

THE FREETHINKER.

REGISTERED FOR]

EDITED BY G. W. FOOTE.

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[PRICE ONE PENNY.

TO OUR READERS.

WE will not bore you with a long introductory address, containing a catalogue of promises that may never be kept. The *Freethinker* is an anti-Christian organ, and must therefore be chiefly aggressive. It will wage relentless war against Superstition in general, and against Christian Superstition in particular. It will do its best to employ the resources of Science, Scholarship, Philosophy and Ethics against the claims of the Bible as a Divine Revelation; and it will not scruple to employ for the same purpose any weapons of ridicule or sarcasm that may be borrowed from the armoury of Common Sense. During the summer months special attention will be given to the out-door advocacy of Free-thought. Our first number will give a fair idea of the style in which the paper will be conducted.

Any competent Christian will be allowed reasonable space in which to contest our views; and if fuller opportunity is desired, the editor will be always ready to hold a public debate with any clergyman, minister, or accredited representative of the other side.

SECULAR POLICY.

OUR Principles are purely and exclusively Secular; by which we mean such principles of human thought and action as the most critical investigation shows to be true: and the widest, longest, and most enlightened experience demonstrates to be useful to human society. All other principles we may be ready to weigh and to discuss; but we shall not adopt them until Free-thought and experience warrant them as true and useful.

Infallibility we do not claim for ourselves, but only for truth. And as we are fully convinced that all other claims to infallibility, whether on the part of persons, books or institutions, are nought but shams; that all "revelations" are false and also useless; that all false and useless things are real nuisances and hindrances to human advancement and happiness; we shall attack all such to the uttermost of our power.

Our principles belong entirely to the regions known and becoming known to man. What we know, others may know. We have no occult or mysterious sources of information, no profound secrets to hide from vulgar view. No Gods, angels, spirits, or devils have ever spoken to us. Indeed, we have not the remotest conception of what they are like nor who they are. We know only their names, as we know the names of fairies, pixies, peri, and goblins. Michael and Gabriel are no better known to us than Puck or Odin; Satan is as great a stranger as Pluto; and Jehovah as empty a name as Jupiter. Heaven is unknown to us, and so are Purgatory and Hell. The separate existence of the "soul" and the "future life" are to us inconceivable; and we believe that Christians are just as ignorant respecting them as we.

Since we regard all Theological doctrines as sheer superstition, we cannot draw any principles of thought or action therefrom. For us the "verities" of Christianity are all fables. Regarded as legitimate objects of thought, of hope, fear, and reverence, we ignore them; and merely attack and ridicule them as monstrous myths which have filled the world with fantastic hopes and horrible fears; have lent themselves as instruments and sanctions of the worst form of cruelty and tyranny; have roused the world to most unnatural strife; drenched the earth with seas of blood; and burnt the noblest of mankind to ashes for daring to think and speak as reason dictated.

Shaking off all Theological prejudices, we turn to nature as expounded by Science; to human society in its necessary elements and workings. From these we draw all our principles, freely availing ourselves of all that the world's Workers and Thinkers have secured and exhibited for the use of man. Whatever there is in human life which experience shows to be good and useful, that we adopt, and shall strive to elaborate and illustrate it, to render it better known, and more useful still. Whatever we may evolve by Free-thought, from present or future materials and elements, which may be of use to man, that also we shall recommend: as we shall all of the same description found and exhibited by others.

X.

MR. BRADLAUGH'S ADVISERS.

ADVICE can always be had for the asking, and frequently without being asked for at all. No commodity is more plentiful. Every man keeps an abundant stock of it, which he is always ready to dispense; and ignorance of the matter in hand is seldom thought to justify reticence. About their own affairs men are conscious of difficulty; they recognise the necessity of caution; and have to admit that in the complicated problems of life a practical decision often involves a departure from the strict line of principle on this side and on that. But when they deal with another man's affairs they make little, if any, allowance; they demand that he shall adhere to the principle which happens to be predominant in their minds, without any respect to other principles that may predominate in his; and if the following of their advice entails great sacrifice of fame or fortune, they prefer it all the more insistently, and even feel within their bosoms a virtuous glow, as if they had performed the sacrifice themselves instead of enjoining it on another.

Mr. Bradlaugh has just experienced the truth of this. Many highly disinterested persons who have access to newspapers have offered him excellent moral advice, although it does not seem that they are prepared to offer him anything else. He is to carry out their advice at his own cost; a vicarious practice of virtue which commends itself to them more forcibly than it does to Mr. Bradlaugh. He has already subjected himself to monstrous penalties through his adherence to the principle of affirmation, and by pursuing the same course after his re-election he would subject himself to further penalties. Yet this is what his virtuous advisers counsel him to do. Now it is but fair that these persons should be asked what contribution they have made towards the expenses he has already incurred, and what contribution they intend to make towards the expenses he may incur in the future. We are afraid this question would be unpleasant to them, and that a truthful reply to it would ill accord with their virtuous advice.

We are all agreed as to the injustice and folly of maintaining the oath; that is, we who think Mr. Bradlaugh is now practically justified in taking it, and those who say he is not. The Parliamentary oath has been so whittled down that anybody with any kind of God may take it. As Mr. Gladstone said, in his splendid speech for which all Free-thinkers are indebted, those who maintain the oath "cling to a narrow Theistic ledge;" and their test of legislative fitness is so absurdly devised that it would exclude all the Buddhist subjects of her Majesty and include all the Mohammedan. It is simply a relic of the tyrannous imposition of a dominant creed, and is upheld chiefly by those who represent in the present the worst traditions of the past.

Mr. Bradlaugh of course has no wish to take the oath, nor abstractly could he be justified in taking it. But practical life is not an abstraction, and public men have



often to reconcile contending duties. If Mr. Bradlaugh were attending to his private affairs, and were gratuitously demanded by authority to swear an oath, he would be morally bound to refuse and to take the consequences; and we have no doubt that he would do so with as much alacrity and fortitude as could be displayed by his present advisers. But that is not his situation. The problem he has definitely settled for himself is not so simple; on the contrary, it is very complex; and any decision he might form would certainly do violence to some public principle. He has wisely determined to adopt the course which promises least injury to any public interest.

From the list of Mr. Bradlaugh's advisers we select first the *Pall Mall Gazette*, a journal ably conducted by Mr. John Morley. It remarks:—

"Mr. Bradlaugh says that he hopes 'in this great battle I shall quit myself as better men have done before.' If he intends that, he should imitate their example, and refuse to take the oath. His refusal to comply with what he regards as a degrading formality and an unreal mockery would do more to abolish the oath than the Bill which he may introduce, but which, in the present state of public business, cannot be passed."

