

The Free Thinker

Edited by G. W. FOOTE.]

[Sub-Editor, J. M. WHEELER.

Vol. XII.—No. 33.]

SUNDAY, AUGUST 14, 1892.

[PRICE ONE PENNY.

SHELLEY'S ATHEISM.

CHARLES DARWIN, the Newton of biology, was an Agnostic—which is only a respectable synonym for an Atheist. The more he looked for God the less he could find him. Yet the corpse of this great "infidel" lies in Westminster Abbey. We need not wonder, therefore, that Christians and even parsons are on the Shelley Centenary committee, or that Mr. Edmund Gosse was chosen to officiate as high pontiff at the Horsham celebration. Mr. Gosse is a young man with a promising past—to borrow a witticism from Heine. In the old *Examiner* days he hung about the army of revolt. Since then he has become a bit of a Philistine, though he still affects a superior air, and retains a pretty way of turning a sentence. The selection of such a man to pronounce the eulogy on Shelley was in keeping with the whole proceedings at Horsham, where everybody was lauding a "bogus Shelley," as Mr. Shaw remarked at the Hall of Science celebration.

Mr. Gosse was good enough to tell the Horsham celebrants that "it was not the poet who was attacked" in Shelley's case, but "the revolutionist, the enemy of kings and priests, the extravagant and paradoxical humanitarian." Mr. Gosse generously called this an "intelligent aversion," and in another sense than his it undoubtedly was so. The classes, interests, and abuses that were threatened by Shelley's principles, acted with the intelligence of self-preservation. They gave him an ill name and would gladly have hung him. Yes, it was, beyond all doubt, an "intelligent aversion." Byron only dallied with the false and foolish beliefs of his age, but Shelley meant mischief. This accounts for the hatred shown towards him by orthodoxy and privilege.

Mr. Gosse himself appears to have an "intelligent aversion" to Shelley's principles. He professes a great admiration for Shelley's poetry; but he regards it as a sort of beautiful landscape, which has no other purpose than gratifying the æsthetic taste of the spectator. For the poet's teaching he feels or affects a lofty contempt. Shelley the singer was a marvel of delicacy and power; but Shelley the thinker was at best a callow enthusiast. Had he lived as long as Mr. Gosse, and moved in the same dignified society, he would have acquired an "intelligent aversion" to the indiscretions of his youthful passion for reforming the world; but fate decided otherwise, and he is unfortunate enough to be the subject of Mr. Gosse's admonitions.

Shelley lived like a Spartan; a hunk of bread and a jug of water, dashed perhaps with milk, served him as a dinner. His income was spent on the poor, on struggling men of genius, and on necessitous friends. Now as the world goes this is simply asinine; and Mr. Gosse plays to the Philistine gallery by sneering at Shelley's vegetarianism, and playfully describing him as an "eater of buns and raisins." It was also

lamented by Mr. Gosse that Shelley, as a "hater of kings," had an attraction for "revolutionists," a set of persons with whom Mr. Gosse would have no sort of dealings except through the policeman. "Social anarchists," likewise, gathered "around the husband of Godwin's daughter"—a pregnant denunciation, though it leaves us in doubt whether Shelley, Godwin, or Mary was the anarch, or all three of them together; while the "husband" seems to imply that getting married was one of the gravest of Shelley's offences. But the worst of all is to come: "Those to whom the restraints of religion were hateful marshalled themselves under the banner of the youth who had rashly styled himself as an Atheist, forgetful of the fact that all his best writings attest that, whatever name he might call himself, he, more than any other poet of the age, saw God in everything."

We beg to tell Mr. Gosse that he is libellous and impertinent. He knows little or nothing of Atheists if he thinks they are only repelled by "the restraints of religion." They have restraints of their own, quite as numerous and imperative as those of any religionist who fears his God. What is more, they have incentives which religion weakens. Mr. Gosse is perhaps in a state of ignorance on this matter. He probably speaks of the moral condition of Atheists as a famous American humorist proposed to lecture on science, with an imagination untrammelled by the least acquaintance with the subject.

So much (it is quite enough) for the libel; and now for the impertinence. Mr. Gosse pretends to know Shelley's mind better than he knew it himself. Shelley called himself an Atheist; that is indisputable; but he did so "rashly." He was mistaken about his own opinions; he knew a great many things, but he was ignorant of himself. But the omniscient Mr. Gosse was born (or *was he born?*) to rectify the poet's blunder, and assure the world that he was a Theist without knowing it—in fact a really God-intoxicated person.

What wonder is it that Mr. Gosse became intoxicated in turn, and soared in a rapture of panegyric over a Shelley of his own construction? "The period of prejudice is over," he exclaimed, "and we are gathered here to-day under the auspices of the greatest poet our language has produced since Shelley died, encouraged by universal public opinion and by dignitaries of all the professions—yea, even by prelates of our national Church." Here the preacher's intoxication became maudlin, and there should have been an interval for soda-water.

Curiously enough, the very last page of Trelawny's *Records of Shelley and Byron* contains a conversation between that gallant friend of the two poets and a "prelate of our national Church."

"Some years ago, one of the most learned of the English Bishops questioned me regarding Shelley; he expressed both admiration and astonishment at his learning and writings. I said to the Bishop, 'You know he was an Atheist.' He said, 'Yes.' I answered: 'It is the key and the distinguishing quality of all he wrote.' Now that people are beginning to distinguish men by their works, and not creeds, the critics, to

bring him into vogue, are trying to make out that Shelley was not an Atheist, that he was rather a religious man. Would it be right in me, or anyone who knew him, to aid or sanction such a fraud? The Bishop said: 'Certainly not, there is nothing righteous but truth.' And there our conversation ended."

Trelawny's bishop was willing (outside church, and in private conversation) to deprecate prejudice and acknowledge the supremacy of truth; and perhaps for that reason he allowed that Shelley was an Atheist. Mr. Gosse's bishops will soon be converting him into a pillar of the Church.

Trelawny knew Shelley a great deal better than Mr. Gosse. He enjoyed an intimate friendship with the poet, not in his callow days, but during the last year or two of his life, when his intellect was mature, and his genius was pouring forth the great works that secure his immortality. During that time Shelley professed the opinions he enunciated in *Queen Mab*. He said that the matter of that poem was good; it was only the treatment that was immature. Again and again he told Trelawny that he was content to know nothing of the origin of the universe; that religion was chiefly a means of deceiving and robbing the people; that it fomented hatred, malice, and all uncharitableness; and that it also fettered the intellect, deterring men from solving the problems of individual and social life, as well as the problems of nature, out of regard for the supposed oracles of Omniscience, which were after all the teachings of bigoted and designing priests. Shelley called himself an Atheist; he wrote "Atheist" after his name on a famous occasion; and Trelawny says "he never regretted having done this."

"The principal fault I have to find," wrote Trelawny, "is that the Shelleyan writers, being Christians themselves, seem to think that a man of genius cannot be an Atheist, and so they strain their own faculties to disprove what Shelley asserted from the earliest stage of his career to the last day of his life. He ignored all religions as superstitions."

On another occasion Shelley said to Trelawny—"The knaves are the cleverest; they profess to know everything; the fools believe them, and so they govern the world." Which is a most sagacious observation. He said that "Atheist!" in the mouth of orthodoxy was "a word of abuse to stop discussion, a painted devil to frighten the foolish, a threat to intimidate the wise and good."

Mr. Gosse may reply that Shelley's conversations with Trelawny are not absolute evidence; that they were written down long afterwards, and that we cannot be sure of Shelley's using the precise words attributed to him. Very well then; be it so. Mr. Gosse has appealed to Shelley's "writings," and to Shelley's writings we will go. True, the epithet "best" is inserted by Mr. Gosse as a saving qualification; but we shall disregard it, partly because "best" is a disputable adjective, but more because all Shelley's writings attest his Atheism.

Let us first go to Shelley's prose, not because it is his "best" work (though some parts of it are exquisitely beautiful, often very powerful, and always chaste), but because prose is less open than verse to false conception and interpretation. In the fine fragment "On Life" he acutely observes that "Mind, as far as we have any experience of its properties, and beyond that experience how vain is argument! cannot create, it can only perceive." And he concludes "It is infinitely improbable that the cause of mind, that is, of existence, is similar to mind." Be it observed, however, that Shelley does not dogmatise. He simply cannot conceive that mind is the basis of all things. The cause of life is still obscure. "All recorded generations of mankind," Shelley says, "have wearily busied themselves in inventing answers to this question; and the result has been—Religion."

G. W. FOOTE.

(To be concluded.)

H Y M N S .

H Y M N S are a great attraction to church and chapel, and we freely own that while they increase in quantity they also improve in quality. The Rev. J. Julian, author of a big *Dictionary of Hymnology*, says the number of Christian hymns is not less than 400,000. Out of this number there should be a few worth preserving. We intend, however, to preserve a few, formerly popular ones, which some in the Church would now willingly abandon. Hymns, it has been said, have been written by all kinds of persons except poets, yet there are a few; one thinks at once of Newman, Whittier, Keble and Cowper,* who have written hymns that may be classed with poetry. Here, as elsewhere, thanks to improving taste, "the beautiful remains, the base alone dies out." We no longer hear—

My poor pol-
My poor pol-
My poor polluted heart.

Or—

I want a man-
I want a man-
A mansion in the sky:

O send down sal-
O send down sal-
Salvation from on high.

Still, as a certain twang is necessary for public exhortations to religion, Church hymns are deemed to demand a restrained indistinctness of utterance. The full flavor of piety is sometimes elicited in this fashion as noted by a religious reporter—

Waw kaw swaw daw aw raw,
Thaw saw thaw law aw raw!
Waw kaw taw thaw raw vaw vaw braw,
Aw thaw raw jaw saw aw!

On referring to the hymn-book, the critic discovered that the words supposed to be sung were—

Welcome, sweet day of rest,
That saw the Lord arise!
Welcome to this reviving breast,
And these rejoicing eyes!

We have heard some persons aver that when in church they always sing la-la-la rather than commit themselves to the ideas or sentiments of the hymns, thinking God will be better pleased with this old refrain—which, like fal-a-lal-lero, is supposed to have been part of Druidical worship—than to attribute to him such a predilection for a special day as is implied in the foregoing very innocent verse of a popular hymn. This has still more weight when he is pictured like some old king sitting upstairs:

Great God! wilt thou condescend
To cast a look below?
To this vile world thy notice bend—
These seats of sin and woe?

Still more might one pause before separating the deity into three and rolling him again into one, as in this hymn by Wesley—

The Father is both God and Lord,
Both God and Lord is Christ the Son,
The Holy Ghost, the Glorious Third.
Both God and Lord his people own;
Both God and Lord, who Him believe,
Each person by himself we name,
Yet not three Gods or Lords receive,
But one essentially the same.

Or where they speak of his dreadful person and awful feet, after the manner of the lamented Dr. Isaac Watts—

* One of the finest hymns, Pope's apostrophe to his soul, "Vital spark of heavenly flame," is in part taken from the Pagan Hadrian, and is quite inappropriate as a part of the worship of God.

Bright King of Glory! dreadful God!
Our spirits bow before thy seat;
To thee we lift an humble thought
And worship at thine awful feet.

This beautiful hymn concludes—

I tremble lest the wrath divine
Which bruises now my sinful soul,
Should bruise and break this soul of mine
Long as eternal ages roll.

