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Edited by G. W. FOOTE.]

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[PRICE ONE PENNY.

GLADSTONE ON MOSES.

[CONCLUDED].

MR. GLADSTONE advances five arguments to prove the antiquity of the Mosaic Law, and we shall proceed to discuss them. But before doing so we must make this observation. Not one of his arguments would carry the Law back to the time of Moses. They might, if they were sound, carry it back beyond the Captivity, but this is many hundreds of years from the death of the supposed lawgiver. It appears to us, indeed, that Mr. Gladstone is playing on his readers' lack of historic perspective.

First Argument.—The early ages of the Jews were purer and nobler, and less idolatrous, than the later; it is therefore "a paradox, and even a rather wanton paradox, to refer the production of those sacred Mosaic books, which constituted the charter of the Hebrews as a separate and peculiar people, to the epochs of a lowered and decaying spiritual life."

Surely Mr. Gladstone has read Jewish history upside down. Where in the narrative of the wandering in the desert, of the rule of the Judges, and of the early Kings, shall we find this heightened spiritual life? Look at the hideous story of the Levite and his concubine in the Book of Judges, and see what kind of private and public life existed in the "good old times." Then turn to the best parts of the Book of Isaiah, and see the immense improvement in every respect. If the Mosaic Law shows a high spiritual culture (which for the moment we neither affirm nor dispute), as Mr. Gladstone alleges, it was more likely to have originated in the later than in the earlier ages of Jewish history.

Second Argument.—From about 300 B.C. the Jews paid great reverence to the sacred text, and took painful precautions to preserve its integrity. Is it possible, therefore, that the ostensible editors were really the authors? And was there not "something like hallucination on the part of a people that accepted such novelties as ancient?"

This is a skilful, but not very ingenuous, appeal to the ordinary readers of to-day, who may well doubt the possibility of such an imposition being now successful, and who have neither the knowledge nor the imagination to weigh the probability of its success in a very different state of society, when there was no printing-press and no general circulation of literature, when the masses were grossly ignorant, and all the knowledge that existed was monopolised by the theocracy.

Let us take a couple of illustrations of how people can be the victims of "something like hallucination"—one from profane and one from sacred history.

During the mediæval period the Arthurian legends grew up in Western Europe. They were most circumstantial, as works of imagination are apt to be; witness the marvellous details of Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe* or his *History of the Great Plague*, or, in our own day, the minute Dutch painting of Dickens. When we read the Arthurian legends in Sir Thomas Mallory's great book they seem like actual occur-

rences. It requires an effort to realise that they are purely romantic; and they have still enough life-blood in them to give an air of reality to Tennyson's more shadowy *Idylls of the King*. Centuries ago those legends were real history. They were as true as Gospel. Now we know they are products of imagination. The famous Round Table was the dream of poets' brains. The gallant knights and lovely ladies were fictions. Arthur himself seems never to have existed. Like William Tell, another purely romantic creation, who has figured so prominently in Swiss history as an actual hero, Arthur has melted away in the light of modern criticism. Nor is it anything but foolishness to lament the "loss," for if history becomes more scientific, the poetry of the old legends remains as an imperishable possession.

Our second illustration shall be taken from the New Testament. In the Epistle of Jude a quotation is made from "Enoch, the seventh from Adam." Now this quotation is really taken from the Book of Enoch, a work which is ascribed by some authorities to the first, and by others to the second, century before Christ. That is the highest antiquity claimed for the book by any competent scholar. Yet here, in the Epistle of Jude, we have a Christian writer of probably the second century after Christ, citing the work as written by the Enoch who lived before the Flood. In other words, a work not four hundred years old, and perhaps not three hundred, was honestly taken to be older than Moses, older than Abraham, older than Noah. Was not this "something like hallucination"? And if a Christian writer could be so deceived, was it impossible for Jewish readers to be the victims of a less colossal deception?

Third Argument.—If the Jewish hierarchy composed the Pentateuch, and ascribed it, or at least the legislation, to Moses, the forgery was unaccountably unscientific. The books are "rather crude and irregular," they "have not that consistency which belongs to consecutiveness of form." Yet the priests had "unbounded freedom of manipulation," and there was every condition to "favor the production of a thoroughly systematic and orderly work."

Now this argument proceeds on two false assumptions; first, that the whole Pentateuch was concocted at one time by one set of hands—say like our Revised Version of the Bible; secondly, that the priests were skilful enough to anticipate the severity of modern criticism. The first assumption would be scouted by the whole school of "negative" critics; the second would be derided by every person with a grain of common sense.

The fact is, the forgers were skilful enough for their own necessities. They had merely to deal with the circumstances of their own time. And if the circumstances had not changed, as they did not until the modern invention of printing, and the growth of exact knowledge, the forgery would still hold its ground. It imposes on ordinary people still, and apparently it imposes on Mr. Gladstone. But it did not impose on Spinoza, who viewed it as a man of genius, a mathematician, and a scholar; it did not impose on Colenso,

who examined it with more than the minuteness of Sir Charles Russell's examination of Pigott; it does not impose on the great textual and historical critics of Germany, Holland and France; nor does it impose on English writers like Dr. Robertson Smith and the editor of *Lux Mundi*. We may add that it did not impose on the critical sagacity of Voltaire and Thomas Paine.

Fourth Argument.—The exclusion of the doctrine of a future life discredits the idea of the Law being framed immediately before or after the Captivity, as the Jews had then become familiar with the "idea of a future life and an Underworld, as held both in the East and in Egypt."

But was not Moses "skilled in all the learning of the Egyptians," and was not the belief in a future life a profound conviction among the Egyptians long before his birth? Why then did he exclude it from the Law? Mr. Gladstone says it was because he wanted to draw a sharp line between the Hebrews and other nations. But why could not the same motive prevail with the post-exile hierarchy? Do we not know that they were passionate Judaists? Were they not the nurses of a patriotism far narrower and intenser than that which obtained in the age of Solomon?

Fifth Argument.—The Samaritan Pentateuch is a proof of the antiquity of the Mosaic Law. "How is it possible," Mr. Gladstone asks, "to conceive that it should have held as a Divine work the supreme place in the regard of the Samaritans, if, about or near the year B.C. 500, or, again, if at the time of Manasseh the seceder, it had, as a matter of fact, been a recent compilation of their enemies the Jews?"

This argument, if valid, would not carry the Pentateuch back to the time of Moses, which is what Mr. Gladstone undertakes to prove. At the utmost it could only establish the fact that the Pentateuch was in existence before the Captivity, when the old Hebrew character was in use among the Jews; and it does not require all the statistical power of Mr. Gladstone to see that a book might exist 700 years before Christ and still not exist 1,500 years before Christ. We are accustomed to cutting big slices out of ancient chronology, but really the years followed each other one at a time, and many things happened in the course of twenty generations.

Mr. Gladstone's argument, however, is fallacious. The Samaritans were not harder to impose upon than the Jews, and however great their hostility, they had a common interest in Moses and the founders of the race.

Mr. Gladstone is curiously silent about the strong objections to the antiquity of the Samaritan Pentateuch. We have no space to enter upon them here, but they are of a very pregnant character, and Mr. Gladstone has perhaps shown a wise discretion in avoiding this awkward branch of the subject.

Having gone through Mr. Gladstone's arguments, which we have drawn out in numerical order for the sake of clearness, we proceed to remark that they are all of an *a priori* character. He judiciously evades all the positive facts of the case. He does not touch a single internal difficulty. He does not explain, for instance, how "the stranger that is within thy gates" was inserted in the Fourth Commandment while the Jews were desert nomads dwelling in tents; nor does he give the slightest hint as to how the Mosaic Law could have been carried out in the desert, or why it was so utterly neglected during the rule of the Judges, and plainly violated during the reign of the early Kings. No one but a priest was to presume to offer sacrifice; yet we see David sacrificing, and at the opening of the Temple we see Solomon officiating as High Pontiff.

The one concession to rational criticism that Mr. Gladstone deigns to make is this. There is a "probable imperfection of the text"—a phrase wide

enough to cover anything—and numbers may have gone wrong in transcribing; which again is a convenient method of reconciling the wildest contradictions, and simply involves the re-editing of the Pentateuch.

