

# The Freethinker

Edited by G. W. FOOTE.]

[Sub-Editor, J. M. WHEELER.

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[PRICE ONE PENNY.

## ROME OR ATHEISM?

PROFESSOR NEWMAN ON CARDINAL NEWMAN  
AND MR. FOOTE.

PROFESSOR F. W. NEWMAN has just issued a little volume, entitled "Contributions chiefly to the Early History of the late Cardinal Newman." What the venerable Professor has to say about his great brother's career before he left the Church of England shall be dealt with hereafter. For the present, I confine myself to his criticism on the article I wrote in this journal for August 17th, 1890. Professor Newman devotes several pages to this criticism. He calls my Atheism "foolish," but he applies the epithet generically to *all* Atheism. On the other hand, he refers to me as "Mr. G. W. Foote, a fine writer, editor of the *Freethinker*, and an avowed Atheist." Personally I am rather careless of compliments, knowing as I do, better than any critic, both my powers and my limitations. But a compliment from such a quarter may bespeak consideration for me, and for this journal, in cultivated circles, and may a little abash those who would persuade persons who never read a line of my writings that I am only an illiterate brawler.

I will not argue whether Thackeray was right or wrong in the passage I quoted from *Pendennis*. Professor Newman says his brother had irrecoverably lost respect and position in the Church of England when it was seen that "his doctrine was fullblown Romanism." Perhaps so, but had he been insincere he might have stopped short of that point. His pressing beyond it is perhaps consistent with Professor Newman's statement of fact, and Thackeray's statement of opinion. I at least see no essential contradiction.

Professor Newman doubts my accuracy in saying that Cardinal Newman dreaded Atheism, and never argued against it, knowing that to be hopeless. "Is that a fact?" he asks: "I am not *up* in the *Grammar of Assent*, some readers may perhaps correct Mr. Foote's fact." Certainly Professor Newman is not *up* in any of his brother's writings. He seems to have treated them with singular neglect, though I think he might have studied them to advantage. But I am "up" in the Cardinal's writings; and, as a matter of fact, I know that he never did argue against Atheism, and that there are scores of passages in his treatises and sermons which show that he saw the uselessness of doing so. The famous passage in the *Apologia*, which is not too highly praised by Lord Coleridge, at least shows that the Cardinal put faint trust in any argument derived from "the law of gravitation," such as Professor Newman finds so cogent in his *Life After Death?* (p. 11). It was the voice of conscience that sustained his faith in God. "Were it not for this voice," he said, "speaking so clearly in my conscience and heart, I should be an atheist, or a pantheist, or a polytheist when I looked into the world." Nor did the argu-

ments "drawn from the general facts of human society and the course of history" satisfy him. "These do not warm or enlighten me" he said. He trusted to the voice within. But he knew very well that the Atheist had a natural explanation of that voice, and he was far too sagacious to risk a battle on ground where, even if he won the victory in the opinion of his disciples, he would certainly display the weakness of his position. Every theologian has some assumption which he will not debate; it is the point from which he starts, the germ of error from which all else is evolved, the "idol" as Bacon called it which must not be exposed to vulgar criticism.

Cardinal Newman's *dread* of Atheism is affirmed by his personal friend, Mr. Lilly. But it needs no such affirmation. It is a logical deduction from his theories. Given a belief in God, he held that Catholicism was its inevitable development. The thing to be feared, therefore, was Atheism, which struck at the very root of faith. Protestantism he only feared as leading to Atheism.

"If the Cardinal avowed [I did not say *avowed*] that it was hopeless to argue against Atheists," writes Professor Newman, "that may merely mean that they are lower than ordinary normal mankind, and he treats them with contempt." For my part, I am not aware of any such *contempt* in his writings. He felt no contempt, but dread, of "the wild living intellect of man," whose "tendency is towards a simple unbelief in matters of religion," so that "no truth, however sacred, can stand against it, in the long run."

Nor do I think Professor Newman displays his usual urbanity in suggesting that Atheists may be "lower than ordinary normal mankind." Coleridge knew human nature and the history of human thought, at least as well as Professor Newman, and he declared that "not one man in ten thousand has goodness of heart or strength of mind to be an Atheist." Cardinal Newman himself, in his tremendous sermon on "Neglect of Divine Calls and Warnings," places a man in hell, agonising and shrieking, whose friends, on earth are praising him as "So comprehensive a mind!" or "so just in his remarks, so versatile, so unobtrusive," or "so great a benefactor to his country and his kind."

In the next place, I am taken to task for saying that the Cardinal could not rest without certitude, and could only find that in Rome. (By the way, I added "such as it was.") This is Professor Newman's comment:—

"If he mean that the Cardinal *ever* thought the existence of God our Creator was uncertain, or that greater certitude was afforded by entering the Roman Church, I think Mr. Foote must be wrong in fact. But if by *certitude* he mean a better knowledge of how many Persons co-existed in one God, in short, certitude concerning the inner essence and constitution of Godhead, it is marvellous to me how this can seem commendable to an Atheist."

But when have I said that such speculations are "commendable"? I certainly believe they are very natural. If you have a God behind the curtain you cannot help thinking all sorts of things about him.

Nor have I said that Cardinal Newman was ever uncertain as to God's existence. But he wanted, like Othello, to make assurance doubly sure. Besides, the mere proposition of God's existence—some sort of God—was not sufficient. He required a different God from Professor Newman's; and although Catholicism did not prove this being's existence—which, indeed, could not be proved by logic at all—it furnished, as he thought, many and splendid corroborations. And this it was that gave him "perfect peace and contentment," like "coming into port after a rough sea," when he passed his Rubicon and finally threw in his lot with the Roman Church.

The next point on which the Professor takes me to task is my statement that Cardinal Newman saw there was no logical halting-place between Rome and Atheism. "Delightful news!" exclaims my venerable critic: "Since the days of Isaiah and Micah, have the whole Jewish nation been so gliding" down to Atheism? Now the exclamation is irrelevant, and the question shows a misconception of the Cardinal's argument. The Jews, before the time of Christ, had no choice between Catholic Christianity and Atheism. They lived under a special dispensation, the Cardinal would have said; but when the opportunity arose they rejected Christ wilfully, and in rejecting him they rejected the Church he came to establish. No doubt the Cardinal would have included the modern Jews in the category of persons who have no logical alternative but Atheism or Rome. Whether the Cardinal *did* maintain what I allege, and whether I am right or wrong in agreeing with him, I proceed to show in detail.

G. W. FOOTE.

(To be concluded.)

### CITIZEN CHRIST.

WERE it not that people nowadays more readily take their theology from their magazines and journals than from the Bible or the pulpits, it would be ridiculous to devote a moment's serious thought to the theology of such a flabby-minded person as Mr. W. T. Stead. As the great creator and sustainer of the new journalism, and, barring his friend Giacomo Pecci, the only living representative of God Almighty on earth; ready from his arm-chair at Mowbray House to receive the confidences of the world, and rule the universe with all the omniscience and infallibility of divinity, the essence of his religious teaching may be worthy brief examination. It has been concisely summed up by an intimate friend of Mr. Stead, as a belief in the citizen Christ as meeting the wants of this democratic age. Christ is the representative citizen whose footsteps we are to follow. Then shall we avoid the Scylla of sectarianism and the Charybdis of unbelief.

Christ is continually put before the world as our ideal, but Mr. Stead's speciality is regarding him as the ideal citizen. Manifestly it is absurd to regard him as an ideal lover, husband, or father, for he is not depicted in either of these characters. As a son, his flippant language towards his mother scarcely warrants his being classed as an ideal. But as a citizen—well, let us see. On but one question have we any decisive evidence of Christ's relation to the State. This, of course, does not matter to Mr. Stead, who can evolve his citizen Christ out of his own consciousness. But it is worth while to note what the records say. The question was the one of paying tribute-money to Rome. Judæa was subject to Rome. Every Jew in his heart rebelled, for the Thora (Deut. xvii., 15) distinctly forbids any king who is not a brother Jew. On this occasion Jesus was asked if it was lawful to pay tribute to Cæsar. He demanded to be shown the tribute money. When they brought him a Roman penny he said, "Whose is this image and superscription?" They answered, "Cæsar's." Jesus

answered, "Render to Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's, and to God the things that are God's." As an evasion of a difficult question, this was worthy of the wit of say Mr. Stead. As the serious utterance of a divine teacher it is scarcely ideal. Even Mr. Stead will hardly argue that the Queen is entitled to all the coins and stamps which bear her image and superscription. We must look elsewhere for Christ's ideal citizenship. This, we suspect, Mr. Stead has gathered from private and exclusive sources of information, such as might be obtained by a personal interview. But to the law and the testimony. Whether Jesus ever worked for his living is not quite clear, though it may be surmised from his being in one place spoken of as the carpenter. When on his mission he was attended by certain ladies, who ministered to him of their substance. Not knowing the whole of the circumstances we pass no judgment, but it does not seem ideal citizenship.

