

# The Freethinker

Edited by G. W. FOOTE.]

[Sub-Editor, J. M. WHEELER.

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[PRICE ONE PENNY.

## BOOTH'S BANDS.

"GENERAL" BOOTH shows a sound instinct in fighting for his band at Eastbourne. We may also remark that Eastbourne shows a sound instinct in fighting against it, for the place is supported by visitors seeking rest and quiet from the world's strife and bustle. It would not seem to us any great infraction of "liberty" if the "yelling yahoos" of the Salvation Army, and, for that matter, all other persons, were compelled to observe a certain measure of restraint in such places. Nor should we be alarmed for "liberty" if the sensitive inhabitants of English cities in general were protected against the street noises which are fast making life unbearable for all but the coarse-grained and phlegmatic.

The Boothites' notion of "liberty" is that they have a right to make as much row as they please at other people's expense. It is indifferent to them whether the people whose windows they assail are healthy or sick, or even dying. While Mr. Bradlaugh lay sick unto death, a Boothite band played lustily past his house, and they were going to stop to give him a royal salute for the good of his soul if they had not been prevented by a friendly policeman.

Here is another gross case of Salvation fair-play. There is a space set apart in Finsbury Park for public meetings. Speakers of all kinds, on all sorts of subjects, are allowed to go there and attract an audience if they can. So far so good. But now comes the nuisance. The Salvation Army brings a band, which makes as much noise as it chooses, drowning the speakers' voices at the other gatherings, and thus virtually monopolising the ground. Surely this should not be permitted. The Boothites are entitled to the same privileges as other people, but no more. It is a perfect farce to let them blare away, more or less discordantly, on a spot ostensibly devoted to public speaking. Let them *speak* there, by all means, but do not let them *play*.

On Whit Monday evening the present writer took a stroll in Finsbury Park. Many thousands of holiday-makers were assembled round the band-stand, listening to popular music. A hundred yards further down the Salvationists were holding a miniature meeting. Their flag was visible at a distance, but where was their band? The answer is very simple. They had to leave their instruments at home. It is a fair game, apparently, when they drown the speakers at other meetings in a deluge of what they fatuously call "music," but the authorities drew the line at their competing with the Park Band.

Now what was the result of this interference with the Boothites? Shorn of their band, they were a miserable, dejected crew. The male Salvationists bawled out a hymn, without the usual accompaniment, and such melody could only be paralleled by three gentlemen learning to play the French horn. When the hymn was over, one of the sweet songsters turned

his face heaven-wards and offered up a prayer, but not even communion with his Maker could cheer up his spirits. He looked as limp as a boiled rag, and his two musical companions, whose heads were bowed towards the earth, seemed as if they had spent a week in Purgatory.

Without their band the Salvationists were dispirited, and they failed to attract fifty people. A hundred yards off, thousands of men and women were listening to the Park Band. Yes, it is the band that does the trick. General Booth knows it. Hence the stubborn fight for his band at Eastbourne. He knows what he is about, far better than the Christian ministers of that watering-place, who idly besought the "General" to desist from opposing the local authorities. They look upon the Salvation music as an adjunct; he knows it is essential.

The "General" looks at this matter from a business point of view. We believe there are no Salvation Army meetings and band-playings at Clacton-on-Sea. That is the place where Booth himself recreates. He doesn't want a row *there*. He only wants it at places where *other people* go to restore their jaded constitutions.

But to return to our point. We maintain now, as we have maintained all along, that the secret of the Salvation Army's success lies precisely in those features which its friends often bid us regard as incidental. Without constantly ministering to sensationalism, and (to borrow a biological phrase) to human *atavism*, Booth's Army would probably collapse in a year or two. His doctrines are those of other orthodox Christian bodies. What differentiates his sect is simply their outward practices. Rent is saved by going into the streets. Coarse and weak minds are attracted by noise and excitement. Vanity is gratified with a uniform. And the old fighting instincts, which are of the deepest in human nature, are roused by the sham language and insignia of warfare.

Booth's instinct, as we have said, is sound. Given his object—for this is his *real* object—namely, to detach from the other Christian bodies as many people as possible—and he is going the right way with mathematical accuracy. He cannot compete with the well-educated and more refined preachers. Nature has not given him the qualities, such as they are, which enable Spurgeon to gather round him, year in and year out, the biggest congregation in London. But he is a splendid organiser and an unscrupulous showman. He is therefore able, by means of bands, uniform, sham war-flags, and so forth, to collect a great mob of low human organisms, with a sprinkling of the better sort who are the victims of ambition or fanaticism; and by keeping a firm grip on every scrap of property, and every penny of income, he is able to sway them with a rigid discipline. His success is an open secret. But many people are mentally bleary-eyed and see nothing clearly. Booth, however, belongs to a 'cuter species. He sees his road, and he will fight like grim death for his bands.

G. W. FOOTE.



## PAUL'S EPISTLE TO THE GALATIANS.

THE Epistle to the Galatians is one of the earliest and most important of early Christian documents. Usually dated from 54 to 69, it comes before the gospels and Catholic epistles; and from its having stood first in the collection of Marcion, the Gnostic follower of Paul, it has been surmised to have been written before the Epistles to the Romans and Corinthians. It stands almost alone in unquestioned authenticity. Bruno Bauer, who argues that it was compiled from those to the Romans and Corinthians, alone disputes its genuineness. On this point most rationalists will agree with the orthodox. Whoever the writer, it bears the stamp of an unmistakable personality. He is independent to the extent of arrogance and intolerance. He says, "Though an angel from heaven preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed," and declares, "I would they were even cut off which trouble you." It is evident other gospels were already afloat, and the Church of the Gauls in Asia Minor was troubled by rival factions disputing, as they have ever since, as to what were the essential features of their divine revelation. Who were these rivals against whom Paul urges so vehement a polemic? Apparently they were some of the twelve apostles or their emissaries. As in 2 Cor. xi., 5, he declares himself "not a whit behind the very chiefest apostles," so here he sets out by calling himself an apostle "not of men, neither by man, but by J. C." The tone in which he speaks of the apostles is not cordial, but depreciatory. He says, "Of these who seemed to be somewhat, whatsoever they were it maketh no matter to me. God accepteth no man's person." Peter he withstood to his face because of his hypocrisy. Indeed Peter's conduct, as told by Paul, is irreconcilable with honesty. A comparison of this epistle with Acts shows that the Judaic party was powerful in the early Christian Church. In the account of James given by Josephus and Hegesippus, he is represented as a Jew of the Jews, living the life of a Nazarite, and praying in the temple till his knees were as hard as a camel's. Evidently he knew nothing of the Christianity preached by Paul. Between the epistles ascribed to them there is the most decided antagonism. Paul says (Gal. ii., 16) "by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified." James answers (ii., 20-24), "wilt thou know, O vain man, that faith without works is dead. Was not Abraham our father justified by works, when he offered Isaac his son upon the altar? . . . Ye see then how that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only." Paul was so strongly anti-Judaic that he declared (Gal. v., 2), "If ye be circumcised Christ shall profit you nothing." But the council at Jerusalem presided over by James only permitted the Gentile converts to be uncircumcised, and Paul himself is declared to have circumcised Timothy, whose mother was a Jewess though his father was a Greek. The council even imposed on Gentile converts that they should abstain from eating blood and things strangled (Acts xv., 20), a decree unheeded by them till this day.

But the truth is, it is impossible to harmonise what Paul says in this epistle with the narrative in the Acts. Dr. S. Davidson, in his *Introduction to the New Testament*, vol. i., p. 92, says: "It presents Paul in a different light from the historian's—so different as to cast grave suspicions on the accuracy of the portrait in the Acts. The Paul of the epistles is not the Paul of Luke. The apostle of the Acts is an observer of the law, like Peter, James and John. He looks upon circumcision leniently, allowing it under the Gospel; in the epistle he opposes it as contrary to the genius of the Gospel."

The epistle gives the reader to understand that the apostle's immediate mission was to the Gentiles: "to

reveal his Son in me that I might preach him among the heathen" (i., 16); but in the Acts he preached at once to the Jews in the Damascene synagogues, and after that to those at Jerusalem (ix., 19-29). The Acts say that after many days spent at Damascus, during which he preached in the synagogues, he was compelled to flee to Jerusalem, where he was looked upon with suspicion by the believers, till Barnabas vouched for his sincerity and introduced him to the apostles; so that he was supported in his preaching there, till the Jews compelled his departure and removal to Tarsus (ix., 19, etc.) The epistle says that immediately after his conversion he went to Arabia, returned thence to Damascus, and only visited Jerusalem after three years. There is no mention of the Arabian visit in the Acts; nor is there any room for its insertion. The Acts imply that his stay was of some length, and that he preached the gospel there. According to the epistle his object was only to see Peter and he stayed but a fortnight. Paul says he went up by revelation. The story in Acts is that he was one of several deputies from the Church of Antioch.

