

The Free Thinker

Edited by G. W. FOOTE.]

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[PRICE ONE PENNY.

"When once we gain some real notion of the extent and the unconquerableness of our ignorance, it is a very broad and restful thing to depend upon; you can throw yourself upon it at ease, as on a cloud, to feast with the gods. You do not thenceforward trouble yourself, nor anyone else, with theories, or the contradictions of theories; you neither get headache nor heartburning; and you nevermore waste your poor little store of strength, or allowance of time."

—JOHN RUSKIN.

MR. HERBERT SPENCER ON PAUL AS A LIAR.

A VERY pretty storm has been raised (and settled) by the *Independent* and *Nonconformist*. It raged around the Apostle Paul and Mr. Herbert Spencer, who both come out of it apparently not a penny the worse. Mr. Spencer has a chapter on Veracity in his recently published *Principles of Ethics*, wherein he cites Paul as a violator of this virtue, and remarks that "apparently piquing himself on his craft and guile," he "elsewhere defends his acts by contending that 'the truth of God hath more abounded through my lie unto his glory.'" This roused the ire of the *Independent*, and Mr. Spencer was informed that his extraordinary aspersion on the Apostle's character was wholly without justification. Whereupon the great Evolutionist replied that two days before receiving the *Independent* he had "sent to the printer the copy of a cancel to be substituted for the page in which there occurs the error you point out." Mr. Spencer goes on to say that he had trusted to assistants, and been misled on this particular point as on a few others.

"The inductions contained in 'The Principles of Sociology' and in Part II. of 'The Principles of Ethics' are based mainly, though not wholly, upon the classified materials contained in 'The Descriptive Sociology,' compiled between 1867 and 1881 by three University men I engaged for the purpose. When using this compilation of facts concerning sixty-eight different societies I have habitually trusted to the compilers. For even had I been in good health, it would have been impossible for me to verify all their extracts from multitudinous books. In some cases, where the work was at hand, I have referred for verification; and have usually done so in the case of extracts from the Bible; now and then, as I remember, rejecting the extracts given to me as being not justified by the context. But in the case in point it seems that I had not been sufficiently careful. It is only after reading the preceding chapter that it becomes clear that the passage I quoted must be taken as part of an argument with an imaginary interlocutor, rather than as expressive of St. Paul's own sentiment. It must, I think, be admitted that the presentation of the thought is a good deal complicated, and, in the absence of the light thrown upon it by the preceding chapter, is liable to be misunderstood. I regret that I misunderstood it."

This explanation and apology are, of course, most satisfactory. Saint Paul is cleared by Mr. Spencer's certificate, and the *Independent* remarks that this is "a noble codicil to Mr. Spencer's chapter on

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Veracity." Nay, it professes high "admiration" for him as the "greatest living philosopher of the English-speaking race." Thus the "Comedy of Errors" is followed by "All's Well that Ends Well," and the curtain falls on compliments and embraces.

It really seems a shame to disturb this pleasant harmony, but we feel compelled to say something to the *Independent* and to Mr. Herbert Spencer about the Apostle Paul.

In the first place we must observe that Mr. Spencer's "erroneous" statement about the great Apostle, while it may be an *aspersion*, is certainly not *extraordinary*. It has repeatedly been made by the Apostle's adverse critics, and even by some of his admirers. Without citing a long list of them, we will give two—both English, and both judicial. Jeremy Bentham, the great reformer of our jurisprudence, wrote a work entitled *Not Paul, but Jesus*, in which he contends through four hundred pages that Paul was mercenary, ambitious, and an unscrupulous liar. To call a single passage from Bentham's book is like picking one raisin from a rich plum-pudding. Every sentence is an indictment. And surely after Bentham's trenchant performance it is idle for an English journal to pretend that there is anything "extraordinary" in Mr. Spencer's "erroneous" accusation. The other judicial writer, also belonging to the English race, is Sir Richard Davis Hanson, who was for some time Chief Justice of South Australia. In his able work on *The Apostle Paul* there is an admirable summing-up of the hero's character. After admitting Paul's ability, persistence, courage, and other virtues, he remarks—"But these are accompanied by what in an uninspired man would be called pride, jealousy, disdain, invective, sophistry, time-serving and intolerance." This is pretty strong; and "sophistry" and "time-serving" are only euphemisms for *lying* in preaching and practice.

So much for the *Independent*, and now for Mr. Spencer. It must be observed that one part of his "erroneous" statement *cannot* be repudiated. The Apostle distinctly says, "being crafty, I caught you with guile" (2 Cor. xii. 16), so that "piquing himself on his craft and guile" must stand while this text remains in the Epistle. Mr. Spencer allows that, in the third of Romans, the "presentation of the thought is a good deal complicated," and "liable to be misunderstood"; but, if read in the light of the preceding chapter, the passage about lying to the glory of God "must be taken as part of an argument with an imaginary interlocutor." Perhaps so; but *which* is speaking in the seventh verse? Paul or his opponent? Mr. Spencer does not say. Yet this is the real point. To us it seems that *Paul* is speaking. Of course it may be urged that he is speaking ironically. But this is not Mr. Spencer's contention. It is not clear what he *does* mean; in fact, he seems to have caught a little of Paul's confusion.

We have no objection to reading the seventh verse of the third of Romans in the light of the preceding chapter. But should it not also be read in the light of Christian history? Have honest openness and

strict veracity been *ever* regarded as essential virtues in the propagation of the Gospel? And why is it likely that Paul, of all men, escaped the contagion of fraud, which has always disgraced the Christian Church? The ordinary Protestant imagines, or pretends, that the Catholic Church has been the great impostor; but this is nonsense to the student of early Christianity. Mosheim remarks that the "pernicious maxim" that "those who make it their business to deceive with a view of promoting the cause of truth were deserving rather of commendation than of censure," was "very early recognised by the Christians." Bishop Ellicott similarly observes that "history forces upon us the recognition of pious fraud as a principle which was by no means inoperative in the *earliest ages* of Christianity." Middleton likewise reflects that the bold defiance of honesty and truth displayed by the Fathers of the fourth century "could not have been acquired, or become general at once, but must have been carried gradually to that height, by custom and the example of former times, and a long experience of what the credulity and superstition of the multitude would bear." So far, indeed, were the "*earlier ages*" from being remarkable for integrity, that Middleton says there never was "any period of time" in which fraud and forgery more abounded. The learned Casaubon also complains that it was in "the *earliest times* of the Church" that it was "considered a capital exploit to lend to heavenly truth the help of invention, in order that the new doctrine might be more readily allowed by the wise among the Gentiles." Mosheim even finds that the period of fraud began "not long after Christ's ascension." And it continued, without a blush of shame on Christian cheeks; not growing worse, for that was impossible; until Eusebius, in the fourth century, remarked as a matter of course that he had written what redounded to the glory, and suppressed whatever tended to the disgrace of religion.

Now if fraud was practised as a pious principle in the very earliest ages of Christianity; if it continued for as many centuries as it could pass with impunity; if it was so systematic and prolonged, and carried to such a height, that Herder declared "Christian veracity" fit to rank with "Punic Faith"; what right has anyone—even a Christian editor—to place Paul above suspicion, or to find a "monstrous" blunder in his being accused of lying, especially when the historic practice of his co-religionists seems to many persons to be more than half countenanced by his own language?

We are not concerned to *press* the charge of lying against St. Paul. There have been so many liars in the Christian Church that one more or less makes very little difference. On the other hand, we cannot accept Mr. Spencer's certificate without reservation. He admits that Paul's language is obscure; and perhaps a little obscurity is to be expected when a man is replying to an accusation which he is not wholly able to rebut.

G. W. FOOTE.

INGERSOLL.

UNCONSCIOUS artist, tracing pictures fair
Of heaven on earth's dull canvass, with a light
Unborrowed from the wisest past, this bright
World paradise pervading everywhere;—
A buoyant minstrel, who his untaught air
Attunes to thoughts immortal, and whose might
Is eloquence and earnestness for right—
To win mankind to courage from dark fear.
An alchemist, turning life's grey to gold;
With sympathy obscuring selfishness—
Man's worth made better than the gods of old.
All this he is whose great heart seeks to bless;
Exponent of a truth all faith above
Whose brush, whose song, whose art, whose creed is love.

YOM KIPPUR.

MOST ancient nations had a day for the expulsion of evils or demons, and wiping off old sins. The ringing of bells at Christmas Eve and New Year is probably a survival of these customs. Among the Jews fasting was deemed an efficacious method of appeasing the wrath of their dreadful deity, and a day was set apart for abstinence from all pleasures of sense, including according to the Mishnah (Yoma viii.), sexual intercourse. The Jews were to afflict themselves, and the Rabbis took good care they did. *Yom Kippur*, the tenth day of *Tishri*, is called "the Day" *par excellence*, and its celebration, like the Pagan festival of Christmas among Christians is so firmly fixed that many of the chosen race who at other times of the year take no notice of religious observances rigidly fast on *Yom Kippur*, in the hope of thus clearing off all scores. If we read the account of the institution of *Yom Kippur* in Lev. xvi., we shall see the people played no more than a passive part. They had to rest, fast, and afflict themselves, under penalty of being cut off for ever. They had no share in the rites. These were left to the *cohens*. Priestcraft prevailed, and prevails still, in the Jewish church, as in all other churches, with the possible exception of that of Islam. And what were the priestly rites prescribed? Far different from those now in use. Not even reading from the Thorah was mentioned, but sprinkling of blood of animals provided at the public cost, burning of incense, and the taking of two goats, one for Jahveh, the other sent sin-laden to Azazel, the prince of fabled demons, in the wilderness. This custom brings *Yom Kippur* strictly in line with the before-mentioned savage and Pagan days of expiation. In "Scapegoats" (*Freethinker*, Nov. 9, 1890) I showed how this custom was linked with the superstition of killing the God, which lies at the core of Christianity.

