In 1971;

OR, A REVIEW OF A CURIOUS OLD MS. WRITTEN BY MY GREAT-GRANDFATHER.

AN ESSAY.

Delivered before the Sunday Free Discussion Society, at the Masonic Hall, on New Year's Evening, 1871,

By J. D.

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KINGCRAFT AND PRIESTCRAFT.

Dear Reader,

You will please suppose yourself to be your great-grandchild living a hundred years hence, as the audience was requested to imagine themselves, when the following prospective trial was read. A friendly debate, as is the custom every Sunday evening, followed. Most of the numerous hearers appeared to coincide with the views of the author; many of whom, after the meeting, expressing a desire that the essay should appear in its present form.

J. D.

This New Year, 1871, will not be the perfect year, the Millennium will certainly not. You laugh at my uttering so absurd a statement, for that we shall progress this year is as certain as that we progressed last year, and the year before that, as well as all in the previous centuries. Though these slowly, while we more rapidly, that is to say, comparatively, for it is just possible that one hundred years hence some public speaker will criticise those parts of our records where we dub ourselves the perjured citizens of the afternoon of the twentieth century, as we smile at the boasting of our forefathers who were for ever talking of the dawn of the enlightened nineteenth century. No, this is not the perfect year. Perfection will never come, I venture to assert. Nay, I also venture to hope. Perfection is not desirable—ever knowing and knowing the "heaven upon earth." Nevertheless, without ostentation, we may gratefully say that some of the glorious dreams of the last century have become the precious realities of the present, some of the joyous visions we are now reveling in, will probably be realized by our children or children's children. This present year of great favor is nothing like the perfect year. Hymns of loving praise be choicerly by the gentle nations to the Infinite, ever revealing great mysteries First Court whereby his unerring prophet (Science) is daily teaching man and woman how little they yet know—how much more they have to learn.

I only respectfully argue that we have made immense strides since the year 1871, and shall do so by a very simple process. Last week I was looking over a much worn old manuscript, written by my great-grandfather Jack, who what he would call "honored" at that time. The manuscript, and a photographic likeness of himself and wife, a few of his books, in a funny looking old box of the period, was all he bequested to his son Jack, who carefully preserved it for his son, who has left the same to me, now an elderly man of past 64 years; and this photograph astonishes me, for the portrait is so like, that if my great-grandfather was of other, I shall not tire you by quoting the tenth part of this old manuscript.
I had not seen him (the priest and friend of the correspondent), for nearly a month, and he had thinned so much in that time that I scarcely

"Ah!" said he, having a deep sigh, and with a most convincing look.

"Republicanism in France, means Republicanism in Spain and Italy, and the total severance of our Church from the State, and six or seven years of trouble and tribulation for our priests. I do not know how it would be better for the invading army to besiege Paris, and by force restore the fallen dynasty, than that such a calamity should happen to our priests.

Now, there was a scoundrel! Soon see his countrymen’s blood flow like water, and wrong and desolation triumph even at the expense of patriotism and honour, than see one priestly privilege abrogated! Then was one country named England, then (but now changed to Albion), as distinguished from the neighbouring Republican nations of Ireland, Scotland, Queen Victoria, but he governed by her ministers and parliament chosen by household suffrage, or something of that sort, though what the house, mere bricks and mortar, had to do with brains, honor, and patriotism, and education, my great-grandfather don’t explain, it is of those riddles of 1871, which men of this period can only guess at.

Well, this pretty good woman reigned constitutionally, as it was termed, that is, the power behind the throne was greater than the throne itself. She was a mere costly toy and died immensely rich, for her revenues were so scandalously enormous, and she didn’t spend much or give much though millions of her people were very poor, while every son and daughter of hers when born had large sums of money—annual pension money—awarded to them, and when they grew up, and married (almost always to foreigners, by the way) had extra pensions, though they did little to make mischief, filled out of the pockets of the people, many of whom, as I said before, were nearly destitute. Won’t you believe my great-grandfather! Don’t! Go to the records of that semi-barbarous age.

Ah! how different now; Albion, almost the only kingdom in the civilized world has upon the throne that excellent democrat, deist, and philanthropist, Albert the Third, who presides at most of the progressive meetings of his country, and gives so liberally out of his somewhat limited income, an income joyfully voted by the unanimous voice. The good man’s son, who expects to be Albert the Fourth, must be more cautious for when his father dies he may be mistaken—already there are broken heads, and the Albionites of this present don’t believe even in their basic apparent sowing their wild oats too long.

But let that pass; we have little to do with it. The Republican United States of Australia, were actually in 1871 mere colonies of this old England, as many other now great nations also were, not that we want to wait to gain our independence. Albion gladly gave it us, to our deistical ranks, long may he reign, good Albert!-vix redolent capital of the Republican United States of Australia. Isn’t that progress? As for war, I needn’t tell you, that if any dispute should arise, which, by the by, has not arisen for fifty years, the grand con

jederman of the world would arbitrate in the matter, and their judgment be final, for the first nation foolishly refusing to agree with the sentences of their chosen representatives would be swept from the map of the world, the war having reached such a height, that war would be annihilated; and better a few obstinate fools die, than a world utterly perish.

