

# The Free Thinker

Edited by G. W. FOOTE.]

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## WHO KILLED CHRIST?

WITHOUT committing ourselves to a full acceptance of the Gospel story of Christ's death, with all its monstrous miracles and absurd defiance of Roman and Jewish legal procedure, we propose to take the story as it stands for the purpose of discussing the question at the top of this article.

The ordinary Christian will exclaim that Jesus was murdered by those infernal Jews. Ever since they had the power of persecuting the Jews—that is, ever since the days of Constantine—the Christians have acted on the assumption that the countrymen of Jesus did actually cry out before Pilate "His blood be on our heads!" and that they and their posterity deserved any amount of robbery and outrage until they unanimously confessed their sin and worshipped him whom they crucified. It made no difference that the contemporaries of Jesus Christ could not transmit their guilt to their offspring. The Christians continued, century after century, to act in the spirit of the sailor in the story. Coming ashore after a long voyage, Jack attended church and heard a pathetic sermon on the Crucifixion. On the following day he looked into the window of a print-shop, and saw a picture of Jesus on the cross. Just then a Jew came and looked into the window; whereupon the sailor, pointing to the picture, asked the Hebrew gentleman whether he recognised it. "That's Jesus," said the Jew, and the sailor immediately knocked him down. Surprised at this treatment, the Hebrew gentleman inquired the reason. "Why," said the sailor, "didn't you infernal Jews crucify him?" The poor son of Abraham admitted the fact, but explained that it happened nearly two thousand years ago. "No matter," said the sailor, "I only heard of it yesterday."

Now it is perfectly clear, according to the Gospels, that the Jews did *not* kill Jesus. Unless they lynched him they had no power to put him to death. Judæa was then a Roman province, and in every part of the Empire the extreme penalty of the law was only inflicted by the Roman governor. Nevertheless it may be argued that the Jews *really* killed him, although they did not actually shed his blood, as they clamored for his death and terrorised Pontius Pilate into ordering a judicial murder. But suppose we take this view of the case, does it therefore follow that they acted without justification? Was not Jesus, in their judgment, guilty of blasphemy, and was not that a deadly crime under the Mosaic law? "He that blasphemeth the name of the Lord," says Leviticus xxiv, 16, "shall surely be put to death." Were not the Jews, then, carrying out the plain commandment of Jehovah?

Nor was this their only justification. In another part of the Mosaic law (Deut. xiii, 6-10), the Jews were ordered to kill any one, whether mother, son, daughter, husband, or wife, who should entice them to worship other gods. Now it is expressly maintained by the overwhelming majority of divines that

Jesus asserted his own godhead. He is reported as saying, "I and my Father are one," and as St. Paul says "He thought it no robbery to be equal to God." Were not the Jews, then, bound to kill him if they could?

Let it not be supposed that *we* would have killed him. We are not excusing the Jews as men, but as observers of the Mosaic law and worshippers of Jehovah. Their God is responsible for the death of Jesus, and if Jesus was a portion of that very deity, he was responsible for his own death. His worshippers had learnt the lesson so well that they killed their own God when he came in disguise.

It is contended by some Christians that Pontius Pilate killed Jesus. According to these arguers, Pilate knew that Jesus was innocent, and the execution was therefore a murder. But is it not perfectly obvious from the Gospel story that Pilate tried to save Jesus? Did not the obstinate prisoner plead guilty to what was really a charge of sedition? Did he attempt any defence? Did he call any witnesses? Was he not contumacious? And had Pilate any alternative to sentencing him to the legal punishment of his crime?

Other friends of Jesus lay the blame of his death on Judas Iscariot. But the whole story of the "betrayal" of Jesus is a downright absurdity. How could he *sell* his master when the commodity was common? What sense is there in his being paid to indicate the best-known man in Jerusalem? Even if the story were true, it appears that Jesus knew what Judas was doing, and as he could easily have returned to Galilee, he was accessory to his own fate. It may also be pointed out that Judas only killed Jesus if the tragedy would not have occurred without him; in which case he was the proximate cause of the Crucifixion, and consequently a benefactor to all who are saved by the blood of Christ. Instead of execration, therefore, he deserves praise, and even the statue which Disraeli suggested as his proper reward.

Who killed Christ? Why himself. His brain gave way. He was demented. His conduct at Jerusalem was that of a maniac. His very language showed a loss of balance. Whipping the dove-sellers and money-changers, not out of the temple, but out of its unsanctified precincts, was lunatic violence. Those merchants were fulfilling a necessary, reputable function; selling doves to women who required them as burnt offerings, and exchanging the current Roman money for the sacred Jewish coins which alone were accepted by the Temple priests. It is easy to call them thieves, but they were not tried, and their evidence is unheard. If they cheated, they must have been remarkably clever, for all their customers were Jews. Besides, there were proper tribunals for the correction of such offences, and no one who was not beside himself would think of going into a market and indiscriminately whipping the traders and dashing down their stalls. Certainly any man who did it now would be arrested, if he were not lynched on the spot, and would either be imprisoned or detained at Her Majesty's pleasure.

Quite in keeping with these displays of temper was the conduct of Jesus before Pilate. A modicum of common sense would have saved him. He was not required to tell a lie or renounce a conviction. All that was necessary to his release was to plead not guilty and defend himself against the charge of sedition. His death, therefore, was rather a suicide than a martyrdom. Unfortunately the jurisprudence of that age was less scientific than the one which now prevails; the finer differences between sanity and insanity were not discriminated; otherwise Jesus would have been remanded for inquiries into his mental condition.

As a man Jesus died because he had not the sense to live. As a God he must have died voluntarily. In either case it is an idle, gratuitous, enervating indulgence in "the luxury of woe" to be always afflicting ourselves with the story of his doom. Great and good men have suffered and died since, and other lessons are needed than any that may be learnt at the foot of the Cross.

G. W. FOOTE.

### THE LAMB OF GOD.

CHRISTIANS who revile the heathen for worshipping gods in hideous forms should ask themselves what a literal-minded Confucian is likely to think when he reads in the Apocalypse that worship is paid a Lamb having seven horns and seven eyes (Rev. v., 6). An intelligent Hindu, aware that in depicting Brahma with four arms the native artists only imply that his power extends to every quarter, will at once give an allegorical interpretation to the Lamb of God. And no doubt he will be right. The Lamb is a symbol. Otherwise, since the Son is depicted as a Lamb, we should be justified in considering the Father as an old ram. But what is it symbolical of? Here we are in danger of being at once launched into a mythological maelstrom.

That the designation of Lamb does not, as Christians generally suppose, refer to the alleged meek and mild disposition of their Savior, may be gathered from the fact that he is also called "the Lion of the tribe of Judah" in the preceding verse to that already mentioned (Rev. v., 5).

The Lamb was undoubtedly a favorite symbol of Christ in the early ages. The term is used throughout by the author of the Apocalypse, generally with the designation Lamb of God. Noting the essentially Jewish character of that book, exhibited in those only of the twelve tribes being depicted as saved, we cannot be wrong in connecting the Lamb of God with the paschal lamb, slain annually by the Jews in token of their covenant with their God. But further, as the author of *Bible Folk Lore* shows, the Apocalypse "is a Jewish copy of older Mazdean eschatological predictions." It employs Mithraic terms and symbology, and thus the Lamb stands not only as the symbol of the old covenant, but of the new age of purity and peace which was looked forward to to succeed the cycle of strife and evil under the dragon.

Paul says "Christ our passover"—that is, our Pisach lamb—"is sacrificed for us" (1 Cor. v., 7), and the first epistle ascribed to Peter (i., 18-19) says we are redeemed "with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot."

The very season of the Passover shows it to have been at bottom a nature feast. The slaying of the lamb was an annual peace-offering, and the sprinkling of blood on the tent-posts was to appease evil spirits. The lamb was probably offered instead of the first-born son of the house.\* In adopting Christ as the Paschal lamb, the substitutionary sacrifice for men, Christians were but reverting to the early savage

notion that deities are only to be appeased with blood, and must have that of the best quality. In this case they made the quality so excellent as to be divine, so that the Christian religion presents the unique spectacle of a God sacrificing himself in order to appease himself!

A survival of the old notions appears in the Catholic Church, that great repository of the Paganism of the past. Just as the lamb was substituted for human victims, so dough or wax figures in the form of a lamb were substituted for the animal. To this day the *Agnus Dei* medallions, supposed to be made from the paschal tapers consecrated by the Pope at Easter, are revered by all good Catholics. The genuine ones are presented by the Pope to distinguished persons. They are supposed to possess the power of preventing thunder, dispersing storms, averting shipwreck, securing against fire, and repelling the Devil and his angels. In short, they are like the old amulets charms against evil spirits. The Romish clergy derive much pecuniary profit from selling the *Agnus Dei*. To this Béranger alludes in "La Mort du Diable" (The Death of the Devil):

Il est mort! disent tous les moines  
On n'achètera plus d'agnus.