Mr. J. G. Frazer, in his *Golden Bough*, gives many instances of savage ideas of atonement, and getting rid of evils, by transferring them to some substitutionary sacrifice. Thus when a Moor has a headache, he will sometimes take a lamb or a goat and beat it till it falls down, believing that the headache will thus be transferred to the animal. After an illness a Bechuana king seated himself upon an ox, which lay stretched on the ground. The native doctor next poured water on the king's head till it ran down over his body. Then the head of the ox was held in a vessel of water till the animal expired; whereupon the doctor declared, and the people believed, that the ox died of the king's disease, which had been transferred to it from the king. A Malagasy was informed by a diviner that he was doomed to a bloody death, but that possibly he might avert his fate by performing a certain rite. Carrying a small vessel full of blood upon his head, he was to mount upon the back of a bullock; while thus mounted, he was to spill the blood upon the bullock's head, and then send the animal away into the wilderness, whence it might never return. At the cleansing of a leper and of a house suspected of being tainted with leprosy, the Jews let a bird fly away (Lev. xiv. 7, 53), doubtless with the idea of carrying off the evil. In the central provinces of India, when cholera breaks out in a village, the priests parade the streets, taking from the roof of each house a straw, which is burnt with an offering of rice, glue, and tumeric, at some shrine to the east of the village. Chickens daubed with vermilion are driven away in the direction of the smoke, and are believed to carry the disease with them. If they fail, goats are tried, and last of all pigs. In some places the scapegoat is a man. A Hindu cure for the murrain is to hire a man of the Chamar caste, turn his face away from the

village, brand him with a red-hot sickle, and let him go out into the jungle, taking the murrain with him. He must not look back. On one day of the year some of the people of the Western Himalayas take a dog, intoxicate him with spirits and bhang or hemp and, having fed him with sweetmeats, lead him round the village and let him loose. They then chase and kill him with sticks and stones, and believe that, when they have done so, no disease or misfortune will visit the village during the year. In some parts of Breadalbane, Scotland, it was formerly the custom on New Year's Day to take a dog to the door, give him a bit of bread, and drive him out, saying, "Get away, you dog. Whatever death of men or loss of cattle would happen in this house to the end of the present year, may it all light on your head."

The principal feature of *Yom Kippur*, as ordained in Leviticus, was the annual sending of the sin-laden goat into the wilderness. Of course this is not possible now. In modern times, according to Buxtorf, the Jewish head of the house sacrifices a white cock on the eve of *Yom Kippur*. He knocks the cock thrice against his own head, saying, "Let this cock be a substitute for me, let it take my place; let death be laid upon this cock, but a happy life bestowed on me and on all Israel." Then he cuts its throat and dashes the bird violently on the ground. The flesh of the cock was formerly given to the poor.* The cock is called Kapparah, or atonement.

Dr. Alexander McCaul, in his *Old Paths*, cites for the ceremony a religious manual, published at Breslau in 1830. It says: "The father of the family first makes the atonement for himself, then for his family, and afterwards for all Israel. Whilst moving the atonement round his head, he says, 'This is my substitute. This is my commutation. This is my atonement. This cock goeth to death but may I be gathered and entered into a long and happy life, and into peace.'"[†] McCaul argues that the ceremonies of *Yom Kippur*, the day of atonement, are a proof of the felt want and necessity of the atonement of Christianity. We should say they rather offer evidence that both the Jewish and Christian systems of atonement are remnants of ancient heathen savagery.

Keeping *Yom Kippur* is still believed to be a clearing-off of past sins. A collective confession of sins, unmentioned in the Bible, is a part of the service. The Jews on this day indeed confess themselves miserable offenders; but then they expect to clear off not only their sins but all past vows and promises. This interpretation of the *Kol Nidre* is of course repudiated by the modern Rabbis, but it is founded on the actual words. The blowing of the Shofer, or magic horn, concludes the service of *Yom Kippur*. So much do the chosen people regard the Day of Atonement as clearing off old scores, that many who do business every Sabbath, and even eat pork, yet scrupulously keep the black fast. When they give up this superstition, as the meetings at the Hall of Science show many are doing, they have usually become complete Secularists.

It is an impressive and pitiable sight to see the Jews bowing their heads and beating their breasts, while the women in the gallery are sobbing and fainting with fatigue, as the preacher admonishes them that "on this day He will decide who shall live and who shall die; who shall be killed by fire and who by water; who shall perish by the sword and who by pestilence." To visit a synagogue at *Yom Kippur* impresses one with the stern character of Jewish religion and Jehovah. As Heine said—

Our great God of love knows nothing,
Never to affection yields he.
For he is a God of vengeance,
And as God his thunders wields he.

Nothing can his wrathful lightning
From the sinner turn or soften,
And the latest generations
For the fathers' sins pay often.

What a faith to need sacrifices, fasting, and self-affliction in order to ward off imaginary dangers coming from an imaginary deity!

J. M. WHEELER.

THE SECULAR VALUE OF KNOWLEDGE.

It is quite true, as Lord Bacon says, "Knowledge is power," but the value of that power depends upon the nature of the knowledge acquired, and also upon the method adopted in its application. Power is frequently made a source of terror to individuals, and of disaster to the public good. All power, to be beneficial, should be controlled by well-trained intelligence and regulated by an honest desire to make it subservient to the well-being of mankind in general. The same truth applies to knowledge; for, to make it a real service to the world, it is necessary that it should be guided by education, and used, not for the benefit merely of one class, but for the advantage of the whole of society. It was the non-observance of this important consideration that marred the old civilisations. They lacked the true democratic principle, which sanctions the conferring upon the whole of the community the advantages of the agencies of personal and national advancement. The result was that for ages knowledge was limited to the few, and thus the many were deprived of its educational force. Hence, old notions were revered, and a persistent opposition was manifested to all new ideas.

The great error of theologians upon the subject of knowledge is that they confound it with education, whereas the former does not necessarily involve the latter. To be educated, a person must possess knowledge, but that of itself is not sufficient. True education, when properly understood, consists in the ability to use what is known wisely, so that it may tend to the improvement of all who are recipients of its influence. This is the Secular idea of the value of all knowledge—that its regulation by intellectual discrimination is indispensable to the free and elevated condition of those who possess it. As John S. Mill observes: "It depends upon the habit of looking into public transactions, and on the degree of information and solid judgment respecting them that exists in the community, whether the conduct of the nation as a nation, both within itself and towards others, shall be selfish, corrupt, tyrannical or rational and enlightened, just and noble." Wherever the erroneous conception of knowledge here mentioned has obtained, the people have remained uneducated, and there the clergy have been all-powerful. It is so to-day in Italy, Spain, and Ireland. In these countries the cultivation of the physical sciences has not only been neglected by the masses, but the study of them has been purposely prevented by the priests who have always discouraged education except so far as it served the interest of the Church. Even in England at the present time many of the clergy and their supporters endeavor to neutralise the legitimate effects of knowledge by seeking to employ it only in support of prevailing notions to which they are wedded, and upon which their influence depends. The persistent efforts which these theological teachers are continually making to prevent the rate-supported schools from giving pure and unadulterated secular knowledge to the populace, would appear incredible if it were not that the disguises under which they try to enforce their

* Synagogica Judaica, c. 25.

† Picard, *Ceremonies et Coutumes Religieuses*, vol. i., p. 118, gives the words as, Ce coq, sera échangé pour moi, il expiera mes péchés, il souffrira la mort, et je jouirai de la vie.

obstruction are transparent to the friends of social progress.

The importance of correctly understanding the proper value of knowledge will become more and more manifest in proportion as the shams of theology are replaced by the realities of humanity. As education and refinement continue to permeate society the advantage of our neighbors being well instructed and properly disciplined will be more than ever recognised, inasmuch as it will be seen that the happiness or misery of the whole of society is affected by the condition of its individual members. Persons in whom selfishness predominates may wish to exclude others from common benefits, but a large and enlightened view of self-interest will assure the practical observer of men and things that the comfort and harmony of the individual can best be secured by the many being educated and properly trained in all the amenities of a well-regulated life. Giving a new interpretation to an old maxim, it will be found wise to serve others the same as we serve ourselves, and then the service of others will be useful to ourselves. As the tranquillity of the individual is almost impossible in a disturbed state of society, so the peace and joy of a cultivated mind are impaired by the atmosphere of ignorance and of mental gloom. It may be that "self-preservation is the first law of nature," but it should not be deemed the only one, and therefore in seeking our own happiness we must not ignore that of others. When men regard their own good, careless of the misery and sufferings of their neighbors, their conduct differs only in degree from that of savages. The efforts of reformers should be to endeavor to reconcile all interests of the human family, making manhood and womanhood the links to unite each and all in the bonds of harmonious friendship. In such a union men should not be forced to grovel in the mire of ignorance, or to waste their lives in the darkness of mental serfdom, but all should have an opportunity to share the advantages of education and to have their careers illuminated by the sun of intellectual freedom. Stupendous as the achievement of such a task may appear, until it is in some measure accomplished that security will be absent upon which the welfare and happiness of the race depend.

A striking feature in the history of mankind is the non-recognition among them of any common interests. Knowledge has been turned to the advantage of the few, instead of having been employed for the welfare of the many. The working classes have as a rule, until recently, been deprived of the materials of a genuine education. The main purpose of rulers, both kings and priests, has been to keep the "hewers of wood and drawers of water" in a state of absolute subjection, to confine the advantages of education to the upper and middle classes, and thus the "lower classes" have been treated as if they were beasts of burden. The king, the clergy, and the aristocracy have been deemed as constituting the nation, while the people have not been recognised except so far as they were made to contribute to the wealth and pleasure of their so-called superiors. True, there have been instances when nature's heroes have revolted against such kingly and priestly arrogance and injustice. Towards the close of the last century the people of France and America rose in rebellion against their saintly rulers, and shook off the yoke of their oppressors. This gave an incentive to reforms among the toilers of this country, who commenced the struggle for untaxed knowledge and manifested a determination to use its advantages for emancipating themselves from the bondage of an ignorance imposed upon them by a heartless aristocracy and a dominating theology. Their newly-acquired knowledge taught them that in a well-regulated community all who had the direction of social or national movements should be selected by the persons whose interests were involved, and that it was essential that both the govern-

ment and the people should be guided by the same principles and actuated by the same motives. A free and well-informed nation is better calculated to ensure its own good than if it were compelled to act under the imperative commands of a few self-appointed dictators.

Secularism teaches that in order to realise this improved state of society, all knowledge that enables us to know ourselves and to learn our relations to the Universe by which we are surrounded, should be at the command of all who are able to acquire it; that education in our public schools should be kept free from all theology, and that every member of the community should deem it a duty to participate in that instruction which would exalt his mind, ennoble his nature, add dignity to his conduct, and thus shed a halo of mental glory upon his character through life. This would be in the highest sense the realisation of the true value of Secular Knowledge. CHARLES WATTS.

MAN-LIKE GHOSTS.

WHEN man had outgrown, in its cruder forms, the worship of fetishes, he transferred his attention to the worship of anthropomorphic or man-like gods. Most, if not all, the races of men pass through this phase of belief in their upward march towards civilisation. It is true that the priests of every religion claim that their god is a "spirit"; but the moment they attempt to describe him they show that he is man-like in all his characteristics; in point of fact, that he is nothing more than a great man-like ghost. Shakespeare, who understood the important truth that uncultivated man must have concrete ideas, made all the ghosts in his plays assume human form. The ghost of Hamlet's father was every inch a king; all the ghosts in *Macbeth* were male or female. Shakespeare would have seen at once the folly of depicting even the "foggy member of the Trinity" as a sort of celestial pigeon. The Jews, in common with the Egyptians, the Baalites and others, believed in a god who was for all practical purposes an amplified human being—a gigantic, man-like ghost. But although these gods were man-like, many of them were formed after very grotesque fashions. Some of them, like the giants in fairy tales, had several heads, and an equal number of legs and arms, for ignorant people always imagined that a large number of limbs and an ugly and ferocious appearance were evidences of extraordinary strength.