Now there is much exaggeration in this. Mr. Bradlaugh considers the oath "unmeaning" so far as its reference to God is concerned, but not otherwise; and he has never described it as "a degrading formality." The old oath "on the true faith of a Christian" was a degrading formality to Jews, because it implied a profession of faith which they had not; but the utterance of such words as "so help me God" has no more moral significance to Mr. Bradlaugh than saying Abracadabra or repeating the alphabet backwards. The degradation of his taking the oath lies entirely with those who prostitute religion by insisting on its terminology being used by unbelievers. The objectionable phrase is sacred to them, not to him, and they are responsible for its sinking to a "degrading formality." Since the question was first agitated they have had ample time to prevent this by passing a Bill to allow all objectors to the oath to affirm instead of taking it. But they have not chosen to do so, nor have they evinced any disposition to do so in the immediate future. Mr. Bradlaugh's course is therefore plain. He has cleared his conscience by the most emphatic statement of his convictions; and if the House of Commons insists on retaining the oath after all that has happened, he may take it, and his seat, with no more violation of conscience than if he had said "so help me Mumbo Jumbo" instead of "so help me God." The words are simply nonsense to him, and further protest against them at present is not worth the cost of time and money it would involve. Most of us have to put up with a good deal more nonsense in the course of our lives in order to avoid much smaller sacrifices.

The *Christian World* follows the same line of objection. It pays Mr. Bradlaugh some handsome compliments on his forensic ability, and then says that his latest decision "has lowered the whole discussion." It speaks of his "lending himself to a solemn farce," and says that he resolves to "submit to the ordeal for the sake of his seat." It does not occur to the *Christian World* that Mr. Bradlaugh owes a duty to the electors of Northampton as well as to the principle of objection to oaths, and that the course he has resolved on may appear to him the only practical solution of the difficulty. But even if he submitted to a little farcical procedure for the sake of his seat, who except a mere *doctrinaire* could censure him? The fruit of thirteen years' striving is not to be lightly risked by him who has won it, however much other people may regard even its total loss with perfect equanimity.

Another critic whose name we refrain from mentioning, as he labors under a horrible dread that he may be suspected of personal rivalry, recommends "consistency and honor, however much it may stand in the way of our interest or advancement." But we have clearly shown that Mr. Bradlaugh's personal interest is the smallest factor of the problem, and that if it be set aside altogether, his decision to take the oath may be justified as the only practical way of reconciling the principles at stake. The same critic is unable to see how Secularists will manage to hold up their heads after Mr. Bradlaugh's defection. This again is exaggeration. Our heads will not droop much, and we do not think the posture of the critic's cranium will be greatly affected.

The last critic we have space to mention says that "Mr. Bradlaugh's clear course was to have quietly sat down out-

side the door of the House until it was opened to him." What an eminently practical solution of the case! Mr. Bradlaugh squatting there would afford a comical sight to the members passing in and out. How he would obtain his meals we are unable to perceive, unless Mr. Sullivan brought him buns and Sir Wilfrid Lawson lemonade. Mr. Bradlaugh has fortunately avoided that alternative. He has resolved to take the oath as his last practical resource and we fail to see how he could have reasonably come to any other decision.

G. W. FOOTE.

ACID DROPS.

THE Chicago Sabbath Association has undertaken to enforce Sunday law in that city. Its circular characteristically says: "The complaint is not so much that people work on Sunday, but that they play. It is against sinful recreation that we are moving." Religious bigots are always incensed at seeing the profane enjoy themselves. Macaulay says that the Puritans abolished bear-baiting, not because it pained the bear, but because it gave pleasure to the spectators and the Chicago Sabbath Association is clearly animated by the same spirit. Should it ever issue a hymn-book it will of course include that delightful song, "Let us all be unhappy on Sunday."

SUNDAY play, however, is just what the Bible does not forbid; it only prohibits Sunday work. Cobblers may play the fiddle on the Sabbath or dance a jig, but they must mend boots. We are free to do whatever the Bible does not condemn. Scripture does not say we mustn't eat on the Lord's Day, so all good Christians eat. In like manner, it does not say we mustn't dance on the Lord's Day, so all good Christians may dance.

THERE'S nothing like faith. Dr. Hammond, in the *International Review*, said that he gave water from Lourdes to a pious patient, saying it was something else, and her symptoms were at once aggravated; but when he used common water, telling her it was from the miraculous spring, she at once improved. "Such tricks hath strong imagination," a Shakespeare says.

THE revised version of the New Testament will be the joint property of the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge. No doubt it will bring them in a handsome sum. If copy right were perpetual, as some insane authors wish, and Jesus Christ had secured the copyright of the Gospels to his own family for ever, what a splendid property it would be. Rénan originated this "happy thought."

THE new version will, it is said, differ materially from the old in numerous important passages; and it will be found that many people, perhaps the majority of every generation since the reign of James I., have entertained radically false ideas as to salvation, and have been going to hell without knowing it. The only consolation is that *Hell* is to be softened by the revisers into *Hades*.

MR. HARRY LONG, the rabid leader of the rabid Orange men of Glasgow, is reported to be persevering in his efforts to form a secret society of 2,000 "Knoxites," who will vote according to his instructions at the next School Board election in the city, in order to secure Protestant ascendancy in educational matters—in other words, to place Harry Long at the head of the poll. Humble Harry!

LORD CAIRNS is a pious Christian and a riotous Jingo and no doubt he has a profound belief in the injunction of his great Master that everybody without a sword should sell his clothes and buy one. He appeared on the platform of Exeter Hall, when it was inaugurated as the head-quarter of the Young Men's Christian Association, and delivered a "very solemn" address to the members and their friends on the transcendent importance of "individual personal knowledge of Christ as their savior." And that very same evening he made in the House of Lords his memorable Jingo speech, in which he actually "blushed" for the honor of England because the Government had concluded a reasonable peace with the Boers, instead of "vindicating the honor of our flag" by killing a lot of them before negotiating

His lordship's sermon in Exeter Hall and his shout for more blood in the House of Lords are edifying when taken together. Sceptics know what it all means as well as his lordship. They remember, as of course he does, Gibbon's gravely satirical statement that in Pagan times religions were held by the people as all equally true, by the philosopher as equally false, and by the statesman as equally useful. A religion useful to statesmen is almost sure to be pernicious to the people.

