.' So in the intention of Picard and the radicals, like the public schools, alcoholism should be made *laïque et obligatoire*. This is quite natural and logical. They have suppressed, as far as they can, for the poor workman and his children, the consolations of religion. They must supply some substitute. The chief substitute they have got is M. Picard's—the consolations of alcoholism. Excellent substitute! In order to keep the working man quiet, ancient Roman pagan society gave him *panem et circenses*—victuals and sports. In order to keep him quiet, modern French paganised society would supply him with the licensed bagnio and the consolations of alcohol. We are making for the golden age of the higher civilisation.

#### The Passing Away of Bebel.

August Bebel, perhaps the most influential leader amongst German socialists, died at Zurich on August 13 last. The Berlin socialist organ *Vorwaerts* says of him: 'None of the chiefs of social democracy has so possessed the hearts of the masses. This popular enthusiasm was always shown him at congresses and party meetings. The proletariat knew that every fibre of his heart belonged to them. Hence their confidence in him; hence the mighty influence he exercised amid the ranks of our social democrats—an influence greater

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