Some of these beings, as Colonel Ingersoll said in his magnificent *Oration on the Gods*, "were armed with clubs, others with swords and shields; some with bucklers, and some had wings as a cherub; some were invisible, some would show themselves entire, and some would only show their backs; some were jealous, some were foolish, some turned themselves into men, some into swans, some into bulls, some into doves, and some into Holy Ghosts and made love to the beautiful daughters of men; some were married—all ought to have been—and some were considered as old bachelors from all eternity; some had children, and the children were turned into gods and worshipped as their fathers had been." Col. Ingersoll gives the following graphic description of the personal appearance of these gods. "The negroes," he says, "represented their deities with black skins and curly hair. The Mongolian gave to his a yellow complexion and dark, almond-shaped eyes. The Jews were not allowed to paint theirs, or we should have seen Jehovah with a full beard, an oval face, and an aquiline nose. Jove was a perfect Greek, and Jupiter looked as though a member of the Roman senate. The gods of Egypt had the patient face and placid look of the loving people that made them. The gods of the northern countries

were represented warmly clad in robes of fur; those of the tropic were naked. The gods of India were often mounted upon elephants; those of some islanders were great swimmers; and the deities of the arctic zone were passionately fond of whale's blubber. Nearly all people have carved or painted representations of their gods, and these representations were, by the lower classes, generally treated as the real gods, and to these images and idols they addressed prayers and offered sacrifices" (*Oration on the Gods*, p. 10).

No god was ever better morally than the people out of whose imagination he grew. If they entertained low and brutal ideas respecting their fellows, so did their god. Were they in favor of slavery? So was their God. Of polygamy? So was their God? Of aggressive warfare? So was their God. And these gods were as ignorant of science and as destitute of the true principles of morality or justice as their ignorant manufacturers. Jehovah, the Jewish God, was not one whit superior to other members of the ghostly fraternity. He was a jealous God, who "visited the sins of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation" (Exodus xx.) He detested competition in his own line of business, and gave instructions for the merciless slaughter of all persons who sought to induce their friends and relations to worship other gods. He was in favor of the Jews making war upon inoffensive and defenceless peoples, making slaves of the "heathen round about them," slaughtering the married males and females among the Midianites, and preserving the unmarried women in order to satisfy the brutal and lustful nature of a horde of soldiers (Numbers xxxi.) The most atrocious vices and crimes committed by the Jews had the sanction and approval of their God. Happily for the human race, these gods were merely figments of the imagination; otherwise the civilised man would find reason to condemn and curse them, instead of offering them, as too many are prone to do, their homage and respect.

But the fertile imagination of our ignorant ancestors not only led them to manufacture gigantic man-like gods, but gigantic man-like devils also. These devils were the natural enemies of the gods. Whatever form of government the gods established they were "agin it." They preached revolutionary doctrines, and headed unsuccessful revolts against the gods and their angels. These devils were generally bold and magnanimous in their behavior; they often sympathised with men, and were invariably more merciful in their conduct towards them than the gods. Although theologians paint these devils in black, and the gods in bright colors, the devils were invariably superior in moral qualities to the gods.

No devil was ever guilty of such barbarous folly as to condemn the majority of mankind for an alleged sin in which they had no part. No devil was ever guilty of commanding men to rip open the bodies of pregnant women and murder defenceless babes. No devil ever caused an earthquake, a famine, or a pestilence; no devil ever sent disease to decimate a race, or a flood to drown every creature that had life except a favored few; no devil ever made a hell in which to burn untold myriads of human beings. It was the good gods who did these things; the devil's deeds were generally harmless or unimportant.

The Bible devil was the first advocate of learning, the first practical teacher. He prompted Adam and Eve to partake of the fruit of the tree of knowledge. He therefore put them on the sure road of inquiry, doubt, investigation—knowledge. He was the first reformer. The gods were against knowledge, and in favor of blind belief. The devil was in favor of scepticism in things doubtful, in all things absolute intellectual liberty.

He was the first Freethinker. And yet the Bible devil, like the gods, is only a ghost after all—a

mere "baseless fabric of a vision"—which, as the human mind expands and unfolds, becomes more and more shadowy and ethereal, until ultimately, as Shakespeare says, it "leaves not a rack behind."

ARTHUR B. MOSS.

BOOK CHAT.

The prolific Rev. Sabine Gould has followed up his *Byeways of History* with another piece of book-making entitled *Freaks of Fanaticism*. We wonder if even the freak of Joanna Southcote—who took the dropsy for a child-Messiah—outdoes that of Isaiah, who went naked three years for a sign (Is. xx. 3), or the freak of Jesus cursing a fig-tree for not bearing figs when "the time for figs was not yet" (Mark xi. 12-21).

Mr. W. H. Burr, the author of *Thomas Paine was Junius*, is of course unconvinced by Mr. Conway's biography, which leaves no room for his theory. Mr. Burr devotes over four columns of the *Ironclad Age* to a reply to Mr. Conway. Most persons will be satisfied with the distinctive characters exhibited by Paine and by "Junius." To those who refuse to accept the Sir Philip Francis hypothesis, "Junius" must remain an enigma.

The September number of the American *Popular Science Monthly* continues Prof. Andrew D. White's powerful indictment of the Church for its warfare with science. In this number he shows the Bible-founded opposition of theologians to the belief in the antipodes. The number also contains one of Prof. Huxley's trenchant papers on "The Decline of Bibliolatry."

The first edition of James Thomson's (B.V.) *Satires and Profanities* is at a premium. It was published at half-a-crown. As much as eight shillings is now asked for a good copy.

Among the announcements of Messrs. Macmillan are a new volume by Lord Tennyson, entitled *Akbar's Dream*, and another by Mr. George Meredith, entitled *The Empty Purse; and other Poems*. This is a suggestive title, and we look forward to something in Mr. Meredith's best satirical vein.

Messrs. Williams and Norgate (Mr. Herbert Spencer's publishers) announce a work on *The Supernatural*, by J. H. King, dealing with its origin, nature, and evolution; also a work by H. C. Hiller, *Against Dogma and Free Will*, in which (the *Academy* says) the author tries to show from Weismann's investigations the impossibility of free will, the certainties of science, and the uncertainties of metaphysics.

Dr. Edward White has taken up a topic of the day in his sermonising book on *The Higher Criticism*. Dr. White thinks the authority of Jesus Christ is sufficient to settle all critical problems. But as Christ says Moses wrote of him, when he did nothing of the kind; as he quotes Daniel the prophet as saying things not written till hundreds of years after Daniel; and as he endorses the story of Jonah and the whale, his evidence, so far from settling the claims of the Old Testament, unsettles his own.

Among autumn announcements is a new translation of Spinoza's *Ethic*, *The Nationalisation of Health*, by Havolock Ellis, and *The Documents of the Hexateuch*, translated and arranged in chronological order by W. E. Addis. The last mentioned will be published by D. Nutt; the two former by T. Fisher Unwin.

Professor Huxley's books are expensive and not uniform, which is very regrettable. We are happy, however, to see that Messrs. Macmillan and Co. will issue his collected writings in five volumes, similar to their collected editions of John Morley and Charles Lamb. The form is handy, and the printing is all that could be desired.

Messrs. Hachette et Cie. have published a French life of *Sébastien Castellio* by M. Ferdinand Boisson. Castellio (1513-1563) was a Freethinking Frenchman, who became a Greek professor in Switzerland. His great claim to remembrance is that he wrote in favor of toleration at the time when Calvin, Beza, and the rest of the reformers were persecuting Servetus. This made him incur their enmity. Both wrote bitterly against him, and Beza called his work the most

impious ever produced from hell. Castellio denied the descent of Christ into hell, and said the Song of Solomon was only a Jewish love-poem. His opposition to the Calvinistic doctrines of predestination, grace, and reprobation also led to his condemnation by the Church of Basle, where he was professor.

A NEW LITANY.

FROM a vinegar priest on a crab-tree stock,
From a sermon one hour long by the clock,
And from Salvation Sal in her bonnet and frock,
Good Lord deliver us!

From archbishops with £15,000 a year,
And cloudy heaven that's not so near
As the bogey devil and hell of fear,
Good Lord deliver us!

From Ritualist robes and Evangelical cant,
From orthodox Christian Evidence rant,
With lots of scandal but reason scant,
Good Lord deliver us!

From preachers who turn up the whites of their eyes
And affect all the pleasures of earth to despise,
With their Bible legends and gospel lies,
Good Lord deliver us!

That it may please thee to suppress
All priestly lies and wickedness,
With those who brought us to this mess,
We beseech thee to hear us Good Lord!
LUCIANUS.

FIGHTING THE LORD.

A Mexican paper publishes the following decree from the Alcalde of Castenas: "Considering that the Supreme Creator has not behaved well in this province, as in the whole of last year only one shower of rain fell; that in this winter, notwithstanding all the processions, prayers, and praises, it has not rained at all, and consequently the crops of Castenas, on which depend the prosperity of the whole department, are entirely ruined, he decrees—Art. 1. If within the peremptory period of eight days from the date of this decree rain does not fall abundantly, no one will go to mass nor say prayers. 2. If the drought continues eight days more, the churches and chapels shall be burned, and missals, rosaries, and other objects of devotion will be destroyed. 3. If finally, in a third period of the eight days, it shall not rain, all the priests, friars, nuns, and saints, male and female, will be beheaded. And for the present permission is given for the commission of all sorts of sin, in order that the Supreme Creator may understand with whom he has to deal."

It is time that there should be an end of the cant which lifts up its hands at the crimes of Republicans and Freethinkers, and shuts its eyes to the crimes of kings and churches—we ought to condemn, wherever we find it, whether on the side of our adversaries or on our own, all readiness to substitute arbitrary force for the processes of ordered justice.—*Rt. Hon. John Morley, M.P., "Miscellanies," vol. ii., p. 111.*

I claim that I do know something of the course of reform in America during the last twenty-five years, and that inch by inch in that work of reform the men who stood out of the church have been the teachers, and the men inside the learners. I say no more than the wiser and truer among them have said of themselves. It is a confession of their own. Take the anti-slavery movement, the temperance movement, the woman's suffrage movement. Step by step, in each of these movements, the church has been obliged to be driven into the work by the whips outside. How was it when Garrison began to work in Boston, and in his trusting innocence went to all the clergymen and found that none of them would follow him? So he took the whole weight of the cross himself, and came outside and planted it in the highway.—*T. W. Higginson.*

OBITUARY.

Thomas Reynolds, who died in the London Hospital at the age of 43, desired to have a secular funeral. Mr. Haslam accordingly officiated at Ilford Cemetery on Friday, Sept. 23.

