

# The Freethinker

Edited by G. W. FOOTE.]

[Sub-Editor, J. M. WHEELER.

Vol. XI.—No. 34.]

SUNDAY, AUGUST 23, 1891.

[PRICE ONE PENNY.

## CHRIST'S COAT, NUMBER TWO.

JESUS CHRIST is urgently required on earth again, to settle the pious dispute between Trèves and Argenteuil as to which possesses the real seamless coat that was taken from him at the Crucifixion and raffled for by the Roman soldiers. No one but the second person of the Trinity, unless it be the first or third person of that three-headed monstrosity, is adequate to the settlement of this distracting quarrel. Even the Papacy, which represents the Holy Trinity on earth, is at variance with itself. Pope Leo favors Trèves, and the wicked pilgrims who visit that little old town are to obtain absolution, if they do not forget to "pray for the extirpation of erroneous doctrines." Pope Pius, his predecessor, however, favored Argenteuil. A portion of the Holy Coat treasured in the church there, was sent to him, and in return for the precious gift he forwarded a well-blessed and marvellously decorated wax taper, which is still on show in a fine state of preservation.

When Popes differ, ordinary people, like pious Christians, and even the editors of Freethought journals, may be excused if they hesitate to commit themselves. One of these coats *may* be the true one, though the evidence is all against it, being in fact of such a shaky nature that it would hardly suffice to substantiate a claim to a bunch of radishes. But *both* of them *cannot* be authentic, and the problem is, which is the very coat that J. C. wore? Now it is obvious that no one—barring his two colleagues aforesaid—can possibly determine this question but himself. His re-appearance on earth is therefore most desirable; nay, it is absolutely necessary, unless a lot of people who would fain bow before the cast-off clothes of their Redeemer are either to stay at home in a state of dubiety or to incur the risk of kneeling before a mouldy old rag that perchance belonged to a Moorish slave or a Syrian water-carrier—in any case to a dog of an infidel who spat at the very name of Christ, for such raiment was never worn by the worshippers of the Nazarene.

If J. C. is coming to decide this great and grave problem, he will have to make haste, for Argenteuil is already on the war-path. Its Holy Coat is being exhibited before that of Trèves, and thousands of pilgrims are giving Number Two the preference. Presently the Trèves relic will attract its thousands, and the spectacle will be positively scandalous. Two Richmonds in the field were nothing to two Christ's Coats, each pretending to be the real article, and each blessed by a Pope. For the sake of decency as well as truth J. C. should peremptorily interfere. It is  
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difficult to see how he can refrain. The Second Advent may therefore be expected before the date assigned by Prophet Baxter, and we shall probably soon hear the faithful singing "Lo he comes in clouds descending."

Why should he not come? we may ask the Catholics. His mother has often appeared, if we may believe the solemn affidavits of priests and bishops, backed up by the Holy See. Why should he not come? we may also ask the Protestants. His second coming is an article of their faith; it is plainly taught in the New Testament, and was recently propounded by Mr. Spurgeon as part of the irreducible minimum of the Christian faith. That he will come, then, may be taken for granted; and what better opportunity could be desired than the present? Surely the faithful, all over Europe—ay, and in America, to say nothing of Asia, Africa, and Australia—will cry like one man, "Come Lord Jesus, quickly come! Tell us, oh tell us, which of these mouldy old rags did once grace thy holy shoulders? Save us, oh save us, from the pain, the ignominy of adoring a dirty relic of some unknown sinner, who perhaps blasphemed thy holy name. Lighten our darkness, we beseech thee, O Lord!"

Meanwhile we may point out that, if Christ does not come and adjudicate between Trèves and Argenteuil, a multitude of Christians will certainly go on a fool's errand. Our private opinion is that all will do so who visit either of these places. Nevertheless they will no doubt congratulate themselves, if they go to Trèves, on winning absolution. The Holy Father at Rome, who has a supernatural dispensing power, promises to wipe out the record of their sins. Liars, cheats, seducers, adulterers, and undetected assassins, may take a trip, perform genuflexions before something in a glass case, and return home with a clean record. Who can conceive an easier method of avoiding the consequences of wickedness? As for the prayer which the pilgrims are to offer up for "the extirpation of erroneous doctrines," it will cost them very little effort, for sinners who are washed clean with such delightful celerity are not likely to be in love with "erroneous doctrines" that declare the Pope's dispensing power a sham, and sternly tell men that the consequences of action, whether good or bad, are inevitable. We very much doubt, however, if "erroneous doctrines" will disappear through the prayers of the pilgrims or the curses of the Pope. Scepticism will probably gain by the spectacle of two rival Coats of Christ, both exhibited at the same time, both attracting crowds of devotees, and both enjoying the Papal blessing. It will bring superstition into still further contempt, and promote the rejection of a creed which has ever traded on ignorance and credulity.

G. W. FOOTE.

## EDUCATION AND HEREDITY.\*

By the death of M. Jean Marie Guyau, who expired from consumption at Mentone, 31 March, 1888, in his thirty-fourth year, French Freethought suffered a loss similar to our own, in the death of William Kingdon Clifford, nine years previously. M. Guyau was the most promising of the scientific school of Freethinkers. Like J. S. Mill, he was an instance of the advantage of being trained without religious belief. His education was almost wholly due to his mother, who is known in France as the author of several works on education, and to her cousin, M. Alfred Fouillée, with whom she became joined in second wedlock, and who is one of the most distinguished and original of French philosophical writers. At the age of nineteen M. Guyau had the honor of being crowned by the Academy of Moral and Political Sciences for his work on the Utilitarian Moralists from Epicurus to Bentham. In the following year he gave a course of philosophical teaching at the Lycée Condorcet, Paris. Overwork affecting his health, he was compelled to retire to the shores of the Mediterranean, where he devoted the rest of his life to literary and philosophical works. Of these the principal are his books on contemporary English ethics, his sketch of a morality without obligation or sanction, and his work on *The Irreligion of the Future*, which ought long since to have been translated into English. In addition to the work before us, M. Guyau left posthumous works on the Sociological Conception of Art, and the Philosophical Ideas of Victor Hugo.

In all M. Guyau's works he had, he says, one end in view, the linking together of ethics, æsthetics, and what is called religion, but which is the sentiment of humanity, which he terms the irreligion of the future, with the idea of *life*—life at once in its most intensive and extensive form. It is round this central idea that the present work crystalises. The life of the society is the standard by which he would estimate and regulate all educational aims and methods. The development of the life of each of us is to be measured by the range and intensity of our human interests. "It is in paternity alone," so he begins the volume, "that man first sounds the depths of his heart—in complete conscious paternity, that is to say in the education of his child," and the aim of his volume is to make education the means of wider, fuller life both to instructor and to pupil. He lays the first stress on moral education. The child must be taught his true relation to the society of which he forms a part. He must be led to understand that his own self-realisation is possible only if, and so far as, he widens and deepens his social instincts and sympathies.

Physical education is second only in importance to moral education. To train the intellect at the expense of the bodily health is to kill the goose that lays the golden eggs. M. Guyau says: "There should be no time when we cease to learn. . . . Inspire children, and especially young girls, with a taste for reading, study, works of art, and elevated amusement; this taste will be worth far more than all *knowledge*, strictly so-called, artificially implanted in them: instead of a mind furnished with lifeless knowledge, you will have a mind at once living, moving, and progressive. Instead of alluring the brain to become atrophied by excess of expenditure, you will have a larger and larger brain, capable of transmitting to the race loftier moral and intellectual dispositions, and that without prejudice to the basis of all the rest, physical and vital energy." M. Guyau aims rather at planting ideas than knowledge, and holds that the representation of an ideal self may be made the most

persuasive and persistent of ideas, and thus become the dominant principle of conduct.

The child, says M. Guyau, should be taught self-reliance. "'Have faith' is the cry of piety. For morality it is further necessary to have faith in one's self, in one's own power, and that independently of all external aid; it is a good thing to expect an abundant spring to leap forth from the heart at the first summons, without the employment of the magic wand which Moses used in his day of doubt; the least doubt may make us dry and sterile, and prevent the welling up of the living will. We must have confidence in the power of our lord and master—ourselves." The doctrine of original sin instilled in childhood produces, says M. Guyau, a real hereditary sin—that is, an unhealthy hallucination. "In this respect the lay morality of Confucius, of which the peculiar characteristic is the repeated assertion of the goodness of human nature in the normal man, is much superior to the religious ethics derived from Christianity or Brahmanism. Although the doctrines may be disputed from the physiological point of view, it is useful for educative suggestions." And indeed, as our author goes on to show, every individual as a naturally sociable being must have some good in him. He is the best who is most conscious of his solidarity with other beings and the universe.

At present the education of children is warped by their being taught a number of abstractions and dogmas which have no vital relation to life. For ideals, too, they are referred to the barbarous and often immoral examples of an ancient book whose authority is made to supersede the use of reason. Rational education will surely receive an impetus when it gets away from the nightmare of theology.