A worthy occupation for the deity venting his divine wrath in bruising and breaking for eternity the souls of his own creation. The same popular hymn-writer sings—

Far in the deep, where darkness dwells,
The land of horror and despair,
Justice has built a dismal hell
And laid her stores of vengeance there.

Eternal plagues, and heavy chains;
Tormenting racks, and fiery coals
And darts t' inflict immortal pain
Dipt in the blood of damned souls.

Again in another hymn—

Tempests of angry fire shall roll,
To blast the rebel worm,
And beat upon his naked soul
In one eternal storm.

This, however, will be nuts to the elect angels who we are told in holy scripture (Rev. xiv. 10, 11) see the smoke of their torment ascending for ever—

What bliss will fill the ransomed souls,
When they in glory dwell,
To see the sinner as he rolls,
In quenchless flames of hell."

While the Almighty Tearem himself thus addresses his helpless victim—

Behold my terrors now! My thunders roll,
And thine own crimes affright thy guilty soul.
Now like a lion shall my vengeance tear
Thy bleeding heart, and no deliverer near.

This picture of the carnivorous deity is truly scriptural, but a little too pronounced for these piping days. We believe in Sheol now; and where Watts wrote "damned" we alter it to "condemned." We can no longer sing

Have faith the same with endless shame
For all the human race,
For hell is crammed with infants damned,
Without a day of grace.

So with a revised Bible we have the old hymns tinkered up, and canticles castrated in improved versions. People have got fastidiously afraid of the old amorous hymns to which I recently called attention (*Freethinker*, Sept. 20, 1891). Even for Charles Wesley's "Jesus, Lover of my soul, Let me to thy bosom fly" (the best of 6,500 hymns he is said to have written), we find substituted "Jesus, refuge of my soul, Let me to thy mercy fly." For the genuine love my Jesus and good old blood and fire doctrine we must now go to the Salvation Army.

J. M. WHEELER.

THE CONCEIT OF ORTHODOXY.

Whence, then, could arise the solitary and strange conceit that the Almighty, who had millions of worlds equally dependent on his protection, should quit the care of all the rest, because, they say, one man and one woman had eaten an apple? And, on the other hand, are we to suppose that every world in the boundless creation had an Eve, an apple, a serpent, and a redeemer? In that case, the person who is irreverently called the son of God, and sometimes God himself, would have nothing else to do than to travel from world to world, in an endless succession of death, with scarcely a momentary interval of life.—*Thomas Paine*.

THEOLOGICAL DIFFICULTIES AT OXFORD.

I.

THE progress of Freethought and of critical inquiry upon religious subjects has just been strikingly signalled in the old orthodox city of Oxford. It appears that in this renowned Christian stronghold "summer schools of theology" are annually held, and this year the proceedings were enlivened by certain doctors of divinity being severely "heckled" by a few of the anxious minds present upon questions affecting the orthodox faith. The "scholars," it is stated, had to listen to "five one-hour discourses a day," a feat of endurance which we sincerely hope the great bulk of them survived. Dr. Fairbairn, the president, at the closing meeting, expressed a hope that the "scholars" "would return home if not sadder yet wiser men." How far this hope was realised may be inferred from what took place at the final meeting of the session. The doctor had invited "any members who had had particular difficulties suggested either by their own reading or by the lectures and discussions in the Summer School, to draw up questions embodying the same; and wherever possible an attempt would be made to deal with them." This was certainly a novel but encouraging departure in theological exposition, and it affords unmistakable evidence of the triumph of modern thought over the old habit of implicit acceptance of whatever was taught by divines. Until recently the idea of "difficulties" in a school of theology was not entertained, and the asking of questions on such occasions, even by the young and anxious, was attended by very inconvenient consequences. But now it is taken for granted that preachers (scholars) of matured age may have difficulties as to their faith, and they are solicited by their learned instructors to state such difficulties with a view, if possible, of being set right in their doubts. It would be interesting to know if the preachers present at the School informed their congregations on their return home of the questions that had been submitted, and of the answers received; also if the opinions of the aforesaid congregations were asked as to the value of the replies given. Dr. Fairbairn was the first Gamaliel who undertook to answer questions addressed to him. They were as follows:

1. "Whercin does Newman's Law of Development differ from Darwin's?" How this query can be considered a "difficulty" is by no means clear. Asking for such information was no difficulty, and neither did the reply given involve any. This was the answer: "Darwin's was a theory of the phenomena of actual organic life; Newman's a theory of a subtleminded man to explain a difficulty peculiar to himself." The teachings of an alleged infallible Roman Church and the inductions from the facts of nature were correctly stated to be manifestly different. But the doctor made no attempt to show how the teachings of a Protestant Church would have come out of such a severe ordeal of comparison. Sagacious expounder of divinity!

2. "Whether the relation of the Father and the Son did not imply priority and posteriority?" The answer: "The terms Father and Son, as applied to the Deity, take us into the region of the eternal and infinite where the categories of time and questions of inferiority and superiority cease to be." Now this reply is a clear evasion of every difficulty involved in the question. The fact is, applying the terms Father and Son to what are eternal and infinite entirely annihilates their meaning. Of course Father *does* imply priority to Son, and an honest teacher should have said so. If the two were infinite, they are both of the same extent and age, which is a sad confusion of language and common sense. If Dr. Fairbairn had referred to the New Testament he could have seen that his statement that "inferiority and superiority," in some

imaginary eternal and infinite will "cease to be" is without foundation. For it is written (1 Cor. xv.), "Then cometh the *end*, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father. . . . Then shall the Son also himself be subject unto him that put all things under him that God may be all in all." This is the text that is supposed to determine the position of the second person in the Trinity, and that gives such consolation to the devout Unitarian.

3. "Whether it is right to have a theory of the Atonement or better to give up all theories of it?" The answer: "To form theories was an inevitable process of the mind. Theories were not useless. If we never form theories we shall never have knowledge. Paul tried to differentiate and formulate his views, but in our attempt to interpret him we must distinguish between Paul's view of the Atonement and our view of Paul." (Laughter.) Here it will be seen that the doctor avoids altogether the subject of the Atonement. Probably the "difficulty" connected therewith is too great for him to deal with. No one will deny, we presume, that theories are the result of the process of the mind; but the point the doctor should have dealt with is this: What knowledge do we gain of the justice, the necessity, and the humane character of the Atonement from the theories taught in reference to it from the pulpits? The doctor's remarks as to Paul's view, etc., were, it is reported, met with laughter. If it were not intended to regard the reply here given as a joke, it is difficult to account for the inability of persons to see that there is no connection between the two—"Paul's view of the Atonement and our view of Paul." Such mental obfuscation amongst religious teachers should cause lamentation rather than laughter. Why did not the doctor frankly state what, in his opinion, the correct interpretation of the doctrine of the Atonement is, and show that it accords with reason and is in harmony with the cultured thought of the nineteenth century?

4. "Is a thing right because God wills it?" The answer: "God wills it because it is right. I can't understand how there can be any distinction between God and right, and I utterly refuse to divide them." This is no answer at all, but a mere changing of the words of the question. As God is said to be the only source of all that exists and of all power, is it right that he should punish mortals for unbelief which they could not avoid, or for doing that of which he (God) was the cause? Dr. Fairbairn refuses to "divide God and right," the God of the Bible must therefore be ignored or given up as, according to that book, he was the Creator of evil. The fall of man was and is considered a bad thing, yet it took place by the will of God, who, we are informed, arranged the plan of Salvation "before the foundation of the world." It is perfectly appalling to think of the millions of human beings who have been held in slavery, the thousands of heretics who have been burnt, and the cruel wars that have been undertaken in accordance with the conviction that what was done had the sanction of God's will, and therefore it was right. The doctor failed to remember the facts of history, with which he ought to be as familiar as he appears to be with the theory of Darwin, and the word juggling of Dr. Newman. The absence of a spirit of candor, when popular beliefs are in peril, is by far too apparent in theological teachings. Here is a difficulty which we should like cleared up. All that happens is either the consequence of God's will or it is not. If it is, then upon the doctor's own showing, whatever happens is right; if it is not, then whose will is it? This reminds us of the axiom in Archbishop Whately's logic, "All the dispensations of Providence are beneficial." But what are those dispensations? Why, all the convulsions of nature,

and all the calamities of life. Hence the pious poet writes—

Diseases are thy servants, Lord
They come at thy command.

Dr. Fairbairn refuses to divide God and right, but does he divide him from wrong? If God acts through his agents, the operations of nature, it is right to kill the laborer in the field by lightning as well as to slay the innocent lamb playing by his side. It is said that God's will is that the youth who honors his parents shall live long in the land, but consumption carries him to an early grave, or an accident instantly ends his career. Truly "God moves in a mysterious way his wonders to perform." If it is God's will that innocent people should suffer from the blasting cyclone, the fiery volcano, and the upheaving earthquake, we fail to see how that would make these devastating outbreaks right. And it is a curious fact that at the very time the will of God was being debated in the college at Oxford the public papers were reporting fresh heart-rending accounts of the manifestations of that divine will. A volcanic mountain was spreading devastation all around, an island and its inhabitants were swallowed up by an earthquake, a glacier fell on a hotel full of sleepers, a ship and all its freight of human beings were engulfed by the sea; a wild beast, with instincts implanted in it by God, descends from the mountain forest into the valley devouring men, women and children, and all this happens with the sanction of God,

Whose power o'er moving world's presides,
Whose voice creates and whose wisdom guides.

CHARLES WATTS.

(To be concluded).

TO PERCY BYSSHE SHELLEY ON THE CENTENARY OF HIS BIRTH.

Greatest of English lyric poets! Now
This name we hail thee by, but shalt not thou
A greater name yet bear in days afar?
For only now at last doth rise thy star
From out the murky clouds of lies and hate
That strove to hide its brightness. Thy sad fate
Whilst living, shall be righted at the last,
And ere another hundred years be past
Thou shalt be hailed, Destroyer of the wrong
That ever rules the world while that the strong
Are counted for the righteous. Then thy name
Written on all men's hearts in tongues of flame
Shall show forth clearly, as the polestar bright,
Herald of truth, and Champion of the right!

E.

INDIFFERENT FREETHINKERS.

TO THE EDITOR OF "THE FREETHINKER."

SIR,—I sometimes fancy we have more to fear from the apathy of friends than from the activity of enemies. I am not a lecturer; but I cannot help thinking our lecturers, especially those who cannot command large audiences, should be better supported by Freethinkers. It must be hard for a dedicated soldier of emancipation—and such, I take it, our lecturers are—to look like the leader of a forlorn hope, and to feel there are few friends to rely on in case of actual personal violence. This may aid his training in tact, but is likely to damp his enthusiasm. So many seem satisfied with their own emancipation from the superstitious terrors of their childhood that, like misers, they keep a good thing to themselves and do little or nothing for the freedom of their fellows. If all who have ceased to believe the orthodox Christian dogmas were ready to say so, those dogmas would soon decline. If all readers of the *Freethinker* even were to join and work with the National Secular Society, that body would soon command attention and be a powerful lever in the uplifting of humanity. All are not speakers, but all could be workers, if only in distributing literature. If every reader of this paper gained but another reader, our editor would soon be free from his troubles.—Yours truly,

A WORKER.

CHARACTERISTICS OF THOMAS COOPER.

II.