Joseph Howdon, an old Freethinker, died recently at Brandon Colliery, county Durham. A Secular Burial Service was read over his grave by Mr. John Hume and Mr. Joseph Close.

ACID DROPS.

The Rev. Archibald G. Brown, of the East London Tabernacle, in a recent sermon exclaimed, "I look at the Churches, and I see they have the dry rot in them." We quite agree with him. There is an awful lot of rot in the Churches, and most of it is dreadfully dry.

"I look at the ministry of men," Mr. Brown continued, "and I see that they are educating infidels wholesale; I behold this blessed Word of God, derided, criticised, cut up with a penknife." Shocking, to be sure! Once upon a time "infidels" used to burn the blessed Word of God; now they only cut it up with a penknife. Oh, what a fall was there, my countrymen!

"Young Atheists" is the heading of a pious yarn in the *Christian Commonwealth*. It tells of a young traveller, who didn't know if there was a God, being rebuked and put to shame by a man of business who saw God Almighty somewhere up the Rocky Mountains while looking out of the train windows. Well, it was a long way from London, and perhaps it wasn't true.

By the way, the *C. C.* might set its wits to work on another problem connected with the Rocky Mountains. How did that couple of grisly bears travel from that part to Central Asia to join Noah's menagerie? And how did they travel back again? We pause for a reply.

"Fire!" is a dreadful cry in a crowded building, especially in Christian countries, where most people are going to blazes; a fact that ought to make them used to the idea of vivification, though somehow it doesn't. Even the Jews, the chosen people of God, are apt to be funky at the thought of going to Abraham's bosom too soon. There was a terrible panic in a New York synagogue on September 23. A lighted candle set fire to a curtain; this caused a stampede; the chosen men trampled upon the chosen women, the stairs were blocked, and four persons were killed, besides a considerable number who were seriously injured.

Talmage is right. These Atheists are always committing suicide. Here is the Rev. H. Holmes, rector of Garthorpe, Melton Mowbray, found drowned in a well near his residence. His hat and coat were on the ground at the well's mouth.

Ada Collins, of Newark, disappeared. Her hat, blue dress, and bodice have been found near the canal bridge. A letter in her handwriting has reached her aunt. It says—"I am the greatest sinner in the world, and I have committed suicide."

A correspondent of the *Hastings and St. Leonard's Observer* has been asking if it was not Napoleon who said, "If there was no God it would be necessary to invent one." Another correspondent gives the correct reply that the saying is taken from Voltaire, so often styled an Atheist by Christians. But he does not mention the Atheist retort that "This is exactly what has been done."

Miss Ruth, a Bible young lady, crept into a barn where a male relative was sleeping. This doesn't seem a very edifying story for young ladies of the nineteenth century. Still, if you get a thousand or two a year for finding in the Bible what isn't there, it is astonishing what you may make of a story like Ruth's. Here is Archdeacon Farrar, for instance, telling English maidens to "learn from the story of Ruth the sanctity and sweetness of the pure, virtuous, unstained domestic life." We don't know whether Archdeacon Farrar has any daughters. If he has, we hope they won't take his advice.

"Pure, virtuous, unstained" is a good sample of Archdeacon Farrar's penny-a-line eloquence. It sounds better, but is just as tautological as our old friend "free, gratis, for nothing."

The Lord, in his wrath, sent a typhoon last week which devastated the Liu-Kiu Islands, destroying five thousand buildings, besides wrecking sixty junks and drowning a vast number of their occupants. Many on shore were killed by falling buildings, and vast areas of crops were damaged.

Already there are threats of another famine in Russia following the cholera. The Lord seems to have a special disregard for Russia. Some think it is for the bad treatment of his chosen race; but then the Jews have been among the chief sufferers from cholera and famine. Others ascribe it to the piety of Russians towards their saints. Jehovah was always a jealous god.

God's house at Tarporley took fire last Sunday morning during divine service. The interior of the choir vestry was destroyed.

Birmingham does not want the luxury of a bishop. Although one of the best livings in the city was to be devoted to his income, the cute Brummagem would not shell out to make up a decent sum, only a small part of what was asked for being offered, though the guarantors knew their money would be returned if the required amount was not forthcoming.

The Church for its own interests so holds with Conservatism, that the position of a Liberal clergyman is made extremely uncomfortable. Under these circumstances the Rev. J. Frome puts forward a plea for a "Liberal Churchman's Union," in which both clergy and laity may unite for protection against political persecution. Another comment on "how these Christians love one another."

The Church Missionary Society, with its four secretaries and headed by Sir John Kennaway, M.P., waited last week on Lord Rosebery to urge the Government to back up their missionaries in Uganda against the natives and the Roman Catholics. We were glad to observe that they got but scant encouragement from the Foreign Secretary.

A church not far from Edinburgh has just received a memorial window put in with stained glass. The old beadle liked to find fault with everything in which he had no hand, and when the minister came to see it he turned to John, and said, "What do you think of it, John?" "Weel, sir, in my opinion they might a been contented wi' the glass as God made it."

There seems to be a very pretty split at Spurgeon's Tabernacle. One party wants Dr. Pierson to preach, and the other wants young Mr. Thomas Spurgeon. When the factions have fought out their battle, the winner at any rate will say the result is the Lord's decision.

A. Copping, jun., who dates from St. John's, Ipswich, writes to the *Suffolk Chronicle* that he expects to see the ruin of his country if the Ipswich Museum is open on Sunday. He also thinks that because it is not well attended on weekdays, when the working classes cannot attend, this is a good reason for debarring them from visiting it on their one day of leisure. Surely A. Copping, jun., must be a very young man indeed.

Mr. Frank Spence calls on all the Christians of Manchester to unite in an "Ekklesia" which he is running. One of the objects of the Ekklesia is to give "a solid Christian vote at all our municipal and parliamentary elections." We expect all our municipal and parliamentary elections. We expect the Christians of Manchester, when united, would be a good deal like the three hundred foxes united by Samson, according to the veracious chronicle in the fifteenth chapter of Judges.

"Perplexed," writing from Gainsburgh to the *Retford and Gainsburgh News*, on the question why young men do not go to church, says that the population of that town has doubled since 1871, and only one church and one chapel have been built since. The attendance at the existing buildings is very limited. "Perplexed" is inclined to put it down to Saturday recreations and Sunday papers.

What superstition remains in Ireland after its centuries of Christian teaching is exemplified in the case of James Mitchell, who recently murdered his mother and pulled out her tongue, near Ballinasloe. He informed the police that a dream induced him to commit the crime. On several occasions, the last on the night of the fatal occurrence, he dreamed that if he killed his mother and pulled out her tongue he would be the richest man in the land.

Father J. Aloysius O'Connor, Roman Catholic priest, has been remanded on bail at Luton on a charge of indecently assaulting Ellen Stokes, a girl under thirteen. The accused was arrested at Folkestone.

William Nathaniel Rose, a well-known member of the Lowestoft Salvation Army Corps, has been fined £10 or one month's imprisonment for indecent behavior to a little girl. The Rev. D. Dickson, vicar of Christ Church, appeared for the defence, and gave the prisoner an excellent character.

The Rev. Herbert Reynolds, priest vicar of Exeter Cathedral, took a holiday with his wife and family at Dawlish, and left forgetting to settle his little bill. Surely the godly should provide for their spiritual pastor and master; instead of which Mr. Reynolds is committed for forty days.

The *Church Times* of Sept. 23 reprints the following from the *Lincoln, Rutland, and Stamford Mercury* of May 30, 1879:

"EXTRAORDINARY PRAYER.

"At a recent Primitive Methodist prayer meeting, held at _____, a local preacher, in the course of his address to the Deity, made use of these words: 'O Lord, these are bad times, and there's a good many people got naught to eat, because they have got no bread. There's a good many people out of work because they've got no work to do. And, O Lord, they tell me that it's all through an old Jew what lives in London. Slay him, O Lord! If I slay him they'll hang me. But do Thou slay him, O Lord, for they can't hang Thee.'" Of course, the old Jew was Benjamin Disraeli.

Twenty-eight of the Welsh members were returned as Church Disestablishers. Only two are supporters of the Church.

To forward Christian re-union you are invited to join the Association for Promoting the Unity of Christendom. The object is declared to be "To unite in a bond of intercessory prayer, members both of the clergy and laity of the Roman Catholic, Greek, and Anglican communions." The means are the subscription of one guinea and the support of your prayers. The guinea is necessary, but you may pray where and how you please.

A Port Elizabeth paper reports a lecture on the Bible by the Rev. J. T. Lloyd, who wound up with the following lines:

O Book! Life's guide! how shall we part,
And thou so long seized of my heart?
Take this last kiss, and let me weep
True thanks to thee before I sleep.

Our printer's devil got hold of this and parodied it thusly:—

O Book! Bad guide! we now must part;
Too long I've held thee to my heart.
Not one last kiss; I'll go and weep
The fool I was before I sleep.

England is in a first-rate condition. We have no starving or distressed people. Our money is therefore free for all sorts of fancy objects; amongst others, the purchase and maintenance of the bogus sepulchre of Christ near Jerusalem. £4,000 is being raised for this sublime object. One of the subscribers is the Archbishop of Canterbury. But he doesn't commit himself beyond his subscription. Very likely the tomb isn't Christ's. There are several tombs of Christ at Jerusalem. Still, it is policy to keep the ball of superstition rolling; and every £4,000 raised means good pickings for some meritorious gentlemen.

Major Conder, the Palestine explorer, writing to the *Times*, says that this tomb was probably a burial-place for pilgrims. It has not even the form of the ancient Jewish sepulchres, but resembles the tombs of the Greek Christians of the ninth century. Major Conder's letter should settle the hash of this attempt to raise £4,000 from the pious British public, but we doubt if it will; for, as Butler said,

Doubtless the pleasure is as great
Of being cheated as to cheat.

Why should not the English Church have a Christ's tomb of its own in Jerusalem. Now the railway from Jaffa is open

there is money in it. Long ago the Christians carried on long and bloody wars to recover the tomb of their Savior, and only got a bogus fraud after all. Now we would suggest as more in accordance with the modern Christian spirit the formation of a Christ's Sepulchre Company, Limited, to explore and purchase good Biblical sites in Palestine and to exploit the pilgrims thereto.

Dr. Parker is out of favor with the *Christian World*, which doesn't understand his flaming indignation at the plagiarism of the Congregational Union's secretary after "his own performances in the same line." The City Temple oracle is advised not to compel the reopening of "a page of history" which cannot but be characterised as "discreditable to him." A very pretty squabble!

Dr. Duncan's Baptist Chapel, Hornsey Rise, was, says the *Evening News and Post*, "used for disgusting disclosures by an ex-Mormon priest, who gave a lecture upon Utah, entitled "Hell upon Earth." Says the *E. N.*: "The details of the lecture are quite unfit for publication, and when relating the washing process and anointing of 100 Mormon men and women in a nude state, many women left the chapel in disgust, while boys and girls stopped to giggle. The lecturer took the opportunity to well push the sale of his books and pamphlets."