M. Guyau believes in the power of training. He even asks M. Ribot, "Might not education create certain psychic qualities? The words '*to create*' can no more be taken absolutely in heredity than in education. Heredity does not, properly speaking, create; it fixes and accumulates certain qualities, which often have themselves been acquired by education in the broad sense of the word." In truth, it is not easy to distinguish between nature and nurture; whether, for instance, the son of a thief is trained to theft or inherits his parent's propensity. If the thesis of my friend Mr. W. P. Ball is correct, and the effects of use and disuse are not inherited, the result, I venture to think, will not be to resign education as hopeless, but to lay greater stress upon it as the main modifier of human nature.

It may be charged as a fault on M. Guyau that he does not first ascertain the extent and limitations of heredity. But the work of Mr. Ball already referred to, in which my friend challenges with effect the conclusions of men like Darwin and Huxley, is sufficient to show that this question cannot be settled offhand. What M. Guyau does is to assume the general fact of inheritance, and then seek how far it can be modified by education and suggestion. From what he says on the physical progress of the race and the growth of population, it is evident he does not overlook the action of both natural and artificial selection; indeed, he says, "Woe, then, to the weak! they must be eliminated, and we must mercilessly apply to them the words of Jesus to the Canaanitish woman, 'It is not meet to take the children's bread and to cast it to the dogs.'" M. Guyau appears to lament the wilful infecundity of his countrymen. He contrasts the stationary population of France with the increasing numbers of Germany. Apparently he would resort to school teaching for a remedy, for he says: "It is not difficult in the primary schools and lyceums, in the teaching of geography and political economy, to lay great weight on the element of power, intellectual wealth, and social selection that is brought to a State by a large population. By holding meetings of soldiers, or workmen or peasants,

\* The Contemporary Science Series, edited by Havelock Ellis, *Education and Heredity: A Study in Sociology*. By J. M. Guyau. Translated from the second edition by W. J. Greenstreet, M.A., with an introduction by G. F. Stout, M.A., London: Walter Scott, 24 Warwick-lane, Paternoster-row; 1891.

we have the opportunity of pointing out these advantages; there is no need whatever to enter into details that may outrage modest ears. All we have to do is to accustom every mind to think upon the future of the nation and of the race." We can but think it will be a difficult task to draw the narrow, calculating mind of the French peasant into thoughts of the remote advantages to his nation from a large population, when he sees before him, as the immediate prospect, a further sub-division of his limited land. He is likely to consider it as the parsons do the teachings of Christ about riches—very good doctrine for other people to practise.

It is in the laws of *suggestion*, to which attention has recently been directed by hypnotisers and psychophysicists, that M. Guyau finds the power of modifying heredity. He says: "Modern discoveries in suggestion seem to me of capital importance in education, because they give us the power of ascertaining *de facto* the possibility of always creating in a mind at every stage of its evolution, an artificial instinct, capable of producing an equilibrium of long or short persistence in pre-existing tendencies. If this introduction of new sentiments is possible by entirely physiological means, it should be equally possible by moral and psychological means." No doubt all are more or less impressionable, capable of being magnetised by the words and ideas of others. But the question how far children, from the imperfect nature of their mental organisation, are in a similarly susceptible condition to hypnotic patients, and how far and how permanently these may have a new nature imposed on them is by no means satisfactorily determined. At the same time it cannot be denied there is much that is suggestive in M. Guyau's view that the great purpose of education is to set up, by direct suggestion or repeated action, a series of habits, strengthening the other impulses of hereditary origin where beneficial, and arresting and supplanting them where detrimental. Whatever may be thought of his views, it is certain the work is one dealing with the most important and fundamental problems, and well worth the attention of all interested in the progress of their species.

J. M. WHEELER.

## PROBLEMS FOR THE HIGHER CRITICISM.

BY VAN BUREN DENSLOW.

(Continued.)

Will the higher criticism consent to consider the account given in the twenty-second chapter of the second book of Kings, and also in the thirty-fourth chapter of the second book of Chronicles, of the finding by the chief priest and the scribe, in the temple, during the minority of the young King Josiah, who is in the eighteenth generation after Solomon, of "the book of the law of the Lord according to Moses?" And if so, will it conclude, with Voltaire and others who had preceded him, that this is the date of the concoction of the Pentateuch; that the Jews were therefore not under the Mosaic law at all during the periods of David or Solomon, nor until within forty-five years of their final extinction as a nation? Will they accept the slaughter which was then ordered of all the Jewish priests who refused to recognise this new law, and who had never heard of Moses and Aaron, or of the ark, or of the passover, or of the captivity in Egypt, or of the exodus, or of the drowning of Pharaoh and his chariots in the "sea of weeds," as being a good and healthy mode of inaugurating a new religion?

Will the new criticism lend its sanction to the old criticism of Voltaire that the so-called Jewish law never prevailed over the Jewish people until on the eve of their overthrow, and that the alleged descendants of Moses, whom he led out of the wilderness, were as ignorant of his existence until the alleged

finding of certain alleged manuscripts in the temple while the carpenters were making repairs, as it has of late been discovered that the Egyptians have at all times been of the arrival or the dreams of Joseph, of the departure or the potency of Moses, or of the fact that the Jewish nation were in any manner cradled in Egypt? For although the apologists with a brief have selected four distinct and wholly unlike events and have tried to find the Moses story in each of them, yet it hides more perfectly than Moses in the bulrushes from any identity with any events recorded by the Egyptians as part of their history.

Will the new criticism admit that Moses and Aaron were but the heroes of a novel, that the Egyptians never lost a Pharaoh by drowning while in chase of Hebrew fugitives; that the wonderful plagues upon the Egyptians became known only in Judea; indeed, that no exodus and that no colonisation of the Jews in Egypt ever occurred?

And what will the higher criticism say of the philological and mythological treatment given by Goldziher and Steinthal to such Bible characters as Abraham, Sarah, Hagar, Isaac, Jacob, Leah, and Rachel? Will it allow Goldziher to resolve Abraham from a shrewd old Jew of Chaldee into the starry night sky, the mystical Brahm, the comprehensive universe, the slayer and the slain of Emerson, or as Bronson Alcott might say, "the overshadowing thingness of the here"? Will Sarah become the Ashtaroth, the wandering one, the changing princess, the moon, of oriental literature? And will her conception of Yishak, the laughing one, the bright and joyous, in her old age, be allowed by comparative philological criticism to become a mere dissolute rehash of the story of the setting moon and the rising sun? Will Steinthal be permitted to resolve the hair of Samson into the rays of sunshine, and to find the Delilah whose dalliances deprived him of his strength in the waves of the sea? It will, of course, be a congenial task for the higher criticism to lift up the Jonah story from its disrepute by converting it into a pretty moon myth, known alike to Phœnicians, and in Rome, to Basutos in South Africa, and Ojibways in Minnesota. But what disposition will it make of the researches which go to show that there was a virgin in India, anterior to the Mary of the New Testament, but wearing the earlier name of Maia, of which Mary is the later form; that the star shone upon her while she slept, and thereby caused conception, instead of merely guiding the magi to where the young child lay; that the tyrant Cansa feared that the young Krishna would destroy his power, and therefore decreed a slaughter of the babes; that the mother fled with her babe to the sacred city of Benares on the Ganges, and much more that sounds so much like the New Testament narrative?

Perhaps the higher criticism, conceding the Hindoo business to be unworthy of investigation, will at least explain how Herod, a Roman governor, indebted for his position to his soldierly qualities, could, at the ripe age of something like seventy-six, interest himself in the question who would succeed him when he was suffering from a malady sure to end his life within the year, and when he must have known that no infant then to be born could by any amount of military prowess succeed to command over Judea until Herod had been twenty or thirty years in his grave.

It will also occur to the higher criticism that Herod at the age of twenty-three was court-martialed and tried for the unsoldierly offence of pursuing certain robbers of Judea into the mountains and putting them to the sword, when he might more humanely have captured them and sent them as prisoners to Rome. It will therefore devolve on it to explain how, under the same system of Roman law which held Herod, as a colonel, severely to account for slaying prisoners

whom he had the power to capture, this same Herod should, when his passions had been palsied by age, and when his interest in earthly rivalries were being shadowed over by the mists of death, have decreed and effected the slaughter of all the babes in a populous province without calling down the condign vengeance of the Cæsars, the general indignation of the people of a cultivated empire, nor so much as a word of comment from any Romish historian. These are but a few of the questions which will devolve on the higher criticism to solve, in such a manner as to leave something still for clergymen to do.

The fact is, all religion is a department of romance, and like all other forms of art, it grows by involuntary accretion. It feeds on the incredible and impossible as its natural aliment, and cannot live a day on anything that is true or even possible. It must have something grotesquely absurd as its basis. Protestants read in the New Testament that the mother of Jesus became after his birth the mother of three or four other children, and they wonder that 180,000,000 Catholics can idealise her into a perpetual and representative virgin, when in fact she was mother of a considerably larger family than the average matrons. They rejoice that Protestantism is not beset by similar superstitions.