A comparison of this epistle with the first gospel and the Acts of the Apostles leads to the conclusion that Paul was the virtual founder of Christianity. Had the twelve apostles been commissioned to preach to the Gentiles, why should there have been a special revelation accorded to Peter with this object, and why should Paul have encountered the difficulties, which he obviously did, from the brethren? The only solution is that originally the Christian gospel was expressed in the injunction of Jesus that his disciples should not go into the way of the Gentiles (Matt. x., 5), and his saying that he himself was "not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel" (Matt. xv., 24). But for Paul the early Christians would have remained an obscure sect of Nazarenes. But with Paul was working the spirit of the age. The Roman Empire had prepared the way for a religion as universal as itself, and the destruction of Jerusalem perforce broadened Judaism. Indeed, it may be said that the fall of Jerusalem occasioned the rise of Christianity.

J. M. WHEELER.

## REVIEW.

*Serious Thoughts.* Translated from the German by the "Bibliographical Bureau," Berlin. London: Luzac and Co., Great Russell-street, W.C. 1891.—The author of these thoughts is a German officer named von Egidy. He is a Christian, who thinks Christianity can be promoted by reducing its dogmata to a minimum. In especial, he holds that the doctrine of the deity of Christ is a stumbling-block to "pure, true, unadulterated Christianity." To us it seems he evolves this article out of his own inner consciousness. We are free to admit that the article is more wholesome than the ecclesiastical Christianity which alone has claim to historic consideration. The author's thoughts are evidently founded rather on sentiment than logic. Those who select from Christianity what pleases their taste may make a showy-looking bouquet, but in a short time it will be withered and lifeless. Logic rules in the long run, and it leaves no room for middlemen.

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## PROBLEMS FOR THE HIGHER CRITICISM.

BY VAN BUREN DENSLOW.

THREE wise men of Gotham, Drs. Newton, Bridgeman, and Briggs, have just weighed anchor and set out to sea in their "bowl"—the higher criticism. Only a neck behind them are Brooks of Boston and Harper of Chicago, ready to follow. It becomes a question as important as their future careers, How strong is their bowl? How ample is it compared with that great deep on which they are sailing? Will the old nursery rhyme hold true—

If their bowl had been stronger  
Their voyage had been longer?

The strength of their bowl lies in the assumption that the methods of the "higher criticism," however pungently they may be applied, will meet with a rock-ribbed something, somewhere, which they cannot dissolve, weaken, or destroy, and that this residuum of indissoluble truth will not only be a religion which will employ priests, but it will be a Christianity which will have a use for Newtons, Bridgemans, and Briggses. If it will not have any such residuum, then these three wise men are near the end of their sacerdotal career. If the residuum is preserved only by withdrawing from the use of critical methods at a prudential stage, then they are only following a slightly higher but not the highest criticism. They are willing to follow truth while it guides them out of orthodoxy into mild heresy, but leaves them their congregations of admiring women and smooth-faced bankers, their stained glass, their music, and their gowns. But what if it threatens to land them in purely secular and economic industries, in raising corn, throwing dice, or practising law? Let us see!

There was a period in the history of the Christian religion when the resurrection of the body of Jesus, and the ascension of that body into the air, in the presence of certain of the disciples, until the heavens received it out of their sight, was the crowning doctrine of Christianity. On this object lesson rested each Christian's hope of a heaven as his own destiny. The realism of the language by which this doctrine is taught in the New Testament is as clear and intense as that which describes the crucifixion. If there was no bodily resurrection and ascension into heaven, then the crucifixion remains merely the death of a supposed malefactor. All the physical assumptions underlying the story as to the configuration of the earth, and the super-jacent nearness of a physical heaven, were so natural and simple under the Ptolemaic system of astronomy as to raise no greater question of their truthfulness than would the statement that he had entered into a small boat to cross the sea of Galilee.

But when Copernicus, who was himself a Christian priest, had written his great work placing the sun in the centre of the solar system, he withheld the truth from publication for fourteen years because he saw that it took away, finally and for ever, from the world, the heaven to which Jesus was supposed to have risen. It substituted only vast open spaces, into which if the rising body of Jesus penetrated only four miles it would freeze solid, thus pursuing a second death more remorseless than crucifixion, and this sacred icicle when it had gone a few miles further would burst into a million fragments and disperse into thin gases, which would either return to the atmosphere, burning as it re-entered it, or wander aimlessly in space.

So dreadful did Copernicus regard the unchristian quality of a truth that came nearer to being a revelation than any other ever made known to the human mind, that even when his bishop had given his consent to the publication, Copernicus withheld it from the world. He had never even the poor privilege of reading his own book, but barely touched its leaves as it was brought to him on his death-bed.

Nobody now believes that the body of Jesus ascended.

But Drs. Briggs, Bridgeman, and Newton, and also Brooks and Harper, all know that had not the early Christian world believed that his body ascended, the religion founded on this idea would never have got a foothold in the world.

Are they prepared to admit that whatever kernel of truth may be in Christianity is indebted for its preservation from extinction to this thick husk of error?

Again, all these doctors feel, no doubt, that after the resurrection of the body of Jesus and its ascension into heaven the next most vital doctrine in the founding of Christianity, was that he would immediately return to earth, during the life of some one of the apostles, and, it was generally thought, of John, and reign thereon for a thousand years. This, too, was a delusion, wholly and simply. Another husk to which we are indebted for the kernel that survives!

A third essential element in the founding of the Christian religion was community of goods, which the political economists have discovered to be a relic of barbarism and a form of slavery, binding man fast to the savage state.

A fourth potential influence, without which the religion would not have risen into power, was the perversion of the Greek poetic myths concerning hades, and the various states of the dead, into the Christian doctrine of hell as a divinely-revealed literal truth. The higher criticism is now surrendering this, too, as a delusion. But if there be any kernel of truth in Christianity, what an effective husk hell has been! It has been as influential in the history of faith as the whip in the progress of learning. Had there been no belief at any time in a hell, who in this coarse world, outside of a theological class or a lunatic asylum, could have supposed there was anything to be saved from, or any need of a Jesus? Of all the men who have ever attained to any considerable notoriety, Jesus, in his mere human aspect, brought with him the smallest stock of anything that could justly be accounted as information. He is the most strictly dependent upon his quality as a savior for his *raison d'être*. If not this he is nothing. History has failed to find in him a discoverer, a scientist, a poet, a philosopher, or even a moralist. And if there is no hell, then in the view of that portion of the coarse and critical world who call a spade a spade, he might as well not have been. If nothing is combustible, why insure against fire? Why not apply the premiums that are paid for this species of insurance to our coast defenses, or irrigation, or some other mode of warding off actual instead of mere poetic and figurative dangers? All these questions stand ready to attack the higher criticism on its march.—*Twentieth Century*.

(To be continued.)

Whoever seriously thinks that supernatural beings have ever given our race information as to the aim of its existence and that of the world, is still in his childhood. There is no other revelation than the thoughts of the wise, even though these thoughts, liable to error as is the lot of everything human, are often clothed in strange allegories and myths under the name of religion.—*Schopenhauer*.

There is not to be found, in all history, any miracle attested by a sufficient number of men, of such unquestioned good sense, education, and learning, as to secure us against all delusion in themselves; of such undoubted integrity, as to place them beyond all suspicion of any design to deceive others; of such credit and reputation in the eyes of mankind, as to have a great deal to lose in case of their being detected in any falsehood; and, at the same time, attesting facts performed in such a public manner, and in so celebrated a part of the world, as to render detection unavoidable; all which circumstances are requisite to give us a full assurance in the testimony of men.—*Hume's "Essay on Miracles."*



## MR. WATTS STOPS.

SINCE Mr. Charles Watts came over from Toronto, a few weeks ago, to see his English friends and lecture to his old admirers, he has been under constant pressure to settle down in his native land, where his platform abilities are more than ever needed. A great many letters have reached me, too, as President of the National Secular Society, urging me to persuade Mr. Watts to remain in England. From the first moment I shook hands with him I gave him to understand that I should personally be pleased if he could see his way to work with me, but I refrained from pressing him, because I knew that his earnings in America were in excess of the income he would be likely to secure in England, where Free-thought advocacy (I regret to say it) is worse paid than in any other part of the English-speaking world. There were, however, other solicitations in Mr. Watts's mind. He is not so young as he was, though still robust; he had a natural desire to spend the rest of his days in the land of his birth; and his wife had always cast a yearning glance eastward to her old English home. Nor was this all, for immediately on Mr. Watts's arrival he was made acquainted with a certain offer from Mr. Daniel Baker, of Birmingham. Negotiations have been going on since, and on Saturday I met Mr. Watts with his son, Mr. Daniel Baker, and Mr. G. J. Holyoake; at which meeting Mr. Baker's proposal was thoroughly discussed, and a rough agreement signed by those present.