The pig-headed superstition of the Dutch Boers in the Transvaal, who refused to take any concerted action against the locusts on the ground that they were a plague sent by God, contrasts with their active countrymen, who, as far back as in the reign of Charles II. of Spain, proposed by a canal to render the Tagus navigable from Lisbon to Madrid. On the proposal being laid before the council of Castille, they consulted the bishops and returned for answer, "That if God had chosen it to be so, he would have made it so; and therefore they begged leave to reject the proposal." The Dutch ought long since to have learnt from the Spaniards that those get on best who are least hampered with the God-superstition.

The Evangelicals who are dissatisfied with the Lincoln judgment are going in for a revision of the Prayer Book. If they succeed in this, it will be the letting out of waters. Earl Chatham said the Church of England had Calvinistic Articles, a Popish Prayer Book, and an Arminian clergy. The clergy alone have altered, and are now mainly Ritualistic and Jesuitical.

The Clergy Discipline Act came into force on Tuesday, Sept. 27. Its purport is the more easy removal of clergymen guilty of certain offences; and of these the sexual offences are chiefly specified, those being the men of God's besetting sins. To examine why this is so would be a curious inquiry. On the surface, it is evident their profession often gives them access to women. But the proportion of such offences among physicians is far smaller. Some explanation may lie in so much of religion being merely perverted sensualism.

While the Ritualists are at the Church Congress at Folkestone the Evangelicals will hold a Protestant Congress at Portsmouth. Feeling between High and Low Church has risen almost to fever heat since the Lincoln judgment and Bishop Perowne's overtures to the Dissenters at Grindelwald.

The Rev. E. Leaton Benkinsopp, writing to the *Church Times*, points out that some fifty years ago there was formed, amid great religious excitement, a Society for the Union of Protestant Christendom, which called itself 'The Evangelical Alliance.' Protestant ministers came from all quarters of the world. Enthusiastic meetings were held in Exeter Hall, and resolutions passed by acclamation, declaring that sectarian differences were to come to an end, and all Protestants to become united into one vast body. Half a century has passed, and there are now more sects than ever.

In an article on the Bishop of Worcester at Grindelwald, the *Church Times* betrays a bitter sacerdotal spirit. It is full of invective against "schism," and "the heretical taint," etc. None but episcopally ordained ministers have the right to give the sacrament, and no instructed Churchman would so much as dream of receiving the sacrament at the hand of nondescript ministers, etc. The *C. T.* concludes: "Into the scandal of the Communion service held by the Bishop of

Worcester, when he admitted many to Communion who neither were, nor were willing to be, confirmed, we can say but little here. The event is too painful to dwell upon, but we can assure his lordship that his action so far from promoting unity will prevent all right-minded men, Churchmen at least, from sympathising with his efforts and, besides doing harm to tender consciences, will cause many to consider whether a bishop who manifests such lawlessness can retain their allegiance and respect."

Mrs. E. Cady Stanton is never tired of giving one little leaf from her experience. When she was a young girl, the ladies of her church raised a fund for the education of a young man for the ministry. He finished his theological studies, and, returning, preached his maiden sermon in his native town from the text: "Let your women keep silence in the churches."

A journalist has been tried at Trèves for oppugning the Church by denying the miracles wrought by the holy coat. Among the witnesses against him was Bishop Korum, who boldly swore that miracles did occur among the excited pilgrims. The audacious heretic has been sentenced to nine weeks' imprisonment.

Commenting on this case, the *St. James's Gazette* observes: "Let us imagine the successive terms of imprisonment that might have awaited Mr. Frederic Harrison, for instance, had the offence of slandering the Church been known to our law; the Exchequer might be replenished with the fines, and the gaols filled with the bodies of some very distinguished persons. The pages of the *Nineteenth Century* and *Fortnightly Review* would provide the Old Bailey with a monthly addition to its calendar that could hardly fail to edify the public. As for Mr. Huxley, his books would long ago have been burned by the hangman. Instead of being a Privy Councillor, he would have been making mats or wheeling granite at Dartmoor."

The writer ought to know that there are yet laws on the statute book by which Prof. Huxley could be degraded from being a Privy Councillor; indeed, to make him one is to go fair in the teeth of the Blasphemous Libel Act of William III., which Freethinkers are desirous of seeing removed from the statute book.

Cremation is gradually spreading in Europe, but of course the clericals are against it, and especially the Catholic Church. It was denounced in a Papal decree in 1886. Citing this document, the *Berlin Germania* says: "No Catholic can participate in any discussion of such a question. We may leave that to Freemasons and to those who hate Catholicism. The hatred against Christian morals, belief, and dogma is the chief cause of the cremation movement."

The Lady Mayoress of London paid a visit the other day to Fleet-road Board School, Hampstead. She was accompanied by the Lord Mayor and General Moberly. "Well," our readers will say, "what of that? Doesn't Hampstead stand where it did?" Of course it does. Everything stands just where it did. The Lady Mayoress's visit, in itself, is a matter of infinitesimal importance. Still, there is something to be said about her object in going. She went to distribute the Scripture prizes; and this little fact shows what efforts are made by the "upper classes" to instil Bible religion into "lower class" children. Nothing approaches it for efficacy in keeping the "mob" quiet, tame and contented.

HOW TO HELP US.

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

MR. FOOTE'S ENGAGEMENTS.

Sunday, Oct. 2, Oddfellows' Hall, St. Anne-street, Liverpool: at 11, "Who Wrote the Bible?"; at 3, "Holy Absurdities"; at 7, "The Doom of the Gods."

Friday, October 7, Secular Hall, New Brompton, Chatham, at 8,

October 9 and 16, Hall of Science, London; 22, Bolden Colliery; 23, Newcastle; 26, Spennymoor; 27, Blyth; 28, Ebchester; 30, South Shields.

Nov. 6, Camberwell; 13 and 20, Hall of Science; 27, Manchester.

Dec. 4, Grimsby; 11 and 18, Hall of Science, London.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

MR. CHARLES WATTS' ENGAGEMENTS.—Oct 2, Hall of Science; 9 and 16, Birmingham; 19, 20 and 21, Aberdeen; 23, Glasgow; 25 and 26, Belfast; 30, Edinburgh. Nov. 8, Chester; 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.

A RUSSIAN.—None of our books or pamphlets are likely to pass the censorship in Russia. It would be a waste of time for you to translate them, unless they can be circulated surreptitiously.

ATAJ wishes to know the newsagents nearest to Harley-street, W., where this journal can be obtained. Can any reader inform him?

W. T. LERKEY.—Thanks for cuttings. See paragraphs.

SKEPTOMAL.—We does not deny the existence of a God, and we do not affirm it. An Atheist is "without God," because he knows nothing of such a being, and because he sees the fallacy of the arguments employed to prove such a being's existence.

YARMOUTH.—J. Headley, 76 George-street, sells and advertises the *Freethinker*.

J. CLOSE.—See obituary notice.

R. G. LEES.—See "Sugar Plums."

A. BUTTERWORTH.—Thanks for cuttings. We noticed Price Hughes's little commercial prayer last week.

JAS. STEWART.—The alleged discoveries concerning Servetus, said to have been issued in 1844, were unknown to or disregarded by Dr. R. W. Willis, who in his book on *Calvin and Servetus* goes very fully into the matter. It is doubtful if the sale of the papers on "Ancient Mysteries" would recoup cost of reprinting.

JOSEPHUS.—We cannot carry on arguments in this column. Read Holbach's *System of Nature*, Mill's *Three Essays*, Bradlaugh's *Plea for Atheism*, Buchner's *Force and Matter*, and Holyoake's *Trial of Theism*.

JOSEPH BROWN, secretary N.E. Secular Federation, acknowledges:—Chester-10-Street Branch, 12s. 1d.; West Auckland Branch, 6s.; Ebchester Branch, 5s.

C. E. SMITH.—Thanks for memoranda. The suggestion shall be considered. Pleased to hear you say that "*Comic Sermons* are splendid, and a fine antidote to the delirious slush of theological writers like W. T. Stead and Hugh Price Hughes."

H. ALLISON (Liverpool).—You were answered nonsensically. The New Testament does teach slavery; that is, it takes the institution for granted, indirectly sanctions it, and never says a word against it. Paul sent a runaway slave back to his master; and the text "servants obey your masters" should read "slaves obey your owners."

E. H. LLOYD.—Lecture Notices for the weekly list must be sent on separate slips of paper.

J. H. WATERS.—Shall appear.

W. JACKSON.—Mr. Foote does not publish his lectures. Buchner's *Force and Matter*, and a powerful chapter in the *System of Nature*.

P. W. BALDWIN.—Received.

J. W. GOTT, 2 Union-street, Bradford, who is bent on pushing the sale of the *Freethinker*, will supply local newsagents with copies for retail sale at the rate of ninepence per dozen.

W. D. McSICCAR.—We hope the Nottingham Branch will pull itself together for a good winter's work.

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 Toufel—Liberty—Liberator—Progressive Thinker—Flaming Sword—Secular Thought—Modern Thought—Twentieth Century—Correspondenz blatt des Deutschen Freidenker Bundes—Für Unsere Jugend—Freethinker's Magazine—Truthseeker—Western Figaro—Clarion—Church Reformer—Ironclad Age—Birmingham Daily Argus—Suffolk Chronicle—Eastern Daily Press—Echo—Retford and Gatesburg News—Watts's Literary Guide—Glasgow Evening News—Eastern Province Herald—Manchester Examiner and Times—Church Times—Morning Leader—Independent Pulpit.

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.

WEST HAM FREETHOUGHT.

FOR some time I have known of trouble in the West Ham Branch of the National Secular Society. More than this, about the *past*, I do not care to say at present. On Sunday, September 18, at a members' meeting, not very numerously attended, the Branch resolved to sever its connexion with the N.S.S. A notice of this was sent to another Freethought journal, but not to the *Freethinker*. It was sent to Miss Vance without a word of explanation, and no complaint has ever been made to the Executive. This sort of thing cannot be permitted. Malcontents will not wreck N.S.S. Branches in such easy fashion. Despite the resolution of Sept. 18 the West Ham Branch still exists. I shall go down there, and, if necessary, call the actual members around me, get the Branch renovated, and see if it cannot be restored to its old strength. I was making arrangements to do this immediately, but as Miss Colville, the secretary, is willing to call a meeting to reconsider the matter, I will take the milder course. The time and place of this meeting are not yet fixed. It will be definitely announced in next week's *Freethinker*, and I will attend it and confer with the members face to face.

G. W. FOOTE
(President, N.S.S.)

SUGAR PLUMS.