His extreme sensitiveness to the opinion of others, or natural irascibility, Christianity did nothing to eradicate or even abate, to the end of his days. Occasionally, when he was lecturing among the Socialists at the John-street Institution, it fell to me to take the chair for him. Sometimes I had not the night to spare; sometimes I was already familiar both with his subject and his argument, and occupied myself in writing articles for the *Reasoner*. Though I sat behind Mr. Cooper and attracted no more attention than any other person who was taking notes, Mr. Cooper would suddenly turn round and say "he could not go on with his lecture. He was sure his friend the chairman was taking notes with a view to criticise it; he could hear the movement of his pencil." Whereupon I would rise and say that "Mr. Cooper was entirely mistaken; but if he would in the course of his lecture persist in saying things so striking and interesting that one desired never to forget them, and was betrayed into taking them down on the spur of the moment, he had only himself to blame." The audience would applaud the explanation, and it being complimentary to Mr. Cooper, he would smile and resume his speech. Mr. Cooper, being a reporter by profession, must have done a hundred times in the sight of speakers what I was doing out of sight, and therefore his complaint was petulant.

The *Daily Chronicle* said that "Mr. Cooper was to have £500 for his *Purgatory of Suicides*, but Mr. How failed, and he never made a penny." This is not true; his friend James Watson published the poem for him, and afterwards a publisher in the City brought out an edition and gave Mr. Watson £25 for his interest in the copyright, which sum he handed over to Mr. Cooper. So he did receive something then and otherwise, though not all he had a right to expect.

When imprisoned in Stafford Gaol the regulations did not permit him to write, and were otherwise harsh. Against these he rebelled with loud and frantic demonstrations against the cell door with all the energy of his nature, which was considerable, as he was a very strong man. Profiting by the example of another saint, he feigned lunacy so successfully that the governor believed his reason was giving way, and, being a kind-hearted man, he made representations to that effect, and his imprisonment was made tolerable to him. He had what food he chose brought in; he wrote at nights and lay in bed all day, as he said the noise of the other prisoners distracted him. The governor, Mr. Thompson, was very considerate to him, and his son told me that his father regarded Cooper "as the most tyrannical person he ever knew." Cooper was tyrannical out of gaol as well as in; he believed in democracy, but he had a private belief that he ought to be the chief of the democrats, and he drove many people out of the movement by his imperious pretensions. Mrs. Watson, the wife of the publisher, who was a shrewd observer, said one day after listening to him, "Ah! I see the democrat would be a king."

The merit of Mr. Cooper was that, if he were imperious to the humble, he was never servile to the powerful. He was domineering to all alike—sometimes brutal to the rich. When he was Chartist leader in Leicester, and was passing along the road with others, Sir Charles Easthope's carriage broke down, and there were ladies in it. Instead of rendering help, Cooper turned away with his friends, exclaiming, "Let the aristocrats help themselves." The storm and stress and despair of poverty in Leicester somewhat excused this brutal speech; but it was never forgotten by those who heard it.

Mr. Cooper denied to me that he ever took Tory money. Calling upon Francis Place one day, Place asked him what he did with it. He denied having had any with indignation, but Place took from a book

a cheque which Sir Charles Easthope (the banker who cashed it) had sent to him, and giving it to Cooper, he said, "You had £100 in gold, so many in silver, and so many in copper; how did you distribute it?" Cooper, who might be beguiled into untruth for a time, soon recovered the natural honesty of his nature, and in his *Life of himself* he confesses and regrets the denial.

His distinction was that he was animated by a sincere desire for the elevation of working men as a class. In their service no menace of power, no peril into which he might be thrown, no consequences which might come upon him, intimidated him; he was always brave for them. He set them the example of self-education and self-help. He wrote books, he edited newspapers, he edited journals to circulate among them. If one failed he started another, and by lecturing work he paid the expenses of the papers when they fell upon him. He was ceaseless in his exertions as editor and lecturer. Out of his earnings he supported one or two old fellow Chartist prisoners all their lives. Out of the proceeds of his lectures that money went weekly without fail. For years he contributed to the support of an artist and his family whom he thought had ability to attain distinction, and gave away all his life the chief portion of his earnings or whatever came to him. The last sum he received from Mr. Balfour, at Mr. Mundella's suggestion, he gave away, and left little more than £50 to pay for his funeral and household expenses.

The *Star* lately said that "During the elections in the metropolis more than one Tory canvasser told working men that 'they should vote for the Tory party, seeing that the Government had given £200 to one of the most determined Radicals of them all, namely Thomas Cooper.' But they did not tell the working men that Mr. Gladstone had given Cooper £300. True, it was intended to be given to Mr. G. J. Holyoake, but he wrote saying that 'as he had all his life taught self-help to working men, and that it was the duty of the people to support the State, and not the State the people; and unless blindness came again or age rendered him incapable of work, he preferred not to receive anything. But the gift would be well bestowed upon Thomas Cooper, who, at the age of 77, was still going out in inclement weather preaching, his income being insufficient for his needs.' Mr. Gladstone very kindly gave to Mr. Cooper the £300, the amount then in question." I informed Mr. Gladstone further that if I received money at his hands, however kindly intended by him, he would be made responsible for it on the ground of my opinions, upon which *I did not keep silence* or intend to keep silence.

While Mr. Cooper was with us as Secularist, or politician, we always knew that his daily life was consistent with his professions on the platform. As he boldly put upon the title page of the *Purgatory of Suicides* the words "By Thomas Cooper, the Chartist," I had always regard for him for his adherence to his proscribed opinions. As often as I went to Leicester during his imprisonment I visited his wife, and I was on terms of personal friendship with him for fifty years, and my respect for him never abated. He told me he would tell all his friends of the gift I had caused him to receive, otherwise I should not have mentioned it here.

The next and concluding chapter will relate to Mr. Cooper's religious opinions.

G. J. HOLYOAKE.

There is no case of Voltaire mocking at any set of men who lived good lives. He did not mock the English Quakers. He doubtless attacked many of the beliefs which good men hold sacred; but if good men take up their abode under the same roof which shelters the children of darkness and wrong, it is not the fault of Voltaire if they are hit by the smooth stones shot from his sling against their unworthy comrades.—*Right Hon. John Morley, M.P., "Voltaire,"* p. 223.

DEATH OF MRS. ROSE.

MRS. ERNESTINE LOUISE ROSE, who expired at Brighton on Aug. 4 (Shelley's centenary), had far exceeded the common lot of years; yet her death will be felt with a pang by many an old Freethinker both here and in America. She was no common woman. The daughter of a Jewish Rabbi, born at Pierterkof, Poland, Jan. 13, 1810, she early in life evinced her independence by questioning her father on points of religion he found difficult to answer. At the age of seventeen she went to Berlin and interviewed the King of Prussia on the right of Jews to remain in the city. She was in Paris during the Revolution of 1830, and throughout life was a strong Republican. She came to London as a teacher of languages, embraced the views of Robert Owen, and was encouraged by him to propagate them in public. In 1834 she presided at the formation of a society of Owenite reformers called the Association of All Classes of All Nations, without distinction of sect, sex, party, condition, or color. She was a lifelong advocate of woman's emancipation. During her residence in England she married Mr. W. E. Rose, a Freethinking follower of Owen. In May, 1836, they went to the United States, where Mrs. Rose devoted herself to the propaganda of Freethought, woman's rights, and the abolition of slavery. She lectured gratuitously in all parts, even in the Southern States, where she was once threatened with tar and feathers. "Your divine institution of slavery," she said to her threateners, "makes you so lazy—a task like that will do you good; set to work and do it." In 1838 she sent the first petition to the New York Legislature to give married women the right to hold real estate in their own names. Her eloquence and courage made her known throughout the States. With her friend Mrs. Stanton she inaugurated the Woman's Rights Movement. About 1870, owing to declining health, she returned to London, where she but occasionally spoke, as at Owen's centenary, May, 1871, and at the Conference of Liberal Thinkers at South-place in 1876, where she urged the necessity of a bold attack on religion. Mrs. Rose lived and died an Atheist. She was never afraid of the name. Only about six weeks ago she gave me a copy of her *Defence of Atheism*, and said she had nothing to alter. She passed away quite unconsciously. In accordance with her wish she was buried beside her husband at Highgate Cemetery, close to the graves of Austin Holyoake, James Thomson, Mrs. Waynham, and Mrs. J. Martineau. Mr. Holyoake officiated, reading a special notice of Mrs. Rose written for the occasion. Mrs. Allinson, wife of Dr. Allinson and niece of Mrs. Rose; Mrs. Bonner, Mr. Truelove, Mrs. Foote, Mrs. and Mr. Wheeler, Mr. and Miss Trevillion, Mrs. Robertson, Mr. Marsh, Miss E. Holyoake and other Freethinkers were present.

J. M. W.

THE ATHEIST.

The Atheist says to the honest, conscientious believer, Though I cannot believe in your God whom you have failed to demonstrate, I believe in man; if I have no faith in your religion, I have faith, unbounded, unshaken faith in the principles of right, of justice, and humanity. Whatever good you are willing to do for the sake of your God, I am full as willing to do for the sake of man. But the monstrous crimes the believer perpetrated in persecuting and exterminating his fellow man on account of difference of belief, the Atheist, knowing that belief is not voluntary, but depends on evidence, and therefore there can be no merit in the belief of any religions, nor demerit in a disbelief in all of them, could never be guilty of. Whatever good you would do out of fear of punishment, or hope of reward hereafter, the Atheist would do simply because it is good; and being so, he would receive the far surer and more certain reward, springing from well-doing, which would constitute his pleasure, and promote his happiness.—Mrs. E. L. Rose, "*Defence of Atheism*."

THE NEW TESTAMENT.

The different genealogies of Jesus in Matthew and Luke; the incidents of the miraculous conception and birth; the star in the east; the slaughter of children by Herod, mentioned only by Matthew and unnoticed in history; the differing accounts of Saul's conversion; the miracle stories; the fact that Jesus is not mentioned by contemporary historians; the uncertainty as to who wrote the gospels, and when they were written—all these things, and multitudes that it would be tedious to mention, prove the New Testament to be the work of man, and of less enlightened man than exists to-day.—R. C. Adams.

AN ATHEIST'S DEATH-BED.

The following letter has been sent to the editor of the *Christian World*:

"SIR,—Having been a reader of your paper for many years and observing your fairness to all classes, I venture to ask you to insert in your valuable paper my experience of an Atheist death-bed, which occurred yesterday, Aug. 6, at 5.45. My reason for asking the favor is that the record may serve as some consolation to others losing relatives and friends of similar views. I was called by telegram at four p.m. to the death-bed of a brother-in-law, an Atheist of thirty years' standing, who had led an unstained career. On seeing me he at once recognised me and shook hands. At 5.35 I again went to his bedside. He again took my hand, saying, 'Good bye, Edwin; I am satisfied with the result, and this is the end to all.' He gasped for five minutes, and then peacefully departed.—Yours faithfully, "E. CHURCH."

ACID DROPS.

Moody, the Yankee revivalist, who is netting souls and cash in Great Britain, told the Keswick Convention that "You English people are slow to observe what strangers see quickly." Well now, there may be some truth in it. English preachers have never made a pile in America; they were "slow to observe" how it could be done. But American preachers have been very successful in England; they could "see quickly" how the job was to be managed.

