

December 29, 1889

# The Free Thinker

Edited by G. W. FOOTE.]

[Sub-Editor, J. M. WHEELER.

Vol. IX.—No. 52.]

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 29, 1889.

[PRICE ONE PENNY.

## JESUS CHRIST'S BIRTHDAY.

EVERY man's birthday is a milestone on his road to death. The same truth, we believe, applies to gods. They are born of ignorance and imagination, the sire being very stupid and the dam very freakish; and they die in the light of knowledge and reflection. Of old there were so many deities carrying on business in this world, of course through the agency of priests, that a sceptical wit remarked it was easier, in certain places, to find a god than a man. Holy ghosts literally pullulated, like the eruption in a case of small-pox, and with as much damage to those who suffered from them. There were gods of every aspect of eternal nature, and every department of internal nature; and all of them had to be handsomely supported. They took good wages, and worked when they pleased, which was so seldom that they might have been called the army of the unemployed. But in time they were all found out, and that is the only disease under which gods expire. They had their day and ceased to be. Some lived for centuries, some for milleniums, but all perished sooner or later. Being the progeny of man they share his destiny, and are subject to the laws of growth, decay, and death.

The birthday of most gods was unknown. They crept into existence so gradually that no one thought of registration until it was too late to be accurate. Indeed, the only gods whose birthdays were fixed were those who symbolised the sun, and who were therefore born on the twenty-fifth of December. This date was commemorated by all the great religions of antiquity. It is then that the sun has begun to emerge from his winter cave. The day begins to lengthen, the king of the universe is reborn, and fancy sees the buds of spring already peeping through the snows of winter. The world seemed to thrill with the assurance of resurrection, and men danced and sang for pleasure, decking their houses or temples with evergreens, and drinking the blood of the grapes that plumped and purpled under the rays of last year's sun.

Jesus Christ's birthday is simply the birthday of the old sun-gods. There were no registration offices for births and deaths in Palestine, nor did a single Christian ever suspect on which day of the three hundred and sixty-five his Savior was born, until three centuries after his death, when Christianity triumphed by incorporating the Paganism it could not kill. St. Chrysostom, writing in the second half of the fourth century, assures us that only a few years had elapsed since it was discovered that Jesus Christ was born on the twenty-fifth of December. He tells us that the information came from the West, which proves it was a novelty in the very parts of the world where Jesus lived and died, where his religion was first preached, where the Gospels and the Epistles were written, and where the first Churches were established. Mary herself, the mother of Jesus, never breathed a whisper of her

eldest son's birthday. It never occurred to his brother James to mention it. It did not excite the curiosity of the apostles. It was as utterly unknown to the primitive Church as the birthday of Moses or Elijah. It was "discovered," by the convenient methods of priestcraft, three hundred years afterwards. The Pagans were accustomed to commemorate the twenty-fifth of December, and the Church, which had become an irresponsible despotism, said to them, "Keep it up; it is an excellent festival; only call it the birthday of Christ." Nothing was changed but the name. And what's in a name? Good cheer by any name is just as sweet.

Ever since that epoch the Christians have "kept up" their Savior's birthday in the good old Pagan fashion. "God was born to-day," they say to each other, "let us drink his health."—"The ruler of the universe had his first wash to-day. Have a slice of plum-pudding."—"The Savior came this very day to redeem us. Take a little of the breast of this turkey."—"Christ was born in Bethlehem. Let me recommend the goose."—"The infinite spirit took upon himself our nature and bore our infirmities. Port or sherry, William?"—"Glory to the newborn King! Matilda, you're right under the mistletoe."

This is a curious way of commemorating the sacrosanct mystery of the Incarnation. But there is a great deal of human nature in most people. No doubt in olden times there were learned theologians who talked very solemnly about the birth of the sun-gods, but the multitude showed that such matters were too high for them, and insisted on praising heaven in an earthly manner. If the big-wigs of theology had had their way, the world would be as cold and glum as the inside of a gothic church on a foggy December morning. Happily human nature has been too strong for them. It has laughed in spite of their dogmas, and enjoyed itself in spite of their threats.

Great Christ has had a pretty long spell of power but his kingdom is waning, and many people wonder why such a fuss should be made about his birth or his death. That he died painfully may be true, but it is certainly as true of millions who lived before him and millions who have lived since. That he was born without a father is a mythical story, told of all the old sun-gods, and even of men like Buddha and Plato. One thing is certain—he was not born without a mother. Such a birth would have been miraculous, but when there is a mother in the case we may depend upon it there is a father somewhere.

Nearly nineteen centuries have rolled by since those Wise Men of the East (no connexion with the Blavatsky mahatmas) followed that tipsy star and found a baby-god between an ox and an ass. The wise men went home again, and the ox and the ass had the god to themselves. They have kept him ever since. And they low and bray that all the good in the world springs from him, that he is the source of all wisdom and virtue and greatness; whereas there were men in the Pagan world as wise, as virtuous, and as great, as any the Christian world has produced

since. Verily, verily, this Christ is a god for oxen and asses. But the more intelligent animals, who are growing in number every day, think that this god is as much a piece of useless lumber as all the rest of his tribe. Subtract the blessings of science and civilisation, which flow from the carnal spirit, and what has Christendom left to boast of? The god Christ has not hastened, but retarded, the progress of mankind. His ministers still babble about invisible worlds, still teach unintelligible dogmas, still frown at every advance of the human intellect, still promote pauperism under the pretence of charity, and still curse the reformers who would make an earthly paradise instead of dreaming of one in heaven. Away with this god! Let him join the other imposters in the pantheon. And let his deluded worshippers learn that all the creeds and sermons of eighteen hundred years have been a mere waste of time and energy. The whole philosophy of life consists in learning what is true in order to do what is right.

G. W. FOOTE.

### THE DIET OF DEITY.

CHRISTMAS is an appropriate time for the Natural Living Society and Vegetarians in general to give little homilies on the sin of overfeeding, and especially on the evil effects of over indulgence in animal food. We notice that just as the teetotallers go in for "Gospel Temperance," as though Jesus never turned water into wine for guests who had already well drunk, and as though Paul never recommended a little wine to Timothy for his stomach sake, so vegetarians appeal to the Bible as though it were in favor of their dietetic reform.

Now the Bible God, as any careful reader must know, was very partial to roast meat. One of the earliest items recorded of him is that he had no respect for Cain and his offering of vegetables, while to Abel who brought him the firstlings of his flock, and of the fat thereof, he had respect. He much preferred mutton to turnips. When Noah offered a sacrifice we are told "He smelt a sweet savor." (Gen. vii., 21.) But the Lord was by no means content with the smell. On his altars huge hecatombs of animals were continually being slaughtered, and the choicest portions set aside as the Lord's. The Lord God seems to have been extremely fond of fat, especially that about the rump. As the richest part of the animal it was reserved with "the two kidneys and the fat that is upon them" especially for the Lord (Leviticus iii., 9-11.) Let it be noticed that the Lord God required no sacrifices except of eatable animals, oxen, rams, goats, lambs, and kids. Fishes he had no regard for, and of birds only turtle doves and pigeons were his favorite dishes. Wine and oil he took to wash them down, but never mentioned water. Like his ministers he lived on the fat of the land,\* claiming as his own the firstlings of the flock. From his claim to the first born, it appears that Javheh was originally given to "long pig," but in the case of Abraham's son, he took a ram instead. He was, however, so partial to blood that he interdicted the sacred fluid to his worshippers, but demanded that it should be poured out upon his altar (Deut. xii.) Even the early Christians made it a fundamental rule of the church that disciples should abstain from blood, and from things strangled (Acts xv. 20). The blood was supposed to be especially the Lord's.

Let not the reader suppose we are not serious. Hear what Prof. Robertson Smith says in his just published *Religion of the Semites* (p. 207).

"All sacrifices laid upon the altar were taken by the ancients as being literally the food of the Gods. The Homeric deities "feast on hecatombs," nay particular Greek

gods have special epithets designating them as the goat-eater, the ram-eater, the bull-eater, even "the cannibal," with allusion to human sacrifices. Among the Hebrews the conception that Jehovah eats the flesh of bulls and drinks the blood of goats, against which the author of Psalm l. protests so strongly, was never eliminated from the ancient technical language of the priestly ritual, in which the sacrifices are called **לחם אלהים** *lechem Elohim*, "the food of the deity."

Our translators of the passages where this phrase occurs (Lev. xxi. 8, 17, 21, 22, Numb. xxviii., 2,) have done their best to conceal the meaning, but like the phrase "wine which cheereth God and man," (Jud. ix., 13.), it takes us back to the time when Gods were supposed like men to eat, drink and be refreshed.

It was a fundamental rule of the Jewish faith that no one should appear before the Lord empty handed (Exod. xxiii. 15). A sacrifice was as imperative as it now is to put something in the church plate. When God made a call on Abraham, with Eastern hospitality the patriarch procured water to wash his feet and killed a calf for the entertainment of his visitor. The Lord God was not a vegetarian but a stout kreophagist. In Numbers (xxix, 13), he orders as a sacrifice "of a sweet savor unto the Lord, thirteen young bullocks, two rams and fourteen lambs of the first year."

From the frequent mention of the "sweet savor," it seems likely that the original idea of the god partaking of the food, developed into that of his taking only the essence of the food. As God got less anthropomorphic he lost his teeth and had, poor spirit, to be content with the smell of the good things offered up to him. We gather from Lev. vii. 6, that the kidneys, fat and other delicacies really fell to the lot of the priests, and some people have found a sufficient reason for the sacrifices to God in the fact that the priests liked mutton.

In 1 Sam. ii., 13-16, we are told how it was the custom of the priests that when any man offered sacrifice, "the priest's servant came, while the flesh was in seething, with a fleshhook of three teeth in his hand. And he struck it into the pan or kettle, or caldron or pot; all that the fleshhook brought up the priest took for himself."

In the time of David the Lord had a table of shewbread set before him—that is, a table spread with food in the temple, where he was supposed to come and take it when he desired, just as Africans place meal and liquor in their fetish houses. Such tables were set in the great temple of Bel at Babylon, and the story of Bel and the Dragon in the Apocrypha explains how the priests and their women and children came in by a secret door and ate up the things which were supposed to be consumed by the God.