What were his aims and methods as a reformer? In the first place, it is evident he sought to set up a kingdom of God, not a democratic commonwealth. He expected himself to rule, and appointed twelve apostles to sit on thrones and judge the twelve tribes of Israel, and they began to quarrel immediately for precedence. The Jewish ideal was a theocracy. This may be Mr. Stead's ideal also, guessing from his naïve suggestion that the Pope should settle the Scotch Railway Strike. But this is certainly not the ideal of the working classes. How did citizen Christ expect to realise his kingdom of God? Supernaturally; and divine vengeance was invoked on those who opposed himself. Sweet reasonableness was hardly displayed in shaking off the dust of one's feet or in denouncing opponents as children of hell.

We say little of the political impracticability of his doctrine of non-resistance; of the political economy of his teaching that poverty is a blessing and wealth a curse; that his disciples should sell all and follow him, give to every one that ask, and pay those who work one hour as much as those who toil all day. But what should we think of a citizen who, when anointed with ointment so precious that if sold it might produce a considerable sum of money for the benefit of the poor, remarked, "the poor ye have with you always, but me ye have not always"? We do not say that this was quite as bad as abducting a child from her parents just to show how the thing could be done. We prefer Christ's forgiveness of the woman taken in adultery to Mr. Stead's hue and cry against Mr. Parnell, but it does not follow that his attitude was that of an ideal citizen.

We may pass over citizen Christ, announcing that "a greater than Solomon is here," and calling all who ever came before him thieves and robbers, turning water into wine to continue drunken revels, cursing a fig tree, turning devils into pigs, and requisitioning a donkey; but we must glance at his breach of the peace at the Temple. We allow his conduct was more courageous than that of his disciple who incited the people to go to Trafalgar Square while he reported their being batoned by the police from the safety of an hotel window. But what business had citizen Christ in raising this particular riot? And when asked "By what authority do ye these things?" was it sufficient answer to ask in return if John the Baptist's authority was of heaven? No, no, Mr. Stead; it will hardly do. The ideal citizen could as readily be found in the pages of Plutarch as in the gospels.

J. M. WHEELER.

The Rev. H. W. Clarke, writing in the *Contemporary Review* on the Land Endowments of the Church, shows that when Henry VIII. suppressed the monasteries what was given in return was national property. Apart from this, the gross annual rental of episcopal and capitular property for the year 1889 were £1,484,000. A goodly sum—more than sufficient in itself to provide for free education.

## A LIAR ON THE LOOSE.

THE Rev. Hugh Price Hughes has never authenticated that story of the Atheist Shoemaker. He was challenged by Mr. Bradlaugh, challenged by Mr. Foote, and challenged by Mr. Forder. He was invited to give details by Mr. Spurgeon. His only answer was that to state particulars would wound the susceptibilities of the Methodist Sisters who brought the Atheist Shoemaker to Jesus. Some time afterwards, however, he told a correspondent in Nelson that the details would soon appear in the *Methodist Times*. Of course they have not appeared yet. The story of that Atheist Shoemaker is sheer invention. There is not a grain of truth in it. As Charles Lamb said of one of his own stories, it is a lie from beginning to end.

More recently Mr. Hughes led Mr. Stead to "understand" that Mr. G. J. Holyoake had declared that Secularism would never have existed if, forty years ago, the Churches had cared for the poor. Mr. Holyoake said nothing of the kind. But despite his letter to the *Star*, the truthful Hughes neither contradicts Mr. Stead's "understanding," nor admits his own mistake. No doubt he knows a lie will serve its turn, however frequently contradicted. Some people will not see the contradiction, and others will credit whatever harmonises with their wishes.

This convicted liar is on the loose again. He makes use in the *Methodist Times* of Mrs. Besant's letter to the *Star*, without saying a word about Mr. Foote's reply. For the benefit, or rather the amusement, or perhaps the disgust, of our readers we give Mr. Hughes's paragraph in full.

"Mrs. Besant has published her reason for leaving the Secular Society. It was the election of Mr. Foote as President. She had 'always strongly disapproved the policy adopted by Mr. Foote when he started the *Freethinker*, and changed the dignified and scholarly line of advocacy he had previously followed for one of rough caricature and mockery.' When Mr. Bradlaugh 'was replaced by a President whose materialism is narrow and dogmatic, and whose policy is one of insult instead of reason only, I felt it was necessary for me to resign.' The step Mrs. Besant has taken is greatly to her credit, and exactly what all who really knew her would expect. Secularism as an anti-Christian movement is on its last legs, and will soon disappear, if Christians have only the good sense to take no notice of it. Its only chance of continued life is to get some foolish Christian to argue with it or to persecute it. Let us neither bless it at all nor curse it at all, and it will soon disappear from the land of the living. It long ago accomplished the excellent work Mr. Holyoake contemplated, and has been dead for some time. The sooner its corpse is buried the better for the public health."

Mrs. Besant must surely wince at the praise and congratulations of a creature like Hughes. She continues to lecture against Christianity, and so far supports "an anti-Christian movement" which is "on its last legs." But this is a point which Mr. Hughes discreetly conceals. We should imagine that Mr. Holyoake, too, is by this time sorry that he spoke to a man who is capable of twisting words to any purpose. The dragging in of Mr. Holyoake's name by Mr. Hughes in this particular connection, is really a reassertion of the very lie which Mr. Holyoake exposed. Secularism has not yet "accomplished the excellent work Mr. Holyoake contemplated." Such an assertion is simply impudent in face of Mr. Holyoake's *Star* letter and his recent lectures and pamphlets.

The "last-legs" posture of Secularism, and its speedy disappearance, are quite inconsistent with Mr. Foote's *Star* letter in reply to Mrs. Besant. In that letter Mr. Foote pointed out that, despite Mr. Bradlaugh's impaired health and resignation of the presidency, and despite Mrs. Besant's secession, the National Secular Society was growing in numbers and funds more rapidly than ever. This was an

official statement, which can be proved to any inquirer. But Mr. Hughes drops it as unprofitable. He prefers lies to truth, especially when they are to the glory of God—in other words, to the advantage of the clergy.

Observe Mr. Hughes's attitude towards persecution. He expresses no objection to it on principle, but thinks it might help Freethought. On discussion he is more straightforward, though his words are ill-chosen. Many foolish Christians still oppose Freethought. It is the knowing ones who avoid discussion. They see its dangers. Their recommendation is a conspiracy of silence. Now and then they rise to the level of Mr. Hughes, and convert fabulous Freethinkers. It is easier than confuting actual ones; it saves all the risk of discussion; and the counterfeit serves as well as the real article.

Mr. Hughes is of that class of persons who have need of good memories. No wonder his metaphors are mixed. The Secularism which is introduced as "on its last legs," has soon afterwards "been dead for some time." Mr. Hughes will not live to see the funeral. He knows he is romancing. He is not exactly a fool. He belongs to the *other sort*. Never would he cudgel his brains, and go through the pain of literary parturition, for the sake of proving that Methodism is able to convert Atheists, if the Freethought movement were already dead. His very Lie in Five Chapters is itself a proof that he is lying in this assumption of indifference.

## DEATH OF BENJAMIN CONSTANT.

Benjamin Constant, the Brazilian Republican Minister, is dead. More than any other man he was responsible for the late revolution in Brazil, and the sterling reforms that have followed it. He was an ardent Freethinker and a disciple of Comte. As a professor at Rio he exercised a powerful influence on hundreds of young minds, especially of officers in the army. The proclamation and peaceful establishment of the Republic was the result of the seeds he sowed during many years of patient propaganda. His influence was felt in the separation of Church and State, the instituting of civil marriage, and the wide extension of public education. Benjamin Constant did not live long enough to see the full fruition of his labors, but he lived long enough to prove that leadership is still a great fact in the world, and that one man with sound head and heart and a lofty purpose may lift a whole nation to a nobler level.

## OBITUARY.

On Thursday, 22nd ult., I read the Secular Service over the remains of James Gray, aged 85, of Walworth, at the Manor Park Cemetery. Deceased had been a Freethinker for over fifty years, an ardent supporter of the Freethought movement when it required rare courage to be known as an avowed heretic. He knew Charles Southwell and other famous Freethought advocates, and was a great admirer of Mr. Bradlaugh. He was the first member of the Camberwell Branch of the N. S. S. Some time before his death he expressed a desire that I should speak a few words at his graveside. His last wish, that he should have a purely secular funeral, was faithfully carried out.—ARTHUR B. MOSS.

Died on January 19th, at 7 Stacey-street, Shaftesbury-avenue, Alexander Hollands, aged 57. An Atheist he lived, an Atheist he died, and his remains were interred at St. George's Cemetery, Hanwell, on Saturday, 25th. Mr. Haslam read the Secular Burial Service at the graveside.—JOHN HOCKIN.