(To be concluded).

#### ZION THE BEAUTIFUL.

MR. HENRY MACDONALD, a rational pilgrim who has been visiting the Holy Land, communicates his experiences of Jerusalem to the *Twentieth Century*. He says of God's favorite city:—

"Its streets are dirty, narrow, winding, ill-paved, steep lanes reeking with indescribable, obscene filth, and which are impossible to traverse with any kind of vehicle. Not a well nor a drop of living water is, or ever was, within its air-infected walls, nor nearer in any direction than two miles and a half, and that a small ill-smelling pool. Water is now and always has been obtained by saving the rain in cisterns and damming up the ravines by which the city is surrounded. Water is not now, and probably never was, used for cleansing purposes; it is scooped up into goatskins from pools by filthy savages, carried into the city on camels and donkeys, and sold for two piastres a skin. The European filters his before drinking.

"Within the walls of this city, which only the most malignant sarcasm could dub 'holy,' are more repulsive wretchedness, heart-broken degradation, hideous, leper-deformed, sore-eyed poverty, conscious, sordid imposture, blind fanaticism, and putrid filth, than any other spot of similar dimensions on this trouble-laden planet.

"Here is the place to anatomise all the baser qualities of mankind. Originally a robber stronghold, even in David's time it was little better than a hill fort, the wild hold of a successful sheik. It could not have been much better in Solomon's time, and after his death, on the disruption of the little kingdom, it lost its importance until Herod's time, when it achieved its greatest magnificence, but which did not exceed in character or dimensions the city of the present day. Since the days of Jesus, it has been pinched by famines, desolated by wars, bloodied by massacres, and its buildings destroyed time and again, but notwithstanding all this the credulous pilgrim is shown, by imposture, the exact places where events occurred that were of trifling importance at the time, more than eighteen centuries ago. A man could throw a stone the entire distance of the "Via Dolorosa," yet in this small space the pilgrim is shown Pilate's house and judgment seat; where Jesus leaned his shoulder against a house and left the impression in the solid rock; where he met his mother; the house of St. Veronica, upon whose handkerchief he left the imprint of his face; the house of Dives and the stone upon which Lazarus sat; where Simeon was compelled to take the cross, and the sepulchre. A child would ask how this narrow lane, with its sharp turns and numerous windings, happens to correspond so exactly with the ancient one, or how arches, walls, houses, and stones could remain intact and be identified after the total destruction of the city by the Romans."

The reader will remember that Jerusalem was twice destroyed, first under Titus and then under Hadrian. It

afterwards underwent sieges both from Moslems and Christians. Mr. Macdonald continues:

"But the church of the Holy Sepulchre is where credulity is stuffed to more than repletion. Within this church is shown some of the earth from which Adam was made; also his grave; a pillar marking the exact centre of the earth as pointed out by Jesus; a silver cup used at the last supper; the spot where Abraham offered up the ram in the place of Isaac, and the bush in which the ram was caught; the stone on which John the Baptist was beheaded; the place where the two thieves were crucified, and the hole in which the true cross stood. The pillar to which Jesus was bound is enclosed in a screen with a hole in it, through which the pious thrust a stick, the application of which will cure disease. A small marble slab, with an aperture two inches wide, is shown as the rock that was rent in twain. The sepulchre is enclosed inside a little marble chapel about seven feet square, on one side of which is the stone couch on which Jesus is said to have been laid. On the end of the couch is a money plate, which I noticed was well supplied with coin and bills. I turned to look at the tawdry, tinsel ornament of the place, and the attendant priest, thinking I was going out without giving the customary fee, tapped me on the shoulder and pointed suggestively to the plate. This is the secret of all the shrines and holy places."

Mr. Macdonald declares that "no critical person can believe that the crucifixion took place on the ground indicated," and that "the entire country is filled with fictitious places of importance to Christianity, and which are a source of revenue to their custodians. The account of the different sacred places around Jerusalem would be a monotonous recital of fraud and imposture. At the Church of the Ascension is shown where the foot of Jesus made an impression on a solid rock as he ascended to heaven. At the Chapel of the Assumption of the Virgin is the rock bearing the marks of the girdle she let fall to convince St. Thomas; another shows the imprint of the foot of the rooster that crew at Peter's denial; in the garden of Gethsemane, a place about fifty yards square, the priest shows the impression in the rock of the bodies of the disciples who fell asleep while Jesus prayed. The garden belongs to the Roman church, but the Greek church, enraged at the monopoly, have started an opposition one. They do not care to exhibit it much yet, as they wish to wait a few years until the trees look older."

"A deep grotto at Bethlehem is shown as the birthplace of Jesus, and within a few feet of the stone manger, in which lies a dressed doll to represent Jesus, is a small hole where 20,000 of the children said to have been massacred by Herod were thrown. Whether Jesus was born at Bethlehem or Nazareth is a matter for conjecture, but this grotto was certainly never a stable, unless the animals were miraculously endowed with wings."

"Bethany, where Jesus often sojourned with his friend Lazarus, is a typical dirty, disease-tortured Palestine village, looking much the same now as it did when Jesus visited it. The house of Lazarus is on an elevation, and while my dragoon was procuring the key, I took a position which enabled me to overlook the village. The houses are dens without furniture, fireplaces, or windows, with flat-topped roofs, upon which most of the women were sitting, picking the vermin from their tattered garments. A party of men were sitting around a vessel eating their dinner, each one thrusting his grimy, unwashed hand into the common dish, occasionally stirring the food with their fingers, and conveying it in handfuls to their mouths, the same as their ancestors did nineteen centuries ago."

#### FOR BABY.

A hundred names were soon propos'd  
But every one the wife oppos'd;

No tongue could e'er run faster:

"Well, Peter, then," the husband cried.

"What! Peter?" the good dame replied;

"No! he denied his Master!"

"Through all the list," said he, "I've run,

And know not, then, what's to be done,

To close this sad distress:

Suppose, my dear, he's Joseph call'd?"

"No, never, no!" she loudly bawl'd,

"For he denied his Mistress!"

Mrs. Batts—"How is your girl?" Mrs. Patts—"Oh, she's a perfect heathen. I left her to straighten things up before the minister called, and she never even dusted the Bible."

## ACID DROPS.

Protestants are ready enough to sneer at Catholic wonders. The *Christian World* calls the Holy Coat of Trèves "a piece of mildewed millinery."

Three shiploads of pilgrims—2,700 in all—are coming from America to see this wretched old rag. Forty thousand visitors per day are expected at Trèves, and the natives are gloating over the prospect of lodging-money and backsheesh.

The most amusing thing about the Holy Coat at Trèves is the imperturbable gravity with which all in the Church, from the Pope downwards, deal with a matter in which only the besottedly ignorant believe. The Holy Father offers absolution to pilgrims, and gravely explains that he never said the coat at Argenteuil was not genuine, only it was a different coat. Jesus may have had only one coat at a time, quite enough for a warm climate; but his clothes did not, like those of the Jews in the wilderness, never wear out, but grow with him. No, the coat at Argenteuil, having Papal sanction, was the one Christ wore when a youth. The one at Trèves was the one in which he was crucified. Both are genuine. Let no true believer doubt the possibility of Christ having more than one shirt.

Lord Coleridge is a scholar and a gentleman, and his views are entitled to all possible respect. But we are unable to follow him in the opinions he has expressed in a recent letter on the subject of Oaths. His lordship thinks that Christ's command, "Swear not at all," is to be "taken as the statement of a principle, not as an order to be obeyed literally and irrespective of circumstances and the rules of good sense." It appears to us, however, that there is something very comical in finite man attempting to square the direct injunction of Omniscience on the "rules of good sense." Omniscience might be supposed to have done that beforehand.

It is scarcely discreet of Lord Coleridge to remark that "God swears by himself." The God of the Bible also gets angry and curses. Is this likewise a rule for human conduct?

The French pilgrims to Rome, who are presently going there in swarms, are to be lodged in the Vatican dependencies at four francs per day. This arrangement is said to be very unpopular among the Roman lodging-house keepers, who roundly blame the Holy Father for robbing them of their expected harvest.

It is said that several people in Rome saw the image of Christ in the church of St. Jacob open its eyes. They told their friends of the miracle, and soon afterward crowds of people went to the church to see the image. One of the cardinals is making a careful investigation.

The property held by the Roman Catholic Church in the United States is valued at 118,381,516 dollars. The bulk of this is exempted from all taxation. The real estate of a church with such opportunities of death-bed terrifying is always on the increase, and all Catholic countries have at last been forced to make the vampires disgorge.

Theosophist (author of *Metempsychosis*, etc.): "Don't you believe in the re-incarnation of souls, Miss Wilder?" Miss Bee Wilder: "Yes, I believe I do. Do you know at times you have the self-same look in your eyes that my poor Fido had when the dog catchers were after him."

