

# The Free Thinker

Edited by G. W. FOOTE.]

[Sub-Editor, J. M. WHEELER.

Vol. XI.—No. 52.]

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 27, 1891.

[PRICE ONE PENNY.

Truth  
Can never be confirmed enough, though Doubt  
Did ever sleep.  
—SHAKESPEARE.

## A BABY GOD.

"Newman described closely some of the incidents of our Lord's passion; he then paused. For a few moments there was a breathless silence. Then, in a low, clear voice, of which the faintest vibration was audible in the farthest corner of St. Mary's, he said, 'Now, I bid you recollect that He to whom these things were done was Almighty God.' It was as if an electric stroke had gone through the church, as if every person present understood for the first time the meaning of what he had all his life been saying."—*J. A. Froude, "The Oxford Counter-Reformation."*

MR. FROUDE'S account of the realism of Newman's preaching is the best justification of the following article. It is difficult to see why the Infancy of Jesus should not be treated in the same manner as his Passion. If it was God Almighty to whom those things were done on the cross, it was equally God Almighty who was suckled and nursed by Mary of Nazareth. And in the one case, as well as in the other, it is well for men to understand the meaning of what they read and repeat.

Eighteen hundred and ninety-one years ago, more or less, God Almighty turned Theosophist and resolved to be incarnated. Whether he was incarnated or re-incarnated will depend on our acceptance or rejection of the Oriental theory of Avatars. The time had come, which was appointed before the foundation of the world, for the Creator of this stubborn, accursed planet to do a great stroke for its salvation. For four thousand years it had been going to the dogs, or rather to the Devil. Angels and prophets had been sent to reform it, but all in vain, and God Almighty determined to come himself and make a last desperate effort to save this wretched world from utter bankruptcy.

No doubt the incarnation of God is a "mystery." Even those who can see through millstones are unable to understand it. The clergy bid us believe it by faith. Reason, they admit, is beaten and baffled by this awful truth. Yet the "mystery" is only the theological view of very simple facts. It does not alter the facts themselves. The birth, growth, and training of Jesus were palpable occurrences, whatever we may think as to his divinity.

God Almighty decided to be born, but he also decided to be born in an uncommon way. True, it was the way adopted by many heroes and demi-gods of the Pagan pantheon, and the more ancient mythologies of Egypt and India. But it was an uncommon way as the world goes. A virgin, though a married woman, was selected to be his mother. He worked a miracle upon her; he became, so to speak, his own father; and though she was at first *his* child, he afterwards became *hers*.

The miracle ended at the moment of his conception. From that time his incarnation followed the natural order of things. His gestation was like

another baby's, and in due course—for such an august birth was not to be hurried—God Almighty came into the daylight of the world, a little red mass of helpless flesh. He was probably tended by an old Jewish midwife, who never suspected what she was handling. She washed him, undisturbed by his faint squealings, and wrapped him up in flannel, without the faintest idea that she was manipulating God Almighty. Had she been suddenly informed that she was holding her Creator, she would probably have dropped him in a fright and injured his spine.

Presently the midwife's services were dispensed with, and Mary had the baby to herself. She nourished God Almighty at her breast, for feeding-bottles were not then invented, and the divine child could scarcely be passed over to a wet-nurse—perhaps a bouncing, big-eyed Jewess who had suffered a "misfortune."

Here we must pause to quarrel with Christian painters. They are too idealistic. They scorn honest realism. Never do they depict this baby God at his lacteal repast. He always looks as if fed six weeks in advance. Perhaps they think a mother's suckling her child, which even old Cobbett called the most beautiful and holy sight on earth, is beneath the dignity of the subject. But the baby God went through these little experiences, with the regularity and pleasure of a common infant. Facts, gentlemen, are facts; and to ignore them is fraud or hypocrisy.

According to the story of the raising of Lazarus, Jesus wept, though we never read that he laughed; in fact, he appears to have been a remarkably serious young man. May be, however, he smiled now and then in Mary's arms; anyhow, it is safe to say he cried. We may presume that he went through all the infantile processes like the rest of us; otherwise his being born on earth as a human being, was a mockery, a delusion, and a snare.

God Almighty mewled and puked in Mary's arms. He screamed when he was hungry or cross, or when his little stomach was overcharged, or when a nasty pin was pricking him. He cooed when he was happy and comfortable. He kicked his legs aimlessly, dashed his little fists into space, scratched his little nose, and filled his mouth with his fingers. A million to one he largely increased the family washing-bill. By and bye God cut his teeth, and had pimples and rash. Probably he had the measles. Eighteen hundred years later he would have been vaccinated. Nasty stuff from another baby's arm, or from an afflicted calf, would have been inserted into the arm of God Almighty.

Later on God Almighty crept about on all fours with his stern higher than his front. Then he stood upright by a chair and learned to walk by means of the furniture. Frequently he fell down upon the part he displayed to Moses. He stole into Joseph's workshop, and God Almighty cut his fingers with chisels and jack-planes. Now and then he sat on a saw and got up with undignified haste. God Almighty also learned to talk. At first you couldn't

tell whether he was talking Sanskrit, Hebrew, Greek, or North American Indian. But he improved as he went along, and God Almighty could at last speak as good Hebrew, with a Galilean accent, as any other juvenile of the same age.

Finally, God Almighty went to school, where bigger boys fagged him and sometimes punched his head. It is conceivable that God Almighty bled at the nose and wore a black eye.

All this is very "blasphemous." But whose is the "blasphemy"? Not ours. We do not believe in the deity of Jesus Christ. The "blasphemy"—and in this case it is *real* blasphemy—lies at the door of those who say that Mary's baby was very God of very God. All we have done is to follow Newman's example; and as he dwelt on the facts of the Crucifixion, so we have dwelt on the facts of Christ's infancy. We have only related what must have happened. Who dares dispute it? No one. The very idea is an absurdity. Why then should we be reviled? Is it not the function of true art to hold the mirror up to nature? And is this not the head and front of our offending? We have simply taken the Christian at his word. We have assumed that he believes what he professes. We have accepted the dogma that the deity was born of the Virgin Mary; we have followed, step by step, his infantile career; and we exclaim "Christians, behold your God!"

We decline responsibility for what the mirror reflects. We merely hold it up. And this we shall continue to do. Here and there we shall arrest a superstitionist and make him think about his faith; and that will console us for all the insults and sufferings we have experienced in the service of Truth.

G. W. FOOTE.

#### CHRISTMAS AND ITS ASSOCIATIONS.

THE only connection between jolly old Father Christmas and the young man of sorrows, who came to an untimely end in Jerusalem, is a church made one. On the face of it Christmas is a Pagan festival. The head of the house, who invites his scattered family to make merry with him at this time, does exactly what his Pagan ancestors did centuries before the Christian era. Nor has the strong arm of religion quite banished the Pagan name, for in many parts Yuletide and Yule log and a glad Yule are still favorite terms. And Yule, which is allied to *wheel*, signifies the revolution of the year. The evergreens, with the specially expressive holly and mistletoe berries, symbolise the life of vegetation carried on from year to year. The Christmas dinner takes us back to the clan feast with slaughter and sacrifice to the manes. The hauling home of the Yule log and the lighting it from the remnant of last year's log, which was the custom down to modern times, was the survival of the ever-burning house fire, rekindled once a year from the ever-burning village fire; and takes us back to the early times when, in the words of Max Müller, "the hearth was the first altar, the father the first elder, his wife and children and slaves the first congregation, gathered together round the sacred fire." The merriment and interchange of presents take us back to the Roman Saturnalia, held at this period of the year, when all business was put aside and the time was given up to merrymaking.

The Christmas carols were formerly sung to the vegetation itself, of which Shakespeare's "Heigh ho, the holly," is a survival. In the north they carry round the Christmas tree, as southern Catholics exhibit the *bambino*, and priests lend out the doll Christ, for a consideration, to mothers expecting to be confined. For the child Christ, like the evergreen tree, is a symbol of renewed life, and the representation of a child is supposed to have a beneficial influence in producing one. The old name in England

for Christmas Eve was "mothers' night," when the women took part in a nocturnal watch. This watch-night has been transferred to New Year's Day, for the birth of the child Christ is indeed the birth of a new year.

Another association of Christmas is with rent day; and here perhaps the man of sorrows may come in. It is evident the quarter-days were fixed when rents were paid in kind; and when animals were slaughtered at the time of sacrifice, geese and other presents were exacted of tenants.

Pantomimes are also associated with Christmas; and because the harlequinade is of Italian origin some think they are quite modern. I am of opinion that this is wrong, as also the common view that the drama has developed from the miracle plays of the Middle Ages. It has been so usual to ascribe everything to the church, and this theory has been supposed to reflect such credit upon the stage, that it has been allowed to pass unchallenged. Yet I am convinced this is a mistake. The Christmas pantomimes have developed from the court masques performed at Christmas, and these again from the Yuletide mummers, who were long anterior to the miracle plays. In Ben Jonson's *Christmas, his Masque*, two of the characters are taken by Minced Pie and Bride Cake, and in Shakespeare's *Midsummer Night's Dream* we have the personal representation not only of a lion and a wall, but of moonshine. This takes us back to the old idea of mummery, which was that of imitative magic. Both the Christmas mummers and the miracle plays, I imagine, developed from a common source; the idea expressed in festival ceremonies of savages, the buffalo and other dances of North American Indians, and the before-mentioned carrying of the bambino to child-bearing women, the notion that the representation of actions was a charm to realise them. Mr. J. G. Frazer, in his *Golden Bough*, has brought this idea out in relation to fire festivals, but he does not notice that therein lies the explanation of the early drama and of much of existing ritual, the Christian sacrament itself being neither more nor less than a charm to ensure that the qualities of the God shall reside in those who take his body and blood in communion.

It is easy to see why the old Pagan festival of Christmas was adapted to the Christian legend. Christmas does celebrate the re-birth of the lord and giver of life, our benefactor and savior, the sun. As to the birthday of the carpenter's wife's son, of that day, or even that year, knoweth no man. Matthew fixes it in the days of Herod, who died B.C. 4, and Luke at the time of the taxing under Cyrenius, a dozen years later.

Nor is the alleged event celebrated at Christmas one whit more original than the Christmas customs. Many remarkable persons were believed to have had extraordinary circumstances attending their birth. A divine father united to a human mother was a common incident in Pagan mythology. In all times, ancient and modern, priests have seduced women under the guise of religion, and children have been born with dubious male parentage. Some have boldly assigned their origin to the gods, as Alexander gave out he was begotten by Jupiter. The followers of others have sought to extol them by ascribing divine parentage. Thus the god Apollo was assigned as the father of Pythagoras, Plato, and Apollonius of Tyana. The first Christian apologist, Justin Martyr, deliberately compares the Christians calling Jesus the Son of God with the divine parentage ascribed to Pagan heroes.

It is singular, to say the least, that so extraordinary an incident as the birth of Jesus without a human father is noticed by only two of the gospels, and that these differ entirely in their relation of the matter. John, who is said to have looked after his mother, makes no mention of the matter. Nor does Mark,

probably the oldest gospel. In the copies of Matthew used by the Ebionites and Nazarenes, the first two chapters were wanting, and they totally differ from those in Luke. In the first gospel Mary appears unaware of the honor, or shame, brought on her. In the third the announcement is made by Gabriel. Matthew tells us Joseph was minded to put her away privately, but Luke says not a word of Joseph knowing of his betrothed's condition. Matthew has an uncorroborated and most improbable story of the massacre of the infants leading to a flight into Egypt, utterly irreconcilable with the account in Luke.

This is not all. Although Mary had sung "henceforth all nations shall call me blessed"—although angels had announced the wonderful birth, and wise men came from afar to worship the child—purifications were offered for him as for an ordinary sin-born infant, and he was simply bred a carpenter (Mark vi. 3), while even his brethren did not believe in him (John vii. 5). The barest examination of the story shows it is no better than a legend, and suggests that those best appreciate Christmas who eat, drink, and are merry in honor of our lord and life-giver the Sun.

J. M. WHEELER.

### THE "LIGHT OF THE WORLD."

CHRISTMAS has once more returned with its many pleasing associations and fond recollections that should shed a halo of joy and happiness upon the homes of the Anglo-Saxon race. We are all more or less willing subjects of the ever-welcome Yule-tide King, and gladly do we pay him loyal homage. This is the period more than all others, when discord is usually replaced by the sunshine of harmony, when wrongs and injuries are forgotten, when ties of affection are cemented, and when benevolence is stimulated. There is, however, one fact that somewhat mars this festive season, and that is the knowledge that too many of the human family in this alleged Christian country are prevented by the curse of poverty from joining in "the feast of plenty." To such victims of misfortune it is not sufficient to offer mere sympathy, it is a Secular duty that we render what help we can to enable them to share the comforts of life; and also to inspire within them a determination to join in the effort so to reconstruct society that poverty shall disappear and wealth be placed on an equitable basis.