We have read that a famous *grande dame* (not one of Brantome's *grandes dames de par le monde* let us hope) has written to thank Mr. Gladstone for the great comfort and support she has derived from his recent articles. We do not envy him such praise. When a man of his standing enters the lists, it should not be to make a reassuring display to his lady friends in the grand stand, but to grapple in deadly earnest with a serious foe. This he is not doing. He had enough of Professor Huxley, and too much of Colonel Ingersoll. We can understand his preference for *Good Words*. It is a party magazine and no reply is permitted. He wins an easy victory who stalks into the arena alone and fights an imaginary opponent. He may gain the applause of those who wear his favor, but men of honesty and discernment will lift their eyebrows at the spectacle.

G. W. FOOTE.

THE ANGLO-ISRAELITES.

God's word is the fountain head of much foolishness. The belief in evil spirits, witchcraft, magic, dreams, charms, and even theosophy finds countenance in the Christian book-fetish. There seems no end to the crazy theories founded on the Bible. One day we have a prophet predicting the speedy approach of the end of the world, and at the same time forming his newspaper into a company from which he is to receive benefit until the time of his translation to heaven. On another we have a Church of God starting up and professing to be the only elect, although the entire body could be accommodated in a room of small dimensions.

One of the silliest sects in this Bible-instructed land of three hundred sects and but one sauce, is that of the Anglo-Israelites. The sect may be dated from the days of crazy Richard Brothers, who called himself the nephew of God Almighty, claiming descent from one of the brothers of Jesus mentioned in Matt. xiii., 55 and Mark vi., 3. His *Uncle* had given him the mission of restoring the chosen people to Jerusalem, and the faculty of discerning them among the children of England. In the face of the facts of history, ethnology and language, there are still a number of pious but ignorant people, who hold that the dispersed tribes of Israel are to be found in these islands, and the believers of course imagine themselves in particular to be of the chosen race to whom God's promises are due, or perhaps we should say over due. The Jews are not in it, being discarded for having crucified their blessed Savior.

The Anglo-Israelites have one weekly paper, *The Banner of Israel*, and two monthlies, *The British Israelite* and *The Messenger*. Several religious papers also countenance the cause without being devoted to its advocacy. They issue numerous pamphlets and tracts, and in Canada have a paper called *The Canadian Advance*. The late Bishop Titcomb held their views, and they number among their writers Dr. Wild, Col. J. M. Williams, Major-General A. M. Rainey, etc.

One main item of their belief is that Queen Victoria is a direct descendant of King David. They have issued a large chart, tracing her connection with that somewhat shady character, and thence to Adam and Eve. This they can fairly claim is to the full as trustworthy as many of the genealogical trees by which the upper ten thousand prove their titles to nobility.

The chart jumps rather suddenly from Zedekiah to some Irish chief, leaving us to suppose that Nebuchadnezzar's captive gave birth to an Irishman either in Jerusalem or Babylon. The better opinion, however, is that the Prophet Jeremiah emigrated to

Ireland, carrying with him the ark of the covenant (perhaps with Jahveh inside), and also the stone which Jacob anointed after the manner of the Hindus with the lingam.

It seems that Jeremiah had a beautiful daughter named Tea-Tephi, who married one of the ancient Irish kings. The descendants married into the Scotch Royal Family, and thus our German speaking sovereign is proved to be a *pur sang* Anglo-Israelite. Jacob's stone, of course, found its way under the coronation chair in Westminster Abbey. Equally of course the Anglo-Israelites are to be restored to Palestine. Mr. Edward Hine, their most prolific advocate, in his earlier writings dated this event about the year 1882, but has since found reason to modify this opinion. But the Lord will not keep his own true and special people waiting very much longer. In his own good time he will gather his elect together in the Holy Land, and devote the rest of the world to destruction.

Let not the reader think I have any animus against this obscure sect, the adherents of which I believe to be, for the most part, as honest as they are earnest. My object in calling attention to their vagaries is simply to illustrate the effect of Bible worship in wasting time and stultifying intelligence. That Englishmen should be found who write big books and advocate week after week that they are descendants of the lost ten tribes, can only be explained by the benumbing effect of treating one book as divine and all others as of comparatively no account. Until the Bible is displaced from its pre-eminence, and importance is given to other branches of human culture, we must expect such absurdities as those of the Anglo-Israelites to grow and flourish.

J. M. WHEELER.

SHELLEY ON CHRISTIANITY.

You assert that the human race merited eternal reprobation because their common father had transgressed the divine command, and that the crucifixion of the Son of God was the only sacrifice of sufficient efficacy to satisfy eternal justice. But it is no less inconsistent with justice and subversive of morality that millions should be responsible for a crime which they had no share in committing, than that, if they had really committed it, the crucifixion of an innocent being could absolve them from moral turpitude. Certainly this is a mode of legislation peculiar to a state of savageness and anarchy; this is the irrefragable logic of tyranny and imposture.

The supposition that God has ever supernaturally revealed his will to man at any other period than the original creation of the human race, necessarily involves a compromise of his benevolence. It assumes that he withheld from mankind a benefit which it was in his power to confer. That he suffered his creatures to remain in ignorance of truths essential to their happiness and salvation. That during the lapse of innumerable ages, every individual of the human race had perished without redemption, from an universal stain which the Deity at length descended in person to erase. That the good and wise of all ages, involved in one common fate with the ignorant and wicked, have been tainted by involuntary and inevitable error, which torments infinite in duration may not avail to expiate.

In vain will you assure me with amiable inconsistency that the mercy of God will be extended to the virtuous, and that the vicious will alone be punished. The foundation of the Christian Religion is manifestly compromised by a concession of this nature. A subterfuge thus palpable plainly annihilates the necessity of the incarnation of God for the redemption of the human race, and represents the descent of the Messiah as a gratuitous display of Deity, solely adapted to perplex, to terrify and to embroil mankind.

It is sufficiently evident that an omniscient being never conceived the design of reforming the world by Christianity. Omniscience would surely have foreseen the inefficacy of that system, which experience demonstrates not only to have been utterly impotent in restraining, but to have been most active in exhaling the malevolent propensities of men. During the period which elapsed between the removal of the seat of empire to Constantinople in 328, and its capture by the Turks

in 1453, what salutary influence did Christianity exercise upon that world which it was intended to enlighten? Never before was Europe the theatre of such ceaseless and sanguinary wars; never were the people so brutalised by ignorance and debased by slavery.

I will admit that one prediction of Jesus Christ has been indisputably fulfilled. "I come not to bring peace upon earth but a sword." Christianity indeed has equalled Judaism in the atrocities, and exceeded it in the extent of its desolation. Eleven millions of men, women and children have been killed in battle, butchered in their sleep, burned to death at public festivals of sacrifice, poisoned, tortured, assassinated and pillaged in the spirit of the Religion of Peace, and for the glory of the most merciful God.

In vain will you tell me that these terrible effects flow not from Christianity, but from the abuse of it. No such excuse will avail to palliate the enormities of a religion pretended to be divine. A limited intelligence is only so far responsible for the effects of its agency as it foresaw, or might have foreseen them; but Omniscience is manifestly chargeable with all the consequence of its conduct. Christianity itself declares that the worth of the tree is to be determined by the quality of its fruit. The extermination of infidels; the mutual persecutions of hostile sects; the midnight massacres and slow burning of thousands, because their creed contained either more or less than the orthodox standard, of which Christianity has been the immediate occasion; and the invariable opposition which philosophy has ever encountered from the spirit of revealed religion, plainly show that a very slight portion of sagacity was sufficient to have estimated at its true value the advantages of that belief to which some Theists are unaccountably attached.

You lay great stress upon the originality of the Christian system of morals. If this claim be just, either your religion must be false, or the Deity has willed that opposite modes of conduct should be pursued by mankind at different times, under the same circumstances; which is absurd.

The doctrine of acquiescing in the most insolent despotism; of praying for and loving our enemies; of faith and humility; appears to fix the perfection of the human character in that abjectness and credulity which priests and tyrants of all ages have found sufficiently convenient for their purposes. It is evident that a whole nation of Christians (could such an anomaly maintain itself a day) would become, like cattle, the property of the first occupier. It is evident that ten highwaymen would suffice to subjugate the world if it were composed of slaves who dared not to resist oppression.