Moody pointed to the awful fact that "the working men, ninety per cent. of them, are utterly alienated from the regular services of the sanctuary, and are careless and hostile to Christianity as thus set forth." Some of us regard this as one of the most hopeful signs of the age. Moody, of course, thinks otherwise. Unless the working men, who now have the franchise, are "taught Christian principles," he predicts "a bad time for England." Well, if it comes, we shall meet it somehow. But how about the bad time in America? Freethought and indifference to religion are spreading there also, and Moody had better save his own country first. It will take him all his time.

About a year after Thomas Carlyle's death we walked up Cheyne-row, Chelsea, to look at the Sage's late residence. It was empty, and had a most melancholy appearance. Half in and half out of the letter-box was a blue document. We pulled it out, and found it was a notice from the public authorities that if the said Thomas Carlyle (twelve months dead) didn't pay certain dues his household goods would be distrained. We stuck the document in the letter-box again, leaving the ghost of Thomas Carlyle to deal with it at leisure, and walked away sighing "Such is greatness! Such is fame!"

Thomas Carlyle's old house is tenanted now by a lady with a passion for dogs and cats. She has about thirty in the place, besides other pets—or pests, as the neighbors call them. The Chelsea Vestry is proceeding against her as a nuisance. "To what base uses we may return" is the complaint of 24 Cheyne-row; and although ghosts are supposed to haunt the premises in which they died, we should fancy the ghost of Thomas Carlyle has moved to the next street.

Charles Bradlaugh carried an Oaths Act. Englishmen can now affirm instead of swearing. After eighteen centuries of Christianity, it was reserved for an Atheist to bring in a Bill to enable Christians to obey Jesus Christ.

Mr. Walter McLaren writes to the *Daily News* urging members of the new House of Commons to avail themselves of Mr. Bradlaugh's Oaths Act. "As one who objects entirely to oaths," he says, "I trust that on this, the first opportunity, a large number of members will avail themselves of the new law." We hope so too.

The *Daily Chronicle* tells of a Celestial who, being asked how he would be sworn, said, "Kill 'im cock, bleak 'im plate, smell 'im bookey, allee samey." There is nothing like your Oriental for true indifference to religion. John Chinaman, when at home, thinks nothing of being a Confucian, Buddhist, and Taoist at the same time.

"General" Booth is very indignant against those who asperse his character, but never replies to the lawyer-like

charge of Mr. G. Kebell in the *Times* that "all and every the asset and assets of the Salvation Army is and are in the sole power and control of William Booth, who can, if he pleases, at any moment make himself off, together with such assets, to any part of the globe." Further, if the said William Booth dies intestate, his heir at law and next of kin may claim every halfpenny subscribed to the Salvation Army.

One William Leff, of Butte, Montana, a member of an organisation known as the Sons of Liberty, made a public announcement through the *Standard* that he would give 100 dols. to any Christian minister who would read before his congregation such a chapter from the Bible as he would designate. Three men of God accepted the challenge, but only one (Rev. Mr. Groeneveld) came to the scratch. An immense crowd, many of them females, assembled at the church, and over a thousand were turned away. Mr. Leff selected Leviticus xv., and Mr. Groeneveld commenced; but, after reading the second verse, paused to explain the purpose of the Lord in giving such a revelation. Mr. Leff contended the chapter should be read intact and without comment. Mr. Groeneveld said he would read it through, but threatened that Mr. Leff should be put out of his church if he interrupted. The minister did read the chapter amid some tittering and excitement, but insisted on interpreting it. The occurrence has drawn much attention to the subject of Bible obscurities; but probably if Mr. Leff had known the amount of brass in some clergymen's composition, he would not have made his offer.

God's recent doings include an earthquake in Mexico resulting in heavy loss of life and destruction to many churches, public buildings, and dwellings, rendering fifteen thousand people homeless. In Russia it is computed that there have been 50,000 deaths from cholera during the past few months—

For his mercies shall endure
Ever faithful, ever sure.

In New York in one day 98 sudden deaths were recorded, due to the intense heat of the weather. One week's mortality reached 1,434. One day's deaths in this city reached the number of 223, of which 111 were those of children under the age of five. Why so many are born to suffer the troubles of infancy without surviving is one of those problems orthodox theism leaves unsolved.

Everything has its comic side. While so many people are dying from the oppressive heat in New York and other American cities, a comic artist issues a picture of Old Nick mopping his forehead and exclaiming, "If this continues I shall have to go home."

The Rev. Chapman, now in Palestine, writes: "There is no such thing as fresh air in Jerusalem. It is the sacredest, saddest, and just about the dirtiest city in the world." Isn't it about time the churches gave up calling the hereafter "the New Jerusalem?" As the Holy City gets better known its name will be mainly suggestive of fleas and stinks.

The *Dublin Figaro* pays no compliment to the *Freethinker* in calling the *Freeman's Journal* by its name. The Irish paper is we believe now mainly the organ of the priests, and less worthy of its own name than ever. But this is no reason for giving it ours.

At a Spiritist *séance*, says the *Daily Telegraph*, the ghost of Voltaire turned up and got on very well until one of the sitters questioned it in French; then it collapsed, and the *séance* broke up in confusion.

The Rev. A. Webster, a Unitarian minister, has raised a storm at Kilmarnock. He declared that there is no such place as Hell. This has made some of the Free Presbyterians feel sick. They don't expect to go to hell themselves, but they expect their enemies will, and don't like to lose the consolation.

Bill Nye, the Yankee humorist, speaking of the Salvation Army and its efforts to down Satan, says: "When they know the great adversary of souls as well as I do, they will not try to scare him with a cross-eyed woman or drive him and his host by beating the tambourine, and the landlord. Humanity, charity, soft soap and unselfishness will do more

toward giving Satan that tired feeling than all the loud and onion flavored hosannas of misguided men and bleating women who seek to harass the hosts of hell with a bass drum, while their own children, with empty stomachs and unlaundered noses, weep at home."

The Rev. R. J. Campbell, minister of the Trinity Reformed Church of England, Keppoch Hill-road, Glasgow, is charged with wholesale swindling. He has thought well to emigrate to distant parts, and many are anxious to know his present location.

Edward de Cobain, of Belfast, who was expelled from Parliament for not answering a warrant for his arrest, has turned up in America as pious as ever. He preached a sermon at the Methodist camp meeting this week, and the report says the audience were much moved by a very earnest exhortation, but were much more moved when they discovered the name of their mentor.

"I told him he was running in the face of Providence starting off on Sunday," cried Mrs. Bergman, of New York, on learning of the arrest of her husband, a professional burglar. She was his abettor, and had just entrusted a kit of burglar's tools to a detective who feigned to be his friend.

Dr. Herbert Evans, a well-known Welsh divine seems to have a good knowledge of many of his fellow men of God. In a congregational Chapel, Pembroke Dock, he said it was his firm belief that many of the men who were ministers in Wales to-day were such because they were too lazy to do anything else!

George Graves, the smith of Huddersfield, who shot at his wife and brother-in-law and stabbed his father-in-law, left a paper in which he, as usual, hoped God would forgive him. Crime usually serves to elicit religion.

A scurrilous representative of the C.E.S. said last Sunday, in Finsbury Park, that he had a good mind to offer a shilling to any infidel who could spell "metaphor." He had, however, a better mind not to, since the Finsbury Park Branch profited recently to the extent of a shilling by a similar piece of rhodomontade by the same lecturer, who thinks it good policy to decry his opponents as being ignorant as well as vile.

Truth devotes an article to "John Chinaman's Blasphemous Libels." It appears that though Christianity has been in the world over eighteen hundred years, a large portion of the world's inhabitants look on it in such a contemptuous light that they call it "the hog religion." This epithet arose from a mistake of the Christian missionaries using the word hog for Lord, and making the Lord Jesus the hog Jesus, and the Lord of heaven the celestial hog. This has led to ribald and disgusting placards on the part of the Chinese, who wish to drive out "the foreign devils," the most offensive one described being a picture of a hog on the cross. This blasphemous literature, says the writer, is the production of a religious and political propagandist organisation, based very much on the same lines as that of the missionaries, whom it is desired to counteract. Chinese outrages against Christians and even against Christian feeling are much to be deplored, but what about the conduct of Christians that have led to such outrages?

Talking of the Chinese, it has just come to light that the superior kind of Chinamen considers a "kitchen-god" a necessary part of his religious outfit. This interesting deity is supposed to take notes of the minor domestic arrangements in every house, and to report all irregularities to headquarters in due course. An institution of the kind in this country would probably result in a considerable saving in the larder of the ordinary householder who keeps servants; while the policeman on the local beat would have to look elsewhere for his proverbial mutton chop.

The *Daily News* is always high and mighty in its leading articles, but the air goes ill with commonplace blunders. Only the other day, in its article on the Bishop of Lincoln judgment, the *D. N.* remarked that the apostle told all Christians to obey the powers that be, but Dr. King set himself above St. Peter. The writer forgot that the text referred to was written by St. Paul. Perhaps he did not forget. It is possible that he never knew.

A sermon by Dr. Dallinger, the Wesleyan scientist, is reported in the *Christian Commonwealth*. It is preceded by a prayer, which fills over a column of very small type. The preacher must have taken from ten to fifteen minutes to get through it. What an unconscionable time for a sinful worm to buttonhole his maker!

This reminds us of a good Ingersoll story. It was during the midday prayer-meeting craze, after a Moody and Sankey revival, and a number of soft Christians were holding one of these performances at a seaside hotel where the Colonel was staying. As the prayer-meeting broke up one day, the landlord accosted the ringleader—a consequential little man—and explained that his place was frequented by persons of all creeds and no creed, that he did not like these prayer-meetings; in short, that he kept an hotel and not a gospel-shop. As the landlord was protesting it happened that Ingersoll stood in the lobby ready to go out, and seeing him there the consequential little man concluded that the Colonel had something to do with Boniface's objection. Strutting up to the Colonel he said, "I hope you are not at the bottom of this, Mr. Ingersoll." "Bottom of what, sir?" said Bob. "Why the landlord objects to our midday prayer-meeting; surely you don't object, Mr. Ingersoll." "My dear sir," said Bob, looking down and laying his hand on the little man's shoulder, "if the *Almighty* can stand it I can."

Let us return to Dr. Dallinger. The *Christian Commonwealth* interviews him. It is quite a Dallinger number. The Wesleyan microscopist gives off a quantity of opinions. "I am entirely a Darwinian," he says; and he believes that Evolution supports instead of destroying Theism. He talks of "the perfect harmony of organisms with their environments." Stuff and nonsense, Dr. Dallinger, and you know it. Perfect harmony does not exist. And the harmony that does exist is the result of natural selection. Dr. Dallinger prattles amiably about the survival of the fit. But what about the elimination of the unfit? And who created the unfit? God, of course, in Dr. Dallinger's theory. Well, if God made the unfit, why talk of perfect harmony and infinite intelligence?

On the subject of miracles Dr. Dallinger is extremely vague. He doesn't believe in the violation of natural law. He is "strongly of opinion that where miracles were wrought they were wrought by supreme knowledge of and obedience to nature's laws." We defy him to apply this theory to the Bible miracles. Take the turning of water into wine by Jesus. Are we to believe that he had a superior knowledge of chemistry; that he provided himself with the necessary ingredients, put them into the water, and produced artificial wine? If he did so, it was only a trick; and if people are taught this they will call the miracle a hollow one. And if Dr. Dallinger does not mean this, what *does* he mean?