Mr. Daniel Baker, who has been for many years the mainstay of Secularism in Birmingham, and who has now reached the advanced age of seventy-six, is anxious to do something handsome for the perpetuation of the movement in that city. Accordingly he places Baskerville Hall, or rather the nineteen years' lease, together with £1,000, at the service of his intention. The Hall is to be conveyed to Mr. Watts by deed of gift. The £1,000 is to be assigned to certain trustees, including Miss Baker, Mr. Morley of Birmingham, Mr. Holyoake, Mr. R. O. Smith, and myself. Thirty pounds of the 4 per cent. interest is to be paid yearly to Mr. Watts to defray the rates and taxes, and the balance to Mr. Baker during his life. The principal is to be invested in more commodious premises if Mr. Watts should ever find Baskerville Hall too limited; and if the enterprise should, from any unforeseen causes, come to grief, the trustees are to deal with the capital for the benefit of the movement, giving the preference of course to Birmingham. With the consent of all the parties, I am getting this trust deed prepared, and when it is thoroughly agreed upon it will be executed immediately.

Mr. Watts undertakes to reside in Birmingham and act as Freethought lecturer and organiser, with Baskerville Hall as his headquarters. He will not lecture there every Sunday, probably not more than two Sundays a month; half of his time will thus be free for the rest of the country, and I hope to see him one Sunday in every four at the London Hall of Science. He will have Baskerville Hall rent free, the rates and taxes will be paid (to the extent of £30, the present amount) by the trustees, and in these circumstances there is no reason why he should not achieve a brilliant success in the Midlands capital.

Before he begins operations there certain funds will be necessary. Into these I have not space to enter. £200 will be required immediately, and another £200 during the next year or two. About £100 is already promised. I am sending out a circular to possible subscribers, but no doubt there are many whose addresses I have not, and if this meets their eyes I hope they will contribute as promptly as possible. It will be understood that Mr. Watts is not begging. The money I refer to is necessary to the immediate and satisfactory carrying out of the Birmingham scheme, and I take the full responsibility of this appeal, although I may say it is heartily approved by Mr. Holyoake.

Mr. Watts is of course extremely sorry to sever his active connexion with the Canadian Freethinkers. During the years he has labored in the Dominion he has made many warm friends, who will deeply regret his present decision. But they will respect his motives, and they will doubtless reflect that in leaving Canada to resume his old life in England he is still wielding his sword in the service of Freethought.

G. W. FOOTE.

## ACID DROPS.

Silly people, with no strength of belief in anything, are always saying, "Don't dispute about doctrines any longer, let theology alone if you don't believe it, and let us all work together harmoniously as far as we agree." How impossible this is in real practice is shown by Mr. E. Dwyer Gray's letter announcing his secession from Mr. Parnell. In the opinion of most Englishmen, Mr. Parnell has done the right thing in marrying Mrs. O'Shea, but in the eyes of Catholics this is a worse crime than adultery. "Mr. Parnell," says Mr. Gray, "by his recent marriage has rendered it impossible that he should ever be recognised by the Catholic people of Ireland. The marriage is no marriage according to the teaching of the Catholic Church, and it is simply preposterous to think of carrying on the national movement under a leader to whom the Church is unanimously opposed."

Mr. Gray stuck to Mr. Parnell after the disclosure of his adultery, but he deserts Mr. Parnell after the disclosure of his marriage. In doing this he acts as a Catholic. How idle is it, therefore, to pretend that belief is unimportant! A man's belief as to the truth or falsity of religious dogmas must influence his judgment and color his life. The Freethinker must thus continue to oppose all priestly teaching which conflicts with the principles of Secularism.

Angelica Darocca, a "saint" residing in the Etsch Valley, in the Tyrol, has not taken on board victuals or drink for several years. Such, at any rate, is her story, and it is devoutly believed by superstitious Catholics. The Pope, however, has decided that Angelica is an impostor, and probably possessed by the Devil. This decision has caused much indignation; and, after all, the Pope might have held his tongue; for the people like a good, thumping mystery, and when they cease to do so it will be all over with the Catholic Church.

"A real Christian," says Price Hughes, "is a man who has so really repented of his sin, and so really trusted in Christ that he is in living union with Christ." Price Hughes, then, is hardly a Christian man. We have never heard of his repentance for concocting that abominable lie about the Atheist Shoemaker.

Price Hughes told his congregation that Jesus Christ was in St. James's Hall. True, they could not see him; but if the electric light were turned off they could not see Mr. Hughes! This piece of imbecility was obviously regarded as a mighty argument. It did not occur to Mr. Hughes that if the light were turned out, people could still touch him, or that it was not the absence of light that made Jesus Christ invisible.

The poorest church living in Great Britain is that of Wainfleet, where the parson gets 1s. 1½d. a week for ministering to 200 people. We wonder how long the Church of England would stand if livings were all reduced to this level.

The bankruptcy of Dr. Herbert Tibbitts, of Wimpolestreet reveals the fact that the confidence trick is occasionally resorted to by the pious: Dr. Tibbitts made himself responsible for a fashionable bazaar which was got up with some *éclat* under the designation of "The Coming Race." It did not pay, though the Princess of Wales was good enough to open it, and graciously received certain bulky purses understood to be costly offerings in the cause. They were, alas! but dummy offerings, lent as decoys to lure more genuine gifts. All for the glory of God!

Says the *Progressive Thinker*:—The clergy want us to understand they are models of perfection; yet it is verily believed there is more crime, more villainy, more indecency practised among them in proportion to their numbers than in any other class who have passed middle life.

Usury is censured by the Catholic Church, yet we read that the Pope has advanced two million francs to prevent the closing of the Bank of Rome.

Two million francs! £80,000! His Holiness advances this prodigious sum with apparent ease. Evidently it pays to be the Servant of the Servants of God. The Holy Trinity's



head butler is better off than Judas Iscariot, who sold the house for thirty half-crowns.

The Rev. W. E. Ryan, vicar of Pilton, in Devonshire, is wanted. A warrant is issued for his apprehension. He is charged with criminally assaulting some boys. According to the newspapers "evidence of a revolting character was given." Perhaps the reverend gentleman has joined Mr. De Cobain.

The Rev. Wm. Andrew Parsons, of St. Leonards-avenue, Bedford, was charged with being drunk and disorderly both outside and inside the Bedford Temperance Hotel. Sir J. Bridge said it was a very shocking case, and remanded the disciple of Noah for a week.

Samuel Simmons, of Leicester, an elderly deacon of a Wesleyan chapel and a widower with a grown-up family, engaged himself to Miss Elizabeth Clarke, and a correspondence, plentifully interspersed with religious references, ensued. Ultimately Deacon Simmons broke off the engagement, pleading that Elizabeth was not a Wesleyan as he had understood, and that she was unconverted. He now has to pay her £100 damages, which he can console himself is better than for Christ to have fellowship with Belial.

"Bishop" Gregg has, it seems, turned a lunatic, so that his case of libel against his churchwardens, who charged him with immorality, has had to be adjourned to the next assize, to see if he is able to be present.

"Thank God, I can meet Him when I die," was the exclamation of Edward Henry Fawcett Watts when sentenced to death for the murder of his wife at Portsea. His victim may have gone on the other path, but he is safe for the company of Moses, Joshua, and David.

At Barnstaple they are so pious that the mayor issues a summons instead of a warrant against the Rev. W. E. Ryan, and so lets him escape; and the ministers assemble and agree that the playing of a band on a Sunday is a scandal to religion. This is Christian piety all over.

Ernest Weeks, one of the chapel choir at Englishcombe, Somerst, has been sentenced to a month's imprisonment for assaulting a girl of 14 in the vestry of the chapel.

Canon Wilberforce has been telling his Southampton congregation that everyone will get to heaven in time, but the unconverted (those who don't believe like the Canon) will first have to pass through "a very long and terrible discipline of suffering." On the principle that half a loaf is better than no bread, Canon Wilberforce's doctrine may be welcomed. But why did he deliver the discourse "to men only"? Have women no souls, or will they all be damned? We pause for a reply.

If the women don't go to heaven we would rather go to the other place, for, as the good-natured cynic said, if it's bad enough with them, it's a darned sight worse without them. Let us go with the ladies, up hill or down.

The Rev. Walter Walsh, of Newcastle, is not a strong man. He has practically caved in to the Northern Baptist Association. His church "reverently accepts the declaration of the Baptist Union of 1848," which is a long orthodox rigmarole, including "justification by faith." After this, Mr. Walsh had better cease coquetting with Freethought, and stick to "the good old story."

How history is written! The Birmingham Daily Post publishes the following answer to a correspondent:—"T. J. C. —Yes, the body of the late Mr. C. Bradlaugh was cremated." We saw it buried in a grave at Woking cemetery.

When James II. absconded he took with him the English crown and jewels to the value of two millions sterling, which he buried near the monastery of Triel. Excavations have been repeatedly made there. The *St. James's Gazette* suggests that the Theosophists should raise the spirit of the departed monarch for further investigations.

In *Belgravia* for August is an account of Torquemada, the Spanish Inquisitor-General, who in the reign of Ferdinand and Isabella burnt over 10,000 persons for heresy, and impi-

soned another 90,000. The paper allows that he was sincere in his convictions, but keeps out of sight the fact that his atrocities sprang from religious zeal. Torquemada died peacefully in his bed at the age of seventy-eight.