The apathy to love and friendship, recommended by your creed, would, if attainable, not be less pernicious. This enthusiasm of anti-social misanthropy, if it were an actual rule of conduct, and not the speculation of a few interested persons, would speedily annihilate the human race. A total abstinence from sexual intercourse is not perhaps enjoined, but is strenuously recommended,* and was actually practised to a frightful extent by the primitive Christians.†

The penalties inflicted by that monster Constantine, the first Christian Emperor, on the pleasures of unlicensed love are so iniquitously severe, that no modern legislator could have affixed them to the most atrocious crimes.‡ This cold-blooded and hypocritical ruffian cut his son's throat, strangled his wife, murdered his father-in-law and his brother-in-law, and maintained at his court a set of bloodthirsty and bigoted Christian priests, one of whom was sufficient to excite the one half of the world to massacre the other.

I am willing to admit that some few axioms of morality, which Christianity has borrowed from the philosophers of Greece and India, dictate, in an unconnected state, rules of conduct worthy of regard; but the purest and most elevated lessons of morality must remain nugatory, the most probable inducements to virtue must fail of their effect, so long as the slightest weight is attached to that dogma which is the vital essence of revealed religion.

Belief is set up as the criterion of merit or demerit; a man is to be judged not by the purity of his intentions but by the orthodoxy of his creed; an assent to certain propositions is to outweigh in the balance of Christianity the most generous and elevated virtue.

—From "*A Refutation of Deism.*"

* Now concerning the things whereof ye wrote to me; it is good for a man not to touch a woman. I say, therefore, to the unmarried and widows, it is good for them if they abide even as I. But if they cannot contain, let them marry; it is better to marry than burn (1 Cor., chap. vii.)

† See Gibbon's *Decline and Fall*, vol. ii., p. 210.

‡ Ibid., vol. ii., p. 269.

GABRIEL CALLED HIM.

The descent of a balloon in a backwoods settlement is almost invariably productive of incidents. Landing once in a mountainous district in the State of Georgia (writes King, the aeronaut) my companion and myself were astonished at hearing loud shrieks and exclamations issuing from a house near by, while in the doorway we saw an old lady on her knees praying with great vociferation. The whole neighborhood had been aroused, and an earthquake could not have caused greater commotion. In the woods, not far from our landing-place, we found a bag of meal lying in the path. It had been dropped by some panic-stricken native. Farther on, a fishing party had abandoned several strings of fish. Our comedy came measurably near ending in tragedy, for we had a narrow escape from the shotguns of a gang of illicit distillers, who took us to be revenue officers. An Afro-American, hearing me call to him, started off at full-speed, crying as he ran, "Gabriel's done called me. I hear him holler." Very amusing was the experience of Elliot, in one of his descents. He had ascended from Charleston, on a summer afternoon, and was carried slowly down the harbor, landing at last, just at nightfall, on one of the islands. There was to be a wake that night, and the dead negro, Dick by name, lay in a cabin, while a dozen live ones sat outside telling spook stories, when Elliot dropped down in front of them. There was a yell, a scramble, and in a moment all but one had disappeared; he had been caught by the aeronaut's anchor, and dragged some distance, screaming piteously, "Oh, Massa Debil! Massa Debil! I'se not the niggar, I'se not the niggar! Dick's in dah! Dick's in dah!"

ACID DROPS.

The *Christian Commonwealth* says that "when they get old infidel controversialists generally give up their hard task. In a few years they seem to have had their say." As the names of Mr. Bradlaugh and Mrs. Besant are mentioned, we may remind our pious and inaccurate contemporary that Mrs. Besant, though a Theosophist, is still lecturing against Christianity, and that Mr. Bradlaugh will resume his anti-theological lectures at the Hall of Science in November.

When the *C. C.* contends that Christianity lives on in spite of all attacks, it forgets that it only does so by changing. One by one its worst features are dropped. Even the *C. C.* is shaky about Hell. Yet Christianity without a hell is on the road to ruin. Mr. Spurgeon sees this. His only mistake is in supposing that Hell can be kept in a humane age.

Can anybody inform us what have become of the Rev. Dr. S. Wainwright, the president, and Mr. Alexander Scott, the secretary, of a Society for the Suppression of Blasphemous Literature? Shortly after Mr. Foote's trial in 1883 these gentlemen wrote to the *Times*:—"We propose to get up cases, as our funds will allow, against Prof. Huxley, Dr. Tyndall, Herbert Spencer, Swinburne, the author of *Supernatural Religion*, the publishers of Mill's works, the publishers of Strauss's works, Leslie Stephen, John Morley, the editor of the *Jewish World*, Dr. Martineau, and others, who, by their writings have sown widespread unbelief, and, in some cases, rank Atheism, in cultivated families." Alas! Messrs. Wainwright and Scott were not supported as they should have been by a Christian world concerned for the defence of its faith. Otherwise we might have by this time got rid of the Blasphemy Laws. We are not even aware that Messrs. Wainwright and Scott ever published a first list of subscriptions.

Church music is taking new developments. The other day a man whistled "Nearer, my God, to Thee," with variations, as part of a special service in a church at Ocean Grove (U.S.) The man is still alive. Two hundred years ago, if he had performed that feat in Scotland, his life wouldn't have been worth five minutes' purchase.

"Whistling for Jesus" ought to be a great attraction. Ordinary Church music is too slow for some folk. Let the churches secure good whistlers, and they may hope to get in the halt, the lame, and the blind. At least for a season. But, of course, there is the danger of even whistling getting played out. Still, the churches need not despair. They

might train a lot of asses (four-legged ones) to bray in concert, and advertise the performance as "The Brayhard Chorus; or Balaam Superseded."

The English clergy are divided on the subject of Cremation. Bishop Moorhouse pooh-poohs the notion that it will make any difference to faith, but Canon Swayne says "without burial, St. Paul's most suggestive analogy between the dead body and the sown seed would be practically effaced from the New Testament." If Canon Swayne thinks the body under the clay sprouts like a grain of corn, or that it cannot sprout a spiritual body as well in an urn as in a coffin, he must be as obtuse as St. Paul. None the less there is a germ of truth in his view; the imagination is differently affected by different modes of disposing of the dead, and were the practice of Cremation to become general, preachers would have greater difficulty in instilling the doctrine of the resurrection. The Pope sees this and hence denounces the heathen practice of burning the dead.

Cardinal Manning's letter to the Catholic Social Congress is worth noting. Among other legal nostrums he recommends the prohibition of the work of married women. This is worthy of him, and of his Church. Every observant man knows there are thousands of married women, blessed (as per the Church Service) with idle, drunken, and dissolute husbands, who have to work hard in order to support their children. Many married women, too, have sick or infirm husbands, and like heroines they toil for the means of life for both. Cardinal Manning would put women in "their place"—that is, the place of subordination and dependence assigned them by the Church.

The Catholic Social Congress was horrified by a letter from the Bishop of Salford (Dr. Vaughan) on the state of the poor in Manchester. But who is responsible for that state? Why chiefly the Church. It stupefies people's minds, and tells them to breed as fast as possible, and then sheds maudlin tears over its own mischief.

The *South Eastern Herald* graces its columns with choice letters from Christians on "The Atheists in Beresford Square." One, W. Darley, is good enough to say he esteems "the Atheist an enemy to civilisation and a disgrace to mankind." "They look upon seduction as no crime, and some of their private meetings would shame a brothel, being given over to vice in its most hideous forms." Such are a few of the flowers of Christian charity with which Atheists are presented.

At the Balsall Heath Police Court on Wednesday in last week, James Pride was sentenced to a month's imprisonment with hard labor for disgusting exposure in a public thoroughfare in the presence of a young lady who was passing. He was a member of Mr. Cadbury's Bible Class, and this was pleaded in mitigation of the sentence. We are also informed that he was a Sunday-school teacher. The prisoner left the dock exclaiming "I shall die, oh dear, I shall die." Maybe the world will be little the poorer if he does.

According to a report in the *South Wales Echo*, there is a nice Salvationist in that district. His name is Thomas Meredith, and he is a member of the Pentre Salvation Army. After a good bracing prayer-meeting he went and stole a horse, and offered to sell it to a publican for £3. This ridiculous offer excited suspicion, and Tommy was arrested. He appeared in court in the Salvation uniform, but the Blood and Fire did not save him from being committed to the quarter sessions. It appears that he was sentenced to two months' imprisonment for theft in April last, and after his release he returned to Pentre and re-joined the Army. This is one of those cases that *don't* appear in Booth's reports.

Troubles still continue at Camden Town Parish Church. All the choir boys have struck, and a meeting has been called to discuss the recent affray between the vicar, the Rev. Mr. Fitzgerald, and one of his churchwardens. After a bout of fisticuffs, in which the parson got the worst of it, he took his revenge on his opponent by preaching at him from the text, "He was a mighty man in valor, but he was a leper." The meeting of parishioners decided to draw up

charges against the vicar and communicate with the Bishop of London and the Rural Dean.