"Is the Church of Christ going to leave all the work to be done by men who are agnostics, infidels and non-Christians?" The "work" referred to is the elevation of the poor, and the abolition of the frightful disparities between poverty and wealth. The question is asked in a Christian paper.

It is astonishing what very small stories pass as arguments in Christian journals. A pious contemporary prints a yarn about a Philadelphia bookseller, who was asked for a copy of Paine's *Age of Reason*. He replied that he had a better book, which he usually sold for a dollar, but he would lend it to the customer if he would promise to read it. It was the Bible. The customer, who was an infidel (of course!), took it home, read it, and was converted. The assumption in this story is that "infidels" don't read the Bible. They do. That's why they are "infidels."

Modern Society wonders at the Vicar of Horsham being on the Shelley Centenary committee. It cannot understand an officer of the Church honoring one who "all his life long held Christianity in great dislike." *Modern Society* forgets the text about building the tombs of the prophets.

"When a new town is captured by the Russians," says a writer in *Cornhill*, "the first thing they do is to partly fortify it and build one or more churches." The forts are occupied by soldiers, the churches by drunken, lousy priests. Both belong to the same army—the army of imposture and oppression.

—Talmage has had an interview with the Czar. His poor little soul is overwhelmed with the Czar's condescension. Henceforth he is going to sing the Czar's praises. No matter about the thousands of political prisoners rotting in Siberian mines. That is nothing. The Czar is a good Christian, and that covers a multitude of sins.

Talmage's biography of Jesus Christ—no doubt compiled from exclusive sources of information—is advertised in English papers at a price which "brings it within the reach of all." As the lowest price is sixteen shillings, Talmage must have a strange idea of the pecuniary "reach" of "all" the English people.

A person of child-like innocence resides at Plymouth. His name is J. Newland. He has issued a circular to the nation, in which he says it is "absolutely necessary that the religious leaders should give proper examples to the people." He thinks it would "prove beneficial" if they "lived in cottages rather than in palaces and mansions." So do we. But circulars won't make them do it. The only remedy is to cut down (or cut off) their salaries. But when that awful sacrilege is committed we may expect the Day of Judgment in about a fortnight.

Bishop Jayne has got all the amusement he could out of traducing Freethinkers. He has now taken up another hobby. He proposes that the State should run public-houses, where the parson and his congregation could adjourn for three of Scotch cold or two of gin unsweetened. It is a good idea. The State already supplies spirit in churches, and why not in pubs? People could then get drunk on the disembodied or the disembodied article. The cost is about the same in both cases, and the result very similar.

Judas carried a bag. So does the Bishop of Ripon. After reading prayers in the House of Lords quite recently he sailed over to the House of Commons, perhaps to see the fun of swearing in the members; but his voyage was interrupted by a policeman, who insisted on seeing whether the bag contained any dynamite. Even a bishop is not above suspicion.

The Rev. E. Husband, vicar of St. Michael's, Folkestone, where the Church Congress is to be held in October, has protested against a woman being permitted to address it. He declares that "it is wrong and unscriptural for a woman to speak in our public assemblies, especially at religious gatherings of the Church of England." No doubt Mr. Husband has scripture on his side, but we wonder what Mr. Husband's wife has to say on the right and wrong of the question.

The alliance of parson and squire is broken up at Frome, and the vicar of Christ Church has been made to suffer in consequence. He let his Liberal convictions be known, and as a result about twenty well-known Tories went to church, but ostentatiously rose and walked out when the vicar ascended the pulpit. Religion is very sacred in these people's eyes so long as it coincides with their material interests.

On Sunday afternoon another attempt was made to break up the Freethought meeting in Victoria Park. The ringleader of the disorder was a person who combines pugilism with Christian Evidences. East-enders would like to know who pays him. It is difficult to imagine that he takes so much trouble, not to mention the risk, for the love of it. Happily the efforts of himself and gang were checkmated. We hope local Freethinkers, especially the more muscular ones, will continue to support the platform.

"The swearing of members continued" was a *Pull Mall Gazette* headline the other evening. Shocking! Cromwell's soldiers were fined a shilling for swearing. Some such rule should be introduced at Westminster.

When the Pope is troubled with sleeplessness he gets up and writes poetry. Why doesn't he read Jeremiah? We shouldn't recommend Jonah. You can't go to sleep while you are laughing.

The Pope's favorite drink is old Burgandy. Not a bad taste. Perhaps it was old Burgandy that J. C. manufactured. Anyhow it won the praises of the toppers at a marriage feast.

MR. FOOTE'S ENGAGEMENTS.

Sunday, August 14, Secular Hall, Pole-lane, Failswor' 1; at 3, "Men, Women and Children: the Real Trinity"; at 6.30, "The Religion of Humanity."

August 21 and 28, Hall of Science, London.
Sept. 4, Glasgow; 11, Aberdeen; 18, Hall of Science, London; 25, Bristol.
October 9 and 16, Hall of Science, London; 23, Newcastle; 30, South Shields.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

MR. CHARLES WATTS' ENGAGEMENTS.—August 14, Liverpool; 21, Manchester; 28, Grimsby. September 3 and 4, Rushden; 11, Town Hall, Birmingham; 18, Birmingham; 25, Hall of Science. October 2, Hall of Science; 9 and 16, Birmingham; 23, Glasgow; 25 and 26, Belfast; 30, Edinburgh; 31, Aberdeen. November 1 and 2, Aberdeen; 6 and 13, Birmingham; 20, Sheffield; 27, Hall of Science, London. Dec. 4, Hall of Science; 11, Manchester; 18 and 25, Birmingham.—All communications for Mr. Watts should be sent direct to him at Baskerville Hall, The Crescent, Birmingham.

CORRIE WEST, in sending a cheque for the Sustentation Fund, promises to send the same yearly or half yearly if found convenient.

L. W. WILD is prepared to give twopence or even threepence for the *Freethinker*.

A. ANDERSON forwards a subscription to our Sustentation Fund, and promises a similar amount next January.

T. BIRD writes:—"I beg to enclose cheque value £5 for your own use, as a small token of esteem for the plucky way in which you are fighting against great odds. I would raise the price of the *Freethinker* to twopence." We have placed this subscription to the credit of the Sustentation Fund.

W. B.—Your letter is very encouraging. We are pleased to hear that the blue-jackets on board your ship who read the *Freethinker* would gladly pay twopence for it. You are not the first person by a long way, who has become a Freethinker through careful reading of the Bible. Freethought propaganda largely consists in pointing out what the Bible really contains. We hardly think you would be recompensed for the cost of the foreign paper you mention.

FOREIGN SUBSCRIBER.—We note your preference for the penny, though personally you would not object to twopence.

P. W. BALDWIN.—Thanks for your interest in the matter.

G. WARD.—Sorry we cannot advise you. It is outside our special province.

MONIST.—It was a well-meant service, but we are extremely indifferent to the misrepresentations of the outside press.

BALLOT BOX.—The so-called Golden Rule was taught by Confucius in China, by Isocrates in Greece, and by other moralists in other parts of the world, centuries before the birth of Christ. We will bear in mind the advisability of an article on the subject.

W. HOLLAND.—It is hard to say which is the most immoral country in Europe. Standards differ; and vice, which is a part of immorality, and not punishable by law, does not come within the criminal statistics.

C. SHUFFLEBOTHAM.—Thanks for your good wishes. Certainly the articles of Mr. Holyoake, Mr. Watts, and Mr. Wheeler should be a great attraction in our pages. They are to those who have the sense to appreciate them; but the ordinary Englishman is a very stolid fool, when not a fanatic, in matters of religion.

J. W. GOTT.—Received with thanks.

R. ROSETTI.—It seems a matter of merely local interest. We have no doubt that you acted honorably in the discussion.

P. CONDON.—Pleased to hear from an Irish Freethinker. You must feel rather isolated at Waterford. Do not feel alarmed; the *Freethinker* is not going to drop; there is no fear of that.

THE RUBBER STAMP CO. (Manchester) sends £1 for the Hall of Science scheme, £1 for our Sustentation Fund, and £1 for the editor's Holiday Fund.

F. W. DONALDSON promises 10s. per year for three years to our Sustentation Fund. For a long time he has taken two copies weekly, and he will continue to do so even if the price be raised.

H. M. RIDGWAY.—We quite believe that your energetic distribution of Freethought literature has prepared the way for the new open-air station at Islington. Speakers are not the only useful persons in our movement. You have done your share of the work, and your being mobbed, insulted, and almost run in, is a witness to its efficiency.

E. S.—(1) Buddhist and Mohammedan scriptures do not teach men to commit crime. Why all these roundabout questions, when you can buy a copy of the *Koran* for a couple of shillings, and study the matter for yourself? (2) Can you name any science that does know anything of a future life?

J. FRANCE.—We have no particulars of the Thomas Walker case. We have always gathered from the *Liberator* that Joseph Symes had a poor opinion of him.

J. NEATE.—See "Acid Drops." It is curious how discussion brings out the beast in so many Christians.

H. G. SHEPHERD.—The lines you copied from the Shelley Memorial at Christchurch are from the poet's "Adonais."

R. O. SMITH, hon. treasurer, London Secular Federation, begs to acknowledge these collections:—Lambeth, 4s.; East London, 1s. 6d.; Victoria Park, 5s.; Edmonton, 7s. 6d.

C. E. SMITH.—Many thanks.

S. SHARPE.—We have occasionally done what you suggest, and may do it again. The speeches at the Hall of Science meeting in honor of Shelley were not reported at any length in the newspapers.

G. WARD.—For "Ish Sodi"—man of the assembly, or secret—see Kenneth Mackenzie's *Royal Masonic Cyclopædia* under that phrase. A life of the Rev. Robert Taylor is given in his *Devil's Pulpit*. Some account of R. Carlile appeared in the *Freethinker*, Dec. 8, 1889. Will look up the reference you now give.

FRIENDS who send us newspapers would enhance the favor by marking the passages to which they wish to call our attention.

PAPERS RECEIVED.—Der Lichtfreund—Boston Investigator—Open Court—Freidenker—Two Worlds—Der Arme Teufel—Dublin Figaro—Twentieth Century—Liberator—Rochdale Observer—Glasgow Weekly Herald—Natal Advertiser—Flaming Sword—Modern Thought—Echo—De Dageraad—Natural Food—Western Daily Press—Vegetarian Messenger—Truthseeker—Clarion—Dundee People's Friend.

LITERARY communications to be addressed to the Editor, 14 Clerkenwell-green, London, E.C. All business communications to Mr. R. Forder, 28 Stonecutter-street, London, E.C.

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

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.

The *Freethinker* will be forwarded, direct from the office, post free, at the following rates, prepaid:—One Year, 6s. 6d.; Half Year, 3s. 3d.; Three Months, 1s. 7½d.

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

SUGAR PLUMS.

Mr. Foote had a very enthusiastic reception at Manchester on Sunday. Owing to the rain, which was gentle in the afternoon and pelting in the evening, the audiences were a little thinner than usual, though still very good for the time of the year. The evening lecture on "The Doom of the Gods" seemed to be specially relished, judging from the laughter and applause, and the ovation at the finish. It was the first time that Mr. Foote has delivered three lectures on a Sunday since his illness. The work necessitated a greater effort than previously, but it has not done him any harm.