But there is yet another reason why the Savior appears in the form of a Lamb. In former times the year began when the sun entered the sign of Aries. This was the Lamb that came to save the world, bringing new life to nature. No wonder men worshipped the Lamb when the sun entering that sign was the signal for the enjoyment of the sun's blessing. The festival of Easter is the feast of the Paschal Lamb, when the sun passes over into this zodiacal sign, having triumphed over the powers of darkness and the under-world. That it is a movable feast sufficiently shows that it does not commemorate the death and resurrection of a mortal man, but of an astronomical deity. Christ our passover is sacrificed for us at the season when the astronomical lamb is obliterated or sacrificed by the superior effulgence of the sun. This Lamb is slain from before the foundation of the world, yet rises again triumphant. This suggests that the reason the name of Lamb has been given to Christ is not on account of the mythical gentleness of Jesus, which he certainly did not display towards the Pharisees, but because Christ is the Sun whose triumph is gained every year under the sign of the Lamb. The representations of the Lamb bearing the cross, or placed upon an altar, may serve to confirm this suggestion.

J. M. WHEELER.

### A RARE MORNING'S WORK.

THE Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge puts out a large placard with a cross in the centre and headed "Holy Week." It gives a list of the events supposed to have happened a long way off and a good while ago which this week commemorates. Premising that for Thursday it places the Passover Supper and the Agony in the Garden, I transcribe verbatim the events for Friday.

Jesus is brought before Caiaphas and accused of blasphemy because he said he was "the son of God."

Then he is brought before Pilate and accused of treason because he said he was "the king of the Jews."

Pilate sends him to Herod, and Herod sends him back to Pilate.

Pilate seeks repeatedly to release him, "finding no fault in him."

At last, seeing the priests and people tumultuous, he delivers Jesus to their will.

Jesus is scourged and mocked, and led away to be crucified. Jesus hangs upon the cross upon Mount Calvary from the third to the ninth hour (9 a.m. to 3 p.m.).

Can any who use their reason suppose that in a country at peace and ruled over by a Roman government

\* See my paper on The Passover in *Freethinker*, April 25, 1886.

all these important judicial events, resulting in an execution, took place in one morning before 9 a.m. ? Proceedings before the Jewish Sanhedrim were of a grave character. Accusations had to be drawn up in writing and witnesses examined, ample time being accorded for cross-examination and defence. Herod was tetrarch of Galilee. Even if he were in Jerusalem at the time, the remission of a prisoner from the Procurator and his return to that functionary must have been accompanied by formalities between these dignitaries, and there is a further stretch of probability in supposing that the Roman governor, who sought repeatedly to release him, should give in to the clamor of the mob and have him summarily executed so early in the same morning. *Credat Judæus.* Let the reader ponder this and read the many discrepancies of the narratives. Let him remember that Jewish courts did not sit at Passover, and that at that time no execution could take place, any more than with us on Good Friday. We shall be surprised if he does not come to the conclusion that the story of the Crucifixion is indeed a *fiction*, and one which this very Church placard stammeringly confesses is without visible means of support.

J. M. W.

## REMINISCENCES OF CHARLES BRADLAUGH.

By G. W. FOOTE.

(Continued.)

LITTLE did I dream, as I watched Mr. Bradlaugh fighting bigotry in the law courts, that the time would come when he and I would be included in a common indictment and stand in a criminal dock together. But as the French say, it is always the unexpected that happens. Early in July, 1882, I was served with a summons from the Lord Mayor of London, ordering me to appear at the Mansion House on the following Tuesday and take my trial on a charge of Blasphemy. Two other gentlemen were included in the summons, and all three of us duly appeared. We were all members of the National Secular Society, and Mr. Bradlaugh attended to render any possible assistance. The case was adjourned to the following Monday, by which time a summons had been served on Mr. Bradlaugh, who took his place beside us in the dock. After an animated day's proceedings we were committed for trial at the Old Bailey.

The object of this prosecution was, of course, to stab Mr. Bradlaugh in the back. He had fought all the bigots face to face, and held them all at bay; so they put a stiletto into Sir Hardinge Giffard's hands, and paid him his blood-money to attack the hero from behind.

Mr. Bradlaugh had to play the fox again. He wanted to gain time, and he wanted to be tried, if at all, in the Court of Queen's Bench. He always told me that being tried at the Old Bailey was going like a lamb to the slaughter, and that a verdict of guilty there would certainly mean twelve months' imprisonment. The obvious resource, therefore, was to obtain a writ of *certiorari* removing our indictment to the superior court. Happily it was in the long vacation, and application had to be made to a judge in chambers. By another piece of good luck, it was Mr. Justice Stephen who sat behind the table on the fatal morning when the writ had to be finally granted or refused. It was obtained on July 29, 1882. Poor Mr. Maloney, who represented the prosecution, was no match for Mr. Bradlaugh, who treated him like a child, and only let him say a word now and then as a special favor.

Roaming the law courts with Mr. Bradlaugh, I was able to see his intimate knowledge of legal practice. He threaded the labyrinth with consummate ease and dexterity. We went from office to office, where everything seemed designed to baffle suitors conducting their own cases. Our case, too, was somewhat peculiar; obsolete technicalities, only half intelligible even to experts, met us at every turn; and when we got out into the open air I felt that the thing was indeed done,

but that it would puzzle omniscience to do it in exactly the same way again. Seven pounds was spent on stamps, documents, and other items, and securities for costs had to be given to the extent of six hundred pounds. As I walked home I pondered the great truth that England is a free country. I had seen with my own eyes that *there is one law for rich and poor.* But I could not help reflecting that only the rich could afford it, and that the poor might as well have no law at all.

Mr. Bradlaugh next moved to quash the indictment. He argued that the public prosecutor's fiat was bad, as it did not name the persons who were to be proceeded against, and thus resembled a general warrant, which in the famous Wilkes case the judges had held to be invalid. On this point, however, two judges, one of them being Sir James Stephen, gave judgment against him. The case was argued on Mr. Bradlaugh's part, the judges said, with "great power and learning." For my part, I think he showed a greater knowledge of "cases" than both the legal luminaries on the bench, who laid their heads close together over many a knotty point of the argument.

Beaten on the main issue, Mr. Bradlaugh was successful, however, on the subsidiary one. Two counts were struck out of the indictment. The excision made no difference to me, but a great deal of difference to him. Two numbers of the *Freethinker* were thus disposed of bearing the imprint of the Freethought Publishing Company, and owing to the lapse of time it was impossible to open a fresh indictment. Of course I saw what Mr. Bradlaugh was driving at, and I could not but admire the way in which he made light of this point, arguing it baldly as a formal matter on which, as their lordships would see at a glance, he was absolutely entitled to a judgment. They would see that he was still open to all the other counts of the indictment, and therefore it might make very little difference, but right was right and law was law. Under the spell of his persuasive speech, it was amazing to see the judges smoothing their wrinkled fronts. I fancy they gave him his second point the more readily because they were against him on the first; indeed, they seemed to think it a pity, if not a shame, that all his learning and ability should be displayed for *nothing*.

Our indictment went into the list of Crown Cases Reserved, and did not come on for trial till the following April. Meanwhile I was prosecuted again, and failing to get a writ of *certiorari*, owing to the flagrant bigotry of Baron Huddleston and Justice North, I was tried at the Old Bailey, and sentenced to twelve months' imprisonment like a common thief—as Mr. Bradlaugh had predicted.

During my trouble Mr. Bradlaugh lent me every assistance, furnishing me with legal books and advice, and visiting me in Newgate between the first and second trials, while Judge North's underlings were preparing a more pliant jury than the one which had declined to return a verdict of guilty.

In Holloway Gaol I lost sight of Mr. Bradlaugh and everyone else, except persons I had no desire to see. But one morning, early in April, 1883, the Governor informed me that Mr. Bradlaugh was going to pay me a visit, having the Home Secretary's order to see me on urgent business. The same afternoon I was marched from my cell into one of the Governor's offices, where Mr. Bradlaugh was waiting. Compared with the pale prisoners I saw day by day, he looked the very picture of health. Fresh, clean-shaven, neatly dressed, he was a most refreshing sight to eyes accustomed to rough faces and the brown convict's garb. And it was a friend too, and I could take his hand and exchange human speech with him. How vivid is my recollection of him at that moment! He seemed in the prime of life, little the worse for his terrible struggles, only the gray a trifle more decided about the temples, but the eyes full of light, and the mobile mouth full of vitality. And now he is dead! Dead! It is hard to realise. But I rang the muffled bell as he lay fighting his last battle, and I followed his corpse to the grave; and I know that the worm is busy about those leonine features, and the rain trickles through with a scent of faded flowers. Yes, it is true; he *is* dead. Dead like the king and dead like the

clown; yet living truly beyond the dust of death in the lives of others, an inextinguishable light, a vivifying fire, a passionate hope, an ardent aspiration.

Till the Future dares  
Forget the Past, his fate and fame shall be  
An echo and a light unto eternity.