"Dash those Theosophists," said a careful husband; "they've been and persuaded my wife she's got seven bodies, and she has been and bought a new dress and bonnet for each of them."

Says Dr. J. Rodes Buchanan in the *Progressive Thinker*, of Chicago: "Such a combination of unlimited audacity and unlimited credulity as we find in Blavatskyism cannot be paralleled in the world's history. Its impudence in assuming the title of Theosophy or Divine Wisdom, of which it is the very antithesis, has been its chief attraction."

The Bishop of Calcutta, lecturing at Fratton on Mission Work in India, corroborated the observation of all independent observers. He said that "in the districts where the most ignorant races lived, there they had the greatest number

of converts, the Christians in these parts now numbering about forty thousand. There were learned and intellectual people in India, and it was with these they had the most trouble." This is an important fact, and one which shows the real status of Christianity. It succeeds when brought into contact with the most savage faiths like the devil-worshippers of the hill-tribes of India, but it fails when it comes in collision with great civilised faiths like Brahmanism, Mohammedanism, Buddhism and Confucianism. Its success with more barbarous peoples is no recommendation to higher races.

According to the *Mylapore Catholic Register*, an Indian Catholic organ, during the year 1889, 811 Protestant missionaries stationed in India converted 298 persons at an expense of £48,296. How long will it take and at what cost will the world be finally brought to Jesus.

The missionaries in India are frequently in scrapes through converting youths without the consent of their parents. We learn from the *Cosmopolitan* there has been much commotion at Delhi through the baptism of a Brahmin youth, and the missionaries are to be prosecuted in the Deputy Commissioner's Court. Our Hindu contemporary says: "Now that converting grown-up men has grown very rare—indeed, too rare to be perceptible—our missionary friends have taken upon themselves the task of converting minors and children scarcely out of their teens! Of such is the kingdom of God!"

All the Bible saints were Jews, if we except poor old Job. Jesus Christ was a Jew, so was Paul, so was Peter, and all the very earliest Christians. But after getting God the Father, God the Son, and the only true religion, from Jews, the Christians express their gratitude to the "chosen people" by hatred and contempt. The Czarina of Russia, for instance, at a recent review outside Moscow, gave orders that every Jewish soldier was to be confined to barracks. These unwilling conscripts were informed that "Jews were offensive to her Majesty [who perhaps owes some of them a trifle], and she wished to be spared the sight of them." No doubt, if J. C. were to appear on earth again, and visit Russia, the Czarina would say to him "Go away, you nasty Jew!"

In a Baptist church at Newcastle on Sunday, in the absence of the minister, a Mr. Barton, who has spent a few months in Palestine, entertained the congregation with a discourse on the restoration of the Jews. He felt sure the chosen people were going back to their fatherland, or rather their great-grandfatherland, but he admitted that the process was somewhat slow. Still, the prophecies would be fulfilled; they were bound to be, or they wouldn't be prophecies. Q.E.D. The Jew, however, would never rule in the land until he renounced his unbelief and accepted the Messiah, whom his fathers slew. Mr. Barton's word for that! But, alas, Mr. Barton sorrowfully confessed that there was little prospect at present of the Jews doing anything of the kind. They won't take on Jesus at any price, not even with fifty per cent. discount off that. The missionary work amongst them at Jerusalem, Nazareth, Tiberias, and Damascus is very unsuccessful. No matter, the time will come! Mr. Barton says it, and he seems as certain of what he says as any old Hebrew prophet who gave straight tips (generally warm ones) to his king.

When the Jews, including the Rothschilds, go back and dig the soil of Palestine, and take to worshipping Jesus Christ, pork will be twopence a pound, and bishops won't take more than a hundred a year. Evidently we shall wait a good while before Mr. Barton's dream is realised.

A colony of "colored people" at Durban until recently had their children in the same Sunday school with the children of white folks. This the clergyman has interdicted. An appeal was vainly made to the bishops assembled in Synod at Capetown, and now the Archbishop of Canterbury is asked to interfere.

In America there is a "Colored Church of Christ," the epithet indicating that the members are excluded from the churches of Christ that are not colored.

According to *Truth*, a native of Ceylon, who, after accepting Christianity, relapsed into Buddhism, attended the English church at Galle as groomsman to his brother, who was being

married. He was repulsed by the clergyman, who said: "Certainly no Buddhist nor apostate from the faith could be allowed to assist in that sacred ordinance of the Church," as though a person attending his brother as groomsmen were officiating in some religious capacity. The individual is not likely to regret his relinquishment of Christianity for Buddhism.

Herr Förster, in an article on Christianity in Central Africa in *Unsere Zeit*, dissipates some of the "darkness" advertised with blare of trumpets by Mr. H. M. Stanley. The blood of the martyrs has not been the seed of the Church in Equatoria. The devoted efforts of the missionaries have been rewarded by meagre results, and stations established at great cost have hitherto made few converts, and exercised a very limited influence. Where Christianity spreads there also is found the most drunkenness and prostitution. It is the general testimony that Mohammedan converts are more self-respecting. They have no Savior to wipe out their sins.

The Right Rev. Abbot Snow, O.S.B., is pretty candid. In a lecture on the Conversion of England, reported in the *Weekly Register*, he remarked, "Instead of being an example, Catholics are too often a disgrace." If he would inquire why they are often so considered, he might perhaps find that their religion was at the bottom of it.

Clement Allen, the secretary of the Gospel Union Mission promoted by Prophet Baxter, is in trouble. He is charged with appropriating to his own use two cheques for £37 and £30 respectively, the property of Mrs. Elizabeth Baxter. In reply to the charge he asserts his right to the use of the cheques.

The Peculiar People were in evidence again before the coroner of East London last week. A child of five months had been ill for nine days, but the parents, believing in the injunction of James, that "the prayer of faith shall save the sick," called in the elders to lay on their holy hands and pray over her, but sent for no doctor. The coroner held that the medical evidence was insufficient to warrant a verdict of manslaughter, and one of the jurors expressed a decided opinion that the parents should be punished for deliberate neglect, but not a word was said of the fact that the Peculiar People really believe and carry out the Bible doctrine, which others only pretend to believe.

The Nazarenes of South London, one of the many sects who propose to restore primitive Christianity, want £300 for a Floating Tabernacle on the river Thames, to be called Noah's Ark, wherein the elect may move from Oxford to the Nore during summer, and which may be removed to *terra firma* during winter. This novel mode of evangelizing, we are told, is the result of a strong desire to get publicity for "the ancient unadulterated gospel"—unadulterated we presume even with Thames water.

How to attract the working men is still the great theme of the churches. Music, the most sensuous of the arts, is the chief card. Booth has found it so, and churches and chapels are taking a leaf out of his book. In Poplar the choir have to sing through the streets before attending the church service. This is a sign they are discovering that people want some more rational amusement than listening to the dreary platitudes and childish fables of the pulpit.

A clergyman at Northport, Long Island, has forbidden the young men of the congregation to smoke near the church. This kind of incense does not please the Lord, who used to delight in the smell of burnt offerings. The clergyman has not announced the distance to which the consecration of the church and his prohibition extends.

On the ledge of a pulpit in one of the churches in Holland may be seen a row of metal and bone buttons. These are the offerings of the youth of the congregation in lieu of lawful pence. Whether that object-lesson in youthful duplicity has had any effect in lessening the evil, so conspicuously preached at, the chronicler does not relate.

The tithe war still goes merrily on in Wales. Disturbances are of common occurrence. Last week Mr. Lewis, the collector for the Associated Clergy of the Archdeaconry of Cardigan, on entering the parish of Penrhyn was met by a crowd of three hundred men armed with sticks, and but for

the presence of the constabulary would have been assaulted. He wisely decided to turn back and let the clergy collect their own tithes.

The *Church Times* calls on all the bishops to issue a joint encyclical letter to be read in all the churches on the duty of Churchmen to support Church schools. The bishops and the *C. T.* may cry as they please. If the Church schools do not give free education, the bulk of the children will find their way to the schools that do.

Bishop Moorhouse, in his new book on *The Teaching of Christ*, tells us that "The eternal Son of God . . . emptied himself of all those divine attributes which would have interfered with the reality of his manhood." What sublime conceptions. First we have a son who is eternal and then a divinity which interferes with humanity.

A pious contemporary publishes a sort of "case of conscience" from a member of a Young Men's Christian Association at the seaside. On a recent Sunday morning, after coming from church, he was asked to take a trip in a pleasure boat. He declined, but he does not quite see what divine law he would have broken by going. "His letter," our contemporary says, "fairly represents the bewilderment of many conscientious minds on this question." At this rate we may expect to see Sunday trips advertised by religious bodies. General Booth himself may run yachts, and take people for a sail on Sunday, with a Salvation Service on board.