Christians profess to celebrate Christmas because it is the supposed period of the birth of Christ; although no data exist to which his birth can be assigned with anything approaching exactness. Even Mosheim admits it "has not hitherto been fixed with certainty, notwithstanding the deep and laborious researches of the learned," and, according to Lardner, it was the opinion of Archbishop Newcombe that Jesus was born between the middle of August and the middle of November. It is, however, comparatively unimportant when the event took place; what concerns us more are, the pretension he set up to be the "Light of the World," and the excessive claims urged on his behalf by his followers. In the New Testament he is represented as proclaiming himself not only the greatest of men, but God over all men; that he was the promised Messiah who was to sojourn for a time on earth, die on the cross, and then return to his Father, where he was before the world was. His indiscriminate devotees accepting these extravagant demands have claimed for him absolute perfection, and they exultingly exclaim that historians have written of his greatness, poets have immortalised his memory, divines have proclaimed his godhead, and millions of sincere, unflinching devotees have, with untiring energy and blissful consolation, sung his praises and extolled the majesty of him who was said

to be "A light to lighten the Gentiles and the glory of thy people Israel."

Evidently Thomas Carlyle was mistaken in supposing that "in these days hero worship professes to have gone out and finally ceased," for thousands now affect to idolise the alleged founder of Christianity, regardless of all reasonable justification. They apparently ignore the fact that a counterpart of Christ has been claimed for most of the theologies of the world. Not only was it said that Hercules, Esculapius, Krishna, and others possessed supernatural power and worked miracles, but it is reported that five hundred years before Christ, Buddha said: "I am going to give light to those enshrouded in darkness . . . to open the gate of immortality to man." E. Bunsen says, "Buddha was regarded as the Supernatural Light of the World." Thus Christ was not unique in his claims; they were but repetitions of what had been previously taught in connection with his predecessors.

Neither does Christ's character, as delineated in the gospels, justify the claim that he was "the light of the world." Apart from the fact that he revealed nothing of practical value, and that he taught no virtues that were before unknown, the emulation of many of the traits in his character would certainly not illuminate human nature to-day, nor would it remove the physical evils or dispel the dense mental and moral darkness which we find existing so extensively in our midst. No doubt that in his life there were many commendable features, but he was far from being perfect. While he might have been well-meaning, he was, in belief, superstitious and disappointed; in conduct inconsistent, in opinions contradictory, in teaching arbitrary, in knowledge deficient, in faith vacillating, and in pretensions great. He taught false notions of existence, had little or no knowledge of science; he misled his followers by claiming to be what he was not, and he deceived himself by his own credulity. He lacked experimental force, frequently living the life of an ascetic, spending much of his time in the isolation of the mountains, and taking but slight interest in the affairs of this world. Hence he exclaims, "I pray not for the world, but for them which thou hast given me; for they are mine. . . . They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. . . . Take, therefore, no thought for the morrow; for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself." It is this lack of experimental force throughout the career of Christ that renders his notions of domestic duties so thoroughly imperfect. The happiness of a family, according to his teaching, was to be impaired before his doctrines could be accepted. "If any man," said he, "come to me and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple." Even the disciple who wished to bury his father was advised by Christ to forego that duty of affection for "Jesus said follow me; and let the dead bury the dead." The fact is, Christ was a spiritualiser, and no doubt he was not far wrong when he said, "My kingdom is not of this world."

Not only was his imperfection apparent in his being subject to such human weaknesses as hunger, anger, and uncontrolled and absurd passion, but his very limited experience prevented him from being a "light" in some of the most important positions of life. We do not read of him in the capacity of either a husband, a father, a statesman, or a political reformer. A man who has not filled these relations of life is not in the best position to give practical and satisfactory lessons thereon. It may be possible for an ordinary man to give advice as to duties he has not performed, but it is highly probable that such advice would be imperfect. Even in the conditions of life he is said to have filled, this "light of the world" failed to exhibit any high degree of excellence,

discrimination, or manly courage. As a son, he lacked affection and consideration for the feelings of his parents. As a teacher, he was mystical and rude; and as a reasoner, he was defective and illogical. Lacking a true method of reasoning, or uniformity of character, Christ exhibited a strange example—an example injudicious to exalt and dangerous to emulate. At times he was severe when he should have been gentle. When he might have reasoned he frequently rebuked. When he ought to have been firm and resolute he was vacillating and cowardly. When he should have been happy and joyful he was sorrowful and desponding. When, after preaching faith as the one thing needful, he himself lacked it when he required it most. Thus on the cross, when a knowledge of a life of integrity, a sensibility of the fulfilment of a good mission, a conviction that he was dying for a good and righteous cause, and fulfilling the object of his life; when all this should have given him moral strength, we find him giving vent to grief and despair. In this scene we have a true indication of the general character of Christ. Here was one who came on earth with a mission to perform, a part of which was to die on the cross; yet when the time arrived for his destiny to be fulfilled, he sought to avoid his fate, and he shrunk from that death which was said to give life to a fallen world. If Christ had been to his age what Darwin, Spencer, Clifford, and Huxley have been to the present generation; if he had written a book teaching men how to avoid the miseries of life; if he had revealed the mysteries of nature, and exhibited the beauties of the arts and sciences, what an advantage he would have conferred upon mankind! In that case he might have been deemed, if not *the*, at least a "light of the world." But Christ's usefulness was impaired by the idea which he held so firmly, that this world was but a state of probation fitting the human race for another and better home, where "the wicked cease from troubling and the weary are at rest."

If the space allotted to the present article would permit it, we could easily show that this "light of the world" was too feeble to extinguish the darkness of Rome, to prevent the gloom of the Middle Ages, or to diffuse rays of happiness among the sombre condition of thousands who to-day drag out a miserable state of existence under the very shadow of the cross. If the "Redeemer" were born, from what has he redeemed the world? We have still on every side oppression, starvation, abject poverty, and revolting crimes. Well might he be asked, in the words of Swinburne:

Hast thou fed full men's starved souls,  
Or are there less oppressions done  
In this wide world under the sun?

CHARLES WATTS.

#### HOW TO SWALLOW GOD ALMIGHTY.

The following directions for receiving the sacrament are taken from *The Garden of the Sou*, the common prayer-book of the Catholics of England, printed by lawful authority: "When the priest gives you the blessed sacrament, saying, 'May the body of our Lord Jesus Christ preserve thy soul to everlasting life. Amen'; receive it with a lively faith, a profound humility, and a heart inflamed with love. At the time of your receiving, let your head be erect, your mouth opened moderately wide, and your tongue a little advanced so as to rest upon your under lip, that the priest may conveniently convey the blessed sacrament into your mouth; which being done, shut your mouth; let the sacred host moisten a little on your tongue, and then swallow it down as soon as you can, and afterwards abstain a while from spitting. If the host should chance to stick to the roof of your mouth, be not disturbed, neither must you put your finger into your mouth to remove it; but gently and quietly remove it with your tongue, and so convey it down; and then return to your place and endeavor to entertain as well as you can the guest whom you have received."

#### A FREETHINKER AT LARGE.

##### III.—REV. HUGH PRICE HUGHES AT ST. JAMES'S HALL.

THE Rev. Hugh Price Hughes is a man of some note in the religious world. He is the editor of the *Methodist Times* and leader of the West London Mission, an enterprise which has, I understand, wrought sad havoc amongst the congregations of some orthodox Methodist chapels. But to Free-thinkers his name is chiefly familiar as the inventor and patentee of the "Atheist Shoemaker," whose wonderful conversion and edifying death were published in the *Methodist Times* two years ago as "a page in the history of the West London Mission." In that striking story Mr. Hughes made a distinct advance upon the barefaced yarns of the older school, which never went beyond such transparent artifices as M—, W—, etc. Mr. Hughes's "Atheist Shoemaker" might have deceived the very elect but for the fatal flaw that the *real* name of the converted one was withheld, and, in spite of Mr. Foote's searching examination of the story and his challenge to Mr. Hughes to produce some verification of his "facts," the identity of the apocryphal cobbler remains a mystery unto this day. "Lying for the glory of God" is an old device which still hath its uses.

Last Sabbath evening I determined to pay a visit to Mr. Hughes in his West-end tabernacle, and accordingly made my way to St. James's Hall, arriving at least a quarter of an hour before the advertised time for the commencement of the service. But I found the ominous word "full" confronting me at every entrance, and it was only by exerting a little of my persuasive influence upon a doorkeeper that I managed to gain admission.

The huge building was crowded in every part by an obviously middle-class audience, which listened with attention to the performance of a very fine orchestra. One singular feature attracted my attention: there were at least fifty soldiers, in full uniform, amongst the congregation. But why were these all gathered in one side gallery? It was not *reserved* for them, as they formed but a portion of the occupants of that part of the hall. Nor were the military men formed into a compact body: they were sprinkled liberally, and with a very picturesque effect, through the special gallery. But *was* it a special gallery? And if so, why?

At seven o'clock the Rev. Hugh Price Hughes came upon the platform, attended by a number of Wesleyan "sisters" arrayed in a garb which mildly suggested the uniform of Roman Catholic Sisters of Mercy. These ladies arranged themselves in a charming semi-circle, in the midst of which the reverend gentleman stood behind a small table decorated with vases of flowers.

Mr. Hughes is not a man of commanding presence. He is of medium height, and his figure is spare almost to leanness. His face bespeaks cunning rather than strength, and its vesture of black, shiny hair, combined with a pair of gleaming spectacles, gives it a weird, uncanny appearance. He at once proceeded to business by giving out a hymn, which, having been first played by the band, was sung in good style by the congregation. Then a short prayer—appallingly brief for a Wesleyan minister—was "offered." Mr. Hughes besought the Lord to save him and others from many evils, including "self-satisfaction and self-righteousness." At the conclusion of this exercise the collection was taken, Mr. Hughes begging his congregation to give as much as they could "for Christ's sake." The bags were passed round whilst the band played, and the tinkling of money formed a cheerful bell-like accompaniment to the music. I noticed that the bags were provided with an ingenious collar-like arrangement by which a very small opening

was left at the mouth. Can it be—I blush to suggest it—that Mr. Hughes does not trust his congregation or his collectors?

At length, after much tedious gospel-reading and hymn-singing, we settled in our places to hear the sermon. In this I was woefully disappointed. Mr. Hughes is not a great preacher; his voice is harsh, and at the same time comparatively feeble. He creates his "effects" by claptrap devices rather than by intellectual force. The sermon was largely composed of declamation of the cheapest and tawdriest kind, eked out with bald-headed platitudes and commonplace illustrations. Twice or thrice he burst out into a bemuddled kind of eloquence, but the discourse as a whole struck me as being but a poor performance, and I did not trouble to take copious notes with a view to reporting, as I felt that the columns of the *Freethinker* might be more profitably used. Let the curious in these things search the columns of the *Methodist Times*, where the inspired twaddle of Sunday night will doubtless appear in verbatim glory.

There are, however, two or three points which may be briefly noticed. In the opening prayer, as I have already said, Mr. Hughes asked the Lord to preserve him from "self-satisfaction and self-righteousness." One passage in his sermon showed that the petition was not without cause. He asked his hearers if they would be afraid to stand at the bar of Christ (the good old judgment-seat of our childhood, with the saved on the right and the sinners on the left). As for him, he would rather stand at the judgment-seat than before one of our courts of law; for Christ had had mercy on him, and he had nothing to fear from divine justice; but in a law court he might be cross-examined by some troublesome barrister. Now if rubbish of this kind does not indicate "self-satisfaction and self-righteousness" of the grossest sort, I cannot understand the meaning of words.

Mr. Hughes not only believes in the old-fashioned day of judgment; he strenuously upholds the literal hell which is logically bound up with it. He worked himself up into an excited state over the supposititious case of a man who, having seduced a young girl, lives joyously and carelessly, whilst his victim sinks through despair and destitution to a shameful death. If there were no punishment hereafter for such as he, Mr. Hughes could see no divine justice in the world. "If God would tolerate that," he cried, "I would curse God and die." Then he pictured to us the fate of the seducer in the hereafter. "He is going to the depths of hell," exclaimed the preacher, "and I thank God there is a hell for him to go to. If there is not a hell for such as he, I could not believe in God!"

But happily there is a hell, and therefore Mr. Hughes can believe in a God. And this God is guided by precisely the ideas of justice which have secured the distinguished honor of Mr. Hughes's approval. God is to measure out to us exactly that which we mete out to others. If we do not forgive others, he will not forgive us. One singular illustration of this was given. Mr. Hughes had known a man who had been "under the conviction of sin for fifteen years," and yet the grace of God had not descended upon him. The ministers were perplexed and baffled—they couldn't make it out at all. At length it was discovered that the unhappy man, despite his "conviction of sin," had not been able to forgive a fellow-creature who had grievously wronged him. When, at length, the sin-convicted one had succeeded in forgiving his neighbor, the grace of God came down upon him with a rush.