(To be continued.)

## ACID DROPS.

Mr. Gladstone opposes divorce on Christian grounds. Well now, on human grounds, we should like to have his view of the Jackson case. Here is a man who marries a woman, goes abroad at her desire on the very day of the marriage, and returns to find that she has "altered her mind" and won't live with him. Then he goes to law and gets an order against her for restitution of conjugal rights. Then, finding the order is a perfect farce, he takes the matter into his own hands, seizes his wife forcibly, and carries her off with as little violence as possible. Thereupon the law is set in motion against *him*, and he is told by the Judges that a wife can live with her husband or not as she pleases, although if he leave her he can be punished for desertion. What a beautiful muddle! Mr. Jackson has a wife, and Mrs. Jackson has a husband, but she is a wife and not a wife and he is a husband and not a husband. Yet the Christian law insists on perpetuating the farce. If Mr. Jackson goes near her he is liable to imprisonment, and if he marries another woman, with less eccentric notions, he will get a couple of years at least for bigamy. Pretty, is it not, Mr. Gladstone? Perhaps you will write a fresh essay on Divorce in the light of this interesting case.

While Archdeacon Farrar and other clergymen are praising the Salvation Army to the skies it is quite refreshing to come across a good old orthodox Church bigot like the Vicar of Newport. This reverend successor of the twelve apostles has turned fifty children out of his school for attending a Salvation Army tea. No one but a Christian could display such amazing charity.

Christian Churches know the weakness of Christian ministers. We see that the Rev. Charles Berry, of Wolverhampton, is offered the pastorate—that is, the shepherding and fleecing—of Brixton Independent Chapel, and has agreed to meet a deputation on the subject. The stipend is *one thousand guineas*. Blessed be ye poor! Yea, and Woe unto you rich!

Saint Paul said it was good for men and women to have nothing to do with each other. Of course, he used less elegant language, being moved by the Holy Ghost, but that is the substance of his inspired observation. It appears, however, that an Ince curate, the Rev. John George James Whitfield, differed from St. Paul on this point. Accordingly he courted the head mistress of the infant school, but having changed his mind, he found himself party to a breach of promise suit, and he has now to pay £150 for his little luxury.

The Rev. W. T. Davison's "remarkable paper" on Inspiration, which we noticed last week, is reprinted in full in the Methodist journals. One of Mr. Davison's confessions is noteworthy. "What is the reason," he asks, "why so much criticism is rationalistic, so that the very name bears with some an ill savor? I fear largely because Rationalism has done so much more minute and thorough work of investigation, and orthodox commentators, while anxious about edification, have not pursued Bible inquiries with the thoroughness or scientific precision which is necessary to-day if the work is to be useful and lasting." Precisely so, Mr. Davison. The Rationalists have *done* the work; they have explained your Bible; and you are trying to appropriate the result of their labors. Or, as Mr. Horton put it, the Rationalists have made all the materials, but "we" are going to construct the edifice. Are you? We guess you won't.

Price Hughes has been holding forth on the opium traffic, which Christian England forces on Heathen China—another instance of the "immeasurable superiority of Christ." Curiously enough, Mr. Hughes quoted a fine passage from a letter by the Marquis Tseng, "the Gladstone of China," in which that great statesman declares that his Government

wants to repress the opium traffic, and not to gain revenue from such a source. "My sovereign," he says, "has never desired his Empire to thrive upon the lives or infirmities of his subjects." Yet this Chinese statesman, as Mr. Hughes sadly confesses, is not a Christian but a Confucian. Indeed, Mr. Hughes, in one of his lucid intervals, suggests that it might not be a bad thing if "a few Chinese mandarins came over here to convert our politicians."

The *Methodist Times* indulges in some very silly and sickly talk about the indebtedness of English poets to the Bible. No one denies that the English translation, with some reservations, such as Coleridge insisted on, is a noble monument of simple, vigorous, racy Saxon. But that is the work of several generations of Englishmen with a sense for style, and not of the original documents. Does not Mr. Swinburne, for instance, say of the New Testament, that it is translated out of canine Greek into divine English?

The newly-instituted Church of England religious order, which calls itself the Brotherhood of St. Paul, has commenced operations in Lisson-grove, Marylebone. It sets out with fine pretensions, but is likely to develop the same characteristics as other religious orders.

The character and conduct of these bodies is pretty well known on the continent, and is expressed in the following lines, which are a translation of a popular mock-chant on the Theatines, a class of mongrel monks and clergy.

The Theatine commandments ten

Have less to do with saints than men.

- |                                  |                                     |
|----------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| 1. Of money make sure.           | 6. Turn day into night.             |
| 2. Entrap rich and poor.         | 7. Give the bailiff the slip.       |
| 3. Always get a good dinner.     | 8. Make the world fill your script. |
| 4. In all bargains be winner.    | 9. Make your convert a slave.       |
| 5. Cool your red wine with white | 10. To your king play the knave.    |
- These ten commandments make but two;  
All things for me, and none for you.

Paris and London are now on speaking terms. By means of the telephone a Londoner can carry on a conversation with a Parisian. We guess this "miracle" would make J. C. and the twelve apostles stare like mad.

The *Draper's Record* gives publicity to a nice bit of humbug. It appears that a pious Methodist is trying to float the Malmesbury Silk Mills Company, Limited, with a capital of £43,000. With the prospectus he distributes a "private" circular headed "The Efficiency of Prayer" and addressed to his "Dear Friends in Christ." If the shares are taken up he promises to subscribe £250 a year towards liquidating the debt on the Rouen Mission. We guess the investors will be a good deal more anxious about their capital and interest.

The *Medium* tells of a Mr. Shaw, who, it appears, thinks he controls the weather. He sometimes experiences an oppressive feeling in his head as if his hat were tight. Then all he has to do is to lift his hat, and immediately rain begins to fall. Mr. Shaw and his head should be looked after. He might bring on a second deluge.

The Rev. Thomas Moore, in the *Church Monthly*, makes some arrogant claims for the Church as the friend of the people, that always "fought the battle of the weak and helpless against the strong and the powerful." Mr. Moore must have access to some history of England hitherto unknown to us if this is his reading of its teachings.

Church statistics are as sparkling as ditchwater. Yet a few of them from the "Church Year Book" may be of interest. The number of confirmations is not on the increase, reaching a total under 200,000, of which nearly two-thirds are females. This number would indicate that the Church has hold on only about one-fourth of the people, though the marriage returns would give it a far better position. In one London parish of 18,000 souls there were but seventy confirmations in 1890. The Church leads the way far above all the combined Dissenting bodies in its voluntary offerings. Yet these in some respects are declining. In 1881 the Church Pastoral Aid Society sent out 540 curates and 168 lay assistants, for whom the congregations in which they ministered raised locally £35,121. But in 1889, for 569 curates and 130 lay assistants, they only raised £29,737, the difference in men being nine, but in money £5,384. The work of saving the heathen declines too. The Church Missionary Society, which a few years ago had an income of a quarter

of a million, raised only £208,500, and the S.P.G. £125,000, while, as the teetotallers remind us, our drink bill is nearly 140 millions.

Among the flowers of School Board biblical knowledge reported by the inspector for the East Riding is the following—"Abraham's name was changed to Israel; the name Israel means to save people from their sins." Good Christians would be horrified if they knew how often children get such matters wrong, but never thinking of asking themselves why time should be occupied in getting them right.

The rival organisations the S.P.G. and the C.M.S. are trying to jockey each other out of the Holy Land. Most of the religious papers are squabbling about the matter. Of course the rivalry is all for the cause of Christ, and not in the slightest degree for cash. Oh dear, no!

The Rev. A. F. T. Le Gros undertakes to show that the existence of the human race demonstrates the existence of Deity and receives therein the endorsement of the Rev. C. Lloyd Engstrom, secretary of the Christian Evidence Society. Do Messrs. Le Gros and Engstrom then deny the existence of Atheists? Not at all, only on the question of the consent of the human race, Atheists do not count.

These gentleman might have a stronger case if for Deity they substituted deities. The vast majority of the human race having held that there were gods many. But what sort of a god or gods does the consent of man testify to? Certainly the *Shang Ti* of the Chinese is very different from the god of the Bible. The Christian Trinity certainly cannot claim the common consent of the human mind were that really any sufficient evidence of its truth instead of being the endorsement of all superstitions, including the belief in ghosts from which belief in God has evolved.

*Wheeling* announces that special Sunday services for cyclists will be re-commenced. It says "We take this opportunity of stating that we object strongly on the broadest grounds to any cyclist of avowed freethinking or positivist opinions reading the lessons. We shall not sit quiet this year if we see such a proceeding as we have referred to." Who hath done this thing to the blasphemy of God and the high displeasure of the editor of *Wheeling*?