A leaflet issued by the Religious Tract Society winds up as follows: "God offers to fill our homes and our hearts with joy and gladness if we will only let him do it. We cannot create the canary-birds; but we can provide cages for them and fill our dwellings with their music." How nice for the poor birds. It is a wonder that God did not create cages when he made the canaries. And does God offer to fill our homes with "joy and gladness" in the shape of rats and mice, black-beetles and other vermin? for which we do not provide cages, but poison.

The Rev. E. Ransford, of Christ Church, Elizabeth, New Jersey, is charged with indecently assaulting boys in the chapel. Ransford is said to be an Englishman and to have come with the highest credentials. He has a wife and two daughters.

Prof. White, in his paper "From Fetich to Hygiene," in the *Popular Science Monthly*, shows that the Church has raised the worst obstructions to science and sanitation. He says: "St. Jerome and the Breviary of the Roman Catholic Church dwelt with unction on the fact that St. Hilarion lived a life of uncleanness; St. Anthony was glorified because he never washed his feet; St. Abraham's most striking evidence of holiness lay in the fact that he washed neither hands nor feet; St. Sylvia never washed any portion of her body except her fingers; St. Euphraxia belonged to a convent in which the nuns religiously abstained from bathing."

The lives of the saints dwelt with complacency on the statement that when sundry Eastern monks showed a disposition to break away from the custom and resort to cleanliness the Almighty showed his displeasure at the innovation by drying up a neighboring stream until the bath which it had supplied was destroyed.

David did not write the Psalms. This is the long and short of Canon Cheyne's story. In his new volume of Bampton Lectures, he writes: "From the point of view of the history of art, no less than from that of the history of religion, the supposition that we have Davidic Psalms presents insuperable difficulties." Canon Cheyne insists that "No concession can be made which a Conservative of the old school would think worth accepting."

Spurgeon is improving very slowly. Prayer does not appear to be a swift restorative. Even with the aid of skilful doctors and excellent nurses it is unable to work wonders. How different from the good old Bible days, when a single man of God could pray you well or dead in five minutes! Is there a failure in the praying-power of this age? Or is the deity who answers prayer getting played-out himself? Perhaps some Christian will kindly explain.

## MR. FOOTE'S ENGAGEMENTS.

Sunday, August 23, Lecture Hall, Nelson-street, Newcastle-on-Tyne: at 11, "The Tree of Knowledge"; at 3, "Nature and God"; at 6.30, "Life and Death."

August 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, Hall of Science. 25, Camberwell.

## TO CORRESPONDENTS.

- MR. CHARLES WATTS' ENGAGEMENTS.—August 23, Hall of Science; 25, Battersea; 30, Edinburgh. Sept. 1, Paisley; 3, Hamilton; 6, Glasgow; 7, 8, 9, Aberdeen; 13 to 20 (inclusive) for North Eastern Secular Federation; 27, Birmingham. October 4, Birmingham; 11, Manchester; 18, Birmingham; 25, Hall of Science. November 1, Hall of Science; 8, Birmingham.—All communications for Mr. Watts should be sent direct to him at 17 Johnson's-court, Fleet-street, London, E.C.
- F. MILLAR.—Glad to hear you approve of "every word" of our last week's article.
- F. DE B.—Very good, but rather stale to our readers. Send us something original.
- J. WATERFORD, Walham-green.—Please communicate with H. N. de Wilde, 13 Radipole-road, Fulham-road, who is willing to aid in forming a Branch of the N. S. S.
- H. L.—Lea's *History of Sacerdotal Celibacy* is published at Philadelphia, but can doubtless be obtained through Trübner or any American book agents.
- SUBSCRIBER (Cape Town).—Thanks for your remarks on the word *Spook*. We note the fact that it is common in South Africa—where the population is largely Dutch—for *ghost*.
- L. TARBUTT.—We believe Colonel Ingersoll was in London about eight months ago. He came on a hurried business visit, and had no time to see any English Freethinkers.
- D. W.—The number of Roman Catholics in England and Wales is about 1,500,000. It is not easy to say how many are immigrants, but we should think more than half.
- A. WALL.—T. W. Rhys Davids gives the number of Buddhists at 500,000,000. But there are great differences of opinion owing to the inhabitants of China being variously classed as Buddhists, Confucians, and Taoists. Many claim to belong to each of these sects.
- INQUIRER.—Nobody knows who separated the false gospels from the true ones, or when and where this was done.
- F. HASLAM writes explaining that his train to Mr. Morris' funeral was delayed for fifteen minutes, or he should have conducted the service as arranged. Mr. Haslam was present.
- J. R. WILLOCK.—Glad to hear you are employed by a member of the N. S. S., and trust you can look forward to better days than those in the service of a bigot.
- C. BROWN.—A son of Richard Carlile with the same name became a member of the legislature of Wisconsin. Mr. Bradlaugh met two of his daughters when in America. We cannot say what has become of his family.
- OWING to Mr. Foote's absence from London most of the correspondence stands over till next week.
- PAPERS RECEIVED.—Fritankaren—Liberty—Freethought—Ironclad Age—Menschentum—Echo—Neues Frereligioses Sonntags-Blatt—Freidenker—The Liberator—Der Arme Teufel—Secular Thought—Boston Investigator—Western Figaro—La Vérité Philosophique—Progressive Thinker—Truthseeker—Flaming Sword—Loyal American—Better Way—Newcastle Daily Chronicle—Newcastle Daily Leader—Une Mère Vierge—Sussex Gazette—Banbury Guardian—Nottingham Daily Express—Cosmopolitan—Freethinkers' Magazine—Watts's Literary Guide—Open Court—Ariel.
- 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.
- 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.

## SUGAR PLUMS.

As the time is very short for advertising the Newcastle lectures, Mr. Foote will be glad if his friends in that city will do their best to make his visit known. The subjects should prove attractive, and it is to be hoped the lectures will elicit discussion.

Mr. Foote's meetings at Shields on Sunday morning and afternoon were only moderate, but there was a capital audience in the evening. The chair was taken in the morning by a lady, in the afternoon by the secretary, and in the evening by Councillor Leslie Johnson, of North Shields. Questions were asked about Mr. Charles Watts, and Mr. Foote was able to say that Mr. Watts would visit the district in September.

Sunderland friends must not expect to hear Mr. Foote on Sunday, August 23. He is for the present boycotted there. Not a single hall is obtainable. Even the Co-operative Hall, which was supposed to be engaged for his lectures, is at the last minute refused, in consequence of the bigoted action of Parson Seccar, who objects to having his doctrines disputed in the town of Sunderland.

*Secular Thought* gives prominence to Mr. Watts's reception at the Hall of Science when Mr. Foote took the chair, and reprints from our columns Mr. Foote's article on "Who Killed Christ?"

The *Nottingham Daily Express* devotes over a column to the report of a lecture by Mr. Charles Watts on "Is Unbelief a Crime?" It is a good sign when the press finds our movement of sufficient interest and importance to demand attention. The long boycott to which Freethought has been subjected will gradually break down, but not till we show ourselves strong enough to command respect.

Mr. Charles Watts will lecture at the Battersea Secular Hall, Prince of Wales-road, on Tuesday, Aug. 25, at 8 p.m., his subject being "Is Unbelief a Crime?" Tickets of admission (3d. and 6d.) can be obtained at the hall, and at 32 Stanley-street, Queen's-road, Battersea.

Mr. Foote has received the following further subscriptions towards the scheme for settling Mr. Charles Watts at Birmingham: T. Allsop, £50; George Anderson, £20; A Friend, £10; J. Downing, £1; "M.," Scarborough, 5s.

Mr. Willock reports that Mr. Heaford has had capital meetings at Manchester. The afternoon lecture in the open air was attended by a crowd of from six to seven hundred people, who listened attentively. Mr. Heaford goes on to Sheffield to-day (August 23), and then to Grimsby on the 25th, concluding his lecturing tour at Hull on the 30th. He is in good form, and we doubt not will do good work.

Mr. Stanley Jones has been following up the track of Mr. Sam Standing at Luton, where the new Branch has made a good start. Last Sunday he had two good meetings, with a little opposition. A collection made on behalf of the General Fund amounted to 11s. 6d., and a few new members were made. Luton is one of the numerous towns within easy reach of London where the Freethought movement has only to be inaugurated in order to spread.

In a paper read before the International Hygienic Congress Sir Henry Thompson pointed to the many dangers to health arising from our present method of burial. Despite a paper in favor of "earth to earth" burial by Dr. Haden, a resolution in favor of cremation was passed by a large majority, four only dissenting in a crowded meeting.

The working men of Banbury met on Sunday to the number of 300, under the presidency of Mr. W. Bunton, to discuss the labor problem. In a letter to the *Banbury Guardian*, Mr. Bunton says: "If one could judge by the assent of some hundreds of the elite of the working men of Banbury to my dicta, Christianity is with them, not in a dying condition but already dead, requiring no more consideration than how and when it can be removed out of their way. . . . The workmen, thanks to their reading the *Freethinker* and other good books, are beginning to see that they need no other salvation than that which is their own hands."