The Rev. Mr. Chishohm, of Inverness, having been convicted at the Sheriff Court of indecent behavior towards children, has been deposed by the Presbytery, but he has appealed against this decision, and the unpleasant subject is still kept open.

Prostitutes have always had a reputation for piety. We read that great clerical fetes are going on in Brittany in honor of St. Yves, and the women of the town have vowed to wreak vengeance on M. Renan if he should "profane the tomb of the saint by his presence."

The Rev. Wm. Radcliffe, formerly curate at St. Barnabas, Pimlico, is committed for trial at Margate on a charge of fraudulently applying to his own use three rings of which he was bailee. It was stated that the accused had been sentenced to three years imprisonment in France, and was wanted at Christchurch, New Zealand, for arson and embezzlement.

Another nice specimen of the result of Christian teaching is Mr. Charles Mickley, Churchwarden of Bray Parish Church, who was fined the full penalty of £5 and costs for having caused a mare to be worked in an unfit condition. The poor creature, one of whose fore fetlocks was dislocated, was seen by a passer-by to be walking on the fetlock instead of the hoof whilst assisting to draw a load of corn. It transpired that the mare had been in the same condition for a considerable time.

A wonderful specimen of the religious scamp is to undergo trial at Graz (Austria) on September 19. His name is Franz Rabt, and he is 34 years of age. He has been a sexton and night policeman, and enjoyed a pious reputation, being a most assiduous attendant at divine service, and very fervent in praying. His arrest was for the murder of his wife, but he is also accused of a whole catalogue of crimes, including burglary, rape, incendiarism and forgery. No less than seventy-six witnesses are summoned against him.

The chronicler of the Almighty's doings this week will note the terrible colliery disaster in Germany, the spread of cholera in Valencia, the distress and deaths from floods in Hungary, and the inundation of twenty villages on the banks of the Elbe with two thousand persons on the point of starving.

The final report of the North China Famine Relief Committee at Shanghai mentions that from being largely under water there are still hundreds of villages where the people have not been able to sow anything. The committee express regret that calamitous floods are of frequent occurrence in China.

A Lieutenant Finley has been investigating the recorded facts of tornadoes in America. He finds that about 146 such storms visit the United States yearly, with a vortex velocity varying from one hundred to five hundred miles an hour. Yet some think everything is for the best in this world. It is safe to conclude they have never been caught in a tornado.

Religious Hindus really believe in a future life, and in them the genuine effects of the belief can be seen. Holding that if they put themselves to death their spirits will torment their enemies, they sometimes seek to gain their ends by threats of self-destruction. Recently in Rajputana a tax levied to pay certain village expenses having been demanded, the religious devotees, instigated by the head of the monastery, refused to pay it. In this refusal they were supported by devotees from neighboring villages, their number in the aggregate amounting to about one hundred and fifty, who threatened that they would bury themselves alive if not exempt from payment. Their threat was no mere empty one, for on the Thakoor declining to yield to their demand they forthwith began to carry it out by burying two of their number.

The abbot had previously caused trouble. Having been arrested, nearly a hundred of his followers rushed into the compound of the British Political Agent and demanded the

abbot's release, threatening to kill themselves if their demand was not granted. Four graves were dug, and in each a man sat himself down, ready to be entombed if their leader was kept in custody. The contemplated wholesale self-immolation was however averted through the tender-heartedness of the Political Agent, who thought it best under the circumstances to comply with the demand of the abbot's infatuated followers.

Savage races having firm belief in dreams possess the greatest faith in a future life. It is said of the early Britons that they would lend in the expectation of a return of the loan in another world. We have not met with such faith—no, not in all Israel.

The Scarlet Lady was "drunk with the blood of the saints," but College Street Church, Northampton, has decided that no member of that congregation shall get drunk even on the Blood of Christ. By an overwhelming majority it has decided to abolish alcoholic wine from the communion table. Henceforth they will have to go in for gooseberry or red-currant, or something of that kind.

The numbers of the ballot were—255 for the abolition, 56 against, and 113 neutral. The 113 don't care a cent either way. All they want is the Blood of Christ. They only draw the line at vinegar. But the 56 want the good old full-bodied port, so that after drinking it they may say with the nigger at his first communion, "Me lub Jesus."

This abolition of alcoholic wine in churches is a sign of the time. Of course it is contended that the Bible wines were sober drinks, but this is absurd on the face of it. What will not a Christian say, however, to act like a civilised being and at the same time to keep his printed fetish?

The Duke of Argyll is generally a wordy gentleman, but he is severely concise in his letter to the Rev. Jacob Primmer. This sky-pilot holds a paying commission to fight a "Romanising" Society of which the Duke is president. He has held a number of big open-air meetings, and carried true-blue Presbyterian resolutions, and he now calls upon the gallant Argyll to come out of his "traitorous society." The Duke replies "You write with great violence—no doubt with great sincerity—but, as I think, very little knowledge.—Yours etc." One for the Duke. Primmer must try again.

The vicar of Southgate, who is generally respected, had trouble in his household. A lady member of it lost her reason. In his distress he asked that no lectures might be given on the Green on that particular Sunday evening, as the doctor was very apprehensive of the result of any disturbance on the sensitive patient. The Freethinkers at once decided to hold no meeting. But the Christian Evidence lecturer only moved a little further off. This beautiful specimen of Christian charity has given rise to much local comment.

Mr. Rudyard Kipling, the clever young writer who is taking the town by storm, has a skit on Theosophy in his new volume *In Black and White*. Madame Blavatsky, and the other ladies who cluster at 19 Avenue Road, St. John's Wood, will hardly like the following:—"Once upon a time, some people in India made a new Heaven and a new Earth out of broken tea-cups, a missing brooch or two, and a hair-brush. These were hidden under bushes, or stuffed into holes in the hill-side, and an entire Civil Service of Subordinate Gods used to find or mend them again; and every one said—There are more things in Heaven and Earth than are dreamt of in our philosophy."

By the way, the Theosophists have just been discovering some records about 11,000 years old in Mexico, belonging to a great extinct race invented by Madame Blavatsky. But somehow the Theosophical discoveries never find their way into the books of real science.

Professor Coues, the eminent American naturalist, who is being sued for "libelling" Madame Blavatsky, has favored us with a copy of the *New York Sun* in which the "libel" appeared. He informs us that he has found our pamphlet *The New Cagliostro* useful, and asks us to send him a few

copies for distribution. Of course we have acceded to his request.

For our part, we have refrained, and we shall refrain, from any remarks on Madame Blavatsky's private character. It is a subject on which we are profoundly ignorant, and wish to remain so. But her "ways that are dark" in establishing and promoting the Theosophical Society are public matters, and we have a perfect right to deal with them.

A London *Echo* article, signed "George J. Day," praises the work of the Salvation Army in Westminster. "In six months," it appears, "topers have given up their drink, lazy men their idleness, burglars their thieving, pugilists their ruffianism, and Atheists their freethought." This is a queer catalogue; and it is still more queer that the people who maliciously bracket Atheists with drunkards and burglars should cry out that Atheists attack their religion with too little politeness.

English Freethinkers should rejoice at the Boulanger exposures. We always contended that this charlatan was intriguing with the Royalists and the Church to overthrow the Republic. And what Freethinker is so blind as not to see that the restoration of any form of Monarchy in France would mean the fresh ascendancy of priests?

The singers of some of the most popular of our comic songs, I fear, are responsible—although only indirectly—for a great deal of irreverence. I assisted recently at "a drum-head collection" by a division of the Salvation Army on the Brighton beach. One of the spouters sought to give emphasis to his address by adopting the catechising method of oratory. "Oh, my brothers," he cried, "what are we wretched mortals—here to-day and gone to-morrow? What is the world? What is heaven? And, you sinful ones, what is hell?" Here came the opportunity of the irreverent lounge, who, taking his pipe from his mouth, shouted at the preacher the title of Mr. James Fawn's comical ditty, "Ask a policeman." And then the band played, and they passed the shrimps around.—"Carados" in *Referee*.

