

hundred duck at once, Colonel?" It was quite indescribable the look of grave sorrow and surprise which the Colonel turned upon him as he drawled out: "Sir, do you think I would trouble the Recording Angel to book me a lie for the sake of one duck?" To crown the joke, he shortly afterwards described a friend of his in New York thus: "Yes, Sir. He's a powerful liar. If you saw him walking arm-in-arm with the late Ananias and Sapphira *his* wife, you would say it was quite a family party."

There is no news in the daily papers. The old-fashioned big gooseberry, and its successor, the sea-serpent, have not been resuscitated this year; but the interminable correspondence, on a set text has been revived. The size of children's ears, and the fashion of children's manners, was, I believe, tried, but did not draw; but the Slavery of Drink seems deliriously interesting to our race, and I am told that the *Daily Telegraph* has three or four columns a day, of more or less inane letters on the subject. Who writes all the letters is, I imagine, less of a mystery than who reads them.

The gathering of the clans at Braemar, last Thursday, attracted the usual crowd, and seems to have been as successful and interesting as usual. Kate writes that the Queen drove over in the afternoon, and everyone was delighted to see how well she was looking. Kate says that Dr. John Williams is going to stay at Abergeldie Mains, in readiness for the accouchement of Princess Beatrice, which is expected to take place at the end of this month. By-the-bye, there seems to have been a very pretty little ceremony at New Mar Lodge. The Duff clansmen assembled there before going to the sports. They first pledged the Duke of Fife in a flowing bumper of mountain dew; and then his baby daughter, the Lady Alexandra Duff, was brought forward in her Nurse's arms, and introduced to her clan, being received with tremendous Highland huzzaning. The Duchess is with the Princess of Wales at Copenhagen, and her absence was naturally greatly regretted on the occasion. Kate says that the Balmoral Highlanders were reviewed by the Queen the same morning, and then photographed at Gordon Cottage by Princess Beatrice.

There is not much in this month's Reviews. In the *Fortnightly* Mr. Francis Adams describes "Social Life in Australia." His account reads, to me, as if it were painted a trifle too black. It reminds me of the midshipman who was sent ashore to explore an island in Polynesia, and whose report to the captain, who desired official information upon the manners and customs of the natives, read thus: "Manners they have none, and their customs are beastly." I feel convinced that the men and women who are building up a great

empire in Australasia may be a trifle unpolished, but their results show that they must have a splendid amount of pluck, perseverance, and patience, and other Anglo-Saxon qualities. Veneer is very pretty, no doubt, but it seldom covers the best wood. Mr. Frederick Harrison discourses on the "Thirteenth Century," and evidently wishes he had lived in that "most organic, most memorable" time.

The *Contemporary* has a chatty article on "A Month in Southern India," by Sir Mountstuart Grant-Duff—quite true, doubtless, but very little new. Sir Robert Ball has an interesting article on "Modern Astronomy." He is the Irish Astronomer Royal, you know, and the moral he teaches is that the most wonderful fact in the nineteenth century is the advances which it has witnessed in astronomical knowledge. Mr. Massingham has daring and original ideas. He has written an article on "The Nationalisation of Cathedrals," which is worth reading. Briefly, he proposes that laymen with brains should be appointed deans of our cathedrals, and draw the comfortable salaries in preference to clerics, whom he considers are mostly destitute of intellect. He points out that deans have very little clerical work to do nowadays, and that journalists and men of letters, for example, would fulfil their duties with more credit to the Church of England. He estimates that the income of deaneries in the United Kingdom amounts to £30,000 a year. If his project were carried out, who would not be a journalist?* Messrs. Sampson Low and Marston, the eminent firm of publishers, have this month taken over the publication of *The Nineteenth Century*, from Messrs. Kegan Paul and Co., but it appears in the old familiar form. Mr. Gladstone has an article on "Electoral Facts," and once more shows that "figures can be made to prove anything." He gives elaborate statistics to show that at a General Election there might be 46 or, perhaps, 96 majority of members, returned in favour of Home Rule for Ireland. Mr. Archibald Forbes has another excellent batch of Reminiscences, which you must read.

I am told that ordinary shoes do not do in Hospitals. Dr. Jackson advised me to write to Messrs. Parker, 145, Oxford Street, telling them to send you a pair of their Ward Shoes, which he says are most excellent and comfortable, and I have therefore done so.

I have ordered *The Nursing Record*, to see what the Home Sister's description of it meant. I cannot understand why she abused it; but will get it regularly now, and discover the mystery. I must keep the rest of my news until my next letter.—Your loving, JEAN GRAHAM.

* Quite so. We like the idea much.—Ed.

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