## N. S. S. BENEVOLENT FUND.

R. Bulmer, £1; "Daylight," 10s.; "Daylight" Junr., 2s.; W. Mitchell, 5s.; Hanley Branch, 8s. 9d.; Mr. and Mrs. Burton, 10s.; Cardiff Branch, 10s.; J. F. Hampson, 2s. 6s.; Annie Hampson, 2s. 6d.; T. Ho'stead, 2s.; H. Peseman, 10s. 6d.; F. Deake, 5s.; Grimsby Branch, 2s. 6d.; W. Wood, 2s. 6d.; T. Naylor, 2s. 6d.; Collected at Mr. Forder's lecture at West Ham, £2 18s.—R. FORDER.

"Uncle, do you know what season of the year and what time of day it was that Adam and Eve were turned out of the garden of Eden?" "Can't say I do, Harry. Do you?" "Yes, sir. It was a fall Eve."

## CORRESPONDENCE.

## MISCHIEVOUS AND DESTRUCTIVE.

TO THE EDITOR OF "THE FREETHINKER."

SIR,—The paragraph which you quote from Mrs. Besant's "Apologia Mea" in the *Star* has greatly surprised me. I must admit I am not acquainted with the "scholarly line of advocacy (you) previously followed," and still less with one of "rough caricature and mockery." I have been a reader of your indeed valuable paper for a year or more, and can freely assure Mrs. Besant, or any one else, that your articles and those of your contributors have given me—a young Freethinker—much good and, as I have proved, reliable information.

She further says your policy "is one of insult instead of reason." I, as one individual, have not found it so. For even before I became a member of the Glasgow Branch of the N. S. S. I wrote to you asking advice as to a course of study, etc., on Freethought investigation, and you gave me, not a line or two in the *Freethinker*, but a personal letter; and I fail to see that such a course, nay, that such a courtesy, is "mischievous" or "destructive" to the best interests of the Freethought party.—I am, Sir, yours sincerely,

80 King Street, Govan.

WM. GILMOUR.

January 23, 1890.

## A VOICE FROM RUSSIA.

SIR,—I cannot find adequate words to express to you the feeling of gratitude called forth by your paper, in me as well as in other Russian readers, the number of which is much greater than you can imagine, taking into consideration the severity of the measures now taken by the Russian Government against Dissenters. The article of Mr. Wheeler in the *Freethinker* of the 4th inst. having been translated into Russian by—*horribile dictu*—an orthodox clergyman (I mean the article "Our Position"), is now, like many others of the same weight and significance, circulating in hundreds of written copies amongst the enlightened public, and you may be sure that the thoughts put down therein will leave their traces on every one into whose hands one of those sheets may happen to fall. We—I am speaking in the name of many of your adherents and admirers—we all deeply regret to be precluded from the possibility of materially contributing to the propagation of your paper, for reasons which, with you, certainly require no commentary. Still we hope, sooner or later, to be enabled to put into your hands, through the medium of one of our friends, who will have the pleasure of making your personal acquaintance, a more tangible token of our most heartfelt sympathy with the noble champions for Freethought, whose energy and perseverance cannot sufficiently be admired. We must wait for a favorable opportunity of placing at your disposal our mite.

If you wish to have any idea of what Christian fanaticism is often capable of, you must pay a visit to our city for a day or two. You will in this short space of time see acts of cruelty and injustice which you could not admit as possible at the close of the nineteenth century, if you were not an eye-witness. If the Jews, to speak now only of them, were handed over, body, soul, and property, to the ferocious instincts of the Russian police, for their having been the originators of Christianity, I have not the slightest doubt but a great many impartial judges, even among the Jews themselves, would, just for that reason, endorse the system of persecution now practised on them in this country. But no; the most revolting deeds of barbarism are being perpetrated on them in the name of Christianity. Allow me to mention only one fact.

Not very far from our city, a few weeks ago, a poor Jew was walking in the street, and, stumbling over a stone lying in the way, involuntarily came into contact with the "noble" body of the wife of an official occupying an influential post in the administration of the town. The Jew, put into prison for frightening the lady, was, after due admonition, most emphatically feruled. Having, a few days after, recovered from his surprise and pains, the miserable victim of Christian love and humility complained to one of the lawyers of the town, asking him to defend his human rights. The lawyer, a co-religionist, took the matter in hand, and, presenting himself to the said official, the husband of the nervous lady, inquired on what legal grounds the Jew was thus treated, and asked permission to get an insight into or a copy of the documents justifying this special punishment. The lawyer was politely advised to address himself to the police,

where he could find what he wanted. Whilst the lawyer was on the way to the police station, the official telephoned there, ordering the inquisitive lawyer to be treated just in the same way and the same measure as his client, an order which was punctually executed!

Can you find anywhere a more impartial official? You have a big work, indeed, and a difficult one too, no doubt, since religious prejudices die hard, unfortunately too hard. But it is no small consolation that they, sooner or later, must die. However, do not despair, and keep up the "flag in the battle for freedom," as you have done till now.

The consciousness of having sincere, although clandestine, followers in the remotest parts of a country where idolatry is as yet almost in its fullest bloom, must keep up in you that moral courage which distinguishes you so advantageously from those that imagine that Freethought is made for their own personal and private use. It will surely offer you some satisfaction to learn that, guided by persons like Uspenski, Troizki, and others well versed in the theological questions, Freethought is making visible progress in and round about our town, without any detriment to the feeling of patriotism, and it only wants a favorable moment to show to the world the as yet hidden fruits of your most eloquent love of enlightenment and truth, of humanity and justice.

Yours truly, T. P.

19th January, 1891.

[This correspondent is a Russian. He dare not give his name or that of the town in which he resides, for very obvious reasons.—EDITOR, *Freethinker*.]

## ACID DROPS.

The *Methodist Times* calls on its party to vote straight against the Government proposals as to public education. Better abandon the 839 Wesleyan day-schools, with their 180,840 children, and trust entirely to the 6,936 Sunday-schools, than sanction what is virtually a new endowment of the Church of England in 10,000 parishes. The President of the Wesleyan Conference has called a meeting of the Special Education Committee, and our pious contemporary says that "no Methodist meeting of equal importance has taken place for nearly a generation." All the followers of John Wesley are implored to resist the Church's greed for money and power. Let voluntary education go altogether. Let us have State schools everywhere, and unsectarian Bible teaching. Then will "every Nonconformist child in the land" be "protected from cruel oppression."

All this is very pretty, but where does *principle* come in? If religion of any kind is taught in public schools, it should certainly be the religion of the State Church. "Oh no," cries the Nonconformist, "we won't have it; it is unfair to teach our children what we disbelieve and even hate." Then the Freethinker steps in and says, "Very well then, why do you thrust the *Bible* into public schools? We Freethinkers object to it as strongly as you Nonconformists object to Church teaching." "Oh," replies the Nonconformist, "there is a conscience clause for you." "Yes," says the Freethinker, "and there is a conscience clause for you too." "Ah, but that conscience clause is a sham," cries the Nonconformist. "True," replies the Freethinker, "and if it does not really protect you against the Church, neither does it really protect us against you." Then the Nonconformist loses his temper and swears. The fact is, he is not fighting for liberty at all, but only for the safety of his own sect.

Godliness is great gain, is a true old text. The Rev. Dr. H. Evans, of Carnarvon, has been offered a pastorate in Australia, with £1,200 a year, and £200 to cover his travelling expenses.

More proof of the gain of godliness. Dr. Armitage, a New York minister, has been presented by his Baptist friends, with a house worth £8,000. This gentleman is a disciple of the poor Nazarene who, as Robert Taylor said, was born in a stable, lived on the high road, and died on the gallows.

Religion is a trade all the world over. In Austria and Hungary the revenues of the bishops and archbishops are princely, while the mass of the people are ground down in poverty. The Archbishop of Prague takes 80,000 fr. a year;

of Vienna, 60,000; and several 40,000. This is the gospel of poverty which some cannot see the humbug of.

Dr Adler, the late Chief Rabbi, left the following message to the Jews in his will:—"Continue to shun, oh! my dear ones—as I know you do—every kind of usury." *As I know you do* is good. Dr. Adler must have written that with his tongue in his cheek. Yet at the moment of writing it he was standing, so to speak, in the very presence of his God.

In the Marylebone Workhouse, at the end of one week in December, there were 1,620 inmates, whose religious persuasions were as follows:—

Church of England	...	...	1,237
Roman Catholics	...	...	370
Presbyterians	...	...	4
Greek Church	...	...	1
Catholic Apostolic	...	...	1
Theistic	...	...	1
No Religion	...	...	2
Wesleyans	...	...	4

The *Methodist Times* chuckles over the relative smallness of the Wesleyan group; but forgets to notice that the non-religionists are still smaller, though they ought logically—so wicked, lazy, drunken, and profligate are they—to monopolise the accommodation.