The Failsworth Secular Schools hold their Annual Services to-day (Aug. 14) in the large hall in Pole-lane. Mr. Foote will deliver two addresses—in the afternoon at 3 on "Men, Women, and Children; the Real Trinity," and in the evening at 6.30 on "The Religion of Humanity." Hymns, etc., will be sung by the Choir, assisted by the Failsworth String Band. The admission is free. A collection will be made at the close of each Service in aid of the School Funds, and any donations from absent friends will be most thankfully received. Tea will be provided for friends who come from a distance.

"FREETHINKER" SUSTENTATION FUND.—Foreign Subscriber, 5s.; W. Jackson, 2s. 6d.; E. Seed, 2s. 6d.; P. W. Baldwin, 2s. 6d.; A. Wilkinson, 6d.; Corrie West, £5; L. W. Wild, 1s.; A. Anderson, 10s.; T. Bird, £5; C. Shufflebotham, 10s.; Rubber Stamp Co. (Manchester), £1; W. T. Leekey, 2s. 6d.; A Few Friends (Failsworth), £1 1s.; C. Shepherd, 2s. 6d.

Mr. Charles Watts had two capital audiences in Leicester last Sunday, where he lectured in the afternoon and evening. The hall was well filled on each occasion, and Mr. Watts was highly complimented for his "able discourses" by gentlemen who took part in the debate after the lectures. There was a great demand for the *Freethinker*, every copy for sale being disposed of. To-day (August 14) Mr. Watts lectures three times in Liverpool.

The Shelley Centenary celebration at Horsham was a noticeable affair. When clergymen and county magnates begin to do honor to a republican and atheistic poet, we see what a change has come over England since the opening of

the present century. Mr. Gosse (in the absence of Lord Coleridge) was selected to read the eulogy of Shelley. His paper showed the talent of the practised man of letters, but it was foolishly, almost condescendingly, apologetic in tone. Shelley needs no man's patronage, certainly not Mr. Gosse's.

Everybody at the Horsham celebration was bent on concealing or minimising Shelley's heresy. He was treated as a great poet, whose heterodox views were the pardonable indiscretions of youth. All which would have been very repulsive to the poet himself, who would have resented compliments to his genius at the expense of his principles. It was his principles that he was in deadly earnest about. Of his genius he formed a very modest estimate. He actually thought Tom Moore his superior: the organ deferential to the flute!

Much sincerer was the tribute paid to Shelley at the Hall of Science. Some six or seven hundred people assembled, with a considerable sprinkling of ladies. Mr. Foote presided. His opening address was applauded most enthusiastically at the points where he championed Shelley's character and laid stress upon his passionate revolt against superstition and oppression. Dr. Furnivall followed with a most interesting speech, abounding in good points and humorous touches. Then the chairman read the *Ode to the West Wind*, which was listened to with breathless attention, and greeted at the finish with a storm of applause. Mr. G. B. Shaw then addressed the meeting. He was in his best satirical vein, and fairly convulsed his audience with laughter as he told what he had heard in the afternoon at Horsham; how they were all afraid to let out the secret that Shelley was "a dreadful character," and how the worthy Chairman had referred to Shelley's atheism as "dialectical views," which were put forward when he was very young, and ought not to be taken too seriously. Mr. Shaw went on to defend Shelley's principles, and to point out that even advanced people were often far from being abreast with them. Mr. Shaw sat down amidst applause, and the chairman wound up the proceedings by reading Shelley's lines *To The Men of England*, which produced a great effect.

The Shelley celebration at the Hall of Science was fairly reported in the *Pall Mall Gazette*, which did not scruple to reproduce Mr. Shaw's description of Shelley as "an Atheist and a Bible-smasher."

In the first of its "Occasional Notes" on August 4 the *Pall Mall Gazette* wrote that "the Freethinkers to-night at the Hall of Science may safely be challenged to say anything that would have scandalised Shelley's contemporaries as much as Mr. Horton's address on the Bible at the Grindelwald conference." Nonsense! There are things in Shelley that would raise the hair of Mr. Horton's congregation, and things said at the Hall of Science that would make Mr. Horton look uncomfortable.

"The move towards freedom of thought," said the *P.M.G.*, "is becoming so great that it is by no means certain that the National Secular Society is going to get there first." Our contemporary forgets that the N.S.S. is already "there," and has been there all along.

The *Daily Chronicle* reported the Horsham celebration at great length. It regarded "the affair" as "a success," but said—"it is impossible to regard such a meeting as a fitting celebration of the centenary of a poetic genius. Horsham had yesterday a grand opportunity—and missed it." The *Chronicle* also gave a brief report of the Hall of Science celebration, frankly admitting the "large attendance."

Mr. Grant Allen wrote an excellent letter to the *Pall Mall Gazette* of August 5 on "Shelley the Seer." He said that Shelley "would have hated" the hollow praises of "bishops, peers, and Philistines," for "if ever there was a poet whose function it was to be Prophet and Preacher in deed and word, that poet was Shelley." "Let us honor Shelley," Mr. Grant Allen added, "by shaping our lives after his precept and example, not by disclaiming or apologising for all he loved best, and then building his sepulchre."

The *Vegetarian Messenger* for August gives Mr. W. E. A. Axon's able address at the vegetarian banquet commemorating Shelley's centenary. It also refers to and quotes from

our columns an extract from Mr. Wheeler's short article on Joseph Ritson.

Mr. Justice Windeyer, who distinguished himself by an enlightened summing up in a neo-Malthusian case at New South Wales, consented to preside at the Sydney celebration of Shelley's centenary.

De Dageraad for August is devoted to Dr. Jacob Moleschott, who, on the ninth of the month, celebrates his seventieth birthday. A portrait of Moleschott is given, and facsimile letters of congratulation from many of the leading Freethinking scientists of Europe, including Profs. Hæckel, Helmholtz, du Bois Reymond, Albert, Charcot, Lombroso, Mantegazza, Morselli and Elisée Réclus. Dr. Ludwig Büchner contributes a special article on Materialism, and J. G. ten Bokkel gives many extracts from Moleschott's works illustrative of his position.

Aug. 9 being the seventieth birthday of Jacob Moleschott, the father of the modern scientific materialistic movement, the occasion has been celebrated in Holland, Germany, and Rome, where he now resides.

The results of the French Councils' general elections having been a splendid victory for the Republicans, who have won 127 seats, our Freethought friends more sedulously than ever seek to substitute civil celebrations, of birth, marriage and death for religious ones. One person proposes in the *Bulletin Mensuel* of the Ligue Anti-Cléricale to revert to the republican calendar and rename the months. In the calendar, as rearranged by Lalande, the names were taken from the characteristics of the month. January being *Nivôse*, February *Fluviôse*, March *Ventose*, April *Germinal*, May *Floréal*, June *Prairial*, July *Messidor*, August *Thermidor*, September *Fructidor*, October *Vandémiaire*, November *Brumaire*, December *Frimaire*.

The *Natal Advertiser* prognosticates that the net outcome of General Booth's exportation of a Salvationist colony to South Africa will be to very considerably swell the ranks of the criminal classes.

Col. Robert G. Ingersoll, while recently in Philadelphia on legal business, desired to see some book in the library of Girard College. It is a peculiarity of this college that it was founded with the proviso that no clergyman should ever set his foot in it, so that it was a congenial place for the Colonel to go, but what was his surprise at being stopped by an attendant at the outer entrance who told him he could not enter. Somewhat puzzled, the Colonel asked for a reason, when the attendant indicated his belief on account of the Colonel's smoothshaven, well-rounded and jovial-looking cheeks and face that he might be a priest. "The devil you say," said the Colonel; whereupon the man hastily brightened up and replied: "It's all right, sir; you can go in."

Mdme. Hedwig Henrich Wilhelmi, has gone to Spain where she will represent the German Freethinkers Union at the International Freethought Conference at Madrid, in October. Immediately after the Conference she returns on a lecturing tour to America.

The *Church Reformer* of August gives a report of the debate on religious education at the London School Board, with comments by the Rev. S. D. Headlam.

The *Catholic Weekly Register* notices the increase of civil funerals of women in France, and says it is a fact which oppresses the heart. Yes, when the women give up superstition, the hearts of the priests will suffer, and their pockets too.

Mr. Symes visits Sydney on the occasion of the opening of the new Freethought Hall. Mr. W. W. Collins also returns there. Mr. Wallace Nelson has gone to New Zealand for a while to replace Mr. Collins. We heartily wish all our old colleagues the greatest success.

Judge C. B. Waite, President of the American Secular Union, has drawn up a legal account of Sunday legislation in the various States of America, and has prepared a petition to the United States Senate upon the subject.

Newcastle members of the N.S.S. should attend the meeting of the local Branch this afternoon (Aug. 14) at 3. Mr. Selkirk, the president, will submit proposals for better organisation.

The N.E. Secular Federation's annual picnic was a great success. It took place last Sunday. Durham was the rendezvous. All the Branches supplied good contingents, the weather was glorious, and the excursionists thoroughly enjoyed themselves. Freethinkers came from as far as Stockton, where Secular propaganda has been for some time neglected. We hear there is a prospect of its revival. Persons willing to co-operate in forming a good working Branch there should communicate with Mr. W. Elcoat, 10 Brougham-street, Bridge-road, Stockton-on-Tees.

A Freethought Demonstration takes place to-day (Aug. 14) at Ilkley: The Bradford and Leeds Branches will meet there and addresses will be delivered by some of the members.

The Glasgow Branch goes on excursion to Greenock to-day (Aug. 14). The train leaves St. Enoch's station at 7.45, returning at 5 or 8. With fine weather there should be a good gathering of the "saints" to enjoy the Lord's Day.

Barnsley Freethinkers will meet at the Blackmoor's Head next Sunday (Aug. 21) at 6.30 to form a Branch of the N.S.S.

The London Secular Federation's excursion will after all yield a profit of over £4, which is a welcome addition to the exchequer. This being the dull season, very little business was transacted at the Federation's last monthly meeting. Several of the Branches made collections on July 24, as per resolution, but some omitted to do so or else to make returns. They are requested to see to the matter at once.

We are pleased to find that a good number of M.P.'s have affirmed instead of taking the oath. The list includes John Morley, John Burns, and Thomas Burt. Keir Hardie preferred swearing, and struggled with a Tory for possession of the New Testament. We have not heard whether the volume had to be rebound.

SOLOMON'S TEMPLE AGAIN.

It was objected that, in a previous article wherein I demonstrated that Solomon's temple was too small to hold all the gold and silver bullion which David had prepared solely for overlaying the carved woodwork of its walls and ceiling, I had designedly diminished the scriptural cubit from nearly 22 inches to 18 inches. As we never get any concessions from orthodox apologists, we are firmly disinclined to admit the cubit to be more than the length of a man's forearm from the elbow to the finger-tip—18 inches; see *Bible Handbook*, page 62, line 30, which is infinitely more reliable than those subterfugal explanations dished up for the stultification of illiterate Sunday-school teachers. Besides, were we to augment the cubit to 22 inches, we should have the temple almost twice as large—and consequently capable—unless we proportionally diminished the liberal value we set upon the silver—of holding not only the silver, but also the gold and a few thousand cubic yards of brass and iron. But we shall not budge an inch—we know the Christians would increase the cubit to 22 yards, if only for the sake of Noah's ship and his menagerie. But how about the giant Goliath? He would become as tall as Nelson's Column. People should beware how they play with two-edged knives.