In Canon Dixon's new *History of the Church of England* he clearly shows that "Bloody Queen Mary" was a really pious woman. Bishop Bonner, who sentenced so many in her reign, was also a truly pious person, actuated by similar holy motives to those of Torquemada. All these persecutors felt they were doing God a service in seeking to extirpate heresy.

The fifth part of *Cassell's Universal Atlas* gives a colored diagram of the religions of the world. The prevailing color is yellow, that standing for heathenism; while pink, which stands for Christianity, has still only possession of a comparatively small portion of the earth's surface.

The *Kaukab-i-Hind*, a Christian paper, says that the sweeper caste in Rohilkund is practically conquered for Christ, and that the next caste most available are the Chumars [shoemakers]. Now these are just the people that will take to Christianity, for before their eyes will float visions of tables, chairs, tweed suits and other important sundries. But we know from what we have ourselves seen, that even among them it is only a matter of self-interest.—*Modern Thought (Bombay)*.

Poor fellow! He was treated too severely. His name was Charles Clarke, and he was getting married at Birchanger Church, Bishops Stortford. Probably the situation was novel and he felt faint. He pulled out a bottle to refresh his drooping spirits, and for this little weakness the magistrates have fined him twenty shillings and costs. In future he will drink cheaper whiskey. Thirty shillings a bottle is too stiff.

What a hash modern criticism makes of traditional notions may be seen in Dr. Cheyne's book on the Psalter. By a long succession of writers Psalm xlv., which says "thy Throne, O God, is for ever and ever," has been referred to Christ. Psalm lxxii. is headed a "Psalm for Solomon." But Canon Cheyne is of opinion that both were composed in honor of Ptolemy Philadelphus, not long after his accession, B.C. 285, some seven hundred and fifty years after the time of David.

Floods on the continent and in India, ravages by caterpillars, the cholera among Moslem pilgrims, thunderstorms and deaths from lightning, are among recent instances of divine bounty.

The Catholic Congress will be held at Mechlin, Belgium, from Sept. 8 to the 12th. It will seek to put pressure on Germany for the restoration of the Jesuits and the Redemptorists, who are an offshoot of the Jesuits under another name.

The *Saturday Review*, noticing Dr. Kinns' new work, *Graven in the Rock*, says the doctor was proved "crassly ignorant of the most common facts of physical science." It also takes him to task on his interpretation of the second word in the Bible, *bara*, which he says is "to change inorganic matter into a living body," whereas its real meaning, says the *S. R.* reviewer, is to cut, to form, to fashion. An able Freethought writer of Jewish birth contends that Gen. i., 1, should be translated, "In the beginning the Elohim separated the heavens from the earth." Certainly the early Jews had no such abstract idea as that of creation from nothing. This translation will better suit the orthodox in rendering Is. xlv., 7, for the authorised version there makes God the direct creator of evil.

Clericalism is not popular in Mexico. On the night of the 24th ult. a mob gathered before the archbishop's palace in the City of Mexico, crying, "Death to the Pope! death to the evangelicals! death to the archbishop and to the priests! death to religion! long live Freemasonry!"

Episcopal Bishop Coxe, of Western New York, denounces bicycling as "grossly immodest as well as ridiculous for women." He says that "women on bicycles look like witches on broomsticks." He has been rebuked by favorers of the hygienic advantages of bicycling by women.

Another instance of how imperfectly the law of affirmation



is understood and administered turned up in a City Court the other day. A person who said he was not devoid of religious belief declined to take the oath, and the judge, because he was not a Quaker, refused to allow him to affirm. This was contrary to the law, which permits affirmation both to those who have no religious belief and those who have religious objections to swearing.

The telephone is being used in the service of religion at Birmingham. Wires from Christ Church have been switched on to the beds of sick Christians, and it is now proposed to connect the gospel-shop with the hospitals. Thus the clergy, who hated and persecuted science, now pay it to get them a hearing.

The pews in Talmage's tabernacle are put up to auction and knocked down to the highest bidder. One pew recently ran up to £150, and another to £151. We presume they commanded a good view of Talmage's mouth, which is one of the sights of America.

Had Jesus Christ run a tabernacle like Talmage's he would never have shouted "Woe unto you rich!" Nor would cashier Judas have sold the firm for thirty shillings.

Fur John P. Robinson, he  
Sez they didn't know everything down in Judee.

Dr. Berliner has published an account of the confiscation of Hebrew books which has gone on under the Papacy. The Talmud and books on the Kabbala have suffered the most; the former because supposed to contain blasphemies against Jesus, and the latter because reputed magical. On Sept. 9, 1553, an immense bonfire of Hebrew books was lit in the Campo dei Fiori, where forty-seven years later Bruno fell a victim to the Church. As late as 1753 thirty-eight waggon loads of Hebrew books were collected from the Ghetto in Rome for examination. A promise was made that all Bibles and prayer books should be restored to their owners, but it was not always kept. Even the Pirke Aboth, or Moral Sayings of the Fathers, were destroyed—possibly because showing that the moral teachings of Christianity are by no means original.

The *St. James's Gazette* announces that Queen Anne is dead, and gives the following verse, which it has received from a Scotch correspondent—

Our Queen Anne has been in heaven  
For years one seventy seven.  
We mourn our Anne who died  
And afterwards was skied.

According to the *Church Times*, the principal organ of High Churchmen, Queen Anne has not been in heaven that time, even though heaven be her ultimate destination. It lays it down that she and all good people have gone to Hades, translated "hell" in the authorised version. Hades, however, consists of two compartments—the place of torment and Abraham's bosom. Good people stay in the latter till the general judgment, so Queen Anne is now in the bosom of Abraham.

Mr. Spurgeon's brief message to an inquiring friend is somewhat peculiar. "My head does not work," he says, "but my heart does." That is the condition of many Christians.

A very secular decision is reported from India. It appears that a pious Hindu gave a live bull to one of the numerous gods of the Hindu pantheon, and loosed him. A less pious native took the bull, and heedless of the rights of the god yoked it to his wagon. The devout Hindu brought an action, but the judge decided that the bull was, according to ancient law and custom, no longer his property, but that of the god, whose business it was to look after his own property.

Last Sunday was the Feast of St. Anne, the mother of Mary, and celebrated in a Catholic hymn as "Grandmother of the Eternal God."

Wicked sceptics who have contested that a man could get down a whale's gullet should read the veracious story of "Bartley the Whaler," in last week's *Newcastle Weekly Chronicle*. Bartley was out in the "Star of the East," whaling off the Frankland islands, when he fell overboard and was taken in by a whale. The whale was fortunately

captured and Bartley cut out. His skin had already been exposed to the gastric juices and was bleached to a deathly whiteness. He came out wrinkled all over and had a general appearance of having been parboiled. Perhaps Jonah was in a similar state when he landed at Nineveh.

"John Calvin's Soul is Marching On" was the title of a discourse by Dr. Whiton, of New York, delivered at a Congregational church in North London. The preacher does not say *where* John is marching. It would be interesting to know if his soul went, after all, to the hell he was so cocksure of, and which he so delighted in gloating over as the receptacle of all predestined to damnation.

The *Rock* mourns over the heresy displayed at the recent Congregational Council, and deplores the "confessed abandonment of the old theology." We think of sending the editor a pocket-handkerchief.

Mr. Flinders Petrie has discovered portions of a lost play of Euripides, which Professors Mahaffy and Sayce say go back as far as the third century before Christ. This prompts the *Christian World* to hope that the next treasure-trove will be "a Greek gospel, which for antiquity and authority will put the Codex Sinaiticus into the shade." Our pious contemporary forgets two things, however; first, that the discovery of an early text might play old Harry with the already very much mixed work of the Holy Ghost; second, that the Church in all probability took good care to destroy all the gospel manuscripts older than the text it palmed off as canonical in the fourth century. Better let sleeping dogs lie.

The General Secretary of the Y.M.C.A. says there are over 7,000,000 young men in America, of whom 5,000,000 never darken a church door; 75 per cent. do not attend church, 95 per cent. do not belong to any church, and 97 per cent. do nothing to spread Christianity.

Three steamers, each with 900 pilgrims, leave America to visit the holy rag of Treves. Pilgrimages will also start from England. It is proposed to call *en route* from Treves at Bruges, where they have a drop of the genuine blood of the Savior; and at Courtrai, where they may see his holy hair—of course on payment of the requisite fees. Good business.

In regard to the seamless coat of Christ said to be on exhibition this month at Treves, Mr. Gerald Massey explains that the legend grew from the seamless linen bandages in which was enwrapped the mummy *Karast*, which among the Egyptians was a type of immortality. Mr. Massey holds that *Karast* was the original Christ.

Stewart Headlam has been at it again. He staggered the London School Board by proposing that the next elections should take place on Sunday. This sensible proposal was sternly rejected by 24 to 4.

The *Boston Investigator* says: "A woman of Mrs. Besant's ability could help the world so much by serving on the School Board in London. We are at a loss to see how she can help it at all by devoting her life to Theosophy."