According to the census returns there are 140 religious sects in the United States. This includes the Theosophists. Evidently the prospect of "Christian union" is as bad in America as it is in England.

Archdeacon Farrar's last sermon in Westminster Abbey contained two notable admissions; first, that "our working classes as a body turn their backs on the churches"; secondly that "the so-called religious press is rife with that peculiar spitefulness which seems to be a characteristic of insincerity." A Daniel come to judgment, yea, I say, a Daniel!

Mr. W. T. Stead is quite the funny man of modern journalism. He selects John Stuart Mill and Mrs. Besant as the most illustrious *beaux ideals* of what a Christ on earth should be. No wonder the *Christian Commonwealth* "repudiates the association of our Divine Lord in such a category."

Mr. Stead has given six suggestions for the improvement of the churches. Five of them are hysterical recommendations of certain parts of Scripture and of the "great conception of the citizens of Christ." But one of the six (number 4) is, "Use the magic lantern more." Oh, the bathos of that magic lantern! Mr. Stead thinks that one of his suggestions may be useful. Probably number four.

"To souls trained in high fellowship," says Dr. Parker, "there is a whiff of heavenly odor in the stinging wind." Ah, yes! Dr. Parker, but it all depends on how you are fed and clothed, and what is your constitution. If you are in and robust health, if you are well clad with good boots and a thick overcoat, and if your stomach is lined with good fat capon or something equivalent, you may face the stinging wind and laugh as you breast it. But where is its "heavenly odor" if you are feeble in body, poor in pocket, ill-clad, ill-fed, and perhaps homeless, with the thermometer ten or fifteen degrees below freezing point? On the whole, Doctor, you ought to be ashamed to preach such stuff when myriads of your fellow-creatures are suffering from the severity of the weather.

Between fifty and a hundred Indian women and children were killed at the battle of Wounded Knee Creek. All hail, thou Angel of Civilisation and Messenger of God to men of peace and good will that prompteth the agents to rob and debauch the Indians and urgeth the soldiers to kill them. Let us swell with pride on account of the glorious deeds of the brave men who are teaching the savages of the plains what true civilisation means.

One of the Indians who was killed at Wounded Knee Creek was discovered to have on his person a religious tract entitled, "Behold the Kingdom of God has come nigh Thee." The bullet which killed him made a hole through the tract. A Christian clergyman gave him the tract. A Christian soldier shot him. Truly the Kingdom of God came near him in two

of its most effective manifestations—cant and a Winchester rifle.—*Twentieth Century*.

The Rev. J. L. Rentoul is reported as making a bold statement in a lecture on "Humanity's Gain from Unbelief." He said he did not know of a single man of the present day who was a great scholar who had attached himself to infidelity. We know Mr. Rentoul may quibble on the words great scholar and infidelity; but we ask him, Does he mean to imply that Leslie Stephen, Judge Stephen, Prof. Huxley, Lecky, Seeley, Tyndall, Spencer, and Bain are Christians, or that these are not among the great scholars of the present day?

The Rev. Walter Walsh, of Newcastle, tried to convert the local Secularists. He seemed to think that the appearance of a live minister among them would charm away their scepticism. But it didn't, and he retired in not the best of tempers. Lately he presided at a meeting to discuss why working men do not go to church. The meeting ended in smoke. Mr. Walsh will have to find some other means of filling his chapel.

The Retford Wesleyans had a bazaar, and among the "special attractions" were fencing, single-stick, and a shooting gallery. Fancy J. C. and the Apostles at a shooting gallery! But the Retford Wesleyans are above such prejudices.

Holding forth at Birmingham on church extension, the Dean of Worcester deplored that Christianity in England was split up into 250 sects. Poor England! he exclaimed. But, for our part, we regard this multiplication of sects as a great advantage. It promotes toleration, for one thing. The sects keep each other in check, and the Freethinker profits by their mutual animosity.

The Bishop of Chester referring to a rumor that he rode round his diocese on a tricycle, gave some excellent advice. People he said "should keep their judgment in suspense till they had really ascertained the facts." Capital. Let us apply it to religion. The stories of Jesus Christ walking on the water, and ascending bodily into heaven, are much more wonderful than of a bishop having ridden a tricycle, and are not even mentioned by contemporaries.

At All Saints, Stoke Newington, they gave an entertainment entitled "My Lord in Livery." The announcement on the church bills excited some wonderment as to what the Lord was doing in livery.

Anything for a change. Outside the Wesleyan Chapel, Hackney-road, is the announcement "Good Singing. Common Sense Talk." The last item must be a novelty.

The prayers of the hallelujah lasses for a thaw reminds the *Dispatch* of the remark of the infidel after a great drought. When rain had not fallen for two months, the Methodists had a prayer meeting, and sure enough rain soon followed. He asked whether they believed that the rain fell in consequence of the prayers. They said most assuredly. "Then all I can say," said he, "is that you are a set of miserable cusses not to have prayed six weeks before."

One result of the cold was the loss of over a million oysters. In North Wales upwards of three thousand sheep have perished on the hills. A result of the thaw has been landslips and floods endangering life in various directions. But His hand is over all.

Mr. Gladstone says the Creation Story was meant to show men how the fatherly care of Providence had fitted the world to be their dwelling place. This great truth has just been illustrated in America. A frightful snow-storm did several millions dollars' damage in New York alone. Other cities fared as badly in proportion, and there is sure to have been a considerable loss of life at sea.

The Rev. M. Ball, representing a deputation from the Church Missionary Society to the Christ Church Auxiliary at Surbiton, and who has labored for ten years in Scinde, said that the number of Christian converts were only as a drop in a bucket. Thanks to the industrious efforts of atheists at home, infidelity was spreading with alarming rapidity in

India, and particularly among the educated classes, five millions of whom now spoke and wrote the English language. B.A.'s were almost as plentiful as blackberries, and yet idolatry maintained its hold upon the affections of the people. The deputation was not of the number of those who believed that Hindooism is tottering to its fall. His experience pointed the other way. He himself had seen new temples arising, some of which when completed would have cost many lacs of rupees. Still he was for persevering, and exhorted his hearers to shell out liberally to counteract the efforts of the hosts of Satan.

Bishop Suter of Nelson, New Zealand, suddenly lost his sight, owing to congestion of the brain while reading prayers in his chapel. Such occurrence should stop forever the pious impiety which delights in tracing the hand of providence.

According to the *Loyal American*, the histories used in the Catholic schools in the United States are misleading falsifications. The errors and corruptions of Rome are concealed, and it is pretended to have been the friend of American Independence because "Catholic France and Spain" sent aid to the colonists in their struggle. This was of course because these powers were at war with England in order to cripple her, not from their love of liberty, still less the Pope's. In their school-books Carroll, who was born of Catholic parents, is made the central leading person who signed the Declaration of Independence. The *Loyal American* points out that Carroll was the friend of Prine, Jefferson and Franklin, and "learned civil and religious liberty from his associates, who were mainly Freethinkers."

The bankrupt firm of S. A. Kean and Co., Chicago, which was conducted on Christian principles, held all the cash of the African Mission Fund, and Bishop Taylor, the missionary, is in sad straits. It appears that he bought African children of their parents, to train them up as Christians, and as heaps of them are but partly paid for the Bishop's position is dangerous. Many of the American subscribers were to have their names given to the Christianised little blackies.

Joseph Faulk killed his wife at Pittsburg. He says he was hypnotised by George Knauff, who claimed to be the Messiah, and ordered the murder of Mrs. Faulk as a sacrifice to God.

The Rev. Mr. Brown, rector of the Episcopal church at Middleton, in Nova Scotia, is a peppery customer. A divinity student, on his way to preach at Annapolis, inadvertently sat down in an express train on the reverend gentleman's fur cap. Immediately the man of God jumped up, and gave the divinity student a terrific blow in the face, blacking both his eyes and breaking his nose. Parson Brown has evidently mistaken his vocation. He should join the great John L. Sullivan.

The Rev. Dr. Wild, of Toronto, has been preaching on "Stanley and Africa." He regarded Stanley as a divinely raised forerunner of African missionaries. In the course of his sermon he exclaimed, "Thank God for chunky Stanley!" What is "chunky"? If we are to criticise Wild sermons we shall have to keep a universal Slang Dictionary.

General Booth can do no wrong, in the opinion of some journals that slaver the feet of success—like the *Daily News*, for instance, which hangs on Booth's lips as an oracle. "General" Booth wrote to the Lord Mayor, as an equal power, inviting co-operation in relieving the prevalent distress. In that letter he said that his officers had counted 164 homeless and penniless persons on Blackfriars Bridge on a particular night. On the face of it the statement was absurd. The thermometer was registering several degrees below freezing point, and anyone who dropt asleep on Blackfriars Bridge would never get up again. Besides, railway arches and other such places would certainly be patronised in preference to open Thames bridges in such dreadful weather. The Lord Mayor naturally told Booth that his statement was inaccurate. The police had been very strict about the bridges of late. Thereupon Booth said that the 164 homeless and penniless persons had been counted on "the approaches" to the bridge—an elastic phrase that might be made to cover half London.