The *Freethinker* ran out of print again last week, and a few orders could not be executed. We have printed a somewhat larger edition of the present issue. Our friends throughout the country should make a fresh attack on newsagents now the winter season is opening. Our circulation would rapidly improve if newsagents would only do us justice. The thing is to get them to show copies for sale, and if possible to display a contents-sheet.

"FREETHINKER" SUSTENTATION FUND.—(To enable us to maintain this journal at its present size and price until its increasing circulation reaches the paying point).—T. Grindrod, 5s.; An Admirer, 5s.; R. Freeman, 2s. 6d.

Mr. Foote visits Liverpool to-day (Oct. 2) after a long absence. His lectures will be delivered in the Oddfellows' Hall, which has just been redecorated and is now more comfortable and attractive.

Mr. Foote's visit to Bristol was most successful. All the lectures were well attended, the hall being nearly full in the morning, full in the afternoon, and densely crowded in the evening. Mr. Foote met with an enthusiastic welcome, and the lectures were evidently much enjoyed. One gentleman came thirty miles to the meetings. He had never heard the President of the N.S.S. before, and he says he will now "die happy." One noticeable feature of the meetings was the presence of a number of bright intelligent ladies, who followed the lectures with the keenest attention.

There was discussion and questioning after each lecture. Some of the questions, however, were very wide of the subject, and the opposition was either trivial or confused. The professional champions of Christianity prefer to answer Mr. Foote in his absence. One of them, who did not attend a single meeting, had the walls already posted with placards, announcing three reply lectures on Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday evenings. He probably drew on his imagination for information. Perhaps he also drew on his memory for arguments.

The Bristol Branch now numbers sixty members, and we hope it will reach to a hundred during the winter. Ordinary meetings are held every Sunday in a large room and special lectures are delivered monthly in the hall. The Branch has a very zealous and capable secretary in Mr. Keast.

Now that the Bristol Branch is well set upon its legs, Mr. Foote will see what can be done for Plymouth, where there

are a good many Freethinkers, although their local organisation has for some time been languishing. This is partly owing—perhaps chiefly—to the loss of St. James's Hall, a large and handsome building situated in the principal thoroughfare. While it was owned by Mr. Snowdon it was always available for Freethought lectures, but it was closed to our party when it became the property of a company. Recourse was had to St. George's Hall, which is rather out of the way, besides being an unpleasant place for public speaking. We understand that a more suitable hall can now be obtained; and Mr. Foote hopes to pay Plymouth a visit early in the new year.

There is a town in the Midlands where Freethought propaganda should be carried on more actively. We refer to Northampton. Mr. Bradlaugh wisely abstained from lecturing there on theology, as he represented the borough in Parliament. But the old order is changed. It is now advisable, nay necessary, to push forward our special work in Northampton. Mr. Foote will be happy to deliver a course of Freethought lectures there if a suitable hall can be obtained. He invites the local Branch to see to the matter, and communicate with him as soon as possible. If they find themselves unable to do anything, he will see if an agent sent down from London can set the ball rolling.

The Birmingham Branch held a social gathering on Monday evening in honor of Charles Bradlaugh's memory. Brief speeches were delivered by Messrs. Watts, Baker and Ridgway. There was a good muster of local Freethinkers.

Mr. Watts had a capital audience last Sunday evening at the Hall of Science. It was large and enthusiastic. The lecture, on "The Blight of Superstition," was evidently appreciated. A good-natured discussion followed between the lecturer and the Rev. Dr. Duffy, who stated that, if possible, he shall attend the hall this evening (Oct. 2) and again do battle with Mr. Watts.

Mr. Watts commences the Sunday morning lectures at the Hall of Science to-day (October 2), when he takes for his subject "The Aristocracy and the People: the Coming Conflict." His evening subject will be "The Death of Jehovah," and as the Rev. Dr. Duffy is expected to be present to oppose, a large audience will no doubt assemble.

The *Birmingham Weekly Mercury* of last Saturday (Sept. 24) gives a two column descriptive article on the recent meeting in the Birmingham Town Hall, when Mr. Charles Watts lectured on "The Religion of the Future." The writer says, "The audience was estimated at two thousand five hundred, and this was probably very near the mark." It being recorded that Mr. Daniel Baker "opened the proceedings with a neat explanatory speech," our colleague receives the following attention: "Mr. Watts, the missionary of the National Secular Society, is a cultured, comfortable Englishman, of genial manner, portly of mien, rosy of complexion, of softened angles, of rounded curves, of insinuating address, a practised speaker, an admirable tactician, an able debater."

A fair and lengthy report of Mr. Watts's lecture is then given, and the article concludes thus:—"The lecture was well received, and the audience rapturously applauded the finish. The platform and orchestra were occupied by well-dressed people, many of them women and children, whose appearance would have done no discredit to a conference of bishops, and whose conduct was conventionally perfect, save for one eccentric individual, who showed his approval by continually shaking his head, as if surprised to find how little there was in it. The meeting was in many respects suggestive, and gave rise to the consideration of strange possibilities of which, when I reached home, I saw a long vista, vaguely visible in the clouds emanating from the judicious hookah."

The National Secular Society's *Almanack* for 1893 is on the stocks. Miss Vance has sent out the usual circular to be filled in and returned by the Branch secretaries. These circulars should be sent in to her as soon as convenient; certainly before October 15. The *Almanack* will be published about the middle of November, and will contain some new and interesting features.

Since the *Almanack* became the Society's property its sale has increased, and as it is kept during the whole year by a great many purchasers, it is an excellent advertising medium. Those who wish to advertise in the new issue should communicate with Miss Vance or Mr. Forder.

Miss Vance asks us to request Branch secretaries not to use members' forms in sending in renewals. This practice has sometimes been the cause of duplicate certificates being made out and forwarded.

Miss Vance is trying to organise a Choir in connexion with the London Hall of Science. She has some names of persons who are willing to take part in this enterprise, and she will be glad to receive more as soon as possible. Letters can be addressed to her at 28 Stonecutter-street, or she can be seen personally any Sunday evening after the lectures.

As the N.S.S. is entering on a new year's tenancy at the Hall of Science, the annual tickets for the front seats at the Sunday evening lectures are becoming renewable. The front seats are a shilling, and the yearly tickets are a guinea, or a guinea and a half for a double ticket for lady and gentleman. We hope a good many of these tickets will be taken. Some of our well-to-do friends, who live out of town, and can attend but seldom, should purchase tickets for the good of the cause.

In October the Sunday morning lectures will be resumed at the Hall of Science. The admission will be free as before, and the lectures upon all sorts of interesting topics. The week-night lectures will also be resumed on Wednesdays instead of Thursdays.

Branches of the N.S.S. requiring any use of the Hall of Science premises will please apply to Miss Vance, on behalf of the Organisation Committee. There seems to be some misunderstanding on this matter, which will be removed by the present announcement.

American Freethinkers talk of purchasing Thomas Paine's farm, and with it the house in which he spent his last years. The project is mooted of a Liberal Syndicate, and Dr. E. B. Foote and Mr. S. P. Putnam have headed the list with a hundred dollars each.

How the whirligig of Time brings round its revenges! For three generations Thomas Paine has been hated and calumniated. Christian children were taught to regard him as an infidel beast; a monster of drunkenness, filth and debauchery. No one would ever have thought of asking for one of his books, or any book about him, in any decent library. Now, however, his *Life* is written by Mr. Conway, in two large, well-printed, and expensive volumes; and the publishers advertise it in large type as "To be had at all the libraries." We hope it is not only to be had, but is being had. It will be well for educated people to know how they have been deceived with regard to Thomas Paine.

The works of Freethinkers, who have suffered persecution in life and contumely in death, are gradually acknowledged. Here, for instance, is the *Times* of Sept. 23, in a notice of Mr. Conway's *Life of Thomas Paine*, saying: "Mr. Conway has done good service in destroying the mythical and repulsive effigy of Paine created by Oldys and Cheetham, and restoring the real Thomas Paine to history and literature." It concludes a long review by saying: "No student of the forces which made for liberty in the latter half of the last century can henceforth afford to neglect Mr. Conway's biography of Thomas Paine."

Secular Thought (Toronto) reprints the first of Mr. Foote's articles on "Will Christ Save Us?"; but does not add "to be continued."

Haddon Hall, the new Sullivan and Grundy comic opera, has a number of satirical hits at the Sabbatarians and Puritans. This will surprise no one who has read the novels of Mr. Sydney Grundy.

The *Co-operative News* suggests that a memorial tablet to the late E. Vansittart Neale be put in Westminster Abbey, as a recognition of his services to co-operation. Mr. Neale, if not a Secularist, was a pronounced heretic, as may be seen by

several pamphlets which he contributed to the Thomas Scott series of Freethought publications. Westminster Abbey already has the ashes of several Freethinkers—Darwin, Grote, Lyell, and E. Chambers.

The new (fourth) edition of Mr. Foote's *Royal Paupers* is now on sale. It is revised and brought up to date. During the fortnight that this pamphlet was out of print there was quite a brisk application for copies.

The Edmonton Branch, having had a very successful open-air season, has engaged the North Middlesex Hall, Fore-street, Upper Edmonton, for indoor lectures during the winter. The hall is a nice one, and well lighted. Mr. Cohen leads off this evening (Oct. 2), and the Branch expects the support of all Freethinkers in the neighborhood.

The North West London Branch has closed its meetings in Regent's Park for this year. During the past summer the lectures have been most successful. There have been good meetings and good collections, thanks to the assistance of the lady members. The open-air station at Islington has also flourished. The tumult subsided as the bigots found their efforts were futile, and Mr. Guest and his colleagues were eventually left in comparative peace.

The *South London Mail* prints a letter from a correspondent who bewails the local spread of Freethought, and calls upon the clergy to "stem the flowing tide." He remarks that the Camberwell Secular Hall is "crowded nearly every Sunday in the year," and tracts, papers, pamphlets, and books are circulated wholesale.

The Battersea Branch held its quarterly meeting last Sunday afternoon. The balance-sheet showed income for the quarter to be £16 15s. 4½d., and expenditure £15 16s. 3½d., leaving 19s. 1d. in hand. Most of the old officers were re-elected. Mr. Shambrook could not again accept the presidency as he was going to New Mexico, and the office was left open with the view of inducing an old friend and worker of the Branch to accept the same. After the meeting a good tea was provided; then a capital program was got through, including a performance by the dramatic club. Dancing wound up the proceedings.

Mr. Cohen has been engaged by the Battersea Branch to give an instructive course of lectures on "Evolution," each Friday in October at 8 p.m. The following are the subjects: 1, The meaning of Evolution; 2, The Origin of Species; 3, The facts of Evolution; 4, The Pedigree of Man. The admission to these lectures will be 2d. and 4d.

The new Barnsley Branch held a business meeting on Sunday, and there was a good attendance. Arrangements were made for active propaganda. Mr. A. B. Moss is to deliver a course of Sunday lectures, probably on October 23.