A thousand copies of Mr. Foote's *Salvation Syrup* have gone to Eastbourne. This exhausts the first edition. A second edition is now ready, containing some additional matter.

We have received from America the prospectus and constitution of the Brotherhood of Moralists. This society, which formerly called itself the Brotherhood of Agnostic Moralists, is a Freethought organisation of considerable extent, having its headquarters at Hannibal, Missouri. It states its aims to be the promotion of morality and the overthrow of superstition. It issues a journal entitled the *Moralist*, edited by Ella E. Gibson, from Barré, Massachusetts. We have seen some numbers of the *Moralist*, which contain some very good articles, notably those on Immortality, by H. Wettstein.

M. Renan's fourth and last volume of his *History of Israel* will be finished this winter. The third volume is now translated into English.

The *Marlboro' Times* occasionally comes out with a round piece of heresy, as witness the following on the celestial regions:—"No picture of heaven yet drawn makes it a much more desirable place for continued residence, except for those constitutionally lazy or born tired. How long would an ordinary human being be content to loaf around the great white throne with a harp he didn't know how to play on, and surrounded by bodiless saints and angels with whom he was not acquainted, singing praises to the occupant of the throne for allowing him to be there, when he had damned ten thousand million better men to the lake of fire and brimstone, the smoke of whose torment could be plainly smelt in heaven every day."

The *Freethinkers' Magazine*, of Buffalo, N.Y., says: "As we have often said before, the *Freethinker* ought to have a large circulation in this country." We are pleased to assure Mr. Green that we are read in every portion of the English speaking world, and that our circulation is increasing.

The *Freethinker's Magazine* gives as frontispiece a portrait of Juliet H. Severance, M.D., a leading American Radical and Freethinker. Mr. Frank continues his articles on "The Evolution of the Devil." Mr. H. M. Taber writes on "God," which he calls "the most unmeaning of words." L. C. Howe writes in favor of Spiritualism. The Literary Department has also a number of excellent papers.

We are always pleased to see the Hindu monthly Freethought journal, the *Cosmopolitan*, copy some of our articles. We think, however, the editor might do well to devote more space to notes and comments on native matters. The missionaries should supply him with plenty of material.

Major Pond, the famous lecture organiser in America, has been interviewed by the *Pall Mall Gazette*. "On what may be called the anti-religious side," he said, "Colonel Ingersoll is a most popular lecturer, and many who would not hear him speak on religious subjects will go to hear him read selections from Shakespeare. He is a splendid reader, and the greatest American orator of the present day."

The President of the National Secular Society signed another batch of members' certificates before going north. Mr. Jones, the new secretary, says he has reason to believe that several Branches are keeping back declaration-forms that are filled in. If this be so, it is to be hoped that they will be forwarded without further delay. Fresh members are disappointed at not receiving their certificates within a reasonable time.

On Tuesday evening, August 25, at the London Hall of Science, at 8, will be held the first general meeting of shareholders of the Bradlaugh Memorial Hall Company, Limited. Every shareholder who can possibly attend is earnestly invited to be present. Those who cannot attend—and of course there are many who live at a great distance from London—are invited to send their proxy votes to Mr. Foote by August 22, or by the first post on Monday morning at the very latest—that is, if they feel they can leave their interests in his hands. Such shareholders are requested to copy out the following: "Bradlaugh Memorial Hall Company, Limited. General Meeting of Shareholders on Tuesday, August 25. I, \_\_\_\_\_, holding \_\_\_\_\_ shares, entrust my proxy to Mr. G. W. Foote, and authorise him to vote for me

at this meeting." This must be signed, and stamped (1d.), and posted to Mr. Forder, 28 Stonecutter-street, London, E.C.

*Bible Heroes*, by Mr. Foote, is now bound up complete in a half-crown volume on sale by Mr. Forder. Another volume at the binder's is the Complete Theological Works of Thomas Paine, also published at half-a-crown. This will be ready next week.

## SPIRITUALITY.

BY COLONEL R. G. INGERSOLL.

If there is an abused word in our language, it is "spirituality."

It has been repeated over and over for several hundred years by pious pretenders and snivellers as though it belonged exclusively to them.

In the early days of Christianity the "spiritual" renounced the world, with all its duties and obligations. They deserted their wives and children. They became hermits and dwelt in caves. They spent their useless years praying for their shrivelled and worthless souls.

They were too "spiritual" to love women, to build homes and to labor for children.

They were too "spiritual" to earn their bread, so they became beggars, and stood by the highway of life and held out their hands and asked alms of industry and courage.

They were too "spiritual" to be merciful. They preached the dogmas of eternal pain and gloried in "the wrath to come."

They were too "spiritual" to be civilised, so they persecuted their fellow-men for expressing their honest thoughts.

They were so "spiritual" that they invented instruments of torture, founded the Inquisition, appealed to the whip, the rack, the sword and the fagot.

They tore the flesh of their fellow-men with hooks of iron, buried their neighbors alive, cut off their eyelids, dashed out the brains of babes and cut off the breasts of mothers.

These "spiritual" wretches spent day and night on their knees praying for their own salvation and asking God to curse the best and noblest in the world.

John Calvin was intensely "spiritual" when he warmed his fleshless hands at the flames that consumed Servetus.

John Knox was constrained by his "spirituality" to utter low and loathsome calumnies against all women. All the witchburners and quaker-maimers and mutilators were so "spiritual" that they constantly looked heavenward and longed for the skies.

These lovers of God—these haters of men—looked upon the Greek marbles as unclean, and denounced the glories of art as the snares and pitfalls of perdition.

These "spiritual" mendicants hated laughter and smiles and dimples, and exhausted their diseased and polluted imagination in the effort to make love loathsome.

From almost every pulpit was heard the denunciation of all that adds to the wealth, the joy and glory of life. It became the fashion for the "spiritual" to malign every hope and passion that tend to humanise and refine the heart. Man was denounced as totally depraved. Woman was declared to be a perpetual temptation—her beauty a snare, and her touch pollution.

Even in our own time and country some of the ministers, no matter how radical they claim to be, retain the aroma, the odor or the smell of the "spiritual."

They denounce some of the best and greatest—some of the benefactors of the race—for having lived on a low plane of usefulness—and for having had the pitiful ambition to make their fellows happy in this world.

Thomas Paine was a grovelling wretch because he devoted his life to the preservation of the rights of man, and Voltaire lacked the "spiritual" because he abolished torture in France, and attacked with the enthusiasm of a divine madness the monster that was endeavoring to drive the hope of liberty from the heart of man.

Humboldt was not "spiritual" enough to repeat with closed eyes the absurdities of superstition, but was so lost to all the "skye influences" that he was satisfied to add to the intellectual wealth of the world.

Darwin lacked "spirituality," and in its place had nothing but sincerity, patience, intelligence, the spirit of investigation and the courage to give his honest conclusions to the world. He contented himself with giving to his fellow



men the greatest and the sublimest truths that man has spoken since lips have uttered speech.

But we are now told that these soldiers of science, these heroes of liberty, these sculptors and painters, these singers of songs, these composers of music, lacked "spirituality" and after all were only common clay.

This word "spirituality" is the fortress, the breastwork, the riflepit of the Pharisee. It sustains the same relation to sincerity that Dutch metal does to pure gold.

There seems to be something about a pulpit that poisons the occupant—that changes his nature—that causes him to denounce what he really loves and to laud with the fervor of insanity a joy that he never felt—a rapture that never thrilled his soul. Hypnotised by his surroundings, he unconsciously brings to market that which he supposes the purchasers desire.

In every church, whether orthodox or radical, there are two parties—one conservative, looking backward; one radical, looking forward—and generally a minister "spiritual" enough to look both ways.

A minister who seems to be a philosopher on the street, or in the home of a sensible man, cannot withstand the atmosphere of the pulpit. The moment he stands behind a Bible cushion, like Bottom, he is "translated" and the Titania of superstition "kisses his large, fair ears."

Nothing is more amusing than to hear a clergyman denounce worldliness—ask his hearers what it will profit them to build railways and palaces and lose their own souls—inquire of the common folks before him why they waste their precious years in following trades and professions, in gathering treasures that moths corrupt and rust devours, giving their days to the vulgar business of making money—and then see him take up a collection, knowing perfectly well that only the worldly, the very people he has denounced, can by any possibility give a dollar.

"Spirituality," for the most part, is a mask worn by idleness, arrogance, and greed.

Some people imagine they are "spiritual" when they are sickly.

It may be well enough to ask—What is it to be really spiritual?

The spiritual man lives up to his ideal. He endeavors to make others happy. He does not despise the passions that have filled the world with art and glory. He loves his wife and children—home and fireside. He cultivates the amenities and refinements of life. He is a friend and champion of the oppressed. His sympathies are with the poor and the suffering. He attacks what he believes to be wrong, though defended by the many, and he is willing to stand for the right against the world.