While the Lord and his priests were certainly not vegetarians, neither did they insist on a vegetable diet for their people. The Lord's table of fare is set out in Lev. xi., and a very curious *menu* it is. The hare is expressly excluded "because he cheweth the cud," although he does nothing of the kind; but "the locust after his kind, the bald locust after his kind, and the beetle after his kind, and the grasshopper after his kind." are freely permitted. Another divine regulation, and one which throws much light on the divine methods, is recorded in Deut. xvi., 21. "Thou shalt not eat of anything that dieth of itself: thou shalt give it unto the stranger that is in thy gates that he may eat it or thou mayest sell it unto an alien." To this day the Jews are particular in observing this godly method of disposing of diseased meat.

J. M. WHEELER.

An honest man's the noblest work of God was the strikingly original remark of a sky pilot at Boston recently. "Wal I guess he hasn't had a job in this city for a long while," remarked an auditor.

\* To "eat the fat" seems as in Neh. viii. 10, to have been a Biblical expression for good living.

LETTERS TO THE CLERGY.—VIII.  
ON "PRAYER."

To the Rev. T. Teignmouth Shore, M.A.  
Chaplain-in-ordinary to the Queen.

(CONTINUED.)

You say that desire and faith are the essential elements of Prayer. But such a truism does not require the elaboration you give it. You might as well dilate on the gastronomic truth that a good appetite is an essential element of a good dinner.

Forgetting that God is omniscient, or taking a singular view of that attribute, you say that we do well to remind him of our wants, but our prayers must be general and not particular. We shall show our modesty by desiring him to oblige us, without stipulating how he is to do it. We must leave that to him, for our knowledge of how any thing is to be accomplished in the "varied and complex conditions of life" is "partial and fragmentary," while he is able to see and foresee everything.

"Thus, in regard to the legitimate ambitions of worldly life, we may (subject to limitations, already and yet to be stated), feel fully justified in praying for our own needs or those of others; though to pray without reserve for any particular promotion, or any definite success as the means of accomplishing it, would scarcely be in harmony with the true spirit of Prayer."

It would therefore be quite right for an ambitious Christian to say to God "please push me on," but very improper to say, "please give me this post." But I think you will find, on reflection, that the human mind thinks by particulars, and that it is impossible to dissociate the idea of advancement from the steps that must be taken to gain it. If my house were on fire, and my child in an upper room, which could not be approached by the staircase; if I were to plant a ladder against the wall, and saw that I must pass a window through which flame and smoke were belching; do you mean that it would be a true prayer if I said "Let me mount to the top and descend in safety," but a false prayer if I said "Let me pass and re-pass that terrible window"?

Your fine distinction seems to me perfectly chimerical. To an omniscient mind every chain of causation, whether extending through a day or a lifetime, is equally finite; and if there be any presumption in the case, it is as great if I ask for a prosperous life as if I ask for a particular blessing. It is true that if God exist he has a superior knowledge of means, but it is also true that he has a superior judgment of ends; and whether I ask for the end or the means, I am acting with equal simplicity. To tell an omniscient God of my wants is childish. Can it be more than childish to ask him for a particular favor?

Prayer necessarily proceeds upon the assumption that man can influence the will of God, and you prove this by your serpentine efforts to evade it. You draw impossible distinctions between God's ultimate and immediate will. You talk of his unchanging purpose, yet you speak of *exciting* his emotions of tenderness, mercy, and love; as though, in the words of Lady Macbeth, we could screw him to the sticking place! Such words as "plead," "appeal," "beseech," and "implore," are unintelligible, except as exciting emotion and influencing volition. Nor can I follow your assertion that it would be "a mockery" to ask God that the sun may not rise to-morrow, in order to mitigate a scorching heat. This was not the belief of the chosen people, who recorded the stoppage of the sun, in order that they might slaughter their enemies. It is idle to say "we know it is God's will that the sun shall rise to-morrow." We know nothing of the kind. I admit we have a very good reason for believing it *will* rise to-morrow, but we have as good—because it is the very same—reason for believing that *every* law

of nature will be in perfect operation, without violation, suspension, or accident. When you say that "we do not know in the least whether it may be God's will that a hurricane should die down at a particular moment," and present this as a reason why we should pray for divine help in the crisis of a storm, you are only saying that meteorology is not as well understood as astronomy.

There was a time when Christians prayed against an eclipse. Why? Because they did not understand its causes. They still pray, though with diminishing heartiness, against bad weather. Why? Because they do not understand its causes. When they *do* understand its causes, they will cease praying against it, and confine their supplications to what is still contingent.

Now contingency is nothing but ignorance. When a coin is tossed into the air, men will bet on its falling "heads or tails." But the uncertainty is only in their minds, for the fall of the coin was absolutely determined on its leaving the tosser's fingers. Similarly next week's weather, or next year's harvest, is determined already, only we do not possess the knowledge that would enable us to foresee it. When we come to the infinitely varied phenomena of human society, we are only able to perceive a few broad sweeps of tendency. All the rest is uncertain *to us*, though certain enough *in itself*; and it is this mighty realm of contingency that you shrewdly mark out as the future preserve of Prayer.

"I maintain," you say, "that in the regulation and variation of these conditions by the human will and choice there is a very wide margin for what I may call contingency." This is perfectly true; but if contingency only means ignorance, and the consequent incapacity of prevision, is it obvious that you are reduced to the extremity of *praying in the dark*. Where light obtains, you find we have nothing to do but submit to the obvious will of God, or, in other words, to the necessity of Nature.

The last quotation introduces a new factor—the human will. You appear to regard this as an independent force, whereas it is the decisive action of a number of concurrent forces. This is an operation you do not appear to understand. You assert that "a child holding a stone in its hand is to a very real and recognisable degree modifying the results of the action of gravity itself." Did you ever know of gravity acting *by itself*? The child no more modifies the action of gravity by holding up the stone, than would a ledge upon which it had fallen. The law of gravity is acting with unerring precision all the time as you will find by weighing the child, first with the stone in his hand, and then without it. The difference is the weight of the stone, and the weight of the stone is the action of gravity.

You shrink from the cruder notions of prayer, although you ultimately find yourselves bound to defend them, and maintain that God answers prayer by controlling "the physical world indirectly, through his action upon human thought and will." According to this theory, when Smith prays for anything, he is asking God to influence Jones, Brown and Robinson. Instead of desiring the forces of nature to be directed towards his pleasure, he is requesting that his fellow creatures may be shuffled into a more favorable combination; and as Brown, Jones and Robinson are praying at the same time for the reshuffling of Smith, your doctrine terminates in a universal shuffle, and human society becomes a mere transformation-scene under the presiding genius of Prayer.

Having reduced the world to this condition, you easily perceive whatever you desire. "We may then," you declare, "pray for the recovery of a patient, and if God guides the physician's genius to a true appreciation of the nature and the proper remedy for the cure of the disease, we may consider the cure so

effected in every true and reasonable sense a direct answer to our Prayer." You call this "true and reasonable." I call it hocus-pocus. You are a Queen's chaplain, and a great deal more dexterous than the simple-minded Peculiar People, but I have a far higher opinion of their honesty. I suspect, if the patient were your wife or child, you would leave as little as possible to the Lord. You would call in a skilful physician, who required but a modicum of divine superintendence; and leave your poorer brethren, who can only afford the services of an inferior practitioner, to experience the utmost efficacy of your celestial nostrum.

G. W. FOOTE.

(To be concluded.)

## ACID DROPS.

Mr. Gladstone is a good example of what Herbert Spencer calls "the theological bias." He is a Christian and a High Churchman, and he looks from that point of view at all questions that are not strictly political. Quite recently he has written on Divorce in the *North American Review*, and while allowing the wisdom of judicial separation, he is dead against divorce. Marriage is a contract for life, and Christian marriage involves a vow before God. That vow, he says, the Christian Church has no authority to cancel, nor has the State any competency to annul it.

Now the fact is that Mr. Gladstone speaks as a High Churchman pure and simple. As a statesman, or social legislator, he is talking the most pernicious nonsense, and assuming that because *his* married life has been so happy and perfect—and therefore sacred—every other marriage should be regarded as sacred, though it be wretched and degrading and a most flagrant failure. Were he to argue as a Christian instead of a High Churchman, he would find it difficult to maintain his position. Jesus sanctioned divorce, and it was both sanctioned by many of the Fathers and practised in the early Church. It is true that the Catholic Church disallows divorce, but it does not do so absolutely, for the Pope is prepared to grant a special dispensation in certain cases, just as he is prepared to set aside the law of consanguinity in favor of "big pots" who want to marry their near relatives.

As for the Christian "vow," what does it mean? A vow to "love" is unspeakably silly. You love or you don't love, and you can't *make* yourself do either. Nor can you raise a fire by blowing upon the dead embers of affection. This is the common sense of "vows." And now for the religious view. Mr. Gladstone, of course, is bound by the Prayer Book, according to which husband and wife agree to live with each other until they are parted by death. Yet, in the face of these plain words, Mr. Gladstone would allow judicial separations! Thus the theological bias, fighting against the man of the world, brings about a compromise, which is neither sensible nor religious.

Mr. Gladstone would allow husband and wife to live apart as strangers, but he would not let them marry again. That is, they are to be cut off from all honorable domestic life, and condemned to drag to the tomb the heavy clog of a past mistake, all in order to satisfy Mr. Gladstone's theory. Talk about the Indian burning a house to roast his eggs! This is nothing to a High Churchman sacrificing thousands of men and women to his "theological bias."

Pantomimes, it has been contended, spring from the "mysterics" which used to be enacted at the festive time of Christmas. Some of these old mysteries were very quaint in the naive way in which they dealt with the Incarnation. In one called "The Miraculous Birth and the Midwives," Mary longs for cherries, and, alluding to her condition, asks Joseph to pluck them. Surly Joe bluntly says, "Let him pluck your cherries that got you with child"; and sure enough God Almighty bends the cherry tree down so that she can pick for herself.

An enterprising tradesman of South Shields prints some

Christmas poetry on the back of a sheet advertising his business. The first verse of one of these effusions is as follows:

The first good joy that Mary had,  
It was the joy of one  
To see her own Son Jesus Christ  
Sucking at her breast-bone.

Here is poetry with a vengeance! The caterwauling of midnight tabbies is as musical and full of sense. And then the physiology. Fancy poor J. C. sucking at a breast-bone! What a dry meal for a baby!