Sir James Fergusson confessed in Parliament that the injudicious proceedings of certain English Christian missionaries in Morocco have aroused what he calls the fanaticism of the followers of Islam. In this case it is fanaticism against fanaticism, the cross against the crescent, an antagonism which kept the world in strife and bloodshed for centuries.

According to a book on epitaphs, published at Munich, the inscription on the churchyard cross in the commune of Obersteiermark runs as follows:—

This Cross is erected  
To the honor of the Lord Jesus Christ  
Who was crucified for us  
By the peasants of this parish.

The Bishop of Wakefield says that a Yorkshire woman recently told a clergyman that her husband was dissatisfied with the Baptists and the Congregationalists, and had become a Yarmouth Bloater. The poor woman meant a Plymouth Brother. Who but an expert can remember the names of all the sects of the only true religion?



## MR. FOOTE'S ENGAGEMENTS.

Sunday, Aug. 9, at 11.30, Finsbury Park (near the bandstand), "Why I Oppose Christianity." At 7.30, Hall of Science, 142 Old-street, London, E.C., "Follies of Theosophy."

August 16, South Shields. 23, Sunderland. 30, Liverpool. September 6, Birmingham. 13, morning, Victoria Park; evening, Hall of Science. 20, morning, Clerkenwell-green; evening, Hall of Science. 27, Manchester. October 4, 11, 18, 25, 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.

H. G. SHEPHERD.—Always glad to receive cuttings. See paragraph.

T. PHILLIPS.—Sorry to hear the *Spennymoor Chronicle* has fallen into the hands of a parson, who will not let the Secularists be heard, even in their own defence. Never mind. Peg away. One parson can't kill Freethought. It is more likely to settle the parson.

READER.—Sorry we cannot find room.

R. G. LEE.—The whole stock of Comic Bible Sketches was destroyed in the fire on our premises. The collection has not been reprinted; in fact, most of the blocks were irreparably injured.

G. B. H.—It forms the subject of a paragraph. See "Acid Drops."

W. HOLLAND.—Have patience. Of course the N. S. S. is opposed to all forms of superstition.

SCEPTICS.—Under consideration.

WM. HEAFORD.—We wish you the success you certainly deserve. Send us an account of your tour when concluded.

C. DORG.—The matter shall be seen to.

J. ROBINSON.—It was a poor piece of bigotry. We regret that Mr. Moss is deprived of the opportunity of debating with the Rev. G. Barton.

JOSEPH BROWN.—Pleased to hear of Sunday's success at South Shields, and also of Mr. Moss's success on his lecture tour.

J. W. HALLAM.—Shall be read through by next week.

R. McDUGALL.—(1) You will have enough to do if you try to stop every pious slanderer of Mr. Foote. The best plan is to ask these creatures to reduce the slander to writing. By the way, there was no such passage in the report the fellow referred to. He is probably the dupe of more unscrupulous knaves. Mr. Foote would bring one of them to book if he could get the slander in writing. Nothing short of that would be of any use before a Christian jury. There is, of course, the alternative of a sound thrashing, but the vermin always avoid Mr. Foote.

NEMO.—He should read our publications first. Then books like Greg's *Creed of Christendom*, Scott's *Life of Jesus*, Strauss's *Old Faith and the New*, Draper's *Conflict between Religion and Science*, and *Supernatural Religion*. If he requires further guidance we shall be happy to direct him.

S. SMITH.—We do not insert ordinary reports of lectures and meetings, though we devote a paragraph to anything special.

F. COOPER.—The Tree of Knowledge was the subject. The Tree of Life would need to be treated separately.

SEVERAL correspondents ask us to name the statute which forbids Freethought Societies to receive legacies. There is no such statute. The statute against blasphemy has never been put in force. All prosecutions have been under the Common Law, which makes it criminal to attack Christianity. Freethought advocacy is therefore illegal by a logical necessity.

E. SMEDLEY.—(1) Every moral precept in the Gospels is to be found, in the same or an equivalent form, in the writings of Pagan moralists or the teachings of heathen systems. (2) We do not try to love our enemies. We give them a wide berth, if they leave us alone. We love our friends instead. (3) Dr. Kennedy's book has no great reputation. We have not read it. Why not read it yourself if it is pressed so upon your attention?

PAPERS RECEIVED.—Fritankaren—Liberty—Freethought—Ironclad Age—Menschenthum—Echo—Neues Freireligiöses Sonntags-Blatt—Freidenker—The Liberator—Der Arme

Teufel—Secular Thought—Boston Investigator—Western Figaro—La Vérité Philosophique—Progressive Thinker—Truthseeker—Flaming Sword—Loyal American—Better Way—Newcastle Daily Chronicle—Newcastle Daily Leader—Birmingham Daily Post—North Devon Mail—Twentieth Century—Sunday School Chronicle—Wigan Observer—Bath and Cheltenham Gazette—Grays and Tilbury Gazette—Kent Messenger—Cosmopolitan—Church Reformer.

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.

Precisely as Mr. Foote stepped on the Battersea open-air lecture-stand on Sunday morning the rain began to pour down. Fortunately there was a hospitable railway arch a hundred yards off, and the meeting got under shelter. Despite the weather the audience grew larger and larger. After the lecture two ten-minutes' speeches were made in opposition by Mr. Taylor, a Christian lecturer, who has all the modesty and urbanity of his profession. The collection on behalf of the London Secular Federation realised £1 0s. 2d.

In the evening Mr. Foote lectured to a good audience at the Hall of Science on "The Tree of Knowledge." This evening (Aug. 9) he occupies the same platform again. His subject will be "The Follies of Theosophy." The Hall of Science audience has been treated to a good deal of Theosophy of late, and Mr. Foote intends just for once to let them see what Theosophy is when "naked and unashamed." Incidentally he will have something to say about the latest developments of Madame Blavatsky's most distinguished lady disciple.

This morning (Aug. 9) Mr. Foote delivers an open-air lecture in Finsbury Park. The Branch expects a big audience and Mr. Foote expects a good collection for the London Secular Federation.

Mr. A. B. Moss has had good meetings in the North. His audience at Crook market-place numbered about 500, and he was heard with keen attention. Opposition was offered by the Rev. G. Barton (Baptist), who complained of only having ten minutes to reply to an hour's discourse. Mr. Moss challenged him to a set debate, which the reverend gentleman accepted. But the Mechanics' Institute has been refused for the purpose, to the great disappointment of both sides.

Mr. Moss had another fine meeting at Spennymoor, where he won golden opinions by the way in which he kept the audience in hand. Some Salvation Army people turned up towards the close and caused considerable disturbance. One old local preacher said such lecturers should not be allowed to enter the town, and his opinion of "blasphemers" was that they should all be swept out of existence. This led to an uproar, and a rush was made for the platform, but Mr. Moss held his ground, and his coolness delighted the better sort of Christians as well as the Secularists.

Mr. W. Heaford begins a lecturing tour at Huddersfield on August 15. The subsequent fixtures are as follows:—16, Manchester; 17 and 18, Farsley; 23, Sheffield; 25, Grimsby; 30, Hull. Some of the unoccupied dates might be taken by Bradford, Leeds, and other places in the district. Mr. Heaford is willing to give open-air lectures. His address is 16 Lavender-terrace, Falcon-road, Battersea, London, S.W.

The August syllabus of lectures, under the auspices of the London Secular Federation, contains, in addition to an excellent little tract, particulars of no fewer than twenty-four stations where Freethought lectures are regularly given. It does not include Finchley and other places where lectures are occasionally given. We are pleased also to notice the names of some new lecturers in the list.

Mr. S. P. Putnam has been lecturing with acceptance at Chicago which is now a city of a million inhabitants. Mr. Putnam says there won't be room for those who come to the World's Fair. In a crowd the other day two or three people were actually pressed to death. It is hoped that aerial navigation will soon be established for the benefit of Chicagoans. No wonder they have big feet in Chicago. It



is necessary in order to stand the racket. One would be lost in the crowd without such an ample understanding.

The monument to the Atheistic dramatist, Christopher Marlowe, will be unveiled at Canterbury by Mr. Henry Irving on September 17. A little before his sudden death in 1593, one Richard Bame drew up an indictment against Marlowe for blasphemy. Now he is generally recognised as the greatest of the precursors of Shakespeare.

Thursday, Nov. 26, is the day fixed for the triennial elections for the London School Board, and no time should be lost in seeing that the secular aspect is pushed well to the front.

The most successful religions are those which have adopted the highest code of morals. Morality is a principle; religion is a theory. Morality can exist without religion. Morality never conflicts with the laws of nature; religion often does.—*Boston Investigator*.

The *Zoophilist* inserts in its columns an impassioned extract from one of Colonel Ingersoll's utterances against vivisection.

The Portsmouth Branch will "excurs" to Sea View today (Aug. 9), leaving Portsea at 10 a.m. The tickets are 1s. each, and can be had at the pontoon. We hope there will be a good party and fine weather.