Canon Liddon's death has been the occasion of much wild writing. He was a learned man and a "great" preacher but only a very sanguine admirer can suppose that anything of his will live. Some have likened him to Bossuet—a foolish comparison! He was as much like Bossuet as a parrot is like an eagle. Others, especially Mr. Stead, call him the English Chrysostom. But that title is already appropriated by Jeremy Taylor, whose sermons are literature, which is more than can be said of Canon Liddon. We have only to add that the famous Bampton Lectures on the Divinity of Christ show a curious inability to see the real nature of the dispute between Christians and Rationalists.

Friends of secular education must be alert. It is rumored that next year the Government will dish the Liberals with a scheme of Free Education, which will mean the perpetual public endowment of the Church of England schools. At present out of 15,000 parishes in this country there are nearly 10,000 where the only day school is a Church of England one. A sop to the Catholics and Wesleyans, in the shape of an endowment of their schools, will, it is expected, disarm opposition, and put secular educationists in a hopeless minority.

The Buffalo *Courier* tells this story: At the gospel tent meeting on Niagara Street a member had just ceased speaking about a cure of asthma affected by prayer when a lank individual arose and asked for the privilege of the floor. "If you have any experience, you may speak, brother," said the presiding officer. "I have had experience. My father was sick with the asthma for fifteen years, and he was finally brought to pray for his recovery. [Intense interest manifested among hearers.] He prayed fifty years, and [emphatically] he died of the asthma." Hysterical laughter among urchins on rear seats and consternation among the leaders.

General Booth is taking advantage of the levanting of the *Matrimonial News* editor. He is going to start a sort of woman market. In some parts of the world there are

men who want wives, in other parts women who want husbands, and Booth proposes to bring them together. It is a risky business, but why shouldn't he succeed? He showed himself a first-rate matrimonial agent in the case of Miss Charlesworth.

In Richmond recently we saw a copy of the "Wicked" Bible issued by Field in 1657. It was ordered to be burnt, being shown to contain as many as 6,000 errors, among others the statement that "the unrighteous shall inherit eternal life." A Dutch friend who was present told us there was a Dutch Bible with the reading "The fool hath said in his heart there is a God." This should be the version of the future.

The Rev. John Wilkinson, of Mildmay, has a mission to the Jews. He says that when he started it he asked the Lord for £1,000 a year, and got it. Like *Oliver Twist*, he asked for more. Last year he petitioned for £5,000, and obtained it. Why doesn't the Lord inspire some idiots to give him enough straight off to convert all Jewry? We suspect he has not yet rendered the Lord a balance-sheet showing what becomes of the money.

The Rev. Mark Guy Pearse has been asking a Weston-super-Mare audience to "make people think well of Jesus Christ." But why is such a request necessary after eighteen centuries of the "divine man's" influence? Nobody thinks of asking anyone to make people think well of Socrates, or Plato, or Spinoza, or Shakespeare. The clergy are always begging for Jesus.

Mr. Pearse also told some childish stories about a pious old Cornish woman, who is 105 years old, and as rosy as an apple. As a matter of fact, there is no clear case of any human being living a hundred years; and we believe that every case that has been investigated to the bottom has turned out to be a ridiculous fraud. Mr. Pearse's "Rosie" is just fit for a Christian meeting.

Dr. Parker is a rare old mountebank. In a recent sermon he said, "Cities had a bad founder; the foundations of cities were laid by a murderer." The reference, of course, is to the Bible story of Cain, who "built a city." But Parker would never dare to talk this nonsense outside a pulpit.

A bacon merchant would be glad to hear of someone who can cure hams by faith, for a reasonable salary. Applicants must produce samples. Address to Mr. Wideawake, 23 Good Business Street, Manchester.

The saints who have gathered round Christ Schweinfurth at Illinois protest that although there have been some babies born, there has been no immorality among them. They sign a document declaring, "We, as a Church, believe that Jesus of Nazareth was conceived by the holy spirit of God; that the Virgin Mary did not bear the seed of man, but that the new life was a direct impartation from God, the invisible spirit. We also believe that this same God still lives, and that when he had clothed souls in robes of virgin white, he blessed some of them in precisely the same manner in which he blessed the holy Virgin of yore. We, with one voice, solemnly declare before God and man, that inside the Church triumphant, or in this family, there has been no compromise of virtue and no traversing of the civil law of this fair country nor this our magnificent commonwealth. It is as far from us as is vice from virtue, to foster or tolerate aught that is condemned in our civil statutes." Their Christian neighbors feel it is a difficult point on which to appeal to the law, and suggest the service of Judge Lynch.

Mr. Gladstone has pointed to a Decretal of Pope Urban II., declaring that "those who put to death excommunicated persons are to render a measure of satisfaction suitable to what their intention may have been. For we do not count them to be homicides to whom it may have happened through their being zealous for Mother Church against the excommunicated to put any of those to death." The *Tablet* thinks it a sufficient reply to suppose it referred to some exceptional circumstances, as with "the just wars of the children of Israel."

MR. FOOTE'S ENGAGEMENTS.

Sunday, Sept. 21, Secular Hall, Rusholme Road, Oxford Road, All Saints', Manchester; at 11 a.m., "The Rock of Ages"; 3 p.m., "Where is the Devil?" 6.30 p.m., "A World Without God."

September 28, Hull.

October 5, 12, 19, 26, Hall of Science, London.

November 2, Nelson; 9, Grimbsy; 30, Leicester.

December 21 and 28, Hall of Science.

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.

W. HOLLAND.—Most of your last budget have appeared before. Still, thanks.

W. GILMOUR.—Send us cuttings whenever the spirit moves you.

A. H. B.—The infallibility of the Church has existed all along; what was promulgated in 1870 was the infallibility of the Pope speaking *ex cathedra* (from his chair) on all matters of faith and morals.

H. ROWDEN.—Shall be inserted.

R. RITCHIE.—Shall appear.

S. G.—There is no such passage in the Bible.

S. STANDRING.—The exertion did Mr. Foote no appreciable injury. As to the Southend matter, why not call a meeting to see what can be done? Mr. Foote will try to attend.

C. E. SMITH.—Received. No doubt it will prove useful.

H. PORTER.—We dislike badges altogether. Flowers are very pretty, some of them, but they don't bloom all the year. Mr. Foote's photos will be on sale at the Hull lectures. We have given fresh instructions about the contents-sheet.

JUDAS.—True enough, no doubt; but patriotism is very sensitive.

J. S. ROGERS.—Almanack copy received. We hope the Plymouth friends will pull together.

JAMES ROWNEY.—Too late to be of any practical use this week. Glad to hear you had a good meeting at Finsburk Park in the evening. Except for a little hoarseness, Mr. Foote is none the worse.

M. SMITH informs us that he was engaged to lecture in Hyde Park on Sunday morning; he was there at 11.30, and waited in vain until 12.15 for the chairman and the platform. Such neglect is utterly inexcusable; it brings the cause into discredit, and is a breach of faith with the public.

J. SAUNDERS.—We always see the *Christian World*.

W. BOWDEN.—Mr. Forder will enrol you. You are quite old enough to join. Read Colenso's *Pentateuch*, Greg's *Creed of Christendom*, Giles's *Christian and Hebrew Records*. You will find a good deal of information in *Bible Heroes* and *Bible Romances*, and the footnotes will direct you to many good books.

J. W. EATON.—Whether the rowdies were *real* Christians is a matter of opinion. They belong to the Christian camp.

T. NOBLE.—No doubt there is a good field for Freethought work in the West of England and South Wales. It is very much a question of means. The N. S. S. wants a bigger income. Thanks for the cuttings.

A SOLDIER.—We think you acted very properly. It is an outrage that soldiers should be compelled to attend "divine service" and listen to what, in many cases, they despise or detest. We are not astonished that your most drunken comrades show the greatest bigotry. Let them drink and pray, if they will; you, as a Freethinker and a teetotaler, will doubtless live down their animosity.

A. HINDLE.—Could you not undertake to do something yourself? Some one must begin.

D. H.—All the experiential school of philosophers, teach that conscience is the result of social training. See Mill's *Utilitarianism*, and the chapter on the Mental and Moral Powers in Darwin's *Descent of Man*. All the "advanced" clergy have given up the Deluge as actual history; for instance Canon Driver, Archdeacon Farrar, and the Rev. C. Gore, editor of *Lux Mundi*.

S. G. M.—Thanks. See "Acid Drops."

PAPERS RECEIVED.—Port Elizabeth Spectator—Echo—Lucifer—Weekly Scotsman—West Lothian Courier—Truthseeker—

South-Eastern Herald—Freethought—Boston Investigator—Stratford Herald—Liberator—Twentieth Century—Neues Freireligioses Sonntags-Blatt—Countryman—Menschentum—Liberator—Fairplay.