Toussaint Boudes has been sentenced to penal servitude for life, and will probably be tried again for poisoning the sacrament. His superior, the Bishop of Rodez, was censured in court for trying to screen this priestly scoundrel, and endeavoring to silence witnesses.

The Rev. Andrew Mearns tried to obtain damages from Mr. Carruthers for stating that his way of arguing was like that of an old preacher who founded a tirade upon a fashionable female foible on the text, "Top-knot come down" (Matt. xxiv., 17), the full text being, "Let him that is upon the housetop not come down." The jury found that this was "only fair criticism," and we expect everyone of them had come across instances of ministerial arguments of very similar character.

"What can be done to restrain the editors of Methodist papers in reference to the incessant and disturbing paper warfare continually going on in their journals?" This question was suggested at a recent meeting of the London Wesleyan ministers. As the song says, "They are a happy family, they are, they are, they are."

The pious Evangelicals have issued circulars for commencing the New Year with a week of prayer. The little result of all their past supplications does not affect them. They know that God is like the unjust judge in the parable who determined to avenge the importunate widow "lest by her continual coming she weary me." But as the old one is not easily moved nowadays—perhaps he has got a little deaf with age—they ask for a long pull, a strong pull, and a good pull all together, to wake him up to the coming business of 1890.

Among the things to be prayed for, if the editor of the *Baner* gets his way, is the immediate disestablishment of the Welsh Church. Praying to the Lord for what everybody sees coming is a wonderful proof of faith.

It is time the Christians showed their enlightenment by subscribing for a phonograph arranged, in accordance with the divine injunction, to pray without ceasing. If they could only get their phonograph connected with the deity's ear-trumpet, they would have such a pull on the cursed heathen and infidels that the end of the wicked world and the sweet by-and-bye might be here in no time. Even so, come quickly!

Principal Rainey, who has visited the antipodes, has been speaking at Edinburgh on the education policy he found in Australia. The result of the system of purely secular instruction in Victoria was the "bringing out a number of young people who were simply and singularly ignorant of the merest elements of Bible knowledge." Well, Principal Rainey, what are they worse for this plentiful lack of knowledge of the old Jew book? Are they less moral, less civil, or less intelligent than the Bible-crammed youth of other communities?

The Rev. A. Douglas, of Arbroath, lecturing on the Apostles' Creed—which isn't the apostles' creed at all—said that the knowledge of God is obtained through a certain avenue of the mind distinct from the logical understanding. We agree with the reverend gentleman. It all comes through the channel of conjecture. That is why, though there is but one Nature, there be gods many and lords many.

Mr. Douglas is not a timid man, nor even a modest man. He declares that the Agnostic must be told that he is deficient in the full possibilities of human nature. What a brave Douglas it is! It requires some courage—perhaps,

too, a fair supply of cheek—for an Arbroath sky-pilot to tell the Darwins, the Huxleys, and the Ingersolls face to face, or as near as he can get to it, that they are defective natures, lacking the completeness of the Arbroath sky-pilot. Oh for another Robert Burns to hit off this little bull-frog in a Doric epigram, or embalm him in an immortal lyric! God Almighty is the great "I Am," and the Arbroath Douglas is the little "I Am."

This is an age of cant, and Sunday-closing is as nauseous a bit of cant as any we can boast of. Imagine our surprise, then, to see Mr. John Burns sending a letter of approval to a demonstration at the Lambeth Swimming Bath in favor of this canting "reform." All the speakers at this meeting dwelt on the evils of drink. Well, anybody could speak on that subject for hours; but what has it to do with *Sunday* closing? Is drink any worse on the first day of the week than on the second? Does it make a man drunk any sooner? Is not the evil of drink the same every day? And if you stop drinking (which you *can't* do, however much you *cant*) on Sunday, what good have you done if the tap is allowed to run freely on the other six days of the week? It is like keeping people out of a seven-gated field by locking one of the gates.

Shut the public-houses on Sunday, and you will certainly multiply clubs. This is seen clearly enough by the great MacDougall, who in the name of all the water in the Lambeth Bath demanded that the clubs should also be closed. If this is the sort of legislation Mr. Burns favors, he will meet with a stormy reception among the London workmen's clubs. They will applaud John as a strike leader, so long as he keeps his head—which, by-the-bye, it is not very hard to lose; but they won't stand him as a forcible reformer of their own private lives. Besides, John might reflect that a workingman has at least as much right to go to his own club on Sunday as John had to go to Trafalgar Square.

Thus far we have simply dealt with the *right* of the case. For the rest, we are far from asserting that clubs are an unmixed blessing, or that they are ideally conducted on any day of the week. Still, all the *bonâ fide* clubs are gradually improving, and we are for letting the improvement continue in its own natural fashion. Restrictive acts of Parliament, with stalwart policemen to carry them out, will do no good to anybody. Men are only improvable by the slow development of intellect, character, and taste; and it is a psychological law that the only way to break old habits is to form new ones.

The attempt of Professor Marcus Dods to introduce some degree of rationalism into the Free Church of Scotland has evoked much bitterness in those who adhere to the Confession of Faith. They say, and with truth, that his position is inconsistent with the standards of faith, to which he subscribed. An acrimonious controversy between the Professor and the Rev. Mr. Macaskill, of Dingwall, has been very edifying to outsiders, inducing the natural comment, "Behold how these Christians love one another."

Messrs. Jahveh, Christ, and Co., we are assured, though we have not personally heard from the firm, wish it to be known that the dissolution of partnership hinted at in our Christmas number is not yet effected, and that they continue to supply their celebrated Lamb's blood warranted to wash away all crime and impurities. The announcement ought to be accompanied with stamps as an advertisement, but as several agents of the firm consider we have done it injustice by denouncing its articles as bogus, we allow the intimation to stand for what is worth.

Some correspondents of the *Christian World* have a funny way of proving that Sunday Schools are *not* a failure. It is true, they say, that the vast majority of our criminals have been Sunday School scholars, but what a lot of other Sunday School scholars grow up decent men and women. Such reasoners, if we may call them so, forget that most children would grow up decent men and women without Sunday Schools; while the fact remains that Sunday School training did not prevent the minority from developing into gaol-birds. *That* is the real point of the argument.

Substitution is a first-rate Christian doctrine, and the A 1 old sinner, as he passes in his checks, sings "Jesus died for me." But the little game won't work in everyday life. A Portsmouth lad was committed for burglary, when the father came forward and begged to act as a substitute and take his son's punishment. Of course the magistrate refused. Thereupon the son fainted and the father fell down in a fit. Here indeed is a father's love, but justice does not allow substitution.

In concluding his lectures on Semitic Races and Religions, Mr. W. St. Chad Boscawen defended himself from the reproach of "heterodoxy." He also made a very contemptuous reference to the Theosophy which now prevails in dilettante circles, speaking of it as the appropriate refuge of a "frightened sceptic."

"Jerusalem Awakening" is the title of a long letter from the Rev. Henry Gaze in the *Christian World*. This doesn't mean that more "saints" are getting out of their graves, as a lot did at the Crucifixion. It means that the place is growing. Streets are being laid out and paved, hotels are springing up, manufactures are developing, and good roads are being constructed. You can leave Jerusalem and go to Jericho easily now. It is only twenty miles and there's a good road all the way. By-and-bye the locomotives will scream under the Mount of Olives, and the guards will shout out "Bethlehem! All tickets ready!" Oh, what a lark it would be to see a "saint" like Isaiah, or Ezekiel, or Elijah, or Elisha, revisiting the glimpses of the moon, and witnessing all this profanation of the Holy Land. They would very likely shout and curse, and rend their garments, and run about as naked as they did of old, and be run in for indecent exposure, and get three months' hard, with an extra month for resisting the police in the execution of their duty. Poor old prophets! May they sleep in peace.

A lot of people have wondered where the deuce their soul was situated, and here comes Dr. A. H. Stevens, of Philadelphia, to state that it is located in the corpus callosum, a little spongy body situated at the base of the brain, which has defied the efforts of physicians in their endeavors to ascertain its uses in the human anatomy. The corpus callosum, according to Dr. Stevens, is the great reservoir and storehouse of electricity which we suppose he identifies with the soul.

Ram Chandra Bose, a Hindoo Christian, is cited by the *Reaper* as saying that missionaries in that country have completely lost the prestige of self sacrifice. "Neither among the varied peoples of the country, nor among their own converts, nor among their own countrymen are they regarded as either abstemious or self-denying."

The *Church Times* says, "Personally we always take missionary reports, whencesoever they come, with a good deal of salt." So do we. Lot's wife herself would be insufficient to season some of them.

In British Guiana the sum of 100,000 dollars a year is voted to the clergy of the Established Churches. Even the Wesleyans have the meanness to take 5,000 dollars. We dare say they would take a subsidy here in England if it could be managed without scandal. How long ago is it since General Booth asked the Government for £15,000 in aid of his "refuges" in the East of London?

Mr. Hugh Price Hughes boasts of the success of his much-advertised West London Mission, but he does not mention at whose cost his success has been gained. The Rev. Mr. Hall, however, a Congregational minister at the West-end, complained at a conference on missions that it is greatly at the expense of his chapel. The year before the West London Mission opened Mr. Hall boasted of adding 100 members to his congregation, the numbers of which have, however, steadily declined since.

A minister from the East End gave similar testimony. He was getting on with his mission, when a new one was started by a peeress. Free teas, free concerts, and free excursions were offered. He could not compete against the peeress with attractions and is now deserted. It appeared evident from the conference that Christian suc-

cesses are only gained by bold advertisement and many secular attractions.

People have got tired of the old theological fare. Hashed Bible, lamb's blood, and the fossilised sawdust which passed current as the bread of life, no longer attract. To make the gospel go down, it must be accompanied with free teas, treats and plenty of music. Even sweet Jesus and him crucified no longer draws unless accompanied with a cheap entertainment.

Enterprising Christians are up to a new dodge. They are trying to steal the best Freethinkers and fasten a Christian ticket on them; and, on the other hand, to use Freethought as a kind of Botany Bay for all their own unhung scoundrels. Here is the *Christian World*, for instance, writing an article on "Which is the Christian Statesman?" and trying to make out that, in reality, Mr. A. J. Balfour is a sceptic, and Mr. John Morley a very good Christian. True, the gentlemen don't think so, but that is the beauty of the argument.