We ask every Christian arithmetician to watch us closely, for, being unscrupulous sceptics and distorters of Bible truths, we are likely folks to be found climbing up among the millions, when we ought to be creeping among the units. In my previous dealings with this subject I have invariably expressed the spaces and bulks in cubic inches and cubic feet, which entailed the use of numbers too long for the appreciation of all but mathematicians. In this article I purpose to reduce both space and bulk to cubic yards, and thus contract the numbers into more comprehensive sizes. I shall so clearly show, as not to leave room for the thinnest edge of a doubt, that the much-boasted temple of Solomon was incapable of holding the silver alone, not to mention an amount of gold large enough to wipe out our national debt, nor huge quantities of brass and iron, of which it is said there was no end.

First. We are informed in 1 Kings vi. 2-10 that the length of the temple was 60 cubits (30 yards), the breadth 20 cubits (10 yards), the height 30 cubits (15 yards). Multiplying these dimensions together, we have $30 \times 10 \times 15 = 4,500$ cubic yards as the internal space of a magnificent temple, only equal in size to a Methodist chapel. Now for calculating the bulk of the silver.

In 1 Chron. xxii. 14 David has prepared for the house of the Lord 100,000 talents of gold and 1,000,000 (a thousand thousand, or a million) talents of silver, and of brass and iron without weight. Before entering upon the comparative bulk of the silver, it would be interesting just to glance cursorily at this fabulous *côte d'or*—gold is so attractive, especially such a lot of it—all scraped up in a poverty-stricken country like Palestine, where there were no art, science, nor manufacturers, and where the insecurity of life and property had reduced and habituated the people to the beggarly condition of living from hand to mouth. A talent of gold is the modest sum of £7,200, which, multiplied by 100,000, produces £720,000,000—a sum of gold representing a dividend for the whole Jewish population of at least £100 per head. Silver might well be *nothing accounted of in Solomon's time*. While at this *El Dorado*, let us assume that a cubic inch of gold is worth £40; then we have $720,000,000 \div (40 \times 1728 \times 27) = 386$ cubic yards of solid gold—a quantity sufficient to give the ceiling and walls of the temple a coating one foot in thickness, and would require more than a dozen of the most powerful locomotives to transfer it per rail from one place to another simultaneously. Selah. And now to return to the silver, a talent of which is valued at £150. Therefore 1,000,000 talents of silver represents the sum of £150,000,000. Befores times I have always appraised this silver bullion in question at 25 per cent. more than its nominal value, in order that our opponents might not charge us with unduly swelling out its bulk. A cubic inch of silver is not worth more than 30s.; but, to allow for any depreciation which that metal may have undergone since the time when it was *nothing accounted of*, we inversely raise £2 per cubic inch. By so doing we now have $450,000,000 \div (2 \times 1,728 \times 27) = 4,822$ cubic yards. As some junior mathematicians may wonder what the numbers 1,728 and 27 have got to do with it, I would here observe that 1,728 cubic inches make 1 cubic foot, and that 27 cubic feet make 1 cubic yard. We see now the absurdity of the biblical statement that into a space of 4,500 cubic yards there were *crammed* 4,822 cubic yards of silver, 386 cubic yards of gold, and perhaps several thousand cubic yards of brass and iron. This is *cramping* with a vengeance, and may take the cake for being the richest flim in holy writ. Further comments on this puerile story will only lessen its absurdity and disgust the intelligent, who may find food for reflection for some time.

P. W. BALDWIN.

JEWES AND CHRISTIANS.

From the Jews the Christians derived nearly all that is valuable in their religion. They have added much of pernicious fable. So far from honoring Jews as elder brethren, Christians slandered and persecuted them, with scarcely a pause of ferocity, for a full thousand years, and with varied injustice for some centuries more in the greater part of Christendom. How many English martyrs has England cruelly slain, in parallel to the single Jewish martyr (if such Jesus was), with whom Christians taunt the entire Jewish nation scattered abroad before Jesus was crucified! In my opinion (and therefore, I cannot doubt, in Jewish opinion), the four gospels are one long slander of the Jews; but that is of secondary importance in comparison to the incessant wickedness of mediæval Christianity, and the tenacious gripe of unjust Christian laws, which the efforts of Freethinkers have scarcely at last wrenched away, so as to make our Jewish brethren our equal citizens.—*Prof. F. W. Newman*, "Thoughts on Comprehensive Christianity," p. 11.

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.

TOLERANCE.

I LATELY attended, by special invitation of the orator, a lecture upon the Roman Catholic Adoration of the Virgin Mary. The lecturer was a Scotch Presbyterian, a worthy man who regards the Pope as the Beast of Revelation and the Church of Rome as the consummation of abominations. He feels that he has a special call to denounce this mystery of iniquities and therefore announced a series of lectures of which this was the first. By copious quotations from Liguori, he showed the estimate in which the Blessed Virgin was held, and then characterised those who adopted this belief as "stupid asses." After some discussion at the close of the lecture I was invited to speak. I felt "a call" to rebuke the intolerance and discourtesy of the speaker, who did not appear to me to be sufficiently enlightened to be able to call his co-superstitious "stupid asses" without reflection upon himself.

I claimed that it was no more stupid to adore Mary than to worship Jesus; in fact, I said, "if I am to worship any being I will choose a woman. She is the most lovely, refined and adorable object in the world, and I think it is more sensible to worship a woman than a man—a dead Jewess rather than a dead Jew. Besides, everything that is said in the Bible about Mary is creditable to her, whereas, according to the gospel narratives, Jesus was not a wholly admirable character. He went about killing pigs, cursing fig trees, anathematising those who didn't agree with him, and sending to hell all who didn't believe in him." By the time I got thus far three-fourths of the audience were on their feet rushing for the door and shouting "Blasphemy!" The lecturer tried to recall them and an angry altercation took place. He said he did not want me to be insulted; he was trying to save me and I was worth saving. But the meeting was hopelessly broken up, though a crowd lingered on the sidewalk in earnest consultation. Unawares I had got into a hornets' nest of Orangemen, and Dr. Fulton's Catholic haters. Never have I seen more intense feeling depicted than that marked upon the faces of some of these followers of the "meek and lowly Jesus." I saw in them the type of the fanatical persecutors of past ages, and the evidence of the same spirit which fortunately modern civilisation has so curbed that it now expends its vindictiveness in passing Sunday laws, oath and blasphemy regulations, prohibition, so-called obscenity laws (secretly aimed at liberal and physiological literature), and various other restrictive measures, all seeking to force the minds of the minority to follow the channel of thought favored by the majority and to conform their habits to the professed standard of the ruling mass.

The effect of this scene upon my mind was to make me feel the folly and impolicy of abusing and hating those who differ from us. Men of the highest attainments hold very diverse opinions upon religious and social topics, and we need to learn, while valiantly uttering our own convictions, to respect liberty of thought in others, and to cultivate that spirit of love which alone can enable us to work effectively in exerting an influence for good. If we would mingle more with those whose opinions are opposed to ours, we should often see how, from their point of view, their conclusions are not as unreasonable as they seem. Circumstances have enforced certain premises and principles upon their minds, and, admitting these, they are logically carried to positions that seem utterly absurd from our standpoint. Thus, a Catholic, who admits the founding of the Church by Christ through Peter, and who believes in the supernatural, finds no miracle absurd and no dogma of the Church incredible. He is intelligent and rational in his deductions. The most gifted and brilliant man that I have ever known, the late Dr. T. Sterry Hunt, although for many years a Freethinker, when nearing his end in full possession of his faculties, felt himself drawn in sympathy back to the communion of the Catholic Church to which he had once been converted, and of his own accord he sent for a priest to administer extreme unction, and he died in the fold of the Church. His Protestant relatives refused to let him have a Catholic burial, and a Protestant minister said a prayer over his remains. A more incongruous act could hardly have been perpetrated, for if Dr. Hunt had any especially strong religious antipathy, it was to the Evangelical Protestant creed.

In Sterne's *Sentimental Journey in France* occurs this passage: "The advantage of travel is to see a great quantity of men and of usages; this teaches us a mutual tolerance; and a mutual tolerance teaches us a mutual love."

While we should courageously utter our opinions, it is incumbent upon a Freethinker to admit the equal right of those opposed to him, and cultivate that spirit of tolerance which is the product of the union of Liberty and Love.

—*Secular Thought.*

ROBERT C. ADAMS.

THE MAHATMAS.

THEY tell us that in Eastern climes
Far, far from sight and sound,
Great teachers, mighty souls, exist,
Whose eyes have pierced the darksome mist
That wraps our being round.

They tell us that these mortals stand
Superior and alone;
That good and true and pure and just
They've risen from the common dust
To heights to us unknown,

They tell us that they live and move
As angels might, serene;
That standing in the van of time,
Their visions have superb, sublime,
And not by others seen.

The mysteries of Life and Death
Of earth and sea and sky,
The whither, whence, the when, and how,
The silent past, the troubled now,
All open to them lie.

The masters they of time and space,
Endow'd with wondrous powers,
Their stores of wisdom deep and vast,
Their knowledge true and ever fast
Increasing thro' the hours.

And men whose brows are lined with thought,
Who search for truth and light.
Who have no sordid aim in view,
Cry out—"What Heaven has given to you
We yearn to hear aright.

"Years, years, long years we've thought and wrought
With purpose high, sincere;
Have toil'd and striven for human-kind
Within the realms of life and mind,
Yet grope in darkness drear.

"Teach us, great masters, what ye know,
And give us peace and rest;
Expound the secrets of the skies,
The glorious golden mysteries,
That baffled have the best."

But in their Eastern cells afar
The great Mahatmas dwell,
And unto poor humanity
What thought and life and death may be
They come not forth to tell.

Then henceforth leave them to themselves,
To th' silence of their hills!
Not they the teachers real and good,
The improvers of our race and land,
The curers of our ills!

Leave, leave them to their occult dreams,
Their vain imaginings,
Their tangl'd talk, their hidden lore;
They cannot interest any more,
Nor touch our bosom-strings.

Not these, the sages great and good,
To whom we honor give,
Who for our human woes can feel,
Who to our higher thoughts appeal,
And teach us how to live.

But those who toil within our midst
In no dark cloud are furl'd,
Who, finding truths that burn and breathe,
Keep not, nor hide them, but bequeath
To all the living world!

W. D. B.

The parson, who was dilating on the evils of intemperance, announced that "A young woman in my neighborhood died very suddenly last Sunday while I was preaching the gospel in a state of intoxication."

BOOK CHAT.

Shelley is pretty well to the fore in the August magazines. The *Century* gives a portrait of the poet in his youth, and a sketch of his work by G. E. Woodbury. The *Magazine of Art* supplies a fine illustration by Mr. Ricketts, and a poem by Mr. Theodore Watts; a young woman is bound to a stake and flames around her—symbolising the hate of Shelley's Christian enemies—blossom into roses as they touch her garment. The *Bookman* has a Shelley centenary number with an Estimate of Shelley as a Poet, by William Watson.

In Mackenzie's *Nineteenth Century* (a school-book much in favor) appears the following: "The primary object of Voltaire's attack was Christianity as represented by the Roman Catholic Church of his day." This is simply an attempt to deceive the readers, and it is certainly not to the credit of the publishers.

At a time when the name of Shelley is being deluged with very pretty rhetoric, we do a real service by calling attention to the very cheap edition of the poet's *Essays and Letters*, published by Walter Scott, Warwick-lane. It is one of the very best volumes in the "Camelot Classics," and is sold at one shilling.