Booth's officers counted the 164, but what Booth's officers did for them does not transpire. And now comes the climax

of the farce. Prophet Baxter, of the *Christian Herald*, writes to the *Star* that his own agents supplied lodging-house tickets to the homeless at the north end of Blackfriars Bridge, and "it is a profound mystery to me how there could have been 164 persons on or about Blackfriars Bridge during all the night after every one applying for it there had got a lodging-house ticket."

It is amusing to see Booth and Baxter at loggerheads. But Booth seems to have the worst of it. He will have to invent another bridge.

The Secretary of the West Ham Branch has received the following letter. The advertisement was for Mr. Sam Standing's course of Free Lectures during February on "English Christianity: its Rise and Decline." The *Stratford Express* inserts it without question:—COPY.—"To Mr. Anderson. Dear Sir,—We cannot, at present, see our way clear to insert the enclosed advertisement in the *Stratford Herald*. Anything suggestive of the decline of Christianity we cannot consent to advertise.—We are, yours very truly, The Proprietors, per pro W. T. HARVEYSON." Well, well, the *Stratford Herald* needn't advertise the decline of Christianity. It doesn't want much advertising nowadays.

Good old Spurgeon! He stands by "the old standard," as he assures his congregation. He is resolved not to move an inch forward. God forbid! He declares "there is no telling what we shall hear next." Christian ministers are forsaking the Gospel; in other words, they are adjusting themselves, as they know they must or perish, to the spirit of the age.

"May the sun shine," Spurgeon says, "and the warm winds blow, and the voice of the turtle be heard in the land." Turtle or no turtle, we echo this genial wish. It is rather too bad of Spurgeon's god to burn us hereafter and freeze us here.

One must go abroad to learn news. From far Cornwall, a letter in the *Redruth Independent* tells us the real truth about the decay of Secularism and the decline of the Freethought party. It seems it was not the work of the Church, nor even of the Nonconformist ministers. It was owing to John Dunn. "It was left to John Dunn, a working man, to drive Atheism out of Hyde Park. John Dunn succeeded in his task; his attacks on Atheism showed an acquaintance with Biblical teaching, astronomy, geology, etc., that surprised people. John Dunn astounded everybody who heard him, and the Freethinkers left Hyde Park, and set up their flag in North London. In North London to-day the battle is raging fiercely." But John Dunn is there, and is clearly winning the fight. We suspect that when John Dunn returns to Hyde Park he will find the defeated Freethinkers have skulked back there again from North London, whither they fled, astounded by his valor. The letter is signed "John Kinsman," and is dated from 32 Wolsey-road, Mildmay Park. Surely it should be John's kinsman.

The Rev. Principal Reynolds, lecturing on Mission Enterprise said, "in this field there was natural selection with no struggle for existence." This however is not the opinion of the heathen who look on in amazement at the strife of Christian sects.

The Vicar of Lelant, in Cornwall, ordered a young lady in the choir to leave the church, and would not proceed with the service until the holy edifice was purged of her presence. She had committed the dreadful crime of attending a mission service at a Wesleyan chapel.

Max Müller's lectures have raised a deal of discussion on Miracles in Glasgow, and Harry Long, the well-known Glasgow Green Orange orator, has challenged any one to debate with him, and prove miracles do not exist. Will Harry come South and prove they do?

Professor Milligan, of Aberdeen, has blown a counterblast, against Professor Max Müller. He declines to allow that the ascension of Christ, like the ascension of Elijah, is a mythical story containing a spiritual truth. He says that if the ascension is a myth, the resurrection is a myth, and the incarnation is a myth, and the whole Christian faith is a delusion and a snare. Which it is, Dr. Milligan, which it is.

## MR. FOOTE'S ENGAGEMENTS.

Sunday, February 1, Alhambra Music Hall, Porter-street, Hull; at 11, "Let us Pray"; at 2.30, "Where is the Devil?" at 6.30, "The Grand Old Book."

February 8, Leeds; 15, South Shields; 16, Blyth; 17, N. Shields; 18, Crook; 19, Spennymoor; 20, Middlesboro'; 21, Ox Hill; 22, Newcastle.

March 1, 8, 15, 22, 29, Hall of Science.

April 5, Birmingham; 12, Camberwell; 19, Belfast; 26, Liverpool.

May 10, Camberwell.

June 7, Camberwell; 14 and 21, 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.

R. WEIGHTMAN.—See "Sugar Plums."

DAYLIGHT.—Thanks for cuttings. The other matter shall be attended to.

J. F. HENLEY.—Delighted to see the West London Branch is so active.

C. DOEG.—The date is booked. You need not write again unless you *cannot* hire the hall.

R. SHAW.—Pardon us for not inserting your letter. We have received so many in support of Mr. Foote. Send the copy you refer to whenever you please.

T. PHILLIPS.—(1) The Foote-Shaw debate will soon be published as a sixpenny pamphlet. (2) Macmillan and Co. publish Professor Huxley's pamphlet on Booth, price one shilling net. (3) The gentleman you refer to took the editorship of a political paper, and has to keep quiet on *Freethought*. (4) Books on elocution are almost worthless. Practical instruction from a good elocutionist is what we should recommend. (5) Shall be glad to receive the copy of Huxley's letter.

H. WISEMAN.—The term "*Freethought*" does not occur in the National Secular Society's principles. *Freethought*, in our opinion, is thought without prejudice or fear of consequences.

ALLEN LAWTON.—The Buddhists keep Thursday, the Mohammedans Friday, the Jews Saturday, the Christians Sunday. The other days are said to have been kept sacred in religions now extinct.

ATHEIST FRENCHMAN.—*La Verité Philosophique* will be sent post free from Paris for four francs for one year. The office is 28 Rue Mont Thabor, Paris.

ENGINE DRIVER.—Always glad to receive cuttings.

J. PARTRIDGE.—The date is booked.

R. NICHOLLS.—Thanks for your valued communication.

W. P. B.—Always pleased to hear from you.

T. P.—Write whenever you feel the spirit move. Your English is very good indeed for a foreigner.

H. MELLOR.—As you say, a man in Mr. Foote's position is bound to have enemies. All he can do is to take care not to make enemies of those who should be friends. Glad to hear you appreciate Mr. Wheeler's instructive articles, and find *A Virgin Mother* has "sixpennyworth of reading in it." By the by, Oldham is not very far from Manchester, and you might occasionally hear a *Freethought* lecture *there*.

MARK BALL.—Thanks for all your good wishes.

J. P. SILKSTONE.—Glad to hear you were "intensely amused as well as instructed" by the lecture on the Trinity Puzzle. The address shall be kept with a view to the purpose indicated.

W. L. W.—You must apply by letter to the Librarian of the British Museum for a reading-room ticket. Certainly the Sacred Books of the East, translated under the editorship of Prof. Max Müller, are worth reading.

J. EVANS.—Cuttings are always welcome.

R. D. TURNER.—Glad to hear from one on the road to *Freethought*, who finds this journal an antidote to superstition.

M. A. B. PELMAN.—We are sorry to hear of your brother's death, but glad to know we had his good opinion, and still have yours. Pamphlet sent.

R. H. WRLLINGS.—Walter Besant, the novelist, is a brother of Mrs. Besant's husband. Pleased to have your approval, but

sorry to hear of the trouble you have with newsagents. Many complaints have reached us lately. We appeal to our readers to press reluctant newsagents.

C. F. D.—Follow *no one's* guidance. Think for yourself, and act according to your own light. There is much truth, as well as humor, in the first part of your letter.

SOUTHPORT AGNOSTIC.—Much too long.

M. D. H.—Hardly short or pointed enough. "Stewing down" verse is a frightful task.

A. SWINNEY.—Your balance-sheet of the Balls Pond Secular Sick and Tontine Society is a most creditable document. *Freethinkers* in the locality might join with profit.

W. H. MORRISH.—Mr. Foote will write you.

F. JOHNSON.—We have always lost money on the Special Numbers, and for the present at least we must discontinue them.

E. S. ROBERTS.—You are quite right. Japan is a very progressive country, and it is *not* Christian, nor likely to be.

G. GALE.—We haven't the slightest idea to whom he referred. Yarns of that sort, in pulpits, are as plentiful as pigs in Ireland.