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.

SUGAR PLUMS.

There was a great stir in Finsbury Park on Sunday afternoon. A crowd of Freethinkers responded to Mr. Foote's appeal. Not only did North London supply a large number, but some came from Camberwell, some from the East-end, some from the West, and some from even as far away as Battersea. The sun was shining gloriously, and Mr. Foote prudently stationed himself under a tree, where he awaited the arrival of the platform. Unfortunately this piece of furniture did not arrive. As luck would have it the boy who brings it failed on the very afternoon when it was most wanted. The dilemma was an awkward one. It was impossible to address such a big meeting without some kind of elevation. But in the very nick of time a providential policeman handed over a chair from the circles round the bandstand, and the ball opened under happy auspices.

There were many Christians present, including those who caused disorder on previous occasions, but they were overawed by the presence of so many Freethinkers. Mr. Foote was also careful to give no unnecessary offence to his opponents, and the result was that the lecture was listened to throughout with great attention. The disorderly element confined itself to silly small-talk on the outskirts of the meeting. By this means it prevented many persons from hearing all the lecture, but it did no further mischief.

When the discussion began the disorderly element asserted itself a little. A knot of interrupters, including the repulsive Mitchell, gathered at the back of the platform, but it did not succeed in doing any serious damage. The first "enemy" was a man with a white, serious face, and a fund of unintentional humor. He merely wanted to ask a question, and from his pregnant look it might have been conjectured that, after he had asked it, the lecturer would feel annihilated. He said he held something in his hand to show that the employees in the *Freethinker* office were not properly paid. Of course there was breathless suspense. Then he read out a paragraph from one of our back numbers, stating that we hoped the editor would soon be paid journeyman's wages for his labor; and he wanted Mr. Foote to explain that. The Freethinkers roared with laughter. You might almost have heard them at the Tower. And the Christians joined in the laughter when the case was explained. But the gentleman who asked the question was still dissatisfied. He had floored the lecturer, and it wasn't his fault if the lecturer wouldn't acknowledge it.

Then came Mr. Poulson, well known to Freethinkers who go to outdoor meetings—*too* well known, some of them would say. Not caring to attack Mr. Foote openly, Mr. Poulson sailed in on a side wind. He never tried to argue, but only to create prejudice. He declared that there was a lady, present in the Park that afternoon, whom the Freethinkers were starving, although she had worked for them for ever so many years. This put the Christians in high glee. They did not know that Mr. Poulson had discovered a mare's-nest. Mr. Foote knew the lady, and he was able to give the facts of the case. He was also able to show that Mr. Poulson had only heard the lady's story that very afternoon, and that he got up and made the public accusation without a moment's inquiry.

This lady's name is Blackwell, and as her going to the Christians is a challenge, she has only herself to thank if we take the public into our confidence. She never was a member of any Secular Society. She says she sent subscriptions to Mr. Bradlaugh many years ago. Of that we know nothing. It is quite possible. But we know that she has had money from Mr. Bradlaugh since. We never saw her, to our knowledge, until after our imprisonment, when she came begging assistance. Mr. Foote gave her several small sums, and on one occasion a half-sovereign. She came to his house, very much against his wish, and Mrs. Foote gave her money, pre-

pared something hot as she was suffering from neuralgia, and gave her an order on a neighboring doctor for medicine. This Mrs. Blackwell has had assistance from other Freethinkers. Mrs. Besant has helped her. Mr. Rowney has given her small sums in Hyde Park. Miss Vance gave her money and groceries several weeks running, and visited her in the Cleveland Street Hospital, where she falsely accused the attendants of starving her. How many other Freethinkers have helped her we know not. Probably she has begged of all she thought able to assist. For years she was assisted again and again by the Benevolent Committee. Mr. Forder furnished her with clothes and got her employment, but she would not keep it. She would be eccentric and obtrusive; she could get on with nobody, and nobody could get on with her. Now she can wring no further contributions from our party, she goes to the Christians, and says we starve her, as though our party were under an obligation to maintain her, and to maintain her on her own terms.

It is painful to write thus, but it is our duty to nip this woman's mischief in the bud. If the Christians have gained her, we wish them joy of their catch. No doubt she will say whatever they wish, but such a purchase can hardly be profitable.

After Mr. Poulson came the gentleman who rejoices in the name of Jack Williams. His personalities have won him an evil reputation, but on this occasion he was civil enough. After Mr. Foote's replies the big meeting broke up, and as the crowd streamed through the Park gates the passers-by wondered "what was up."

By the way, four new members joined the Finsbury Park Branch on Sunday. Evidently the opposition did no harm.

So far so good. A stand has been made with perfect success against the rowdies. But we are not absolutely out of the wood, and the Finsbury Park open-air station must be still supported. Mr. Moss lectures there again this afternoon (Sep. 21), and we hope a good number of North London Freethinkers will rally round him.

Mr. Foote lectures at Manchester to-day; the subjects are attractive; and he will be happy to see as many South Lancashire friends as can conveniently attend.

The Battersea Branch of the N. S. S. holds its quarterly Tea and Soiree next Sunday, Sept. 28. The meeting of members takes place at three in the afternoon, and this will be a good opportunity for Freethinkers in the district to join the Branch. Tea will be on tables at 5 30; tickets (only 6d. each) can be obtained at the Battersea Secular Hall, or of Mr. Forder, 23 Stonecutter Street.

A special meeting of the Finsbury Park Branch will be held on Monday (Sept. 22) at Mr. Rowney's, 155 Winstow Road, Green Lanes, N.

The editor of the Port Elizabeth *Spectator* in answer to a correspondent who gives an account of a pauper buried without a coffin, and then asks "Is this Christianity?" says: "Yes, that's exactly what it is. What else did you think it was? To allow a wretched pauper to starve to death and then refuse a deal coffin to contain her bones is just what is to be expected from nine-tenths of the Christianity that is current nowadays. If you want humanity and charity, the less modern Christianity you mix with it the better."

Some one recently asked the following question of Mr. Herbert Spencer: "Whether since publishing *Education, First Principles* and *Study of Sociology* your opinion of true religion has been changed and modified"—a few extracts being given as illustrative of the writer's opinion—and Mr. Spencer has replied, "Your statement of my views is quite correct, and I continue to think the same."

Statistics show that money spent in education are a good investment against crime. In 1869 the total number of persons in custody under sentence of penal servitude in Great Britain, Gibraltar and Western Australia was 11,660, while in July last the number had fallen by about one-half, the exact figures being 5,944.

"We are very sorry to see that dear old Forder is com-

pelled by ill-health to resign his position as Secretary of the National Secular Society. We do not wonder at this, for we think he should have done so earlier for his own sake; but his loss will be severely felt. He is unique, a curiosity, a combination of more good qualities than we should like to enumerate. Probably he has few enemies—we never knew he had so much as one; and yet he is full of quiet independence, push, perseverance, and unconquerable patience. It is impossible to guess how much we all owe to him. He would leave such a peculiar blank and vacant place, were he to go before his time over to the majority, which we sincerely hope his good sense will prevent him doing. If he would only come and settle down in Australia, no doubt we could utilise him well, and find him health into the bargain."—Joseph Symes in *Liberator*.

We have often objected to the name of "Tom" being applied to Paine, when it has evidently been bestowed as a sign of contempt. There is however, as the author of *Will Shakespeare and Tom Paine* shows, much to be said for the abbreviation having been originally used as a sign of good-fellowship, and there is even evidence that Paine used it himself. Mr. Gilbert Vale, in his *Life of Paine*, New York, 1841, p. 159, says, "Mr. Jarvis who gave us the information, observed that he once, by way of a joke, advised Mr. Paine to recant, and publish his recantation as a hoax, assuring him that he would then make a large fortune and get a good living. Mr. Paine, shaking his head replied, "Tom Paine never told a lie."

Mr. W. W. Collins is returning to Sydney from Tasmania by way of Auckland, and is giving the North New Zealanders a taste of his quality.

The Fourteenth Annual Congress of the American Secular Union will take place at the Grand Opera House, Portsmouth, Ohio, on Friday, Oct. 31, and continue its sessions on the Saturday and Sunday following. We trust there will be a good gathering.

The MSS. of the various manuals on morals, without religion, for which a prize was offered by the American Secular Union, are being read by Dr. D. G. Brinton and Prof. Felix Adler, and it is hoped the prize will be adjudicated at the Congress.