He enjoys the beautiful.

In the presence of the highest creations of Art his eyes are suffused with tears. When he listens to the great melodies, the divine harmonies, he feels the sorrows and the raptures of death and love. He is intensely human. He carries in his heart the burdens of the world. He searches for the deeper meanings. He appreciates the harmonies of conduct, the melody of a perfect life.

He loves his wife and children better than any God. He cares more for the world he lives in than for any other. He tries to discharge the duties of this life, to help those that he can reach. He believes in being useful—in making money to feed and clothe and educate the ones he loves—to assist the deserving and to support himself. He does not want to be a burden on others. He is just, generous, and sincere.

Spirituality is all of this world. It is a child of this earth, born and cradled here. It comes from no heaven, but it makes a heaven where it is. There is no possible connection between superstition and the spiritual, or between theology and the spiritual.

The spiritually-minded man is a poet. If he does not write poetry, he lives it. He is an artist. If he does not paint pictures or chisel statues, he feels them and their beauty softens his heart. He fills the temple of his soul with all that is beautiful and he worships at the shrine of the ideal.

In all the relations of life he is faithful and true. He asks for nothing that he does not earn. He does not wish to be happy in heaven if he must receive happiness as alms. He does not rely on the goodness of another. He is not ambitious to become a winged pauper.

Spirituality is the perfect health of the soul. It is noble, manly, generous, brave, free-spoken, natural, superb.

Nothing is more sickening than the "spiritual" whine—the pretence that crawls at first and talks about humility, and then suddenly becomes arrogant and says: "I am 'spiritual'—I hold in contempt the vulgar joys of this life. You work and toil and build homes and sing songs and weave your delicate robes. You love women and children and adorn yourselves. You subdue the earth and dig for gold. You have your theatres, your operas, and all the luxuries of life; but I, beggar that I am, Pharisee that I am, am your superior because I am 'spiritual.'"

Above all things, let us be sincere.

#### FREETHOUGHT PROPAGANDA.

THE holidays are now upon us, and the Freethinker as well as the Christian will be taking advantage of them to revel in the sunshine and invigorating breezes at the sea-side, or trying to extract as much happiness as possible from the beauties of nature in the country districts. The lecture hall will be comparatively deserted, and the lecturer's voice will have ceased to amuse and instruct, and carry our principles forward except on much rarer occasions. But each individual Freethinker, however humble, can do even more for the grand old cause, and address larger audiences than even the greatest of lecturers. That "the pen is mightier than the sword" is a trite saying, and nothing need be said at this time of day of the marvellous power of the press. Let every Freethinker then, who goes on his holiday, take with him a bundle of Freethought tracts, and drop them judiciously and unobtrusively whenever or wherever opportunity presents itself. In railway trains, in hotels, in places of amusement, on steamboats and in tramcars they may be trusted to do their work silently but effectually. Like a stone thrown on a placid lake, the ripples of their influence will extend immeasurably beyond the first point of contact. Like bread cast upon the waters they shall be seen after many days. People who would no more enter a Secular Hall than they would a house with a pestilence in it, may carelessly pick up a tract and imbibe a Freethought idea or argument that may set them thinking. Freethought by the aid of the tract may be introduced into families and circles of society which otherwise would be utterly inaccessible. The tract may insinuate itself into the boudoir of the "lady," or the kitchen of the "slavey," and the society of my "lord," may be as easily secured as the companionship of Dick, Tom, and Harry.

The present writer has often thought what might not be accomplished by an organised body of Freethought tract distributors. How insignificant even the largest audience gathered together in a hall seems compared with the multitudes to be met with outside. Generally speaking, it is not in the heated atmosphere of the Secular hall that men become awake to the absurdities of religion, but in the quiet seclusion of their own thoughts, suggested by the literature they have read. Reading, with its accompanying reflection, is, after all, the lever which raises the inert mass of man's mind out of the rut of conventional custom and superstitious imbecility. Let us see that we supply the fulcrum in the shape of Freethought tracts. Freethought lectures are only an adjunct—a very valuable one we allow—in the great work of Freethought propaganda, and only reach a comparatively insignificant number of the community. The main service must be rendered by literature, and of that literature a not unimportant section is Freethought tracts. H. J.

#### HOW TO HELP US.

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

A Young Man's Freethought Temperance Society has been started in America. The headquarters are at Meadville, Pennsylvania, but the secretary, Mr. W. H. Ketter, resides at 148 E 97th-street, New York.

## MY TOUR IN YORKSHIRE AND IRELAND.

It is not unusual, even among Englishmen, for some of them on visiting a country for the first time, to write learned articles on the more important physical features of the country and the intellectual and moral condition of its people. In this article I do not propose to do anything of that sort; it would be presumptuous on my part to suppose for a moment that my brief visit to Belfast entitles me to give anything more than the most obvious "impressions" which one would form of the growth of Freethought from a short personal contact with Irishmen in their own country.

Before, however, I relate my experience in Ireland, I desire to say that two or three days before I crossed the sea I visited, during the second week of my tour, two important towns in Yorkshire, viz., Bradford and Huddersfield. At the former of these places I lectured on "The Bible and Evolution," and just as I was about to begin a big bell rang, and a number of persons rushed in all directions crying "Fire!" and my audience suddenly disappeared. Getting down from the van which formed my platform, I beheld that a colossal building close at hand was enveloped in flames, and that it was inevitable that some time must elapse before it could be extinguished and the people return. I waited an hour for them, however, and then dispensed a large dose of heresy which fairly upset many of them.

My lecture at Huddersfield was listened to with a reasonable degree of quietness, but I could see during its delivery that a storm was brewing, and that I might expect a warm time of it when discussion was invited; and my impression was speedily verified, for as soon as my opponents were called upon to discuss, a half a dozen of them mounted the rostrum at the same time, and, by their noisy conduct, made it impossible for my replies to their unreasonable and often stupid questions to be heard. However, I stirred the bigots up, and probably they will search the Scriptures diligently and see how far my statements were true.

On Saturday I left Fleetwood for Belfast. There was a strong wind blowing, and as soon as we got out of the river it was plain that we were going to have a rough time of it; and for three or four hours a rough time, indeed, we did have. Except a limited few, the passengers suffered very badly from *mal de mer*, and when finally we arrived at Belfast, after ten hours' voyage, I am afraid that some of us cut a very sorry figure. For myself, I had not suffered so badly as many who had had no previous experience on the sea, so I soon pulled myself together, and, although I had not had a wink of sleep all night, I delivered my first lecture in Ireland three hours after my arrival, to a very good audience. My reception was very flattering to me; indeed, I may truly say that I received a real Irish welcome. My subject in the morning was "Is the Bible the Word of God?" Irishmen, I found, could not only appreciate sound reasoning, but were quick at understanding the force of an appropriate joke. In the afternoon my theme was "The Last of the Gods," while in the evening I gave reasons "Why I am not a Christian." I was told by some of my English friends that the Irishmen would not stand a strong Freethought lecture; that they wanted heretical ideas strongly diluted. This I was glad to find was not true. I spoke my strongest word against Christianity, and was well received.

At each of my lectures there was plenty of discussion. Some of my opponents, however, did not quite grasp the points at issue, and one old gentleman read a brief essay in which Voltaire, the French Revolution, the Tory Government, the Land Question, and other subjects were unceremoniously dragged in by the heels, as an answer to my objections to the teachings of Christ. Some of my opponents, it should be mentioned, were Englishmen, and I shall not soon forget how the Irish portion of the audience laughed over and applauded my replies to these disputants. During the whole day an enthusiastic interest was taken in my lectures, and the audience increased in numbers until, in the evening, not a vacant place could be found in the hall.

There can be no doubt whatever that Freethought views are spreading rapidly in the north of Ireland. The priest—whether Protestant or Catholic—has lost his hold upon the people, and consequently liberty of thought is beginning to prevail. There was an excellent sale of literature—of my own books and pamphlets, as well as other Freethought publications. Mr. Knox, the secretary of the Ulster Branch, expressed his satisfaction at the interest I had aroused, and many expressed the hope that I would soon visit Ireland again.

ARTHUR B. MOSS.

## REPORT OF THE BOMBAY SECULAR SOCIETY FOR THE YEAR 1890.

LAST year, for the first time, a Freethought Association was formed in the city of Bombay, and though it is a small one, its influence for good has been already felt to some extent. The influence, of course, has been limited owing to the great difficulties it has to meet with and the small means at its command. But it is something to say that the Society has done some useful work, however small that be.

There are now twenty-four members on the roll of the Society. Some of our members have left India, others have gone away from Bombay, and some have resigned; but it is gratifying to say the more intelligent members have their names still in our books. Among the twenty-four there is one lady member.

