

The Free-thinker

Edited by G. W. FOOTE.]

[Sub-Editor, J. M. WHEELER.

Vol. XI.—No. 43.]

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 25, 1891.

[PRICE ONE PENNY.

FIRE!!!

DON'T be alarmed, dear reader; there is no need to rush out into the street, like poor old Lot flying from the doomed Cities of the Plain. Sit down and take it easy. Let your fire-insurance policy slumber in its nest. Lean back in your chair, stretch out your legs, and prepare to receive another dose of Free-thought physic—worth a guinea a bottle. So! Are you ready? Very well then, let us begin.

What would man be without fire? Would he not be a perfect barbarian? His very food, even the meat, would have to be eaten raw, and as knives and forks would be unknown, it would have to be devoured with hands and teeth. We read that the Tartar horseman will put a beefsteak under his saddle, and supple and cook it in a ten-mile ride; but we cannot all follow his example, and many would think the game was not worth the candle. But not only should we be obliged to eat our food uncooked; we should enjoy none of the blessings and comforts bestowed upon us by science, which absolutely depends on fire. Nay, our houses would be too cold to shelter us in the winter, and we should be compelled to burrow in the ground. The whole human race would have to live in tropical countries; all the temperate regions would be deserted; and as it is in the temperate regions that civilisation reaches its highest and most permanent developments, the world would be reduced to a condition of barbarism if not of savagery.

No wonder, then, that this mighty civiliser has figured so extensively in legend and mythology. "Next to the worship of the sun," says Max Müller, "there is probably no religious worship so widely diffused as that of Fire." At bottom, indeed, the two were nearly identical. The flame of burning wood was felt to be akin to the rays of the sun, and its very upward motion seemed an aspiration to its source. Sun and fire alike gave warmth, which meant life and joy; without them there reigned sterility and death. Do we not still speak of the *sunshine* of prosperity, and of basking in the *rays* of fortune? Do we not still speak of the *fire* of life, of inspiration, of love, of heroism? And thus when the tide of our being is at the flood, we instinctively think of our father the Sun, in whom, far more than in invisible gods, we live and move—for we are all his children.

Like everything else in civilised existence, fire was a human discovery. But superstitious ages imagined that so precious a thing must have descended from above. Accordingly the Greeks (to take but one illustration) fabled that Prometheus stole Jove's fire from Heaven and gave it to mankind. And as the gods of early ages are not too friendly to human beings, it was also fabled that Prometheus incurred the fierce anger of Jove, who fastened him to a rock on Mount Caucasus, where he was blistered by day and frozen by night, while Jove's vulture everlastingly preyed upon his vitals.

No. 535.]

The sun himself, in oriental countries, shining down implacably in times of prolonged drought, became a terrible demon, and as Baal or Moloch was worshipped with cruel and bloody rites. The corruption of the best is the worst; beneficence changes to malignity. Thus fire, which is a splendid servant, is an awful master. The very wild beasts dread it. Famishing lions and tigers will not approach the camp-fire to seize their prey. Men have something of the same instinctive apprehension. How soon the nerves are disturbed by the smell of anything burning in the house. Raise the cry of "Fire!" in a crowded building, and at once the old savage bursts through the veneer of civilisation. It is helter-skelter, the Devil take the hindmost. The strong trample upon the weak. Men and women turn to devils. Even if the cry of "Fire!" be raised in a church—where a believer might wish to die, and where he might feel himself booked through to glory—there is just the same stampede. People who sit and listen complacently to the story of eternal roastings in an everlasting hell, will fight like maniacs to escape a singeing. Rather than go to heaven in a chariot of fire they will plod for half a century in this miserable vale of tears.

Man's dread of fire has been artfully seized upon by the priests. All over the world these gentlemen are in the same line of business—trading upon the credulous terrors of the multitude. They fill Hell with fire, because it frightens men easily, and the fuel costs nothing. If they had to find the fuel themselves hell would be cold in twenty-four hours. "Flee from the wrath to come," they exclaim. "What is it?" ask the people. "Consuming fire," the priests exclaim, "nay, not consuming; you will burn in it without dying, without losing a particle of flesh, for ever and ever." Then the people want to get saved, and the priests issue insurance policies, which are rendered void by change of opinion or failure to pay the premium.

Buddhist pictures of hell teach the eye the same lesson that is taught the ear by Christian sermons. There are the poor damned wretches rolling in the fire; there are the devils shovelling in fuel, and other devils with long toasting-forks thrusting back the victims that shove their noses out of the flames.

Wherever the priests retain their old power over the people's minds they still preach a hell of literal fire, and deliver twenty sermons on Hades to one on Paradise. Hell, in fact, is always as hot as the people will stand it. The priests reduce the temperature with natural reluctance. Every degree lost is a sinking of their power and profit.

Even in England—the land of Shakespeare and Shelley, Newton and Darwin, Mill and Spencer—the cry of "Fire!" is still raised in thousands of pulpits. Catholics bate no jot of their fiery damnation; Church of England clergymen hold forth on brimstone—with now and then a dash of treacle—in the rural districts and small towns; it is not long since the Wesleyans turned out a minister who was not cocksure about everlasting torment; Mr. Spurgeon preaches hell

(hot, without sugar) in mercy to perishing souls; and General Booth, who caters for the silliest and most ignorant Christians, works hell into his trade-mark.

"Blood and Fire" is a splendid summary of the orthodox faith. All who would be saved must be washed in the Blood of the Lamb—a disgusting ablution! All who are not saved fall into the Fire. A blood-bath or a sulphur-bath is the only alternative.

Happily, however, the people are becoming more civilised and more humane. Science and popular education are working wonders. Reason, self-reliance, and sympathy are rapidly developing. The old primitive terrors are losing their hold upon us, and the callous dogmas of savage religion are growing impossible. Priests cannot frighten men who possess a high sense of human dignity; and the doctrine of an angry God, who will burn his own children in hell, is loathsome to those who will fight the flames and smoke of a burning house to save the life of an unknown fellow creature.

How amusing, in these circumstances, are the wriggings of the "advanced" Christians. Archdeacon Farrar, for instance, in despite of common sense and etymology, contends that "everlasting" fire only means "eternal" fire. What a comfort the distinction would be to a man in Hell! Away with such temporising! Let the ghastly old dogma be defied. Sensible people should simply laugh at the priests who still raise the cry of "Fire!"

G. W. FOOTE.

THE BIBLE AND THE SCHOOLS.

THERE are abundant reasons why the Bible should not be read in rate and tax-supported schools. As the time of the School Board elections approaches it may be well to enumerate a few of these, for this is a question upon which the general indifference and apathy of the ratepayer should be stirred by the activity of the Freethinker.

In the first place, it is unjust that public money, buildings, and the time of teachers paid by the public, should be devoted to that upon which only a portion of the public are agreed. Every argument against this principle must tell equally in favor of teaching the dogmatic creeds of the majority, as well as their Bible, in the public schools. Nonconformists justly object to this, and ask that only so much religion shall be taught as they themselves approve of, thus giving up the old principle upon which they contended against church rates, viz., that the State has nothing to do with the teaching of religion at all. This is the only just, safe, and consistent position. They wish to draw the line at the Protestant Bible, forgetting that to the Catholics it is incomplete, while to the Jew it contains too much, to say nothing of false translations, while the Freethinker regards its reading by children as, to say the least, a pernicious waste of time.

There is little enough time for children to master what is absolutely necessary for their service in after life, for any portion to be taken up with such controverted topics as those pertaining to the Bible and religion. How much better would it be for the world if every child were taught physiology, and knew something of its own structure and functions and of the conditions necessary to health, instead of the barbarous twaddle and nonsense with which its brains are bewildered.

But there are special reasons why the Bible should not be read in public schools. It is a work around which so many controversies have gathered that no teacher can explain a single passage without running counter to the idea of opposing theologians. If no explanations are made Bible reading is useless as

instruction, and receives its worst comments in those of childish ignorance. For the Bible, though of considerable value to the advanced student of ancient traditions and beliefs, is pre-eminently unsuitable to children. It reflects ancient and barbarous ideas that should be repressed rather than encouraged. Much of it, fortunately, cannot be understood. If teachers expound the Bible—a task for which they have usually little inclination—they are pretty sure to manipulate it to suit their own views. For anything worthy of the name of instruction, the greater part of the Bible is utterly useless. It contains little indeed of any real service in adult life. Much is taken up with dry injunctions of rites and ceremonies, now obsolete, even among the Jews; much with fulminations against the enemies of the Jews, and against the Jews themselves for "whoring after other gods," to use its own choice language. Much therein taught has to be unlearned in after life—The whole legend of creation in six days, the belief in possession by demons, the entire atmosphere of miracle. When a child is given the *Arabian Nights*, he is told the stories are not true. But the Bible legends are spoken of reverently as the Word of God, and the whole effect of the Bible lesson is to induce a spirit of credulity and submission to despotic power. This is why the clericals fight so hard for its retention, and why we must fight for its expulsion.

Again, much of the Bible is taken up with sanguinary histories of battles entered into at the command of God; much with most immoral examples. The characters held up to special admiration were cut-throats and swindlers. The child reads how Adam and Eve were prohibited the knowledge of good and evil, and for obtaining it were punished; how Abraham was ready to slay his son at the Lord's command, and is in consequence praised for his faith; how Jacob prospered through cheating his brother and his uncle; how Moses slew an Egyptian and hid him in the sand; and how the Lord hardened the heart of Pharaoh so that he should not let the people go, while punishing with plagues the people, for what was not even the fault of their ruler; how God commanded the Jews to spoil the Egyptians; how Ehud stabs Eglon, and is made a judge; how Jael treacherously murdered Sisera in his sleep, and is pronounced blessed above other women; how David, who put his enemies under saws and iron axes, and treacherously slaughtered the officer of his army whose wife he had debauched, was the man after God's own heart. What effect can all this have but to stimulate the lower elements of his nature?

Further, there are no less than three hundred chapters containing words of indecent signification, about which the child's fancy is sure to play. Stories of a filthy character are told with revolting plainness, and although no teacher would venture to read these before children, the fact is they are read whenever there are Bible lessons, and children have their sexual nature stimulated, often with pernicious consequences, through this boasted revelation of the Deity.

I know there is something to be said for higher classes reading carefully-expurgated extracts as fair specimens of ancient literature. But the clericals will fight tooth and nail against any such attempt to put the Bible on the same level with other literature, nor will they allow it to be studied in its true position as one of the many so-called sacred books of the world. They uphold the Bible for it is the faith founded on the Bible that upholds them. They rely on the general apathy of the public, and unless the party of progress are prepared to oppose them on any and every possible occasion, we shall have to do our work over and over again in each succeeding generation.

J. M. WHEELER.

In every country in the world idleness is the root of all evil. In Italy religion is the root of idleness.—*Sir P. Francis.*

CHRISTIANITY AND CIVILISATION.

It is a common boast of Christians that the most civilised nations of the world are Christians, therefore arguing that their civilisation is a consequence of their Christianity. It would be equally correct if they argued that because the fair-complexioned inhabitants of the globe are Christian, therefore the whiteness of their skins is a result of Christianity.

Christianity, we are told, has carried the blessings of civilisation to the uttermost parts of the earth. It would be just as true to say Christianity had carried bad whiskey and worse morality to the benighted heathen in various parts of the world. Christians have carried their civilisation with them as they have carried their whiskey, but their civilisation is no more Christian than is their whiskey. Our civilisation bears no affinity to Christianity except in the sense that it has evolved from a lower form of civilisation (if it deserves such a title) which was undoubtedly Christian, and is no more identical with it than is man with his ape-like ancestors. Certain rudimentary excrescences remain, but they will disappear as time moves on, and will only be remembered as having exerted functional activity at a time when intellectual life was decidedly much simpler and lower than it is now. The age of steam and electricity has little in common with the age of faith, and science claims no relationship with superstition.

Christian civilisation does not exist now, but it did exist in the Dark Ages which were neither more nor less than the ages of faith. The nearest approach we have to a Christian civilisation at the present time, is in some parts of the Catholic countries where the authority of the Christian Church is supreme, and the people are consequently ignorant, immoral, and degraded. Our civilisation, instead of being Christian, is opposed to Christianity, and it is only as we have gradually and persistently thrown off the influence of the church that we have attained our present position.

Roughly speaking, civilisation means that state of enlightenment which we have attained in the arts and sciences, and the resulting general well-being of the community. Without progress in the arts and sciences there could be no advancement in the well-being of the people. What has Christianity done for the arts and sciences? What *did* Christianity do for them when it had unlimited power? In the Middle Ages the church had it all its own way. It doctrines were omnipotent either for good or evil. It doctrines were swallowed unreservedly—and bore fruit accordingly. There was no "godless education" then, no Secular Society and no *Freethinker*. If Christianity be the divine thing its professors represent it to be, we should necessarily expect its beneficent influence and results to be greater in proportion as its power was more absolute and far-reaching. Naturally we look for the results of any principle when that principle is in full operation. By its fruits shall we know it. If Christianity and civilisation be convertible terms, what a glorious and divine civilisation should have overspread Europe during the Middle Ages when Christianity was all powerful! Yet what do we find? Let anyone read Hallam's picture of the state of society during the Middle Ages, and then say whether he would care to enjoy the benefits of a thoroughly Christian civilisation.

Regarding science, Hallam says: "All physical science especially was held in avowed contempt, as inconsistent with revealed truths" (page 586, Middle Ages, Murray's reprint). We need not mention here the persecution of Galileo and Bruno as an outcome of Christianity. *The intellectual* state of the people was appalling. "For many centuries, to sum up the account of ignorance in a word, it was rare for a layman of whatever rank to know how to sign his name. . . . An inconceivable cloud of ignorance overspread the whole face of the church. . . . In

almost every council the ignorance of the clergy forms a subject for reproach. It is asserted by one held in 992 that scarcely a single person was to be found in Rome itself who knew the first elements of letters. Not one priest of a thousand in Spain about the age of Charlemagne could address a common letter of salutation to another." (Ibid, 595-6).