"Edinburgh is falling fast from her Christian greatness" The Rev. Jacob Primmer says so, and so it must be. Edinburgh, however, with its Sunday boats to Aberdour, Burntisland, and the Forth Bridge, with the Botanic Gardens open, and soon we trust with Sunday bands in the Prince's Gardens, is a vastly more desirable place to live in than the city of gloom to which the Rev. Jacob Primmer looks back as a sort of modern Zion.

The Bishop of Manchester has been reading Trade Unionists a lesson. He does not disapprove of labor combinations, but they should be careful not to trespass beyond the bounds of persuasion. Excellent advice! But with what an ill grace it comes from a Bishop. His lordship belongs to a Church which has unscrupulously used any and every means to keep up its "combination." It "persuaded" Dissenters by imprisonment, mutilation and murder; and afterwards by Test Acts. It persuaded, and still persuades, Atheists by blasphemy laws. It says, "Join us, or we'll do our best to injure and starve you." Yet here is a Bishop of this clerical Trade Union sermonising others for taking one of the mildest leaves out of its own book.

There is a Lawyer's Prayer Union, which held a half-yearly public meeting last week in Bloomsbury Church Hall. Mr. Bompas, Q.C., was in the chair, and speeches were delivered by several barristers and solicitors. We are not able to gather from the report what effect the praying has had upon the profession. There seems to be more litigation than ever, and perhaps this is an answer to the legal gentlemen's supplications. Lawyers live upon dishonesty and quarrelsomeness, and if the Lord answered prayers for the growth of honesty and good-will their business would go to rack and ruin.

"Preach Christ" says the *Reaper*, a Scotch Evangelical paper; "Don't argue." The advice is the offspring of experience. Argument is the Christian's undoing.

The idea that Jahveh was originally the dead chief of a horde of banditti is not likely to find many supporters; but that such persons do become deified, Sir Alfred Lyall gives some evidence from India. Writing to Mr. Herbert Spencer, he says: "I enclose you part of a memo. upon the religious practices of the Pones or Domras, who live on the edge of the forests under the Himalayas. You will observe that they propitiate ghosts and worship notable thieves of bygone days, and there cannot be the slightest doubt that this practice is characteristic of all the lowest and most barbarous Indian societies." The memorandum states that the chief god of the Maghia Domras is Gandak, whose grave is in Bengal. According to their traditions, Gandak was hanged for theft "a long time ago," and when dying promised to help Maghias in trouble. He is accordingly worshipped by the whole clan, and invoked on all important occasions.

A sensation was created at a weekly meeting of the Methodist Preachers' Association in Philadelphia, by a complaint made by Rev. Dr. Roche, of Brooklyn, that Methodism is declining in New York city and Brooklyn.

"Try as we may," said he, "and use every endeavor, it is impossible to get a congregation. This state of affairs is not the fault of the ministers engaged in the work, for I have filled my pulpit with the most able preachers, and the body of the church has not been half filled. There is no use trying—employ every device, you cannot secure a congregation."

A clergyman, going the rounds of his country parish in the South of Ireland, met a farmer who, though residing in a neighbouring parish was a regular attendant at his church. Said Pat, "Af ye please, yer reverence, would ye mind prayin' for a wee drap o' rain next Sunday, for sorra a thing'll grow in me little garden wid the present hate o' the weather?" "Sorry to hear that, Pat," replied the divine; "but you ought to ask your own parson, not me." "Ah, shure," was the reply, "that's just it; what's the good in axin' him to pray for rain wid them cocks o' hay a standing on his lawn?"

"Ah, but God will never damn a person of my quality!" said a princess of the house of Bourbon. "Surely the Almighty has forgotten all I have done for him," remarked Louis XIV., when he heard of a disaster to his troops. "Decidedly the Almighty is no longer on our side," exclaimed Queen Isabella, when she heard of the Brazilian revolution. There seems to be an inherited form of profanity in the Bourbon family.

The Rev. Patrick MacGreevy, of Storrington Priory, Pulborough, Sussex, came to London, got drunk, and fell in with two disinterested gentlemen to whom he stood drinks. The police apprehended the trio, the sky-pilot for being drunk and incapable, and the two disinterested gentlemen for trying to rifle his pockets. When the case was called at Marlborough Street, the noble MacGreevy failed to answer, and the magistrate ordered that he should be compelled to attend as a witness.

A capital story is told in the *Century* by Mr. G. Keenan, the Siberian traveller. Passing through one of the villages, he found everyone, from the priest downwards, utterly drunk, and he was unable to procure horses to proceed on his journey. After much waiting a sober man was found, who explained that everyone was drunk owing to a new church having been consecrated, the consecration being always accompanied by a feast. Asked how it came about that he was the only sober man in the village, he gave the simple answer, "I am not a Christian."

#### HOW TO HELP US.

- (1) Get your newsagent to exhibit the *Freethinker* in his window.
- (2) Get your newsagent to take a few copies of the *Freethinker* and try to sell them, guaranteeing to take the copies that may remain unsold.
- (3) Take an extra copy (or more), and circulate it among your acquaintances.
- (4) Display, or get displayed, one of our contents-sheets, which are of a convenient size for the purpose. Mr. Forder will send them on application.
- (5) Leave a copy of the *Freethinker* now and then in the train, the car, or the omnibus.
- (6) Distribute some of our cheap tracts in your walks abroad, at public meetings, or among the audiences around street-corner preachers.

#### SEED CORN.

It is wrong, always, everywhere, and for anyone, to believe anything upon insufficient evidence.—*Wm. Kingdon Clifford.*

Infidelity says to the whole world: it is dangerous *not* to think. It is dangerous *not* to be honest. It is dangerous *not* to investigate. It is dangerous *not* to follow where your reason leads.—*Ingersoll.*

In the ordinary affairs of life, a person bearing testimony or acting as a witness is expected to be enlightened, sensible, and disinterested. In religion, those on the word of whom we are required to believe incredible things are pious ignoramuses and fanatical prophets.—*Voltaire.*

## MR. FOOTE'S ENGAGEMENTS.

Sunday, December 29, Hall of Science, 142 Old Street, E.C., at 7, "The Star of Bethlehem."

Jan. 5 and 12, Hall of Science, London; 19, Liverpool; 26, Camberwell.

Feb. 2, Hall of Science, London; 9, Blackburn; 16, Milton Hall, London; 23, Hall of Science, London.

March 2, Manchester; 9, Camberwell; 23 and 30, Hall of Science, London.

## TO CORRESPONDENTS.

LITERARY communications to be addressed to the Editor, 14 Clerkenwell Green, London, E.C. All business communications to Mr. R. Forder, 28 Stonecutter Street, London, E.C.

THE *Freethinker* will be forwarded, direct from the office, post free to any part of Europe, America, Canada and Egypt, at the following rates, prepaid:—One Year, 6s. 6d.; Half Year, 3s. 3d.; Three Months, 1s. 7½d. Australia, China and Africa:—One Year, 8s. 8d.; Half Year, 4s. 4d.; Three Months, 2s. 2d. India:—One Year, 10s. 10d.; Half Year, 5s. 5d.; Three Months, 2s. 8½d.

SCALE OF ADVERTISEMENTS.—Thirty words, 1s. 6d.; every succeeding ten words, 6d. *Displayed Advertisements*:—One inch, 3s.; Half Column, 15s.; Column, £1 10s. Special terms for repetitions.

It being contrary to post office regulations to announce on the wrapper when the subscription is due, subscribers will in future receive the number when their subscription expires in a colored wrapper.

R. DUNN.—We have full confidence in our informant, and your name was not mentioned.

HUMANITAS.—We don't fear the lethal powers of the Theosophic adepts. Those of them who are not humbugs are humbugged. Thanks for your genial letter.

X. Y. Z.—The story in Sanconiatho of the sacrifice of Ieoud by his father is somewhat similar to that of Abraham and Isaac. In ancient times the sacrifice of an only son was considered particularly efficacious, and this idea certainly appears in the Christian myth.

INQUIRER.—Irenæus and early Christian tradition agree that Nicolas, one of the seven deacons mentioned in Acts, was the founder of the Nicolaitanes, denounced in Rev. ii., 15. The passage shows the early divisions and enmities existing among Christian sects.

A. INGRAM.—The phrase should have been "Midsummer Day," not "the longest day." It was a slip of the tongue.

J. BRUMAGE.—Delighted to hear you are recovering.

A SUBSCRIBER.—Thanks. The Swedenborgian hell is less ugly than the orthodox one, but just as fanciful. Discussing it is like fighting a cloud.

J. BROWN.—Your letter was too late for last week's *Freethinker*. Glad to hear you are pegging away on the Sunday question in Newcastle.

OWING to the holidays, and our having to go to press early, much correspondence stands over till next week.

PAPERS RECEIVED.—The Golden Perhaps—Der Lichtfreund—Freidenker—Neues Freireligiöses Sonntags-Blatt—Der Arme Teufel—Open Court—Evening Standard—Twentieth Century—Progressive Thinker—Truthseeker—Western Figaro—Echo—Boletín de la Enseñanza Laica en España—Penny Illustrated Paper—Newcastle Daily Chronicle—Cambria Daily Leader—The Reaper—Mumbles Observer.

FRIENDS who send us newspapers would enhance the favor by marking the passages to which they wish our attention directed.

CORRESPONDENCE should reach us not later than Tuesday if a reply is desired in the current issue. Otherwise the reply stands over till the following week.

## TO ALL WHOM IT CONCERNS.

A GENTLEMAN asked us at Nottingham if the invitation we printed early in the year was still open. We replied that it was. Our resources are not adequate to carry on our Freethought business properly, and they are diminished from time to time by investors requiring to withdraw their money. We have indeed to repay a good deal of money during the new year, and we shall be glad to hear from any friends who have spare cash to entrust us with. Every investment bears five per cent. interest, and the investor receives a legal document entitling him to recall his amount by six months' notice. We intend, if possible, to be very active in publishing during the next year or two. There is a certain market for all we produce, and a

reasonable, if not handsome, profit on sales. It will be borne in mind that the *Freethinker* brings us no direct return for our labor, at least for the present, though the prospect is slowly improving. We have, therefore, to rely upon what is yielded by the publishing business, which, besides lecturing work, is our only source of income. Our stock of publications is a large one, and some idea of the resources needed may be gathered from the fact that the *Dictionary of Freethinkers* alone has cost £150 to produce, exclusive of the binding, the expense of which is incurred gradually as the work sells. Those who cannot afford to invest are not desired to inconvenience themselves; we only appeal to those who can; and they who respond quickly will be doing us the greatest service.