A London priest pokes fun at Mr. Hugh Price Hughes in the *London Echo*. He says: "The last time I had the pleasure of hearing Mr. Hughes railing ferociously against 'Sacerdotalism,' he was himself actually dressed as a priest. Indeed, his tailor had given him a far more 'sacerdotal' look, to judge by the outside, than Dr. Pusey himself was wont to assume." Hugh Price Hughes railing against 'Sacerdotalism' is of a piece with his usual cant. His very clothes bear witness against him.

Let us return to the Christianity of Christ and the primitive Church, is the constant cry of the "forward" Christians, like Messrs. Stead, Lunn, Hughes, Parker, Farrar, and Booth. But the Bishop of Manchester is of a very different opinion. He actually argues in favor of Christianity on the ground that, unlike other religions, it gets better as it grows older. Both views cannot be sound. We leave the Christians to settle the dispute among themselves.

The *Athenæum* "slates" Sir Edwin Arnold's *Light of the World*. According to our leading literary journal, his "blank verse is not exactly bad, but it is utterly without distinction. It runs on, like the strains of a piano-organ, with maddening ease and monotony. Loosely constructed and lax in expression, its sentences trip each other up, and jostle along confusedly to no certain close. Gorgeous they often are, decked out with purple and gold; but their splendor is meretricious and unreal, and soon falls upon the reader." At the same time "its fervor and fluency will undoubtedly delight a certain order of readers."

Very different, of course, is the criticism of the *Methodist Times*. Sir Edwin Arnold's is "one of those great poems which civilised men will never allow to pass out of print." Above all, he has "rendered an immense service to Christianity by bringing out the gracious humanity, the manly sweetness, and the divine tenderness of the life of our Lord"—which, it is to be presumed, were not properly brought out

by the biographers who were selected and inspired by the Holy Ghost. Sir Edwin also shows Christ's "immeasurable superiority to Buddha"—which, by the way, he doesn't, for he represents the moral teaching of Jesus as much the same as Buddha's, only the Nazarene opens the door to a future life; hell, of course, being shunted on to a neglected siding, and heaven having the main line to itself.

Sir Edwin Arnold's poem naturally pleases the Price Hughes fraternity. Its sentimentality is just on their level, and its free handling of "the Savior" and the Gospels is akin to their professional blasphemies; for which, if their God keeps a Holloway Gaol, they will certainly do twelve months' "hard."

What strange notions of evidence are found in orthodox heads! Here is the *London Echo* writing on the Rev. Dr. Dallinger, Wesleyan and microscopist, and telling us that "the views of such a man on questions of revelation and Nature are of great interest." On nature, yes; at least in his special department. But why on revelation? It may be true that "no man more unhesitatingly believes in the redemptive work and Divinity of Jesus Christ." But how on earth does looking through a microscope at minute organisms enable a man to judge better than his neighbors whether Jesus Christ be man or God, or whether the Gospels were written by the scribes whose names they bear or by a different set of persons in a later age? Perhaps the *Echo* will kindly explain.

One of the most eminent of American spiritists instances the best-known editor of a spiritist paper as himself a complete demonstration of immortality, "for," says he, "if the remainder of his soul—if there be any—is as tenacious of life as his innate love of falsehood, and his treachery and malice, nothing but a fiat of creative power can destroy it." The editor in question calls the writer a "blackguard." Such are the amenities of spiritual polemics.

In the unhappy loss of the emigrant ship *Utopia* last week the conduct of the men of the Channel Squadron and of the ships in Gibraltar harbor, which sent out boats to aid in the work of rescue, contrasted strongly with the supposed work of God, which drifted the emigrant ship into collision with the ironclad, resulting in a loss of over five hundred and seventy lives.

The determination of the Rev. Mr. Hallows, now he has emerged from prison, to continue his open-air preaching in Arklow, has resulted in new disturbances.

There has been a fall-off in the subscriptions to the Wesleyan Missionary Society of £1,000 during the past year, and it was stated in a leading Congregational church that the deficit of the London Missionary Society would probably reach £9,000.

The Ritualistic churches get up many attractions for this season, but Dr. Joseph Parker means to outdo them. He announces that he will close a recent controversy with his friend Mr. Gladstone by preaching on Good Friday on "The Huxleys of Gadara, or What the Neighbors said about the Devils and the Pigs. Reserved seats, price sixpence, may be obtained from the sexton." We shall probably give an account of Dr. Parker's discourse.

A well-known preacher was suffering from an acute attack of influenza. In the course of an earnest sermon, he said, "I know of no more melancholy spectacle than this—" Here the sentence was abruptly terminated by his applying his handkerchief to his nose with emphatic sonorosity.

Another of the Peculiar People has died through attending only to the divine directions in the Epistle of James. Eliza Cranmer died in labor, the doctrines of her sect prohibiting the summoning of medical aid. Prayers were offered, and the woman was anointed with oil according to the scriptural directions. But she died from exhaustion. The jury censured the husband, but in doing so they were really casting a slur on St. James.

Mr. W. Leys explains in the *Woolwich Gazette* why the Secularists do not go to hear the Rev. Mr. Barker oppose their views. He lectures in a hall which is refused to Freethinkers for a similar purpose, and they decline to counte-

nance such bigotry. Mr. Leys reminds Mr. Barker that he can have a set debate whenever he likes. Mr. Foote is ready to discuss with him, and to let the proceeds go to an unsectarian charity.

Miss Emily Glade Ellis, in her paper on The Fetish of Charity, in the *Westminster Review*, gives several instances of Church bazaars being got up for the personal benefit of the parson, to build him a house or enlarge his drawing-room and add a library and greenhouse. She says: "It is a maxim among Church financiers that a steady pressure of debts and appeals keeps the congregation up to the mark; immediately these are relaxed, the receipts fall off. Thus, when the vicar wanted new church furniture, if he first asked the money to pay for it, he might wait long for a single bookmarker. So he orders his altar clothes from London and then announces in the pulpit that there is a heavy debt for church expenses, a serious decline in the offerings for divine service; that the congregation must bear this in mind, and let their light so shine before men, etc." Possibly he preaches to them from the text, "Owe no man anything."

The *Seren* is the weekly organ of the Welsh Baptists. It gives large type to the following on the Church of England: "The history of the Church is a scandalous history. Her mother was a harlot and her father a murderer. She grew up an ugly and imperious creature. She persecuted the Nonconformists, tortured the philanthropists, robbed her neighbors, hanged the innocent, and threw the heroes of freedom into prison. Her history is more disgraceful than that of any tribe of cannibals in the South Sea Islands. Her chief articles of faith are robbery, tyranny, persecution, barbarism, and all ghastliness."

The writer, a well-known Baptist minister, thus continues regarding his Anglican brethren: "What of her clergy? They are either in their parlors smoking, in the fields shooting hares, preparing for a dance, or in tap-rooms drinking hot spirits. What matters it to them that the poor should starve? Slave-holders have they been through the ages, and they possess the spirit of persecution as strongly now as ever."

No wonder the Welsh write thus bitterly against the Church if the statement of Mr. Owen Owen be correct that in twenty years the Welsh Nonconformists have paid three millions in tithes to the support of the Established Church.

Dean Gregory, of St. Paul's Cathedral, has been orating at Salford on religious education. He cannot deny that the Board Schools give better secular teaching than most of the voluntary schools, but the children trained in the latter, he contends, have more "reverence." In other words, they are more docile recipients of priestly medicine. That, indeed, is the real reason why the clergy are so hot on this question. They simply want to create, at the public expense, artificial customers for their artificial goods.

The story in the *Spectator* about the man who attended three services one Sunday and gave his texts as: And the Lord said unto Moses from out the belly of a whale, almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian; proves to be an old one. In its early form it read that at an examination in Trinity College, Dublin, an examiner known for his badgering blockheads, enjoyed the following treat: Q. What beast is recorded to have spoken in Scripture. A. A whale. Q. To whom did the whale speak? A. To Moses in the bullrushes. Q. What did the whale say? A. Almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian. Q. And what did Moses say? A. Thou art the man. Then the examiner left.

The persecution of Freethinkers in Germany continues relentlessly. Our energetic friend Dr. Voelkel, the editor of the *Neues Freireligions Sonntags Blatts*, has been condemned to another six months' imprisonment for blasphemy at Halle. Dr. Voelkel is a stout, hearty man of under fifty. He has stood many prosecutions for blasphemy, and may be able to stand imprisonment; though we confess we wish he was now editing his paper from Switzerland. But Karl Scholl, who is also being prosecuted for blasphemy at Nuremberg, is an old man of over seventy. He was originally a minister, but was suspended for his free opinions after the Holy Coat was exhibited at Trier in 1844. In 1861 he translated into German extracts from the writings of Mr. Holyoake and other English Freethinkers. For many years

he conducted *Es Werde Licht*, a monthly journal of the Religion of Humanity. His prosecution shows a determination to crush Freethought in Germany if possible.

The Archbishop of York, in his very able address to working men at Hull, gave a little attention to the familiar question, why working men do not go to church. He remarked that "if men are hungry in their souls they go to their church to have their souls fed, and you may depend upon it that a man is not very hungry who is always finding fault with his food." Just so, Dr. Magee. What men hunger after is knowledge, beauty, and happiness. At church they are only offered dry and doleful dogmas. They are finding that to feed on fossil sawdust is only to fill their bellies with the east wind.