Regarding the important art of medicine, we quote the following from the *Leisure Hour* of Feb. 1, 1870: "From the fall of the Roman Empire until the revival of letters in the sixteenth century, the treatment of disease throughout Christendom was chiefly in the hands of monks, whose practice was a jumble of medication and superstitious rites. . . . Belief in the miracles of 'Holy Church' paralysed the search after rational remedies for disease, and interfered with their effective use even when found. Charms and amulets were more trusted than medicine. In these dark ages light gleamed from an unexpected quarter. . . . The Arabs made some improvements in the arts of medicine. . . . and were the first to employ distillation as well as chemical analysis. . . . It was strange that the healing art found a patronage from a faith based on the power of the sword that it could not find from that founded on the words of him who is justly called the Great Physician."

The morals of the period were on a level with the intellectual condition. "All writers concur in stigmatising the dissoluteness and neglect of decency that prevailed among the clergy. . . . In every country the secular or parochial clergy kept women in their houses upon more or less acknowledged terms of intercourse by a connivance of their ecclesiastical superiors" (Murray's reprint of Hallam, p. 352-3).

The social condition of the people was equally deplorable. A short extract will serve as a key to the state of a large proportion of the common people—never so "common" as during the sway of the Church. "The characteristic distinction of a villein was his obligation to remain upon his lord's estate. . . . His person was bound, and his lord might reclaim him at any time, by suit in a court of justice, if he ventured to stray. . . . The lord could seize whatever they acquired and inherited, or convey them, apart from the land, to a stranger. Their tenure bound them to what were called villein services, ignoble in their nature and indeterminate in their degree; the felling of timber, the carrying of manure, the repairing of roads for their lord, who seems to have possessed an equally unbounded right over their labor and its fruits" (Ibid. 104).

Another writer says: "From the fifth to the seventh centuries the political influence of the church greatly increased. Bishops were invested with extraordinary powers. In the towns and cities public affairs were committed to their hands. . . . They were to interfere in the appointment of guardians over the young, in the protection of prisoners, insane persons, foundlings, stolen children and oppressed women; in the general administration of justice, and in the public maintenance of morality and order. . . . But if the temper of the clergy answered the description given by a writer of that period. . . . the beneficent effect of the influence of the church's civil power was not very widely extended. Is it likely that any should undertake the cause of the oppressed when even the priests of the Lord do nothing—the most of them either holding their peace, or if they speak, acting like the silent? So it is that the poor are plundered, widows groan, orphans are trampled upon, and many are driven to take refuge among the barbarians, seeking among the barbarians Roman humanity, because among the Romans they are not able to endure their barbarous inhumanity" (*Glimpses of the Dark Ages*, Religious Tract Society).

How much civilisation is indebted to Christianity may be seen from the above extracts. Christianity is incalculably indebted to civilisation, which has shorn

it of some of its worst features and modified others. In brief, infidel science has civilised it. Christians no longer oppose science—they adapt their religion to it.

Science is no longer an apologetic weakling to be brayed down by clerical asses, as was the case when Darwin propounded his doctrine of Descent, but a stalwart athlete that Christians are bound to conciliate with their lips if they hate in their hearts. H. J.

MAHATMAS.

Mrs. Besant says—"The Mahatmas have a vast body of knowledge in trust which they give to their pupils century after century to start it again in the so-called civilised world; and so all our boasted scientific advance is due to their impulse."

PRAISE Gobi! whence all blessings flow;
Praise Gobi! where the bogeys grow—
Mahatmas who are "in the know"

Of Nature's secret phases,
Revealed on Gobi's weird plateau
Of deserts and oases.

Refrain—Which Philistines deny.

Praise Gobi! whence, and thither, flow
Epistles that more swiftly go,
Than those sent through the G. P. O.,
Or thought's response to feelings,
Precipitated high and low
Through solid floors and ceilings.
Which Philistines deny.

Praise Gobi! wisdom's sacred seat,
Where present, past, and future meet
As focussed rays of knowledge "neat,"
Whence Mystagogues reflect them,
To light the heads, and guide the feet
Of those who can detect them.
Which Philistines deny.

Mahatmas guard the secret door
Of Nature's esoteric store;
They doled, and dole, out crumbs of lore
To men like Paracelsus,
And other scientists galore,
As H. P. B.'s friend tells us.
Which Philistines deny.

Our writers who enlarge our ken
Are, after all, but "middle men";
'Tis true as six and four make ten,
'Bout which no doubting lingers;
The "author's" fingers hold the pen,
Mahatmas hold the fingers.
Which Philistines deny.

The Western mind is in its youth:
We talk of "Kepler's laws" forsooth!
"Mahatma's laws" they are, in truth!
Sent all the way from Asia,
By creepy folk, whose names uncouth
Would very much amaze ye.
Which Philistines deny.

O shade of Kepler! fie! for shame!
To foist upon the world your name;
To father "laws"—results you claim,
Of thought experimental,
When, ready-made, to you they came
From sources transcendental.
Which Philistines deny.

The greatest thinkers of the West
Are merely puppets, at the best,
Who think as "Masters" may suggest;
In short: Thought Occidental—
'Tis sad! but truth must be confessed—
Is really Oriental!
Which Philistine's deny.

G. L. MACKENZIE.

Anent the recent convent case, the *Law Journal* reprints the judgment of Sir Alexander Cockburn in the celebrated *Starr v. Saurin* case. The learned judge laid it down that English law did not recognise vows to obey a superior even as God. All authority, he declared, must be reasonable, only reasonably enforced, and reasonably obeyed.

MAINLY ABOUT HOLY PEOPLE.

The Rev. John Hogan, a Roman Catholic priest at Nottingham, got into a helpless state of intoxication in Pimlico and lost a gold watch. The father in God did not wish to prosecute the person who was arrested, but was bound over to appear if called upon at the sessions.

At Glasgow Sheriff Court, William Brown and Margaret Brown, who were described by their minister as exemplary church members, were convicted of having mercilessly thrashed the granddaughter of the former with a leather thong with whipcord attached, because, they stated, she stayed out at night. William Brown was fined £5, with the option of 21 days' imprisonment. "Spare the rod and spoil the child" is doubtless their pious motto.

The Presbytery of Brockville have deposed Rev. John McIntyre, evangelist, from the office of the ministry and membership of the Church, he having been found guilty of gross immorality. In a letter to the public he makes confession, and expresses contrition for his sin.

Louis Mong, who for years has been a bright star among celestial "converts," and has acted as interpreter in the U.S. courts, suddenly betook himself back to China a few weeks ago. He is supposed to have taken with him about 5,000 dols. and his boy by a former wife, but he has left behind his recently married bride and a deficit of some thousands of dollars.

On December 15 last the Rev. Zacharias Bell, of Lexington, N.C., one of the most noted revivalists in North Carolina, kissed his wife and children goodbye. At the same time he took leave of Miss Katie Washburn, a visitor at his house. She left the next day for her home. Since that time the preacher has not been heard from, and his wife has mourned him as dead. She has just learned that on the day after his departure Bell was joined at Salisbury by a young woman, whom he passed off as his wife. The pair left on the train for Georgia, in which State Bell said he had important revival engagements. Mrs. Bell thereupon wrote to Randolph county, and learned that Miss Washburn had never returned home. It is supposed she was the young lady who joined Bell at Salisbury.

Winnipeg piety was somewhat shocked on October 4th upon learning of the arrest of James Chisholm, a prominent member of the Congregational body there. He is charged with seducing girls under fourteen years, the penalty for which under the Thompson Act is life imprisonment, with a whipping, and the police authorities claim they have a straight case against him. Chisholm is thought to be worth considerable money. It is said that the police know at least half a dozen girls who have been ruined by him.

ARITHMETICAL WORMWOOD FOR CHRISTIANS!

David prepared £720,000,000 in gold and £450,000,000 in silver for a temple 90 feet long, 30 feet wide and 45 feet high. The bulk of the gold would be 16,000,000 cubic inches; reckoning £45 to the cubic inch. Whereas if we suppose 40 shillings worth of the silver to make a cubic inch, we shall get of silver the enormous bulk of 225,000,000 cubic inches; while the internal space of this mythical edifice is exactly 209,952,000 cubic inches, or 15,048,000 cubic inches too small to hold the silver alone. This difference, when multiplied by 2 shows us that £30,096,000 of the silver could not be accommodated, and that the whole of the £720,000,000 in gold, would also have to be excluded; in other words, out of £720,000,000 in gold, and £450,000,000 in silver prepared for a certain building; £419,904,000 in silver was the greatest amount it could possibly hold? How did David get it all in? Selah! Christians please dot up, and oblige,

P. W. BALDWIN.

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. Ford will send them on application.

JUSTICE FOR FREETHOUGHT.

"Be just and fear not."—SHAKESPEARE.

WE have recently had an example of the slavish allegiance of the daily press to superstition and Mrs. Grundy in the manner in which Mrs. Besant has been received since her conversion to Theosophy. While she was an advocate of Rationalism pure and simple, and examined the claims of Christianity in a fearless and unsophisticated fashion, the daily press took little or no notice of her; but the moment she leaves our platform to proclaim a mysterious teaching, which has to be taken more upon faith than upon evidence, and which savors very much of an ancient superstition, Mrs. Besant is lauded to the skies. Her earnestness, integrity, unselfishness and great eloquence are now spoken of in terms of the highest praise, whereas these same qualities, which were just as conspicuous when she was on our platform, were passed over by these same journals as unworthy of recognition. But why all this palaver? why this change of attitude? The reason is not far to seek. The fact is, the editors of most of our London journals hate nothing so much as what they are pleased to call "aggressive Freethought." So long as the reformer leaves the prevailing religion alone he is all right; but once he attacks it he is a bad fellow, with no refinement, no poetry, and no goodness in his nature. This is the class of men who exhausted all their epithets of abuse in condemning Mr. Bradlaugh because of the uncompromising attitude of his mind to all that he regarded as superstition, but who, like sycophants, when the great Freethought advocate had been borne to the grave, declared that "while differing from Mr. Bradlaugh in his religious opinions, they nevertheless recognised all along his great talents, and the useful service he performed in the cause of social, political and religious reform."

It is a characteristic of these persons that they generally condemn an earnest reformer while he lives and extol his greatness when he is dead. They cannot stoop from their lofty position as editors to pat a man on the back while he is a struggling advocate, but when he has achieved success they suddenly remember that they were among the first to recognise his ability and encourage him in his labors.

Take another illustration of this hatred of "aggressive Freethought" as exemplified in the columns of the *Daily Chronicle*. A number of credulous persons who have more leisure than brains write to say that they have seen a man through a brick wall, or seen a number of roses spring up from the floor like mushrooms in a cellar, or something of an equally foolish character, and the editor gives instructions to have this rubbish printed in large type, but when a Secularist writes a sensible letter exposing this nonsense, his remarks are compressed into a few lines; the heart is knocked out of them, they are printed in small type and relegated to an obscure corner, as though the infallible editor said: "Dear reader, the remarks of this correspondent are quite unimportant; but I wish to be fair, therefore I have condescended to allow a few of them to appear in print."

There is another way these journalistic oracles show that they cannot be just to Freethinkers. An ordinary man of the world writes a book full of balderdash and twaddle about "Two Girls in a Boat; or, How I Winked the Other Eye," and half a column review is written upon it, pointing out how cleverly it is conceived, what a marvellous insight the author has of human nature, how thoroughly he understands female character, and so on, in the most eulogistic strain. But let a Freethinker write a book on "The Bible," and he will be lucky if he gets a line of notice, and that even of the most unfavorable character. For instance, after keeping a copy of my *Bible and Evolution* for over twelve months, the *Weekly Dispatch* came out last Sunday with the following notice: "*The Bible and Evolution*, by Arthur B. Moss, is an acrid and

impetuous attack on the Bible." And this is what they call reviewing a book! It is true I am in the habit of giving my opponents hard knocks, but I am always ready to receive vigorous blows in return. But when a man pretends to review a book it surely should be his duty to read it. Let the reader turn to any page of the book and judge for himself. Do the following lines savor of acridity or impetuosity? Read: "If we apply ourselves to a rational study of the Bible, discarding altogether the use of theological spectacles, we shall find in its venerable pages much that is useful and interesting to us as students of nature, and also much that assists us in understanding man's physical mental, or moral progress in the past. But we also find that, so far from the Bible containing a true record of the events it professes to narrate, a careful consideration of its contents shows that it is inaccurate in its science, false in its history and bad in its morality. In point of fact, it shows that the primitive man's guesses at the riddle of existence, however natural to an ignorant age and however useful as a working hypothesis to the simple patriarchs and peasants of those far-off times, were pregnant with all sorts of errors, which it has taken many centuries to correct" (*Bible and Evolution*, p. 11).

Nothing "acrid" or "impetuous" in this, is there? And yet this is the tone of the book throughout. No; the real reason is this. I am known as an "aggressive" advocate of Freethought, and Dr. Hunter and his subordinates on the *Weekly Dispatch* cannot tolerate me. They therefore "go" for me on every available opportunity. But this attitude will not always do. Freethinkers will not only demand justice but will command it by-and-bye. Our opinions are growing day by day, and the daily and weekly press will have to play to our tune at last. Moreover, everybody will admit that it is an easy thing for a laborer to knock down with a pickaxe a house which it has taken a man months to build; and it is an equally easy task for a critic to demolish in a line a book—especially if he hasn't read it—that has taken the author a year to write. What we want the critics to do is to answer our arguments and to point out their defects—if they can.

And in common with all earnest and honest reformers, we ask for justice—nothing more. A fair field and no favor, and victory for demonstrated truths, whether they strengthen or destroy the prevailing belief.

ARTHUR B. MOSS.

WHAT IS PRAYER?

A SHORT time ago a priestly editor had an article on "What is Prayer?" He said: "Do you ask what is prayer? It is the voice of the needy calling to Him who alone can relieve them. It is the cry of the sinful to Him who alone can pardon them."

Then he tells us what he knows, and what results from praying, in this wise: "Prayer, we know, has stayed the pestilence, it has caused the sun to stand still in the heavens, it has parted the sea, opened the prison doors, healed the sick and raised the dead to life again. No sooner is the spirit of grace and supplication given from on high than the stubborn soul is melted, the broken heart is bound up, the sinner changed into the humble saint, and offending man restored to the lost image of his God."