G. W. FOOTE.

## SUGAR PLUMS.

THIS evening (Dec. 29) Mr. Foote lectures at the Hall of Science on "The Star of Bethlehem." It is to be hoped that enough people will have recovered from the Christmas festivities to make up an audience.

MR. WHEELER'S *Biographical Dictionary of Freethinkers* is now completed. It includes over 1,600 names of all ages and nations. Of course the work has involved immense labor, for which it is hopeless to expect an adequate pecuniary reward. Mr. Wheeler undertook the task from other motives. He has toiled as a knight of Freethought. Out of the wide welter of the world's literary, scientific, religious and artistic history, he has rescued this noble muster-roll of thinkers and heroes. And now he has done it, the rest remains with others. Every Freethinker who can afford the price should buy the volume, and keep it as a precious possession. It is a monument of Freethought as well as of the author's industry. When the Christian asks "Where are your great men?" the Freethinker has only to take this volume from the shelf, and say "Here they are; see for yourself; and tell me if you can find a more illustrious company."

ROBERT BROWNING was a great hater of bigotry and persecution. When the Russians were harrying the Jews, in 1882, he wrote in reference to the Mansion House committee—"No words can sufficiently express my abomination of every species of religious intolerance and execration of such an instance of it as the late outrages in Russia astonish us with. You are quite at liberty, to add name to the Oxford requisition."

THE *North American Review* always finds the name of Robert G. Ingersoll lead to a second edition. There is a run upon its December number for his paper "Why Am I am Agnostic?"

COL. ROBERT G. INGERSOLL has accepted the invitation of the State Bar Association to deliver the annual address before that body in the assembly chamber at Albany on January 13. "The Imperfections of the Common Law" will be the subject of the address.

THE *Truthseeker* gets over half a column of "Foreign Items of Interest" culled from our pages. We are always glad to be of service to our American Freethought contemporaries.

*Secular Thought*, of Toronto, is giving its readers a number of articles by Kate Eunice Watts, the versatile wife of the editor.

THE *Freidenker*, of Milwaukee, has put out its annual almanac full of matter of interest and amusement to Freethinkers who read German.

MR. H. L. GREEN, of the *Freethinkers' Magazine*, Buffalo, New York, has collected together a number of articles on Giordano Bruno, including Colonel Ingersoll's address, a paper by G. J. Holyoake, a translation of Prof. Bovio's address at the unveiling of the memorial, etc., and

capable of erecting monuments to Bruno or any other enemy of the Church.

What fault, then, can be found with a criterion like that? Surely if a truth is self-evident, it must be true. Of course it must; but the criterion after all isn't so good as it looks. It is mixed up with so many other suspicious truths that one is never satisfied one has hold of it properly. It is necessary to ask what this means. "All proof or reasoning must ultimately rest upon truths which carry with them their own evidence, and do not therefore need proof." This looks like an extended statement of the criterion, but it contains the fallacy. Who is to judge of the self-evidence of these final truths which "need no proof"? The Church, we know, is supposed to have a large assortment of truths not generally considered to be self-evident; and we must not lose sight of the fact that the apparently innocent criterion has to be so manipulated that it can be so applied to every one of these "truths" until they are also proved to be self-evident; not a bad bit of conjuring, but like most other logical tricks, the success depends on the acceptance of the criterion with its accompanying explanations. Accept these and you are just the flat St. G. Mivart hopes you may be. The particularly innocent looking *petitio* here is that "self-evident truths are incapable of proof." Swallow that along with the criterion, and every miracle that the Church ever palmed off on its ignorant worshippers can be made to appear self-evident, because they, too, bear the mark of being "incapable of proof." Yes, St. G. Mivart is remarkably clever. But is it a fact that self-evident truths are incapable of proof? When I learned geometry I was told that axioms were self-evident, ultimate truths which were incapable of demonstration. The demonstration here meaning the reduction of the axiom into any still more elementary truths, and in this sense it is true. But it is easy for a very clever logician to slip in his fallacy here. A self-evident axiom or truth is incapable of further proof because its self-evidence is already sufficient, and because it is sufficient it needs no further proof, and the assertion that it is a truth which is incapable of proof is a piece of logical jugglery quite in keeping with the character of the Church; and, what is more; St. G. Mivart knows this as well as George Henry Lewes did, who explained this fallacy long ago.

J. H. ELLIS.

#### HOW IT STRIKES AN AMERICAN.

CHARLES BRADLAUGH has announced that on returning from his voyage to India he will resign the presidency of the National Secular Society. The intimation was conveyed in a letter to the Executive Committee of the Society. He desired a special meeting of the members of the Society to be called in February to receive the formal resignation, and to listen to a statement of his reasons for his course.

At the meeting of the Executive Committee at which this notice was received, after some friendly discussion, the following resolutions were adopted, as expressing the feelings of the Secularists so far as they had considered the matter:

"(1) The Executive Committee of the National Secular Society receives the notice of Mr. Bradlaugh's intention to resign the presidency with the deepest regret. It feels itself to be expressing the universal sentiment of the Freethought party in heartily thanking him for his many years of leadership and in deploring the great loss that must be entailed by his resignation.

"(2) That a meeting of the members be convened early in February to receive the president's statement."

There are a good many good men in England to take Mr. Bradlaugh's place, but nevertheless his resignation will be a strain upon the Secular organisation, so nearly synonymous have been the names of the Society and Mr. Bradlaugh. As a leader he is just the man for the members of the Society, though occasionally he and his prominent assistants would "fall out," chiefly upon personal grounds. But if he shall still be willing to advise the party, and to devote some portion of his talents to its welfare—which it would be a reflection upon him to doubt—it will get along all right and still be an effective opponent to ecclesiastical misrule.

It is probable, from the position he now occupies in the Society and before the Secular public, that G. W. Foote, of the *Freethinker*, will be selected to succeed Mr. Bradlaugh. Mr. Foote is a practical man, a hard-working and very able editor, and a brilliant orator. He has, we believe, the affection of the masses of the party as has no other but Mr. Bradlaugh. If he "is in the hands of his friends," he will probably be chosen, and the choice will be wise.—*Truthseeker* (New York).

#### MARRIAGE AND DIVORCE.

BY COL. INGERSOLL.

(From the "North American Review.")

[Concluded from page 542.]

Question 2. *Ought divorced people be allowed to marry under any circumstances?*

This depends upon whether marriage is a crime. If it is not a crime, why should any penalty be attached? Can any one conceive of any reason why a woman, obtaining a divorce without fault on her part, should be compelled as a punishment to remain forever single? Why should she be punished for the dishonesty or brutality of another? Why should a man who faithfully kept his contract of marriage, and who was deserted by an unfaithful wife, be punished for the benefit of society? Why should he be doomed to live without a home?

There is still another view. We must remember that human passions are the same after as before divorce. To prevent re-marriage is to give excuse for vice.

Question 3. *What is the effect of divorce upon the integrity of the family?*

The real marriage is back of the ceremony, and the real divorce is back of the decree. When love is dead, when husband and wife abhor each other, they are divorced. The decree records in a judicial what has really taken place, just as the ceremony of marriage attests a contract already made.

The true family is the result of the true marriage, and the institution of the family should above all things be preserved. What becomes of the sacredness of the home if the law compels those who abhor each other to sit at the same hearth? This lowers the standard, and changes the happy haven of home into the prison cell. If we wish to preserve the integrity of the family, we must preserve the democracy of the fireside, the republicanism of the home, the absolute and perfect equality of husband and wife. There must be no exhibition of force, no spectre of fear. The mother must not remain through an order of court, or the command of a priest, or by virtue of the tyranny of society; she must sit in absolute freedom, the queen of herself, the sovereign of her own soul and of her own body. Real homes can never be preserved through force, through slavery, or superstition. Nothing can be more sacred than a home, no altar purer than the hearth.

Question 4. *Does the absolute prohibition of divorce where it exists contribute to the moral purity of society?*

We must define our terms. What is moral purity? The intelligent of this world seek the well-being of themselves and others. They know that happiness is the only good; and this they strive to attain. To live in accordance with the conditions of well-being is moral in the highest sense. To use the best instrumentalities to attain the highest ends is our highest conception of the moral. In other words, morality is the melody or the perfection of conduct. A man is not moral because he is obedient through fear or ignorance. Morality lives in the realm of perceived obligation, and where a being acts in accordance with perceived obligation, that being is moral. Morality is not the child of slavery. Ignorance is not the corner-stone of virtue.

The first duty of a human being is to himself. He must see to it that he does not become a burden to others. To be self-respecting he must endeavor to be self-sustaining. If by his industry and intelligence he accumulates a margin, then he is under obligation to do with that margin all the good he can. He who lives to the ideal does the best he can. In true marriage men and women give not only their bodies, but their souls. This is the ideal marriage; this is moral. They who give their bodies, but not their souls, are not married, whatever the ceremony may be; this is immoral.

If this be true, upon what principle can a woman continue to sustain the relation of wife after love is dead? Is there some other consideration that can take the place of genuine affection? Can she be bribed with money, or a home, or position, or by public opinion, and still remain a virtuous woman? Is it for the good of society that virtue should be thus crucified between Church and State? Can it be said that this contributes to the moral purity of the human race?

Is there a higher standard of virtue in countries where divorce is prohibited than in those where it is granted? Where husbands and wives who have ceased to love cannot be divorced, there are mistresses and lovers.

The sacramental view of marriage is the shield of vice. The world looks at the wife who has been abused, who has been driven from the home of her husband, and the world



pitied; and when this wife is loved by some other man, the world excuses. So, too, the husband who cannot live in peace, who leaves his home, is pitied and excused.

Is it possible to conceive of anything more immoral than for a husband to insist on living with a wife who has no love for him? Is not this a perpetual crime? Is the wife to lose her personality? Has she no right of choice? Is her modesty the property of another? Is the man she hates the lord of her desire? Has she no right to guard the jewels of her soul? Is there a depth below this? And is this the foundation of her morality? this the corner-stone of society? this the arch that supports the dome of civilisation? Is this pathetic sacrifice on the one hand, this sacrilege on the other, pleasing in the sight of heaven?