Dr. Percy Macloghlin has a well-written letter on the Oath Question in the *Wigan Observer*. We are glad to see the matter ventilated, but we think Dr. Macloghlin is wrong in his interpretation of the Oaths Act (1888). We believe that the person who claims to affirm under that Act *must* state that he has *no* religious belief, or that the taking of an oath is *contrary* to his religious belief.

Mr. Joseph Brown sends us a glowing report of the North Eastern Secular Federation's annual Excursion to South Shields. The weather was rather mixed, but it never damped the ardor of the excursionists, who went through the programme like Trojans. The Singing Competition resulted in prizes to Mr. Thrat (1), Miss Haines (2), and Mr. Graham (3). Over 200 sat down to the knife-and-fork tea. Then came more music and recitations. Afterwards an open-air meeting was held, Mr. Peacock presiding, and Messrs. Moss and Dipper being the speakers. Finally, after handshaking and mutual congratulations on a happy day, the excursionists, to the number of about 400, left by train or brakes. Mr. Brown believes the gathering will lead to an extension of Freethought in Northumberland and Durham, and to the starting of some new Branches.

The Newcastle *Leader* gives a long extract from the annual report of the North-Eastern Secular Federation. It is pleasant to find the movement gaining recognition in the ordinary press.

Mr. Symes has published choice extracts from the Bible under the title of the *Scamps' Directory*. We are glad to see that, despite trade depression and recent storms, the *Liberator* is increasing in circulation.

The *Times of India*, in a long editorial, severely criticises Mr. Gladstone's *Impregnable Rock of Holy Scripture*, from a Rationalistic standpoint.

Signor Crispi's article in the August number of the *Contemporary Review* shows how largely the quarrel with the Pope and fear of French intervention forced Italy into the Triple Alliance. He states that at the time of the Giordano Bruno celebrations the Pope sent out a circular in regard to leaving Rome, and only hesitated because of the uncertainty of his return.

A splendid open-air meeting was held at Hull on Sunday. Mr. Billamy occupied the chair, Mr. Naewiger lectured, and was listened to attentively. These meetings increase the sale of literature and bring fresh members to the Branch.

We have just printed a nice edition of the Miscellaneous Theological Works of Thomas Paine. It is now at the binder's. We expect to have it on sale next week. The price is one shilling. This completes our edition of Paine's

writings. It is similar to the *Age of Reason*, with which it will be bound up in cloth, making a handsome half-crown edition of the author's complete theological writings. Our edition of the *Rights of Man* is printed in the same type.

### INGERSOLL ON CREEDS.

(From the "New York Morning Advertiser.")

[CONCLUDED.]

"KNOWING those things, and knowing, in addition to what I have stated, that there are 30,000 or 40,000 mistakes in the Old Testament, that there are a great many contradictions and absurdities, that many of the laws are cruel and infamous, and could have been made only by a barbarous people, Dr. Briggs has concluded that, after all, the torch that sheds the serenest and divinest light is the human reason, and that we must investigate the Bible as we do other books. At least, I suppose he has reached some conclusion. He may imagine that the pure gold of inspiration still runs through the quartz and porphyry of ignorance and mistake, and that all we have to do is to extract the shining metal by some process that may be called theological smelting; and if so I have no fault to find. Dr. Briggs has taken a step in advance—that is to say, the tree is growing, and when the tree goes the bark splits; when the new leaves come the old leaves are rotting on the ground.

### AS TO PRESBYTERIANISM.

"The Presbyterian Creed is a very bad creed. It has been the stumbling block, not only of the head, but of the heart for many generations. I do not know that it is, in fact, worse than any other orthodox creed; but the bad features are stated with an explicitness and emphasised with a candor that render the creed absolutely appalling. It is amazing to me that any man ever wrote it, or that any set of men ever produced it. It is more amazing to me that any human being thought it wicked not to believe it. It is more amazing still than all the others combined than any human being ever wanted it to be true.

This creed is a relic of the middle ages. It has in it the malice, the malicious logic, the total depravity, the utter heartlessness of John Calvin, and it gives me a great pleasure to say that no Presbyterian was ever as bad as his creed. And here let me say, as I have said many times, that I do not hate Presbyterians—because among them I count some of my best friends—but I hate Presbyterianism. And I cannot illustrate this any better than by saying, I do not hate a man because he has the rheumatism, but I hate the rheumatism because it has a man.

"The Presbyterian Church is growing, and is growing because, as I said at first, there is a universal tendency in the mind of a man to harmonise all that he knows or thinks he knows. This growth may be delayed. The buds of heresy may be kept back by the north wind of Princeton and by the early frost called Patton. In spite of these souvenirs of the dark ages the Church must continue to grow. The theologians who regard theology as something higher than a trade tend toward Liberalism. Those who regard preaching as a business, and the inculcation of sentiment as a trade, will stand by the lowest possible views. They will cling to the letter and throw away the spirit. They prefer the dead limb to a new bud or to a new leaf. They want no more sap. They delight in the dead tree, in its unbending nature, and they mistake the stiffness of death for the vigor and resistance of life.

"Now, as with Dr. Briggs, so with Dr. Bridgman, although it seems to me that he has simply jumped from the frying-pan into the fire; and why he should prefer the Episcopal creed to the Baptist is more than I can imagine. The Episcopal creed is, in fact, just as bad as the Presbyterian. It calmly and with unruffled brow utters the sentence of eternal punishment on the majority of the human race, and the Episcopalian expects to be happy in heaven, with his son or his daughter or his mother or his wife in hell.

"Dr. Bridgman will find himself exactly in the position of the Rev. Mr. Newton, provided he expresses his thought. But I account for the Bridgmans and the Newtons by the fact there is still sympathy in the human heart, and that there is still intelligence in the human brain. For my part I am glad to see this growth in the orthodox churches, and the quicker they revise their creeds the better. I oppose nothing that is good in any creed—I attack only that which is only ignorant, cruel and absurd, and I make the attack



in the interest of human liberty and for the sake of human happiness."

ORTHODOXY THE MASTER.

"What do you think of the action of the Presbyterian General Assembly at Detroit, and what effect do you think it will have on the religious growth?" was asked.

"That General Assembly was controlled by the orthodox within the Church," replied Col. Ingersoll, "by the strict constructionists and by the Calvinists; by the gentlemen who not only believe the creed, not only believe that a vast majority of people are going to hell, but are really glad of it; by gentlemen who, when they feel a little blue, read about total depravity to cheer up, and when they think of the mercy of God as exhibited in their salvation, and the justice of God as illustrated by the damnation of others, their hearts burst into a kind of efflorescence of joy.

"These gentlemen are opposed to all kinds of amusements except reading the Bible, the Confession of Faith and the Creed and listening to Presbyterian sermons and prayers. All these things they regard as the food of cheerfulness. They warn the elect against theatres and operas, dancing and games of chance.

"Well, if their doctrine is true, there ought to be no theatres, except exhibitions of hell; there ought to be no operas, except where the music is a succession of wails for the misfortunes of man. If their doctrine is true, I do not see how any human being could ever smile again—I do not see how a mother could welcome her babe; everything in nature would become hateful; flowers and sunshine would simply tell us of our fate.

"My doctrine is exactly the opposite of this. Let us enjoy ourselves every moment that we can. The love of the dramatic is universal. The stage has not simply amused, but it has elevated mankind. The greatest genius of our world poured the treasures of his soul into the drama. I do not believe that any girl can be corrupted, or that any man can be injured, by becoming acquainted with Isabella, or Miranda, or Juliet, or Imogen, or any of the great heroines of Shakespeare.

"So I regard the opera as one of the great civilisers. No one can listen to the symphonies of Beethoven or the music of Schubert, without receiving a benefit. And no one can hear the operas of Wagner without feeling that he has been ennobled and refined.

"Why is it the Presbyterians are so opposed to music in this world, and yet expect to have so much in heaven? Is not music just as demoralising in the sky as on the earth, and does anybody believe that Abraham, or Isaac, or Jacob, ever played any music comparable to Wagner?

"Why should we postpone our joy to another world? Thousands of people take great pleasure in dancing, and I let them dance. Dancing is better than weeping and wailing over a theology born of ignorance and superstition.

"And so with games of chance. There is a certain pleasure in playing games, and the pleasure is of the most innocent character. Let all these games be played at home and children will not prefer the saloon to the society of their parents. I believe in cards and billiards, and would believe in progressive euchre were it more of a game—the great objection to it is its lack of complexity. My idea is to get what little happiness you can out of this life, and to enjoy all sunshine that breaks through the clouds of misfortune. Life is poor enough at best. No one should fail to pick up every jewel of joy that can be found in his path. Every one should be as happy as he can, provided he is not happy at the expense of another.

"So let us get all we can of good between the cradle and the grave—all that we can of the truly dramatic, all we can of enjoyment; and if, when death comes, that is the end, we have at least made the best of this life, and if there be another life, let us make the best of that.