The Liverpool *Guardian* reports an interview with Mrs. Crook, the faith-healing lady of "Bethshan." One of her close friends is Dr. Hill, who also believes in faith-healing. This gentleman gave a number of "cases," every one of which may be true, though his logic is fit for an infant-school. Certain patients gave up doctors, trusted to Jesus, and got better; ergo Jesus healed them. But why? Is there no such thing as the restorative power of nature? Is it not that which the doctor himself has to work with? Do not animals often recover without medical aid? Does Jesus heal them? The fact is, Dr. Hill, Mrs. Crook, and the rest of that tribe, argue on the good old superstitious principle of "heads we win and tails you lose." If a praying patient dies, that was Nature; if he recovers, that was Jesus; whereas it was really Nature in both cases.

Agnostic (argumentatively): "You say that you believe in the immediate efficacy of prayer?" Christian Friend (firmly): "I do." Agnostic: "Well, now suppose a mother kneels down and prays fervently for favoring winds to blow her son's ship safe home from China, and another mother prays for winds to blow her son's ship safe into China, and these ships are passing each other on the same course, do you mean to tell me that both these prayers can be answered satisfactorily?" Christian Friend: "I—er——" Listening Boy (triumphantly): "Why, of course, pa; don't you see? That's what makes so many cyclones."

The prosecution, or as the Ritualists call it the persecution, of the Rev. J. Bell Scott, of St. Margaret's, Liverpool, is to be continued. No attempt will be made to imprison the reverend gentleman, but only to obtain a sentence of condemnation.

There has been a row at St. John's, Deritend, Birmingham. The parson issued a circular requesting that those of the choir who were not decided Christians should resign. One lady did so, another abruptly left, and a third, the leader of the choir, was pointedly asked to do so, "giving any reason you may think desirable." On this letter being shown to the choir, the organist and most of them resigned, and the organist will be put forward as the pupils' warden at the forthcoming Easter vestry.

What's in a name? Mr. C. A. Berry wishes to be known as a Catholic Congregationalist. We should like him to tell us the doctrinal difference between a C. C. and a Protestant Independent, except that the first name is a bigger mouthful.

A *Pall Mall Gazette* man has interviewed Prophet Baxter, who is not in the least disturbed by the death of Prince Napoleon. Why should he be, indeed? So many of Baxter's anti-Christ's have died that he is quite accustomed to losing them. He serenely picks up another, puts off the battle of Armageddon and the Second Advent a little further, and cries out as lustily as ever, "Walk up, walk up, ladies and gentlemen!" Anti-Christ changes every season, but the show goes on, and the fools pay gate-money. Baxter for ever! Hallelujah! Lord Jesus come quickly! Amen!

Coro: "Wonder why the pretty young minister calls us the lambs of his fold?" Dora: "On account of the sheep's eyes we are always casting at him, I presume."

Mr. Bingo: "Well, Tommy, what did you learn at Sunday school to-day?" Tommy: "I learned how to say grace." Mr. Bingo: "Let's hear it." Tommy (meekly): "It only goes with two pieces of cake."

**MR. FOOTE'S ENGAGEMENTS.**

Sunday, March 29, Hall of Science, Old-street, London, E.C., at 7, "Christianity and Social Progress."

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

May 3, Hall of Science; 10, Camberwell; 17, N. S. Conference; 24, Manchester.

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. 3d.; 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.

HENRY JONES.—Thanks for your interesting letter. Able, earnest, and energetic Freethinkers like yourself, scattered over the country, leaven the whole community. We dare say your member's certificate has been received by this time. If it does not arrive kindly let us know.

JOSEPH BROWN.—The shares in the Bradlaugh Memorial Hall Company (Limited) can be taken up very easily. See "Sugar Plums." We hope Mr. Hunt's tour will be successful.

MAGINNIS, newsagent, Ferrier-street, Wandsworth, supplies this journal and other Secular publications.

R. H. CATTELL —(1) We criticised Miss Weston's "Hard Knots" nearly a year ago under the title of "Fooling Jack." Do you think it would be a good thing to reprint the article as a Tract for circulation in the Navy? (2) By and bye the compulsory attendance at "divine worship" will be abolished in both services. (3) The *British Sentinel's* account of "Voltaire's Last Hours" is a perfect tissue of lies from beginning to end. The real facts, from contemporary sources, are given in our *Infiel Death-Bells*.

DIET.—Something on the Design Argument will be found in Mr. Foote's *Darwin on God*. You are wrong in supposing that no stress has been laid on the multiplicity of Christian sects, all pretending to be based on the proper interpretation of Scripture. These internal divisions have always been a strong argument against the inspiration and value of the Bible. Of course the meaning of Christ's words is just as much a bone of contention as that of any other Bible character.

W. SIMONS.—It is absolutely untrue that J. Williams was "invited" to oppose Mr. Foote at the Hall of Science. No one there would ever think of "inviting" him. He simply availed himself of the public invitation which is always given from Freethought platforms.

BOOTLE FREETHINKER.—The man must be crazy, and the editor nearly as bad to insert such rubbish.

R. TRENCHARD.—We understand that Mrs. Besant goes to America to represent England and Mde. Blavatsky at a Theosophic Convention.

A. CLARK.—We think there must have been a misunderstanding. Mr. Bradlaugh always professed himself in favor of constitutional methods, as we believe he always followed them. Soon after he first took his seat he voted in favor of the Arms Act, allowing the Irish authorities to search for concealed weapons.

T. PHILLIPS.—You do not "bore" us by writing. Quite the contrary. If Mr. Howard is willing to debate, Mr. Foote is ready to represent the Spennymoor Branch. We doubt Mr. Wise's competence, but if the Christians put him forward you will have to give the matter a fair consideration. The local Christians may rest assured that Mr. Foote doesn't mind "a crushing defeat." He is used to it.

J. TULLIN.—The double collecting sheets you refer to, sent out from Fleet-street in error, are not to be used, but destroyed. The two funds have separate collecting cards and sheets. See "Sugar Plums."

H. SMITH.—Perhaps in the autumn.

C. DOEG.—Glad to hear good news of the Liverpool Branch.

W. EMSLEY.—Shall appear.

S. ACKROYD.—Mr. Foote is quite ready to meet the Rev. G. H. Rowe. The reverend gentleman need be under no misapprehension. Mr. Foote's worst enemy never accused him of condescending to personalities in debate.

W. LEMAITRE.—Happy John! It is better than advertising for a wife.

D. Gow (Dundee) sends us £5 to be divided between the Bradlaugh Memorial and the Liability Fund.

E. V. A.—Thanks, but 'tis a little out of date now.

CHARLES DICKENS.—Mr. Foote debated with Mr. Woffendale fourteen years ago. The joint committee decided not to incur the expense of a verbatim report. Mr. Woffendale, however, smuggled in a reporter of his own, a man incapable of taking a verbatim report. This man's copy was a most ridiculous travesty of the debate, and does not contain a third of Mr. Foote's speeches. Mr. Woffendale's speeches were given at greater length, and the reverend gentleman helped them out with footnotes. Of course Mr. Foote denounced the abortion at the time, and leaves it to the judgment of honest men.

PAPERS RECEIVED.—Fritankaren—Liberty—Freethought—Ironclad Age—Menschenthum—Echo—Neues Frereligioses Sonntags-Blatt—Freidenker—The Liberator—Der Arme Teufel—Secular Thought—Boston Investigator—Western Figaro—La Vérité Philosophique—Progressive Thinker—Flaming Sword—Loyal American—Two Worlds—Star—Open Court—Truthseeker—Birmingham Daily Mail—Daily Telegraph—Eastern Morning News—Phonetic Journal—Twentieth Century—Independent Pulpit—Western Mail—Wheeling—New York Sun—Woolwich Gazette—Bradford Observer.

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.

**SUGAR PLUMS.**

Mr. Foote delivers the last of his special course of Sunday evening lectures at the London Hall of Science to-day (March 29). The subject is "Christianity and Social Progress." Last Sunday evening Mr. Foote was opposed by the Rev. P. H. Wicksteed, who made a humorous, good-natured speech, and was well received. The final subject is more in Mr. Wicksteed's line, and we hope he will come again. If he does so, special provision will be made for a good discussion.

*The Resurrection*, another instalment of Mr. Foote's "Bible Romances," will be published next week. It is a double number, price twopence, and will appear very seasonably.

The *Truthseeker* (New York), writing on the Bradlaugh Memorial, says "the scheme is a good and feasible one," and adds—"It will honor Mr. Bradlaugh as he would like to be honored, and the Hall will be invaluable to the Freethinkers of England."