Can it be that this kind of stuff suffices to attract 3,000 people to St. James's Hall on a wet and miserable Sunday night? If so, the average intelligence of our countrymen must be deplorably low. But I cannot believe that the magic of Mr. Hughes's name and "eloquence" accounted for the presence of that vast audience. From beginning to end his sermon failed

to inspire anything more than a languid, passive interest. It seems far more reasonable to seek the attractive power in the splendid music which preceded the service, and in the indefinable sense of exaltation which arises from the association of large numbers of people in a spacious building. And if Mr. Hughes is depleting the chapels to fill St. James's Hall—well, so much the better for all of us.

GEORGE STANDRING.

---

### HELL, SWEET HELL!

---

#### I.

'MIDST sulphur and brimstone, as Talmage can tell,  
Be it ever so torrid our home will be hell.  
A word from the parsons can dump us all there,  
In that place of all places which is really nowhere.  
Hell, hell, red-hot hell,  
If you want to keep out, just keep in with the sell.

#### II.

An ethical church, *rara avis* indeed,  
O give me a land with no Christian creed,  
Such as saints praising God while the De'il makes a haul,  
O give me a rest—I am tired of it all!  
Hell, hell, where is hell?  
The man should go thither who takes stock in hell.

#### III.

Will the orthodox churches come forward and tell  
Why they do not *abolish* the old-fashioned hell?  
*Revising* is but a ridiculous sham  
With its quibbles (excuse me) it's not worth a—damn.  
Hell, hell, useful hell,  
For, to rake in the shekels there's no place like hell.

#### EPILOGUE.

It is much the same thing, as is known pretty well,  
Be it Sheol or Hades, Gehenna or hell.

ANDREW W. HERDMAN.

---

### WHO WAS THE FATHER OF JESUS CHRIST?

---

I HAVE not been to Lourdes for an interview, nor had any spiritual séance with the late lamented virgin Mary, who I should guess to be the only person able to satisfactorily settle the above momentous question. But I have a suggestion which I may think may commend itself to those who concern themselves with such important inquiries.

Christians have differed among themselves from the very first on this question. Some, including many modern Unitarians, hold that Jesus was the son of Joseph and Mary, in the face of Matt. i., 25, which declares that Joseph "knew her not till she had brought forth her firstborn son." It is true that Mary speaks of Joseph as his father (Luke ii., 48), but there is no evidence that her husband acquiesced.

Some held that Jesus proceeded from God the Father, others from God the Holy Ghost. The Roman Church holds that the Holy Ghost proceeds from the Father and the Son, while the Greek Church split from the Western Church on this vital question.

The vile, wicked Jews, as Justin Martyr tells us, began early to circulate blasphemies about their blessed Lord and Savior. They alleged that Jesus was the offspring of Miriam Magdala and one Pandera. Celsus, in the second century, repeated this malignant slander, and alleged that Pandera was a Roman soldier. A living Italian, Signor Giacomo Testa, has even contended that this Pandera was a native of Brindisi; so that Jesus Christ was the offspring of a Jewess and an Italian, which might account for the Western cast of features with which he is usually painted.

But mark how little these slanderers agree. Celsus says Pandera was a Roman soldier. The Talmud does not say what he was, but implies he was a Jew, while the Sopher Toldoth Jeshu says he was of the fallen tribe of Judah.

Messrs. Foote and Wheeler—may the Lord spifficate them for their blasphemy!—have given currency to this blasphemy by publishing the *Jewish Life of Christ*, and have sought to back it up by the fact that Epiphanius, an early Christian father, introduces Panther into the genealogy of our Savior.

One of the most curious theories was that of William Taylor, of Norwich, the translator of German literature. In a remarkable *Letter Concerning the Two First Chapters of*

*Luke*, published in 1810, he contended that Zacharias, the high priest was the father of Jesus Christ. He found this testified to by Mary, Elizabeth, and Jesus himself. He shows that it was the custom among the Jews for wives, when pregnant, to offer their husband concubines. It appears that while Elizabeth was in this state Mary came to her house (*Luke* i. 41-56). When she left she was in the family way. What more natural than that the father was the person who acted as her protector. Corroboration may be found in the story of *The Protevangelion*, which tells how the high priest, Zacharias, induced Joseph to take Mary. Poor Joseph complained that he was an old man, but Zacharias told him to fear the Lord, and threatened him with the fate of Korah, Dathan and Abiram; so poor Joseph was compelled to give in. Jesus too, when he stays at the temple, says he has been engaged in his father's business. There are obvious objections to this theory of Taylor's, which was perhaps only one of his learned jokes.

My view, I think, will commend itself on the ground of simplicity. We know that Jewish names were usually compounded with those of God. What is more likely than that a young acolyte of the temple was named Gabriel, champion of God, and that he acted in this matter as Josephus tells us that Mundus did in the temple in regard to Paulina (*Antiq.* xviii., 3, 4). Possibly he was found out, discharged, and joined the army under the name of Pandera.

LUCIANUS.

### HUME ON DESIGN.

And why should man, added he, pretend to an exemption from the lot of all other animals? The whole earth, believe me, Philo, is cursed and polluted. A perpetual war is kindled amongst all living creatures. Necessity, hunger, want, stimulate the strong and courageous; fear, anxiety, terror, agitate the weak and infirm. The first entrance into life gives anguish to the new-born infant and to its wretched parent; weakness, impotence, distress, attend each stage of that life, and it is at last finished in agony and horror.

Observe too, says Philo, the curious artifices of Nature in order to embitter the life of every living being: The stronger prey upon the weaker, and keep them in perpetual terror and anxiety. The weaker too, in their turn, often prey upon the stronger, and vex and molest them without relaxation. Consider that innumerable race of insects, which either are bred on the body of each animal, or, flying about, infix their stings in him. These insects have others still less than themselves, which torment them. And thus, on each hand, before and behind, above and below, every animal is surrounded with enemies, which incessantly seek his misery and destruction. . . .

Were a stranger to drop, on a sudden, into this world, I would show him, as a specimen of its ills, an hospital full of diseases, a prison crowded with malefactors and debtors, a field of battle strewn with carcasses, a fleet foundering in the ocean, a nation languishing under tyranny, famine, or pestilence. To turn the gay side of life to him, and give him a notion of its pleasures; whither should I conduct him? To a ball, to an opera, to court? He might justly think that I was only showing him a diversity of distress and sorrow.—*Dialogues in Religion.*

A good specimen of a prayer is that which was used to be addressed to St. Catherine the bride of Christ. It ran thus: "A husband, St. Catherine; a handsome one, St. Catherine; a rich one, St. Catherine; a nice one, St. Catherine; and soon, St. Catherine."

In 1849 Mr. Wood, Sir E. Buxton, and Mr. Bouverie brought a Bill before Parliament to substitute solemn affirmation for oaths. The Bill provided that any person having a conscientious objection to take an oath may go before a magistrate and make a solemn declaration to that effect, and shall thereupon, upon payment of a fee of 2s. 6d., receive a certificate, and be relieved from hereafter taking an oath in any court of justice. Provisions are also included for punishing those who make any affirmation in lieu of an oath without having made the preliminary affirmation. Persons giving false evidence after affirmation to be deemed guilty of perjury.

## ACID DROPS.

Mr. Gladstone is fond of thanking God, but he needn't have done it at Northampton, especially after referring to Mr. Bradlaugh's long, unjust exclusion from the House of Commons. Mr. Bradlaugh was persecuted as an Atheist, and "thank God" has a bitter flavor so soon after his death and in the very town he represented.

A saved soul from one of Booth's Rescue Homes was engaged as lady's maid. But she didn't suit. The lady said: "She isn't the spiritual help to me I thought she would be. Mrs. Booth told me she was saved, and I expected she would be a great help to me in my soul difficulties." This dame wanted a lady's maid and a female chaplain rolled into one—at one salary. A sweet mixture of piety and prudence!

Booth's matrimonial agency will soon be in operation. A colonist has applied for a wife, and so has a Glamorganshire miner, while a Chelsea widow has applied for a husband. We don't know whether Booth has settled a name for this department. We suggest "The Coupling Office."

Spurgeon and Renan are both at Mentone. One believes in prayer and the other doesn't, but they adopt the same remedy against ill health. It would be a good thing if the couple could meet. Spurgeon would be a queer figure under the exquisite sarcasm of Renan—that is, if he could understand it.

Some Irish admirers have presented Mr. Spurgeon with a Kerry cow, which yields an abundance of nutritious milk. They seem to know that Spurgeon is a good hand at milking the cow.

The keeping of Christmas Day is extending in Scotland despite Presbyterian dislike to the Paganism of the festival. This was so strongly felt in the days of the Commonwealth that in 1643 the Westminster Assembly of Divines endeavored to get the English Christmas abolished, and in the following year the people were actually ordered by the Houses of Parliament to keep Christmas as a fast. This proceeding contributed more than many important political events in rendering the Puritanical party detested by the people, especially by the poor and the young, and thus no doubt aided the Restoration in 1660.

Calamy, the great Presbyterian divine, preaching on this occasion before the House of Lords, said, "This year God, by a providence, hath buried this Feast in a Fast, and I hope it will never rise again." The keeping of Christmas, in fact, continued illegal under the Puritan regime. Evelyn records in his diary of the Christmas of 1652, "No sermon anywhere, no church being permitted to be open; so observed it at home." Many others doubtless observed it at home.

December is the rainy season in Palestine, and the sheep are all put under shelter. Hence no shepherds are employed to watch them, and consequently Jesus was not born at Christmas time. But although Jesus was not, all the old sun-gods were. The Romans celebrated the time under the name of *Natalis Invicti Solis*. Wherever the religion of Persia penetrated there was a similar festival, that of Mithras; and among the Scandinavians logs of wood blazed in honor of Baldr.

Sir Isaac Newton held that the Feast of the Nativity, and most of the other "Immovable Festivals," were arranged to fall on cardinal points of the year, the Annunciation at the Vernal Equinox, St. Michael at the Autumnal, Christmas at the Winter Solstice, St. John the Baptist at Midsummer, St. Paul's Day, St. Matthias', and others, on days when the sun entered the respective signs of the elliptic.

The *Church Times*, in attempting to define the great mystery of its faith, the three in one Godhead, approaches dangerously to the confines of heresy. It says (Dec. 18): "Each Person of the Godhead has an idiosyncrasy or limitation of his own. The idea of the first Person is limited by Paternity; that of the second by Filiation; that of the third by Procession from the other two, or, as the Greeks have it, 'coming from the Father through the Son.'" The *Church Times* refers to the authority of the judicious Hooker, but for our part we should fancy it very injudicious to speak of the

idiosyncrasies and limitation of the Trinity. Both Hooker and the *Church Times* editor may incur the denunciation of St. Athanasius, and "without doubt perish everlastingly."

The Methodists claim to number some thirty millions throughout the world, but *Whitaker's Almanack* for 1892 ruthlessly cuts the number down to eighteen millions.

*Whitaker's Almanack* was delayed this year in consequence of the indisposition of the editor and the sudden death of his sub-editor and chief assistant. "Arrangements have already been made," the publisher says, "to prevent a repetition of such an occurrence." As the excited Frenchman said, this is "magnificent, splendid, very good." Whitaker has apparently made an arrangement with Providence. Perhaps he will let us know how he did it.

A document has been drawn up by Archdeacon Denison, the Dean of Norwich, and other clergymen, which should form an interesting item among the fossils in a gallery of theological antiquities. It is a "declaration of the truth of Holy Scripture," directed against the advanced school of critics in general, and against Mr. Gore, the editor of *Lux Mundi*, in particular. Those who sign it declare their joint testimony that, in their judgment, the Scriptures "declare incontrovertibly the actual historical truth in all records both of past events and of the delivery of predictions to be thereafter fulfilled." This, which was once the belief of the universal church, has now to be hawked about for signatures.

The Rev. W. C. G. Cubinson, vicar of St. Andrew's, South Streatham, is much scandalised at the large sale of newspapers on Sunday, and has established a book store, where he says excellent little books can be bought for Sunday reading. The man of God forgets that it is his own Monday paper which employs Sunday labor. What the parsons really object to is not Sabbath desecration, but competition.

Canon Gordon, of St. Marie's Roman Catholic Church, Halifax, has been lecturing on the Church and Science. His chairman, Rev. Dr. Dolan, said: "Galileo was deservedly censured by the church, not on account of his scientific teachings, but because he questioned the authority of the Bible." This falsification was modified by the Canon into "It was Galileo's defiance of authority much more than the Copernican theory that brought upon him the anger of the Roman authorities." There is nothing more contemptible in history than the pretence of friendly attitude now adopted by Christianity towards science, after having done its utmost to strangle her in the past.

"I will work the flesh off my fingers to the bones sooner than revert to dishonesty again," exclaimed that good Christian young man named James Taylor, when in the dock at Guildhall charged with stealing. After residing for two months in Holloway Jail, he has the audacity to come to Battersea to oppose those wicked Freethinkers. Taylor (amidst the applause of his Christian friends) declared that he was innocent of the charge brought against him. James Taylor will only be allowed on the Secular platform to oppose if he is put forward by the Christian Evidence Society.