J. M. SMITH.—You can hardly expect us to insert a letter of such length. We reply as follows. (1) Yours is the only letter we have received in opposition to Mr. Foote, and your use of such epithets as "rude, pointless, and silly" shows the temper in which you write. (2) Mr. Foote cannot discuss the subject with *you*. He replied to Mrs. Besant's attack and has no more to say unless she begins afresh. (3) The decline of the N. W. London Branch, of which you are a member, has been going on for years, and lectures on Dreams and Reincarnation are not the means to revive it. (4) Mr. Foote has lectured four times at Milton Hall during the last six months. Scores of Branches want his services. In what way, then, is your Branch neglected? (5) We refrain from characterising your inquiry as to the value of the five hundred members who have joined the N. S. S. during the last eight months. (6) Do you really mean that Christians may teach children that Jesus was born without a father, and that a *Freethinker* shows ill taste in criticising this teaching in a pamphlet entitled *A Virgin Mother*? If that is a spirit at all prevalent in your Branch, we are not surprised at your stagnation.

PAPERS RECEIVED.—Fritankaren—Liberty—Freethought—Ironclad Age—Menschentum—Echo—Neues Frereligioses Sonntags-Blatt—Freidenker—The Liberator—Der Arme Teufel—Secular Thought—Boston Investigator—Western Figaro—La Verité Philosophique—Progressive Thinker—Flaming Sword—Loyal American—Two Worlds—Star—Truthseeker—Lucifer—Glasgow Herald—Open Court—Fair Play—Monist—Dwarf—Redruth Independent—Heckmond-wike Herald—Surrey Comet—Twentieth Century—Southern Shields Daily Gazette—De Dageraad.

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

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.

## MR. BRADLAUGH.

MR. BRADLAUGH's condition is still dangerous. His present illness is, if possible, worse than the one that prostrated him fifteen months ago. Last Saturday his case seemed hopeless. The skilful physicians could only let nature fight the battle of life or death. Happily the struggle was decided, at least for the time, in Mr. Bradlaugh's favor. He surmounted that crisis, and his condition slightly improved. But the heart is so much affected that he is unable to sleep, and while we may hope passionately for the best it is idle to close our eyes to the grave peril of his situation.

No one is allowed to see him but the doctors, the nurses, and his daughter. On Sunday afternoon I called to learn how he was. I crept on tiptoe past his bedroom door and saw Mrs. Bonner in his study. She looked worn but brave-spirited. It is a trying time for her, with a dearly-loved father hovering between life and death. She is his only child now. Her brother died years ago. Her sister's grave I saw at Woking a few weeks ago, scraping off the snow to read the inscription on the stone. It is natural that the two living ones should cling together. But the prospect was dark, though not quite black, and I felt inexpressibly sad as I crept down the stairs.

A gentleman was ringing as I opened the front door. His voice was not at all subdued. Evidently he did not know the gravity of Mr. Bradlaugh's

illness. But his voice softened as I told him the facts. He gave me his card, but I did not look at it till he was gone. His last words were, "All his friends in the House of Commons are anxious about him." Then I looked at the card. It bore the name of Mr. C. T. Ritchie, President of the Local Government Board. Evidently Mr. Bradlaugh has won the respect of both sides in the House of Commons. It was a piece of nature's irony that he should be lying in that sick room, in deadly peril, just as his personal worth was properly recognised and his public usefulness had free scope.

The improvement in Mr. Bradlaugh's condition was maintained on Monday, but he had a bad night and was very weak on Tuesday morning. As we go to press (Wednesday noon) I learn that there is no change in Mr. Bradlaugh's condition. He remains in a state of great feebleness. I understand he is not informed of his splendid triumph in the House of Commons on Tuesday night, when the old resolution declaring him unable to affirm or swear, and consequently unable to sit, was ordered to be expunged from the books by general consent of the House.

G. W. FOOTE.

## SUGAR PLUMS.

Mr. Foote had a capital audience at the Hall of Science on Sunday, and quite an ovation at the close of his lecture. Referring to the incomprehensible nature of the Trinity, he said, "I am one of those vulgar persons who demand a reason for what they are asked to believe." At the word "vulgar" there was a general titter among the audience. They were thinking of a recent letter in the *Star*.

Owing to Mr. Bradlaugh's breakdown fresh arrangements have had to be made for February at the Hall of Science. Mr. G. J. Holyoake will take the first Sunday evening and discourse on "General Booth's Scheme." Mr. Touzeau Parris will follow. Curiously, both these gentlemen have just recovered from serious accidents. Mr. Holyoake was knocked down by an omnibus, and Mr. Parris fell and broke his collar bone.

Mr. Forder had a bumping house at West Ham on Sunday. Nearly three pounds was collected for the Benevolent Fund.

Mr. Forder delivers three lectures to-day in the Trades Societies' Hall, Huddersfield. The admission is free, and we hope Mr. Forder will have a hearty reception.

By the way, there is a curious thing about those Huddersfield meetings. By way of showing respect for the Sabbath, the audience has to enter the hall by the back door and ascend a narrow staircase. After the lecture the front door is thrown open. By-and-bye, perhaps, the audience will be allowed to go in as well as leave by the front door.

The Newcastle Branch, at its monthly meeting on Sunday, passed the following resolution:—"That this Branch heartily agrees with our President's methods and principles of propaganda, and repudiates the assertion that he has damaged or hindered the work in any way." Mr. Tullen moved, Mr. Jamieson seconded, and Mr. Kelf was instructed to forward the resolution to headquarters.

The Secretary of the Spennymoor Branch reports that the members discussed the late controversy on Sunday; they were sorry to make a choice, but they unanimously supported Mr. Foote's action.

These resolutions are inserted because there is no just principle on which they could be excluded. But Mr. Foote begs other Branches *not* to pass resolutions on the subject. It would be a different thing if Mrs. Besant were a member of the N. S. S.

Mr. Moss had a large audience on Sunday at Leicester. His lecture was on "Why General Booth must Fail." The discussion lasted over an hour. We notice Mr. Moss's pen occasionally in the London *Echo*.

Mrs. S. D. Proctor lectures on "The Life and Death of Worlds" for the Sunday Lecture Society this afternoon (Feb. 1) at four o'clock, in St. George's Hall, Langham-place, W.

The Richmond (Surrey) Literary Society had a discussion on devils, Satan, Mephistopheles, Lucifer, etc. All the speakers treated the real existence of a personal devil as merely a joke. But how about the devil's great antagonist?

The Leyton Branch held its first quarterly meeting on Sunday. A fair amount in hand was shown by the balance-sheet. If all Freethinkers in the district would join, this might be made a strong Branch. The secretary's address is—Mr. W. Jenkinson, Clarke's Cottages, Cooper's-lane, Leyton.

A course of Free Lectures will be delivered by the West London (late Hyde Park) Branch at the Kilburn Liberal Club, Belsize-road, Kilburn, on the two first Tuesdays and the two last Fridays in February, at 8 o'clock. Mr. C. J. Hunt opens the course next Tuesday with a lecture on "Immortality and Science." The same Branch is also holding lectures, admission free, at the Hammersmith Club on Tuesday evenings throughout this month. Freethinkers willing to assist financially or otherwise are requested to communicate with C. Durrant, 17 Andover-place, Kilburn; or, Harry Courtney, 8 Norland-road North, W.; or with the secretary, J. F. Henley, 24 Dunster-gardens, Brondesbury, N.W.

The debate on the Legal Eight Hours Question between Mr. Foote and Mr. G. B. Shaw came off at the Hall of Science, London. Mr. G. Standing presided the first evening, and Mr. Pease, secretary of the Fabian Society, on the second. The audiences were remarkably attentive and well behaved. Good summary reports appeared in the *Star* and the *Daily Chronicle*. A verbatim report was taken by Mr. Theodore Wright; it is being printed, after revision by both disputants, and will shortly be published as a sixpenny pamphlet.

The Reading Branch publishes its first annual balance-sheet. It shows a deficit of £3 0s. 11d. This is mainly owing to the local expenses of lectures, and the item will be reduced in future. The Branch held its first annual meeting on Sunday. There was a good attendance, and three new members were enrolled. The officers elected for 1891 are—President, W. Butler; Secretary, G. Fraser; Treasurer, W. Mitchell; Committee, Messrs. Blackall, Joseph, Slyfield, Soper and Wyatt.

The American Secular Union has started a movement to raise five thousand dollars for the employment of field lecturers, or to aid those already in the field to open new ground.

When H. L. Knight, who has recently rested from his labors lay dying, a Catholic Sister asked him if she might not summon a priest. He replied: "You may; you may bring a priest, a bishop, an archbishop, the college of cardinals, and the pope himself. I never closed my door against any man on account of his religion. But," said the old man, "I should tell them all, singly and severally, that my chief regret in dying is that I can no longer use tongue or pen to expose them as either dupes or impostors." He died as he had lived.—*Freethought*.

Mr. W. F. Jamieson, one of the American Freethought lecturers, had a mortgage on his homestead and farm, and was in danger of having it sold from him. Freethinking friends hastened to the rescue, and he is now secure in its possession. More loans were offered to him than he needed.

