

light, etc., he cured her in a very few treatments, and the lump, pain, and tenderness entirely disappeared within two weeks.'

Mrs. Wilcox comes forward with a definite proposal on the matter. 'Any physician who is ready to make a positive statement that an operation is the only escape from death for a patient ought to be willing to put that statement into writing. No man or woman should submit to the knife if the physician refuses to do this. Let us present a Bill to Parliament compelling physicians to put their professional statements into writing. Those who jeopardise life should be ready to risk their professional reputation. The law should protect us from the regulars as well as from the charlatans.' The article concludes: 'Every case cited in this article is known to be true, and the names and addresses, with a score more, can be given to those who desire further proof.' Needless to say, we do not put forward Mrs. Wilcox's 'shocking examples' as necessarily or indisputably true; but we quote the article as indicating an interesting point of view, and one that is certainly worth consideration.

## OUR LETTER FROM FRANCE

Paris, September 14.

### A Parliamentary Outrage.

What could show more clearly the abnormally low state to which the Parliament of France has come than this: The members have just been wasting the nation's time and money doing what, would you think? Discussing and decreeing the official celebration of the second centenary of the birth of Diderot! What would you think, if you heard of the British House of Lords and House of Commons passing a law commanding a public official celebration of the birthday of Tom Paine or of Bradlaugh? Yet Tom Paine and Bradlaugh were decent when compared with Diderot. Diderot was a dogmatising materialist of the grossest and most pronounced type. In his books *Interpretation de la Nature*, *Lettre sur les Aveugles*, *Rêve de D'Alembert*, etc., he taught that in the universe there is nothing but matter eternally whirling and circling in a blind movement, yet the fruitful mother of all things, of all changes, of all productions—even of the ideas and highest thoughts of man, of Milton's poems as well as of the sensations of a lobster. Unlike our university agnostics and concealed professorial materialists of the 19th and 20th centuries, who cover up the hideousness of their principles with fine words, Diderot, like our street-corner socialist orators, drew out all the logical consequences of materialism in their pure nakedness. He taught that the idea of God was *le plus grand fleau de l'humanité*. He ridiculed Christianity as a system of religion, which, if honestly practised, would only make fools of men. He taught that the traditional Christian morality—the Ten Commandments—was a silly bugbear, and that the laws of Christian States were artificial inventions, the device of scoundrels and tyrants to exploit their subjects—devices unnatural and hurtful to the race because calculated to restrain the animal passions and natural instincts of men. As to female modesty, chastity, and self-restraint, Diderot taught his friend and pupil, an apt pupil she was, the infamous Catherine of Russia, that these glories of womankind were merely *vertus imaginaires*, *guenilles usées*, worn out rags, to be despised and cast away. In the filthiest terms, he recommended promiscuity of the sexes. He held up before his countrymen the Tahitians—sexually the most depraved of savages—as models of domestic life! As to law and order he said: 'Always distrust the man who speaks of law and order.' *Ni Dieu ni maître* (Neither God nor master)—the modern anarchist's motto—sums up his philosophy as to religion, morals, and society. And the Senate, the elected makers of laws, the elected guardians of order and morality, the protectors of peace and of the general good of the community, have decreed that the birthday of this man shall be cele-

brated by parliament and people with processions and laudatory speeches! Unnecessary to say that all the truly Catholic members of the House, and all decent men, vehemently opposed the passing of this decree. M. de Lamarzelle, an eloquent Catholic member, scourged with scorpions M. Martin, the proposer, and M. Henriot, the seconder of the decree. But all to no purpose; the decree was passed, and all the admirers of Diderot and his philosophy—Masons, radicals, and socialists—will go in procession to the Pantheon to lay flowers on the master's tomb! Could a nation's moral and social degradation, shown in this act of its elected representatives, descend to a lower level?

### Not Wasting Your Time.

It is not a waste of time to call your attention to this *affaire Diderot*. We must be on our guard. We must look beyond the hedge of our cabbage-garden. The doings of one nation this year may be the doings of a distant nation next year. Ideas travel now with electric rapidity. There is now really no distant nation. The telegraph and the steamship have annihilated distance. You may frown, my masters, at my recital of the gross doctrines of Diderot: you may say 'What's the use, he has been dead these 150 years?' Ah, true, but his doctrines live and they are spread around you in ten thousand papers, magazines, and books. The comrade who planes the plank beside you in the wood-factory may preach them to you. The young lady who, next to you at the counter, sells the latest in hats and skirts, may have her head filled with them. These people have no idea whence their opinions have come, nor perhaps have the writers and orators who supply the public with such mind-food. These may think they are the able exponents of twentieth century ideas, fresh, original, and we must not forget, 'progressive.' They are really echoes of that strange but clever body of men, deniers, scoffers, cynics, rebels against all things established—the Encyclopedists—Diderot, d'Alembert, d'Holbach, Voltaire, and Rousseau. They were a queer lot. They lived in a very queer age—the age of Louis XV. and of the *Parc-aux-Cerfs*. For twenty years (1744-1764) a butcher's daughter, but the king's chief concubine, Madame de Pompadour, threw the mantle of her protection over them. Royal courtiers, like the depraved Duc de Richelieu and the infidel Malesherbes, helped them, while the lewd nobility, imitators of an utterly debauched court, entertained and applauded them. Their age was an age of mud, says a French historian, but they changed it into an age of blood. They were the fathers of the French Revolution—a movement not yet exhausted or spent. Present-day liberals, radicals, and so on are glorifiers of the Revolution. To it they attribute all their light and all their licence. Why, then, not celebrate the festivals of their fathers in the faith? Why not commemorate the anniversary of Diderot?

### Clemenceau's Ruling Passion.

An idea of the thoughts and ways of our French politicians should prove instructive to colonial people. You will have men like them abroad with you one of these days. France still leads, not merely in giving the fashion for ladies' skirts, corsets, and blouses, but in most things. Say what you will as to her eccentricities, still she is an intensely brainy nation. Well, take a glance at two or three of her brainy political leaders. Take Clemenceau, Jaurès, and Gustave Hervé. Clemenceau is one of the few French politicians (to vary is a striking weakness with politicians—to be amenable to circumstances), who do not vary in their opinions. What is the secret of this? It is a great predominating motive, directing all his thoughts, words, acts, passions, and impulses. What is that motive or principle? It is an ardent, positive, personal hatred of God. In his speeches and newspaper articles he never misses an opportunity to insult and defy the Almighty. 'Ah,' he replied a little time ago, to adversaries who called him a mere obstructionist and rebel, 'Ah, that terrible reproach "rebel," which Jehovah himself addressed to Satan in revolt: I do not fear it, I am a rebel. Like my noble father, the great fallen archangel, I have no stomach for submission!'

# Better Teeth

AT HOWEY WALKER'S,

Less Pain,

Less Expense.

QUEEN STREET, AUCKLAND.