The treasurer's balance-sheet shows that we have incurred during the year a total expenditure of Rs.240 1., against a receipt of Rs.346 13 6., thereby enabling us to carry forward for the current year a credit balance of Rs.106 12 6.

During the course of the year the Society has printed two tracts for propagandist purposes. Towards the funds for the publication of Freethought tracts only one member has contributed, and that is our friend Mr. R. V. Ayyavaru, who presents us with an annual donation of Rs.50, which he pays in parts from time to time. It is to be hoped that his example will be followed by others.

The library is gradually increasing. The N. S. S. presented our Society with books to the extent of £2 12s., the secretary to the extent of Rs.12, and Mr. R. V. Ayyavaru to the extent of Rs.5. Your Executive voted a sum of Rs.17 13s. for the same purpose.

During the year under review the Society had three lectures delivered under its auspices, and a small quantity of Freethought literature has been distributed from time to time.

The secretary has started a small book depôt at his own risk, and literature to the extent of several hundred rupees has been procured from England, and has met with a ready sale.

It is now proposed to start a paper to represent the interest and defend the rights of the Society, and friends throughout India are asking for such an organ. With earnest co-operation a good weekly would have a wide circulation, and your Executive requests that each member do his utmost to push the paper on. In Calcutta, through the praiseworthy exertions of Mr. Kaliprasana Kavyabisharad, there is a small monthly journal devoted to our cause.

In India there are now three branches of the National Secular Society of England—one at Madras, one at Dum Dum (Calcutta), and one in Bombay; and it is the intention of your secretary, with your assistance, to visit some of the larger cities of India, like Poona, Calcutta, Lahore, etc., and open Branches there.

## REVIEW.

*Life and Character of Charles Bradlaugh.* By G. J. HOLYOAKE. Office of *Freethinker's Magazine*, Buffalo, N.Y. —This is a reprint, with additions, of Mr. Holyoake's paper on Mr. Bradlaugh, written shortly after his death, and which first appeared in the *Bradford Observer*. Many of our readers will doubtless be glad to have Mr. Holyoake's paper, which can be procured in England from C. Watts, jun., 17 Johnson's-court.

"He isn't in it" is a popular phrase. How did it originate? The *Toledo News* surmises it was first used by Noah in chaffing somebody who had criticised his building of the ark.

"Now, madam," said the bric-a-brac dealer, "here is an elegant bronze vase. The nautical scene on this side represents 'Jonah and the whale.'" "I only see the whale; where is Jonah?" "You note that distension near the tail?" "Yes." "Well, that is Jonah."

"Eve, my darling," said Adam, in a broken, jagged voice to the partner of his sorrows as the gates of Paradise closed behind them with a bang. "What is it, dearest Adam?" queried Eve in an all-is-lost-but-honor tone. "I was about to remark, my pet, that we are not in it any more," said Adam, pensively, and then he took Eve by the hand and led her gently away along the dusty turnpike, little thinking that after many ages his trite summarisation of the situation would become a favorite expression among the most highly civilised people of the globe.

**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. Tuesday, at 8, Mr. Charles Watts, "Is Unbelief a Crime?" (admission 3d. and 6d.). Wednesday, at 7.30, dramatic class. Thursday, at 8, discussion class.  
 Camberwell—61 New Church Road, S.E.: 7.30, Mr. H. Snell, "Conscience and Consequence."  
 Hall of Science, 142 Old Street, E.C.: 7.30, Mr. Charles Watts, "False Claims for the Bible."  
 West Ham—Secular Hall, 121 Broadway, Plaistow: 7.30, Mrs. Thornton Smith, "Shelley." Thursday, at 8, open debate.  
 West London—Clarendon Coffee Palace, Clarendon Road (close to Latimer Road Station): Friday, at 8.30, a discussion.

**OPEN-AIR PROPAGANDA.**

Battersea Park Gates: 11.15, Mr. A. Johnson, "The Christ of History and the Christ of Legend"; 7, Mr. W. J. Ramsey, "Praying to an Unchangeable God."  
 Bethnal Green (opposite St. John's Church): 11.15, Mr. James Marshall, "A Pardoning God."  
 Camberwell—Station Road: 11.30, Mr. H. Snell, "The Church as an Apostle to the Heathen."  
 Clerkenwell Green: 11.30, Mr. J. Rowney will lecture.  
 Edmonton (corner of Angel Road): 7, Mr. C. Cohen, "Christianity and Civilisation."  
 Finsbury Park (near the band-stand): Mr. W. Norrish, 11.30, "Love ye one another"; 3.30, "Freethought and Progress."  
 Hammersmith Bridge (Middlesex side): 6.30, Mr. C. J. Hunt, "History of the Inquisition."  
 Hyde Park (near Marble Arch): 11.30, Mr. C. J. Hunt, "History of the Inquisition."  
 Kilburn—Salisbury Road (close to Queen's Park Station): 6.30, Mr. Lucretius Keen, "Was Man Created?"  
 Kingsland Green: 11.30, Mr. George Standing, "Why are Atheists Moral?"  
 Lambeth (corner of Belvedere Road, opposite St. Thomas's Hospital), Westminster Bridge: 6.30, a lecture.  
 Leyton (open space near Vicarage Road, High Road): Mr. Stanley Jones, 3.30, "Historical Opposition to Science"; 6, "The Basis of Secularism."  
 Midland Arches (corner of Battle Bridge Road): 11.30, Mr. H. Hooper, "Christ of the New Testament Unhistorical."  
 Mile End Waste: 11.30, Mr. W. J. Ramsey, "Samson."  
 North Finchley: 7, Mr. R. Rosetti, "Is Easter a Christian Festival?"  
 Old Pimlico Pier: 11.30, Mr. A. B. Moss, "Who are the Saints?"  
 Plaistow Green (near the Station): 11.30, Mr. Lucretius Keen, "Conservation of Evil."  
 Regent's Park (near Gloucester Gate): 3.30, Mr. F. Haslam, "English Freethinkers of the Eighteenth Century."  
 Stratford—Matthew's Park Estate, Ham Park Road: 3.30, Mr. Lucretius Keen, "The Creation Story."  
 Tottenham (corner of West Green Road): 3.30, a lecture.  
 Victoria Park (near the fountain): Mr. C. Cohen, 11.30, "Celestine Edwards' Impeachment of Atheism"; 3.15, "Christianity and Civilisation—Part VII."  
 Wood Green—Jolly Butcher's Hill: 11.30, Mr. F. Haslam, "Life and Times of Charles Bradlaugh."

**COUNTRY.**

Glasgow Branch N. S. S., excursion to Greenock; train from St. Enoch's at 7.50 a.m.  
 Liverpool—Camden Hall, Camden Street: 11, Tontine Society; 7, Mr. Doeg, "Scapegoats."  
 Manchester N. S. S., Secular Hall, Rusholme Road, Oxford Road, All Saints: Mr. Sam Standing, 11, "Are Protestants Christians?"; 6.30, "The Bishop of Manchester."  
 Newcastle-on-Tyne—25 Nelson Street: Mr. G. W. Foote, 11, "The Tree of Knowledge"; 3, "Nature and God"; 7, "Life and Death."  
 Sheffield—Hall of Science, Rockingham Street: Mr. W. Heaford, 11, "What must I do to be Saved?"; 3, "Christianity and Cruelty—an Answer to the Bishop of Chester"; 7, "Man's Reason and God's Revelation."  
 South Shields—Capt. Duncan's Navigation School, King Street: 7, business meeting, arrangements for picnic to Holywell Dene.  
 Spennymoor—Victoria Hall, Dundas Street: 10.30, general meeting.

**OPEN-AIR PROPAGANDA.**

Leeds—Woodhouse Moor (near the band-stand): 6.30, Mr. A. B. Wakefield (of Hipperholme), "Why do the Clergy Avoid Discussion?"  
 Manchester (corner of Denmark Road): Saturday, at 7, Mr. Sam Standing, "The Bitter Fruits of Christianity." Sunday, at 3, Mr. Sam Standing, "St. Paul's Sophistry (Rom. vii.)."  
 Ox Hill—Annfield Plain (near Mr. Taylor's): Saturday, at 7, and Sunday at 10.30 and 3, Mr. Dipper will lecture.

**LECTURERS' ENGAGEMENTS.**

STANLEY JONES, 28 Stonecutter Street, London, E.C.—Aug. 23, Leyton; 30, Halstead. Sept. 6, Rochdale; 7, Wigan; 10, Black-Chester; 11, Darwen; 13, Manchester; 14, Nelson; 15, Nelson; 18, Finsbury Park. Nov. 1, West Ham.  
 ARTHUR B. MOSS, 44 Credon Road, Rotherhithe, London, S.E.—Aug. 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. 23, morning, Hyde Park; evening, Hammersmith; 30, morning, Camberwell; evening, Lambeth.

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Printed and Published by G. W. FOOTE, at 28 Stonecutter-street, London, E.C.