Thus, as to Priestcraft, although the priests of all religions were the same with my great-grandfather, he seems to confine himself to those ancient Israelite books, and the several beliefs in those days. The Roman Catholics denounced all Protestants as damnable heretics, and the Protestants agreed in declaring that the Catholics were the abomination of abominations, and His Holiness the Pope, as he was then called, was actually anti-Christ, and the Scarlet W., whatever that meant, some bad word I should imagine, commencing with that letter; possibly Wicked, though it could hardly be that, as the Pope was a man. I give it up. Well, then, the Protestants, a very indefinable designation, were divided into a legion of sects, almost all damming one another, and only agreeing in declaring that that was the gate and narrow was the way that ledeth unto life, and that strait gate and narrow way was, for the most part, confined to themselves, The Elect Precious!

Like people, like priests, the latter led the former by their noses, both Catholic and Protestant calling them their shepherds and their dupes the sheep, and sheepish enough they were, writes the author of the old manuscript, thus to be swindled both spiritually and temporally, for it appears that most nations had what they called their national religions, every dissenter being robbed accordingly. Nay, in these very United States, at that time, as I said before, subject colonies, the queer old folks paid a pretty large sum to all the parsons of every sect, probably on the agreed understanding that there was little difference between the tawdry, theodics, and tawdrelities; and then, how they did abuse the unbelievers, in the idolatry of the ancient Israelite book, they were termed infidels, in the idolatry of the ancient Israelite book, they were termed infidels, in the idolatry of the ancient Israelite book, they were termed infidels, in the idolatry of the ancient Israelite book, they were termed infidels, in the idolatry of the ancient Israelite book, they were termed infidels, in the idolatry of the ancient Israelite book, they were termed infidels, in the idolatry of the ancient Israelite book, they were termed infidels, in the idolatry of the ancient Israelite book, they were termed infidels, in the idolatry of the ancient Israelite book, they were termed infidels, in the idolatry of the ancient Israelite book, they were termed infidels.
only it covered him all over, with immense sleeves, and a white hat of linen, split in two clapped round his throat; directly he got into the box, he would look as if he had committed some great sin, as perhaps he had, and miserably shutting his eyes and as miserably lifting up his hands, would clap them over his face, and stand in this semi-comic attitude for some five minutes, what for my great-grandfather does not explain, but I suppose to arrange his thoughts; for the people in their seats, called pews, would do much about the same as each entered—but that couldn't have been to arrange their thoughts, because they only came to listen. As in a former case (he word beginning with a W.), I give it up. Well, then, this half-mad gentleman, with the all-over petticoat on, would bow as awful at the assembly, and give out a hymn, verses of which are pretty freely distributed in this curious manuscript. I merely quote one:

With holy fear and humble song
The dreadful God our souls adore;
Reverence and awe becomes the tongue
That speaks the terrors of his power.
Far in the deep, where darkness dwells,
The land of horror and despair,
Justice has built a dismal hell,
And laid his store of vengeance there.
[ Eternal plagues and heavy chains,
Tormenting racks, and fiery coals,
And darts, t'inflict immortal pains,
Dried in the blood of damned souls.
There Satan, the first sinner, lies,
And roars, and bites his iron bands;
In vain the rebel strives to rise,
Crush'd with the weight of both thy hands.
There guilty ghosts of Adam's race
Shriek out, and howl beneath thy rod;
Ones they could scorn a Saviour's grace,
But they incensed a dreadful God.
Tremble, my soul, and kiss the Son,
Sinner, obey thy Saviour's call;
Rise your damnation hastens on,
And hell gapes wide to wait your fall.

And the people would sing these blasphemous verses standing up. What semi-savages must they have been in 1871! Then the man in the all-over petticoat would pray, and to give you a glimpse of the inconsistency of their prayers, he would commence by saying, "O Lord, we thank thee that these worms," yes, he called the people worms, "these worms are spared another week in the land of the living, while others have been called to thy judgment bar." And then he would end by saying "O Lord we praise thee, that shortly we shall leave this vale of tears and dust, and be in our weary souls in seas of heavenly rest." Very strange, wasn't it, praise for life yet pray for death. Then he would give another hymn, commencing with "Lord what a wretched land is this that yields us no supply," although most of those present, would seem to look pretty well, and the parson, especially as if he was very well supplied indeed. Then he would preach from the words "in hell he lifted up his eyes, being in torment?" not the parson, but a gentleman named Dives, who had so lifted up his eyes for above eighteen hundred years. Then the congregation would disperse, after the benediction was given, or rather paid for; not a man, as the manuscript said before, daring to speak against such horrid ugly lies. Indeed, the old gentleman would speak up against such things, to the place holding only three hundred, was the only hall that little - well, the advancing party of the period had, in order to utter anything like a free thought in, and even that place had only been rented a few weeks before.