THE REV. C. BULLOCK, editor of *Home Words*, after spying horrible blasphemy in hot-cross-buns, proceeds to rebuke a number of his readers who have answered "Bible Questions" in an heretical spirit. "Most of the writers," says he, "seem to think it is open to them to pronounce an opinion on the Church's doctrines, forgetting that the Church is a divine institution, and that all divergence from her teaching is heresy, and all separation from her order is schism." This divine institution should support itself on miracles instead of annually consuming ten millions of our national wealth. The only infallibility about it is the dead certainty of finding most of its ministers fanatics or fools.

THE *Christian* warns all ministers of Christ not to steep themselves "in the fallacies of Matthew Arnold or the speculations of Herbert Spencer," lest they should let some of it out on Sunday. "Let us," adds the *Christian*, "have able ministers of the New Testament, and we can do without refutations of infidelity." That sagacious bird, the ostrich, sticks its head in the sands, but it leaves other vulnerable parts sufficiently exposed. Death overtakes it all the same, and the only result of its strategy is that it dies not with its face, but with a more ignoble part to the foe.

CHRIST, says Mr. Spurgeon, has not only undone all the mischief wrought by Adam, but he has done more; he has secured to us the freehold of a heavenly Paradise, which is infinitely better than the precarious tenure of that earthly Paradise enjoyed by our first parents. Yes, that is true enough for the elect; but how about the non-elect and damned? Christ hasn't done much for them. In the great theatre of the next world, Mr. Spurgeon has a seat booked among the gods, or at least in the upper circle. He ought to be thankful for his admission to such select company. But it is rather absurd for him to expect the same thankfulness from the unfortunate crowd stewing in the pit.

THE REV. ARTHUR MURSELL is a lover of very small jokes. He recently filled a column of the *Christian World* with a quantity of the dreariest little witticisms we ever saw. For instance, he opined that "the Corporation of Northwich must be lineal descendants of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram," because their houses, being situated over salt mines, have a constant tendency to sink into the earth. The joke is infinitesimal, and below the mental level of a pious tea-meeting. But its blasphemy is simply atrocious. Here is a professed believer in the Bible who makes fun of one of its most startling instances of divine retribution. Arthur Mursell is a Baptist, yet he allows himself to crack a feeble joke about dip candles. How can such men expect others to believe in their sincerity when they thus make light of what they represent as sacred? We advise Arthur Mursell, if he must perpetrate small puns and jokes, to speak them and not print them. He is in his proper element when discoursing to a Birmingham crowd on a sensational subject like "Whispers to Wives," but beyond that we reckon him as very small fry. Let him stick to his last.

"WERE you ever a Pantheist?" enquired a correspondent of Thomas Carlyle. "No," replied the sage, "never was; nor a Pot-Theist either."

THE *Church Review* says that "for the dunce and the dullard the Church is materially and commercially as good a career as he could choose."

"WILL you walk into my parlor?" said the spider to the fly. The same sweet tune was sung by Mrs. Fletcher, a Spiritist medium, to Mrs. Hart-Davies, a lady anxious for tidings from her dead mother. With wonderful celerity the victim was fleeced; her jewels, rare lace, and other valuables were transferred to the disinterested medium, who conveyed messages of advice to that effect from the spirit-world.

Judge Hawkins has sentenced Mrs. Fletcher to twelve months' imprisonment with hard labor, and however potent the spirits are, we don't think they will succeed in getting her out of gaol before the term expires. The revelations made during the trial were highly edifying. The "brotherly hugs," the "scrunching kisses," and other endearments between the plaintiff and the defendant's husband, combined with the fraud which was so daringly practised, sufficiently indicates the moral atmosphere in which all the parties moved. Modern Spiritism is a strange compound of credulity, fraud, and sensuality. "Sex," as the Spiritists call it, is always coming to the front; and is there a medium who hasn't been condemned by the law or by rival practitioners for trickery and cheating? We recommend all persons in the incipient stage of Spiritist disease to read Robert Browning's "Sludge the Medium." If after reading that wonderful poem they still show a disposition to be duped, they must e'en go to perdition in their own way, for nothing short of a miracle could save them.

PROFESSOR FISKE has a very poor opinion of Joseph Cook. In the *North American Review* he says that Joseph's books contain "little else but misrepresentation of facts, misconception of principles, and floods of tawdry rhetoric."

A WESLEYAN minister of Sheffield has invented a Torpedo-boat Exploder. He is a proficient in the blowing-up business. Perhaps he wants to people heaven a little faster

THE Rev. Canon Clarke has contributed some Jingo doggerel to the *St. James's Gazette*. He tells us that

"England's flag and 'scutcheon
Are covered with disgrace."

This is because our Government wouldn't murder more Afghans and Boers. Canon Clarke is a worthy minister of the Prince of Peace.

SECULARISM in Edinburgh has a good deal of bigotry to contend with. Mr. Alexander Orr, the Society's secretary, secured a book-stall in the Waverley Market some time ago, and did a roaring business in Freethought literature, until the authorities became alarmed and turned him out. The Sunday lectures used to be advertised in the *Scotsman* among the Church Notices, but the clericals resented this, and they now appear among the Public Amusements. Quite recently the editor refused to insert one of Dr. Aveling's subjects, "The Wickedness of God," which, it must be admitted, is pretty strong for such a pious city as Edinburgh. The Doctor, however, threatens to post it on the walls in the biggest letters next time he goes there.

THE *Leeds Mercury*, edited by that pink of perfection, T. Wemyss Reid, makes a great boast of its Liberalism, but it persistently refuses to advertise the subjects of Freethought lectures delivered in that town, although it is not above taking money for announcing where and when they may be heard.

PROFESSOR BRUCE, of Glasgow, has just delivered at the Presbyterian College, London, a series of lectures on Revelation. In one of these, speaking of the miracles of Christ, he said that they "were all useful, morally significant, and beneficent works." Now, we should just like Professor Bruce to show us the utility, moral significance, and beneficence of the following miracles:—First, the cursing of the fig-tree for not bearing fruit out of season; second, the turning of a large quantity of water into wine at the marriage feast in Cana of Galilee after the guests were already well on; and third, the casting of those devils into the herd of Gadarean swine, without compensating the owners whose pigs were drowned. When Professor Bruce has shown the beauty and holiness of these miracles, we will supply him with a few more.

TALMAGE says that the welfare of your father, mother, wife, children, or friends, is nothing compared with your own salvation. Yet this clerical mountebank tells us that Christianity is the pure Gospel of love.