Another man of God in trouble! The Rev. Jonadab Finch has been sentenced to three months' hard labor at the Mansion House for embezzling the sum of £600 entrusted to him as secretary of the Orphan Working Schools, Haverstock-hill. Counsel pleaded that the worthy Jonadab regarded it as "a loan." Perhaps this accounts for the light sentence. Jonadab has had £200 for every month he spends in the stone jug, and the transaction is fairly profitable.

The Earl of Dudley, who was once bagged in a betting raid, has now arrived at the ripe age of twenty-four, and he discourses like a wiseacre at Tory meetings. At Brierly Hill he spoke warmly in favor of the Established Church, and of the absolute necessity of bringing up young men with sound religious views. We presume his lordship is a case in point. It seems a pity that he cannot enter the Church and become a bishop.

The gospel-shops are up to all sorts of dodges to attract the people. Horton-lane Chapel, Bradford, advertise Sunday afternoon functions for "men only." Not only is there "no collection," there are actually "prizes." "Compel them to

come in," said Jesus Christ. But that game is played out, and the sky-pilots read it "Tickle them in."

Clerkenwell-green is evidently in Jehovah's black books. Fires are commoner there than in any other part of London, and they always occur on the *Freethinker* side of the Green. The latest victims are Willing and Co., the advertisers. Their premises were burnt right out on Thursday night in last week, and it required all the efforts of the Fire Brigade to prevent the flames from spreading. Had there been a high wind the whole block of buildings would probably have been destroyed.

Willing and Co. are pious. They don't mind posting risky bills on the London walls, such as the *Zæo* picture or the Empire girl dancing a can-can; but they draw the line at "blasphemy." They will not post *our* bills nor those of any Freethought meetings. Yes, Willing and Co. are pious; but, for all that, they are dangerous neighbors. This is the second fire they have had in four years, and we feel like giving the pious firm a wide berth in future.

The Rev. B. Waugh, who distinguished himself at the beginning of the year by informing the Bishop of Chester that Atheists were specially cruel to children, now perpetrates another absurdity. At a meeting of his society at Bolton he declared, "he had come to the conclusion civilisation was the cause of cruelty to children." The nincompoop cannot understand the meaning of words, still less anything of the evolution of humanity, or he would see that it is the savagery which underlies civilisation, and which is supported by the biblical rule-with-a-rod theory, which is the cause of the cruelty all humanitarians deplore.

At an inquest on a platelayer who was killed at Spa-road station the station-master declared, "It is the work of providence; it is a very dangerous spot." Evidently providence should be indicted for manslaughter.

A mandarin in China says, in reply to reproaches as to the persecutions of Christians there: "Why should Russia do the same thing? That empire, which enjoys the Christianity which you are trying to foist upon us, is doing just as bad as we are, if not worse. Its government is expelling foreigners wholesale, partly because they are foreigners, partly because they profess a different religion from the Czar. It is massacring, robbing, and exiling the Jews wholesale. Why don't the powers interfere? They are sending their warships to threaten our ports because some of our people have ill-treated a few Christians. Why do they not send their ships to Russian ports?"

The *Lancashire Evening Express* makes a curious mistake in its report of Mr. Foote's recent lecture on Theosophy at Blackburn. It represents him as saying that he had not the honor of Mrs. Besant's acquaintance, but that friends of his who did know her assured him that she swore like a trooper. Of course it was not Mrs. Besant of whom Mr. Foote said this, but Madame Blavatsky. The blunder is a ridiculous one, and very annoying. Perhaps the Blackburn friends will bring this correction to the notice of the *Express* editor.

Mr. Stead makes too much of his catchsixpenny magazine. He actually suggests that the Devil is alarmed at its success. "It has gone everywhere," he says, as an emissary of light, and not even the powers of darkness have found that it was possible to take action against it." Why should they?

While Freethinkers are prevented by law from holding any property for Freethought, it is instructive to see how the Roman Catholic Church is accumulating tax-exempted wealth in "free America." Its property now amounts to the value of 118,331,516 dols. This wealth in the hands of a well-disciplined, celibate priesthood is a great source of power. Sagacious politicians see a growing danger to America in this Romish organisation. It is a State within the State.

Parker isn't quite as good a showman as Booth, but he is not to be sneezed at, unless you have the influenza. On Christmas Day he announces the delivery of a message "which has been received from a place upon the earth never trodden by the foot of man." Holy Moses! Has the grand old boss of the Wandering Jews, who was killed by Jahveh up that mountain, and buried God only knows where, got up

again and sent Parker a "straight tip"? Anyhow, Parker will keep his word, and the tickets for the private door are a shilling.

John M'Allister, employed at the works of the North Lonsdale Iron and Steel Company, Ulverston, fell into one of the blast furnaces, and his body was instantly consumed. What became of his soul, and how it got out of the furnace, we know not. But the Rev. Father Allan decided to do what he could for it, so he read the burial service on the gangway at the top of the line of furnaces. We hope the man of God was duly paid for spouting over the poor fellow's unrecognisable ashes.

Arthur Firth went wrong in a Barnsley Wesleyan Chapel and had to be taken out. He is now in a lunatic asylum. Some years ago he wrote letters to the local press against the admission of Mr. Bradlaugh to Parliament. Some said he was cracked then, and apparently they were not far wrong.

Two Presbyterian ministers—Drs. Carson and Milligan—are to be tried before the New York Presbytery for speaking against political corruptions. The Presbyterians hold that ministers must not interest themselves in public elections "until the Constitution of the United States shall recognise the kingship of Christ over the world and the authority of His word as law." They want God in the Constitution first, and then they will utilise him. This should be a caution to Uncle Sam against any union of Church and State.

Prof. Edward Caird's Gifford lectures are a sad contrast with those of Dr. E. Tylor and Prof. Max Müller, who at least gave their hearers facts. The Glasgow professor treated his audience to a continent of mud, with not even the light of an eruptive volcano. Such "clotted nonsense" as that "the consciousness of God was as near and necessary to us as the consciousness of the world and self" formed the bulk of his discourse.

A fool of a preacher having denounced the drama as in league with damnation, a Boston paper ventures to remark that the drama will survive as long as the churches. Is that encouraging for the drama? Lovers of the drama hope to see the churches transformed into theatres.—*Liberty*.

The action of Dr. Plunket, the Archbishop of Dublin, in ordaining certain Spanish Protestants to the ministry, has grievously offended the High Church party, and "Hibernicus," in the *Church Times*, calls on the English episcopate to "save Ireland" by making it clear that "they must choose between communion with that sect and with England." How they love one another!

In the American Episcopal Church, in the Southern States, it is the custom to charge a dollar per head for each communicant who receives the sacrament. This pays for the blessed wine being turned into blood, and helps to keep the thing select.

Eucharino is not the name of a new Christmas game or of a musical instrument, but of a special wine "for Eucharistic purposes," supposed to more adequately represent the Savior's blood than common port, or "ter" or even "vino sacro."

Clerical correspondents of the *Church Times* are still discussing the momentous question, "Is Fasting Communion Indispensable?"—that is, whether it is permissible under any circumstances to let the body and blood of the Savior glide in among coffee and toast, instead of letting coffee and toast glide down to the partly digested Savior. Fasting on Friday is considered so necessary in the High Church that some are exercised in conscience as to whether they may take roast beef and plum pudding this Christmas, since feast and fast this year come together.

A student at Christ College, Oxford, was asked by a Ritualist, "You surely don't go to communion after breakfast?" "I do," replied the student. "What!" exclaimed the Romaniser, "do you put the body and blood of Christ on top of ham and eggs?" "Yes," answered the student, "and in doing so I don't think I am acting more unreligiously than you who put the ham and eggs on the body and blood of Christ."

The Rev. R. H. Hadden, vicar of St. Botolph, Aldgate, sees so much the importance of having his congregation prostrate on their knees during prayers, that he has had his church fitted with a new kind of seat which will not permit the worshipper to be comfortable in a merely leaning attitude. The *priedieu genufragia*, or down on your marrow-bones, seats should be popular with the clergy.

"Object Sermons" are the latest attractions in the American pulpit, which we may soon expect to see imported. The American correspondent of the *Manchester Examiner* tells how the Rev. Dr. Tyndall, commenting on Aaron's rod, cast down on his platform a big blackthorn, and then stooping down rose again with a serpent about five feet long dangling from his fingers. It looked alive and squirming, but was only an imitation one.

This was not the end of his performance. He began to speak of the snakes seen in *delirium tremens*, and declared there was an invisible snake in every glass. Here he placed a glass on the pulpit, struck a match and inserted it among prepared chemicals, when a long writhing Pharaoh's serpent arose, pointing to which he cried, "The next time you feel like getting drunk think of that." Dr. Tyndall's idea is capable of developments. He might illustrate how Jesus turned water into wine; or he might ride in procession on an ass and a colt the foal of an ass, and then whip out the worshippers in his tabernacle with a whip of small cords.

A curious example of belief in transmigration is given by Sir Alfred Lyall. Some fifty years ago a very high English official died in a fortress situated in one of the centres of Brahmanic orthodoxy. Just as the news of his death reached the Sepoy guard, a black cat rushed out of the main gate, whereupon the guard presented arms to the cat as a salute to the flying spirit of the English officer; and until a few years ago any cat that passed out at night was invariably saluted by the sentry.

An article on "New England Puritans," in *Blackwood's Magazine* for December, says, speaking of their theology, "Beyond the little circle of the elect and privileged was a living hell of foredoomed horrors and despair. The most just-living of the heathen, who walked straight according to their lights, had nothing of course to hope for beyond some tempering of the penal fires, and even the innocent children who died in infancy paid the heavy penalty of their fathers' sins. Although their immediate progenitors had been among the redeemed, they might still be answerable for the sin of Adam, and be the victims of the seductive sophistries of the wily serpent." This was the religion of the most pious people when they went direct for their faith to the Bible.

Speaking of their hymns, the writer says, "These advanced Calvinists seem to have agreed with the cynical Rochefoucault in thinking that seeing the pain of our friends gives piquancy to our pleasures. The poet indulges himself with a foretaste of the joys of the saved representing them as almost gloating over the agonies of the lost. A single stanza in that vein will suffice—

The pious father had much rather  
His graceless son should lie  
In Hell with Devils for all his evils,  
Burning eternally."

Does not revelation declare that those who drink of the wine of the wrath of God "shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels" (Rev. xiv. 10).

Among the Puritans the Devil was continually on the rampage. They persecuted alleged witches with relentless fury. The Rev. Cotton Mather, one of their most celebrated divines, wrote *The Wonders of the Invisible World Displayed*, and burnt witches like any inquisitor. The story of their persecution at Salem cannot be read without shuddering. Yet the atrocious cruelties perpetrated in the name of religion were all founded on the divine command "Thou shalt not suffer a witch to live" (Exodus xxii. 18). Nowadays people keep a devil, but put him to no use. The Puritans were more logical and believed he actually went about destroying souls.

Prof. Eugene Revillont says the Egyptian ethics were far superior to Jewish morality and even equalled Christian ethics which it anticipated. There is much reason to think that Christian moral teachings were derived from Egypt.



## MR. FOOTE'S ENGAGEMENTS.

Sunday, December 27, Hall of Science, 142 Old-street, E.C. : at 7, "A Christmas Sermon on the Son of God."

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

February 7, Bradford; 14, Leeds; 21 and 28, Hall of Science.  
March 6, Merthyr.

## TO CORRESPONDENTS.

MR. CHARLES WATTS' ENGAGEMENTS.—December 27, Birmingham. January 3 and 10 (morning and evening), Hall of Science, London; 14 and 15, Portsmouth; 17, Milton Hall, London; 24 and 31, Birmingham. February 7, Hull; 14, Glasgow; 15, Hamilton; 16, 17, 18 and 19, public debate in Glasgow; 21, Edinburgh; 28, Birmingham. March 7, Birmingham; 14 and 21 (morning and evening) Hall of Science, London; 28, Birmingham. April 4, Manchester; 11 and 17, Birmingham; 25, Sheffield. May 1 and 8 (morning and evening), Hall of Science, London; 15 and 22, Birmingham.—All communications for Mr. Watts should be sent direct to him at Baskerville Hall, The Crescent, Birmingham.

DOUBTFUL.—Many years ago, fifteen or sixteen we think, George Bishop was lecturing as a Freethinker at Northampton. He had rather a hard time of it, and soon found a softer road in the church.

CONSTANT READER.—Thanks for the reference to Mrs. Linton's book, but "matins" has only one *t*. The derivation of the word is obvious.

W. COSFORD.—We always lost money on our special numbers despite the excellent sale. Thanks for your efforts to promote our circulation.

J. FISH.—Thanks. See "Sugar Plums." Freethinkers in every constituency should heckle candidates on the subject of the Blasphemy Laws. In most cases they would meet with success.

D. W.—We don't suppose Spurgeon takes his own advice about "putting your head between your knees" when you pray. He has too much corporation for such antics. Perhaps he meant it for the thin ones.