Now, this priest knows that he knows no such thing. Prayer has never done one of the things he says it has done. He knows that he states a falsehood when he says it has. Prayer stay the pestilence indeed! It could not pull the splinter out of a baby's finger. Prayer cause the sun to stand still! It could not stop a runaway horse. Prayer part the sea! It could not turn a stream as large as a lead pencil a hair's breadth. Prayer open a prison door! Why are so many behind prison bars? Prayer heal the sick! The earth is covered with sickness and disease. Prayer raise the dead! It could not remove a grain of sand from the buried coffin.

ACID DROPS.

"Ben Tillett," the *Star* says, "is the fashionable attraction now at religious conferences." Ben spoke at the close of the Congregational Union's gathering at Southport, and had an enthusiastic reception. It was gratifying to the Congregationalists to see a real, live labor leader in their midst. It proved that they were "in the swim," and made them think they had a future.

Ben pitched into the churches as responsible for the poverty and degradation of the workers. But he does not seem to have caught a glimpse of the *real* responsibility. He is deluded by the fallacy that the churches are able to cure the secular miseries of the people, whereas they are able to do nothing of the kind, and all their tinkering will only make matters worse. The only way in which the churches can do any true service to the world is by giving up the ghost. While they have any life in them they are mentally perverters of the people's minds and actually their parasites.

One remark of Ben's, however, was very true. He said that "the people had yet to understand Christianity." But they are *beginning* to understand it. Hitherto they have been blinded and bamboozled, but secular education is opening their eyes, free discussion is undeceiving them, and they begin to see that Christianity, like every other faith, is a form of the confidence-trick. Ministers lead pleasant lives in this world—well-housed, well-dressed, well-fed, and well-flattered—in return for promising the people who support them an infinity of pleasant things in the next world. That is their business, and that is all they are fit for. When they turn to secular affairs they are nearly always failures. Malthus is the only Christian minister we know of who has ever thrown the least light on the problem of secular salvation.

Mr. T. P. O'Connor, in his hurriedly produced Memoir of Mr. Parnell, says that the Irish leader, during a railway journey, when religion was under discussion, avowed his disbelief in the Old Testament. Subsequently, on another railway journey, he said, "to the surprise of everybody," that he "had faith in religion, that he had once lost it, but it came back again." "I believe," he added, "in the religion I was born in."

How far these statements are correct we have no means of judging. So much depends on the exact words Mr. Parnell may have used. As Mr. O'Connor puts it, the Irish leader's access of religion is not very creditable to religion itself, for he made the avowal at the very time that he was forcing Captain O'Shea on Galway.

Jehovah's storms are very indiscriminating. Several churches were injured during the recent severe tempest. The Guthrie Memorial Free Church (Edinburgh) was partly wrecked, damage being done to the extent of £2,000. Tod-dington old church had its windows broken. Many other Bethels were more or less knocked about. We have not heard of damage to any Secular meeting place.

The newspapers report the "curious conduct" of a Hanwell chaplain. It appears that on Communion Sunday, in September, one of the little girls in charge of the chalice let it slip, and some of the consecrated wine fell upon her pinafore. The chaplain had this garment cremated, much to the surprise of the managers of the pauper schools, who demanded an explanation. Had they understood their own religion they would have known that the chaplain acted rightly. The consecrated wine was the Blood of Christ, and by burning the pinafore the chaplain saved his Savior from indignity. That little girl might have wiped her nose on the Blood of Christ. Dreadful thought! Most provident chaplain!

Dr. Parker has drawn back. He finds he has made a mistake. He was going to issue sixpenny tickets, to admit the bearer by an early door, after the fashion of the theatres. But some of the City Temple worshippers kicked against the innovation, and the great man has caved in. Perhaps he will try the game again at a more convenient opportunity. He is not the man to lose a chance of making money.

"Clocks and Watches" was the title of a recent lecture by Dr. Parker at Bolton. The report in the local press speaks

of his "elocutionary and dramatic powers." Some people who have heard Dr. Parker would use more forcible language in describing his style. No doubt some such descriptions have reached his ears, for he indignantly exclaimed that "the man who was sent from Heaven to reveal the Eternal Kingdom was not the man to be criticised about the peculiarity of his style." Does Dr. Parker mean that *he* was sent from Heaven? It looks like it. Will he, then, be good enough to tell us something about the place he came from? Lighten our darkness, we beseech thee, O Parker!

Colonel Olcott has been interviewed by the American journalists. He tells Yankeedom that when Mrs. Besant became a Theosophist she "brought in some eminent ex-Materialists, including Herbert Burrows." One thing, however, Colonel Olcott forgot to state, and that is when and where Herbert Burrows ever spoke or wrote on behalf of Materialism. He might also explain, when he has the leisure, in what circles Herbert Burrows was ever "eminent"? His present "eminence"—and it is the greatest he ever enjoyed—consists in taking the chair for Mrs. Besant.

The *Cosmopolitan* of Calcutta says of Mrs. Besant's visit to India, "we may wonder at her coming to the land of occultism to teach occultism." Madame Blavatsky, if a Russian agent, had a good reason for taking her coals to Newcastle. But then it is said Mrs. Besant is going to visit the Mahatmas. We hope one will be imported and put in a glass case for inspection at the Natural History Museum.

The missionaries in India much dislike the circulation of Freethought literature. *Modern Thought* having been placed in a native library at Hyderabad, the missionary denounced it as Atheistic and immoral, and induced the committee not to accept it. This is a good instance of Christian cheek. They not only wish every liberty to destroy the religion of the Hindu, but endeavor to prevent the fact being known that there are those who look on Christianity as being only another of the pernicious superstitions that have deluded mankind.

"Antonio," in the *Christian Commonwealth*, draws attention to the decline of religion in Brussels. Wanting to find a post-office, he was directed to a great church in a prominent and central thoroughfare. It was a noble building, but its walls were plastered with advertisements, and the inside was fitted up as a post-office. Shocking, to be sure! But there is one consolation. The church is now put to an honest use.

Parsons' wives in rural districts generally carry things with a high hand. Mrs. Goode, the wife of the vicar of Holy Trinity Church, Barnstaple, is in the front rank of the sisterhood. She has been fined ten shillings for assaulting two little girls, whom she fetched out of school and castigated. Her excuse was that they had been "impertinent" to her daughter. Parson Goode had better give his helpmeet a few lessons in the Sermon on the Mount.

The gentlemen of the Church Congress assume that good music will prevent the death of the church; but they appear to have forgotten the shrewd Ulysses who stopped his ears with wax in order not to be fascinated with the Sirens. And what would be the result if their flock proved to be as wise as the legendary king of Ithaca?

"Why," asks Lord Reay, "is Europe armed to the teeth? Because no nation can feel a sense of security unless it knows that its armaments are of such a nature that it will not be molested by its neighbor." What a comment on the religion of peace. But Jesus came not to send peace, but a sword.

It seems to have been a piece of unintentional sarcasm on the part of President Harrison in stating to the Methodist Ecumenical Conference at Washington that he had looked in on their deliberations while on the way to visit a large gun-foundry.

The godly Stead gives, in his *Review of Reviews*, a picture of Alexander III. of Russia, and grandiloquently styles it "The Peacemaker of Europe." The crowds of Jews turned homeless and the political prisoners sent to Siberia remind us of the saying of Tacitus, "He makes a desert and calls it peace."

The Rev. H. H. Snell—no relative, we believe, to the

Secularist lecturer—left the Congregationalists at Leicester for the Octagon Unitarian Church, of Norwich, but on the distinct understanding that he was not a Unitarian, but only a Christian of undefined views. He, however, found the Unitarian views too definite, or their numbers too small, and has reverted to Congregationalism.

According to the *Countryman* of Leicester, the local infirmary is as far as possible run in the interests of the church as by law established. A good salary goes to the church chaplain, and the nurses are compelled to conform to the State Church religion, "Clodhopper" asks: "How is it that a prescription may be written out in the Infirmary by an atheist doctor, "put up" by an atheist dispenser, and intended for an atheist patient, admitted on the recommendation of an atheist subscriber, but yet may not be administered except by the hand of a Church of England woman?"

A certain pious Church of England man has the following inscription hung over his mantelpiece:—"Christ is the head of this house. The unscen guest at every meal. The silent listener to every conversation." Poor Christ! This is worse than crucifixion. Fancy, always sitting, and never eating, at another fellow's table! Fancy, listening to all the small talk, day and night, in another fellow's house! Again we say, Poor Christ!

"In the name of the dying world, and of the living and loving Christ, bray, bray, bray." Thus runs the conclusion of a printed call on the Wesleyan Methodist Church by the Rev. T. B. Stephenson, president of the Conference. On looking at it closely, however, we see that some wag has neatly changed the "P's" into "B's." Thus praying is altered to braying; but most of both is done by asses.

The High Church papers, which vigorously denounced Archbishop Plunket, of Dublin, for having ordained some ministers in the Spanish Reformed Church, on the ground that this was unchristianlike proselytism in an already Christian country, record with satisfaction the progress of Ritualism and Episcopalianism in Scotland. But the Ritualists always regard Romanists as true believers, while Protestant Nonconformists are little better than heathen.

While the bogie men of Thibet engage the attention of fashionables at the West End, we cannot be surprised that witchcraft or something like it is still credited in Norfolk. In a case that came before the Swaffham Petty Sessions, it transpired that one, Robert Mason, had two laborers arrested for stealing his purse which he had lost and which contained some £16. His sole reason was that he had consulted a Mrs. Watson, "a wise woman," who told him that two persons had got his money, one tall and fair, and the other short and fat. She further said that the thieves worked on land near which there was water. This was sufficient for Mr. Mason who had two laborers arrested on the strength of what the wise woman had told him. But it was not enough for the magistrates, though one of them was a clergyman who must know that the belief in witchcraft is endorsed in the holy book.

J. C. said when they persecute you in one city flee into another. Booth says, if an Act of Parliament says you must not play bands on Sunday at Eastbourne, persist in playing, whatever disturbances may result. The inhabitants are, however, as determined as the army, and black eyes and broken instruments are still part of the Sunday program at Eastbourne.

Bramwell Booth says the Army has sent 1,000 men to gaol already, and is ready with another 1,000. Yes, but Bramwell won't be one of them. Oh no! He has been very careful since the Eliza Armstrong case. Eastbourne for ever! But no "quod" for Bramwell.

General Booth offers £10,000 a year for a site on the Thames Embankment. He also offers to spend £100,000 on buildings. At this rate a terrible amount of the "Army's" money will be wasted on offices for the "staff." The Salvation Army, in fact, seems very much like the Queen's Army. The "fat" goes to the top, and the "lean" to the bottom.

The Shoreditch Guardians complain that men are sent from the Salvation Shelter at Whitechapel in a dirty condi-

tion and covered with vermin. A deputation of Army officers has waited on the Board, but has not succeeded in shaking the Board's opinion of the shelters.

Mr. John Marsh, a publican of St. Helen's, who appears to have been highly respected, died recently. The Rev. R. J. Ward improved the occasion by preaching from the text, "Except ye repent ye shall all likewise perish." "Do you know," said he, "no drunkard can enter the kingdom of heaven. And if it be true of the drunkard, what hope can there be for the man who encourages the drunkard in his drinking? I fear no one has ever gone to this man. I have not; have you?" So this minister of the gospel of charity, who makes no effort to save the publican while alive, devotes a sermon to damning him now he is dead.

If you see a man extremely solicitous lest his soul will not be redeemed, you may be sure there is a heavy discount upon it, and he knows it. A fellow with a soul at par has no solicitude about its salvation.—*Dr. J. R. Munroe.*

Edward Hine, the author of several pamphlets written to show that the English were descended from the lost tribes of Israel, died last week. He firmly believed he was a special messenger of God, and refused to have a doctor. A coroner's inquest had therefore to be held on his body.

The clerk of the London County Council replied to the request of the Finsbury Park Branch for the use of the bandstand on Sunday mornings, that it could be had for lecturing only if there was no discussion. This is rather artful. Some of the members having attended meetings of the Branch, the Council is perfectly aware that liberty of discussion is considered a fundamental principle not to be surrendered.

Stundism, a sort of Protestant Ritualism, is spreading in Russia. In some places the Stundists openly deride the orthodox Greek Church, scoff at the holy images, and the rites and ceremonies of the church. Energetic measures are being taken to repress and destroy Stundism, whose teachers will be subjected to severe penalties. Christianity can never rid itself of the vice of persecution which lies in its very constitution.

The Rev. C. E. Gander formerly curate of St. James's Church, Plymouth, has joined the Roman Church, and will enter on its propaganda. He is the fifth clerical who has gone over to Rome from this Romanising Church.

Several papers pointed to the fact that the name of the Rev. Hugh Johnson, who recently renounced Christianity for Mohammedanism at Liverpool, cannot be found in the clerical directories. This is accounted for by the fact that he was only ordained on Trinity Sunday, in the diocese of Exeter. His transition to Islam seems to have been rapid. Perhaps he realised what a solemn farce it was entering on the Christian ministry.

Someone has made the calculation that there were at least sixty millions of slaves in the Roman Empire in the time of Christ. Yet he never raised his voice against slavery, and Christians down to recent times have held slaves and defended their right to do so from the Bible.

The Rev. Cotton Mather was one of the leading lights of the Pilgrim Fathers who settled in Massachusetts. He was the great investigator of the trials for witchcraft at Salem. A letter from this holy man has recently been printed which serves to illustrate the Christian charity which abounded in his day: "Sept. 15, 1682.—To Ye Aged and Beloved, Mr. John Higginson.—There be now at sea a ship called Welcome, which has on board 100 or more of the heretics and malignants called Quakers, with W. Penn, who is the chief scamp, at the head of them. The General Court has accordingly given secret orders to Master Malachi Huscott, of the brig Porpoise, to waylay the said Welcome slyly as near the Caps of God as may be, and make captive the said Penn and his ungodly crew, so that the Lord may be glorified and not mocked on the soil of this new country with the heathen worship of these people. Much spoil can be made by selling the whole lot to Barbadoes, where slaves fetch good prices in rum and sugar, and we shall not only do the Lord great service by punishing the wicked, but we shall make great

good for his minister and people. . . . Yours in the bowels of Christ, COTTON MATHER."