One little item in Professor Newman's latest book is well worthy consideration. In regard to the pretence to absolve from sin, countenanced in the English Prayer-book, he points out that a gipsy may be punished for taking sixpence by promising a servant girl a handsome husband. He remarks: "The same principle of law which defends the weak and credulous from the palmistry of gipsies might with equal propriety defend the weak and credulous from the extortion of priests, which indeed may be made at expense of a dying man's kinsfolk. Some restrictions do exist against clerical terrorism of a dying man, but it is undeniable that the death-bed is not the only place at which enormous power over money can be exercised. If a single M.P., with only one



seconded, were to move for a Bill to make it a misdemeanor to pretend to have power or to bestow power of forgiving sin, or refusing forgiveness, his mere motion would force the public to study the question."

In his latest instalment of reminiscences in the *Newcastle Weekly Chronicle*, Mr. Holyoake gives some account of the fight for an unstamped press carried on by Henry Hetherington and others, who were mostly, if not entirely, Freethinkers.

A letter written by Harriet Martineau early in the forties, and hitherto unpublished, is printed in the current *Notes and Queries*. It shows her already developing on the road to Freethought. She had been brought into contact with J. J. Gurney and other leading lights among the Quakers, and says she finds their intellects extinct in regard to religion, owing to the submission to the letter of the records of the gospel. Such minds, she adds, are only capable of stringing together texts without regard to their rational connection.

The policy of President Westbrook, in seeking the support of all and sundry to the platform of the American Secular Union does not appear to suit some of the most thorough-going in the States. At any rate a few of them have started a North American Confraternity of Atheists, about whose principles there can be no mistake.

*Fair Play*, now comes out as a monthly. It is edited by E. C. Walker, and published at 718 Fourth-street, Sioux City, Iowa. Its policy is Atheistic and Anarchistic, but it opens its columns and gives fair play all round.

The pansy adopted by the French Federation of Freethinkers as their symbol, has been also accepted by the Freethought societies of Belgium, Spain and Sweden.

*De Dageraad* in its universal review, gives some attention to Booth's *In Darkest England*, and translates Prof. Huxley's first letter on the Salvation Scheme, and gives several other items from our columns.

Darwinism is advancing. A recent clerical lecture on "We are Fearfully and Wonderfully Made," is said to have been illustrated with the skeleton of a gorilla.

Mr. Fraser's *Golden Bough* is reviewed in the current *Quarterly Review* more appreciatively than by the *Edinburgh Review*. It says his conclusions are generally established, and does not appear to scent the heresies pointed out in our columns, and perhaps observed by the *Edinburgh Reviewer*.

"Thor" replies in the *Heckmondwike Herald* to the London correspondence on the "Decay of Secularism" with the unmistakable heading "A Falsehood Nailed."

In Sabbatarian Glasgow ex-Baillie Crauford read a paper before the Ruskin Society in which he advocated the Sunday opening of art galleries.

The *Monist* of January keeps up its philosophic character. It opens with a serious study of The Architecture of Theories by Chas. S. Pierce. Prof. Lombroso follows with studies in criminal anthropology. H. Schubert gives the history of squaring the circle, and E. Krause the psychological life of the star-fish. One of the most interesting contributions is on German Philosophy in the Nineteenth Century, by Professor F. Jodl. Prof. Jodl is evidently a thoroughgoing Freethinker. He sees the transcendental philosophy has led to nothing, and regards E. Laas and A. Riehl as the best representatives of scientific critical philosophy.

#### CHILDREN'S PARTY, 1891.

It has been decided to give the youngsters their annual treat at the Hall of Science on Wednesday, February 25th. I therefore appeal to our friends, who have so generously helped us in the past, to enable us to make the little ones happy once more. Subscriptions may be sent to me or to any member of the committee.—ROBT. FORDER.

Jack Blazes (at Mrs. China Astor's tea): "Here comes my young nephew! Good evening, Doctor," Rev. Mr. Kidd (who has just taken high-church order): "Excuse me; I am Father Kidd now." Jack: "Very glad to hear it. Congratulations. How is the little kid doing?"

#### BOOTH'S TRUST DEED.

PROFESSOR HUXLEY is pursuing General Booth like a sleuth-hound. He has taken counsel's opinion on the Trust Deed which Booth is always talking about as the "security" for those who give him money for social and religious purposes. Mr. Ernest Hatton, a well known Queen's Counsel, gives a long legal opinion on this precious document, which Professor Huxley communicates to the *Times*. We make the following extract that shows what a bubble Booth has been blowing:— "As to the properties vested in Booth himself, it appears to me that such are placed absolutely under his power and control both as to the disposal and application thereof, and that there are no trusts for any specific purposes declared which could be enforced, and that there are no defined persons or classes of persons who can claim to be entitled to the benefit of them, or at whose instance they could be enforced by any legal process. As to the properties (if any) vested in trustees appointed by Booth, it appears to me that the only person who has a *locus standi* to enforce these trusts is Booth himself, and that he would have absolute power over the trusts and the property, and might deal with the property as he pleased, and that, as in the former case, nothing could be done in the way of enforcing any trusts against him. As to the moneys contributed or raised by mortgage for the general purposes of the mission, it appears to me that Booth may expend them as he pleases, without being subject to any legal control, and that he cannot even be compelled to publish any balance sheets. . . . It is to be noted that the deed is a mere deed poll by Booth himself, without any other party to it who, as a contracting party, would have a right to enforce it. Whether there are any objects of the trust I cannot say. If there is, as the recital indicates, a society of enrolled members called 'The Christian Mission,' those members would be objects of the trust, but then, it appears to me, Booth has entire control and determination of the application. And as to the trusts enduring for the benefit of the 'Salvation Army,' I am not aware what is the constitution of the 'Salvation Army,' but there is no reference whatever to any such body in the deed. I have understood the Army as being merely the missionaries, and not the society of worshippers. If there is no Christian Mission Society of enrolled members, then there are no objects of the trust. The trusts are purely religious, and trading is entirely beyond its purposes. Booth can 'give away' the property simply because there is no one who has any right to prevent his doing so."

#### NARROW RELIGION.

Mr. H. A. Jones, the dramatist, whose "Dancing Girl" is the latest sensation on the London stage, has been censured for making the Quakers acquainted with harmoniums. On this point he replies as follows to the dramatic critic of the *Daily News*:—"In reply to your correspondent of last Monday, the harmoniums in Endellion do not belong to the Quakers. The Quakers do not constitute the whole population of Endellion; indeed, there are two hundred other dismal sects in the island, all of them lineal descendants (by direct transmission of blind and impenetrable stupidity) of those people in Judea who passed such a furious condemnation on the simple act of plucking a few ears of corn. Only now, instead of condemning the plucking of corn, they shut up our museums and picture galleries on Sundays and fodder their souls on all kinds of stale and withered doctrinal herbage."—For Endellion, of course, we have only to read England.

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## FATHER IGNATIUS, THE SELF-MADE MONK.

BY HUGH O. PENTECOST.

*(Delivered Sunday, December 21, 1890.)**(From the Twentieth Century.)*

[CONCLUDED.]

It was a positive pleasure to me to listen to Father Ignatius, for while all the while I heard him, I was inwardly saying: "My dear fellow, what you believe and what you do are all wrong"; I was also saying: "You are honest, you are genuine, you are no wolf in sheep's clothing, you are all right."

That monk has "got religion," genuine, old-fashioned, mediæval religion; the only kind of religion that is worth having. He hasn't much common sense, but he's "got religion." He says right out that God is three persons and yet he is only one person. He doesn't try to explain away the Trinity. He believes it. He says that if you believe on the Lord Jesus Christ you will be saved and if you believe not you will be damned, and he does not try to make you believe that within the last hundred years hell has considerably cooled off. He says that God has a perfect right to damn him if he wants to, and that is a fact. If there is any God he has a perfect right to do whatever he likes, whether it is right or wrong. He believes there is a personal Devil. He says that the arguments to prove the existence of a personal Devil are precisely like those to prove the existence of a personal God; and that if there is no personal Devil there is no personal God; and he is perfectly right. He says that if a man will use his reason he cannot be a Christian, and in that he is right too.

He says that at Llanthony Abbey they have visions from heaven, and have seen the angels of God, and that the dead have appeared to them. He says that one of the novitiates at the monastery ridiculed these stories of visions, but that he, himself, saw a vision one day which frightened him so that he ran away and never returned. And, furthermore, he says he does not care whether people believe these stories or not, or whether they consider him a crazy fanatic or a lying enthusiast. For my part I believe the stories. And anyone who will study the monk's ecstatic face while he prays, or when he turns it up to heaven and sings, can readily believe that he is just the man to see visions. Any one who can believe what he believes, in the way he believes, can see visions.