We are pleased to notice that Mr. Moses Harman, editor of *Lucifer*, who was sentenced to five years' imprisonment for inserting in his paper a letter giving details of a rape by a husband on his suffering wife, has after seventeen weeks' incarceration in Kansas State prison, been released on a "writ of error." Whatever Mr. Harman's offence, it was one against taste, and dictated by a spirit of humanity. The sentence upon him was monstrously heavy, and like the recent attack on the *Kreutzer Sonata*, shows that the United States is by no means such a land of liberty as some are apt to think.

Judge C. B. Waite, author of an excellent *History of the Christian Religions to the year 200*, is president of the Chicago Secular Union. The *Boston Investigator* reports a capital presidential address on the separation of Church and State. The judge declares that the present ecclesiastical attempt to put God into the constitution of the United States, "is a desperate effort to bring the aid of the civil power to the support of a lost cause."

"Our British friends held a very successful conference in Manchester on Whit Sunday. Mr. Foote was elected President, and well supported. We are proud to see him in the chair, now that Mr. Bradlaugh's health has compelled him to resign. We feel sure Mr. Foote was and is the only possible President for some years to come; and he has our most hearty sympathy in his trying position. It is no trifle to follow Charles Bradlaugh. But we have confidence in the new President; and shall heartily hail the greatest success he may attain—and we expect it to be great."—Joseph Symes in *Liberator*.

Dr. Edmund Montgomery, writing in *Open Court*, says:—"Judged by the standard of morality, organic evolution has been brought about by pre-eminently immoral means. Morality enters into the process only when natural evolution becomes controlled for ethical purposes by man's power of

rationaly interposing with the otherwise non-rational and exorbitantly cruel disposition of nature in general. Morality is of human origin. It emanates from the rational understanding of man's social or hyper-individual nature. And, as regards religion, I, for one, can find no incitement for it in the deaf and blind cosmos, that lies outstretched there in infinite space, insensible to our joys and woes. I can detect religion, if religion it may still be called, only in the enthusiastic devotion lavished by generous hearts on the progressive exaltation of the inner worth of human existence."

Brave old Oliver Wendell Holmes celebrates his eighty-first birthday by a vigorous attack on the Christian doctrine of Hell. His paper in the *Atlantic Monthly* will do a great deal of good. He says the popular theology makes man a sheep and God a wolf. "Humanity," he declares, "is shocked and repelled by the Christian Tartarus. The heart of woman is in unconquerable rebellion against it." He concludes with some verses, of which we give a specimen:

Shall mouldering page or fading scroll
Outface the charter of the soul?
Shall priesthood's palsied arm protect
The wrong our human hearts reject,
And smite the lips whose shuddering cry
Proclaims the cruel deed a lie?
The wizard's rope we disallow
Was justice once—is murder now.

According to the recent census of Switzerland, that little republic contains 1,700,000 Protestants; 1,200,000 Catholics; 8,300 Jews, and 10,700 of no religion.

Cremation societies have been formed at Philadelphia on the tontine plan. Each society is limited to 35, thirty-five dollars covering cost of cremation. Each member pays in a dollar and the society engages to cremate him, making a new assessment of one dollar and taking in a new member upon every death.

The *Nonconformist and Independent* will become a penny paper with the title *The Independent and Nonconformist*. The Rev. F. Herbert Stead replaces Mr. Chas. S. Miall as editor. Under Mr. Miall, the *Nonconformist* was always of high class liberal tone and a stout opponent of all connection between Church and State. We wonder if the *Independent* will prove worthy of the old traditions.

The Ten Plagues and The Wandering Jews, two fresh numbers of "Bible Romances," are now ready. The work will probably be completed by Christmas.

GUILIELMUS REX.

THE folk who lived in Shakespeare's day
And saw that gentle figure pass
By London Bridge—his frequent way—
They little knew what man he was!

The pointed beard, the courteous mien,
The equal port to high and low,
All this they saw or might have seen—
But not the light beyond the brow!

The doublet's modest gray or brown,
The slender sword-hilt's plain device,
What sign had these for prince or clown?
Few turned, or none, to scan him twice.

Yet 't was the king of England's kings!
The rest with all their pomps and trains
Are mouldered, half-remembered things—
'Tis he alone that lives and reigns!

T. B. ALDRICH, in the *Century*.

A FRENCH FREETHINKER.

We regret to announce the death of M. Juffrin, the member for Montmartre, in the French Chamber. Last year he took part, as vice-president, in the reception by the Paris Municipal Council of the International Freethought Congress. He was then suffering from cancer in the cheek, which has now killed him. He bore his great sufferings with lofty fortitude, and never slackened his activity for the people's good while his strength lasted. France could have better spared some of the vain, ambitious, or mercenary intriguers who are now exposing each other's crimes.

THE TRIALS AND TROUBLES OF OPEN-AIR PROPAGANDA.

At the present time there appears to be a recrudescence—happily in a mild form—of the old stupid attempts to suppress the public oral advocacy of Freethought by the simple expedient of driving the speakers from their stands by main force or by persistent interruptions of a more or less violent character. There is, of course, no possibility of such tactics being justified by success, and for one, I see an element of good in the chastening hand, for as a party we should be worth little did not this mild and sporadic persecution stimulate us to a wider and even more earnest proclamation of our views.

For several years I have been accustomed to speak in the open-air as an advocate of Secularism, and my experience in this direction has been extensive, if not peculiar. That experience has been singularly free from disturbance. It has rarely happened that I have been troubled even by verbal interruptions, and a simple reminder that our platforms are invariably available for opponents has immediately restored quietness by the moral force of public opinion. I may perhaps lay myself open to a charge of egotism in writing upon this matter; but the open-air propaganda is a branch of such vital importance to the Freethought movement that I will venture to indicate the policy which in my opinion, it is best to pursue in face of a possibly hostile audience.

For the speaker and the person or persons in charge of the station there is one injunction in which is contained all the law and the prophets. That is—KEEP YOUR TEMPER. The lecturer who cannot retain complete control of himself should eschew open-air work, or, at least, should avoid stations at which hostility is at all likely to be exhibited. The tone of the speaker determines everything. He who loses his temper loses everything. He cannot control himself, and therefore he cannot influence his audience save in a direction distinctly disadvantageous to himself and to the cause which he for the time being represents.

My experience has always proved that an English audience contains a substantial proportion of people who are in favor of fair play. Disturbance generally arises from a knot of persons who have not sufficient sense to organise their own stupidity or malice to any formidable extent. It is therefore wise to enlist the sympathies of the well-disposed against the evil designs of those desiring to interrupt. This is a policy which I have never known to fail.

The only case in which a disturbance appeared imminent at any lecture of mine was at Tunbridge Wells. Some years ago, while Mr. Foote was in prison, a great Freethought demonstration was organised on the Common adjacent to that town. The disturbance on that occasion was really formidable, and the meeting could only be carried on by forming a protecting semi-circle of friends behind the speakers, who were protected from assault in front by a "lumpy" acclivity. Time after time the disturbers strove to break the arm-linked line in the rear, but their efforts were frustrated by the firmness of the guard. Good old Toby King wrought miracles of valor on that day.

About twelve months after this memorable gathering I was invited to go to Tunbridge Wells to deliver a Freethought lecture one Sunday afternoon, on the Common. In due course I went; but on arriving at the place I found that only *one* of the local Secularists—Mr. Harry Seymour—would "assist" at the meeting. This was unfortunate and annoying, but it could not be remedied, so we twain went to the Common in somewhat doleful mood. On our arrival we found about 150 young men and lads prepared to give us a lively time. First we "pitched" under the shade of some rocks, but the enemy climbed

these and shelled us from above with clods of earth, fern-roots, and other botanical specimens. This, be it noted, was before any attempt had been made to commence the lecture. Then we moved to the platform upon which the demonstration had been held in the preceding year. The loafers and "larkers" followed us thither, anticipating a jolly time. They crowded round us, but abstained from violent interference. Seymour briefly introduced me, and standing on a little eminence, I addressed the crowd in a familiar way. I told them that I had come from London to speak on Freethought, and that I intended to speak on Freethought unless I was doubled up. I pointed out to them that it was to their interest to hear all views, as a view might be suppressed which possibly contained the truth. How could the suppression of any opinions be of advantage to them? Then I reminded them of the ancient love of fair play which is an Englishman's boast and pride, and asked them as Englishmen to hear me and to assail my opinions as lustily as they chose in discussion after the lecture.

