

were as late as 1716 ; but still later, in 1766, the Seceders in Scotland published an act of their associate Presbytery, denouncing that memorable act of the English parliament which repealed all the penal statutes against witchcraft.

The equal reverence paid by the Puritans and Scotch Seceders to the Jewish and Christian Scriptures (if, indeed, they did not hold the Old Testament in greater veneration than the New), was the chief cause of the superstition which led to these judicial murders. They had, indeed, in common with other Protestant sects, rejected the miracles ascribed to the Christian saints of the middle ages, because they were not supported by sufficient historical testimony. They had stood forward in the face of cruel persecutions courageously to vindicate the right of private judgment ; and they held it to be not only the privilege, but the duty, of every Christian, layman or ecclesiastic, to exercise his reason, and not yield himself up blindly to the authority of an earthly teacher. Yet if any one dared, in 1692, to call in question the existence of the witchcraft, he was stigmatized as an infidel, and refuted by the story of the Witch of Endor evoking the ghost of the dead Samuel. Against the recurrence of such dreadful crimes as those perpetrated in the years 1602-93, society is now secured, not by judges and juries of a more conscientious character or deeper sense of religious responsibility, but by the general spread of knowledge, or that more enlightened public opinion, which can never exist in the same perfection in the minds of the initiated few, so long as the multitude with whom they must be in contact are kept in darkness.

On our return from Salem to Boston, we found the seats immediately before us in the railway car occupied by two colored men, who were laughing and talking familiarly with two negro women, apparently servant maids. The women left us at the first station, and we then entered into conversation with the men who, perceiving by our accent, that we were foreigners, were curious to know what we thought of their country. Hearing that it was our intention to winter in the south, the elder traveler "hoped we should not be tainted there." My wife, supposing he alluded to the yellow fever, said, "We shall