

OUR MONISTIC ETHICS

the priest's cook should not be less than forty years old was very cleverly "explained" in the sense that the priest might have two cooks, one in the presbytery, another without; if one was twenty-four and the other eighteen, that made forty-two together—two years above the prescribed age. At the Christian councils, at which heretics were burned alive, the cardinals and bishops sat down with whole troops of prostitutes. The private and public debauchery of the Catholic clergy was so scandalous and dangerous to the commonwealth that there was a general rebellion against it before the time of Luther, and a loud demand for a "reformation of the church in head and members." It is well known that these immoral relations still continue in Roman Catholic lands, although more in secret. Formerly proposals were made from time to time for the definitive abrogation of celibacy, as was done, for instance, in the chambers of Baden, Bavaria, Hesse, Saxony, and other lands; but they have, unfortunately, hitherto proved unavailing. In the German Reichstag, in which the ultramontane Centre is now proposing the most ridiculous measures for the suppression of sexual immorality, there is now no party that will urge the abolition of celibacy in the interest of public morality. The so-called "Freethought" Party and the utopian social democracy coquette with the favor of the Centre.

The modern state that would lift not only the material, but the moral, life of its people to a higher level is entitled, and indeed bound, to sweep away such unworthy and harmful conditions. The obligatory celibacy of the Catholic clergy is as pernicious and immoral as the practice of auricular confession or the sale of indulgences. All three have nothing what-