JOHN STUART MILL once sneered at pious people who couldn't teach the multiplication table without reference to the number of Jacob's sheep. What would he think of the idiot who wrote the following rubbish, which we cut from a Christian paper of wide circulation?

"Now, have you got down the number of Baal's prophets? Well, subtract from these the number of people on board the ship that was cast on the island of Melita. You know Paul was one of them. Subtract from this number Jacob's age when he died. Add the number of provinces over which Ahasuerus reigned. Subtract the number of parts into which the 119th Psalm is divided. Multiply by the number of men who drew water for David from the well at Bethlehem. Add Abraham's age when he died. Subtract the number of cities that Solomon gave Hiram. Add the number of stripes Paul received on any one occasion from the Jews. Subtract Sarah's age at the time of her death. Subtract the number of prophets whom Obadiah hid in the cave. Add one to the number of times Paul was shipwrecked, and then add the result to the last product. Add the number of men Gideon led against the Midianites. Multiply the age of Uzziah when he ascended the throne, by the days in which Jonah said Nineveh would be destroyed, and add the result to the above. Subtract from this the years in which Abraham was told his descendants should be afflicted. Add one to the age of Zedekiah when he ascended the throne, and add the result of the previous answer. You will then have the number of chapters in the Old Testament."

Children who are made to waste their time over such nonsense are certainly being prepared for Colney Hatch.

CANON LIDDON the other Sunday referring to Carlyle, intimated that Christians found a painful lesson "in the bearing of this great and gifted man in the presence of death. In the Reminiscences just published we saw him all through his pages face to face with the terrible mysteries of human existence, and bearing the load with a long-suppressed wail of agony. One could but regret that a man so rightful and true should have thus forfeited the supreme consolation of the simple believer." This style of fastening the responsibilities attaching to dyspepsia and theistic pessimism on lack of faith in the Christian mythus, is ingenious after the clerical fashion, but it can only impose on an audience in St. Paul's. Canon Liddon could not be expected to appreciate the argument that Carlyle's error lay in not carrying his Scepticism far enough. But he might fairly be asked (1) whether he thinks many Christians could support an unurmuring faith during threescore and ten years of dyspepsia? and (2) how he accounts for the fact that Mr. Ruskin, who is understood not only to believe, like Mr. Carlyle, in a future life, but in the redemptory functions of Jesus Christ, has been, if anything, a more miserable man than Mr. Carlyle?

SUGAR PLUMS.

AMERICA is perhaps the freest country in the world, not only in a legal but also in a social sense; and there can be no doubt that much of the world's future lies there in germ. Dr. Darwin approves the Rev. Mr. Zincke's opinion that all the past history of mankind is of meaning and importance only in relation to the great stream of emigration from the old world to the new. Yet in the first of his "Latter-Day Pamphlets," published thirty-one years ago, Thomas Carlyle sneered at Americans in a most outrageously cynical manner. "What have they done?" he growled. "They have doubled their population every twenty years. They have begotten, with a rapidity beyond recorded example, Eighteen Millions of the greatest *boces* ever seen in this world before." Yet Carlyle's will, recently published, speaks of them in a far different tone. He confesses to "a variety of kindly feelings, obligations, and regards towards New England," and recognises "with gratitude how much of friendliness, of actually credible human love, I have had from that country, and what immensities of worth and capability I believe and partly know to be lodged, especially in the silent classes there." On the whole, Carlyle's ideas of America approximate very closely to those of Walt Whitman, whose democratic fervour no one will doubt; and it may interest some of those who feel that Carlyle was at bottom a fierce enemy of all remains of the old order of things essentially opposed to the new, that Whitman accounts him "the most serviceable democrat of our age," and doubts if any country in the world has one to show like him.

THE *Christian World* pays a high tribute to Mr. Bradlaugh's forensic ability. It says that he "displayed more than his wonted sagacity and skill in conducting his own case, and it is acknowledged that he showed himself fully

equal to the task of grappling even with so able and experienced an advocate as Sir Hardinge Giffard."

IN addition to the increasingly wide circulation given to the writings of Herbert Spencer, Matthew Arnold, Professor Clifford, and others whose works have an analogous tendency, Mr. Bradlaugh and the London secularist societies are actively supplying India and the colonies with pseudo-philosophical and quasi-scientific literature intended to promote scepticism in regard to religion. Translations of such papers into the dialects of India are also circulated; the colonial press is being used with a similar purpose, and the ill effects are already apparent.—*The Christian*.

MR. BRADLAUGH has been again returned as member for Northampton. His majority was small, but the victory was signal, for he had to contend against the most unscrupulous appeals to theological bigotry. The vast majority of Nonconformist voters were nobly superior to such appeals, and steadily adhered to the principles of civil and religious liberty. By their aid Mr. Bradlaugh won, as he himself gratefully acknowledges. As for the Nonconformist Whigs who ratted and voted for the Tory candidate, they have done the Devil's work without getting his wages.

COLONEL INGERSOLL is to visit England soon. The Freethinkers here will give him a hearty welcome.

W. L. SUGDEN has already issued a second edition of the Colonel's "What Must I do to be Saved?" The sale of Freethought literature has immensely increased during the last few years.

AFTER one of Professor Calderwood's lectures on religion in Edinburgh last month, Mrs. Harriet Law was permitted to offer some opposition, which was courteously replied to.

CHRISTIAN missionaries in India have to confront a serious rival. At Lucknow there is a large establishment, employing 800 men, for lithographing various editions of the Koran. Another establishment at Cawnpore employs 300 men. It is said that an alarm will be sounded at the forthcoming missionary meetings.

MOODY AND SANKEY, who are coming to England again in September, have experienced very great difficulty in San Francisco, owing to the sceptical spirit which prevails there. The inhabitants of that Western metropolis prefer Paine and Ingersoll to Moses and the Evangelists.

THE Rev. Newman Hall says: "Throughout this country, in all denominations, there is the sorrowful admission that the progress of the Church does not keep pace with the population. There is a diminished attendance at public worship; there are fewer admissions to Christian fellowship."

A PIOUS YARN.