"I am doing what little I can to hasten the coming of the day when the human race will enjoy liberty—not simply of body, but liberty of mind. And by liberty of mind I mean freedom from superstition, and, added to that, the intelligence to find out the conditions of happiness; and added to that, the wisdom to live in accordance with those conditions."

If every copy of the Bible were destroyed, all that is good in that book would be reproduced in a single day.—*Ingersoll*.  
We find everywhere and always that whatever depresses man exalts and exaggerate the priests.—*James Parton*, *Life of Voltaire*, vol. 2, p. 300."

REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON INFIDELITY.

In accordance with a resolution passed at a meeting held under the presidency of the Lord Bishop of London, "that a committee be appointed to consider and report upon the prevalence of scepticism and infidelity and the best way of dealing with them," the following abstract of a private report, of which we do not guarantee the accuracy, as it is sent to us from a surreptitious source, is said to have been made.

My Lord Bishop,—Your committee have given the subject confided to them the utmost attention and regret to say that evidence, derived from many quarters, confirms the impression that scepticism and unbelief are largely prevalent, and, in some directions, gaining ground, especially among the working classes. This is a grave matter, and your committee feel deeply the responsibility of dealing with it. The extent of the evil is indeed more easily seen than the remedy, and we feel that the latter is a question to be dealt with by your lordship and the other spiritual authorities of the land, to whom we can only tender a few respectful suggestions and considerations.

Your committee has chiefly devoted its attention to the prevalence of unbelief among the masses, but it has observed with pain that the example of the higher orders is by no means what could be desired. The violation of the Sabbath in pleasure parties and excursions by the well-to-do, sets a terrible fashion which is largely responsible for the evils we have to deplore.

In our universities a tone of unbelief is found to prevail among the studious classes. It is among the majority taken for granted that the Darwinian view is established, and the great essentials of our faith but legendary traditions from more barbarous ages. A shocking and blasphemous parody of the Holy Sacrament by the students of a noted college shows to what lengths may be carried the reaction against superstition, as our helps to the realisation of the supernatural are deemed. In our large public schools practical unbelief is the order of the day. Boys grow from youth into manhood with a general disregard of the divine offices of religions. Doubtless this is in part due to the defective home religious teaching, but the examples of their elders and the influence of the literature to which they have access are largely responsible. In young men who have entered upon the duties of life we have to deplore an awfully godless condition. In some large firms where the employees are boarded at home, strict attention to prayers and other religious offices is enforced, but this commendable effort has, we fear, but slight influence. With the mass of business people the cares of this world and the deceitfulness of riches, are becoming more and more absorbing, to the exclusion of God and his Church.

Among the working classes we have found not only agnosticism and unbelief, but, alas, openly professed Atheism. While with the bulk toleration of all faiths has passed into indifference to any, a few are devoted to preaching their horrible creed of negation as though it were what they profess, the charter of human emancipation. An ungodly regard to the wisdom of this world and the teachings of science has made these elevate men like Darwin and Huxley into an authority above that of Moses, or even of our blessed Lord. Literature of a blasphemous character is widely circulated, and prosecutions have been found of little avail to suppress it. A more rigid enforcement of the law which is broken by high-priced publications as well as by those which reach the masses is eminently desirable. This literature, we regret to report, is circulated over every part of the English speaking world, and is doing much to counteract the noble efforts of Christian missionaries in India, Japan, and other countries.

What other efforts should be made to counteract the pernicious propaganda has engaged our most serious attention. We are sorry to confess that the agencies hitherto employed have appeared miserably inadequate and ineffective. We can indeed but unite in prayer to God that he in his good time will open our eyes that we may see how the threatened destruction of our holy religion may be averted.

THE DOGMA OF THE CHURCHES.—When a man talks to you about Jesus in the language of the Churches—about the atonement, original sin, sanctification, saving grace, etc.—he simply uses a jargon that may mean something to him, but can mean nothing at all to an outsider. He states as facts things which have no ground either in reason or experience; they belong to a world apart, which neither the rest of our knowledge nor our faculties of reason and observation can put us in communication with.—*John Burroughs*.



## WHO KNOWS?

EVEN granting that He—or she, or it,  
 One toparch, or many—beyond the sky:  
 May not this infinitesimal bit  
 Of matter escape an eternal eye!  
 What interest can an undying pow'r  
 Take in the insect lives of an hour?

What if those specks which are spinning in space  
 To Him seem counters of weightless worth,  
 Waste sparks from the anvil, which have no place  
 In the mind of the worker who sent them forth,  
 Who, quite unaware of ephemeral life,  
 Marks only the things with eternity rife!

Of course, an indignant mite must deny  
 That *his* cheese could only a "counter" be;  
 In playing a game so surpassingly high  
 His race never dream'd of its lowest degree—  
 But finite planet, cheese, mite or man  
 May count for no more in an infinite plan.

Burning off acres of forest or lea,  
 We torture, and kill, without pity or care,  
 Destroying, in spite of our impotency  
 To animate anything perishing there—  
 And, shall not your "Author and Finisher" do  
 As much, paltry parasite, careless of you!

What if the motors pursue their course,  
 Regardless of finite effect and cause,  
 Insentient strength, like the lightning's force,  
 Mathematical motors, of "Kepler's laws!"  
 And were they not seers, rightful monarchs of mind,  
 Who discern'd that eternal justice was blind?

(Liberator.)

HOMO.

## NATIONAL SECULAR SOCIETY.

Executive Meeting, July 29, Mr. Foote in the chair. Present: Miss Vance, Mrs. Thornton Smith, Messrs. Reynolds, R. O. Smith, George Standring, J. M. Wheeler, J. H. Ellis, J. M. Robertson, R. Killick, G. J. Warren, E. Bater, J. Samson, W. Heaford, S. Hartmann, W. Heard, F. A. Davies, C. Quinton, E. Larkin, J. E. Brumage, and Jones, sec. The minutes of last meeting were read and confirmed. The financial statement for the month was received. Mr. Foote informed the meeting that he was in communication with Mr. Holyoake, who was endeavoring to get a member of Parliament to take charge of a Bill for the repeal of the Blasphemy Laws. Mr. Foote reported the arrangements which had been made by the sub-committee for carrying on the lectures, etc., at the Hall of Science. Mr. Samson proposed that the Free-thought organisations in the English colonies and the United States of America be approached with a view to exchange reports of progress made and work done in the movement. Mr. Hartmann seconded the proposal, and it was adopted. Mr. Samson proposed, and Mr. Brumage seconded, "That Col. Ingersoll be invited on a lecturing tour to England"; carried. Mr. Foote reported to the Executive the plan of new tracts recommended by the Organisation Committee; approved.—STANLEY JONES, Sec.

## OBITUARY.

I have to record the death of Mr. Philip Shepherd, aged 35. He was an active member of the Grimsby Branch of the N. S. S. some years since, but his complaint (paralysis) made him totally unable to earn his own living these two years. Mr. Shepherd was interred last Monday, Mr. Henry Blakelock reading the Secular Burial Service over him.—J. W. WITTING.

I deeply regret to record the death of Robert Henry Thompson, of Jarro, who died on July 27. Deceased was a Freethinker of thirty years standing, and for the past twelve-months was a member of the Newcastle Branch of the N. S. S. Death was owing to a fall down the hold of a vessel in course of construction at Messrs. Palmer's on the 26th of November last. Inflammation of the brain set in, finally resulting in death. He died as he lived, a Freethinker.—J. G. BARTHAM.

It would be no over-statement to say that for nearly six hundred years the priests of the Galilean miracle-monger persuaded a plurality of the Caucasian nations to risk their lives in defence of dogmas, the mere profession of which would start a modern Christian on a galloping trip to the next lunatic asylum.—Professor F. L. Oswald.

## A MINISTER THRASHED.

The *Melbourne Herald* of June 19 contains the following telegram from an Adelaide correspondent: A short time back a clergyman belonging to one of the Dissenting bodies arrived from England, and was given the charge of a church a little distance from the city. After he had for some months, on successive Sundays, been ably preaching the Gospel, one of the church members learnt that someone had been paying great attention to his daughter (the church member's daughter). The father became terribly annoyed, and by force and threats obtained from his daughter the name of her admirer. She told her enraged father that it was the rev. gentleman who preached in their church. The father straight-way proceeded to the minister's residence, and after an interview the minister declared that he would marry the girl "on the morrow," and the now satisfied father took his departure. The rev. gentleman, who has a wife and family in England, proceeded next day to take his departure from the colony. He booked by the outgoing steamer which left that day, and got safely on board before the steamer sailed. However, the father heard of the flitting, and boarded the vessel. There he found that the rev. gentleman was on board. After a search he discovered him hidden in the engine-room, and without any ado he set to and administered a sound thrashing to the parson, who loudly cried for mercy. This was denied him at first, but one of the barmen of the steamer, seeing that the fellow had received a fearful trouncing, rescued him and took him away to the bar, where he concealed him. The father of the girl, being satisfied, took his departure shortly afterwards, and the rev. gentleman steamed away over the blue waters to rejoin his wife.