To me, the tenderest word in our language, the most pathetic fact within our knowledge, is maternity. Around this sacred word cluster the joys and sorrows, and agonies and ecstasies, of the human race. The mother walks in the shadow of death that she may give another life. Upon the altar of love she puts her own life in pawn. When the world is civilised, no wife will become a mother against her will. Man will then know that to enslave another is to imprison himself.

ROBERT BROWNING.

A SONNET BY MR. GEORGE MEREDITH.

Now dumb is he who waked the world to speak,  
And voiceless hangs the world beside his bier.  
Our words are sobs, our cry of praise a tear;  
We are the smitten mortal, we the weak.  
We see a spirit on Earth's loftiest peak  
Shine, and wing hence the way he makes more clear:  
See a great Tree of Life that never sere  
Dropped leaf for aught that age or storms might break.  
Such ending is not Death: such living shows  
What wide illumination brightness sheds  
From one big heart—to conquer man's old foes:  
The coward, and the tyrant, and the force  
Of all those weedy monsters raising heads  
When Song is muck from springs of turbid source.

—*Pall Mall Gazette.*

OBITUARY.—On Thursday, 5th inst, at his residence, Charles Street, Horselydown, William Hurtle, aged 71, died after a long illness. He had been a Freethinker for upwards of forty years. He was well read, a diligent student of science and philosophy, and possessed a vast knowledge of astronomy and geology for one who was not a recognised "man of science." He was a modest, kind-hearted man, esteemed by all who knew him. The deceased was buried on Saturday, 7th inst, at Nunhead cemetery. His friends communicated with me, but as I was away at Liverpool I could not deliver the Secular Service over the remains of one who had been a true friend to me for nearly twenty years. The remains were consequently interred without any ceremony whatever.—ARTHUR B. MOSS.

PROGRESSIVE PUBLISHING CO.'S LIST.

All orders to be sent, with remittance, to R. FORDER, 23 Stonecutter Street, London, E.C. Rate of postage—Orders under 3d., one halfpenny; orders under 6d. one penny. Orders over 6d. post free.

G. W. FOOTE.

|   | s. | d. |
|---|----|----|
| PRISONER FOR BLASPHEMY. Cloth ...   | 2  | 6  |
| A Full History of his Three Trials and Twelve Months' Imprisonment. Copies in paper covers, soil d, 6d.   |    |    |
| IS SOCIALISM SOUND? ...   | 1  | 0  |
| Four Nights' Public Debate with Annie Besant. Superior edition, in cloth ...                              |    |    |
| CHRISTIANITY AND SECULARISM ...   | 1  | 0  |
| Four Nights' Public Debate with the Rev. Dr. James McCann. In paper covers. Superior edition in cloth ... |    |    |
| INFIDEL DEATH-BEDS ...  | 0  | 0  |
| Second edition, enlarged. Superior edition, in cloth ...  |    |    |
| DARWIN ON GOD ...   | 0  | 6  |
| Superior edition, in cloth ...  |    |    |
| DEFENCE OF FREE SPEECH ...  | 0  | 4  |
| Three Hours' Address to the Jury before Lord Coleridge. With a Special Preface and many Footnotes.        |    |    |
| LETTERS TO JESUS CHRIST ...   | 0  | 4  |
| PHILOSOPHY OF SECULARISM ...  | 0  | 8  |
| THE BIBLE GOD ...   | 0  | 2  |
| THE FOLLY OF PRAYER ...   | 0  | 2  |
| CHRISTIANITY AND PROGRESS ...   | 0  | 2  |
| A Reply to Mr. Gladstone.   |    |    |

|  |   |   |
|--|---|---|
| WHAT WAS CHRIST? ...   | 0 | 2 |
| A Reply to J. S. Mill.   |   |   |
| THE DYING ATHEIST. A Story ...   | 0 | 1 |
| WAS JESUS INSANE? ...  | 0 | 1 |
| A searching inquiry into the mental condition of the Prophet of Na areth.  |   |   |
| THE SHADOW OF THE SWORD ...  | 0 | 2 |
| A moral and statistical Essay on War.  |   |   |
| ROYAL PAUPERS ...  | 0 | 2 |
| Showing what Royalty does for the People, and what the People do for Royalty.  |   |   |
| BIBLE HEROES—First Series, in elegant wrapper ...  | 1 | 0 |
| (1) Mr. Adam, (2) Captain Noah, (3) Father Abraham, (4) Juggling Jacob, (5) Master Joseph, (6) Joseph's Brethren, (7) Holy Moses I., (8) Holy Moses II., (9) Parson Aaron, (10) General Joshua, (11) Jephthah and Co., (12) Professor Samson. One Penny each singly. |   |   |
| BIBLE HEROES—Second Series.  |   |   |
| (13) Prophet Samuel, (14) King Saul, (15) Saint David I., (16) Saint David II., (17) Sultan Solomon, (18) Poor Job, (19) Hairy Elijah, (20) Bald Elisha, (21) General Jehu, (22) Doctor Daniel, (23) The Prophets (Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Hosea).                |   |   |
| MRS. BESANT'S THEOSOPHY ...  | 0 | 2 |
| THEOSOPHY AND SECULARISM ...   | 0 | 2 |
| A Rejoinder to Mrs. Besant.  |   |   |
| THE NEW CAGLIOSTRO ...   | 0 | 2 |
| An Open Letter to Madame Blavatsky.  |   |   |

COLONEL R. G. INGERSOLL.

|  |   |   |
|--|---|---|
| MISTAKES OF MOSES ...  | 1 | 0 |
| Superior edition, in cloth ...                                   |   |   |
| Only Complete Edition published in England                       |   |   |
| DEFENCE OF FREETHOUGHT ...                                       | 0 | 6 |
| Five Hours' Speech at the Trial of C. B. Reynolds for Blasphemy. |   |   |
| REPLY TO GLADSTONE ...   | 0 | 4 |
| With a Biography by J. M. Wheeler.                               |   |   |
| ROME OR REASON? Reply to Cardinal Manning                        | 0 | 4 |
| FAITH AND FACT. Reply to Rev. Dr. Field                          | 0 | 2 |
| GOD AND MAN. Second Reply to Dr. Field                           | 0 | 2 |
| THE DYING CREED ...  | 0 | 2 |
| THE HOUSEHOLD OF FAITH ...                                       | 0 | 2 |
| THE LIMITS OF TOLERATION ...                                     | 0 | 2 |
| A Discussion with Hon. F. D. Courdert and Gov. S. L. Woodford.   |   |   |
| ART AND MORALITY ...   | 0 | 2 |
| DO I BLASPHEME? ...  | 0 | 2 |
| THE CLERGY AND COMMON SENSE ..                                   | 0 | 2 |
| THE GREAT MISTAKE ...  | 0 | 1 |
| LIVE TOPICS ...  | 0 | 1 |
| MYTH AND MIRACLE ...   | 0 | 1 |
| REAL BLASPHEMY ...   | 0 | 1 |
| SOCIAL SALVATION ...   | 0 | 2 |

G. W. FOOTE and J. M. WHEELER.

|  |   |   |
|--|---|---|
| CRIMES OF CHRISTIANITY. Vol. I. Cloth ...  | 2 | 6 |
| Hundred of exact References to Standard Authorities. No pains spared to make it a complete, trustworthy, final, unanswerable indictment of Christianity. |   |   |
| THE JEWISH LIFE OF CHRIST ...  | 0 | 6 |
| With voluminous footnotes. An extraordinary work. Superior edition, in cloth ...   |   |   |

G. W. FOOTE and W. P. BALL.

|   |   |   |
|---|---|---|
| BIBLE HANDBOOK FOR FREETHINKERS AND INQUIRING CHRISTIANS ...  | 1 | 4 |
| Superior edition, in cloth ...  |   |   |
| Sold also in separate parts as follows—   |   |   |
| 1. Bible Contradictions ...   | 0 | 4 |
| The Contradictions are printed in parallel columns.   |   |   |
| 2. Bible Absurdities ...  | 0 | 4 |
| All the chief Absurdities from Genesis to Revelation, conveniently and strikingly arranged, with appropriate headlines, giving the point of each absurdity in a sentence. |   |   |
| 3. Bible Atrocities ...   | 0 | 4 |
| Containing all the godly wickedness from Genesis to Revelation. Each infamy has a separate headline for easy reference  |   |   |
| 4. Bible Immoralities, Indecencies, Obscenities, Broken Promises, and Unfulfilled Prophecies  | 0 | 4 |

J. M. WHEELER.

|                         |   |   |
|-------------------------|---|---|
| LETTERS FROM HEAVEN ... | 0 | 1 |
| LETTERS FROM HELL ...   | 0 | 1 |

DR. E. B. AVELING.

|  |   |   |
|--|---|---|
| DARWIN MADE EASY. 44pp., cloth ..            | 1 | 0 |
| Best Popular Exposition of Darwinism extant. |   |   |

GIORDANO BRUNO.

|                                   |   |   |
|-----------------------------------|---|---|
| Picture of the Statue of Rome ... | 0 | 2 |
| Post free in Lett's case ...      |   |   |

## THE WONDER-WORKING PRINCE HOHENLOHE.

THE Rev. S. Baring-Gould in his recent book on *Byeways of History*, illustrates the power of credulity by his account of the wonder-working Prince Hohenlohe, who, in 1821, acquired much reputation, not only in Germany but throughout Europe, from the marvellous cures which he was alleged to have performed through his prayers and faith. The prince's reputation went up like a rocket, but came down like a stick. He was invited by the physicians to try his powers at the Julius Hospital, Wurzburg. He experimented on twenty cases, but was unsuccessful in every one. His former faith cures were then inquired into with the result that their supposed supernatural character entirely broke down. The case which made the most noise was the cure of the Princess of Schwarzenberg, who had been crippled with a twisted spine and but been enabled to walk. All the country people hailed it as a miracle wrought at the hands of Prince Hohenlohe, but Dr. Heine, who had attended the Princess for nineteen months, published a full account of the case, in which he showed that the cure was by no means miraculous, but due entirely to his own skill, which Prince Hohenlohe, stepping in at the right moment, snatched the credit of.