W. KAY.—Thanks. See "Acid Drops."

GEO. STANDING acknowledges 10s. from Mrs. Bussie for the Forder Election Fund.

R. S. SEAGO (S. Africa).—Thanks for your handsome Christmas card. We wish you health and success, and some day a return to England.

S. H. COLES.—Contents-sheet shall be sent. Thanks.

C. DOEG.—If you dispatched the notice on Monday there must have been a delay in the post. We distinctly remember the postman bringing in your letter as our formes were going on the machine. It is a very foolish suspicion that we intended to slight Mr. Small.

H. BARRATT adopts this plan of advertising the *Freethinker*. He tears off the front page, pastes the back, folds it up, puts it in his pocket, and affixes it at a prominent spot, where the spectator sees the title staring him boldly in the face, and may taste the quality of the editorial leader.

A. FLINDE.—The circular is all fudge. The parson simply wants Church Schools instead of Board Schools. A population of 50,000 ought not to be fooled in that way.

J. W. GOTT.—We shall be glad to help as soon as Mr. S. Standing settles down at Manchester and sends us a practical sketch of what he proposes to do.

BROWN MEMORIAL FUND.—The secretary acknowledges:—Harrington, 2s.; Duncombe, 6d.; Ridgeway, 1s.; O'Feeby, 1s.; Pownceby, 2s. 6d.

PAPERS RECEIVED.—Fritankaren—Truthseeker—Lichtfreund—Freidenker—Liberator—Two Worlds—Western Figaro—Boston Investigator—Freedom—Liberty—Der Arme Teufel—Progressive Thinker—Cosmopolitan—Flaming Sword—Echo—Halifax Guardian—Lancashire Evening Express—Better Way—Open Court—Ironclad Age—Chester-le-Street Advertiser—Houghton-le-Spring News—Twentieth Century—Bath Argus—Church Times.

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. E. Forder, 28 Stonecutter Street, London, E.C.

SCALE OF ADVERTISEMENTS.—Thirty words, 1s. 6d.; every succeeding ten words, 6d. Displayed Advertisements:—One inch, 3s.; Half Column, 15s.; Column, £1 10s. Special terms for repetitions.

It being contrary to Post-office regulations to announce on the wrapper when the subscription is due, subscribers will in future receive the number when their subscription expires in a colored wrapper.

## THE NATIONAL SECULAR HALL SOCIETY (LIMITED).

NEXT week I hope to make an important announcement in regard to the intended purchase of the London Hall of Science and its conversion into first-rate headquarters for the Secular party. The preliminary prospectus will then be superseded by another, giving fuller particulars, and indicating the financial prospects of the enterprise.

Applications for shares are coming in from all parts of the country. There will be a great many more after the issue of the new prospectus. It will be no easy task to raise the largest amount of money in the history of Secularism, but the outlook is far from unpromising. In a week or two it may be possible, with the consent of the directors, to give a precise account of the progress that has been made.

The following donations have been sent to me:—Mrs. Bussie, £5; Mrs. J. Donaldson, £10; "G. R.," £10. Some persons prefer to assist in this way instead of taking shares in their own names. All the donations I receive will eventually be invested in shares, to be held by persons of my own selection as trustees for the National Secular Society. G. W. FOOTE.

## SUGAR PLUMS.

There will be no morning lecture at the London Hall of Science to-day (Dec. 27). In the evening Mr. Foote will deliver "A Christmas Sermon on the Son of God," with special reference to the Rev. Charles Gore's new volume of Bampton Lectures. Mr. Gore is the editor of *Lux Mundi*, and it was his essay on Inspiration that caused such a flutter in church circles.

The Skating Rink at Nottingham is a dreadfully cold place on such a day as last Sunday. Mr. Foote wore his thick overcoat during the morning lecture, and was none too warm at the finish. The audience sat shivering all the time. The afternoon and evening audiences were fairly good, and they must have been very enthusiastic to sit for an hour in such a temperature with their feet on such a floor. Friends were present from Derby, Newark, and other distant places. At five o'clock a tea was served up at the Branch's hall, where good fires were burning, and the lecturer and about forty "saints" had an opportunity of thawing themselves.

During the day Mr. Foote was able to talk with a few of the Nottingham friends who have been laboring under a misunderstanding. We are quite sure they are very earnest and loyal Secularists, and it is pleasant to know that they will now work with the Branch as of old.

The Nottingham *Daily Express* gave a three-quarter-column report of Mr. Foote's evening lecture on "The Follies of Theosophy"—a lecture which was highly relished by the audience. There are a few mistakes in the report, which we have not space to correct, but it is something to see the old conspiracy of silence against Secularism breaking down.

Next Thursday (Dec. 31) another social party takes place at the London Hall of Science. Mr. Foote hopes to be present. The tickets are one shilling. On the following Thursday (Jan. 7) the London Secular Federation's annual dinner will take place. The tickets are half-a-crown. This includes a good dinner, good music, and brief speeches by leading Freethinkers, including Messrs. G. J. Holyoake and Charles Watts. Mr. Foote presides, and hopes to see a fine gathering of London Secularists. Tickets should be purchased not later than Jan. 4.

On Sunday last Mr. Charles Watts visited Leicester for the first time since his return from Canada. He lectured afternoon and evening to excellent audiences, the hall being packed at night. Friends had travelled twelve and fifteen miles to attend the lectures. In the afternoon there was a smart

debate, which added considerably to the interest of the gathering. On Monday evening Mr. Watts gave his third lecture, his subject being "Freethought in England and America."

Fund for Settling Mr. Watts in Birmingham.—Per Mr. Millard: T. B. Millard, 2s.; W. Frank, W. H. Millard, and J. Morris, 6d. each; J. Evans, 5s.; W. H. P., 2s. 6d.; A. A. 2s. 6d.; J. C., 1s.; C. W. Pantry, 6d. Per Mr. Kerslake: Mr. Kerslake, £1; T. Styles, 2s. 6d.; H. Taylor, 2s. 6d.; C. Gibbs, 1s. T. Askey, 5s.; L. Kuphal, 5s.; J. Part-ridge, 4s. Per Mr. Bomerman: G. Bomerman, 2s. 6d.; G. Carless, 1s.; T. Ford, 2s. 6d.; C. Braum, 2s.; T. Tramford, 1s.; J. H. Halifax, 1s. Per Mr. Rodaway: G. Rodaway, 1s.; H. Thompson, 6d. Per Mr. Taylor: T. Taylor, 2s. 6d.; J. Carpenter, 1s.

Baron Halkett, the Radical candidate for Chester, promises to vote for the abolition of the Blasphemy Laws. Our Chester friends believe him to be a sincere friend of religious liberty, and almost think he might take charge of a Bill on Mr. Bradlaugh's lines in the House of Commons.

The Newcastle Branch wants to have the next N. S. S. Conference in that city. The local Branches affiliated to the N. E. Federation have definitely decided to invite the gathering. The arrangement would at least be convenient for the Scottish Branches, which we are anxious to see represented. Mr. Foote proposes to go on a lecturing tour through Scotland before the Conference.

Mr. Joseph Brown, the very active secretary of the North Eastern Secular Federation, reports a successful lecturing tour in the district by Miss Ada Campbell. The Federation is arranging for its annual social gathering at the Arcade Assembly Rooms, Newcastle, which promises to be a great success. Tickets can still be had of Mr. Peter Weston, 77 Newgate-street. Adults, 1s. 6d.; children under nine, 1s. Mr. Brown says that the Federation is greatly in want of funds for the propagandist work it has in hand. He acknowledges the following subscriptions:—W., 5s.; Mr. Henderson, 5s.; Chester-le-Street Branch, 10s.; Collection at Newcastle, 14s.; South Shields Branch, 5s.; Hetton-le-Hole Branch, 5s. 7d.; Middlesboro' Branch, 6s.

The Newcastle social gathering mentioned in the foregoing paragraph takes place on January 4. Tea will be on the table at 6 o'clock, but late comers will be served on arrival. Concert at 8, dancing at 10. There will be songs and parlor games for the non-dancers.

The Portsmouth Secularists do not mean to be without a representative on the School Board. Mr. J. Brumage having removed to London, they have selected Mr. R. Skipton to fight the "secular education" battle at the approaching elections. Mr. Skipton is a man of ability and integrity, and we hope he will carry one of the fifteen seats. He will be assisted during the election by Mr. Brumage, who will run down for the purpose.

A new edition (the second), completing ten thousand copies, is just issued of Mr. Foote's exposure of Ananias Hughes's "Converted Atheist" story. Freethinkers should circulate the pamphlet as widely as possible. One gentleman has paid Mr. Forder for a thousand copies of the new edition, to be sent in various directions.

The N. S. S. *Almanack* is selling very well, but a larger edition has been printed this year, and we are anxious to see every copy cleared out, so that the N. S. S. may reap a substantial profit. Those who have not yet purchased will find it an interesting as well as useful sixpennyworth.

Freethinkers in south-west London who wish to spend a jolly evening on Sunday, Dec. 27, should purchase at once a ticket for the Battersea Branch tea, which takes place at 5.30. After the tea there will be a concert and laughable farce, and dancing till a late hour will wind up the evening. All for sixpence. Tickets can be had at 54 Landseer-street; at outdoor lecture on Sunday morning; and at the Battersea Secular Hall. Members' quarterly meeting at 3 o'clock same date.

Karl Blind, the veteran political reformer and anthropologist, has an interesting article in the *National Observer* on the ceremony of bringing in the boar's head at Christmas. He contends that the old Teutonic Yuletide was dedicated to Fro, the Teutonic sun-god, said to ride on a golden bristled boar, and to whom the boar was annually sacrificed.

Mr. Symes reprints in the *Liberator* our article on the Freethought Flag, written at the time of the enlargement of the *Freethinker*.

Addresses were given at the grave of the late Prof. Kuenen by Drs. C. P. Tiele and H. Oort, themselves well known as able rationalist scholars. They spoke to his great learning and high character, and declared there was no need to defend his opinions.

Mr. H. S. Young is hopeful of winning in the Court of Queen's Bench. The case is early on the Crown List. We are constantly asked where subscriptions for his defence should be sent. The treasurer is Dr. C. Drysdale, 23 Sackville-street, London, W.

The Huddersfield Branch has a social party on Christmas Day in the Friendly and Trade Society's Club, No. 5. All local friends are invited. Tickets for dancing and refreshments, one shilling, can be obtained of G. Dobson, 53 Thornton-road.

### MR. HOLYOAKE'S BILL.

MR. G. J. HOLYOAKE'S draft Bill, as he informs us, is only in its first stage. It is not yet accepted by the Liberty of Bequest Committee. We have been communicating with Mr. Holyoake privately, and we hope he will see his way to enlarge the scope of his Bill. As it now stands, it would only legalise bequests for the purpose of "inquiry" into the truth of religious doctrines. In our opinion (and it is fortified by the judgment of an eminent jurist whom Mr. Bradlaugh advised us to consult) there is no need to do anything for "inquiry." It is already protected by Lord Coleridge's declaration, on the occasion of our own trial, that even the fundamentals of Christianity may be called in question, providing it is done in a proper spirit. The Gifford Trust, in Scotland, provides for the freest treatment of theology; the lectures may even be delivered by an Atheist, according to the terms of Lord Gifford's will; and his lordship, it must be remembered, was himself a judge, and able to see how far the law sanctioned this Trust. If "inquiry," then, is already provided for, Mr. Holyoake's draft Bill is superfluous. What is wanted is something more thorough-going. After the Bill of Mr. Courtney Kenny, and especially after the Bill of Charles Bradlaugh, it would be a distinct retrogression to introduce Mr. Holyoake's in its present form. Nor is it easy to see how Freethinkers could work to promote it. The eminent jurist we have consulted, on Mr. Bradlaugh's own recommendation, says it would be entirely useless to the National Secular Society. Now it is from that point of view we are bound to regard all such measures. It would be suicidal for the N. S. S. to labor for a Bill which ignores their shocking grievances, merely in order to give an added sense of security to the rather colorless thinkers who are always "inquiring" without ever finding anything. We earnestly hope, therefore, that Mr. Holyoake will alter his Bill so as to legitimate Bequests for the maintenance of *all* ideas on the subject of religion. Nothing short of this will ever command the support of the Secular party. As for the abstract question of endowments, it may be left to a future generation. No sensible man supposes that voluntary endowments of opinion are likely to be illegalised in the immediate future, and until they are so, Freethinkers claim the same rights as their Christian fellow-citizens.

G. W. FOOTE.

## THE BLESSINGS OF POVERTY.

BY THE REV. CATER TO-THE-RICH  
(H. O. Pentecost, of "Twentieth Century.")

[CONCLUDED.]