THE *Christian Herald* is distinguished for its fine stories about Freethinkers who get converted by little children, or some such slender agency; who get ignominiously routed by weak adversaries; or who die howling in despair. Its number for April 13th contains the following yarn:—

"An infidel's loss of a sovereign recently happened while a gentleman was preaching out of doors in the City Road, London. The objector frequently interrupted in the most noisy and insulting manner, by declaring that he did not believe in the Bible or in God. A tall Irishman present exclaimed, "What do you know about the Bible? Here" (putting his hand in his pocket and pulling out a *sovereign*), "I will give you this to repeat a dozen verses from any part of it. You can't; I knew you couldn't! You shall have it for six! Not yet, eh? You shall have it for four! Not that, either? I'll show you up, my boy; faix, you shall have it for *two*!" But the infidel was speechless, and amid the jeers of the audience confessed by his shame and silence how truly the Irishman had judged him."

Now we thoroughly believe this to be an editorial concoction. Still, it may be true; and we invite the editor to authenticate it; in which case the sum which the vanquished infidel did not earn shall be handed over by us to the *Christian Herald* circulation fund, or devoted to some equally pious purpose.

CORRESPONDENCE.

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WE shall be obliged if our readers will send us any newspapers or cuttings likely to be serviceable.

W. L. S.—Thanks for your subscription for three copies. The gratuitous distribution of a few copies every month will materially aid our circulation.

J. R.—“Acid Drops” and “Sugar Plums” are, of course, not sublime phrases, but there is no harm in them. The public now-a-days is in a great hurry, and you must attract its attention before you can be heard.

The Quarterly Meeting of the Central London Branch of the National Secular Society will be held in the Hall of Science, Old Street, E.C., on Sunday, May 1st, after the evening lecture. Mr. G. W. Foote will preside. A full attendance of members is desired, as there will be much important business to transact.

BIBLE BIOGRAPHY.

ADAM.—This gentleman was the first that ever lived; his father's name was God (Luke iii., 38), and his mother was the earth or the ground (Genesis ii., 7). Adam was made, or begotten, or manufactured, or born, or produced twice at least. In the first instance he was made the same day with his wife, viz., on the first Saturday that ever dawned; and after this gigantic effort the creator dropped work, “rested and was refreshed” (Exodus xxxi., 17) during the first of Sundays, and has, we believe, done no work to speak of since.

At his first creation Adam found the world prepared for him. As Hood, one of his late descendants sung, he came

“tenderly ushered in
To a prospect all bright and burnished:
No tenant he for life's back slums—
He comes to the world, as a gentleman comes
To a lodging ready furnished.”

There was the earth, in all its vastness of glory, furnished with a crystalline roof (time, alas! has destroyed it long since), in which were fixed the sun, moon, and stars—now, sad to say, left to wander through space as they best can, with no firmament to hold them fast! What would the astronomer of to-day give to gaze upon the world as our first father saw it! Over head that beautiful sapphire vault, roof at once of the lower world and floor of the musicians of the gods! What a pity it was ever permitted to decay! Had it been kept in proper repair the theologian might confound his sceptical foes by merely pointing upwards, and dramatically crying, “Behold!”

When Adam first opened his eyes upon the vegetable world no parasites were found anywhere, and a fungus had never a chance to grow. The leaves of the trees grew, but never decayed; the blossoms consolidated into fruit, the fruit ripened; but it never fell. The animals, too, were in a most extraordinary state. The lion played with the lamb, and the cat with the mouse; if the hawk chased the sparrow it was merely in fun; and the veriest cormorant to be found would as soon have dreamt of swallowing a crow-bar as a fish. In those days, all beasts of prey browsed in the meadows; and the whales and sharks grew fat upon nought but sea-weeds. Then it was that tigers had neither fangs nor claws, the wasps no stings, the serpents no poison; mosquitoes had not yet left their eggs, the locusts had never begun to devour, and phylloxera and the Colorado beetle had never cast murderous eyes upon vine, grape or potato.

These were delightful times when our first parents sunned themselves in “Eden's bonny yard,” untroubled by the thought of debt or danger, untrammelled with skirts or pantaloons, big, romping babies, that they were, the very image of their father!

But Adam's second Advent was different. In the first instance he was made, but of what material we know not; when he was made the second time it was of dust (Genesis ii., 7). Whether the dust was moistened and worked up with water, like plaster of Paris, is not said. A modern man consists chiefly of water; Adam's one element was dust. Whether it was stone dust, or clay dust, or saw dust, or gold dust, or diamond dust, or brick dust, or coal dust or a

mingling of them, we cannot say. Divine wisdom has not seen fit to enlighten us further than to condescend to inform us that our first father was made of the dust of the ground; and as the dust of the ground differs so in different regions, we must leave the solution of this interesting problem till the Great Day, when the whole of his descendants will, no doubt, rush to him simultaneously and exclaim, “Oh! Reverend sire, out of what dust did thy creator form thee?” Adam's reply must, I am sorry to add, be postponed *sine die*.

As Adam consisted of dust, and as sons and fathers are usually of the same material, I presume it is but logical to infer that Adam's father—or God—was also of the dust. One thing is certain, he has been turned to dust or something less substantial for many ages; and his worshippers can no more find a relic of his than they can one of Eve's hair-pins.

When Adam was made on this second occasion, and the dust was worked up into its required form, proportions, symmetry, and consistency, his maker “breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and man (Adam) became a living soul.” The result must be pronounced wonderful and altogether different from what might have been expected. It must be remembered that he breathed into Adam, that is, the creator breathed *out of himself* or expired his own breath; and that breath would have poisoned Adam if he had been previously alive, for it must have been highly charged with carbonic acid. So it appears that what would kill a live man will make a dead man live.

Of course, we should not believe this story if we found it in Homer—unless we had been coaxed to believe it by a promise of heaven or frightened to it by a threat of hell; but seeing it is in the Bible, and reflecting that we must be damned if we doubt it, it seems safest to believe it.

When God the second time created Adam, he certainly did not improve upon his work; for this time Adam found the earth bare; he himself was the very first living thing created. When he awoke to life there was nothing to eat, no one to speak to. A little later he saw a garden rise suddenly around him, and then beasts, and birds, and insects crowded into life. But none of them suited him, though the creator seems to have tempted him to amalgamate with beasts. The Lord God thought it not good for Adam to be alone, and so gave him a sleeping draught of extra power, and while he lay in deep repose, proceeded to vivisect him. Opening the side of the sleeper, the surgeon-creator extracted a rib, and then stitched up the wound, leaving Adam a lighter if not a wiser man. Of the extracted rib the creator now made a woman. When Adam's skeleton is dug up it may easily be identified by being a rib short.