Mr. Gould quotes from a contemporary pamphlet, published at Darmstadt, an account of Prince Hohenlohe's faith-healing, from which we cull an extract to show how similar his performances were, both to those of our own days and those of antiquity:

"A girl of eighteen, who was paralysed in her limbs, was brought from a carriage to the feet of the prophet. After he had asked her if she believed, and he had prayed for about twelve seconds, he exclaimed in a threatening rather than gentle voice, 'You are healed!' But I observed that he had to thunder this thrice into the ear of the frightened girl, before she made an effort to move, which was painful and distressing; and, groaning and supported by others, she made her way to the rear, 'You will be better shortly—only believe!' he cried to her. I, who was looking on, observed her conveyed away as much a cripple as she came.

"The next case was a peasant of fifty-eight, a cripple on crutches. Without his crutches he was doubled up, and could only shuffle with his feet on the ground. After the Prince had asked the usual questions and had prayed, he ordered the kneeling man to stand up, his crutches having been removed. As he was unable to do so, the miracle-worker seemed irritated, and repeated his order in an angry tone. One of the policemen at the side threw in 'Up! in the name of the Trinity,' and pulled him to his feet. The man seemed bewildered. He stood, indeed, but doubled as before, and the sweat streamed from his face, and he was not a ha'porth better than previously; but as he had come with crutches, and now stood without them, there arose a shout of 'A miracle!' and all pressed round to congratulate the poor wretch. His son helped him away. 'Have faith and courage!' cried to him the Prince; and the policeman added, 'Only believe, and rub in a little spirits of camphor!' Many pressed alms into the man's hand, and he smiled; this was regarded as a token of his perfect cure. I saw, however, that his knees were as stiff as before, and that the rogue cast longing eyes at his crutches, which had been taken away, but which he insisted on having back. No one thought of asking how it fared with the poor wretch later, and, as a fact, he died shortly after."

Prince Hohenlohe had no notion of hiding his light under a bushel and sent an account of over a hundred cures, which he claimed to have worked, to the Pope, who, however, also got hold of the doctors' statements, and so failed to canonise the prince or even make him a bishop. He lived just a little too late for his role of prophet and thaumaturgist. There was no medical investigation or other tests applied to the miracles of healing which are said to have happened in Palestine nearly eighteen hundred years previously.

## A RHYME FOR CHRISTMAS.

Christmas is here in his mantle of snow,  
Holly-crowned, jolly, with face all aglow;  
See how his starry eyes glitter and shine,  
Bright as his goblet of fiery wine.  
We who care nothing what dogmatists teach  
List to the sermon old Christmas does preach,  
Knowing full well that the doctrine is sound,  
Bidding good cheer and contentment abound.

Christmas is here, make the little ones glad—  
This is no season for thoughts that are sad;  
Hark how their laugh like a fairy chime rings,  
Touching the heart but to quicken love's springs;  
Beasts, too, of burden now claim a kind thought,  
They that for man have so patiently wrought.  
Cheer then the child and the beast in its stall,  
Good will and plenty for one and for all.

Christmas is here, and the bird on the bough  
Shivers to hear how the dreary winds sough;  
Bare is the earth, and the snowflakes have hid  
Food that the little bird sparingly fed.  
I, who know well that no God reigns above,  
Guarding his creatures in pity and love,  
Now at the door, that the birdie may live,  
Bread for his song will unstintingly give.

Christmas is here, and the heart groweth light,  
Knowing the sun is new-born in its might;  
Sol is our lord, and the king whom we hail,  
In bumpers of wine and of fine sparkling ale:  
Ye who care nothing for priests and their creeds,  
Shout that his car through the zodiac-scroll speeds,  
Thus 'mid the feasting and frolic and mirth,  
Hailing the Savior who gladdens the earth.

Christmas is here, let the workers rejoice,  
Making sweet music with harp and with voice.  
Life is but fleeting, too short for vain sighs,  
Cull the soft down from Time's wings as he flies.  
So to the feast with a fun-loving soul—  
Join in the dance and replenish the bowl,  
Making the rafters re-echo again—  
Peace upon earth, and good will unto men.

ALFRED LOVETT.

THE BIBLE GOD!  
INSPIRED DESCRIPTION OF OUR HEAVENLY FATHER.

"THERE went up smoke out of his nostrils, and fire out of his mouth devoured: coals were kindled by it" (Psalms xviii., 8). "Round about him were dark waters and thick clouds of the skies" (Psalms xviii., 11). "His head and his hairs were white like wool; and his eyes were as a flame of fire" (Rev. i., 14). "And his feet like unto fine brass, as if they burned in a furnace" (Rev. i., 15). "He had horns coming out of his hand"—"and burning coals went forth at his feet" (Hab. iii., 4-5). "Clothed with a garment down to the foot, and girt about the paps with a golden girdle" (Rev. i., 13). "Out of his mouth went a sharp two-edged sword" (Rev. i., 16). "For I am a god and there is none else; I am God, and there is none like me" (Isaiah xlvi., 9).

This is the God that "overshadowed" the blessed Virgin Mary. He is the God that ordered women disemboweled, little children murdered, and innocent maidens given over to brutal soldiers. He is the God that is wanted in the constitution of the United States. He is the God that requires us to spend every seventh day in worshipping and "praising" him—big fellow that he is! He is the God that owns some billions of dollars' of untaxed church property. He is a God that employs a standing army of 100,000 priests to sound his "praise," and compels the ignorant and superstitious masses of our people to clothe and feed them and pay them big salaries. He is the "so help me god" that makes a lie the truth in court. He is the God that governors implore to stop epidemics, and to kill grasshoppers and potato bugs, or drive them into adjoining states. He is a bully God! There may be a broader and a bigger God than this; but this is the God worshipped by the Christian people of the United States of America, and by those of New Jersey and the State of Delaware.—*Ironclad Age*.

## RELIGION MUST HAVE BLOOD.

Rev. Orville A. Ross, the good minister who shot and killed his wife, his son aged eight years, and himself near Lockeford, California, Nov. 12, was a Christian pure and simple. He believed in redeeming blood. The *San Jose Mercury* of Nov. 13 says of the rev. gent:—"He was of very ordinary intellect, but was a religious enthusiast and devoted most of his spare time to theological studies. At camp meetings and during seasons of religious excitement he would frequently go into an ecstatic condition and some times would lie for hours on the ground apparently oblivious to all earthly surroundings." Religion is a fine thing for harmless fools; but when a fool with large destructiveness fills up with it he should be encouraged with a shot gun or a club to seek the bosom of Abraham or the inside of an insane asylum.—*Ironclad Age*.

BIBLE QUESTIONS FOR BOARD SCHOOLS.

THE Bishop of Gloucester laments that Bible teaching in the Board Schools is very inadequate, and suggests that the questions should be more definite and explicit. In order to assist the reverend father in God we have jotted down a few questions, which if used by examiners may tend to more definite teaching.

Explain how the earth brought forth grass, etc., before the sun was made.

It states that God rested from his work and was refreshed (Exod. xxxi., 17.)—Explain what he rested on and what he took for refreshment.

Reconcile the statement that no man hath seen God at any time with Exod. xxiv., 9, 10, 11, which teaches that God was seen by Moses and Aaron and Nadab and Abihu and seventy of the elders of Israel.

What was it Moses saw in the cleft of the rock? (Exod. xxxiii., 23).

Why did the Lord seek to kill Moses when he met him at an inn? (Exod. iv., 24).

How was it the Lord could not drive the inhabitants out of the valley? (Jud. i., 19),

Why did God love Jacob and hate Esau? (Mal. i., 2-3).

What did Samson do when he went to Gaza? (Jud. xvi., 1).

What orders did Moses give as to the Midianitish women? (Num. xxxi., 17, 18).

Was it God who moved David to number Israel? (2 Sam. xxiv., 1); or was it Satan? (1 Chron. xxi., 1).

How are we to know witches and put them to death according to the divine commands? (Exod. xxii., 18).

Explain how the prophecy in regard to the strangers lending to Jews but the Jews not lending to strangers has been fulfilled (Deut. xxviii., 44).

Explain how a star could guide people to a particular place (Matt. ii., 9).

Was Jacob the father of Joseph? (Matt. i., 16); or was he the son of Heli? (Luke iii., 23).

Show how believers can take up serpents, swallow poisons, and heal the sick by laying hands on them (Mark xvi., 17, 18).

Explain the chemical process of changing water into wine (John ii., 9).

Show that the world came to an end in the lifetime of the apostles (Matt. xvi., 28).

LUCIANUS.

PROGRESSIVE PUBLISHING CO.'S LIST.

All orders to be sent, with remittance, to R. FORDER, 28 Stonecutter Street, London, E.C. Rate of postage—Orders under 3d., one halfpenny; orders under 6d. one penny. Orders over 6d. post free.

G. W. FOOTE.

|   | s. | d. |
|---|----|----|
| PRISONER FOR BLASPHEMY. Cloth ...   | 2  | 6  |
| A Full History of his Three Trials and Twelve Months' Imprisonment. Copies in paper covers, sold, 6d.   |    |    |
| IS SOCIALISM SOUND? ...   | 1  | 0  |
| Four Nights' Public Debate with Annie Besant. Superior edition, in cloth ...  |    |    |
| CHRISTIANITY AND SECULARISM ...   | 1  | 0  |
| Four Nights' Public Debate with the Rev. Dr. James McCann. In paper covers. Superior edition in cloth ...   |    |    |
| INFIDEL DEATH-BEDS ...  | 0  | 8  |
| Second edition, enlarged. Superior edition, in cloth ...  |    |    |
| DARWIN ON GOD ...   | 0  | 6  |
| Superior edition, in cloth ...  |    |    |
| CONTENTS:—Darwin's Grandfather—Darwin's Father—Darwin's Early Piety—Almost a Clergyman—On Board the "Beagle"—Settling at Down—Death and Burial—Purpose of Pamphlet—Some Objections—Darwin Abandons Christianity—Deism—Creation—Origin of Life—Origin of Man—Animism—A Personal God—Design—Divine Beneficence—Religion and Morality—Agnosticism and Atheism. |    |    |
| DEFENCE OF FREE SPEECH ...  | 0  | 4  |
| Three Hours' Address to the Jury before Lord Coleridge. With a Special Preface and many Footnotes.  |    |    |
| LETTERS TO JESUS CHRIST ...   | 0  | 4  |
| PHILOSOPHY OF SECULARISM ...  | 0  | 3  |
| THE BIBLE GOD ...   | 0  | 2  |
| THE FOLLY OF PRAYER ...   | 0  | 2  |
| CHRISTIANITY AND PROGRESS ...   | 0  | 2  |
| A Reply to Mr. Gladstone.   |    |    |