The Articles of Association of the Bradlaugh Memorial Hall Company (Limited) will be signed by the time this number of the *Freethinker* is in the reader's hands. The signers will act as Directors until the first general meeting of shareholders, which must be called within six months. All of these gentlemen have been elected by the Memorial Committee, who, after discussing the really important items from our special standpoint, left the completion of the Articles in the hands of Mr. Foote and the solicitors.

A secretary to the Company will be appointed as soon as possible. Meanwhile applications for Shares can be sent to Mr. Forder, who will hand them over to the officer in question. The Shares are £1 each, payable 1s. on application, 1s. on allotment, and in subsequent calls of not more than 2s. 6d. each. This will enable the poorest to become shareholders. Those who can afford to pay up their shares fully are of course at liberty to do so.

The more donations are raised the better. It will both place the company in a safer position and give the N. S. S. a firmer grip on the enterprise. Collecting-cards, all signed by Mr. Forder and bearing the name of the person to whom each is entrusted, are now in circulation, and we beg the holders to lose no time in getting the cards filled up. They are sent to all members of the Committee and to all the secretaries of Branches. But this is not intended to be the limit. Any Freethinker who is able and willing to collect for the Fund should communicate at once with Mr. Forder. The treasurer of this Fund is Mr. George Anderson, himself a subscriber of £100.

The special Fund for Liquidating Mr. Bradlaugh's Liabilities, and assisting Mrs. Bonner, has a separate treasurer.

Mr. W. H. Reynolds, Camplin House, New Cross, London, S.E. All monies received will be lodged in his hands. Subscriptions had better be sent to him direct, but if preferred for any reason they can also be sent to Mr. Foote or Mr. J. M. Robertson. Collecting sheets, with copies of the Appeal printed in our last issue, are being extensively circulated outside as well as inside the Freethought party. We shall be happy to see copies forwarded to any fresh applicants.

The Sydney Freethought Hall will be built this year; at least we read so in Mr. Symes's *Liberator*. We hope the prophecy will be realised, and that friend Collins will officiate in the temple.

Mr. C. J. Hunt goes on a lecturing tour early in April under the auspices of the North Eastern Secular Federation. He begins on April 1 at North Shields, and ends on April 12 at Spennymoor. All the intervening days are filled up. Subscriptions to help defray the expenses of Mr. Hunt's tour should be sent to the secretary, Joseph Brown, 86 Durham-street, Bentinck, Newcastle-on-Tyne.

Now that lady doctors abound it may be worth mentioning that one of the first to advocate this innovation and to qualify herself for the post, was an Atheist, Mrs. Emma Martin. This lady, who had been highly educated, persistently advocated the instruction of girls in physiology. This she made the subject of lectures. She was accepted as midwife for the Royal Maternity Charity, but when it was discovered she was Mrs. Martin the Social lecturer, she was informed it was part of the duty to offer up prayer. Relating this in the *Reasoner* of Feb. 23, 1848, Mrs. Martin says: "I told him, in reply, that I was the person spoken of. That if he had told me I should be required to pray, I should long ago have informed him that I could, in conscience, do no such thing. That I supposed I should be required to render physical assistance only, not spiritual, which latter I did not understand. And I said much more that I dare say convinced him that I was not only heterodox, but gloried in it."

The Children's Party at the London Hall of Science was a great success. About four hundred little ones sported about for six hours, eating, drinking, dancing, and watching and listening to performances suited to their time of life. Finally came the distribution of prizes. Thanks are due to the ladies and gentlemen of the Committee who made all the arrangements and attended to look after the children's comfort.

Those slanderers of Giordano Bruno who have asserted that his conduct towards the end of his life was pusillanimous should be effectually silenced by a recent publication in Italy. The third volume of a series of works by Bruno, that have existed hitherto only in manuscript, has just been issued by order of the Italian Government. It contains, among other illustrative matter, a facsimile of the report of the Company of St. John the Beheaded, who superintended Bruno's execution. This report gives the details of Bruno's last hours, proving clearly that he died as nobly and firmly as he had lived.—*The Speaker*.

The *Cosmopolitan* announces that Mr. J. A. Balfour, of 13 Khetwady, Bombay, is about to start a high-class weekly Freethought journal, with the title *Modern Thought*. We wish the venture all success and shall be happy to exchange.

The *Cosmopolitan*, of Calcutta, comes out in a black cover and with an obituary notice of Mr. Bradlaugh, whose loss, it declares, all India is mourning. It gives a lengthy list of his labors in connection with that great country. The editor of the *Cosmopolitan* has challenged Dr. Pentecost, the American revivalist, now in India (no relation to Hugh O. Pentecost) to debate the truth of Christianity.

In one of those articles in which French writers so charmingly mix learning with lightness of touch, M. André Chevrillon deals with the Religions of India in the *Revue des Deux Mondes*. He compares Brahmanism with one of those primitive organisms which are capable of resisting all mutilations because composed of independent centres of which each may be wounded by the entire body perishing. "At Calcutta an Englishman was lamenting the scanty success of Protestant missions. A few Hindoos were converted, most frequently through self-interest, in order that they might be employed by Europeans. After a few years they re-embraced

their caste and their set. The Brahmans listen with patience, indulgence, or curiosity. Their religion is too evanescent and multiple to permit them to be captured bodily. Hence they offer to admit Christ among the three hundred and thirty millions of the Hindu Pantheon, provided they may be allowed to consider him as one of the forms of Vishnu incarnated for Europeans."

Our brothers in Sweden are not satisfied with attending to missionary work at home. Mr. John Lindell, one of the most active Freethinkers in Sweden, has left for Australia to carry the gospel of Light and Liberty to his countrymen there.

Mr. Foote will shortly pay his first visit to Ireland. He delivers four lectures in Belfast on Saturday and Sunday, April 18 and 19. Prior to his visit the Branch is placarding the town with *Freethinker* bills.

The Bethnal Green Branch holds a tea and smoking concert this evening (March 29). Tea at 5.30, Concert at 6.45. Will any lady or gentleman who can assist by singing or reciting drop in and do a good turn for a poor Branch in a poor neighborhood? Place—Monarch Coffee Tavern, 166 Bethnal Green-road, E.

At a large meeting of the Women's Liberal Association, held at Stratford on Monday, March 16, a resolution in support of Mr. Lawson's Bill for Opening Museums, etc., on Sunday was carried unanimously. It says something for the progress of Secularism and the decline of Christianity when even the middle-class women break from the chains of superstition.

Dr. G. W. Brown, of Rockford, Illinois, whose *Oriental Researches* we reviewed Oct. 27, 1889, finding it urged by a clergyman that even if Jesus was a myth his ideal character as given in the gospels is a type of all that is noble in humanity, has put forward a little booklet with the title *The Teachings of Jesus not adapted to Modern Civilisation*. It is written very vigorously and goes to show that the gospel Jesus was a very imperfect specimen of humanity.

Dr. Brown says, "If a model is needed for the young and for the old, do not give us this mythical Jesus; for a better can be found in any community. We need a man of truth, of plain words, of noble deeds, educated and refined; industrious, not given to boasting, or denunciation; indifferent to the frowns of the vulgar, or the bribes of the wealthy; always courteous; open as the day; his heart and purse ever ready to relieve the needs of the distressed; who treats the humble, and those in high places alike with deference; has no words of abuse or reproach for any one; is deaf to censure or applause; in short, is a gentleman, and finds only gentlemen in all he meets."

A curious anticipation of modern views, which appears in *A Relation of Some Yeares Travaile Begunne anno 1626* (London, 1632), by Thomas Herbert, is given in *Notes and Queries*. Herbert, writing of "the savage inhabitants" of the Cape of Good Hope, states that "comparing their imitations, speech, and visages, I doubt many of them have no better Predecessors than Monkeys; which I have seene there of great stature."

*De Dageraad* for March is late in making its appearance. It has a lengthy notice of Mr. Bradlaugh from the able pen of J. v. d'Ende.

Mr. Forder has issued, at the price of twopence, a facsimile reprint of Mr. Bradlaugh's first pamphlet, issued originally in 1849. It is entitled "*A Few Words on the Christian's Creed*, by C. Bradlaugh, Jun." It was issued from his residence, which was that of Mrs. Carlile, 1 Warner-place, Hackney-road, and is dedicated to the Rev. J. G. Packer, M.A. At the end is announced as in the press another pamphlet, "*Christianity a Delusion*, by C. Bradlaugh, Jun." Mr. Bradlaugh's literary activity thus began at about the age of sixteen. His admirers will desire to possess a copy of its first fruits.

The *Boston Investigator* gives its readers a picture of the monument erected to Horace Seaver. It appears to be a noble obelisk, and may deserve the title, a sermon in granite. However, we can but think that a memorial hall, or something similar that carries on a man's work, is the best way of perpetuating his memory.



CHARLES BRADLAUGH.

By MONCURE D. CONWAY.

