

A writer, while visiting Jerusalem a couple of years ago, heard from a venerable Jewish rabbi, a resident of the holy city, a curious account of the origin of the tradition. His statement may be given for all it is worth. When the city, he said, was destroyed by the Romans, most of the Christians fled. The old inhabitants of the city who had been eye-witnesses to the events recorded in the New Testament were scattered. Some were slain; others were driven into exile. Strangers came in who did not care to know anything about the places considered sacred by the despised and conquered inhabitants, and in this way with the lapse of a century or so, all certain knowledge of these places was lost. Ruins covered everything and made it next to impossible to later explorers to recognize such places of which historians had given descriptions previous to the terrible destruction. A couple of centuries thus rolled on and nobody took any interest in the spot where a supposed criminal once had been executed and buried. It was first at the time of Constantine, when Christianity had become a power in the state and the Christians commenced to breathe the air of liberty, that pious men and women performed pilgrimages to the holy land and searched the country for Calvary, the sepulcher, the place of nativity, etc. The Empress Helen, the mother of Constantine, conceived the idea of finding the sepulcher and she consequently went to Jerusalem. She thought that the few Jews who then resided there, knew where the grave was and she made inquiries, but always met with the answer that nobody knew. The empress ascribed this to perverseness of the Jews and thought they did know, but refused to tell because they hated the Nazarenes. She therefore commanded her soldiers to seize an old Hebrew and gave them power to torture him and even kill him, if he persisted in refusing to divulge the secret of which she thought he was in possession. He was accordingly seized and led about in the streets and commanded to go to the place where the grave was. No protestation, no excuse would be accepted. He had either to find the grave or be tortured to death. In his great distress he earnestly prayed to his Heavenly Father to be delivered from his tormentors, and while thus mentally engaged, he came to a cave. Then, as by a sudden flash of inspiration, he exclaimed, here is the grave you are looking for! and was subsequently liberated. This was given as all there was to the tradition. The empress immediately consecrated the place and built a church over it.

The Catholic tradition is more in harmony with the genius of that church. According to Eusebius, whose reliability as a historian is not of the highest reputation, Constantine was led to explore the place and found the cave which he supposed to be the holy sepulcher. The grave once found, his imperial mother had a revelation according to which the three crosses were found near the grave, which miracle identified the place beyond a doubt. Tradition has further ornamented this story by adding that she discovered the genuine cross by placing a dead body on it, which immediately was revived. But aside

from these fabulous stories, it is but just to say that one thing speaks for the genuineness of the place, notwithstanding the arguments against it. It is related in history that the Emperor Hadrian built a Venus-temple over the grave in order to hide it from those who held the place in veneration. This temple still existed in the days of Constantine, if it was built at all, and he had in this structure a sure guide where to seek the tomb and find it.

The place which now is to be bought is known as the Garden tomb. General Gordon thought it to be the genuine one and his view has been accepted by Haskett Smith and others. But Major Conder rejects the theory altogether. He explored the cave in 1873 and came to the conclusion that its construction does not date farther back than to the ninth century.

Another place is known as Conder's tomb, but the evidence of its being the genuine grave is as insufficient as that adduced for any other spot. The only safe conclusion so far is, that the grave of Christ has probably not yet been found. Perhaps it never will be, unless it should be the pleasure of the Lord Himself to reveal it to somebody in the future.

The awakened interest among the nations in the land of promise is, however, a gratifying sign to those who believe in a glorious future for that country. Not many years ago it was despoiled. Now it attracts attention. It has already begun to blossom as a rose in the wilderness. It seems to be under preparation, by the hand of Providence, to receive the inhabitants to whom it belongs. Its gates are being opened; its cities are being rebuilt; the ruins are being removed. The curse is surely lifted, and blessings are being poured down like the early rains and late rains which again make the country a beautiful garden as of old.

THE DARK CONTINENT MANIA.

The North Pole mania has its counterpoise in the recently developed craze for interior African exploration, one being about as hazardous as the other to the unacclimated novice. Stanley made quite a respectable fortune and no little fame out of his exploits, but it is generally admitted that he was unusually fortunate. The interior of Africa, especially the equatorial regions, are as full of dangers to the one whose tissues have been seasoned to the temperate zone only as would northern Greenland be to the average schoolboy. Yet such expeditions are not only taking place but numerous so. We are now advised that a large number of prominent Frenchmen, Austrians, Englishmen and Germans are at present either on their way to Africa or already marching into the interior. On the west coast the young Duke d'Uzes, whose extravagance has caused him to be deprived of the right of administering his fortune, which has been invested in the hands of trustees, is endeavoring to reach the Victoria Nyanza from the Congo. In his party there are said to be about about half a dozen young Frenchmen of rank and family. Inasmuch as the duke of Orleans hopes to reach the Victoria Nyanza from the

east coast, it is possible that they may all meet on the shores of that lake. What they all expect to accomplish, it is doubtful if even themselves could tell. The French expedition militant, headed by General Dodds, has been successful in one respect, that is, the dusky King Behanzin and his Amazonian phalanx have been defeated and his capital is in possession of the invader; but the monarch himself, like Josh Billings' mosquito, wasn't there when the hand descended upon him. If France will now count up its profits and losses and let the world know how it stands, there will be so much of interest in it at least.

"WILDCAT" CURRENCY AGAIN.

Notwithstanding that the phantasm of "wildcat" banking and worthless state issues has been thoroughly dissipated, and that there can by no possibility be any further political capital gained by such means now, there are some eastern papers which let go of the subject with the greatest deliberation, not to say regret. The Milwaukee *Sentinel*, for instance, recently presented its readers with a doleful account of the evils of the state currency system as it was thirty-two years ago, when 1547 bank failures occurred in less than ninety days, and went on to say:

The bank currency of Wisconsin was subject to the common lot. Bank failures were of frequent occurrence during the years 1856, '57, '58 and '59; the list of discredited banks grew longer from week to week, and the climax was reached in the spring of 1861. The Milwaukee banks became flooded with discredited bank notes. Accordingly the bankers of this city met and decided to throw out ten banks from the list of seventy which had been passed on favorably at the April convention. Such action was taken on Saturday, June 21. The workmen had just received their weekly wages, and on reading over the list of the ten banks thrown out they discovered that most of the money paid them was in bills of the discredited banks. They had already been subject to sufficient loss by the uninterrupted succession of bank failures, and the new discovery completely exhausted their patience. On the following Monday there was a riot, which is still remembered by many eye witnesses.

This might have had an effect during the campaign, but as is already seen not to any practical extent, perhaps for the reason that it endeavors to create prejudice out of improper materials. It was not altogether that the currency was the issue of state banks that caused the trouble spoken of, but chiefly the imminence of the great war of the rebellion, which unsettled values and undermined securities of all kinds. Indeed, if the national government itself had had paper money afloat it would have shared the same fate and later have been held up to the same execration by those who held it when the crash came, as was the case with the notes coming from the state banks. It was a time of general panic, as was the year 1857, though from vastly different causes, albeit the war shadow was beginning to be seen upon the land even then.

Unstable, insecure money, or rather bills passing for money, cannot be too