In Rammohun Roy's Life it is related that his mother had become quite convinced of the unity of God, and that the Hindu gods were but idols. Yet she went as usual to the feast of Juggernaut, and said "but I am a weak woman, and am grown too old to give up these observances, which are a comfort to me." How many partly enlightened Christians are in a similar case.

Some of the Chinese, while by no means anxious to receive English religion, are yet anxious to get the missionaries to teach them the language. One pretended he must learn English or else Jesus would never understand his prayers.

Professor Henry Drummond, the author of that washy, much-belauded book, *Natural Law in the Spiritual World*, has been discoursing on Books at Edinburgh. He confessed he had not read Gibbon, but he "hoped to tackle Gibbon some day." Well, the sooner the better. It is a lamentable confession for a public teacher to declare that he has not read the greatest historical work in the English language, and perhaps in the world. Professor Drummond should stop talking and read Gibbon. It might give a little texture to his rather flabby mind.

Another admission of Professor Drummond's is this. He had derived profit from Ruskin, Emerson, Carlyle, George Eliot, and Channing; yet he alleged that not one of those writers would have been admitted to the membership of "our Church." What is this but a confession that the great stimulating writers of to-day are outside the Church pale?

Mr. W. Emmette Coleman has been writing in *The Golden Way* on "The Unveiling of Isis Unveiled." He shows that this work, which goes under the name of H. P. Blavatsky, is mainly a compilation of plagiarisms from other authors. Dunlap, the author of *Sod* and *The Spirit History of Man*, is chiefly drawn upon. Mr. Coleman gives a list of 276 passages bodily taken without credit from the works of Dunlap, Mdme. Blavatsky boldly transferring his citations as from books which she had herself consulted. *Isis Unveiled*, whether founded on the papers of the Baron de Palm or compiled by H. P. B. herself, was simply a stupendous literary fraud, with a great pretence of learning, now proved to be second-hand.

There is a sect of Christo-Theosophists, who apparently don't intend to let Mrs. Besant have all her own way. Under the auspices of this sect, the Rev. J. Page Hopps has been explaining his proposal to form an Ideal Church. There is to be the Fatherhood of God and the Brotherhood of Man. That is the treacle. The pill is "constant communion of kindred spirits in the unseen and the seen"—in other words, Spiritism. The best name for the new affair is "Our Father's Church." But how about "Our Mother"? Why is *she* left out?

"There is a consentient opinion among qualified judges," says the *Christian World*, "that Mr. Spurgeon has not duly appreciated the intellectual wants of the age." This is a parliamentary way of saying he is behind the times; and undoubtedly he is; but so is the Bible, which Mr. Spurgeon stands by as the infallible Word of God.

Babu N. C. Mukherjee has written a pamphlet in Bengali on the god Juggernaut. He contends that Juggernaut is not a Hindu god at all, not being mentioned in the Vedas or Puranas, but the image of the Christian Cross. This theory will probably set the Christians in India by the ears, for Juggernaut is the god under whose rolling car the people used to immolate themselves.

Archdeacon Farrar has just published an historical romance entitled *Darkness and Dawn*, relating how the early Christians struggled against the persecuting Nero. Perhaps he will write another historical romance, entitled *Eve and Midnight*, relating how the Christian religion oppressed and shed blood wholesale in the day of its own power.

Hugh Price Hughes is "going it" in America. Replying to the observation that he uses newspaper English, he said, "I consider that a great compliment. I tell them in my

church that if they see a duke coming they are to treat him with all due respect, but if they see a reporter they must treat him with awed reverence." Canny Hughes! No wonder the reporter returned the compliment by saying—"After listening to his address one can readily understand why he is called a second Wesley."

One of the Yankee papers seems to take Mr. Hughes at his own estimate. According to the Rhode Island *Evening Telegram*, "Among the people of England Mr. Hughes is considered as ranking next to Gladstone in oratorical ability; he has done Herculean services toward bridging over the chasm between the capitalistic and labor elements." This will be news to "the people of England."

A religious contemporary complains of the profane way in which Sunday is observed at Blackpool. Pleasure is in full swing, and "many of the people walk straight from church and chapel to the concert." Of course the places of worship are languishing. "In the nineteen churches for the two services of the day £150 will not have been taken up," yet a single Sunday concert will realise £250 in gate money. Surely the sky-pilots of Blackpool are to be pitied. They seem to be drifting to bankruptcy. But why don't they show a little enterprise? Probably business would revive if they sandwiched the sermon between thick slices of a more exhilarating entertainment. A sermon on Samson might be illustrated by Sandow; another on Jonah by the Beckwiths enjoying themselves under water; and so on, almost *ad infinitum*. Really the clergy must keep abreast with the times.

Alfred Fletcher got up early one morning and reached Queen Victoria-street, in the City of London, about four o'clock. There he produced an inkpot and began to write on a plate-glass window. Seeing him thus occupied, a City constable intervened, but Alfred Fletcher said "Let me alone; I am writing the Book of Moses." The policeman told him to drop writing the Book of Moses, but he would not; in fact he exclaimed "I have been sent down from heaven, and I must obey the commands of God rather than the commands of men." Thereupon the policeman ran him in, and in due course he was brought before the magistrate, where it turned out that he had suffered from sunstroke.

Light, Love, and Truth, a Manchester Protestant magazine, edited by the Rev. A. E. Clarke, gives from John Bunyan "What the infidel Hobbs said in Hell." The philosopher, whose name is properly written Hobbes, is made to say the love of sin hardened his heart against his Maker, "and made me hate him first and then deny his being." He declares he is in everlasting fire, which "ten thousand times exceeds all culinary fire in fierceness." A nice specimen this of Christian light, love, and truth!

The Rev. G. S. Barrett, preaching before the autumnal session of the Congregational Union, said, "Sunday leisure, museums, picture galleries, better conditions of labor—all these were the fruits of Christ's own gospel." If so, Christ's ministers must have set themselves in blank antagonism to his gospel.

So the devil is not yet dead. A Catholic priest in Southern India, some of whose pupils violated the sanctity of a heathen temple, has found it to his regret that bones and brickbats are showered upon his church, and that in spite of police guards and his own men continually keeping watch on all sides. The priest is now positively certain that the devil has been furious at the profanation of his temple, and intends to appease him by propitiatory gifts. There is no end of human credulity.—*Cosmopolitan*.

An old rhyme runs thus:

"God made Satan, and Satan made sin,
God made a hole to put Satan in."

This, though perfectly correct according to the Bible and orthodoxy, might lead any one to inquire, why Satan was not confined in the pit before he did any harm, or rather, why he was created at all?

A clergyman was lecturing a youth of his fold about the sin of dancing, when the latter protested that the Bible plainly said, "There's a time to dance." "Yes, there is a time to dance," said the divine; "and it's when a boy gets a whippin' for going to a ball."

MR. FOOTE'S ENGAGEMENTS.

Thursday, October 22, Hall of Science, at 8, "The Gospel of Freethought." Admission free.

Sunday, October 25, Secular Hall, New Church-road, Cambridge, S.E., at 7.30, "The Way to Heaven."

Thursday, October 29, Lecture Hall, High-street, Deptford, at 8, "Who Wrote the Bible?"

November 1, Portsmouth; 8, Sheffield; 15, Leicester; 22, Wolverhampton; 29, Grimsby.

December 6, Hall of Science; 13, Manchester; 20, Nottingham; 27, Hall of Science.

January 3, Birmingham; 10, Bolton; 17, Newcastle Sunday Lecture Society; 24 and 31, Hall of Science.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

MR. CHARLES WATTS' ENGAGEMENTS.—October 25, Hall of Science, London—morning and evening. November 1, Hall of Science; 8, Birmingham; 15, Birmingham; 22, Portsmouth; 29, Leeds. Dec. 6, Bolton; 13, Birmingham; 20 and 21, Leicester; 27, Birmingham. Jan. 3 and 10, Hall of Science; 17, Milton Hall; 24 and 31, Birmingham. Feb. 7, Hull; 14, Glasgow; 15, Hamilton; 16, 17, 18 and 19, public debate in Glasgow; 21, Edinburgh; 28, Birmingham. March 7, Birmingham.—All communications for Mr. Watts should be sent direct to him at Baskerville Hall, The Crescent, Birmingham.

J. D. STONES.—Thanks for your interesting letter expressing such strong appreciation of our last week's article. We did not think, when writing it, of any man's approval or disapproval. It was some Englishman's duty to say what we said, and we took the duty upon ourselves.

R. F. F.—Always glad to receive cuttings.

W. COLE (Coves), who has read the *Freethinker* from its first number, and "loves it immensely," has just got us a new subscriber. This is the third he has obtained for us in that sleepy little place. Surely other friends can do a great deal more in active, populous places.

A. BAKER.—Mr. Foote's Sundays are all engaged till the end of February. He cannot visit Wigan before March or April, if then, for he hopes to make a tour in Scotland in the spring.

J. G. FISHER.—We cannot see our way to invite subscriptions for such an object.

G. F. DEFRIEZ, bookseller, 168 London-road, Croydon, supplies this journal and all Secular literature.

W. HEAFORD has changed his address. It is now 67 Mantua-street, Falcon-road, Battersea, S.W. Branch secretaries, please note.

A. CARVER.—Thanks. See "Sugar Plums."

E. ANDERSON.—We have had to summarise. See "Sugar Plums." Glad to hear of progress at West Ham.

C. W. ROWE.—Mr. Parnell was not exactly a wealthy man, and Mrs. Parnell has private means.

JEWISH FREETHINKER writes: "My bookseller (Mr. Hainwell, of the Triangle, Maro-street, Hackney) has at my request increased his weekly supply of the *Freethinker*, and he tells me there is never one left." May this correspondent's example be imitated extensively! Now is the time to get newsagents to sell this journal. All it wants is fair play. It always finds customers where it has a chance.

E. LARKIN, 3 Bradbury-street, Kingsland, N.E., is the new secretary of the Balls Pond Branch in place of Mr. Baxter, who has resigned in consequence of his removal to Dartford. Mr. Larkin hopes to have the support of all local Freethinkers. The Branch sadly needs strengthening.

CONSTANT READER (Portsmouth).—You will find ample detailed information as to the right and practice of Affirmation in the National Secular Society's *Almanack*. The Oaths Act 1888 is the one now in force. Those who choose can object to be sworn, as witnesses or jurors; but before they affirm they must declare that they have no religious belief, or that the taking of an oath is against their religious belief. Freethinkers should observe the directions in the *Almanack*, and if the judge, magistrate, or coroner refuse to let them affirm, they should write out a statement of the case and forward it at once to the President of the National Secular Society.

J. A. SPARROW.—You have no right to "presume" what we mean. We mean exactly what we said. Herbert Spencer is a Freethinker. We never said he was a Materialist.

F. J. LAST.—See "Sugar Plums."

R. CHAPMAN.—We note the discontinuance. Pray thank the South Shields Branch on our behalf. Mr. Foote's Sundays are engaged a good deal in advance. See his list.

W. SAXTON.—Pleased to have your intelligent approval of the Parnell article. There may be another tussle with Rome in England, but we have no fear as to the result.

A. HOLLAND, 5 Wood-street, Bilston, invites the Freethinkers of the district to meet him at Giffiths' Hotel, Fallingsheath, Darlaston, near James's Bridge Station, on Wednesday next (Oct. 28) at 8 p.m., with a view to organising.

A. CARNES.—It is a very old joke. We heard it in our school days. Thanks, all the same.

J. WITTERING.—See "Sugar Plums." Miss Campbell does not send us her address.

J. K. HAMILTON.—Thanks for jottings, which will appear in due course.

B. S. CORKE.—Glad to hear a Branch is to be formed at Cheltenham. The N. S. S. secretary will send you forms and information.

J. CLOSE.—Certainly our lecturers should dress neatly for the platform, but they cannot dress better than their means allow. Some of the open-air lecturers are working men, who would be very foolish to run up a big tailor's bill.

S. HOLMES (Southport), in response to the appeal in our last number, encloses a cheque for £1 ls. for the N. S. S. funds. Well-to-do readers, please follow suit.

J. H. HOLDEN.—Lecture notices should not be sent to Mr. Forder, but to the editor. See below.

T. G. B.—Pleased to hear the *Freethinker* is relished by your employees. It is impossible for us to "explain" the "phenomena" you refer to. They would require a very careful sifting, and that could only be done at the time and on the spot.

T. T. BLANCHARD.—Mr. Jones has handed us your letter. Thanks. Every Freethinker should join the N. S. S.

J. SKUSE.—Letters like yours are very encouraging. The Hall of Science Syndicate will soon have its prospectus in circulation.

PAPERS RECEIVED.—Fritankaren—Liberty—Freethought—Ironclad Age—Menschenthum—Echo—Neues Frereligioses Sonntags-Blatt—Freidenker—The Liberator—Der Arme Teufel—Secular Thought—Boston Investigator—Western Figaro—La Vérité Philosophique—Progressive Thinker—Truthseeker—Flaming Sword—Loyal American—Better Way—St. Helen's Newspaper—Sussex Evening Times—Freedom Greenock Telegraph—Manchester Evening Mail—Light, Love and Truth—Lichtfreund—Western Daily Mercury—Lynn News—Twentieth Century—Watts's Literary Guide—Chester-le-Street Advertiser—Age we Live In—Nottingham Daily Express—North Devon Herald—Christian Globe—Sowerby Bridge Chronicle—Yorkshire Evening Post—Leeds Mercury—Open Court—Cosmopolitan—Tunbridge Wells Advertiser.

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.

SCALE OF ADVERTISEMENTS.—Thirty words, 1s. 6d.; every succeeding ten words, 6d. *Displayed Advertisements*:—One inch, 8s.; 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.

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.

SUGAR PLUMS.