I TOLD you that I should be frank with you. I do not, therefore, pretend that Christ did not teach the doctrine of poverty. I do not pretend that the wealth and splendor of the church are not entirely inconsistent with and contrary to the teachings of Christ. I do not pretend that Christ did not plainly say that a rich man could not enter the kingdom of God. But, on the other hand, we see how impracticable these teachings are when applied to the every-day life of the class of persons to which you and I, my brethren, belong; the class to whom the heavenly Father has vouchsafed good birth, intelligence, respectability, and the money-making faculty; the class who represent the good manners, the virtue, and the piety of the community; the better class; the ruling class; the class on whom God has laid responsibility for the good government and benevolent care of those who are born to the lower, the humbler walks in life.

Here, then, is an apparent contradiction between the written word of God, which must be held in reverence on pain of our eternal loss, and the revelation which God makes of his purposes in the daily affairs of men. There is only one way by which this apparent contradiction can be explained. *It is a mystery!* We cannot solve the mystery now, but in that better world, in which all mysteries shall be explained, we shall understand it. "For now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face: now know I in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known" (1 Cor. xiii. 12).

It is a comfort, however, my brethren, to pass on to another application of Christ's doctrine in which there is no mystery. When we think of that portion of the Lord's people whom it has not pleased him to endow as richly as he has endowed us, the doctrine of poverty is blessedly comforting and useful. The great mass of God's dear children are not well born, not intelligent, not gifted with the money-making faculty. It is necessary that there should be hewers of wood and drawers of water in the world. Much heavy and fatiguing labor must be performed in the various busy hives of industry. Menial servants are needed in the households of the rich—cooks, chambermaids, coachmen, and the like. The all-wise creator has met this need of the world by bringing into it vast multitudes of human beings who are physically able to do this work, and intellectually unable to do such work as falls to the lot of the class to which we, my brethren, belong; the higher work of life, the work of teaching, organising, governing. This is an admirable arrangement. Indeed, this plan of dividing society into classes is so wise that it is an evidence of the existence of a Supreme Intelligence, if we needed such evidence. This lower class of persons of whom I am speaking are a very useful, very honorable class. To labor, my brethren, is the one truly honorable exercise of our functions, and to labor with the hands is as respectable as to toil with the brain. The manual laborers are the bone and sinew of the country. Without them their executive skill and capital would be useless. But it necessarily happens that these humble factors in the complex organism of society do not enjoy the luxuries of life that the heavenly Father vouchsafes to those whom he has endowed with higher faculties. It is true that their natures are such that they do not require the comforts and luxuries that are necessary to the happiness of persons of more culture and refinement; persons such as you and me, for example, my brethren; and this crudeness or coarseness of nature is one of the compensations which a kind Providence has provided for them.

But it is not as great a compensation as that which is embodied in the language of our text. As if to ward the root for the extremely useful part they

play in the world, and to make up to them what they do not and cannot enjoy in this life, the good Lord has spoken to them almost as if they were his favorite children, and has given them many and exceedingly precious promises concerning the world to come. And these gracious words of the master are very useful to us in these days, as you will readily understand if you are aware of certain dangerous elements that are now at work in society.

All of you know that certain troublesome agitators, who call themselves Socialists or Anarchists, are abroad. These persons are endeavoring to teach the working people doctrines highly subversive of law and order, and destructive of those principles of religion and patriotism on which society, in its present divinely ordered and admirable arrangement, is founded and subsists. Fortunately the poor people are so faithful to God and those whom God has placed in authority over them, that these dangerous agitators have little influence over them. Nevertheless, their constant iteration and reiteration of their crazy notions of equality, their persistent assertion that poverty is due to some unjust arrangement in society, has a tendency to poison the minds of the toilers with a wicked discontent with the condition in which God has placed them. And for the purpose of counteracting this discontent, which I regret to say appears to be growing, nothing could be more effective than the doctrine of my text. Impracticable as the doctrine of poverty is when applied to the better classes of society, as I have tried to show you, my brethren, it is the bulwark of good government and industrial and social prosperity when applied to that portion of the race who make up the employed class, the servant class. If we can make the poor understand the gracious purposes of God toward them in the world to come, if we can make them understand how trifling the discomforts of this fleeting life are when compared to the "far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory" (2 Cor. iv., 17) that awaits them in a better world, we shall do them the greatest possible service, and at the same time strengthen the great and glorious political institutions for which our land is famous, and render secure the vast wealth invested in enterprises which are rooted and grounded in our present admirable laws.

If good government is to last, if business is to remain secure, if those vast fortunes, so useful to the church and so serviceable in carrying on the work of God, are to be conserved and increased, the working people must be kept contented with their lot, obedient to the State, and submissive to the will of God; and I know of no better way to keep the working people quiet, submissive, and dutiful, as it becomes them to be, than to thoroughly instruct them in the doctrine embodied in our text, "Blessed are ye poor, for yours is the kingdom of God."

A census taken of the church attendance at seventy-three parishes in the diocese of St. Asaph shows that the worshippers numbered less than one-tenth of the population. The Church of England has no more claim to be representative of the Welsh people than of the Irish.

A religious census has been taken at Accrington with the following result:—Church of England attendants, 2,005; United Nonconformists, 3,984; Roman Catholics, 574. The population is 38,000, so there are over 30,000 who attend no place of worship.

According to the *Freethinker's Magazine* there is a Theological Institution at Meadville, U.S.A., which is practically a school of Freethought. No doctrinal test is made a condition of enjoying the opportunities of instruction in that school. Women as well as men are admitted. Freedom of thought and investigation are held sacred, and, so far as the expression of honest opinions is concerned, there is perfect liberty. Unlike all other theological schools, no prayer meetings are held there. Instead of weekly prayer meetings, conferences are held, the students conducting them in turn. Publications of various opinions are tolerated in the reading room.

## BOOK CHAT.

Mr. A. H. Bullen has earned the thanks of all lovers of our old literature. His fine editions of Marlowe, Marston, and Middleton—dramatists of the great Elizabethan age—cannot be praised too highly. His edition of Thomas Campion revealed a forgotten glory of English song, and furnished Professor Palgrave with some beautiful additions to the new issue of his "Golden Treasury" of English Lyrics.

Mr. Bullen has now turned publisher in concert with Mr. Lawrence. Publishing is a risky business, but we wish success to the firm of "Lawrence and Bullen." They are bringing out some delightful books—well edited, well printed, and well bound—grateful to the eye as well as the mind. One of these books is very appropriate to the season. *Lyrics from the Song Books of the Elizabethan Age* is edited by Mr. Bullen, and it would be hard to find a daintier gift-book for any one who appreciates song in its tenderest pathos and noblest rapture.

In concluding his modest Preface, Mr. Bullen points out that song-writing is now almost a lost art. "Contrast the poor, thin, wretched stuff that one hears in drawing-rooms to-day," he says, "with the rich full-throated songs of Campion and Dowland. O what a fall is there, my countrymen! In Elizabethan times music was 'married to immortal verse.' Let us hope that the present separation will not always continue." Let us hope so, indeed.

When one reflects that these hundreds of beautiful lyrics are only a selection from the mere Song Books of one generation, without borrowing a line from the famous poets and dramatists, we feel more than ever the glory of "the spacious times of great Elizabeth." It was indeed an age of god-like men. The very third and fourth rate writers were touched with the holy fire. They moved with a grand air and used a noble style, as though they all belonged to the family of which Shakespeare was the patriarch.

To select from this volume is too difficult. We open it at random as we write, and take the shortest song on the page. It is far from being the most poetical specimen, and the author, John Wilbye, it is a thousand to one the reader never heard of before. But what grace, ease, and dexterity the rogue has! What sly humor, with what true philosophy!

Love not me for comely grace,  
For my pleasing eye or face,  
Nor for any outward part;  
No, nor for a constant heart!  
For these may fail or turn to ill:  
So thou and I shall sever.  
Keep therefore a true woman's eye,  
And love me still, but know not why!  
So hast thou the same reason still  
To doat upon me ever.

Want of space forbids us to say more than this. You who love song, get Mr. Bullen's *Lyrics*; and if you don't prize the volume beyond gold "there's witchcraft in't."

Lovers of good literature will never cast aside unread the book catalogues issued by Mr. Bertram Dobell, 54 Charing-cross-road, W.C., the publisher of James Thomson's works. They always contain many choice items. The number before us, dated 1892, has, for instance, first editions of Shelley, Swinburne, Morris, Thomas Taylor the Platonist, and many other books, which induce the reflection that a well-filled purse ought to accompany choice taste in literature.

Mr. T. B. Smart, of 5 Mount View-road, Crouch Hill, has completed, and will publish, a bibliography of Matthew Arnold.

Messrs. Longmans issue a new edition of Lecky's *History of England in the Eighteenth Century* in twelve six shilling volumes.

No. 2 of the Humanitarian League's publications is entitled *Royal Sport*, and gives some facts concerning the Queen's buckhounds by the Rev. J. Stratton. If the facts are as stated, viz., that the poor deer hunted by the royal

hounds from Windsor Park are really tame ones that take shelter in any cottage that offers protection, it is time that the attention of her Majesty's Master of the Buckhounds was called to the existence of a Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals.

Among the publications of Messrs. Longmans is a one-volume novel by E. F. Wright, entitled *Save Me From My Friends*. It describes the career of a man whose strength of character is destroyed and his whole life ruined by his absorption in Theosophy. It is emphatically a novel with a moral.

## CHRISTIAN CALUMNIES.

A great religious "revival," under the lead of one Rev. Mr. Mills was lately in progress in our neighboring city of Rockford. As a specimen of influences employed to induce sinners to flee from the wrath to come, Mr. Mills is reported in the *Register-Gazette* of the 31st ult. to have used the following language:

"Once a society of Liberals started a town in the West. The people bound themselves by vote never to mention the name of God, except in the spirit of blasphemy. The consequence was that the sons grew up to be cut-throats and the girls without virtue. They had to send for a missionary finally, and established a church of God there. Not until then were matters righted and the people as they should be."

It is evident that the stale falsehood in regard to Liberal, Mo., was the base for this shameful slander. To persons of sense it is needless to say there is not one word of truth in the entire story. Instead of the town being started by a society of Liberals, it was projected, and the town site was owned, and was sold in lots by our friend, G. H. Walsler, Esq., a well-known Spiritualist. A vote to never mention the name of God, except in blasphemy, is too silly to require denial. A professional revivalist could only invent such a story. "The sons cut-throats, and the girls without virtue," is one of those vile charges which would justify the

Putting in every honest hand a whip,  
To lash the rascals naked through the world.

And then the climax: "They had to send for a missionary and establish a church of God there."

Such is the drivel of the professional revivalist, and such the methods of the clergy to induce the ignorant to become Christians.—*Progressive Thinker*.

## OBITUARY.

The late Peter Alfred Taylor, who died at Brighton, on Sunday, Dec. 20, was well known as a prominent Radical reformer, who sat for many years as M.P. for Leicester. He was not only a political but a personal friend of Mr. Bradlaugh, and was an advanced man in religion as well as in politics. He was a strong Individualist and advocate of woman's rights, but, like his friend John Bright, looked with some apprehension to Home Rule being synonymous with the rule of Rome. Mr. P. A. Taylor was a man of strong, earnest convictions, who won the respect of all who knew him, and there are many among our readers who will regret that a sterling friend of humanity has departed.

DIED at Cincinnati, Dec. 4, Thomas Winter, aged 90, having been born at Bath, England, June 20, 1801. He had resided at Cincinnati half a century, and was well known as one of the oldest living materialists. He contributed to various Freethought papers, and was active with P. Pillsbury, Lucy Colman, and others in the cause of the abolition of the slave trade. He was by his own request cremated.

A COURTEOUS PARSON.—The funeral of our young friend W. J. Bowden took place on the 19th inst. at Kensal Green Cemetery. The inclemency of the weather prevented a large gathering, and the Nonconformist chaplain (Rev. Mr. Davis) surprised everyone by lighting and warming the chapel and placing it at the disposal of the mourners. Mr. F. Haslam read Austin Holyoake's impressive service in the building, concluding with a few words at the graveside. Mr. Davis was heartily thanked for his considerate conduct, and in reply stated, "Whatever our differences, we have no right to persecute one another."—HARRY COURTNEY, West London Branch.

## THE PARACLETE COMPLAINETH.

Topmost Pigeon House, Columbian Aviary, Paradise.

DEAR SIR,—My co-partners, J. C. and J. Hova, having availed themselves of your columns to complain of their treatment by their followers, perhaps you will kindly also permit me to humbly indulge in a word or two. For, sir, I find that unless I put myself in evidence, I am in danger of being forgotten. I, too, can unfold a tale of woe. I am always kept in the background. My partners get most of the prayers, and nearly all the praises; I am spoken of profanely as the nebulous member of the Trinity. Yet look, sir, at what I have to do. On me depends all the reputation of the firm. Poor old J. Hova is getting sadly infirm, and is indeed little better than a sleeping partner. True, he sometimes wakes up and interrupts the perennial chorus of "Holy, holy, holy," with his "Hi tiddly hi ti, hi ti hi"; but, as Carlyle says, "he does nothing." His boy is more active, going from planet to planet to get crucified. But he need not complain; he is used to it. But look what I have to do! Every time a bishop ordains a minister I have to enter in and take possession of the oft-times rotting carcass. Every sky-pilot who offers up his prayers has to be inspired by me. Just fancy having to inspire one fool to pray for rain and another to pray for fine weather, and all the prayers thus offered by myself to myself. And then, sir, though I've been declared consubstantial, and equally indivisible and incomprehensible, with my partners, I get treated as though I was only a sort of gas or airy influence, while the other two take all the honor and glory. Even Mary, unmindful of the days when she found my name so useful, says, "What is the use of a ghost?" Now, sir, I wish you to know this ghost can materialise, as he did in fire at Pentecost. Just remember that blasphemy against the others may be passed over, but blasphemy against myself hath never forgiveness.—Yours,  
THE COMFORTER.