On the 242nd anniversary of "King Charles the Martyr" died another Charles, who represented the more civil but more fatal steel which England keeps suspended over its throne. Charles Bradlaugh was something of a martyr too. His herculean frame, which lies low in his fifty-eighth year, must have lasted many years longer had he continued a comfortable Christian. But in his seventeenth year, when he became slightly sceptical, a pious hunt began: the superintendent of a Sunday-school, in which he had taught, started a clerical hue and cry; Bradlaugh was driven out of his situation of solicitor's errand boy, and, after nearly starving, passed three wretched years as a soldier in Ireland. His strength sapped by early privations was further impaired by years of persecution; in defending the Freethinker's right to speak in public, to print his opinion, to testify in court to sit on juries, to sit in Parliament, he received blow after blow from the tyranny he was overthrowing; his accumulated costs bound on him a burden of debts that wore upon his life, and was largely instrumental in weighing him down into his premature grave. Yes, Bradlaugh was a martyr. No Christian of our time has had a heavier cross to bear. In this country Bradlaugh was known by his lectures, and in evening dress; but the man's proportions could not be truly seen in that way. His place was on a hill-side speaking to thousands of miners, swart and hungry, with a canopy of furnace-smoke for their only sky; or in his London Hall of Science, where he drilled his humble comrades for service in great issues; or in the court room, where he maintained singlehanded the constitutional liberties of Englishmen against the retained casuists of Church and State. I have seen and heard him on occasions when he seemed to stand like some century-worn obelisk, scarred all over with hieroglyphs of innumerable battles. Even what friendly censors called his faults were historic and monumental. If he appeared egotistical, it was because he had been left alone by intellectual peers who should have been his friends. If his voice was sometimes shrill, it was because he was so long compelled to contend for the plainest truths and simplest justice. If he was now and then revolutionary, it was because of the oppression that, as Solomon says, maketh a wise man mad. His faults mirrored the wrongs he had suffered. But let me not be supposed to countenance the judgments of his adversaries. No man was ever more ludicrously misjudged. He was supposed by many to be of a hard and harsh nature. In the course of a long personal acquaintance with him, during which I witnessed some of his most trying experiences, I found in Bradlaugh a womanly tenderness. He has often brought to my mind what Emerson said of Carlyle, "he was a trip-hammer with an æolian attachment." He was an affectionate husband, a kind father, a faithful friend, and most scrupulously polite to all who treated him as what he was,—a gentleman at heart. In all matters relating to sex and marriage, Bradlaugh was not merely chaste personally, but exceptionally conservative in opinion.—*Open Court* (Chicago).

CHARLES BRADLAUGH AT DEATH'S DOOR.

About fifteen years ago I was informed, on my arrival in New York, that Charles Bradlaugh was ill in St. Luke's Hospital. I hastened to visit him. His physician said that the illness had been very dangerous, indeed the patient was not yet out of danger. Bradlaugh had expected death. When I entered he took my hand eagerly, and showed a relief that at first I did not understand. But I presently saw that he had dreaded the slanders that swarmed around the dying and dead Paine. When I asked, "How can I help you?" he said: "I have been facing death—may presently be facing it again—and my doctor, all who have approached me, can inform you whether at any moment they have seen in me any sign of fear. Should I die, you will be able to bear witness that I am not afraid to die—have never been nor for a moment faltered from the principles to which my life has been devoted."—*M. D. Conway, in "Open Court."*

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A LEARNED PIG IN PURSUIT OF KNOWLEDGE.

An amusing incident occurred on Wednesday forenoon in the neighborhood of the Custom House Quay, Greenock, where the cross-channel steamers land their pigs as well as their passengers. As a somewhat stout and sedate-looking member of the former fraternity was being induced to proceed up Brymner-street, having just accomplished the voyage from the Emerald Isle, it suddenly bolted from its caretakers and rushed headlong—not into the nearest public-house, as so many would have done, but into the nearest emporium for the diffusion of useful knowledge, the Waverley Book Bazaar. There it immediately came to a sedate pause, and began a careful study of a large poster displayed in front of the counter, setting forth, in attractive Salvation Army blood-red letters, the tempting bill of fare presented in the current number of the *Review of Reviews*. The learned pig had just reached the line, "Mr. Gladstone's Defence of the Gaderene Swine Miracle," when it was recaptured by its pursuers. Some say they distinctly heard it ask the young lady, who, meantime, had remained courageously, but discreetly, behind the counter, for a copy of the *Review of Reviews*; but others, again, say as positively that it cried for "Help!" Be that as it may, the ruthless captors of the learned pig hurried it away to a place in which it is to be feared no regard will be paid to its feelings.—*Edinburgh Evening Dispatch.*

REVIEWS.

*The Old Testament Unhistoric and Unscientific.* By JULIAN. Watts and Co., 17 Johnson's-court, Fleet-street. *What the Old Testament says about Itself.* By JULIAN. Ibid. —These penny pamphlets are well calculated to serve the purpose for which they are issued. "Julian" is quite at home in his subject, and has many able points. Yet in one instance at least he allows his headline to exceed his text. After reading "Religion the Invention of Priests," one expects something more than the statement that every religious mystery has its hierarchy, whose work it is to uphold its mythology. Everybody knows priests support the religion which supports them. It is another thing to prove they invented it.

*Finger-Posts to Truth.* Being Independent Thoughts of Independent Thinkers. London: Watts and Co., 17 Johnson's-court, Fleet-street. Price 6d.—The compiler of these extracts from Freethought writers would have enhanced his service if, as is the case in our own "Freethought Gleanings," he gave the exact reference to each authority. Should anyone challenge the extract ascribed to Confucius on p. 45, we fear there would be some difficulty in supplying the proof. On the next page, "Ignorance is the great mother of assurance and undoubting confidence" is assigned to "Lee," with no indication what Lee is intended. It does not look well either to see the name of Maudsley, from whom there are several extracts, misspelt. The little book is, however, not undeserving its title, and may serve both to suggest and stimulate thought.

The *Progressive Thinker* of Chicago, in its issue of Feb. 28, reprints two leading articles from our columns.

## IS IT POSSIBLE TO BE HAPPY?

By HUGH O. PENTECOST.

*(From the "Twentieth Century.")*

[CONTINUED.]

A friend of mine, a few weeks ago, was offered a position at fifty dollars a week, but he would have been required to go to his place of business at seven o'clock in the morning and live in a city which he does not like. He refused to take the position. He told me that the thought of binding himself down to certain hours, and of living where he does not wish to live, is unbearable to him.

All the world will call him foolish. If he comes to poverty, people will say it serves him right. But he is not foolish. He is wise. The nature of his business is such that he can make a living without submitting to such drudgery, and freedom is worth more to him than fifty dollars a week. He knows that the moment he puts on a harness to which he is not accustomed his unhappiness will be deepened.

Your scissors grinder, your umbrella mender, your odd jobs man is the wise among laborers. He does not make much money, but to some extent he is his own master, and that is worth a great deal.

How many wives are there who hardly dare look at another man besides their husbands! How many husbands are there who hardly dare to speak to a woman besides their wives! Is it any wonder that so many marriages are failures when husbands and wives so rob each other of their freedom? Whenever marriage involves slavery it must be a failure. As a rule, marriage changes people. I have seen bright, cheerful, hopeful young people marry, and in a short time I have seen the lustre leave the eye, the color fade from the cheek, the elasticity go out of the step, and I have known that joy was dead, and that love would die, for the reason that one or the other or both did not understand that unless there is perfect freedom there cannot be perfect happiness. When marriage becomes a yoke, a harness, a slavery, the parties to it must be miserable.

When a man marries a woman with the feeling that she now belongs to him, as if she were a house, or horse, or cow; with the feeling that she is his property, and that for another man to talk with her or enjoy her society is to trespass on his property, he has a conception of marriage that does not involve complete freedom for his wife, and it is perfectly certain that she will be unhappy, and that he also will. The only doubt about his wife's being unhappy will lie in that marked characteristic of some women whose happiness is enhanced by the fact that their husbands are jealous of them, and by that other fact that women, as a sex, have been slaves so long, that, though slavery is a synonym for misery, they rather enjoy it, and have no especial wish for freedom.

Some slaves in the South would not take their freedom when it was offered them. Freedom would have increased their happiness, but they were too far gone in slavery to understand that. Some women are like those sodden slaves.

There is a movement abroad for the emancipation of women. It is intended to give them legal freedom from their husbands; to lift them to the dignity of separate entities among sentient beings; to give them control of their own persons. It is a great, a glorious movement. Who is hindering it most? Women; wives. As a rule, women wish to be objects of romantic love from a man who will domineer over them. If a man will prove his devotion to a woman by small knightly attentions, especially before others, in most cases she will gladly be his slave in all important respects. The slavery of women to men is one main condition of their unhappiness, but, as a rule, they do not know it, and they cling to their slavery, fighting against those who would set them free if they could. But no one can set another free. Each must set himself free.

When a woman marries a man with the idea that he is hers by some sort of arbitrary right as against all the world, and that his association with his former men friends, or his slightest attention to any other woman than herself, is an infringement of her monopoly rights in him, her conception of marriage is such that her husband's complete freedom is not involved in it, and it is perfectly certain that he will be miserable, and that because he is she will be. Where there is a master or a mistress and a slave, both will be unhappy.