The circulation of the *Freethinker* improves. But we are still dissatisfied. We want the circulation to increase a good deal more before Christmas. We are not actually out of pocket, for the improved sale has broken the back of the extra expense of the sixteen pages. But we want something to pay contributors with, and after that we want a little (if we can get it) for our own labor, or at least for our loss of time. We are making a pretty heavy sacrifice to render the *Freethinker* more and more worthy of "the cause." We appeal therefore, without the slightest hesitation, to the friends of "the cause" to lend us their aid in this enterprise. Those who can afford it—and there are many—should take an extra copy or two weekly, and distribute them among the heathen. Above all, let the newsagents be bombarded. Mr. Forder will send a contents-sheet of the *Freethinker* to any address where it can be displayed.

We may also appeal once more to Freethinkers who do any advertising. They will find this journal a good medium. It is not glanced at and flung aside, but carefully read and often kept. We ask for a trial.

On Sunday evening the National Sunday League opened its winter season at Shoreditch Town Hall; there was also a free concert going on at South Place Institute—both places being within an easy walk of the Hall of Science. Despite these counter attractions, however, Mr. Foote had a fine audience. His lecture on "Man, Nature and God" was followed with keen attention, and he sat down amidst a storm of applause. Previous to the lecture he gave another reading from Shakespeare. The musical part of the "service" was rendered by Madame Burgwitz, who sang with great taste and expression, and was very heartily applauded.

Thus far the new experiment at the London Hall of Science has been a marked success. Our own opinion is that the audiences will go on improving. The "service" too will be improved in every way, as far as possible. Ladies and gentlemen able and willing to render voluntary service in the musical part are earnestly desired to communicate with Miss Edith Vance, 142 Old-street, E.C.

Mr. Charles Watts is at the London Hall of Science to-day (October 25), both morning and evening. No doubt he will have excellent audiences.

Mr. Foote will take the chair at Mr. Watts's morning lecture. In the evening Mr. Foote lectures at Camberwell, after an absence of several months. His subject is "The Way to Heaven."

Mr. Foote lectures on Thursday evening (Oct. 29) in the Lecture Hall, High-street, Deptford. His subject will be "Who Wrote the Bible?" The chair will be taken by Mr. George Standring. Freethinkers in the district should try to bring their orthodox friends.

Fund for settling Mr. Charles Watts at Birmingham:—The following subscriptions have been received: C. J., £1; Captain McTaggart, £10 10s.

A London Freethinkers' Ball will take place at the Hall of Science on Thursday, November 26. There will be a concert in the minor hall and dancing in the large hall. During the evening Mr. Foote will present to Mr. Robert Forder the illuminated address that was sanctioned by the Conference. It is handsomely got up, and expresses tersely the N. S. S.'s appreciation of Mr. Forder's services as secretary. The tickets are being printed for the evening's entertainment, and will soon be in circulation. They are one shilling each. We may add that Mr. Anderson is acting as honorary secretary to the Committee, Miss Vance takes charge of the musical program, and Mr. Mearns will act as M.C.

Mr. G. J. Holyoake reminds us that "busy" is hardly the word for the reason of his absence from the unveiling of Mr. Bradlaugh's portrait at Manchester. He had been three days speaking at Hebden Bridge, ending at 10 o'clock on Saturday night. On Sunday he travelled to London and lectured the same evening at the Hall of Science. His article for the *Freethinker* was written in the train. Since then, the record of Mr. Holyoake's labors would shame many a young man—and the veteran is seventy-five!

We beg to call our readers' attention to a volume called *Essays in Rationalism* advertised on our back page. It includes the articles that were contributed to the *Reasoner* thirty years ago by "A Recluse." The writer who adopted this pseudonym was Charles Robert Newman, the second of the three Newman brothers, the eldest of whom became Cardinal Newman, and the youngest of whom is still known in the land of the living as Professor Newman. Charles Robert Newman was an Atheist. Archdeacon Hare spoke of his "remarkable mental power," and Mr. Thomas Purnell said "I cannot imagine a more distinguished head and face." The only writings he seems ever to have published were the articles now collected in a neat little volume. They are in themselves striking and original, and they are otherwise important on account of the writer's relationship to the great Cardinal Newman.

A correspondent in the Army sends us a letter he has received from an Italian count, the son of a minister of state. He returns thanks for some copies of the *Freethinker* and says "They agree totally with my way of thinking." He has translated some paragraphs for the Italian newspapers.

The gentleman who presented the Manchester Branch with the fine portrait of Mr. Bradlaugh, after defraying the cost of decorating the hall, writes to us as follows:—"I am much pleased with the present form of the *Freethinker*. It is a splendid pennyworth, and should be well supported by the party."

Mr. Forder has handed us an interesting letter from a sergeant in the army stationed at Gibraltar, who orders a second supply of Freethought literature. He says that he met with the *Freethinker* by accident and found it very much to his taste. He had begun to find mistakes and objectionable features in the Bible, but he had never heard of any Freethought publications. He finds the *Bible Handbook* and *Infiel Death-Beds* most interesting and useful, and it appears that his heresy has reached the ears of the chaplain, who has written to say he will be "only too glad" to see him at any convenient time, and help him "with regard to some of the difficulties of the Bible." For our part, we fancy it is the chaplain that will want "help."

This case should encourage our friends to distribute the *Freethinker* as widely as possible. Some seed will fall upon stony ground, but some will find fertile soil and repay the sower.

The North-Eastern Secular Federation is taking time by the forelock. At the last council meeting it resolved to get the next N. S. S. Conference held if possible at Newcastle. All the affiliated Branches are eager to bring this about. The Federation is going to try to do something for the training of local lecturers with a view to putting a larger number of open-air speakers in the field next summer. The annual social gathering is fixed for January 4. Tickets can be had of J. Brown, 86 Durham-street, Bentinek; J. Summerfield, 10 Campbell-street; Peter Weston, 77 Newgate-street; S. M. Peacock, 35 Baring-street, South Shields; or any of the Branch secretaries. The price is 1s. 6d. Half price for children under nine.

Mr. Brown acknowledges the following subscriptions for the N. E. Secular Federation:—Bedlington Branch, 10s.; Crook Branch, £1; S. M. Peacock, 5s.; Sunderland Branch, 3s.; J. Bowen, 2s. 6d.; J. Proctor, 10s.; Mr. Elcoat, 10s.; collection at Mr. Dipper's lecture, 17s. 2d.

The meetings of the Newcastle Branch in the Eldon Hall are very successful. The place is crowded every Sunday night.

The eulogy on Charles Bradlaugh written by M. D. Conway was refused insertion in the press at Canterbury, New Zealand, whereupon the Canterbury Freethought Association paid for its insertion as an advertisement. Commenting on this, Mr. Conway says: "I feel sure there is not a Christian in New York who would pay for the insertion as advertisements of two long articles in advocacy of his Redeemer."

Mr. Symes is going on a little propagandist tour, visiting Adelaide and Broken Hill, where there is a large field for Secularism.

Mr. Touzeau Parris will lecture at the Battersea Secular Hall next Sunday evening, Nov. 1, his subject being "Why I am not a Christian." Tickets of admission (3d. and 6d.) can be had at the hall, at outdoor meetings, or at 54 Landseer-street. As charging for admission and having a special lecturer on the first Sunday in the month is an experiment, it is to be hoped the Branch will be well supported by Freethinkers in the neighborhood.

The *Mid-Surrey Gazette* inserts a brief report each week of the Sunday evening lectures at the Battersea Branch N.S.S. Secretaries of Branches should always send a short report to their local paper, for by this means our views are made known to many thousands who would never attend a Freethought lecture.

The West Ham Branch held its quarterly meeting on Sunday. Mr. Ivatts, the president, gave an encouraging report. By the generous action of the treasurer the Branch was freed from debt. The Enterprise Hall, Great Eastern-road, which seats 300 people, had been secured for the Sunday evening meetings. Mr. Ivatts continues as president and Mr.

Anderson as secretary. The committee was increased in view of the growing work. After the formal business was transacted the members and friends sat down to a tea and entertainment. We are pleased to record that the West Ham Branch has eighty-four paying members, four having been enrolled during the past quarter.

Mr. C. F. Cooper has been selected as School Board candidate by the East Lambeth United Democratic Committee, representing the N. S. S. Branches, the Radical Clubs, and the Social Democratic Federation Branches. Mr. Cooper goes in for Secular Education, and we hope he will go into the School Board on that ticket. Freethinkers in East Lambeth will take note of Mr. Cooper's candidature.

The Bethnal Green Branch successfully opened its new Hall last Sunday. There was an excellent audience, some in fact standing, and all declared it was a first-rate start. We hear that the neighborhood is aroused, and that the bigots have been getting at the landlord; but, alas! that unfeeling landlord has gone and joined the Branch.

Mr. W. Heaford (N. S. S.) and Mr. J. Tarry (C.E.S.) debate this evening (Oct. 25) at Hammersmith Bridge on "Is Christianity a Better Moral Guide than Secularism?" Local Freethinkers should attend and secure fair play for their representative. The battle begins at 6.

Mr. Wittering, secretary of the Grimby Branch, sends us a very favorable report of Miss Ada Campbell's lectures. She made a first-rate impression, and the Branch has booked her for another Sunday in the new year. Miss Campbell's reply to Mrs. Besant on Theosophy was well reported in the local press.

Heinrich Heine, the Jewish Freethinking poet, is the favorite of the Empress of Austria. She would have presided over the committee to collect funds for his monument at Dusseldorf, but clerical intrigues were successful in stopping the undertaking. She is now about to erect a monument to Heine in her private grounds. It is a life-size statue of the poet on his mattress grave. One hand holds a pencil, the other a manuscript, on which are inscribed four of his verses.

A French commune (that of Murat, near Cahors) is said to have gone over *en masse* from Catholicism to Protestantism. This does not seem to indicate that deep attachment to their faith upon which Cardinal Manning was recently congratulating the French Catholics.

The *Chester-le-Street Advertiser*, inserts a letter from "A Secularist and Not an Infidel," who maintains some bold propositions in regard to the credibility of the gospels and the practicability of the Sermon on the Mount.

The Rev. Howard MacQueary, who was prosecuted for heresy in Ohio, has left the American Episcopal Church and joins the Universalists. He has been sufficiently advertised to ensure a good following.

Harold Cox, describing in the *Co-operative News* a Sunday performance of a patriotic historical drama in Switzerland, says: "I should like to ask an English Sabbatarian whether he thinks the young men of English towns and villages would not be better employed on a Sunday in learning about the history of their own country, and giving pleasure to hundreds of people, than in standing at street corners and spitting?"

The western cities of the United States are less Puritanical than the eastern ones founded by the early pilgrims. In Illinois there is no Sunday law, and although ministers went from New York to Chicago to remonstrate against the opening of the World's Fair on Sunday, the *Chicago Herald* says "the mission of fanatics from New York has completely failed," and considers it settled that the World's Fair will be kept open every day.

During the Protestant Conference at Brighton Mr. C. E. Ford sent a letter to the *Sussex Evening Times*, pointing to the fact that Protestants have been guilty of persecution as well as Catholics. Well-written and well-timed letters like this are of great service. Occasions are continually arising when Freethinkers can strike in an opportune word for their cause.

The *Freethinker's Magazine* for October gives a portrait of Mrs. H. S. Lake, with a sketch of her career by Lydia R. Chase. H. Frank continues his papers on "The Evolution of the Devil," and B. F. Underwood gives some telling facts in an article on "Christianity and Slavery."

Our energetic friend, M. Cilwa, editor of *La Verité Philosophique*, has put out a monthly literary journal designed for family reading and young Freethinkers entitled *Le Bleu*. We wish it all success.

The French Comité d'Etudes Morales has decided to publish the result of its labors under the title of *Principes de Morale et d'Education Laïques* (Principles of Morals and of Secular Education). The work will be published by M. M. Guérin et Cie, 22 Rue des Boulangers, Paris. The price will be 2 francs 50 centimes.

The *Progressive Thinker* of Chicago, gives in one number (Oct. 10) two articles by Mr. Wheeler, extracted with acknowledgment from our columns. One is on the "Heathen Doctrines of Hell," the other on "Early Christianity."

A Twentieth Century Club of Radicals and Freethinkers has been formed at New York. Their meeting place is 13 Clinton-place.

The *Truthseeker* devotes considerable space to a full report of the decision of Mr. W. C. Jones, the Attorney-General of Washington, affirming that the Bible must not be read in public schools, the clause in the constitution that no sectarian instruction shall be given being interpreted to exclude everything pertaining to religion. He says of the public schools: "They are godless, and the educational department of the government is godless in the same sense that the executive, legislature and administrative departments are godless. So long as our constitution remains as it is no one's religion can be taught in the public schools."

Of Mr. Spencer's daily life the general public knows little. He lives very comfortably near Regent's Park, and is happy in the companionship of a few old friends and his books. He is now, as he has ever been, a great reader. He dines away from home quite often, and sometimes goes to great banquets and places of amusement. Life is very pleasant to him. He is still on the sunny side of the road and in perfect health. He has been honored by having his works extensively translated. All are rendered into French, many into German, Russian, Italian, Spanish, Hungarian, Greek, Japanese, and Chinese. Many offers of academic honors have come to him, but all have been declined. The old philosopher sits calmly in the twilight of life, watching the struggles of others who must soon take up the work that has been his life's duty.

On Friday evening (Oct. 23), at 8 o'clock, a public meeting will be held at South Place Institute, South-place, Moorgate-street, E.C., to protest against the prosecution of Mr. H. S. Young for sending literature on the population question through the post. Mr. Young will be present, and among the speakers will be G. W. Foote, Dr. Drysdale, Dr. Allinson, and J. M. Robertson.

OBITUARY.

James Parton, the author of the best English Life of Voltaire, is reported to have died of heart disease. He was an advanced thinker, and his voluminous work on the great French heretic showed wide research and a keen appreciation of Voltaire's intellect and character.

Herman Melville's death is also reported from America. He was a writer with very remarkable gifts. An article on one of his masterpieces, showing his Freethought tendencies, recently appeared in our columns.

It is with deep regret I have to record the death, by accident, of Mr. Joseph W. Brown, aged twenty, late a member of the Ball's Pond Branch of the N. S. S. Of a gentle, unobtrusive nature, passionately devoted to his books, he was but little known outside a small circle of sympathetic friends; but those with whom he was familiar feel that in him they have lost a faithful and loving companion, and Freethought a loyal servant.—EDMUND POWNCEBY.