## PRIESTS AND SUNDAY.

Fabrienne concludes at last that her love for Martial is wicked as it gives her delight and takes her attention away from her devotions.—*Bill Nye.*

The clergy reason analogously in relation to the opening of the World's Fair on Sunday. They say to each other: "The people will enjoy themselves very much on Sunday if the Fair is open that day. And if they go there they cannot attend church services at the same time, and they will care less about taking part in devotions at other hours of the day, after they discover how well they can be instructed and amused at the Fair every Sunday. The fair must not be open on the Sabbath. It will be money out of our pockets if it is." This is what they say to each other in trade's union confidence; what they say to the public sounds quite differently: "We must not, as a nation, desecrate the Sabbath. It will call down God's judgments upon us. And if you open the Exposition on Sunday the rich men will soon have the laborers working seven days in the week." Which are the true reasons why the clerics want the Fair kept closed on "preacher's day"?—*Liberty.*

## AN AGNOSTIC'S PRAYER.

Our Father, or our Mother, or it may be no relation at all but an impersonal nondescript essence, we, thine alleged children, wonder if we ought to thank thee for all the misery, crime, and wretchedness with which thou, perhaps, but perhaps a hard fate superior to thee, hast plentifully besprinkled the world. We wonder what good it could do thee, or it, to offer praise for the earthquakes, tempests, floods, fires, plagues, and pestilences with which mankind has ever been afflicted. Shall we thank thee, O God, for our ignorance, stupidity, and degradation; for our churches, chapels, prisons, and lunatic asylums; for the Salvation Army, Mr. Spurgeon, and all others of defective intellect? Wilt thou give us faith, O God, to preserve us from blank atheism and infidelity, that our respectability may shine before men? Help thou our unbelief. Make us to see the virtue of thy name, though it be but a voice and nothing more. Open thou the gullet of our understanding that we may swallow any nonsense concerning thee. Permit us to at any rate derive whatever advantages may accrue from reverencing thee, whether we believe in thee or not. And unto thee, and any associates thou mayest possibly have in thy herculean task of doing nothing from eternity to eternity, we will, if thou particularly wishest, ascribe honor and glory, world without end, Amen.

## BUDDHISM SUPERIOR TO CATHOLICISM.

The superiority of the Buddhist religion, or at least its emblems, over Catholicism has been demonstrated to our satisfaction. Three years ago Mr. George Newton brought to this office a Roman Catholic "miracle," in the shape of a flat silver woman two inches long, presented to the Virgin Mary by a man whose wife had recovered in response to prayer to the Virgin. A priest, of course, took charge of the "milagro," who sold it to Mr. Newton, with other trinkets, as old silver for the melting-pot. It now hangs on the editorial desk, useless except as a reminder of the superstitious ignorance of Roman Catholics. But a "miracle" came in the other day from a Buddhist temple in Kilani, Ceylon, of some utility. Like the other, it was a religious offering, in this case made to Buddha, and, like the other, taken care of by a priest. Mr. F. C. Dean, who has just returned from a trip around the world, coaxed it from the priest by a present of cash. It is made of five "sacred" metals (principally brass), is nearly six inches high, represents a man "affirming," has a symbol of the old serpent in the top of his head, is evidently a devout and thankful idol, and can be used as a paper-weight or to strike matches on, and would be a handy thing to throw at the cat. So if we were to choose either religion, it would be Buddhism, because of its comparatively greater usefulness.—*Truthseeker.*

## RELIGIOUSLY POLITE.

The church was crowded, and several ladies were standing in the aisle. "I am a good deal older than I look, miss," observed a somewhat fleshy man in one of the seats, addressing a young woman standing near him, "or I would offer you this seat." She bridled a little, and replied that it was not of any consequence. "I beg your pardon, miss," he insisted, "but I think it is. No man under ordinary circumstances should keep his seat and permit a lady to stand. You would hardly think," he added, with engaging frankness, "that I am in my fifty-fifth year. Yet such is the fact. I am often taken to be about thirty or thirty-five. I am old enough, I presume, to be your grandfather. Under these circumstances, I am sure you will pardon the seeming impoliteness—." "I am not asking you for your seat, sir," said the young woman, with some irritation. The conversation had begun to attract the attention of everybody in that part of the church. "I know it, miss," he responded, blandly. "But I should take pleasure, as I said, in offering it to you if I were not beginning to feel that age is creeping on. When a man is old enough to be the grandfather of a young woman whom he sees standing up, and is so unfortunately handicapped by his youthful appearance that he seems to be guilty of unpardonable rudeness in not offering her the seat he is occupying, it is due to himself that he should explain—." "I am not asking you for any explanation, sir," she retorted, sharply. "I know it, miss," he rejoined, with unruffled suavity, "but I feel that I cannot, in justice to myself, omit to offer one. When a man is old enough—." But she had flitted angrily to the farther end of the church.

## JEWS AND CHRISTIANS.

It seems to have escaped the attention of writers that at the very time during the Middle Ages when the Jews were being most bitterly persecuted for offering children at the Passover, it was really a common thing among Christians to sacrifice children, maids, or grown-up people, by burying them alive under the foundations of castles, etc., to ensure their stability—a ghastly sacrifice, which in after times took the form of walling-up a cock, and finally an egg. But from an impartial and common-sense standpoint, there could be no difference between the sacrifice of a child by a Cabalist and the torturing and burning witches and heretics by ecclesiastics—unless, indeed, that the latter was the wicked of the two, since the babes were simply promptly killed, while the inquisitors put their victims to death with every refinement of mental and physical torture. Both Cabalist and priest were simply engaged in different forms of one and the same fetish work, which had been handed down from the days of witchcraft. Nor did Calvin, when he burnt Servetus, differ in anything from a Vodoo sacrificing "a goat without horns."—*C. G. Leland, "Gipsy Sorcery,"* pp. 240-241.

A few days since an abandoned woman, in the human form, entered Westminster Abbey under the pretext of seeing the show, and absolutely passed off a bad sixpence upon one of the vergers.

## PROFANE JOKES.

Converted Sal: "'Ave yer tried 'eaping coals of fire on 'is 'ead?" Meg: "No; I can't exactly say as 'ow I 'ave; but I've tried bilin' water often."

They were doing a little love-making between acts. Just as the curtain went up he called her his angel. "Say," said a man in the next seat back, "couldn't you get your angel to wear her wings somewhere besides on her hat?"

A colored preacher was called upon to attend the funeral of one of his chief members, who had come to his death by falling from a tree in which his neighbor's fowls roosted. After recounting the faithful life the good man had lived, the preacher said: "Now, bredren, I cums to de del'cate part ob de subjec.' De good man du clim' de tree in de nite, an' dah wuz de fowls ob anudah man up dah. De rain it 'scended to freeze, an' de sleet cum, an' de foot slipt, an' down 'e went. Now, bredren, I can only say dat if he repented on de fall, he went straight to heb'n. But I tells you, bredren, he had monstrous little time."

During the bad days of Cardinal Mazarin—for he was a wicked and an oppressive minister—a peasant was riding, somewhere in France, upon a lean and half-starved mule that stumbled at almost every other step; and at every false step the poor beast made, the peasant cried out, "Curse Cardinal Mazarine—oh, curse Cardinal Mazarin!" "Why, my good friend," cried some astonished passengers, "why do you curse the cardinal? What possible connexion is there between the stumbling of your mule and the minister?" "Why," replied the poor fellow, "I curse the cardinal because he is the only cause of my mule stumbling. Look you here, sir. The cardinal taxes barley; barley is my beast's provender; the barley tax makes me unable to feed my mule properly; want of good food causes weakness; and weakness is productive of stumbling, and so, twenty thousand curses on the cardinal!"

## SUNDAY MEETINGS.

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

### LONDON.

Battersea Secular Hall (back of Battersea Park Station): 3, quarterly meeting; 5.30, tea and entertainment. Wednesday, at 7.30, dramatic class.

Bethnal Green—Libra Hall, 78 Libra-road, Roman-road: 11.30, W. Lyons will lecture; 7.30, C. Cohen, "The Birth and Development of Christianity"; music will precede the lectures Monday at 8.30, social meeting.

Camberwell—61 New Church-road, S.E.: 11.30, debating class, Mr. Fawcus, "Strikes"; 7.30, Miss Eliza Hammond Hills, "The Achilles of our Age."

Finsbury Park—Rock-street Hall, 1 Rock-street, Blackstock-road: 11.30, James Rowney will lecture; 7, Mrs. Thornton Smith will lecture. Admission free. Saturday, at 8, free social concert.

Hall of Science, 142 Old-street, E.C.: 6.45, music; 7.15, G. W. Foote, "A Christmas Sermon on the Son of God."

Lambeth—New Nelson Hall, Lower Marsh: 7.30, W. Heaford, "Secularism Superior to Christianity."

Milton Hall, Hawley-crescent, Kentish Town-road, N.W.: 7, orchestral band; 7.30, Touzeau Parris, "Life, Death, and Immortality."

West Ham—Secular Hall, 121 Broadway, Plaistow: 7, S. H. Alison, "Soul, Spirit, Ghost." Thursday, at 8, concert and dance.

West London—Clarendon Coffee Palace, Clarendon-road (close to Latimer-road Station): Friday (Jan. 1), at 8.30, Mr. Saint, "Freedom and Marriage."

Westminster—Liberal and Radical Club, Chapter-street: 7, Stanley Jones, "Man and his Relations."

### OPEN-AIR PROPAGANDA.

Battersea Park-gates: 11.15, F. Ha' m, "Bible Anecdotes."

Hyde Park (near Marble Arch): 11.30, W. Norrish will lecture.

### COUNTRY.

Birmingham—Baskerville Hall, Crescent, Cambridge-street: 7, Charles Watts, "The Origin of Christmas."

Crook—35 Gladstone-terrace, Sunnyside, Tow Law: 6.30, business meeting.

Glasgow—Ex-Mission Hall, 110 Brunswick-street: 12, debating class; 6.30, J. B. Glasier, "Equality: Social and Physical."

Hull—Cobden Hall, School-street, Waltham-street: 6.30, G. E. Conrad Naewiger, "Why am I a Socialist?"

Leicester—Secular Hall, Hummerstone Gate: 6.30, musical and literary evening.

Liverpool—Camden Hall, Camden-street: Sam Standing, 11 "Man's Search for God"; 3, "Secularism: Past and Present"; 7, "Sunday Schools: their Evil Influence." Tontine Society at 11 a.m. (commences a new year).

Newcastle-on-Tyne—Eldon Hall, 2 Clayton-street: 3, half-yearly meeting of members; 7, J. Brown, "The Hebrew Cosmogony v. Modern Science."

Nottingham—Secular Hall, Beck-street: 7, J. B. Coppock, F.C.S., "The Re-incarnation of Science."

Plymouth—100 Union-street: 7, a Member, "Apocryphal Gospels and the Babe of Bethlehem."

Sheffield—Hall of Science, Rockingham-street: 7, music, etc. New Year's Day, soiree and ball.

South Shields—Capt. Duncan's Navigation School, King-street: 3, W. Dawson, "The Law of Primogeniture and Entail, and its Effect upon Society"; 7, business meeting. New Year's Day, annual gathering—tea, concert, and dance.

## LECTURERS' ENGAGEMENTS.

TOUZEAU PARRIS, 28 Rivercourt-road, Hammersmith, London, W.—Dec. 27, Milton Hall. Jan. 7, Finsbury Park.

ARTHUR B. MOSS, 44 Credon-road, Rotherhithe, London, S.E.—Dec. 27, Deptford. Jan. 3, 10, 17, 24, Deptford; 31, Camberwell. Feb. 7 and 14, Deptford; 21, Reading; 28, Deptford.

C. J. HUNT, 48 Fordingley-road, St. Peter's Park, London, W.—Jan. 3, Lambeth; 10, Bethnal Green; 17, morning and evening, Battersea; 24, Lambeth; 31, morning and evening, Finsbury Park. Feb. 7, Lambeth; 21, Westminster. March 6, Southampton; 20, Westminster.

H. SNELL, 6 Monk-street, Woolwich.—Jan. 3, evening, Battersea; 10, evening, Finsbury Park; 14, Hall of Science; 17, Ball's Pond; 24, evening, Camberwell; 31, evening, Lambeth. Feb. 7, evening, Westminster; 21, evening, Camberwell. March 6, evening, Westminster; 20, evening, Camberwell. April 3, Southampton.