The Hull Branch will break new ground at Beverley on Friday evening (Oct. 7), when Mr. Jones will lecture in the Corn Exchange, Market-place, at 8 o'clock. Several Hull friends will be present, and an effort will be made to start a Branch of the N.S.S. Freethinkers in Beverley and the immediate neighborhood should communicate beforehand with the secretary of the Hull Branch, Mr. G. Naewiger, 9 De la Pole-terrace, Bean-street, Hull.

The Nottingham Branch held a special meeting on Sunday evening in the Secular Hall, Beck-street. A new secretary (Mr. W. D. McSiccar) was appointed, and the meeting adjourned till this evening (Oct. 2) at 7, when it is earnestly hoped that the Nottingham Freethinkers will attend in full strength.

Three thousand years ago an Egyptian monarch, Khuenaten, the Splendor of the Solar Orb, married a Babylonian princess, and lived with her as his only wife. They loved each other and their children, and built a place for themselves half way up to the Nile cataracts. He died at thirty and was forgotten. But the place he built is now unearthed, and shows him to have been a person of remarkable mind and character. "When one stands," says E. J. Harmer in the *Christian World*, "before the mask that was taken off his face as he lay in the chill death-chamber, one cannot withhold the thought

that behind that massive forehead, those refined lips, that smooth restrained chin, there lurked a spirit that cared nothing for the conventions of the past or the opinions of the day." Khuenaten was apparently an Egyptian Freethinker.

THE WORLD'S FAIR ON SUNDAY.

Col. Ingersoll's Letter to Mr. A. E. Gammage.

MY DEAR SIR,—You ask my views on the subject of opening the World's Fair on Sunday.

1. There are two reasons given in the Bible for "keeping" the Sabbath. The first is that God having made the world in six days and rested on the seventh, therefore man shall rest on the seventh. We know that this is not true. We now know, if we know anything, that God did not make the world in six days and rest on the seventh. It will not do to say that he made the world in six "periods" and rested on the seventh. This would be no argument in favor of keeping the Sabbath.

2. The second reason given in the Bible for keeping the Sabbath is that God had brought out the Jews from Egypt. If this is the real reason, it applies to no people except the Jews. It certainly could not have been expected that the Egyptians would think a day sacred for that reason. The reason given applied only to the Jewish people, and if that be the real reason, then the Sabbath is for the Jews and for no others.

3. There is another point. The day that was made sacred, according to the Bible, was Saturday, and not the day we keep. There is nothing in the Old or New Testament to show that God ever changed the day, and there is no warrant to be found in the "sacred scriptures" for keeping the day we call Sunday. The day we keep was kept by pagans long before the Jewish people were released from Egypt. It was a day sacred to the sun—not sacred in the sense that people were not to enjoy themselves, but sacred in the sense that on that day they were to enjoy themselves. That day was a festival, not a penitentiary.

This worship of Sunday is of modern growth. It seems to have reached its height in Scotland, then in England, and from England it was brought by the Pilgrims and Puritans to the New World. It is a relic of asceticism—of the idea that man can please God by making himself miserable. The Jews at one time kept the Sabbath so strictly that if anyone, by accident, fell down, he would not rise until after sunset. On Sunday they built no fires in their houses—they shivered and thanked God. They ate cold victuals with pious gratitude, and longed with all their hearts for the next day.

At one time in Scotland it was discussed whether it was right to rescue drowning men on Sunday. The most pious took the ground that they should not be rescued; that the drowning was God's punishment for the violation of the day, and that man should not endeavor to rescue his fellow-man from the judgment of God.

The question now is whether here, in this country, in this nineteenth century, the World's Fair shall be closed on Sunday.

Admit, for the sake of argument, that the day is absolutely sacred—ought the Fair to be closed? What will be the effect of looking upon great pictures or statues, of seeing the wonderful machines that man has invented? Will the tendency be to degrade or elevate, to demoralise or enlighten?

If looking at these pictures, at these statues, at these machines, enlarges the mind, educates the brain, cultivates the tastes, certainly there can be no objection to opening the Fair on Sunday, no matter how sacred the day is. Can anyone conceive of a better way to keep Sunday—admitting the day to be sacred—than to develop the brain and civilise the heart?

From this it follows that whether the day is sacred or not the Fair should be open.

There will be many thousands of people in Chicago. They must do something on Sunday. They will not remain in their rooms and read Baxter's *Call to the Unconverted*, neither will they attend church. They must do something, and it is impossible to conceive of a better thing for them to do than to examine and study the triumphs of genius. Even the most devout will hardly object to looking at the world about us on Sunday, at the undulating fields, the green and spreading trees,

the rivers, and clouds. Neither will they think it wrong on Sunday night to gaze on Heaven's dome inlaid with stars. And yet all things are from the same source. Nature works through man, and the great painting and the great statue are and have been as naturally produced as rivers and trees and stars.

Of course the idea that one day is better than another is infinitely absurd; that a space of time can be called "holy," or that man is under any more obligations one day than another to do good, to love mercy, and to increase the happiness of his fellow man.

All things that man ought to do on any day of the week, certainly can be done on Sunday without sin. The whole matter may be summed up in this—It is never right to do wrong, and it is never wrong to do right.

Most people imagine that Sunday should be kept sacred by not doing anything on that day for the good of man, but by devoting your entire time to the worship of God—that is to say, in doing something for God. There is nothing a man can do for God, as God needs nothing; but there are many things we can do for our fellow men, because many of them are in constant need.

All days should be for the good of man, and that day in which the most people are really happy is the best day.—
Yours very truly, R. G. INGERSOLL.

SOME RESULTS OF CHRISTIANITY.

"Withhold not correction from the child: for if thou beatest him with the rod, he shall not die. Thou shalt beat him with the rod, and shalt deliver his soul from hell. . . . Chasten thy son while there is hope, and let not thy soul spare for his crying."—PROVERBS.

The poker has almost disappeared from the list of tortures to which English children have been subjected during the past year. This statement is not a conundrum of any kind, but a simple statement of fact. The poker—hot and cold—has disappeared. We must not be too elated, however, at this gratifying fact, for English parents during the past year have found other and not less effective means of dealing with their offspring. There have been examples, for instance, of punishing a child by putting pins into its nostrils, putting lighted matches up them, biting a child's wrist till a wound was made, and then burning the wound with lighted matches; throwing a little girl of two years, ill of bronchitis, out of its bed-room window, breaking its bones, and ending its life; breaking a two-year-old baby's limbs in three places, both arms and a thigh, leaving them untended, and, when it moaned in its pain, irritably taking it up from its cradle by the broken arms, shaking it by them, and throwing it down again; leaving a baby unlifted out of its cradle for weeks, till toadstools grew around the child out of the rotteness; leaving another to lie for days and nights on a mattress alive with maggots; keeping the stumps of little amputated legs sore, to have the child with its little face puckered up in pain, to excite pity; tying a rope round a boy of six, dipping him into a canal, leaving him immersed till exhausted, bringing him up, recovering him, and putting him in again, repeating the misery time after time; keeping a child always in cool cellars till its flesh became green; cooping up a child for months in a room without conveniences, and punishing it for "filthiness of the floor; scourging a child till it is a mass of bruises, then breaking its jaw in two; tying cords tightly round a child's thumbs, then tying them, with extended arms, to the foot of a bedstead, and beating it with a thorn-bush.

These, says the reader, have been the deeds of savages, of men and women who were drunk, of the very lowest dregs of the worst classes of our population. No; these parents and guardians were in many cases quite ordinary people; these tortures are not often due directly to drink, and so far from occurring exclusively among the lowest classes, they were generally in houses where for everybody but the children there was plenty; and three of the most revoltingly atrocious occurred in families of affluence, refinement, and good social position—in a long-esteemed county family; in that of a well-connected legal aspirant to political fame; and one in that of a gentleman occupying an important public position. These facts we take from the report of the National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children.—*Daily Chronicle*.

I shall never regret my life passing away, if I have lived in such a manner as to be conscious of not having lived in vain.—*Cicero*.

AN AUTO DE FE.

(Translated from the Spanish)

[I happened recently to come across an ancient Spanish historical document giving an account of one of the periodical transactions of the Spanish Inquisition for the "clearing off" of its prisoners, which in their fanatical parlance they denominated an *Auto de Fé* (Act of Faith). The description is graphically written, and it will be read with great interest, being a life-like picture of the state of society at that unhappy period. It is entitled *El Rey se Divierte* (The King Amuses Himself).—JOHN SAMSON.]

In the year 1680, Carlos II. of Austria and King of Spain, expressed a desire to witness an *Auto general de Fé*. He was at that time nineteen years of age.

The Inquisitor General, Don Diego Sarmiento de Valladores, Bishop of Oviedo and Plasencia, who was also a Royal Councillor and member of the Regency Commission during the king's minority, applauded the idea of the young monarch, and promised him to carry out his wishes as soon as a collection of criminals could be brought together.

The king had not long to wait. Orders were sent out to all the tribunals to hasten their proceedings, and by the end of April a great many trials were completed which otherwise might have dragged on for years, with the result that many prisoners in the Inquisitions at Madrid, Toledo and other places received their sentences.

The king gave orders that the "auto" should take place in Madrid, and chose as a fitting date the 30th June, that being St. Paul's Day, when the memory of the saint would be suitably honored. Preparations were immediately begun for the great festival. Every evening, at dusk, heavy coaches were seen to enter the city, closely guarded by selected troops. The people guessed what they contained—criminals from the remotest regions of the kingdom, brought to the furnace now being raised in the great square.

Popular excitement rose continually as the day approached, and the pleasures anticipated on June 30 formed the sole topic of conversation.

The Duke of Medina Celi, Prime Minister of Spain, was offered the honor, which he gladly accepted, of bearing the Cruz Verde (the Green Crucifix) in the procession which walked through the Plaza Mayor (Central Square) of Madrid, in order to announce the proximity of the auto.

"Plenary indulgences" were promised to all who would attend the ceremony. Under the direction of Don Fernando Villegas, the Plaza Mayor was rapidly put in order for the performance. On one side a grand stand was erected, one hundred feet in height, which was to be occupied by the nobles. Separate canopies were constructed for the municipal corporations. A balcony in the house of the Count de Barajas was prepared for the reception of the king and royal family, and was richly adorned. To the right were placed the stands for the members of the Holy Inquisition, close to which were altars and pulpits for the officiating clergy, and tables for the authorities and their secretaries. Behind these constructions refreshment-stands were placed for the use of the notables. In the centre of the square was the brasero, or furnace, an erection of iron, from which arose about twenty-five strong stakes of wood. Near this were a series of cages, composed of iron bars, for the reception of the prisoners. The other sides of the square were set apart for the accommodation of the common people. No armed guard to keep order was deemed necessary, as it was well known that it would not be required, the populace taking a vast delight in such solemnities.