A woman is a separate entity. She cannot be merged

in another entity, and an attempt to sink her personality in that of another, were he forty times her husband, will result in unhappiness.

A man is a separate entity. He cannot be arbitrarily attached to another being, were she married to him by the decree of a God, and the attempt to arbitrarily cut him off from the rest of the world and fasten him to her, by other than the ligaments of inclination, will result in misery for them both.

If two beings are content to walk together as one, cutting themselves off from all the world besides, that is good, that is an act of freedom. And there are many who are walking thus; many who find their highest happiness together. I have been speaking of where there is no such walking together of the two; of where the attempt is made by either to bind the other arbitrarily.

This marriage question is so delicate that hardly one dares speak on it at all. To do so is like going into a powder mill with a live coal in one's hand. Many husbands dare not discuss the marriage question even privately for fear their wives will hear of what they have said. And many wives are silent for a similar reason. Public speakers and writers are dumb on this subject, for fear some will say, "Aha! He is unhappily married." I have no fear of any one saying that of me who knows the truth. What others say is of no consequence. And then, too, when the subject is broached from a platform one knows that husbands and wives are sitting before him who are trembling for fear he will say something that is true. Nevertheless, along with all the happiness among married people, and there is very much, there is so much wretchedness, the conditions of which the sufferers themselves do not understand, that it is necessary to say that in marriage, as in the nation, and in the workshop, there must be freedom or there will be misery.

This is a thing that it is difficult to make even very intelligent persons understand, and that is why millions are miserable; they are miserable because they do not understand it. They must learn to understand it or continue to be wretched. The man says to the woman, or the woman to the man, "Do you love me? Then you must or you must not do thus" and so." But "love" and "must" are two words which cannot go together. Do you love me? Then you may do whatever you like. If you love me, you are free to speak or be silent, to come and go, and to do as you please. If you love me, freedom will not hurt your love. If you do not love me, you are equally free to speak or be silent, to do what you please, and go where you like, and the sooner you go the better.

How few people understand all that, especially among those who are married.

*(To be concluded.)*

## AS HE WAS AND AS HE IS.

An Oregon reader asks us to answer the following questions:

1. Is there any proof that men lived to the age of nine hundred years, as recorded in the Bible? If not, what was the age of men living anterior to the Christian era, according to history?

2. Were men in those days bigger and stronger than they are now? I have read somewhere that the armor of crusaders is too small for the soldiers of this day.

We know of no authority outside of the Bible, Rider Haggard's novel "She," and other works of fiction, for believing that human longevity is on the decline. David the psalmist apparently never heard of the long lives of his ancestors, for he wrote:

"The days of our years are three-score years and ten; and if by reason of strength they be four-score years, yet is their strength labor and sorrow."

David did not remark that the days of our years were nine hundred and sixty-nine years. He was arguing the more years the more sorrow, and if he could have held out the possibility of a thousand years of trouble it would have just suited his frame of mind to do so. What induced the early Bible writers to lie so about the age of the patriarchs is not readily understood in our time, when a certain regard for truth is professed. The commentators call it "oriental exaggeration," but it is now known by a shorter name.—*Freethought.*

The widow's might.—Her beauty.

Who is going to pay us for the forty days Lent in Spring!

**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, social evening for members and friends.  
 Battersea Secular Hall (back of Battersea Park Station): 3, members' quarterly meeting, election of officers (subscriptions now due); 5.30, tea and soiree (tickets 6d., soiree only 3d.). Monday, at 8, social gathering. Thursday, at 8, dramatic class.  
 Camberwell—61 New Church Road, S.E.: 7.30, Mr. A. B. Moss, "The Jesus Legend Up to Date."  
 Hall of Science, 142 Old Street, E.C.: 7, Mr. G. W. Foote, "Christianity and Social Progress."  
 Milton Hall, Kentish Town Road, N.W.: Good Friday, at 8, plain dress ball. Sunday, at 7.30, ballad concert, band, etc.  
 West Ham—Secular Hall, 121 Broadway, Plaistow: Good Friday, at 8, concert and dance (tickets 3d. each). Sunday, at 7, Mr. E. Cave-Hill, "Christian Morality." Thursday, at 8, open debate.  
 Westminster—Liberal and Radical Club, Chapter Street: 7, Mr. E. Calvert, "John Howard and Prison Reform."  
 Woolwich—"Sussex Arms," Assembly Room, 60 Plumstead Road (entrance, Maxey Road): 7.30, Mr. J. Fagan, "What is Sin?"

**OPEN-AIR PROPAGANDA.**

Battersea Park Gates: 11.15, Mr. A. T. Dipper, "Is Secularism Decaying?"  
 Hammersmith Bridge (Middlesex side): 3.30, Mr. W. J. Ramsey, "Strong Samson."  
 Hyde Park, near Marble Arch: 11.30, Mr. W. J. Ramsey, "Now the birth of Jesus was on this wise."  
 Tottenham—Corner of West Green Road: 3.30, Mr. J. Rowney, "The Resurrection."  
 Wood Green—Jolly Butcher's Hill: 11.30, Mr. J. Rowney, "The Resurrection."

**COUNTRY.**

Chatham—"Old George Inn," Globe Lane: 6.30, Mr. H. C. Crofts, "Sir Walter Scott as a Poet."  
 Glasgow—Albion Hall, College Street: 12 noon, debating class, Mr. T. Robertson, Selections from Popular Authors; 6.30, Mr. J. P. Gilmour, "The Scientific Theory of Ghosts."  
 Heckmondwike—At Mr. John Rothera's, Bottoms: 2.30, a meeting.  
 Leeds—Gladstone Hall, New Wortley: Mr. C. J. Hunt, 11, "Christ—God, Man, or Myth?"; 3, "God: Where and What?" 6.30, "Life and Death." A special members' meeting at 5.30.  
 Liverpool—Camden Hall, Camden Street: 3, discussion class, Mr. Bowles, "Jesus"; 7, Mr. Harry Smith, "The Hidden Wisdom."  
 Manchester N. S. S., Secular Hall, Rusholme Road, Oxford Road, All Saints': 3, annual meeting of members; 6.30, social evening, recitals by Mr. Thomas Griffiths. Easter Monday, 8.30, till 2, ball (ladies 1s., gents 1s. 6d.).  
 Nottingham—Secular Hall, Beck Street: 7, Mr. A. Lord will lecture.  
 Portsmouth—Wellington Hall, Wellington Street, Southsea: 7, Mr. Hore, "The Crucifixion and its Lessons."  
 Reading—Forester's Hall, West Street: 7, Mr. Toleman Garner, "Why do Christians Celebrate the Crucifixion?"  
 Sheffield—Hall of Science, Rockingham Street: Mr. E. Stanley Jones, 3, "Is there a God?"; 7, "The Soul Idea and Immortality."  
 Spennymoor—Victoria Hall, Dundas Street: 10.30, general meeting; 6, Mr. J. Phillips, a reading.  
 South Shields—Capt. Duncan's Navigation School, King Street: 7, important business meeting.

**LECTURERS' ENGAGEMENTS.**

ARTHUR B. MOSS, 44 Credon Road, Rotherhithe, London, S.E.—March 29, Camberwell. April 5, morning, Westminster; evening, Woolwich; 12, morning, Battersea; 26, evening, Hall of Science. May 3, morning, Clerkenwell; 10, morning, Bethnal Green; afternoon, Victoria Park; 17, morning, Westminster; 24, morning, Kingsland; afternoon, Victoria Park; 31, morning, Battersea, June 7, morning, Clerkenwell; afternoon, Victoria Park; 14, morning, Woolwich.

C. J. HUNT, 48 Fordingey Road, St. Peter's Park, London, W.—March 29, Leeds. April 1, North Shields; 2, South Shields; 3, Middlesboro; 4, Bedlington; 5, Blyth; 6, Wellington; 7, Spennymoor; 8, West Auckland; 9, Ox Hill; 10, Newcastle; 11, Chester-le-Street; 12, Spennymoor; 19, morning, Mile End; 26, morning, Hyde Park; afternoon, Finsbury Park; evening, Woolwich. May 3, morning, Kingsland Green; afternoon, Regent's Park; 10, morning, Pinlicko; evening, Kilburn; 17, morning, Clerkenwell; evening, Battersea; 24, morning, Hyde Park; evening, Hammersmith; 31, morning, Camberwell; evening, Lambeth.

TOLEMAN-GARNER, 8 Heyworth Road, Stratford, London, E.—March 29, Reading.

H. SMITH, 3 Breck Place, Breck Road, Everton Road, Liverpool.—March 29, Liverpool. April 12, Liverpool.

STANLEY JONES, 3 Leta Street, City Road, Liverpool.—March 29, Sheffield. April 19, Liverpool. May 10, Manchester. Sept. 6, Liverpool.

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