

enough. It was the autograph of his holiness the Pope and Patriarch of Alexandria, the head of the Greek-Catholic-Orthodox (is there anything else?) Church. Here is the autograph: [Our correspondent here introduces a string of hieroglyphical flourishes which are too intricate to imitate in type and are to us indecipherable.—Ed.] It was accompanied by the following explanation: *Signature de sa Saintete le Patriarche Orthodox Sophronius qui vente cet hotel le 2 Nov. 1888.* I believe some of our cowboys in Utah could beat "His Holiness" in penmanship.

Prior to departing from Port Said I witnessed the devotional exercises of a praying old Arab. It was on the pier in the harbor. The sun shone brightly and poured down a flood of light and heat from a cloudless sky. The noise from the hundreds of coal carriers working on board the vessels, the playing children, the shrieking toothache-like sounds from the grind-organs all were blending together in one confusion. But the old man who evidently was tired wanted to rest a little. So he betook himself to a place behind a boat that had been hauled up to dry. And here he selected a place for a quiet nap. Before lying down, however, he said his prayers. He first took off that square piece of cloth serving as an overcoat and spread it on the ground. Next he very slowly pulled out his pocket-handkerchief and spread that on one corner of the overcoat. After that he knelt down and pulled out a comb and a bit of a looking glass preparatory to combing his beard very carefully as if going to visit his best girl. This performance over, he was ready for his prayer. With hands sometimes folded, sometimes lifted towards the sky, and with his eyes always fixed on the pocket-handkerchief, he recited his prayers whatever they were, with an earnestness and fervency edifying to behold. The ceremony lasted some twenty minutes, after which the pocket-handkerchief was folded up and the old man rolled himself under his cloak and went to sleep on the hard ground. To a superficial spectator the whole ceremony must have appeared ridiculous. I cannot say that there was anything ridiculous in it to me. I admired the man who would not take a midday nap in the open street without first having communicated with God in prayer. And his prayer was evidently not a prayer to an abstract being beyond the blue sky, but to some being close at hand. I have no doubt that to his phantasy the heavenly being whom he invoked was present, standing, perhaps, on the pocket-handkerchief, the best carpet he could procure for the moment, and thus this old man had a mental conversation, so to speak, face to face with his deity. It seems to me even "Christians" could learn something from this ignorant Arab.

But the "Christians" are a proud set, although it is expressly stated that God is against those that are proud. I had this illustrated to

me in the expression used by a "Christian" lady a few days ago. A little party of tourists went to see the Mosque at Port Said, and we were, as all are, requested to take off our shoes. The lady referred to, highly indignant and offended, exclaimed "Should I take my shoes off to enter that den?" I believe the lady was a Methodist of the purest blood. I asked her if she thought that appellation proper when applied to a Mohammedan sanctuary. "Sanctuary!" she again exclaimed, "those heathens! They are nothing but heathens!" "Heathens? Why?" I asked. "Because they want us to pull off our shoes." "Then," I replied, "God must have been a heathen, too, because he required Moses at a certain time to pull his shoes off." "Well, I do not know, but that He was," sniffed the lady, to my great astonishment. "Pardon me," I said, "do I understand you to admit that perhaps God was a heathen?" "God?" no, Moses." She was evidently so excited that she did not know what she said, and finally excused her confusion by asserting that God was not in that Mohammedan mosque. "Then," I rejoined, "the Mohammedans must be a mighty race if they are able to shut your God out of their houses—a God of whom you always say that He is omnipresent." This proud, "Christian" went away, I hope, with a wholesome lesson.

A philosopher right in Port Said would have a wonderfully rich field wherein to gather observations for generalizations and framing theories on various subjects connected with the progress of the human race on the road to civilization. It is a place where the eastern and western civilizations have met and where each struggle for equality if not for supremacy. An observer will soon find that the two, after a very few years' struggle, have already left their marks on each other. The refinement of the Occident has impressed itself upon the more crude civilization of the Orient, and the crudeness of the Orient is already visibly blended with the more refined civilization of the Occident. In this respect the issue of the struggle is widely different from that of the struggle between the races in America. On this latter continent the war has been one of extermination entirely. Not so here, at the threshold of the Orient. Here the races are more equally strong, and it would be no wonder if a kind of compromise were the final result. Certain it is that Europeans who live here, if they were not "toughs" when they came, soon learn to be rough and tough from their Arabian brethren; while on the other hand, the Arabs to a certain extent imitate the newcomers. Under these circumstances the question arises: What will the issue be? A retrograde movement of the Europeans or progress on the part of the Arabians?

Europeans lack the one great factor of true progress—a living Christianity; for you cannot call those dead rites of an ignorant Catholic clergy, or the little better rites of the Church of England, a living

Christianity. On the contrary, these, if they have any influence at all, will produce death instead of life. Stagnant water produces nothing but putrefaction. The following incident is very illustrative of this. It was some sort of a holiday, a commemoration of the baptism of Christ by John, I believe. On behalf of the Catholic mission here, a fellow carrying a crucifix on a plate went round gathering "shekels." He visited all the stores, getting a little here and a little there. I noticed in one store, a "Christian" merchant threw a large coin on the plate and afterwards bowed very humbly and kissed the crucifix on the plate. On seeing him you would think him to be a saint of the very purest water. Into the store of that fellow came, a few minutes afterwards, an Arab buying something, and having some change coming to him. And that same pious saint who so devotedly had kissed the cross, tried to cheat the poor native out of some ten francs by offering him bad coins in exchange. Fortunately the Arab was no fool, and the pious hypocrite must produce good money. But thus is religion here. In dealing with the people one must particularly take care not to be cheated by "Christians." Surely a religion with such broad allowances can do nothing but harm to the cause of progress.

An interesting conversation which I recently had with a well educated gentleman, a Greek by birth, I will refer to before closing this letter. I obtained his friendship by reading a few verses of my Greek New Testament to him. The modern Greek language and that of the ancient Greek are quite widely different, but it happened that this gentleman was well read and understood the beautiful "glossa" of his forefathers. The New Testament being the medium of our acquaintance, our conversation at first turned upon religious subjects. I was informed that the Greek-Orthodox Church was the only true church on earth, that all others were apostates, and that the destiny of the Greek Church was by and by to gain the supreme spiritual rule over the whole earth. I was further informed that the Greek Church had preserved—he said—the forms of the sacraments as they were instituted by our Lord. I asked for a nearer explanation of this, and he said that the Greek Church distribute both bread and wine in the Lord's supper, while the Romans give the people the bread only. The Greeks also baptize the children by immersion. I further inquired why they immersed, seeing that all the other churches, with a few exceptions, sprinkle. "Why, my dear sir," he said, "the word baptism never meant anything else than immerse, and what is not immersion is not baptism."

Here, then, I had a testimony from a man whose native tongue is nearly identical with the language of the New Testament, and he declared that the meaning of the word baptize was nothing but "immerse." I would like to know what "sprinklers" could reply to the assertion of