BOOK CHAT.

Byron probably thought himself a finer poet than Keats, but he was mistaken. He was equally in error as to the character of his young contemporary. Here is the *Don Juan* stanza on Keats:

John Keats,—who was killed off by one critique,
Just as he really promised something great,
If not intelligible,—without Greek,
Contrived to talk about the gods of late,
Much as they might have been supposed to speak.
Poor fellow! his was an untoward fate:
'Tis strange the mind, that very fiery particle,
Should let itself be snuff'd out by an article.

Here we have the Byronic mixture of praise and detraction, winding up with the statement that Keats was killed by criticism. The same view is expressed, though more generously, by Shelley in the Preface to his glorious *Adonais*. He supposes that Keats could not recover from the wound "wantonly inflicted" by an anonymous critic in the *Quarterly Review*. Apostrophising the literary villain, he exclaims: "Miserable man! you, one of the meanest, have wantonly defaced one of the noblest specimens of the workmanship of God."

Shelley and Byron were both mistaken. John Keats was not the man to be "snuffed out by an article." Indeed, it is ludicrous, when you come to think of it, to imagine that a poet like Keats could take the pip because of an adverse, or even dishonest criticism, penned by a man that he must have felt to be immeasurably his inferior; and still more ludicrous to fancy that the pip so taken carried him into an early grave. No man with as much heart as a fly was ever killed in that fashion. And John Keats's letters show him to have been one of the last men in the world to suffer such an ignominious fate. He had pride enough to quench the darts of a million Reviewers.

Lovers of Keats's poetry (and what poetry the best of it is! pure nectar of Olympus!) are now able to see the poet himself as he really was. Messrs. Macmillan and Co. have published a beautiful complete edition of his Letters, at the moderate price of five shillings. The volume is edited by Mr. Sidney Colvin, who provides a brief Preface. All the Letters are here, in chronological order, except the love-letters to Fanny Brawne, which are chiefly of pathological interest, and should be read, if at all, apart from the poet's normal writings. Whoever reads these Letters from first to last will find himself in contact with a strong, sane, practical intellect, as well as a high poet's soul and a true man's character. The fact is, that the Keats of these Letters has a deep vein of the bull-dog Englishman, with all his exquisite poetry and flashes of spiritual insight. "Snuffed out by an article" indeed! He was more likely to knock the writer down.

Mr. Colvin merits thanks for this delightful volume. He has done his work admirably. His preface is modest and manly, and his notes are only inserted when requisite. He just spreads the Letters out one by one, and puts his finger now and then on a place where the reader may himself pause for explanation.

We have no space for many extracts, though the Letters are tempting. We must, however, as this is a Freethought journal, point out that Keats was not only no Christian, but a keen appreciator of the clerical genus. Here is a reference to them. Keats had been to see a burial-ground consecrated; a lot of clergymen met for the purpose, and as the day was wet, they consecrated the alluvium through the vestry window. Thereupon Keats writes as follows:—"I begin to hate parsons; they did not make me love them that day when I saw them in their proper colors. A parson is a Lamb in a drawing-room, and a Lion in a vestry. The notions of Society will not permit a parson to give way to his temper in any shape—So he festers in himself—his features get a peculiar, diabolical, self-sufficient, iron stupid expression. He is continually acting—his mind is against every man, and every man's mind is against him—He is a hypocrite to the Believer and a coward to the unbeliever—He must be either a knave or an idiot—and there is no man so much to be pitied as an idiot parson."

That is pretty strong, but Keats had still some bile to work off on the obnoxious tribe. A little later he writes—"Parsons will always keep up their character, but as it is said there are some animals the ancients knew which we do not, let us hope our posterity will miss the black badger with tri-cornered hat; who knows but some Reviewer of Buffon or Pliny may put an account of the Parson in the Appendix; no one will believe it any more than we believe in the Phoenix."

The Gifford Lectures, delivered by Professor Max Müller before the University of Glasgow last year, were issued a few months ago under the title of *Physical Religion*. Despite an evident inclination to be as little offensive as possible to traditional beliefs, the book is well calculated to destroy the orthodox faith in a revelation given especially to the Jews, and afterwards to the Christians. It is not that Max Müller anywhere distinctly expresses his disbelief in revelation, but the facts he brings forward are incompatible with the idea. It is indeed difficult to in any way deal with the subject of comparative religion without implying a rejection of all exclusive claims to divine truth.

Max Müller traces "Physical Religion" principally in the worship of Agni, the Vedic god of fire. But the same features are found in other faiths, even in the Old Testament. Max Müller says, p. 223, "The highest authorities on the religious antiquities of the Semitic peoples, and of the Jewish people in particular, have expressed the conviction that the physical characteristics of their principal god point to an original god of fire—taking fire in the same wide sense in which it was taken in India; not only as the fire on earth, but as the fire of heaven; the fire manifested in storm and lightning; nay, the fire as the life of nature and of man. In this way only, they think, can we account for the poetical phraseology still found in many parts of the Old Testament." For instance, Ps. xviii., 8; xxix., 3.

The last chapter, entitled "What does it lead to?" will be read with most interest. But the author's results are mostly left to the reader's discernment. He mildly deprecates miracles, and shows that the best moral teachings of Christianity were anticipated by Buddhism. Monotheism, he shows, was taught in India "at least 1000 B.C.," and all the conclusion we are given is "that the human mind, such as it is, and unassisted by any miracles except the eternal miracles of nature, did arrive at the fundamental doctrines of our own religion." When the reader has got as far as this he will probably go considerably farther.

Professor Momerie's lecture on "The Corruptions of the Church" has been published by Messrs. Eglinton. He states that it is only the first of a series of lectures on "The Mischievous Effects of Ecclesiasticism," which he proposes to deliver both in England and in America.

Messrs. G. P. Putnam and Co. announce Mr. Moncure D. Conway's *Life of Thomas Paine* as ready in November. It will be in two volumes, price 18s.

The Influence of Ibsen is shown in the publication of Mr. G. B. Shaw's *Quintessence of Ibsenism*, and in a drama entitled *Rosmer of Rosmersholm*, suggested by Ibsen's *Rosmersholm*, being indeed a dramatisation of the incidents supposed to have taken place previous to the beginning of the play by the Norwegian master. The drama is undeniably clever. The character of Rebecca, an advanced Freethinking woman, is strongly drawn. But the play is not an agreeable one, and is hardly likely to be acted.

The *Monist* for October sustains its highly philosophical character. The most important papers are those on Thought and Language, by Prof. Romanes, and on the Continuity of Evolution, by the editor, Dr. Paul Carus. The following sonnet to the French Positivist, Emile Littré, by L. Belrose, is one of the most readable things in the number:

Some debts there are that make the debtor proud;
So ours to him, who could philosophise
With common-sense, and sweep from starry skies
The brain-spun webs that darken like a cloud.

We loved him, for his highest thoughts avowed
Our own akin and less than ours allies;
Born of the common soil but born to rise
And light the labor of the laurel-browed.

Justice he traced to truth ; morality,
Back to the brutish primal needs of man ;
And stood himself for all the best might be.

He wrought in words, a faithful artisan ;
And lived to shame their loutish mockery
Whose virtue ended where his own began.

* * *

Mr. J. M. Robertson's *Modern Humanists* bids fair to be one of the most popular of Swan Sonnenschein's popular "Social Science Series." These sociological studies of Carlyle, Mill, Emerson, Arnold, Ruskin and Spencer are all written from a Freethought point of view. Mr. Robertson is nothing if not critical, and is even readier in exposing the blemishes of these great teachers than in expounding their merits. On this account, it seems to us much of the book would have been of more value if published a dozen or twenty years ago, when Carlyle and Arnold, upon whom he is specially severe, were living. The objectionable elements of the former, to which considerable space is devoted, were mainly constitutional and practical. The negro, franchise, and treatment of criminals questions have worked or are working themselves out, and not on Carlyle's lines. But his gospel of earnest work remains, and his general influence being recognised as good, the blemishes which Mr. Robertson makes so conspicuous may be suffered to fade into oblivion. For the rest, it may be said that *Modern Humanists* is throughout acute and readable, and the writers of whom it treats being of permanent value, this vigorous and rigorous criticism is sure to command deserved attention.

JOSEPH SYMES ANENT MRS. BESANT.

(From the *Liberator*.)

Mrs. BESANT is clever, earnest (too much so in some respect), emotional, but totally lacking in independence. We mean independence of thought. She was dominated by the church at first, as we all were ; in her perplexity she sought assistance from Pusey, Stanley, and others, but showed no independent working out of the problems which troubled her. She always sought a guide and leader. For years she was positively and absolutely dominated by Mr. Bradlaugh, and not through any effort or wish on his part ; but it was her nature, and she found solace, encouragement, direction under his mighty shadow. No saint ever more fully sheltered herself under the name of Jesus than did Mrs. Besant under the majestic and kindly influence of Charles Bradlaugh. We mean no reproach, for we shall always feel kindly towards Mrs. Besant. We simply point to well-known facts.

She was powerfully moved also by Dr. Aveling, and whirled most violently into university studies under his sway, so much so that, we fear, a permanent injury to her health resulted. And now again, Mrs. Blavatsky catches, clutches, and whirls her away into the heights and flights and depths and fooleries of Theosophy ! After vainly striving to amalgamate all this absurdism with Secularism, she retires from us to devote herself entirely to fictions of the brain, and fictions not her own.

We are sorry to lose so good and able a worker ; but we have and retain all the good work she ever did. That is our permanent gain. She cannot carry her intellect, her usefulness, her common sense over to the other camp. All that was noblest and best remains with us.

Is this the end ? We doubt it. We expect further developments, such as we tremble to think of and will not yet name. There is nothing to prevent Mrs. Besant developing into a recluse, an ecstatic saint. We doubt if Theosophy will retain her. We shall see.

Not one word would we whisper against Mrs. Besant. We feel no ill-will at this departure. We are sorry to see so noble a woman entangled and bewildered by transparent imposture. But so it is. We cannot help it. The unalterable must be philosophically borne. And we must fight superstition and sham all the more earnestly for her unfortunate perversion.

The Freethinker has no theory of a great scapegoat upon which he can throw his sins, and thereby escape the natural consequences of his wrong-doing. He has no great bankrupt salvation scheme by which to get rid of paying his honest debts.—*B. F. Underwood.*

COL. INGERSOLL ON SUNDAY OPENING OF THE WORLD'S FAIR AT CHICAGO.

COL. INGERSOLL shoved his hands deep in his pockets and strode back and forth as he talked of the great question of Sunday closing at the World's Fair.

"Bah, here's this crowd from New York, headed by Col. Elliot F. Shepard, presuming to dictate to the World's Fair people how they are to run the fair. We don't want the fair closed on Sunday. It is nonsensical. It would put us on record as foolish and provincial. It would be too much like a country fair near some town in Waybach County."

"But it is claimed that a wide-open fair would greatly aid in destroying our American Sabbath."

"That's just what should be done. The Sabbath, as it is now, is the worst curse that lingers on humanity. They close up everything but the churches, thus driving people to those places to hear speeches that have been repeated forty thousand times, and to return home to revel in cold victuals and dyspepsia.

"But how about the laboring man securing one day of rest ?"

"Now you have it. Let us have a Sabbath, if necessary to call it that, of recreation. Then I will raise my voice and praise such a scheme from Atlantic to Pacific. A genuine day of recreation, during which a person can enjoy himself as he pleases—a national day of sports, picnics, anything—just so the people enjoy themselves, without having that chilly cloak of the church's influence thrown over their spirits. I repeat, we want to destroy the American Sabbath as it now exists."

"Dr. Patton says that he does not believe the laboring element will be obliged to remain away if the fair is closed on Sunday."

"Dr. Patton is a donkey. He has a soft position, drawing the largest salary upon the least calibre of any man in the country, and he knows nothing except to stamp around for Sabbath observance. The laboring man will one day teach his class that either a grand national day of recreation has to be provided, or the cranks must keep their hands off this matter of Sunday observance. Keep the fair open on Sunday. To allow these fanatics to close it would make the whole thing a pest—aye, a pest and nuisance to Chicago."—*Chicago Post.*

BLESSINGS IN DISGUISE.

In this country, it has been said, we have no climate, but abundance of weather. If the Lord superintends the business it must be in the interest of umbrella dealers, many of whom are of the chosen race. But perhaps he has retired from the bossing business in disgust at the contrariness of things.

Disasters from all parts are reported from the late gales. Fearful damage has been done to property and numerous lives have been lost at sea. But then our Heavenly Father doeth all things well. He holdeth the winds in the hollow of his hands.

Floods have followed the recent gales and have resulted in damage and loss of life, both on the continent and throughout Great Britain and Ireland.

Russia is scourged both with famine, arising from failure of the harvest in most of the provinces, and with influenza. It is reported that in Kieff in every home there are sick people. Whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth.

Cholera is reported as increasing at Damascus, and a ten days' quarantine has to be enforced at Constantinople on arrivals from the Arabian coast.

FRUITS OF FAITH.—The Fijians believe that as they die such will be their condition in another world ; hence their desire to escape extreme infirmity. Hence as soon as a man feels the approach of old age, he notifies to his children that it is time for him to die. If he neglects to do so, the children after a while take the matter into their own hands. A family consultation is held, a day appointed, and the grave dug. The aged person has his choice of being strangled or buried alive.—*Sir J. Lubbock, "Origin of Civilisation,"* p. 382. 1889.

PROFANE JOKES.

Christian Woman (to beggar): "I give you this bread for God's sake." Beggar: "Then put some butter on it for Christ's sake."

The Bishop of Carlisle, who thinks every boy and girl should be well up in the articles of belief as well as the catechism, asked a young candidate for conformation if he had read the thirty-nine articles. "No sir," said the said the boy, "but please sir I've read the *Forty Thieves*." That boy should be well up in church matters.

SUNDAY MEETINGS.

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

LONDON.

Ball's Pond Secular Hall, 36 Newington Green-road: 7, a lecture.

Battersea Secular Hall (back of Battersea Park Station): 6.30, members' meeting; 7.45, entertainment. Monday, at 8, social gathering. Wednesday, at 7.30, dramatic class.