|  |   |   |
|--|---|---|
| WHAT WAS CHRIST?...<br>A Reply to J. S. Mill.  | 0 | 2 |
| THE DYING ATHEIST. A Story ...   | 0 | 1 |
| WAS JESUS INSANE? ...<br>A searching inquiry into the mental condition of the Prophet of Nazareth.   | 0 | 1 |
| THE SHADOW OF THE SWORD ...<br>A moral and statistical Essay on War.   | 0 | 2 |
| ROYAL PAUPERS ...<br>Showing what Royalty does for the People, and what the People do for Royalty.   | 0 | 2 |
| BIBLE HEROES—First Series, in elegant wrapper ...  | 1 | 0 |
| (1) Mr. Adam, (2) Captain Noah, (3) Father Abraham, (4) Juggling Jacob, (5) Master Joseph, (6) Joseph's Brethren, (7) Holy Moses I., (8) Holy Moses II., (9) Parson Aaron, (10) General Joshua, (11) Jephthah and Co., (12) Professor Samson. <i>One Penny each singly.</i>          |   |   |
| BIBLE HEROES—Second Series.<br>(13) Prophet Samuel, (14) King Saul, (15) Saint David I., (16) Saint David II., (17) Sultan Solomon, (18) Poor Job, (19) Hairy Elijah, (20) Bald Elisha, (21) General Jehu, (22) Doctor Daniel, (23) The Prophets (Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Hosea). |   |   |
| MRS. BESANT'S THEOSOPHY ...<br>A Candid Criticism.   | 0 | 2 |
| THEOSOPHY AND SECULARISM ...<br>A Rejoinder to Mrs. Besant.  | 0 | 2 |
| THE NEW CAGLIOSTRO ...<br>An Open Letter to Madame Blavatsky.  | 0 | 2 |
| COLONEL R. G. INGERSOLL.   |   |   |
| MISTAKES OF MOSES ...<br>Superior edition, in cloth ...<br>Only Complete Edition published in England  | 1 | 0 |
| DEFENCE OF FREETHOUGHT ...<br>Five Hours' Speech at the Trial of C. B. Reynolds for Blasphemy.   | 0 | 6 |
| REPLY TO GLADSTONE ...<br>With a Biography by J. M. Wheeler.   | 0 | 4 |
| ROME OR REASON? Reply to Cardinal Manning  | 0 | 4 |
| FAITH AND FACT. Reply to Rev. Dr. Field  | 0 | 2 |
| GOD AND MAN. Second Reply to Dr. Field   | 0 | 2 |
| THE DYING CREED ...  | 0 | 2 |
| THE HOUSEHOLD OF FAITH ...   | 0 | 2 |
| THE LIMITS OF TOLERATION ...<br>A Discussion with Hon. F. D. Courdert and Gov. S. L. Woodford.   | 0 | 2 |
| ART AND MORALITY ...   | 0 | 2 |
| DO I BLASPHEME? ...  | 0 | 2 |
| THE CLERGY AND COMMON SENSE ..   | 0 | 2 |
| THE GREAT MISTAKE ...  | 0 | 1 |
| LIVE TOPICS ...  | 0 | 1 |
| MYTH AND MIRACLE ...   | 0 | 1 |
| REAL BLASPHEMY ...   | 0 | 1 |
| SOCIAL SALVATION ...   | 0 | 2 |
| G. W. FOOTE and J. M. WHEELER.   |   |   |
| CRIMES OF CHRISTIANITY. Vol. I. Cloth ...  | 2 | 6 |
| Hundred of exact References to Standard Authorities. No pains spared to make it a complete, trustworthy, final, unanswerable indictment of Christianity.   |   |   |
| THE JEWISH LIFE OF CHRIST ...  | 0 | 6 |
| With voluminous footnotes. An extraordinary work. Superior edition, in cloth ...   |   |   |
| G. W. FOOTE and W. P. BALL.  |   |   |
| BIBLE HANDBOOK FOR FREETHINKERS AND INQUIRING CHRISTIANS ...   | 1 | 4 |
| Superior edition, in cloth ...   |   |   |
| <i>Sold also in separate parts as follows—</i>   |   |   |
| 1. Bible Contradictions ...<br>The Contradictions are printed in parallel columns.   | 0 | 4 |
| 2. Bible Absurdities ...<br>All the chief Absurdities from Genesis to Revelation, conveniently and strikingly arranged, with appropriate headlines, giving the point of each absurdity in a sentence.  | 0 | 4 |
| 3. Bible Atrocities ...<br>Containing all the godly wickedness from Genesis to Revelation. Each infamy has a separate headline for easy reference  | 0 | 4 |
| 4. Bible Immoralities, Indecencies, Obscenities, Broken Promises, and Unfulfilled Prophecies ...   | 0 | 4 |
| J. M. WHEELER.   |   |   |
| LETTERS FROM HEAVEN ...  | 0 | 1 |
| LETTERS FROM HELL ...  | 0 | 1 |
| DR. E. B. AVELING.   |   |   |
| DARWIN MADE EASY. 44pp., cloth ...   | 1 | 0 |
| Best Popular Exposition of Darwinism extant.   |   |   |
| GIORDANO BRUNO.  |   |   |
| Picture of the Statue of Rome ...  | 0 | 2 |
| Post free in Lett's case ...   |   |   |

# NOW READY BIOGRAPHICAL DICTIONARY OF FREETHINKERS

OF  
ALL AGES AND NATIONS.

By J. M. WHEELER.

Handsomely Bound in Cloth.

Price Seven Shillings and Sixpence.

Should be in every Freethinker's Library.

Saint Peter - - - - - 1d.  
Saint Paul - - - - - 1d.

Numbers 24 and 25 of BIBLE HEROES, completing the work.

By G. W. FOOTE.

## THE CHRISTMAS NUMBER OF THE "FREETHINKER."

### ILLUSTRATIONS.

An Old Christmas  
A Virgin's Family  
Leading Them On  
Christian Godhead  
Creation and Fall  
(Twelve Sketches)  
Holy Arson  
Obeying the Bible  
Samson and Sandow Eclipsed  
Castles in the Air  
Curious Twins  
Raising the Wind

### CONTENTS.

### ARTICLES.

Satan and Michael  
Deity Interviewed  
Religious Idiots  
Babyhood of Christ  
Ninnies of Nineveh  
Last Will of Jahveh  
Barnum Outrivalled, etc.  
*VERSE.*  
Three Wise Men  
Holy Young Working Man  
Good God Almighty O!  
Rib Ticklers, Profane Anecdotes, etc.

Price 3d., post free 4d.

IN HANDSOME WRAPPER.

Price 3d., post free 4d.

### W. J. Rendell's "WIFE'S FRIEND."

Recommended in "Law of Population," and "Wife's Hand Book." Made solely by J. PULLEN, 15 Chadwell Street Clerkenwell, and supplied per post, 2s. dozen. For particulars of this Malthusian discovery send stamped envelope. Higginson's Syringe, with vertical and reverse current, 3s. 6d. and 4. 6d. Dr. Palfrey's Powder, 1s 2d. Quinine Compound, 1s. 2d. All other Malthusian Appliances. All prices post free.

LIMITED FAMILIES.—Allbutt, posted, 6jd.; Besant, 7d.; Owen, 7d. Malthus, 1s. 1d. Lists (Literature and Appliances), 1d. VOLUNTARY TAXATION. Fisher, 32pp., 1jd. Old Testament, 1d. Darwin's Hypocrisy, Daws n. 4jd.—Fisher, Progressive Publisher, Kohurg, Leeds.

STANTON, the People's Dentist, 355 Strand (opposite Somerset House).—TEETH on VULCANITE, 2s. 6d. each, upper or lower set, £1. Best quality, 4s. each, upper or lower, £2, completed in four hours when required, repairing or alterations in two hours. If you pay more than the above they are fancy charges. Teeth on platinum, 7s. 6d. each; on 18c. gold 15s.; stopping, 2s. 6d.; extraction, 1s. painless by gas, 5s.

### GRATIS.

AN ILLUSTRATED 16-PAGE PAMPHLET, containing extracts from the utterances of the Archbishop of Canterbury, the Bishop of Manchester; the Revs. T. R. Malthus, A. E. Whatham, M. J. Savage, Leonard Dawson, — Lawton, H. R. Hawels; the following Doctors — Allbutt, Allinson, Armstrong, Drysdale, Pye Chavasse, E. B. Foote, Nicholls, Wilder, Raciborski, Napheys and Reamy. Also Plato, Aristotle, Sismondi, Huxley, Mill, and numerous others. Should be read by every married and in marriageable person. Sent on receipt of stamped addressed envelope by J. R. HOLMES, Hanney, Wantage, Berks.

TESTIMONIALS (Extracts from).  
"The one you sent me some months since is  
**Quite Worn Out**

with being lent to so many friends."  
"Some of us have paid five shillings for less than one-tenth of the information."

**TO MARRIED PEOPLE**  
Or Those Contemplating Marriage.

Send 1d Stamp to  
DAVIES, CHEMIST, 101 PARK LANE, LEEDS,  
And you'll receive an Illustrated List of most useful  
Malthusian Appliances by return of post.

WANTED, Bed-room in North London, with or without board.—Address, stating terms, A. Tarn, 39 Newhall Street, Birmingham.]

### TOMLINSON

WATCHMAKER,

3 THEBERTON STREET,  
UPPER STREET, ISLINGTON.

CLOCKS, OPTICS, &c  
GOOD VALUE FOR MONEY.

REPAIRS OF EVERY DESCRIPTION.

Best Work Guaranteed at Moderate Charges.

(Few doors off Upper Street.)



**IRETON'S**  
INDELIBLE JET BLACK MARKING INK

(NO HEATING REQUIRED)  
For Rubber Stamps, Stencil, Type or Pen.

PRICE 6d. 1/- and 2/6 per Bottle.

Sample bottle 4d. post free.

Dyed with Iretton's INK, no hope of  
ever changing my Color. IRETON & Co., 32, Gracechurch St.,  
LONDON, E.C.  
The largest makers of Rubber Stamps.  
Special terms to the Trade.

Printed and Published by G. W. Foote, at 28 Stone-  
cutter Street Farringdon Street, London, E.C.