Here we face a decided difficulty. If Adam was ordinary man, a rib of his would make but a very small woman, and merely a *bone* woman after all. A woman so small must have been a very poor “help meet” for Adam, even if consisting of bones and flesh and all things human; and a woman of bone, whatever her size or shape, must have been of far less value than one of ivory, not to mention marble or the precious metals.

This, however, is merely a sceptical difficulty, and decidedly dangerous. We prefer sticking to God's holy word, though we cannot tell how a rib, no more than a pound or so in weight, could become a woman, weighing 140 lbs. For if the rest of the material was taken from some other place, then manifestly only one one hundred-and-fortieth part of Eve was due to that rib; and, therefore, the Lord God did not make that extracted rib a woman, as the story avers. It would have required all Adam's ribs and nearly all the rest of him to make a woman of respectable proportions as compared with himself. Still it is better to believe than be damned.

J. SYMES.

(To be concluded.)

SHAKESPEARE ON THE OATH QUESTION.

Most of the great writers of our literature have reprobated oaths altogether, in Parliament and outside; and especially the great poets, who always reflect the truest and humanest spirit of the nation. Beginning with Coleridge, we might give a long list of these; but we shall go at once to our supreme poet, and the master-mind of our race. Shakespeare makes one gentleman a great stickler for his oath. When Portia asks Shylock to be merciful he piously replies—

An oath, an oath, I have an oath in heaven :
Shall I lay perjury upon my soul ?
No, not for Venice.

This scrupulous gentleman's oath was to have a pound of flesh from Antonio. His oath was only a minister to his revenge, and it was ultimately disregarded for profit when revenge could not be obtained. Now let us take a very different case. When the conspirators are met at the house of Brutus to determine the death of Cæsar, and Cassius says "let us swear our resolution," what answer makes "the noblest Roman of them all" ?—

No, *not an oath* : if not the face of men,
The sufferance of our souls, the time's abuse—
If these be motives weak, break off betimes,
And every man hence to his idle bed ;
So let high-sighted tyranny rage on,
Till each man drop by lottery. But if these,
As I am sure they do, bear fire enough
To kindle cowards and to steel with valor
The melting spirits of women, then, countrymen,
What need we any spur but our own cause
To prick us to redress? what other bond
Than secret Romans, that have spoke the word,
And will not palter? and *what other oath*
Than honesty to honesty engaged,
That this shall be, or we will fall for it?
Swear priests and cowards and men cautelous,
Old feeble carrions and such suffering souls
That welcome wrongs; unto bad causes swear
Such creatures as men doubt: but do not stain
The even virtue of our enterprise,
Nor the insuppressive metal of our spirits,
To think that on our cause or our performance
Did need an oath; when every drop of blood
That every Roman bears, and nobly bears,
Is guilty of a several bastardy
If he do break the smallest particle
Of any promise that hath passed from him.

After this "high-inspired" protest from the august sovereign of English literature, and therefore the spiritual monarch of our race, we may surely dismiss the pretended utility of oaths as no longer credible except to the ignorant and superstitious.

OUTDOOR ADVOCACY.

THE Central London Branch of the National Secular Society intends to carry on the open-air propaganda vigorously during the summer months, and in our next number we hope to give a good account of its work. Two conferences have been held of delegates from the metropolitan societies, one on March 20th, the other on April 17th; and a plan of operation has been agreed on, which is expected to be very successful. Other Conferences will be held from time to time as the need arises. The open-air stations will be at the Midland Arches, Gibraltar Walk, Clerkenwell Green, Victoria Park, and Mile End Road. As the season advances other stations may be included. Societies throughout the country should emulate the example of those in London. During the summer it is often difficult to induce people to enter close lecture-halls, especially when the platform is not occupied by a professional lecturer. It would, therefore, be well to go out of doors, and find the people there, and preach Secular sermons from the mount. The following is a list of the out-door lectures to be delivered during May:—

OPEN-AIR PROPAGANDA.

LECTURERS FOR MAY.

STATION AND TIME.	1	8	15	22	29
GIBRALTAR WALK, ...11.15	Grout	Norrish	Fagan	Haslam	Ramsey
VICTORIA PARK, 3.30	Norrish	Fagan	Haslam	Norrish	Grout
MILE END,11.15	Fagan	Ramsey	Norrish	Thurlow	Fagan
CLERKENWELL GREEN 11.30	Moss	Haslam	Foot	Ramsey	Grout
MIDLAND ARCHES, ...11.30	Haslam	Moss	Grout	Job	Moss

EARL BEACONSFIELD.

THE great Hebrew-English statesman is dead. His funeral panegyric may be found in the newspapers. Here we have no concern with his politics. In religion he was a professed Christian, but blood is thicker than water, and he always yearned towards the Semitic creed of his fathers. He frequently sneered at Christianity as a *parvenu* religion compared with Judaism; and he

attained to the cynical sublime in his "Life of Lord Bentinck," when he suggested in a footnote that Judas Iscariot deserved a monument instead of reprobation, as without his betrayal Jesus Christ would never have been crucified. No doubt Benjamin Disraeli laughed in his sleeve at the idea of poor Jesus Christ wandering about the earth, old and decrepid, vainly beseeching somebody to kill him for the benefit of mankind, and finally being obliged to commit suicide in order to end the dreary business.

JOSEPH COOK.