For an hour did that audience listen patiently and quietly while I examined the Bible from an anti-theological standpoint. I softened nothing, omitted nothing that I had been accustomed to say in other places. Then a gentleman spoke twice in opposition to my views, arguing with intelligence and treating me with perfect courtesy. That afternoon, which opened so inauspiciously, was one of the pleasantest in my experience as an open-air speaker. May I, in all humility, offer this round, unvarnished tale for what it is worth to my brother advocates?

Of trials and troubles I have had my share. Papa Woffendale and his lambs have squalled me into nothingness at the Midland Arches; rain has drowned me out unseasonably; foul and ignorant "opponents" have wearied me until I have, in self-defence, been compelled to "boycott" one or two. But my severest trial fortunately had a comic aspect. One Sunday morning I was speaking in Hyde Park to a fairly large and very attentive audience. Suddenly there was a fierce grunting, and, a few yards away, two ill-conditioned curs were to be seen engaged in deadly combat. My audience fled as one man, and watched the struggle with consuming interest. Of course it was useless to go on for the time being—Demosthenes himself could not compete against a dog-fight. In a few minutes one of the canines threw up the sponge (metaphorically); my audience came back, and we finished the business as decorously as possible under the circumstances. GEORGE STANDRING.

TALMAGE'S TEXAS RIVAL.

There is an old negro in Austin, Texas, named Uncle Nace, who is a regular attendant at the church of the Rev. Whangdoodle Baxter. Meeting his pastor the other day, the latter said—

"You seem to enjoy my sermons mightily, Uncle Nace, considering you am so hard ob hearin'," shouted the clergyman.

Uncle Nace nodded understandingly.

"Kin yer heah me when I preaches!" bellowed the colored prelate in Uncle Nace's ear.

The old man shook his head.

"Whaf for den does yer come ter de church?" howled Baxter.

"Bekase hit 'muses me ter see you cut up dem monkey shines and saw de air wid yer arms."

PROFANE JOKES.

A cynic says that the meek may inherit the earth, but he is sure they will never get possession of it unless they do a lot of hustling.

"Mamma," said little Alice, as the baby lifted up its voice, "do all the babies come from heaven?" "Yes, dear." "I ain't s'prised," said Alice, thoughtfully, as the infant lifted up its voice higher. "Why, love?" "Oh, I wouldn't want them there either if I was the angels."

A little boy, whose impecunious parents are always moving from one house to another, was asked by the Sunday-school

teacher: "Why did the Israelites move out of Egypt?" "Because they couldn't pay their rent, I suppose," was the reply.

SUNDAY MEETINGS.

[Notices of Lectures, etc., must reach us by first post on Tuesday, and be marked "Lecture Notice," if not sent on post-card.]

LONDON.

Ball's Pond Secular Hall, 36 Newington Green Road, N., 7, Mr. A. T. Dipper, "The Man after God's own Heart."

Battersea Secular Hall (back of Battersea Park Station), 7.30, Mr. P. H. Snelling, "Poets of Atheism." Tuesday, at 8, social evening.

Camberwell—61 New Church Road, S.E., 7.30, Mr. H. Snell, "Christian and Pre-Christian Civilisation."

Hall of Science, 142 Old Street, E.C., 7, Mrs. Arnie Besant, "The Bible as a Guide in Morals."

Milton Hall, Kentish Town Road, N.W., 7, Orchestral Band; 7.30, Mr. B. Hyatt, "The Myth of the Ascension."

West Ham—Secular Hall, 121 Broadway, Plaistow, 7.30, Mr. T. Thurlow, "Death's Test."

Woolwich—"Sussex Arms," Assembly Room, 60 Plumstead Road (entrance, Masey Road), 7.30, Mr. Toleman-Garner, "Jesus Christ: his Life and Teachings."

OPEN-AIR PROPAGANDA.

Battersea Park Gates, 11.15, Mr. P. H. Snelling, "God Moves in a Mysterious Way."

Bethnal Green—Opposite St. John's Church, 11.15, Mr. Sam Standring, "God in Bethnal Green."

Camberwell—Station Road, 11.30, Mr. F. Millar, "Rationalism applied to the Bible."

Clerkenwell Green, 11.30, Mr. C. J. Hunt will lecture.

Edmonton—Corner of Angel Road, 6.30, Mr. W. J. Ramsey, "Samson."

Finsbury Park (near the band-stand) 11.15, Mr. G. Standring, "The Church and the People"; 3.30, Mr. A. B. Moss, "Bible Biography."

Hammersmith Bridge (Surrey side), 6.30, Mr. A. B. Moss, "Why I Reject Christianity."

Hyde Park, near Marble Arch, 11.30, Mr. W. Heaford, "Secularism Superior to Christianity." Monday, 7.30, debate between the Rev. S. Brennan and Mr. C. J. Hunt, "Intelligence in Nature." Wednesday, at 8, Mr. A. T. Dipper, "The Resurrection: Did it Happen?" Thursday, at 8, Mr. W. Heaford, "The Difficulties of Theism."

Kingsland Green, 11.30, Mr. A. T. Dipper, "Esau have I loved; Jacob have I hated."

Midland Arches, St. Pancras Road, N.W., 11.30, Mr. A. B. Moss, "Apostles of Freethought."

Mile End Waste, 11.30, Mr. J. Rowney, "Jesus."

Plaistow Green (near the station), 11.30, Mr. T. Thurlow, "All about the Devil."

Regent's Park, near Gloucester Gate, 3.30, Mr. Sam Standring, "St. Paul on Mars Hill."

Tottenham—Corner of West Green Road, 3.30, Mr. J. Rowney, "The Creation Story."

Victoria Park, near the fountain, 3.15, Mr. C. J. Hunt, "Theism and Atheism."

Westminster—Old Pimlico Pier, 11.30, Mr. F. Haslam, "Modern Science and Revelation."

Wood Green—Jolly Butcher's Hill, 11.30, Mr. W. J. Ramsey, "Samson"; 7, "Mr. Sam Standring, "St. Paul's Impudence at Athens."

COUNTRY.

Birmingham—Baskerville Hall, Crescent, 7, Mr. R. S. Bransby, "What has Christianity Done for the World?"

Hull—Friendly Societies' Hall, Albion Street, No. 2 Room, 6.30 Mr. G. E. C. Naewiger, "Why should an Atheist Fear to Die?"

Liverpool Branch N. S. S., Camden Hall, Camden Street—7, Mr. Doeg, "The Old Testament and the New."

Manchester N. S. S., Rusholme Road, Oxford Road, All Saints—Mr. G. W. Fote, 11, "The Rock of Ages"; 3, "Where is the Devil?"; 6.30, "A World Without God."

Nottingham—Secular Hall, Beck Street, 7, Mrs. A. R. Atkey, "The Story of Religion in England, II."

Plymouth—100 Union Street, 7, Readings and discussion.

Portsmouth—Wellington Hall, Wellington Street, Southsea, 7, Mr. Coobyn, "A Citizen's Duty."

Sheffield—Hall of Science, Rockingham Street.—Members and friends meet at tram terminus, Moorhead, at 2.30, and go by car to Herley for Ruskin Museum and Meersbrook Park.

South Shields—Capt. Duncan's Navigation School, King Street, 6.30, committee meeting; 7, usual weekly meeting.

LECTURERS' ENGAGEMENTS.

ARTHUR B. MOSS, 44 Creden Road, Rotherhithe, London, S.E.—Sept. 21 (morning) Midland Arches, (afternoon) Finsbury Park, (evening) Hammersmith; 28 (morning) Clerkenwell, (evening) Woolwich. October 5 (morning) Camberwell; 15, Battersea.

E. STANLEY JONES, 3 Leta Street, City Road, Walton, Liverpool.—Oct. 12, Liverpool.

T. THURLOW, 7 Dickson's Villas, Rutland Road, East Ham.—Sept. 21 (morning out-door and evening in the hall) Plaistow; 28 (morning) outside "Salmon and Ball," Bethnal Green. Oct. 12 (morning) Hyde Park; 19 (morning) Battersea Park, (evening) Battersea Secular Hall.

TOLEMAN-GARNER, 8 Heyworth Road, Stratford, London, E.—Sept. 21 (evening) Woolwich; 28 (afternoon) Finsbury Park. Oct. 5 (evening) Woolwich; 12 (morning) Finsbury Park; 19 Mile End, debate; 26, Woolwich.

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