C. COHEN, 154 Cannon-street-road, Commercial-road, E.—Dec. 27, Libra Hall.

STANLEY JONES, 28 Stonecutter-street, London, E.C.—Dec. 27, evening, Westminster. Jan. 10, morning and evening, Battersea; 24, Ball's Pond. Feb. 21, Portsmouth.

## ANOTHER LOT OF BARGAINS

- 40 Trousers Lengths Solid Worsteds, at 4s. each.
- 60 " " Tweeds and Worsteds, at 5s. each.
- 40 " " " " " 6s. "
- 18 " " " " " 7s. "
- 30 " " Wests and Worsteds " 8s. "
- 60 Suit Lengths Tweed and Serge, at 12s. each.
- 40 " " " " " 18s. "
- 20 " " Fcy Worsteds " 15s. "
- 30 " " Black and Blue Worsteds, at 18s. each.
- 20 " " " " " 14s. "
- 50 Overcoat Lengths in Beaver, Melton, Worsted, Vicuna, and Nap Cloths, at 15s. each.
- 500 yds of Remnants in Black and Blue Worsteds, Serges, Vicunas, in all lengths, suitable for Ladies Capes, Jackets, Mantles, or Boys' Suits. 3s. 6d. per yd. 58 inches wide.
- 40 yds Blue Nap Cloth, suitable for Ladies' Jackets. 2s. 6d. per yd. 50 inches wide.

### DRESS MATERIALS.

- 1,000 yds Cloth Dress Material, at 1s. 1d. per yd; 50 inches wide. In Black, Navy, Brown, Myrtle, Cardinal, Fawn, or Grey.
- 100 yds Dark Fcy Striped Cloth, at 9½d. per yd; 48 inches wide.
- 100 yds Navy Blue Serge (all wool), at 1s. per yd; 40in. wide.
- 100 yds Curl Cheviot (all wool), at 1s. per yd; 42 inches wide.
- 80 yds Flako Tweed, at 1s. 1d. per yd; 40 inches wide.
- 200 yds Black Cashmere, at 8d. per yd; 44 inches wide.
- 50 yds Peacock Blue Cashmere, at 8d. per yd; 44 inches wide.

I am anxious to clear all the above out before Stock-taking at the end of December. All the readers of this journal who are open to buy either cloths or dress materials, will never have a better opportunity than this one of getting some really cheap goods. During the last fourteen days I have received forty-two orders from readers of the *Freethinker* for £1 parcels of the above; although I offered to return money in full for all goods not approved, I have not received either a complaint or a single parcel back; but, on the contrary, I have received quite a number of letters expressing the greatest satisfaction with the value of the goods.

SATISFACTION GUARANTEED.

**J. W. GOTT,**  
36 VILLIERS STREET, BRADFORD.

### HOW TO HELP US.

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

# NATIONAL SECULAR HALL SOCIETY (LIMITED).

(Incorporated under 39 and 40 Vic., cap. 45, Act 1876.)

Chairman:

G. W. FOOTE, 14 Clerkenwell-green, London, E.C.

Directors:

GEORGE ANDERSON, 35A Great George-street, Westminster, S.W.

W. COOPER, 112 Canonbury-road, N.

G. J. HOLYOAKE, Eastern Lodge, Brighton.

W. H. REYNOLDS, Camplin House, New Cross, S.E.

R. O. SMITH, 81 Ridge-road, Hornsey, N.

T. P. SMITH, 275 City-road, E.C.

G. STANDRING, 7 and 9 Finsbury-street, E.C.

Hon. Secretary:

R. FORDER, 28 Stonecutter-street, E.C.

Registered Office:

HALL OF SCIENCE, 142 Old-street, London, E.C.

The immediate objects of the Society are (1) to acquire the lease, premises, fixtures, and furniture of the London Hall of Science, where Charles Bradlaugh for twenty-two years lectured and carried on the organisation of the Secular party; and (2) to transform the same into a first-class Secular Hall and Institute, which may be the headquarters of the Free-thought movement in England.

The lease is for 86 years, on condition that £2,500 is expended on re-building the front portion of the premises within ten years.

The plot of ground on which the front premises stand is 30 feet by 54 feet. Upon this a handsome Institute of three or four storeys could be erected, in addition to a commodious basement.

The Hall at the rear covers a larger plot of ground. It seats 1,000 people, and has held 1,700. A moderate outlay would put it in thorough repair and give it a more handsome appearance.

The Society's capital consists of its members' shares, which are £1 each, payable 2s. 6d. on application and 2s. 6d. on allotment, and in subsequent calls of 2s. 6d. as may be found necessary. Two months' notice of such calls must be given. Any member can at any time pay up his shares in full.

Freethinkers in all parts of the world are earnestly invited to become members of this Society. The poorest may take one share, the wealthier any number up to two hundred. The Chairman is President of the National Secular Society, the Honorary Secretary is also Secretary of the N. S. S., and of the seven directors five are N. S. S. vice-presidents, the other two being members.

It should be added that the property to be acquired is a valuable one, situated centrally in an improving thoroughfare, and that there is a good prospect, under proper management, of realising a fair dividend for the shareholders.

## INGERSOLL, ROBERT G.

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. Conder 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 2
The Great Mistake ...	0 1
Live Topics ...	0 1
Myth and Miracle ...	0 1
Real Blasphemy ...	0 1
Repairing the Idols ...	0 1

# Freethought Works.

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" ...	1 0
<i>Bound in cloth</i> ...	1 6
Is Socialism Sound? Four Nights' Public Debate with Annie Besant ...	1 0
<i>Superior Edition, in cloth</i> ...	2 0
Christianity and Secularism. Four Night's Public Debate with the Rev. Dr. James McCann... ..	1 0
<i>Superior Edition, in cloth</i> ...	1 6
Darwin on God ...	0 6
<i>Superior Edition, in cloth</i> ...	1 0
Reminiscences of Charles Bradlaugh ...	0 6
Infidel Death-Beds. Second Edition, much enlarged	0 8
<i>Superior Edition, on superfine paper, bound in cloth</i> ...	1 3
Letters to the Clergy. <i>First Series</i> . 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 <i>Lux Mundi</i> ...	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 Abel, 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. <i>First Series</i> , 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. <i>One Penny each</i>	
Bible Heroes. <i>Second Series</i> , 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. <i>One Penny each singly.</i>	
<i>The Complete Work, bound in cloth</i> ...	2 0
<b>NEWMAN, CHARLES ROBERT</b> (Atheist Brother of Cardinal Newman.)	
Essays in Rationalism. With Preface by George Jacob Holyoake and Biographical Sketch by J. M. Wheeler	1 6
<b>PAINE, THOMAS</b>	
The Age of Reason. New edition, with Preface by G. W. FOOTE ...	1 0
Miscellaneous Theological Works... ..	1 0
<i>Complete Theological Works, bound in cloth</i> ...	2 6
Rights of Man. With a Political Biography by J. M. Wheeler. Paper covers ...	1 0
<i>Bound in cloth</i> ...	2 0
<b>SHELLEY</b>	
A Refutation of Deism. In a Dialogue. With an Introduction by G. W. Foote ...	0 4

# THE NATIONAL SECULAR SOCIETY'S ALMANACK FOR 1892.

Price 6d.

Price 6d.

EDITED BY G. W. FOOTE AND J. M. WHEELER.

## CONTENTS:

Stamp; and Telegrams, etc. The Cabinet Calendar  
Secular Progress, by G. W. Foote  
The Outside Mind, by G. J. Holyoake  
A Christian Saint and a Freethought Martyr  
by J. M. Wheeler  
Charles Dickens a Secular Reformer, by  
Charles Watts

The Troubles of God, by J. M. Robertson  
Measures not Men, by Touzeau Parris  
How to "get at" the Public, by G. Standing  
By the Right, Quick March! by S. Standing  
Atheist or Agnostic? by W. P. Ball  
The Last of Hell, by Arthur B. Moss  
My Testimony, by William Heaford  
The Right to Affirm, by Charles Bradlaugh

Principles and Objects of National Secular  
Society  
List of Officers and Members of the Council  
List of Branches and Full Particulars  
Freethought Lecturers  
Secular Burial  
Foreign Freethought Societies  
American and Australian Societies, etc., etc

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

## 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.

## WORKS BY CHARLES WATTS.

SECULARISM: DESTRUCTIVE AND CONSTRUCTIVE—  
24 pp., 3d.

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 B. 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., 2d.

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." 6d.

ATHEISM AND THE HORRORS OF THE FRENCH  
Revolution. 24 pp., 3d.

CHRISTIANITY: DEFECTIVE AND UNNECESSARY.  
By Kate Eunice Watts. 24 pp., 3d.

CONTENTS.—1. Why is Christianity Believed? 2.  
"Our Father which art in Heaven." 3. The Fall and  
the Atonement. 4. The Basis and Incentive of  
Orthodox Christianity. 5. Christianity Not a Necessity  
to Mankind.

London:

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

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

Recommended in "Law of Population," p. 7, 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. Pullen's Powder, 1s. 2d.  
Quinine Compound, 1s. 2d. All other Malthusian  
Appliances. All prices post free. "Law of Population"  
and "Wife's Handbook," 73d. each, post free.  
—W. J. Rendell (J. Pullen, successor), 15 Chadwell  
Street, Clerkenwell, E.C. Near the "Angel."

### 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.

UGHT WOMEN TO BE PUNISHED for having  
too many children? 3d. post free. Malthusian  
Catalogues 1d. Kingfisher, Leeds.

## 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 Sleepless-  
ness; 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 Eating; 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, Sabaceous  
Tumors or Wens, Hay Fever, Winter Cough, Chil-  
blains, 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.]

STANTON, the People's Dentist, 335 Strand (oppo-  
site 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 15s. stopping 2s. 6d., extraction 1s., painless by  
gas, 5s.

### THE ESSENCE [1s.] OF RELIGION

GOD THE IMAGE OF MAN  
MAN'S DEPENDENCE UPON NATURE  
THE LAST AND ONLY SOURCE OF  
RELIGION.

By LUDWIG FEUERBACH.

"No one has demonstrated and explained  
the purely human origin of the idea of God  
better than Ludwig Feuerbach."—*Buchner*.  
"I confess that to Feuerbach I owe a  
debt of inestimable gratitude. Feeling  
about in uncertainty for the ground, and  
finding everywhere shifting sands, Feuer-  
bach cast a sudden blaze in the darkness  
and disclosed to me the way."—*Rev. S.*  
*Baring-Gould*.

## GEO. STANDING'S PUBLICATIONS.

The People's History of the English Aristocracy. By  
Geo Standing. 170 pages, 1s.

Court Flunkys: their "Work" and Wages. By  
G. S. 1d.

Life of the late C. Bradlaugh, M.P., with portrait  
and autograph. 16 pp., 1d.

Life of Col. Ingersoll, with portrait and autograph.  
16 pp., 1d.

Interview with Ingersoll. 16 pp., 1d.

Voltaire's Important Examination of the Holy Scrip-  
tures. 4d.

Early Marriage and Late Parentage. By Oxoniensis.  
24 pp. in wrapper, 2d.

Life and Writings of T. R. Malthus. By Dr. C. R.  
Drysdale. 1s.

Vegetarian Fallacies. By Dr. C. R. Drysdale. 2d.

The Length of Life of Total Abstinents and Moderate  
Drinkers Compared. By Dr. Drysdale. 2nd ed. 2d.

Public Debate on Legal Eight Hours' Question,  
between G. Bernard Shaw and G. W. Foote. 6d.

Paine Glorified. By Col Ingersoll. 32pp., 1d.

R. FORDEE, 28 Stonecutter Street, London, 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.

OUR  
SPECIAL ILLUSTRATED LIST

Should be in the hands of every Married  
Couple in the kingdom, wishing to regulate  
the number of their family according to  
their means, as it contains full particulars  
of all Preventive Requisites recommended  
by Dr. H. A. ALLBUTT and others; and  
valuable information on matters of import-  
ance necessary to be known by Married  
Women.

A copy will be sent, under cover, on receipt  
of stamp, to any part of the United Kingdom,  
and to foreign parts on receipt of letter  
postage.

Address—E. LAMBERT & SON, M.M.L.,

(DOMESTIC & HYGIENIC DEPT.)  
DALSTON, LONDON, N.E.

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

## BLAINES AROMATIC CIGARETTES

CONTAIN

## NO TOBACCO.

They are Soothing, Antiseptic, Fragrant. Sample  
box, containing 12, post free for six stamps, from

R. McDOUGALL, Scotch Confectioner,  
211 PENTONVILLE RD., KING'S CROSS.

J. W. GOTT, 36 Villiers Street, Brad-

ford, 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.]

PARTNER WANTED with about £100; half share;  
manufacturing business; good references and  
full explanation. E. and J., 9 Hill-street, Tunbridge  
Wells.

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