comfort of men (it has sometimes contributed to their discomfort) as for the spiritual enkindlement of women.

Yet I doubt if it would be so potent a means of edification, without that badge of the priestly calling, the shaven face. For the beard is an assertion of masculinity, and the priest should be, in the minds of women, not indeed unsexed, but as it were, supra-masculine. The Church does not attempt to eliminate sex, which is stronger even than herself; but she seeks to control it and for her warrant points to the sexual motive behind her most sacred dogmas—not the less sex, that it is translated to the region of mystery and miracle.

Macaulay was right: Protestantism with its bewhiskered marrying Bishops and hirsute, philoprogenitive curates does not stand an equal chance with the old Catholicism of shaven celibates. Besides, it is a fact vouched for by many ecclesiastical authorities and believed by all devout women, that the natural passions of man are by the chemic virtue of the priestly vocation changed into a sexless ardor for saving souls. The few exceptions that might be cited from the Scandalum Ecclesiasticum simply go to prove the rule. I believe the time is coming when Protestantism must have recourse to the razor. The present English High Church movement tends more and more toward compliance in letter and spirit with the ancient Roman Catholic ritual and discipline. Protestant clerics seem to concede, while they appear to envy, the greater spiritual dignity of the Catholic priests. Humanly we are very apt to imitate that which we envy and admire. The next step will be celibacy, and then the Reformation will have been undone! Thus history proceeds ever in a circle.

THE UNWRITTEN LAW

We have been hearing much lately about the Unwritten Law, and it seems to have a better standing in some of our courts and in the minds of many of our people than the Divine injunction "Thou shalt not kill." As a pretext for satisfying his blood-thirst, the American man-killer has hit upon nothing so convenient and plausible as this so-called Unwritten Law. But he is in some danger of over-working it.
I asked my friend, Col. Bill Clark, who has known all brands of men and has lived much in the West and South, what he understood by it, the Unwritten Law being more popular and more frequently invoked in those sections than with us in the East. A certain careless ease in corralling the Main Chance has during some years permitted to my friend a station of leisure and philosophy on Broadway, where it is often my pleasure to hold converse with him on my visits to the Big Town.

"Well, suh," said Col. Bill Clark, "I figure it out something like this, 'specially as I've seen the game played down in Texas. A man has a grudge against another man, no matter what; maybe it's money he owes him, or a crimp in politics, or a business juggle, or a hoss trade, or any of a hundred things that breed man-hate, or maybe it's just pure cussedness,—anyhow, suh, he makes up his mind to kill the man. So one fine mornin' he loads up his gun and says to his wife before leaving the house:— 'Mary, I'm going to kill Jim Smith for attempting your honor and trying to break up our happy home. Don't forget!'—

"And he strolls away and bags his game without any trouble, for nine times out of ten the poor devil he kills isn't looking for it and gets no chance to defend himself.

"Well, suh, the killer gives himself up and goes quietly to jail, looking sort o' sad and resigned, like as if it was a thing he had to do against his will. When the police ask him, 'For Gawd's sake, Tom, what fuss did you have with Jim Smith? Thought you were always the best of friends,' he just blurts out, 'Go and see my wife,—she will tell you all about it.' She does, too, and as dead men don't contradict, nor speak up for themselves, the jury takes her word for it, and her husband is freed by the Unwritten Law.

"It doesn't have to be a strong story, either," added Col. Bill, reflectively. "Why, I know of a case where a man killed another who, according to his wife, had got the better of her some fifteen years before,—a mighty long time to keep still about it, suh. Nobody believed it and everybody did believe that money was at the bottom of the affair, the killer being heavily in debt to the killed, as it turned out afterwards. But,
no matter, suh, the avenger of his wife's honor went neck-free. You couldn't get any other deal down Texas way."

I was pleased to find that Col. Clark's observation agrees with mine, viz., that cases where the Unwritten Law is justly pleadable are very rare indeed. In the West and South crimes against women are visited with swift and awful punishment. Now seduction without violence is one of the most difficult things in the world to bring about, for it almost necessarily implies the consent of both parties. Under the ordinary conditions of civilized society, a good woman is sufficiently protected by her own virtue. There is much truth in the old saw that trouble of this kind usually comes to those who look for it. And the curse of Cain weighs heavily enough upon us in this country,—leading the world as we do with our terrific and unparalleled Murder Crop,—without deepening the horror and judgment of it by our present epidemic of appeals to the Unwritten Law. . . .

Since the foregoing was written an honorable citizen of Virginia slaughtered a young man accused by his daughter of criminal assault, and was acquitted after a very brief trial. The case is notable from the fact that it was perhaps the first in which the Unwritten Law governed the issue without any pretence to the contrary. The learned trial judge did not make even a perfunctory salaam to the Statute of Homicide, and with true Virginian chivalry he ruled out all evidence which might tend to disprove the alleged assault. In his exalted view of the matter, the only pertinent question was, Did she accuse him to her father? If so, the jury had to decide whether the father was blameless in acting as he did, i.e., in snuffing out a human soul without notice or mercy. The jury with commendable promptitude agreed that he was blameless, and the venerable murderer stepped forth into light and freedom amid the applause of his neighbors and the numerous reporters and photographers of the press. It was a great day for Law and Order, and especially for the Honor of the Family, in Virginia.

Still, chivalry aside, here was a fine young man most brutally killed and the public is left in ignorance as to whether he deserved his death, even from the Southern point of view.
For imaginative or designing or hysterical or sexually de-
rang ed women have often told similar stories of assault, which
were afterwards disproved. Students of criminal phenomena
are well acquainted with this singular delusion to which women
of a certain temperament are often subject, and which is really
pathologic in character. There was a young woman, not long
ago, who brought suit against a man in the New York State
courts, alleging that he was the father of her child, and yet at
the same time denying that she had ever held sexual relations
with him—or with any other man! The case was thrown out
of court, the judge ruling that he was without jurisdiction as
to miracles.

If men are to be butchered on the mere say-so of women
who may be perverse or pathologic, then I suppose the Virgin-
ian idea of honor will do as well as any other. It can indeed
add something to the burden of scorn and contempt but noth-
ing to the load of guilt under which we lie as a people.

SOCIALISM

I DO not believe that, as some loose-thinking persons as-
sert, the present European War has made an end of the
movement called Socialism. I believe that it will be
found stronger after the great purgation and that its first duty
will be to efface the race hatreds created by this War. "Those
are mistaken," says Romain Rolland, "who think that the ideals
of a free human fraternity are at present stifled. They are but
silent under the gag of military and civil dictation which reigns
throughout Europe. But the gag will fall, and they will burst
forth with explosive vehemence."

For Socialism cannot be destroyed until it has been given a
fair trial; it is the next hope of mankind and perhaps the sole
portion of the disinherited. Whether it shall turn out to be an
ignis fatuus, a false light, like so many a beacon that has
shone along the toilsome path of humanity, I know not, but
sure am I that men will give it a trial. Socialism is to be!

There are many thousands of socialists who have never
turned a page of Karl Marx, never attended a socialist meeting
and who seem to stand outside the socialistic propaganda. This