## TALMAGE SLUSH.

Talmage talks about God as flippantly as a jockey of the points of a trotter, but he believes the corn of the Bible was Indian corn! The corn of the Bible was probably the Doorah corn, a kind of sorghum lately introduced into this country, and remarkable for its capability of resisting a hot and arid climate. It is grown in the east to-day, and there has been little change in its culture since the days of the Pharaohs. Talmage has gained notoriety by adroitly using the means of patent medicine quacks, and the press usually discreet and quick to detect an advertising deadhead, has complacently given him space that would cost "old Dr. Townshend," Hood, or the soap men thousands and hundreds of thousands of dollars.—Hudson Tuttle.

## TOUJOURS PERDRIX.

Two divinity students were spending a holiday at one of our northern fishing stations. Their landlady was tidy and obliging and all that sort of thing, but she happened to be a Christian, and was fond of the "bawbees." The herrings were cheap, and she naturally concluded that such "halesome farin" would suit her distinguished lodgers. The first day the breakfast and dinner consisted of these dainties, and the same thing on the second. At the dinner on the second day the younger of the students looked across the table (the landlady was present) and made some remark about a certain passage in the New Testament, Hebrew xiii., 8. His companion smiled an intelligent smile and proceeded with the meal. The same fare was set before them again for breakfast in the morning of the third day, and again the same passage was quoted, and again both young men smiled. This was rather puzzling to the good landlady, who, as soon as the coast was clear got down her Bible and turned it up at the passage referred to. To her horror what did she find—"Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, and to-day and for ever." But it was *not* to be "for ever." That morning, in the dark, two young men might have been seen, bag in hand, hurrying along in the direction of the railway station.

JACK'S YARN.—Jack Riggott had been spinning old Mrs. Tartam any quantity of salty yarns. She was quite surprised at Jack's ups and downs, trials, tribulations, and travels. Jack had assured the old lady that he had sailed over many and many cities, all under water, and whose roofs and chimneys, with the signboards on the stores, were still quite visible. He had seen Lot's wife, or the pillar of salt she was finally frozen into. "And did you see that—Lot's wife?" asked the old lady. "Yes, marm; but 'taint there now; the cattle got a-foul of the pillar of salt one day, and licked it all up!" "Good gracious, Mr. Riggott!" "It's a fact; I seed 'em at it, and tried to skeer 'em away."



**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.**

Battersea Secular Hall (back of Battersea Park Station): Monday, at 8, social gathering. Wednesday, at 7.30, dramatic class. Thursday, at 8, committee meeting.  
 Camberwell—61 New Church Road, S.E.: 7.30, Mr. B. Hyatt, "Christian Symbols and Festivals of Pagan Origin." Preceded by a dramatic study from *Romeo and Juliet*.  
 East London—Swaby's Coffee House, 103 Mile End Road: 8, Mr. S. Soddy, "Myth and Science."  
 Finsbury Park—1 Rock Street, Blackstock Road: Thursday, at 8.30, members' meeting.  
 Hall of Science, 142 Old Street, E.C.: 7.30, Mr. G. W. Foote, "Follies of Theosophy."  
 West Ham—Secular Hall, 121 Broadway, Plaistow: 7.30, Mr. F. J. Boorman, "The Evolution of Man." Thursday, at 8, open debate.  
 West London—Clarendon Coffee Palace, Clarendon Road (close to Latimer Road Station): Friday, at 8.30, Mr. F. Schaller, "Darwin v. Moses."

**OPEN-AIR PROPAGANDA.**

Battersea Park Gates: 11.15, Mr. W. Norrish, "Love ye one another"; 7, Mr. A. Johnson, "The Christ of History and the Christ of Legend."  
 Bethnal Green (opposite St. John's Church): 11.15, Mr. W. Heaford, "Is Christianity True?"  
 Camberwell—Station Road: 11.30, Mr. B. Hyatt, "Three Bible Stories Astronomically Explained."  
 Clerkenwell Green: 11.30, Mr. F. Haslam, "English Freethinkers of the Eighteenth Century."  
 Edmonton (corner of Angel Road): 7, Mr. C. Cohen, "A Scientific Education."  
 Finsbury Park (near the band-stand): 11.30, Mr. G. W. Foote, "Why I Oppose Christianity"; 3.30, Mr. J. Fagan, "How I Became a Secularist, and Why I Remain one."  
 Hammersmith Bridge (Middlesex side): 6.30, Mr. F. Haslam, "English Freethinkers of the Eighteenth Century."  
 Hyde Park (near Marble Arch): 11.30, Mr. Stanley Jones will lecture. Wednesday, at 7.30, Mr. Neil Corbett, "The Ten Commandments."  
 Kilburn—Salisbury Road (close to Queen's Park Station): 6.30, Mr. C. J. Hunt, "The Creed of Christianity."  
 Kingsland Green: 11.30, Mr. H. Courtney, "The Decay of Christianity."  
 Lambeth (corner of Belvedere Road, opposite St. Thomas's Hospital), Westminster Bridge: 6.30, Mr. R. Rosetti will lecture.  
 Leyton (open space near Vicarage Road, High Road): 3.30, Mr. C. Cohen, "The Ethical Aspect of Religion."  
 Midland Arches (corner of Battle Bridge Road): 11.30, Mr. S. Standing, "The Presbyterian God."  
 Mile End Waste: 11.30, Mr. C. Cohen, "What we have Gained by Christianity."  
 North Finchley—Mr. Schofield's plot, Coleridge Road: 7, Mr. Sam Standing, "The Duty of Secularists Under Persecution."  
 Old Pimlico Pier: 11.30, Mr. C. J. Hunt, "Evolution and Design."  
 Plaistow Green (near the Station): 11.30, Mr. F. J. Boorman, "Who was Jesus?"  
 Regent's Park (near Gloucester Gate): 3.30, Mr. H. Snell will lecture.  
 Stratford—Matthew's Park Estate, Ham Park Road: 3.30, Mr. F. J. Boorman, "The Origin of Christianity."  
 Tottenham (corner of West Green Road): 3.30, Mr. W. B. Thompson, "The Sabbath of Man and the Sabbath of God."  
 Victoria Park (near the fountain): 11.30, Mr. J. Vining, "Theosophy"; 3.15, Mr. W. Heaford, "What must I do to be Saved?"  
 Wood Green—Jolly Butcher's Hill: 11.30, Mr. W. B. Thompson, "Heaven: 'This day shalt thou be,' etc."

**COUNTRY.**

Crook—35 Gladstone Terrace, Sunnyside, Tow Law: 6.30, a business meeting.  
 Hull—Friendly Societies' Hall, Albion Street, No. 2 Room: 6.30, business meeting. Quarterly subscriptions due.  
 Liverpool—Camden Hall, Camden Street: 11, Tontine Society; 7, Mr. Harry Smith, "Are Christians Christians?"  
 Newcastle-on-Tyne—25 Nelson Street: 3, fortnightly meeting of members, important business. Debating Class: 7, Mr. J. Tullin, "The Real Trinity—Atheism, Republicanism, and Malthusianism."  
 Sheffield—Hall of Science, Rockingham Street: Mr. Charles Watts, 11, "Freethought in England and America"; 3, "The False Claims of the Bible"; 7, "Religion Without Superstition."  
 South Shields—Capt. Duncan's Navigation School, King Street: 7, business meeting, arrangements for Mr. Foote's lectures, etc.  
 Spennymoor—Victoria Hall, Dundas Street: 10.30, business meeting.

**OPEN-AIR PROPAGANDA.**

Hull—Corporation Field: 2.30, Mr. S. Thompson, "The Crimes of Christianity."  
 Leeds—Woodhouse Moor (near the band-stand): 6.30, Mr. J. Greevz Fisher, "The Bible in Board Schools."  
 Newcastle—Quayside (near big crane): 11, Mr. A. T. Dipper, "The New Testament Not Authentic."

**LECTURERS' ENGAGEMENTS.**

CHARLES WATTS.—Aug. 9, Sheffield; 16, Failsworth; 23, Hall of Science, London; 30, Edinburgh. Sept. 2, Paisley; 7, Glasgow.

ARTHUR B. MOSS, 44 Credon Road, Rotherhithe, London, S.E.—July 26 to Aug. 9, Holiday Tour. Aug. 16, morning, Battersea; 23, morning, Westminster; 30, morning, Woolwich. Sept. 6, morning, Clerkenwell; 13, morning, Bethnal Green; afternoon, Victoria Park; 20, morning, Westminster.

C. J. HUNT, 48 Fordingley Road, St. Peter's Park, London, W.—Aug. 9, morning, Pimlico; evening, Kilburn; 16, morning, Clerkenwell; evening, Lambeth; 23, morning, Hyde Park; evening, Hammersmith; 30, morning, Camberwell; evening, Lambeth.

STANLEY JONES, 28 Stonecutter Street, London, E.C.—Aug. 16, Luton; 23, Leyton; 30, Halstead. Sept. 6, Rochdale; 13, Manchester; 20, Liverpool.

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