His rather strange that a gentleman of the name of——, of whom my great-grandfather writes very affectionately, along with the names of others, that this gentleman, Mr.,—should forcibly and unmistakably prove, that all this about hell and Dives was a parable, indicating the end of the old Jew dispensation and the beginning of the new, and yet this gentleman, so logical and so clear, seems somehow to have been misprehended, for the manuscript says that the Christians wouldn't have him, and the infidels didn't want him. Hence these three hundred were of the advancing party, and I am happy to say that my great-grandfather was one of them, for his great-grandson named after him, J. D., wouldn't own him on this glorious New Year's Day, 1791. Another bad practice of these priests of 1871 was their interfering with the legislations of their countries. In old England, it appears, there was a House of Lords, among whom was a lot of old men with all-over white petticoats on, who blasphemously styled themselves Right Reverend Fathers in God, and who were always trying to stop progress temporally or spiritually, and even in this great capital when it was only a colony, though there were only two bishops, and the others styled themselves Reverends and Very Reverends, even against their own text book, and some of them, mostly of the sect of Presbyterians, tried to interfere with the legitimate business and amusements of the colonists, even to the stopping of the telegraph, and the railways, and the gardens, and the other harmless pleasures of the people, on the first day of the week. I wonder if the small remnant of these folks who originally came from Scotland, some of them hopping and jumping with naked legs and thighs, and indecently short clothes on, in public, at holiday time; I wonder if this same remnant would now try to stay the air conveyances floating above the oceans so gracefully, or hinder the weekly European Mail from coming in, or shut our magnificent Opera-house to-night? No, sirs, they know better than that in 1791. But the worst phase of all in this priestcraft was their having in their hands the teaching of the young children. You should see the numerous quotations from some of their Catechisms, just one, from a national catechism:—

**Question.** What is your name? **Answer.** N. or M.

**Question.** Who gave you this name? **Answer.** My Godfathers and Godmothers.

**Question.** What did your Godfathers and Godmothers then for you? **Answer.** They dressed me and now three things in my name. First, that I should know God and his will in my Baptism; wherein I was made a member of Christ, the child of God, and an heir of the kingdom of heaven. Secondly, that I should believe the Articles of the Church of England. Thirdly, that I should keep God's holy will and commandments, and look to the same all the days of my life. My duty towards my parents and masters. To order myself lowly and reverently to all my betters.

We could hardly expect that the poor little things could burst any of their letters under such teaching as this. How different our Sunday,
our teachings, and our priests as a whole are I needn’t tell you—but just a minute. Now, the teachers of religion are dressed like other people and no one can set himself up as a professional teacher without obtaining an educational certificate, and is compelled by act of parliament to discuss on equal terms with any gentleman who chooses to challenge him; provided he also has an educational certificate. Of course there are quite a few theological debates, as we are principally divided into Catholics and Deists, both parties having made up their minds that there can be no half-way house between. Neither do the Catholics call the Deists godless, and indeed their government is far different from what it was in 1871, for, although they now have a Pope who decides for them in matters of faith, it is only a spiritual authority, and even this Pope is not elected by a few cardinals as of yore, but chosen by the votes of seven-tenths of the members of his Church, a vast improvement. God bless us both. And then, of course, no teacher, Catholic or Protestant, can have anything to do with the educational training of our young ones; most of our schoolmasters are ourselves—parents, as we conceive being the best schoolmasters; and as for payment, the parsons and their congregation settle that matter entirely among themselves. There is no interference with our laws. Our first day of the week as well as the last day, Saturday (the wage people being paid on Wednesdays) are kept as the law allows, some reading in the Public Library, some wandering in the gardens or parks or museums, some enjoying themselves in the air conveyed, some in the vastly improved boats on the sea, or attending the Opera House, or the Theatre, or some like us, talking with each other; while others who can afford it, taking trips at this holiday-time in the weekly steamers to Europe, and coming back, after staying a week in the different countries of their forefathers, in about three weeks time; or, parson interfering, scarcely one of them try. Why, it was only the other Sunday, you know, that (Mr. C. great-grandson of a Reverend C., in 1871), preached a good moral sermon in the morning, and in the evening danced with our dear President’s wife at the ball given in aid of the building fund of our new Scientific Institute, while one of the Catholic teachers on the same evening went with the Vice-President of our States who is a Deist, to the Opera-house. What a fuss the 1871 folks would have made. Then, you know, to-night, another Catholic bishop, with his wife, starts for Albion, for Catholic priests may marry now, and most of them very wisely avail themselves of the privilege, and yet the cry is still love, and light, and life, more love, more light, more life, and science is revealing more almost daily. But I have done. Hark to the grand sounds of music just passing this Hall, with the 20,000 happy people returning from the great city of Ballarat, how full of enjoyment they look, with no fear of hell on their countenances because they have been breathing God’s fresh air on a Sunday! Oh! listen to the gladsome strains, they are marching to our patriotic song—“The fetters are broken, the chains are all gone.” See, there is not one man under the influence of strong drink in all that 20,000. God bless us all? He is blessing us all, by the revelations of his scientific Apostles, ever revealing more love, more life, more light. Oh! ghosts of 1871, and everybody the small advancing party of three hundred, see a sight like this, and hear the voices of the millions of the world shouting, “More love! more life! more light! Love, and life, and light!”