As the Shelley cult is likely to take the proportions of a boom and birthday books are an established institution, there is no need to apologise for referring our readers to the *Shelley Birthday Book and Calendar*, compiled by J. R. Tutin, published by Fisher Unwin.

Mr. A. P. Sinnett records that Madame Blavatsky was once offered a good sum from a Leipsic publisher to write romances. We always thought she would have been worth the money. She left behind her some *Nightmare Tales*, reviewing which the *Weekly Dispatch* says: "We suspect that, had Madame Blavatsky lived, the tales would have remained unpublished. In them she evidently poked fun at the nonsense she taught and at the disciples whom she persuaded to take that nonsense for sense. She had a keen sense of humor, also much prudence; but in both her followers appear to be deficient. Were it otherwise, Mrs. Besant would not have chosen, or would not have been allowed, to give this shilling volume to the world."

Mr. Arrowsmith, the enterprising Bristol publisher, has put out a neat little book on *The Supernatural*, by Dr. Lionel A. Weatherby, with a chapter on Oriental Magic, Spiritualism, and Theosophy, by J. N. Maskelyne, the well-known entertainer. Dr. Weatherby explains many famous ghost stories under the headings of "Sane Sense Deceptions" and "Insane Sense Deceptions." Mr. Maskelyne also does his share in exposing modern humbug. Of spiritists he roundly asserts "there does not exist, and there never has existed, a professed medium of any note who has not been convicted of trickery or fraud." Madame Blavatsky he puts down as a gross, sensual, and vulgar adventurer without quoting the details of her career given by Dr. Eliot Coues in the *New York Sun* of July 10, 1890, which would have amply supported this opinion. Mr. Maskelyne explains some of the most important tricks of the mediums, such as slate-writing, table-turning, thought-reading, and spirit-photography, and also the feats of the Magnetic Lady.

A Dissenting attack on Church iniquities is being issued from the office of the *Christian World*. It is entitled *In Darkest Ecclesiastical England*, and will be illustrated by leading artists. This volume is to deal with—1, Parsons in General; 2, the "Popery" Parson versus the "No Popery" Parson; 3, Our Bishops and Deans, and How we Make them; 4, Only a Poor Curate; 5, Only a Poor Perpetual Curate; 6, The Rev. Mr. Catchpenny and Mrs. Catchpenny. It will also treat concerning tithe, glebe, mortgages, dilapidations, taxes, ecclesiastical fees, and the Royal Bounty of Queen Anne.

We clip the following from the *Buffalo News*: "What Ingersoll thinks about literature and authors will be read with some interest. He was caught while his mind was off of religion and politics the other day in a western city, and gave his opinion freely as follows: 'The greatest novelist, in my

opinion, who has ever written in the English language,' said Mr. Ingersoll, 'is Charles Dickens. He was the greatest observer since Shakespeare. He had the eyes that see, the ears that really hear. I place him above Thackeray. Dickens wrote for the homes—for the great public. Thackeray wrote for the clubs. The greatest novel in our language—and it may be in any other—is, according to my idea, *A Tale of Two Cities*. In that are philosophy, pathos, self-sacrifice, wit, humor, the grotesque and the tragic. I think it is the most artistic novel that I have read. The creations of Dickens' brain have become citizens of the world.' Ingersoll spoke of Emerson as a fine writer, but he does not class him with the first. Hawthorne's *Scarlet Letter*, he said, was his best effort. Walt Whitman will hold a high place. His poem on the death of Lincoln, entitled 'When Lilacs Last in the Dooryard Bloomed,' is the greatest ever written on this continent. 'Boston was at one time the literary centre of the country,' continued he, 'but the best writers are not living there now. Edgar Fawcett is a great poet. His 'Magic Flower' is as beautiful as anything Tennyson has ever written.'"

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.] Secretaries may send in a month's list of lectures in advance.

LONDON.

Battersea Secular Hall (back of Battersea Park Station): Sunday and Tuesday at 8.15, social gatherings.
Bethnal Green—Libra Hall, 78 Libra-road, Roman-road: 8, W. Campbell, F.T.S., "Astrology." Monday at 8.30, C. Cohen's science class (physical geography). Saturday at 7.30, dancing.
Camberwell—61 New Church-road, S.E.: 5.30, debating class, Elocution; 7.30, Mrs. Louisa Samson, "Immortality."
East London—Swaby's Coffee House, 103 Mile End-road: 8, W. J. Ramsey, "St. Paul on Tour." Members' quarterly meeting at the Radical Association, Durham-row, Stepney, at 2.
Hall of Science, 142 Old-street, E.O.: 7.30, Touzeau Parris, "Butler's 'Analogy': an Atheistical Argument."
West Ham—350 Barking-road: Monday at 8, committee meeting.

OPEN-AIR PROPAGANDA.

Battersea Park-gates: F Haslam, 11.15, "The Fall of Man and the Atonement"; 7, "Heroes and Martyrs of Freethought."
Bethnal Green (opposite St. John's Church): 11.15, S. H. Alison will lecture.
Camberwell—Station-road: 11.30, C. J. Hunt, "The Pagan Origin of Christianity."
Clerkenwell Green: 11.30, G. Standring, "An Hour with the Holy Bible"; members' meeting after the lecture.
Columbia-road (near Columbia Market), Hackney-road: 11.15, C. J. Steinberg will lecture.
Edmonton (corner of Angel-road): 7, C. Cohen will lecture.
Finsbury Park (near the band-stand): 11.30, debate between P. Leon Dorbusch, A.K.C., and A. Guest on "Fifty Proofs that the Bible is not the Work of a Perfect Being"; 3.30, C. J. Hunt, "The Bible God."
Hammersmith (corner of The Grove): Thursday at 8, C. J. Steinberg, "Miracles."
Hammersmith-bridge (Middlesex side): 6.30, H. Courtney, "Peace on Earth."
Hyde Park (near Marble-arch): 11.30, J. Rowney, "The Resurrection."
Kilburn—Salisbury-road (near Queen's Park Station): 6.30, Mr. St. John, "Heredity."
Lambeth—New Cut (corner of Short-street) 11.30, a lecture.
Leyton (open space near Vicarage-road, High-road): 11.30, T. Thurlow, "What must I do to be Saved?"
Midland Arches (near Battle Bridge-road): 11.30, E. Calvert, "History of the New Testament."
Mile End Waste: 11.30, J. C., "Lux Mundi."
Old Pimlico Pier: 11.30, H. Snell will lecture.
Plaistow Green: 6.30, W. J. Ramsey, "Elijah the Tishbite."
Regent's Park (near Gloucester-gate): 3.30, H. Snell, "Lay it all on Jesus."
Tottenham (corner of West Green-road): 3.30, Stanley Jones will lecture.
Victoria Park (near the fountain): 11.15, C. Cohen will lecture 3.15, debate between Rev. Mr. Brennan and C. Cohen on "Is the First Chapter of Genesis Inspired?"
Walthamstow—Markhouse Common: 6.30, S. H. Alison, "The Bible and Modern Thought." Thursday at 7.45, C. Cohen will lecture.
Wood Green—Jolly Butchers-hill: 11.30, Stanley Jones, "The Fall of Man."

COUNTRY.

Bristol—Shepherd's Hall, Old Market-street: 7, a meeting.
Derby—20 Newland-street: 7, Mr. Whitney, "Some Reasons Why."
Failsworth—Secular Hall, Pole-lane: G. W. Foote, 3, "Men, Women, and Children: the Real Trinity"; 6.30, "The Religion of Humanity."
Hull—St. George's Hall, 6 Story-street: 7, Sam Standring, "St. Paul and the Unknown God."
Liverpool—Oddfellows' Hall, St. Anne-street: Charles Watts, 11, "The Throne and the Church"; 3, "Materialism and Spiritualism Tested by Reason"; 7, "The Blight of Superstition."
Manchester N. S. S., Secular Hall, Rusholme-road, Oxford-road, All Saints': 6.30, W. Heaford, "God's Peculiar Way with Man."

Newcastle-on-Tyne—Eldon Hall, 2 Clayton-street: 3, members' fortnightly meeting, address by the President.
 Pendlebury Secular Hall; 3, Mr. Fisher, "Persecution; Ancient and Modern."
 Plymouth—100 Union-street: 7, a meeting.
 Portsmouth—Wellington Hall, Wellington-street, Southsea: 7, Mr. Hore, "The Age of the Earth."
 Sheffield—Hall of Science, Rockingham-street: 7, lecture or reading by Local Gentleman.
 South Shields—Capt. Duncan's Navigation School, King-street 7, business meeting.

OPEN-AIR PROPAGANDA.

Bradford—Sackville-street (the top), Westgate: Monday at 7, W. Heaford will lecture.
 Huddersfield—Market Cross: Saturday, Aug. 13, at 8, W. Heaford, "Freethought: its Rights and Disabilities."
 Hull—Corporation Field: Sam Standing, 11, "The Bible on Labor"; 3, "Jonah, and other Tales"; if wet weather, in the hall, 6 Story-street.
 Manchester—Stevenson-square: W. Heaford, 11, "The Delusive Consolations of Religion"; 3, "A Better Creed than Christianity"; if wet weather, in the hall.
 Pendlebury Fair Ground; 10.30, Henry Mills, "The Present Political Aspect."

LECTURERS' ENGAGEMENTS.

TOUZEAU PARRIS, 28 Rivercourt-road, Hammersmith, London, W.—Aug. 14, Hall of Science. Sept. 4, Birmingham; 11, Hall of Science.

H. SNELL, 6 Monk-street, Woolwich.—Aug. 14, m., Westminster; a., Regent's Park; 21, m., Camberwell; 28, e., Camberwell Sept. 4, m., Mile End Waste; a., Victoria Park; 11, m., Bethnal Green; a., Regent's Park; 18, m., Wood Green; 25, m. and e., Camberwell.

O. J. HUNT, 48 Fordingley-road, St. Peter's Park, London, W.—All mornings booked to September.

ARTHUR B. MOSS, 44 Credon-road, Rotherhithe, London, S.E.—Aug. 14, m., Bishopstoke; a., Southampton; 21, Westminster. Sept. 4, Camberwell; 11, Clerkenwell; 18, Westminster; 25, Manchester. Oct. 2, Camberwell; 9, Westminster.

C. COHEN, 154 Cannon-street-road, Commercial-road, E.—Aug. 11, Walthamstow; 14, m. and a., Victoria Park; e., Edmonton; 18, Walthamstow; 21, m., Mile End; a., Regent's Park; e., Edmonton; 25, Walthamstow; 28 m., Battersea; a., Victoria Park; e., Walthamstow.

SAM STANDING, 106 Oxford-road, All Saints' Manchester.—Aug. 14, Hull; 21, Blackburn; 28, Manchester.

C. J. STEINBERG, 103 Mile End-road, E.—Aug. 14, m., Columbia-road; 28, m., Bethnal Green.

S. H. ALISON, 52 Chant-street, Stratford, E.—Aug. 14, m., Bethnal Green; e., Walthamstow; 21, m., Victoria Park; 28, m., Wood Green. Sept. 4, m., Columbia-road; 11, m., Lambeth; e., Swaby's; 18, m., Battersea; a., Finsbury Park; 25, m., Bethnal Green. October, all mornings booked.

T. THURLOW, 34 Wetherell-road, South Hackney.—Aug. 14 and Sept. 11, mornings, Kingsland Green.

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