Bethnal Green — Libra Hall, 78 Libra-road, Roman-road: Thursday, Oct. 22, at 8.30, debate on "Theosophy," opened by Mr. Campbell, F.T.S. Sunday, at 7.30, Mr. Vining, "Spiritualism and Experimental Science." Monday, at 8.30, Mr. C. Cohen "Socialism." Thursday, at 8.30, debate on "Is Crime a Disease?" opened by Mr. C. Cohen. Saturday, at 8.30, social evening for members and friends.

Camberwell—61 New Church-road, S.E.: 7.30, Mr. G. W. Foote, "The Way to Heaven."

Finsbury Park—Rock-street Hall, 1 Rock-street, Blackstock-road: 7, Mr. Sam Standring, "Divine Poison; specially extracted from God's Holy Word."

Hall of Science, 142 Old-street, E.C.: 11.15, Mr. Charles Watts, "Secularism: its Relation to Politics" (admission free); 6.45, musical selections; 7.15, Mr. Charles Watts, "The Christian Superstition: its Nature and Origin."

Milton Hall, Hawley-crescent, Kentish Town-road, N.W.: 7, musical selections, dramatic recital; 7.30, Mr. B. Hyatt, "A Challenge to the Clergy." Monday, Lower Hall, at 8.30, social meeting.

West Ham — Secular Hall, 121 Broadway, Plaistow: 7.30, Mr. C. J. Steinberg will lecture. Thursday, at 8, open debate.

West London—Clarendon Coffee Palace, Clarendon-road (close to Latimer-road Station): Friday, at 8.30, discussion.

Woolwich—"Sussex Arms," Assembly Room, 60 Plumstead-road (entrance, Maxey-road): 7.30, Mr. J. Fagan, "How I became a Secularist, and why I remain one."

OPEN-AIR PROPAGANDA.

Battersea Park-gates: 11.15, Mr. A. Johnson, "The Ascetic Basis of Christianity."

Bethnal Green (opposite St. John's Church): 11.15, Mr. C. Cohen will lecture.

Camberwell—Station-road: 11.30, Mr. A. B. Moss, "The Jesus Legend."

Edmonton (corner of Angel-road): 6.30, debate between Messrs. Cohen and Boyce on "The Philosophy of the Bible."

Finsbury Park (near the band-stand): 11.30, Mr. Toleman-Garner, "The Way to Heaven"; 3.30, Mr. F. Haslam, "How I became a Freethinker."

Hammersmith-bridge (Middlesex side): 3.30, Mr. W. Heaford, "The God Idea"; 6, debate between Mr. J. Tarry (C. E. S.) and Mr. W. Heaford (N. S. S.) on "Is Christianity a Better Moral Guide than Secularism?"

Hyde Park (near Marble Arch): 11.30, Mr. W. Heaford, "A Freethinker's View of Christ."

Kilburn—Market-place, Canterbury-road: 6, Mr. F. W. Dowdall will lecture.

Leyton (open space near Vicarage-road, High-road): 11.30, Mr. R. Rosetti, "Is the Bible a Moral Book?"

Mile End Waste: 11.30, Mr. F. Haslam, "How I became a Freethinker."

Old Pimlico Pier: 11.30, Mr. W. J. Ramsey, "Hell Up to Date."

Plaistow Green (near the Station): 11.30, Mr. C. J. Steinberg, will lecture.

Stratford—Matthew's Park Estate, Ham Park-road: 3.30, Mr. C. J. Steinberg will lecture.

Tottenham (corner of West Green-road): 3.30, Mr. Sam Standring, "The Church of England."

Victoria Park (near the fountain): 3.15, Mr. C. Cohen will lecture.

Wood Green—Jolly Butcher's-hill: 11.30, Mr. Sam Standring, "Christianity's Childhood."

COUNTRY.

Birmingham — Baskerville Hall, Crescent, Cambridge-street: Mr. Stanley Jones, 11, "The Problem of Life and Mrs. Besant's Theosophy"; 3, "Jesus and his Parents"; 7, "Christian Opposition to Science."

Glasgow—Ex-Mission Hall, 110 Brunswick-street: noon, debating class, Mr. W. Gilmour, "Buddhism"; 6.30, Mr. James Robertson (President Spiritualists' Association), "Theosophy, I.—The Theosophical Society: its Origin."

Haslingdeu Public Hall: Miss Ada Campbell, 11, "Gods of the Past, Gods of the Present, the God of the Future"; 3, "Secularism and Christianity"; 7.30, "Why I am Not a Theosophist—a Reply to Mrs. Besant."

Hetton-le-Hole—Committee Room, Miner's Hall: 6, Mr. James Murray, an essay.

Leicester—Secular Hall, Humberstone Gate: 6.30, musical and literary evening. Collection for Infirmary.

Liverpool—Oddfellows' Hall, St. Anne-street: Mr. Touzeau Parris, 11, "What is Truth?"; 3, "Is Paul an Historic Character?"; 7, "Theosophy: a Criticism—in Reply to Mrs. Besant."

Manchester N. S. S., Secular Hall, Rusholme-road, Oxford-road, All Saints': Mr. C. J. Hunt, "Christian Sophistry"; 3, "Evolution and Design"; 6.30, "Materialism v. Spiritualism."

Newcastle-on-Tyne—Eldon Hall, 2 Clayton-street: 3, monthly meeting; 7, Mr. A. Dawson, "Is there a God?"

Nottingham—Secular Hall, Beck-street: 7, Mr. James Hooper, "How I became an Atheist and why I remain one."

Plymouth—100 Union-street: 7, "Zendavesta, or Parsee Bible," by a Member.

Portsmouth — Wellington Hall, Wellington-street, Southsea: 2.45, reading circle (in connection with the National Home Reading Union); 7, Mr. Pinhorne, "The Devil Up to Date."

Reading — Forester's Hall, West-street: Mrs. Besant, 11, "Theosophy: what it is and what it is not"; 3, "Crucified Saviors"; 7, "Do Christians Believe in Christ?"

Sheffield—Hall of Science, Rockingham-street: Mr. Frederick Millar, 3, "Rationalism and the Miraculous"; 7, "Christianity and Woman."

South Shields—Free Library Hall, Ocean-road: Mr. J. M. Robertson, 11, "The Religion of Shakespeare"; 3, "The Past and Future of Women."

Spennymoor — Victoria Hall, Dundas-street: 6.30, Mr. B. Dawson, Selections from the poetry of Shelley.

Stalybridge—Mr. J. Taylor's, 12 Bayley-street: 7, committee meeting.

OPEN-AIR PROPAGANDA.

Newcastle-on-Tyne — Quayside (near big crane): 11, Mr. A. Dawson, "Christianity and Secularism Compared."

LECTURERS' ENGAGEMENTS.

TOUZEAU PARRIS, 28 Rivercourt-road, Hammersmith, London, W.—Oct. 25, Liverpool. Nov. 1, Battersea; 8, Milton Hall; 15, Leeds; 22, Hall of Science; 29, Camberwell. Dec. 6, Sheffield.

ARTHUR B. MOSS, 44 Credon-road, Rotherhithe, London, S.E.—Oct. 25, Camberwell. Nov. 15, Reading.

C. J. HUNT, 48 Fordingley-road, St. Peter's Park, London, W.—Oct. 25, Manchester.

H. SNELL, 6 Monk-street, Woolwich.—Nov. 8, Swaby's Coffee Tavern, East London; 15, evening, Camberwell; 22, evening, Ball's Pond; 29, morning, Hall of Science; evening, Finsbury Park Hall. Dec. 20, evening, Camberwell. Jan. 3, evening, Battersea.

STANLEY JONES, 28 Stonecutter-street, London, E.C.—Oct. 25, Birmingham. Nov. 1, West Ham; 8, Nottingham.

TOLEMAN-GARNER, 8 Heyworth-road, Stratford, London, E.—Oct. 25, morning, Finsbury Park, Nov. 8, Woolwich; 29, Ball's Pond. Dec. 20, Woolwich.

C. COHEN, 154 Cannon-street-road, Commercial-road, E.—Oct. 25, morning, Bethnal Green; afternoon, Victoria Park; evening, Edmonton. Nov. 1, 8, 15, and 22, Libra Hall, Roman-road, Old Ford; 29, Edmonton. Dec. 6, Finsbury Park; 20 and 27, Libra Hall.

WORKS BY COLONEL R. G. INGERSOLL.

Some Mistakes of Moses. The only complete edition in England. Accurate as Colenso, and fascinating as a novel. 132pp. ...	1	0
<i>Superior Edition, on superfine paper, bound in cloth</i> ...	1	6
Defence of Freethought. A five hours' speech at the Trial of C. B. Reynolds for Blasphemy ...	0	6
Reply to Gladstone. With a Biography by J. M. Wheeler ...	0	4
Rome or Reason? A Reply to Cardinal Manning ...	0	4
Crimes against Criminals ...	0	3
Oration on Walt Whitman ...	0	3
Love the Redeemer ...	0	2
Why am I an Agnostic? Parts I. and II., each ...	0	2
Faith and Fact. Reply to Rev. Dr. Field ...	0	2
God and Man. Second Reply to Dr. Field ...	0	2
The Dying Creed ...	0	2
The Limits of Toleration. A Discussion with the Hon. F. D. Coudert and Gov. S. L. Woodford ...	0	2
Art and Morality ...	0	2
Do I Blaspheme? ...	0	2
The Clergy and Common Sense ...	0	2
Social Salvation ...	0	2
Marriage and Divorce. An Agnostic's View ...	0	1
The Great Mistake ...	0	1
Live Topics ...	0	1
Myth and Miracle ...	0	1
Real Blasphemy ...	0	1
Repairing the Idols ...	0	1
Christ and Miracles ...	0	1
Creeds and Spirituality ...	0	1

R. FORDER, 28 Stonecutter Street, London, E.C.

FREETHOUGHT PUBLICATIONS.

All Orders to be sent, with remittance to R. FORDER, 28 Stonecutter Street, London, E.C. Rate of postage—Orders under 3d., one halfpenny; orders under 6d., one penny. Orders over 6d. post free.

AVELING, DR. E. B.

Darwin Made Easy. Cloth ... 1 0
Dr. Aveling is a Fellow of the London University, and this is the best popular exposition of Darwinism extant.

BACON, LORD

Pagan Mythology; or, the Wisdom of the Ancients ... 1 0

BENTHAM, JEREMY

The Church of England Catechism Examined. A trenchant analysis, in Bentham's best manner, showing how the Catechism is calculated to make children hypocrites or fools, if not worse. Sir Samuel Romilly was of opinion that the work would be prosecuted for blasphemy, though it escaped that fate in consequence of the writer's eminence. With a Biographical Preface by J. M. Wheeler ... 1 0

Utilitarianism ... 0 3

COLLINS, ANTHONY

Free Will and Necessity. A Philosophical Inquiry concerning Human Liberty. First published in 1715. Now reprinted with Preface and Annotations by G. W. FOOTE, and a Biographical Introduction by J. M. Wheeler ... 1 0
Superior Edition, on superfine paper, bound in cloth ... 2 0

DIDEROT & D'HOLBACH

The Code of Nature ... 0 2

FEUERBACH, LUDWIG

The Essence of Religion. God the Image of Man, Man's Dependence upon Nature the Last and Only Source of Religion ... 1 0

FOOTE, G. W.

The Grand Old Book. A Reply to the Grand Old Man. An Exhaustive Answer to the Right Hon. W. E. Gladstone's "Impregnable Rock of Holy Scripture" Bound in cloth ... 1 0
... 1 6

Is Socialism Sound? Four Nights' Public Debate with Annie Besant ... 1 0
Superior Edition, in cloth ... 2 0

Christianity and Secularism. Four Night's Public Debate with the Rev. Dr. James McCann... Superior Edition, in cloth ... 1 0
... 1 6

Darwin on God ... 0 6
Superior Edition, in cloth ... 1 0

Reminiscences of Charles Bradlaugh ... 0 6

Infidel Death-Beds. Second Edition, much enlarged Superior Edition, on superfine paper, bound in cloth ... 0 8
... 1 3

Letters to the Clergy. First Series. 128pp. ... 1 0

Defence of Free Speech. Three Hours' Address to the Jury before Lord Coleridge. With a Special Preface and many Footnotes ... 0 4

Letters to Jesus Christ ... 0 4

Philosophy of Secularism ... 0 3

Atheism and Morality. Third edition ... 0 2

The Bible God ... 0 2

The Folly of Prayer ... 0 2

Christianity and Progress. Reply to Mr. Gladstone ... 0 2

Mrs. Besant's Theosophy. A Candid Criticism. ... 0 2

Secularism and Theosophy. A Rejoinder to Mrs. Besant ... 0 2

The New Cagliostro. An Open Letter to Madame Blavatsky ... 0 2

The Impossible Creed. An Open Letter to Bishop Magee on the Sermon on the Mount ... 0 2

Salvation Syrup; or, LIGHT ON DARKEST ENGLAND. A Reply to General Booth. Second edition ... 0 2

What Was Christ? A Reply to J. S. Mill ... 0 2

The Shadow of the Sword. A Moral and Statistical Essay on War... ... 0 2

Royal Paupers. Showing what Royalty does for the People, and what the People do for Royalty ... 0 2

The Dying Atheist. A Story ... 0 1

Was Jesus Insane? A searching inquiry into the mental condition of the Prophet of Nazareth ... 0 1

Is the Bible Inspired? A Criticism on *Lux Mundi* ... 0 1

The Rev. Hugh Price Hughes's Converted Atheist A Lie in Five Chapters... ... 0 1

Bible Romances. New Edition. Revised and largely rewritten.—(1) The Creation Story, 2d.; (2) Eve and the Apple, 1d.; (3) Cain and Abol, 1d.; (4)

Noah's Flood, 2d.; (5) The Tower of Babel, 1d.; (6) Lot's Wife, 1d.; (7) The Ten Plagues, 1d.; (8) The Wandering Jews, 1d.; (9) Balaam's Ass, 1d.; (10) God in a Box, 1d.; (11) Jonah and the Whale, 1d.; (12) Bible Animals, 1d.; (13) A Virgin Mother, 2d.; (14) The Resurrection, 2d.; (15) The Crucifixion, 1d.; (16) John's Nightmare, 1d.