BOSTON, as every one should know, is the intellectual hub of the universe. Joseph Cook tells us how the operator at an establishment for the shortening of the hair in that city can discuss, even with him, its most profound philosopher and theologian, the latest article on philosophy; and an authority almost as reliable surmises that the radiation of superabundant phosphorus from the crania of the guardians of the night will in time enable the city to dispense with being lighted by the aid of black cats and sticks of sealing-wax. Boston not only does the thinking for the United States, but is prepared, on short notice, to supply the old world with orators and thinkers who will, for a consideration, solve any problem that demands explication. When, in these days of the minute sub-division of labor, a shop-keeping nation whose thoughts are mainly absorbed in its ledgers and leaderettes, wakes up to the fact that the relations of religion and science are somewhat entangled, it as naturally looks to Boston for their reconciliation as to China for tea or to Egypt for lentils. Joseph Cook had been advertised on the covers of his published Boston lectures as having "carried off the prizes at Harvard as often as his sensitive conscience would allow him to contest them," and as coming forward "as a leader of the religious thought of the nation, and as one armed at all points to resist assaults upon the faith." He was popularly supposed to have quelled infidelity in Boston. Before his prowess Emerson and Theodore Parker had fallen. J. F. Clarke, O. B. Frothingham, and T. W. Higginson began to sing small. Colonel Bob Ingersoll meditated caving in and joining the Shakers, and Parker Pillsbury pusillanimously refused to fight on the pitiful plea that "You can't strike the ding out of a cow-bell." So the cow-bell was brought over. In other words, Joseph Cook, the new broom specially prepared at Andover to sweep out the on-rushing tide of Agnosticism, was hired to lecture in England. Joseph Cook had told his American auditors how in this country Unitarianism was a bar to a man's getting into Parliament. Yet, at the last election, a notorious Atheist had been returned, and, we are now happy to add, twice returned, despite his Atheism. Evidently something required to be done. Bible Defence Associations, Christian Evidence Societies, etc., notwithstanding their funds and prestige, find the tide swelling higher and higher, threatening to carry away the old landmarks and engulf Church and Dissent alike in one measureless sea of contempt. But, alas! we fear, as far as infidels are concerned, this new great doubt-dispeller has not been able to dispel the doubts of his own pretensions. Infidels found only the same bounce and bluster which they had read in the Boston Monday lectures. They found the same pretentious enunciation of strategic positions, the same disorderly catalogue of inconsequent propositions, the same muster of names in default of an array of arguments; Beale placed before Darwin and Lotze pitted against Haeckel; the same pseudo-scientific expressions and experiments; the same mixture of mist from Germany and offal from the dissecting-room; the same rot, and dry-rot too—in short, the same lectures; the tawdry rhetoric now accompanied with histrionic gestures rendering the play-acting nature of the performance more palpable.

Meantime, Professor Fiske has basely taken advantage of Joseph's absence to send a criticism of his performances to the *North American Review* under the title of "Theological Charlatanism," and the Professor finds in the ready acceptance of the charlatan an evidence of the sad straits into which orthodoxy has fallen. In common with many who earn their bread by the wag of their tongues, Joseph Cook has to make a little matter go a long way; so England was not only treated to his Boston lectures, but often to the same lecture under different titles. Now, as THE FREETHINKER means to prove there is nothing like variety to meet the taste of all parties, and as there are certainly a few difficulties remaining in the orthodox faith, we would humbly

suggest to Mr. Cook a few subjects which from their semi-scientific character will, we think, suit the bent of his genius, and may carry out his statement that "it was divinely intended that there should be a sifting of Christianity in this last age and that a defeat of doubt should be the result:—

1. The mean average temperature of the lake of fire and the time it takes to get used to it.
2. The moral influence of the story of Lot and his daughters.
3. New readings from the Song of Solomon illustrated with dissolving views.
4. What Moses saw in the cleft of the rock when the Lord passed by.
5. The marks of design in parasites.
6. How Joshua stopped the sun.
7. Biblical asses, including Balaam's and those that went to Joseph with his brethren.

When Joseph has taken up some such subjects as these we may have something more to say to him.

THE ARROGANCE OF MODERN SCEPTICISM.

UNDER this heading Mr. Francis Peek, understood to be one of the proprietors of the *Contemporary Review*, discourses in the pages of that periodical in a manner altogether touching to the freethinking mind. It is perhaps not unwarrantable to remark that proprietorship is the main qualification Mr. Peek has to show for writing in a leading review. What he chiefly succeeds in proving is that he is very angry; though he certainly does that in a manner that has the not unimportant literary merit of *naïveté*. If Mr. Peek is to be taken as a fair specimen of the orthodox laity, it is to be inferred that—to borrow a religious expression—the iron has entered the soul of orthodoxy. The comparatively new experience of being treated with ill-disguised contempt by men of undeniable literary eminence, stirs it to wrath which vents itself in excited "protests" like Mr. Peek's. It would be interesting to know, however, what such defenders of the faith hope to effect by protesting. Do they expect that Mr. Leslie Stephen and Professor Huxley will take warning, and hereafter speak respectfully of the occupants of pulpits? It is with pain that we assure Mr. Peek there is little prospect of such a consummation. He has shown, by quoting Professor Huxley at second-hand, that he is acquainted with that thinker's writings through quotations in other writers' review-articles, but in his general reading he must have met with a good many utterances indicating the arrogance of orthodoxy. He can hardly expect that after Christians have for centuries insulted Freethinkers, the latter, who have never professed to offer the cheek to the smiter, should remain timidly silent when they feel the balance of opinion daily altering in their favor. They have too long endured the contumely of fox-hunting squires, the pity of well-meaning Liberal statesmen, the abuse of un-Christlike priests, and the insolence of itinerating American lecturers. Orthodoxy has had its day of supremacy. If Mr. Peek, like Mr. Tubbs, feels "hurt," he can do his cause little good by announcing the fact. What he had better do is to abstain from reading not only freethinking review-articles, but articles in which Freethinkers are criticised and quoted from. In this way may be attained an intellectual "Nirvana" free from vexation.

THE A. B. C. OF FREETHOUGHT.

THE phenomenon of the month of May, 1881, for Freethinkers, as for churchmen, will be the appearance of the Revised Version of the New Testament. No doubt it is rash thus to take it for granted that, after repeated failures of the authorities concerned to produce their handiwork at dates named, they will finally succeed in keeping their word, but a Freethinker may be pardoned an occasional lapse into incompletely justifiable faith. The feelings which this phenomenon excites in the spectator from the Freethought standpoint, will probably be pleasurable or pungent, according as he is Spencerianly philosophical in all his ways or humanly prone to sarcasm. For various reasons it might be questioned whether the former attitude is always preferable on purely secular grounds. What Voltaire, in his

brief narrative of the misfortunes of Memnon, calls "the insane project of being perfectly wise," is really too like the attitude of orthodoxy in this very business of the Revised Version. That is the summing up of it. After rubbing along for all these years with a translation which had what Butler could surely prove to be the merit of being fully in harmony with the very badly-constructed system of religion it embodies, English-speaking Christendom has at length, after much toil, put together a translation which shall, according to the popular clerical phraseology, present the Divine Word unclouded by any of the mistakes of fallible man. Freethinkers have hitherto constituted the bulk of the select few among the millions of English-speaking Christians who knew with some clearness the extent of these mistakes, and they are, therefore, debarred from sharing in that sense of the queerness of the Divine Word in its naked purity, which, it may be presumed, will force itself on a number of Nothingarians who will to some extent read the Scriptures in the New Version under the influence of curiosity. It may not be extravagant to assume that a few persons of that thriving class may acquire, further, two new notions, viz.:—First, the significance of the fact that the Church now admits the existence of untold and vital flaws in the body of writings she has for two centuries placed before the people as the authentic "God's truth"; Second, that the Church is virtually indebted for this purification of her precious Word to the activity of those very sceptics whom she has always regarded as the contaminators of society. Only the Freethinker, however, can take note of that truly instructive proof of the tendency and value of the system—the fact, namely, that generations of orthodoxy have produced a class of intelligences which regard a revised translation with aversion.

