

cases, number, genus, etc., were dropped as too cumbersome in the daily talk. Words became obsolete. New words were added. The language became modified by the various tongues spoken by the conquered nations, and the result was finally that a great chasm was opened between the written language and the various spoken dialects. For the former was considered sacred and was scrupulously guarded, while the latter continually developed although slowly.

And this is the condition of the Mohammedan world today. They have a written language almost as different from the vernacular as the ancient Greek is from the modern language of Greece, or as the old Latin is from Italian. Most of the spoken dialects of Arabic are as easy to learn as most modern tongues, while the written language of Mohammed is one of the most difficult to master.

It is to be supposed, however, that a change in this condition is at hand. Modern translations of the Bible into Arabic approach the spoken dialects. Newspapers—the very few that are published—do the same and missionaries in their public addresses, of course, speak the vernacular of the particular people whom they address, with due regard to grammatical rules. All this tends to form a classical, modern Arabic which can be understood by all and will be the language of all educated Arabs, while the language of the Koran will be a dead one and like ancient Greek only of value to the scholar. But perhaps a second Mohammed is needed to form this modern Arabic, for in the orient progress is slow.

"SOCIETY" ATTACKED.

Rev. Thomas Dixon Jr. of New York recently preached a sermon on the vanity, humbuggery and hypocrisy of "society" as the word is understood in fashionable circles. He said in one sense society was insignificant, in another it was practically omnipotent. The little clique which arrogates the title of society is simply a mob, and the impudence with which it sets its right to that title—indicating as it does the solidarity of mankind—is assumed, is pronounced something amazing. Assuming to be the aristocracy of the world, they are in reality an aggregation of all sorts of light-headed, insignificant people. "They could all be dropped from the world tomorrow, and the world's business would not suffer. They are so insignificant in the sum total of the race that they can be left out of account in considering its problems but for the fact that their ideals have a reflex action upon the manners of the people."

The pretensions of this set, Mr. Dixon declared, are accepted by thousands of people as facts, and "their ideals are bowed down to as though they were the deliverances of the oracles of the Most High, while they are only worthy of study and discussion because of this tremendous influence upon the ranks below them." The reverend gentleman, proceeding from mere opposition to violent denunciation, declared that "the so-called high society of our great cities is in its pretensions a humbug, in its customs the

incarnation of vulgarity, in its standard of life essentially immoral and corrupting."

While agreeing with the purport and object of what is said, the NEWS is scarcely prepared to follow the speaker so far. "Society" is not essentially immoral nor does it necessarily lead to immorality; but it does lead to it if it does not embody unworthy vanities and a disposition to overlook the realities in favor of the gilding and the froth of life. The subjoined lines are less subject to criticism:

It is of the earth earthy. It smells of the lowest ideals possible to rational man and woman. Money is the foundation on which its temple of worship rests. Mammon is the god they worship, whom they serve, and a little insignificant fop, with a superannuated European title, is the angel of which they dream. Marriage is made a question of alliance for the multiplication of fortune or of chicanery for the gaining of fortune. It becomes strictly a matter of bargain and sale. It becomes strictly a commercial transaction, and mothers angle for desirable men as the faithful fisherman baits his hook and waits for the victim.

The preacher then engaged in the narration of a case in real life in which the objectionable characteristics not to say repulsiveness of such proceedings were plainly illustrated. Ward McAllister's "Society As I Have Found It" is brought under the pulpit orator's metaphorical scalpel and dissected in fine style, while the author himself is pilloried in a thoroughly characteristic manner. We cannot close without giving the drastic doctor one more hearing in his own words. After showing the follies and even indecencies in some cases of the dress of the class of people spoken of, he proceeds to launch the following verbal thunderbolt:

The occupations of this circle of people are such that any statement describing their position in the world of ethics could scarcely be overdrawn. Extravagance and luxury and idleness are the opportunities the devil always uses to wreck the human soul. The society of which I am speaking spends its time in balls and receptions and suppers, operas, theaters—extravagance in the city and extravagance out of the city. Their business in life is to eat and to drink and to sleep, to spend the winter and spend the summer. Think of a normal, rational human being living as an end of life simply to perform the daily functions of the body and think of the monstrous insolence of such an aggregation of asses calling themselves society!

The society people are contrasted with such men as Darwin, Pasteur, Franklin, Edison, Peter Cooper and others, and mention is made of the incident of the Earl of Shaftesbury crying because he had to die and leave so much suffering in the world that he could not provide for. These were all antipodal characters in life because all useful and living not for display nor vain pleasure but that the world might become better and happier. It sometimes requires radical remedies to eradicate radical evils and in this view of the case perhaps Dr. Dixon's method may accomplish a measure of reform; but we doubt it.

The *Saratoga Standard*, a newspaper which is in financial difficulties, has been placed under attachment for the second time within a month.

THE LIZZIE BORDEN CASE.

What promises to be a slow-going and long drawn out criminal trial is now fairly under way at Fall River, Massachusetts. The defendant is Lizzie Borden and the crime with which she is charged is the murder of her father and step-mother in August last. There is not a particle of direct evidence in the case, so that at the outset at least the defense has much the better side of it to work with. Detective skill has been brought into full requisition; every suggestion, trace and hint has been followed up to its source or until spent in vagueness, and still the case as it stands amounts to a mystery and nothing more. It will require unusual skill and acuteness on the part of the prosecution, aided, too, by some means which at present we are not advised of, to enable it to make such a showing as will put the prisoner upon her defense at all.

It is an interesting as well as a celebrated case, the details of which, with the highly developed taste now existing for such things, will be read with marked avidity. In this instance the public are concerned in the matter of determining whether the murder will out or not, and if the former whether it is possible that a girl not overly skillful apparently could so nearly conceal her bloody work as to make the latter phase of the proposition the one to prevail. The NEWS will have to give place to the details as the electric current brings them, and our readers can and doubtless will constitute an unorganized jury by themselves.

OVERDOING THINGS.

It is a good thing all around that the government is able and willing to entertain its royal guests in a becoming manner. As a nation whose people are now more than ever before on their good behavior, the United States cannot afford to be shabby or niggardly; it cannot even permit it to go forth that any customary luxury was withheld, no matter what the price. But there are, or should be, boundaries within which bills may properly be created for the government to pay, and in some cases it should not have to pay anything at all. We read that the state department at Washington found an unpleasant surprise in its morning mails, the other day. The surprise had a Chicago postmark. It was the Auditorium hotel's bill for one week's board for the Duke of Veragua and party—carriage hire included. The total was \$2500. Then comes New York which points with pride to the fact that the duke's week at the Waldorf didn't cost the government a cent.

The manner in which the infants of Spain is being received wherever she goes is such treatment as can leave no trace of unpleasantness in her or her people's mind when they think of her experience in the United States. But Uncle Sam is paying for everything and we rather suspect that they are laying it on tolerably thick in places, not only as to expense but as to deportment also. The lady herself would scarcely object to walking upon