This man has a genuine case of religion—the kind that two or three hundred years ago was very catching. He has his mind in such a condition that if you positively prove to him that a thing is so he cannot believe it, and if you positively prove to him that a thing is impossible he cannot doubt it. He disbelieves things because they are true and believes things because they are false. In his optical world black is white; in his astronomical world the sun goes round the earth; in his mathematical world four and four make two; in his world of physics water runs up hill; his eyes are in the back of his head; he walks on his hands; like the Irishman who put his clothes on wrong-side foremost, he is "fatally twisted," but unlike the Irishman he is not conscious of the calamity. He has a perfect religious mind, and we should all be thankful that in this day and generation, in which the perfect religious mind is almost as rare as the myth-making mind; in this day in which science has chained nearly all the clergymen to her car and is dragging them along in spite of their feeble protests—we ought to be thankful, I say, that this monk comes out from his monastery and lets us see what Christianity was before science broke into its darkened chambers and flooded them with light, a light that is even now far too strong for eyes accustomed to windowless dungeons.

It is the misfortune of Father Ignatius that he was born too late. Soon after St. Benedict founded the order of Benedictine monks there were thirty-seven thousand monasteries of that order in Europe. Father Ignatius has been struggling for twenty-seven years to keep his one little abbey going, and there will probably never be another. Darwin, Spencer, and Huxley got the ear of England before Father Ignatius began his missionary tours, and the soil which produced these men is not favorable to the seed which Father Ignatius is planting. Men are too busy studying the stars to be attracted by visions of the angels of God. They are too much engaged in listening to the voices of the telephone and phonograph to hear the message from heaven. Calvin's God and Milton's Devil are so shy about showing themselves that we do not fear them any more. Gravitation and chemical energy, steam ploughs and spinning jennies, do so much in the universe that there is no use for supernatural helpers. Father Ignatius has come too late. He is but the ghost of a power that once mightily moved the world. Other questions than those which interest him are now engaging the attention of men.

The question that millions are asking now is not: "How can I best devote myself to the service of God, to express my gratitude because he is not going to send me to hell?" but "How can I best get out of the hell of poverty, ignorance, hunger and nakedness into which rulers and clergymen have plunged me?" The question is not: "How can I bring my child to Jesus?" but, "How can I get enough for him to eat and save him from the horrors of the machine room and the tenement house; how can I be sure that my daughter will not be obliged to take bread from the hand of a libertine; how can I be sure that when I am dead my wife will not have to wear her fingers to the bone toiling for food and shelter?"

Father Ignatius has no answer to give to these questions. While others are starving he is enjoying visions in Llanthony Abbey. He is poor; he plays at starvation certain times; but he has no word for the poor except to exhort them to partake of the holy sacrament and get ready for another world—where? Where is that other world?

I respect this monk because I believe he is sincere. But he is a back number. I do not deny his right to live as he likes, but the world has no use for him unless, like Jeremiah and Isaiah, and Amos, he has something to say to those who "join house to house and lay field to field-till there be no room."

We do not need more monasteries. We need more homes in which men and women who labor may enjoy the fruits of their toil, and fewer in which ill-gotten gains are squandered.

We do not need more monks to tell us of their visions of the angels of God. We need prophets who will rebuke hypocrisy and greed in high places, and harden the consciences and soften the hearts of those who rule us with a rod of iron and plunder us with statute laws.

We do not need men with shaved heads to tell us to shun this world and its rational pleasures, to stop thinking and submit to every unjust command of some political or ecclesiastical despot. We need men to tell us that this is positively the only world we know anything about, the only life that we know we have to live, and that it is our business to make it as bright, clean, charming, and happy as possible.

We do not want our atmosphere crowded again with contending angels and demons. We want it merry with the laughter of children who never hunger, with the songs of women who do not eat out their hearts with trouble, with the stout voices of men who strike the earth with the magic wand of happy labor and bring forth wealth, and then rise up to play; we want it crimson with the blushes of lovers, and perfumed with thought.

Turn away from the monks with their palsied brains, from the clergymen with their flabby consciences, from the politicians with their thimble-rigging schemes, and listen to the prophets of to-day who preach to you of wealth fairly earned, of liberty and happiness. Turn away from the past with the gods and ghosts and tyrants. Turn to the future with its possibilities of labor, leisure and joy—to that future in which men and women will live so sanely, so satisfied with this life, so unterrified by death, that each, when his days are numbered, may say with the philosopher who uttered with his latest breath, these words: "This is the end of earth. I am content."

**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. S. Soddy, "Evolution v. Special Creation."
- Battersea Secular Hall (back of Battersea Park Station), 7.30, Mr. W. Heaford, "Bruno: Freethought Hero and Martyr." Monday, at 8, social gathering. Thursday, at 8, singing and dramatic classes.
- Bethnal Green Branch N. S. S.—"The Monarch" Coffee House, 166 Bethnal Green Road, E., 7.30, Mr. R. Rosetti, "God's Love." Camberwell—61 New Church Road, S.E., 7, dramatic recital; 7.30, Mr. F. Millar, "Supernatural Religion." Friday, at 7.45, Science Classes (Hygiene and Chemistry).
- Edmonton—Freethought literature can now be had at the newsagent's adjoining Silver Street Railway Station (G.E.R.). Hall of Science, 142 Old Street, E.C., 7, Mr. G. J. Holyoake, "General Booth's Scheme."
- Hammersmith — Hammersmith Club, Grove House, 1 The Grove, Broadway, Tuesday at 8, Mr. Harry Courtney, "Which Decays—Christianity or Secularism?"
- Kilburn—Liberal Club, Belsize Road, High Road, Tuesday, at 8, Mr. C. J. Hunt, "Immortality and Science."
- Leyton — Mr. Beadle's, 10 Daisey Villas, Manor Road, 7, a meeting of members and friends.
- Milton Hall, Kentish Town Road, N.W., 7, Orchestral Band; 7.30, Mrs. Annie Besant, "What is Meant by Re-incarnation?" Monday, at 8.30, social meeting. Tuesday, at 8, singing and dramatic classes (practice).
- Tottenham—Lecture Hall (corner of Seven Sisters' Road and High Road), 3.30, Freethought Bible Class.
- West Ham—Secular Hall, 121 Broadway, Plaistow, 7, Mr. B. Hyatt, "The Resurrection." Followed by entertainment. Thursday, at 8, Mr. Sam Standing, "English Christianity: its Rise and Decline—I." Saturday, at 8, social evening.
- Westminster—Liberal and Radical Club, Chapter Street, 7, Mr. E. Calvert, "Astronomy and the Spectrum Analysis."
- Woolwich—"Sussex Arms," Assembly Room, 60 Plumstead Road (entrance, Maxey Road), 7.30, Mr. T. Thurlow, "The Devil and Christianity."

**OPEN-AIR PROPAGANDA.**

Battersea Park Gates. 11.15, Mr. W. Heaford, "What is Blasphemy?"

**COUNTRY.**

- Chester-le-Street—Gray's, Old Pelton, 6.30, business meeting.
- Glasgow—Albion Hall, College Street, 12 noon, debating class, "Land Restoration"; 2, annual business meeting; 6.30, Mr. W. Gilmour, "The Jesuits."
- Heckmondwike — At Mr. John Rothera's, Bottoms, 2.30, a meeting.
- Hull—Alhambra Music Hall, Porter Street, Mr. G. W. Foote, 11, "Let us Pray"; 2.30, "Where is the Devil?"; 6.30, "The Grand Old Book."
- Liverpool Branch N. S. S., Camden Hall, Camden Street.—3, Discussion Class; 7, Mr. Stanley Jones, "Theories of the Soul."
- Newcastle-on-Tyne—4 Hall's Court, Newgate Street, 3, Mr. Tullen, "Palmy's Evidences.—I. Josephus."
- Plymouth—100 Union Street, 7, Mr. Ross, "Why Fear Death?"
- Portsmouth — Wellington Hall, Wellington Street, Southsea, 3, debating class, Mr. Scarratt; 7, Mr. Ho e.
- Sheffield—Hall of Science, Rockingham Street, 7, Dr. Creaghe, "The Evolution of Religion."
- South Shields—Capt. Duncan's Navigation School, King Street, 7, Mr. C. H. Kelf (of Newcastle), "The Necessity for an Eight Hours' Bill."
- Spennymoor — Victoria Hall, Dundas Street, 10.30, general meeting; 6, Mr. B. Dawson, Selections from the Poems of Eliza Cook.
- Stalybridge—Mr. J. Taylor's, 12 Bayley Street, 7, committee meeting.
- Sunderland — Albert Rooms, Coronation Street, 7, Mr. T. R. Fox, a reading.

**LECTURERS' ENGAGEMENTS.**

- ARTHUR B. MOSS, 44 Credon Road, Rotherhithe, London, S.E.—Feb. 1, Rushden; 8, Camberwell; 15, Woolwich; 22 (morning), Battersea. March 1, Woolwich. April 5, Woolwich; 19, Camberwell.
- STANLEY JONES, 3 Leta Street, City Road, Liverpool.—Feb. 8, Liverpool.
- TOLEMAN-GARNER, 8 Heyworth Road, Stratford, London, E.—Feb. 15, Chatham.

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