Only the Freethinker, too, can see all the unconscious humor of the air with which orthodoxy-made-flesh lays a "revised translation" before a world in which Bishop Colenso and M. Renan, Matthew Arnold and Charles Darwin, Professor Huxley and Herbert Spencer, live and speak. At this stage of progress the act has really a startling significance. It will hereafter be told of ecclesiasticism that it used stone knives in its mummeries when men skinned their goats with metal cutlery, and that it believed it combated scepticism in the year 1881 of the Christian era with a corrected translation of a select few of the heterogeneous second-hand manuscripts pored over by (comparatively) early Christians. Shall we say that the clergy, true to their remarkable function of supplying the community with the very sublimation of human falsehood as the "highest truth," have made a really moral effort to produce the falsehood unadulterated? Shall we say that, in systematically and openly accepting the result of two centuries' grammatical and other elementary criticism they have proved that they have mastered the A. B. C. of Freethought? Or, remembering how thousands of them avow their absolute rejection of entire portions of the Bible in any guise whatever, while they read these very portions regularly to congregations, half of which believe it all blindly: remembering all this, shall we ask ourselves whether our reverend instructors in the "highest truth" have yet learned anything in a sub-department of truth which they specially affect—whether, in short, they have yet mastered the A. B. C. of morality? Well, it is perhaps time to revert to the Spencerian attitude.

PROFANE JOKES.

A FATHER and his boy were looking out of window while the former discoursed on religion. Presently a drunkard reeled by. "Dad," said the boy, "did God make that man?" "Yes Tom."—"Well, dad," replied the boy, "I wouldn't have done it."

AN ironmonger took his boy for a country walk. "Father," said young hopeful, "is hell as big as that field?"—"Bigger my lad."—"Is it as big as all these fields put together?"—"Yes, my lad, and bigger than that."—"I say, father, wouldn't you like to get the contract for the fender?"

AN Englishman was boasting to a Yankee that they had a book in the British Museum which was once owned by Cicero. "Oh, that ain't nothin'," retorted the Yankee; "In the Museum in Bosting they've got the very same lead pencil that Noah used to check off the animals that went into the ark."

"THERE is no peace on this side of the grave," said a distinguished clergyman, when preaching at the grave of a friend.

"Well, old chap," said a jolly Jack tar. "you can come over on this side, we are quiet enough here."

An old sailor, who had visited every portion of the world, was once taken in hand by a pious old fellow who sought to get a few interesting points from him relative to portions of the Holy Land. There were quite a number of ladies and gentlemen present, and during the conversation he asked him, "Mr. Spicer, what were your impressions of Jerusalem?" "Jerusalem? Jerusalem's the meanest, one-horse town that I ever saw. You can't get a drop of good liquor in the whole confounded place."

A COLORED brother in a Virginia church prayed at the close of a white brother's sermon: "Lord, bress de brudder to whom we has listened to so patiently."

ASTRIDE a log sat Sam and another sinner, engaged in a little game of seven-up, when a minister approached, who, after a solemn contemplation of the game, laid his hand upon Samuel's shoulder and said: "My friend, is that the way to save your soul?" "Perhaps not," answered Sam, who having just played a card, was attentively considering the hand: "perhaps not, but it seems about the best thing I can do to save my Jack."

A MOTHER was explaining the origin of things to her little daughter. Having been told that God made the earth, the child asked, "Who made God?" When her mother hesitated a moment for an answer, the child said, "I suppose he just blistered right out!"

REVIEWS.

The True Source of Christianity; or, A Voice From the Ganges. By AN INDIAN OFFICER. (London: Freethought Publishing Company.) (1s.)—This is a reprint of a very scarce work, and although naturally not abreast with the latest scholarship, is nevertheless valuable to all who are interested in the question which it treats. We notice that the author, in his introduction, erroneously represents the famous Rabbi Hillel, at whose death Jesus was only ten years old, as having "flourished at the end of the second century"; and the work may contain some other inaccuracies. But in the main it is trustworthy, and no one can doubt the author's conscientious spirit. He gives a thorough analysis of the Gospels, and shows how they differ from each other and from authentic history; traces the obligations of Christianity to Pagan and Rabbinical teaching, and the close resemblance of many of its doctrines to the tenets of the Essenes; examines the prophetic claims of the Evangelists on behalf of Christ; and freely criticises, although in no ungenerous spirit, the moral and religious ideas of Christ himself. He does all this with considerable aid from authoritative scholars, and his numerous quotations will be especially valuable to the amateur champions of Freethought in their contests with the representatives of Christianity. We cordially recommend this little volume of 138 pages, which is one of the cheapest shilling's-worths we have yet seen.

What Must I Do To Be Saved? A Discourse by COLONEL ROBERT G. INGERSOLL. Second edition (3d.). See advertisement.—This handsome bijou edition of the great American Freethought orator's humorous, pathetic and eloquent discourse on an all-important question, reflects great credit on the taste and enterprise of Mr. W. Larnier Sugden, who is responsible for its publication on this side of the Atlantic. Mr. Holyoake calls Ingersoll "the Voltaire of America." This is the language of hyperbole, and the Colonel himself would be the first to admit it. Voltaires are born about once in a thousand years. "Bob," as his friends call him, is, however, very much superior to Mr. G. A. Sala's estimate of him, and his wit is undeniably fine and trenchant. In this discourse he honors Jesus as a man, and contends that the orthodox terms of salvation were unknown to the apostles, if it be true that three of them wrote the synoptical gospels. Mr. Holyoake considers this "a novel ground," but it is nothing of the kind; for it has been maintained by advanced Unitarians for at least a century, and by many writers and speakers of more pronounced views. Mr. Gimson, of Leicester, has long been hammering away at the same idea, as Mr. Holyoake should know; and he finds it singularly effective against orthodox critics. Colonel Ingersoll, however, by his eloquence and his power of witty illustration, presents the idea with wonderful freshness. His own gospel is one of "kindness, honesty and justice." "To preach less," he adds, "is a crime, and to practise more is impossible." Everybody should read this racy discourse.

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