Bible Heroes. First Series, in elegant wrapper ... 1 0

(1) Mr. Adam, (2) Captain Noah, (3) Father Abraham, (4) Juggling Jacob, (5) Master Joseph, (6) Joseph's Brethren, (7) Holy Moses I., (8) Moses II., (9) Parson Aaron, (10) General Joshua, (11) Jephthah and Co., (12) Professor Samson. One Penny each

Bible Heroes. Second Series, in elegant wrapper ... 1 0

(13) Prophet Samuel, (14) King Saul, (15) Saint David I., (16) Saint David II., (17) Sultan Solomon, (18) Poor Job, (19) Hairy Elijah, (20) Bald Elisha, (21) General Jehu, (22) Doctor Daniel, (23) The Prophets (Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Hosea), (24) St. Peter, (25) St. Paul. One Penny each singly.

The Complete Work, bound in cloth ... 2 6

G. W. FOOTE & W. P. BALL

Bible Handbook for Freethinkers and Inquiring Christians. Complete, paper covers ... 1 4

Superior Edition, on superfine paper, bound in cloth ... 2 0

Sold also in separate Parts as follows—

1. Bible Contradictions. The Contradictions are printed in parallel columns ... 0 4

2. Bible Absurdities. All the chief Absurdities from Genesis to Revelation, conveniently and strikingly arranged, with appropriate headlines, giving the point of each absurdity in a sentence ... 0 4

3. Bible Atrocities. Containing all the godly wickedness from Genesis to Revelation. Each infamy has a separate headline for easy reference ... 0 4

4. Bible Immoralities, Indecencies, Obscenities, Broken Promises, and Unfulfilled Prophecies ... 0 4

G. W. FOOTE & J. M. WHEELER

The Jewish Life of Christ. Being the *Sepher Toldoth Jeshu*, or Book of the Generation of Jesus. With an Historical Preface and Voluminous Notes ... 0 6
Superior Edition, on superfine paper, bound in cloth ... 1 0

Crimes of Christianity. Vol. I., cloth gilt, 216pp. Hundreds of exact References to Standard Authorities. No pains spared to make it a complete, trustworthy, final, unanswerable indictment of Christianity ... 2

HUME, DAVID

The Mortality of the Soul. With an Introduction by G. W. FOOTE. This essay was first published after Hume's death. It is not included in the ordinary editions of the *Essays*. Prof. Huxley calls it "A remarkable essay" and "a model of clear and vigorous statement" ... 0 2

Liberty and Necessity. An argument against Free Will and in favor of Moral Causation ... 0 4

NEWMAN, CHARLES ROBERT

(Atheist Brother of Cardinal Newman.)

Essays in Rationalism. With Preface by George Jacob Holyoake and Biographical Sketch by J. M. Wheeler ... 1 6

PAINÉ, THOMAS

The Age of Reason. New edition, with Preface by G. W. FOOTE ... 1 0

Miscellaneous Theological Works... Complete Theological Works, bound in cloth ... 2 6

Rights of Man. With a Political Biography by J. M. Wheeler. Paper covers ... 1 0
Bound in cloth ... 2 0

SHELLEY

A Refutation of Deism. In a Dialogue. With an Introduction by G. W. Foote ... 0 4

THOMSON, JAMES (B.V.)

Satires and Profanities. New edition ... 1 0

CONTENTS:—The Story of a Famous Old Jewish Firm (Jehovah, Son & Co.)—The Devil in the Church of England—Religion in the Rocky Mountains—Christmas Eve in the Upper Circles—A Commission of Inquiry on Royalty—A Bible Lesson on Monarchy—The One Thing Needful.

WHEELER, J. M.

Biographical Dictionary of Freethinkers of all Ages and Nations. Handsomely bound in cloth ... 7 6

Letters from Heaven ... 0 1

Letters from Hell ... 0 1

ESSAYS IN RATIONALISM.

By Charles Robert Newman
(Atheist Brother of Cardinal Newman).

With Preface by GEORGE JACOB HOLYOAKE and Biographical Sketch by J. M. WHEELER.
In Cloth Covers, 1s. 6d.

ATHEISM AND MORALITY.

By G. W. FOOTE.

Third Edition.

Price Twopence.

THOMAS PAINE'S COMPLETE THEOLOGICAL WORKS

Including "THE AGE OF REASON."

Price 2s. 6d.

Handsomely Bound in Cloth.

Price 2s. 6d.

THE GRAND OLD BOOK

A REPLY TO
THE GRAND OLD MAN.

An Exhaustive Answer to the Right Hon. W. E. Gladstone's "Impregnable Rock of Holy Scripture."

CONTENTS:

Preface—Preliminary View—The Creation Story—The Fall of Man—The Psalms—the Mosaic Legislation—Corroborations of Scripture—Gladstone and Huxley—Modern Scepticism.

Paper Covers, One Shilling.

In Cloth, Eighteenpence.

WORKS BY CHARLES WATTS.

- SECULARISM: DESTRUCTIVE AND CONSTRUCTIVE. 24 pp., 3s.
THE TEACHINGS OF SECULARISM COMPARED with Orthodox Christianity. 96pp., 1s.
SECULARISM: IS IT FOUNDED ON REASON, AND is it Sufficient to Meet the Needs of Mankind?
Debate between the Editor of the Halifax "Evening Mail" and Charles Watts. With Prefatory Letters by George Jacob Holyoake and Colonel Ingersoll and an Introduction by Helen H. Gardner. 60 pp., 1s.
THE SUPERSTITION OF THE CHRISTIAN SUNDAY: A Plea for Liberty and Justice. 24pp., 3d.
EVOLUTION AND SPECIAL CREATION. 24pp., 3d.
THE GLORY OF UNBELIEF. New Edition, Revised and Enlarged. 24 pp., 3d.
THEOLOGICAL PRESUMPTION: An Open Letter to the Rev. Dr. R. F. Burns, of Halifax, N. S.
In this letter the following subjects are dealt with—1. Why do the Clergy Avoid Debate? 2. The Position of Agnosticism Towards Christianity. 3. Free-thought and Men of Science. 4. The Difference between Facts and Opinions. 5. Christ and Heroism. 6. Christianity and Slavery. 16 pp., 2s.
SAINTS AND SINNERS—WHICH? 24 pp., 3d.
CHRISTIANITY: ITS ORIGIN, NATURE, AND Influence. 32 pp., 4d.
SCIENCE AND THE BIBLE: Wherein they Differ. 32 pp., 4d.
NATURE AND THE SUPERNATURAL; or, Belief and Knowledge. 24 pp., 3d.
AGNOSTICISM AND CHRISTIAN THEISM: Which is the More Reasonable? 24 pp., 3d.
A REPLY TO FATHER LAMBERT'S "TACTICS OF Infidels." 4d.
ATHISM AND THE HORRORS OF THE FRENCH Revolution. 24 pp., 3d.
London:

Watts and Co., 17 Johnson's-court, Fleet-street, E.C.
R. Forder, 28 Stonecutter-street, E.C.

CHURCH OF HUMANITY,
St. Mary's Place, Newcastle-on-Tyne,
Service every Sunday evening at Seven, with Lectures in Explanation of Positivism.
All Seats Free.

J. W. GOTT, 36 Villiers Street, Bradford, offers best possible value in all kinds of Cloth and Dress Materials. Any length cut. Patterns post free. Terms, cash with order.

TO FREETHINKERS, Ladies and Gentlemen, requiring Superior Cut Garments at moderate prices. First-class Style and Fit Guaranteed.—**H. HAMPTON, Artiste Tailor, 14 Great Castle Street, W.** Three doors from Regent Street. [Patronised by leading Freethinkers.]

UGHT WOMEN TO BE PUNISHED for having too many children? 3d post free. Malthusian literature on application. Kingfisher, Leeds.

TO FREETHINKERS visiting Bournemouth.—Board and lodgings, 18s. per week inclusive. Rooms from 8s.—Miss Armstrong, 11 Montague-road, Bournemouth. Opposite cricket field and near pleasure-gardens and pier.

EVERY MAN HIS OWN DOCTOR.

MEDICAL ESSAYS. VOL. I. For Postal Order for 1s. 2d.

It contains Articles on: Management of Infancy; Health; Longevity; The Teeth; Brown Bread; Bread Making; Food; Vegetarianism; Tobacco; The Drink Question; Fruit; Fresh Air; Exercise; Bathing; Sight; Holidays; etc. Also the cause and cure of Disease; Constipation; Biliousness; Eczema; Black-heads and Pimples; Nervousness; Coughs and Colds; Chest Complaints; Deafness; Thread Worms; Long Worms; Tape Worms; The Itch; etc.

MEDICAL ESSAYS. VOL. II. Of the Author, for Postal Order for 1s. 2d.

Containing Articles on: The Healing Power of Nature; Clothing; Electricity in Disease; Apparent Health; Vegetarian Experiments; The Pig as Human Food; Popular Fallacies about Flesh; The Beef Tea Delusion; Salt; Saline Starvation; Tea Drinking; The Hair and its Management; Sleep and Sleeplessness; Want of Energy, etc.; Health Hints for Workers, for Shop Assistants, and for Servants; Advice for the Thin; for the Stout; and on the Proper Treatment of Simple Fever, Measles, Scarlet Fever, Whooping Cough, Ringworm, Hypochondria, Bloodlessness, Diarrhoea, Ulcerated Legs, Tumours, etc.

MEDICAL ESSAYS. VOL. III. Post free from Author, for Postal Order for 1s. 2d.

It contains articles on: Health and Wealth; No More Death; Youth; The Necessity for Pure Air, and How to Get It; The Management of Young Children; Hunger and Appetite; Effects of Fasting; Perfect Foods; Green Foods; Suppers; Unsuspected Domestic Poisons; Thirst; Perspiration; Sea Bathing; etc. HOW—to Eat Properly, to Eat Fruit, to Judge Wholesome Bread, to Breathe Properly, to Grow Tall, to Keep Warm, I Live, to Live 100 Years, to Improve the Memory, and to become Beautiful and Attractive. On the Cause and Cure of the following Diseases: Stomach Troubles, Flatulence, Sleepiness, Varicose Veins, Boils and Carbuncles, Scurvy, Tumors or Wens, Hay Fever, Winter Cough, Chills, and on the Diseases Produced by taking Mercury.

"Hygienic Medicine."—For Postal Order for 1s. 1d. An Eye Opener to Drug Takers.

"Rheumatism."—Its Cause and Cure. Post Free for 7d.

"Diet and Digestion."—Post Free for 7 stamps.

"Consumption"—Its Natural Cure. Post Free 7d.

"Three Pamphlets to Young Men."—13 stamps.

All the above can be got from

Dr. T. R. ALLINSON, 4 SPANISH PLACE,
MANCHESTER SQUARE, LONDON, W.

Please mention this paper.]

THE

FAMILY LIMIT

1s. 6d. per doz., post free.

For further Particulars send stamped direct envelope to

A. MOSS, 36 Upper Park Street, ISLINGTON, LONDON, N.

STANTON, the People's Dentist, 335 Strand (opposite Somerset House).—TEETH on VULCANITE. 2s. 6d. each, upper or lower set, £1. Best quality. 4s. each, upper or lower, £2, completed in four hours when required, repairing or alterations in two hours. If you pay more than the above they are fancy charges. Teeth on platinum 7s. 6d. each on 18c. gold 12s., stopping 2s. 6d., extraction 1s., painless by gas, 5s.

Important Papers by Professor Huxley and Professor Momerie.

Ninth Year of Issue, price 6d., by post 7d.

THE AGNOSTIC ANNUAL For 1892.

Edited by CHARLES A. WATTS. Possibilities and Impossibilities. Professor Huxley. The Growth of Agnosticism. B. Bithell, B.Sc., Ph.D. After Many Years: A Poem. W. B. McTaggart. Sundays and Holydays. Samuel Laing. Ecclesiasticism. Professor Momerie. Christ a Religious Creation. F. J. Gould. Early Verses. The Late Constance Naden. The Activities of Agnosticism. Amos Watts. Religion Without Superstition. Charles Watts. Mr. Gladstone and Supernaturalism. H. J. Harwicke, F.R.C.S.

The Land of Death: A Poem. Saladin (W. Stewart Ross).

The Triumph of Rationalism. Frederick Millar.

An Agnostic Homily. Hon. C. K. Tuckerman.

Eternal Life: A Poem. George Henry Martin.

London: W. Stewart & Co., 41 Farringdon-street, E.C.

W. J. Rendell's "WIFE'S FRIEND."

Recommended in "Law of Population," p. 32, and "Wife's Handbook," p. 51.

Made Solely by J. PULLEN, 15 Chadwell Street, Clerkenwell,

2s. doz., post free (reduction in larger quantities)

For particulars send stamped envelope. Higginson's

Syringe, with vertical and reverse current, 3s. 6d.

4s. 6d. and 5s. 6d. Dr. Palfrey's Powder, 1s. 2d.

Quinine Compound, 1s. 2d. All other Malthusian

Appliances. All prices post free. "Law of Population"

and "Wife's Handbook," 7d. each, post free.

—W. J. Rendell (J. Pullen, successor), 15 Chadwell

Street, Clerkenwell, E.C. Near the "Angel."

MUSIC! MUSIC!!

2d. each. Full Size. 7 for 1s.

Words and Music Guaranteed Correct.

Maggie Murphy's Home. Song that reached my heart.

The Diver. Bogie Man. Tale of Woe.

I'll take you home, Kathleen. Gipsy Convent.

Razzle Dazzle. White Wings.

Pretty Pond Lilies. Wait till the clouds roll by.

Bay of Biscay. Hearts of Oak. False Friend.

Robin Adair. Mistletoe Bough. Bloom is on the Eye.

Sweet Kiss Polka. Dewdrop Waltz.

Mountain Belle Echottische. Little Primrose Valse.

Send Stamp for Complete List.

King Street Music Stores,

OFF CHEAPSIDE, LONDON, E.C.

Printed and Published by G. W. FOOTE, at

28 Stonecutter-street, London, E.C.