At three o'clock in the afternoon of the day preceding the festival, a solemn procession came out from the prison and paraded the streets of Madrid until midnight, when it returned to the Santo Tribunal (Holy Courts), where the prisoners were given supper. After that meal, these unfortunates had to keep vigil unto the following morning.

The priests in charge addressed each of the condemned criminals in the following terms: "Brother! the charges against you have been submitted to the judgment of persons very learned in science and letters, who, after due consideration, have decided that your crimes are such that you must be put to death as a punishment to yourself and as a warning to others. Therefore, to-morrow you must die. But in order that you may be properly prepared, the Church in its great goodness has sent to your aid these religious men, to whose counsel and advice we pray you to give due heed." The friars then began to chant the office for the dead.

The condemned to death numbered twenty-three. The sentences of those adjudged to other punishments were announced in similarly solemn tones.

At three in the morning the prisoners had to dress (those to be burned were clad in robes of canvas, upon which were painted flames pointing upwards, and nude figures of imps and demons). The other prisoners wore rough canvas dresses, fantastically painted, and many carried lighted candles as tokens of penitence.

The sun rose on June 30; it was a brilliant day. At five o'clock the prisoners breakfasted. Immediately afterwards a procession was formed. The prisoners numbered eighty-six. Thirty-four effigies were also carried in the procession to represent criminals who had died in their prisons, or who had escaped and had been condemned in default. Those effigies which represented the dead carried in their arms a box containing the bones of the person deceased. The name of each prisoner was emblazoned on his breast in large letters.

Of the eighty-six prisoners, twenty-one were clad in the flame-painted robes. These were the condemned to death. Two of the twenty-three had been pardoned that morning. They were women who had promised to make important revelations to the Inquisition. Of the twenty-one remaining six were women. Their respective ages were 21, 24, 30, 43, 52, and 60. Three of them were hand-cuffed and gagged. The ages of the fifteen men were 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 30, 33, 34, 35, two at 36, two at 38, and one at 65 years. Nine of them were hand-cuffed and gagged. Some of these men were doctors, but the majority were merchants. The crime of all these persons was practising Judaism. They were mostly Portuguese Jews. Some were to be previously strangled the others to be burned alive.

Thirty-two of the effigies were also to be burned, and the bones of the dead reduced to cinders. These effigies represented persons of both sexes and of all ages. After the condemned followed the prisoners sentenced to the pillory and to public flogging. Amongst these were two women, each thirty-four years of age. The men were: a lame tailor, who had been found guilty of begging; a young carpenter, an Italian, twenty years of age, and a cow-herd, who had been accused of marrying twice; for this act he had been sentenced to receive 200 lashes and ten years' banishment, five of which were to be spent in the galleys laboring at the oar without wages.

The prisoners sentenced to banishment and perpetual imprisonment were twenty in number. Amongst them were twelve women of the ages of 14, 17, 18, 25, 25, 30, 34, 39, 40, 50, and 76.

Behind the prisoners followed a long procession, formed of representatives of the authorities, the corporations, the courts, etc. About nine a.m., the cortege, after traversing the principal streets, reached the Plaza Mayor, where it was received with popular acclamation.

The king had already taken up his seat in the balcony. The ceremonies now began. The king made oath to the Inquisitor General to protect and defend the Holy Inquisition. The people swore destruction to all the enemies of the faith, without distinction of class or relationship. Mass then began; a sermon followed. The sentences of condemnation upon each of the accused were then read aloud by an official. By the time these ceremonies were over it was four o'clock in the afternoon. A faggot was presented to the king, who passed it on to the queen, and after having caressed it for some time with their hands, their majesties delivered it to the Duke of Pastrana, with the request that it should be the first lighted upon the pile.

The condemned were then led to the furnace and chained each to a stake. The faggots were piled round them, and fire was at once applied, amidst the yells of the crowds.

The priests chanted exorcisms, abjurations and conjurations. The whole multitude then joined in singing *Veni Creator*.

The king was observed to shudder and tremble several times. Mass was again performed, and the religious ceremonies were continued until half-past nine at night.

His Majesty asked the Inquisitors if his presence was still required. He had been then more than twelve hours in the balcony without refreshment, without moving or speaking, and looked almost like a corpse. The Inquisitors replied that he might retire. He immediately left and went to the palace.

But the ceremonies had not yet finished. A new procession was formed, which paraded the streets all night.

Next morning the remaining prisoners were placed in the pillory, to be hissed and stoned by the populace. Others were publicly flogged, and finally all were taken back to their cells, to be perpetually imprisoned. Of the condemned there remained only a heap of cinders.

PROFANE JOKES.

"It's too bad," said Mrs. Smith, "I have to slave all Sunday while you read and smoke your pipe." "You forget that Christ said the sabbath was made for man," observed Mr. Smith, blandly.

Greene—"It is only fair to let a fellow sleep all he wants to in church." White—"How so?" Green—"The confounded bells don't let him get any rest at home."

The Rev. Rosy Babbleton is always up to date, and so last Sunday he gave a lengthy discourse, showing that bad crops were a blessing in disguise, and finished up with a touching prayer for fine weather. One of his most ardent admirers is an old man, who met Farmer Mildew in the churchyard, observing, "Ah! Mr. Mildew, what a well-timed sermon." "You may well say that; all the folk had their watches out twenty times within the last half hour."

Minister's wife—"Wasn't there a request for rain among your letters this week?" Minister (wearily)—"Yes." "I thought I saw one." "Yes. It was from Deacon de Goode." "But you didn't pray for rain?" "No. I'm tired praying for rain just to please the deacon. I've come home in the wet for the last three Sundays, and still he keeps on asking for more." "What business is he in?" "He's a contractor for the street cleaning department."

THE FREEMAN.

I honor the man who is willing to sink
Half his present repute for the freedom to think,
And when he has thought, be his cause strong or weak,
Will sink t'other half for the freedom to speak,
Caring naught for what vengeance the mob has in store,
Be that mob the upper ten thousand or lower.

—J. R. Lowell.

SUNDAY MEETINGS.

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

LONDON.

Battersea Secular Hall (back of Battersea Park Station): 7.30, H. Snell, "One Hundred Years of Science and Invention"; social gathering after the lecture. Tuesday at 8, social gathering. Wednesday at 8, dramatic class. Thursday at 8, discussion. Friday at 8, C. Cohen, "The Meaning of Evolution."

Bethnal Green—Libra Hall, 78 Libra-road, Roman-road: 5.30, public tea (6d.); 7.30, free dramatic entertainment by Miss Vance's company. Monday at 9, C. Cohen's science class (astronomy). Wednesday at 9, reading class, "Spencer's Ethics."

Camberwell—61 New Church-road, S.E.: 7.30, B. Hyatt, "Pioneers and Heroes of Iconoclasm"; preceded by dramatic recital, "Phil Blood's Leap."

Hall of Science, 142 Old-street, E.C.: 11.15, Charles Watts, "The Aristocracy and the People: the Coming Conflict"; 6.30, musical selections; 7, Charles Watts, "The Death of Jehovah."

Hammersmith—Hammersmith Club, 1 The Grove: Thursday at 8, Touzeau Parris, "Jesus Christ, neither God nor Man."

Milton Hall, Hawley-crescent, Kentish Town-road, N.W.: 7.30, Mrs. Annie Besant, "The Evolution of Man, from the Animal to the Divine."

OPEN-AIR PROPAGANDA.

Battersea Park-gates: 11.15, A. Guest, "Heavens and Hells." Bethnal Green (opposite St. John's Church): 11.15, C. Cohen will lecture.

Camberwell—Station-road: 11.30, A. B. Moss, "The Flight of the Shadows."

Finsbury Park (near the band-stand): 3.30, C. J. Steinberg, "Miracles."

Hammersmith-bridge (Middlesex side): 6.30, C. J. Hunt, "After Death."

Hyde Park (near Marble-arch): 11.30, C. J. Hunt, "The Religion of To-day."

Kilburn—Salisbury-road (near Queen's Park Station): 6, C. Durrant, "Christ and Christianity."

Mill End Waste: 11.30, F. Haslam, "Bible Stories: are they True?"

Old Pimlico Pier: 11.30, E. Calvert, "The Darwinian Hypothesis."

Victoria Park (near the fountain): 11.15 and 3.15, W. Heaford will lecture.

COUNTRY.

Birmingham—Baskerville Hall, Crescent, Cambridge-street; Dr. T. R. Allinson, 11, "The Beef, Beer, and 'Bacca Delusions"; 7, "Number One, and how to take care of him for seventy years."

Bradford—Unity Lodge Rooms, 65 Sunbridge-road: Robert Law, F.G.S., 3, "Man's Great Antiquity"; 6.30, "My Adventures in the Wild West of America."

Bristol—Shepherd's Hall, Old Market-street: members' quarterly meeting.

Glasgow—Ex-Mission Hall, 110 Brunswick-street: 12, discussion class and business meeting; 6.30, Zosimus, "The Philosophy of Dreams."

Glasgow—St. Rolox Eclectic Society, Toynbee Hall, Parson-street: Tuesday at 8, debate between Messrs. Waddell and Smith on "Is Theism Opposed to Reason?"

Grimsby—Hall of Science, Freeman-street: Stanley Jones, 11, "Jesus Christ"; 3, "Creation and the Fall of Man"; 7, "Is there Evidence of the Existence of God?"

Hackmondwike—Mr. John Rothera's Bottoms: 2.30, annual meeting.

Leeds—Crampton's Temperance Hotel, Briggate: 7.30, John Badlay, "Christianity: its Birth, Development, and Decay."

Liverpool—Oddfellows' Hall, St. Anne-street: G. W. Foote, 11, "Who Wrote the Bible?"; 3, "Holy Absurdities"; 7, "The Doom of the Gods."

Manchester N.S.S., Secular Hall, Rusholme-road, Oxford-road, All Saints': J. M. Robertson lectures three times.

Newcastle-on-Tyne—Eldon Hall, 2 Clayton-street: 7, T. Pearson, "Radicalism, Old and New." Meeting of sub-committee of the North-Eastern Secular Federation at 3.

Plymouth—100 Union-street: 7, a meeting.

Reading—Foresters' Hall, West-street: 7, members' meeting.

Sheffield—Hall of Science, Rockingham-street: 7, T. Garbutt, "Ernest Jones's 'Master and Man' and 'England and America.'"

South Shields—Capt. Duncan's Navigation School, King-street: 7, business; 7.30, debate on "Home Rule." Oct. 5, presentation to Capt. Duncan; tea at 7 prompt.

Sunderland—Bridge End Vaults, Bridge-street: 7, music and lecture.

Wolverhampton—Coffee Tavern (next to Knock and Joseland's), Bilston-street: 8, annual meeting.

OPEN-AIR PROPAGANDA.

Blackburn—Market-square: Sam Standing, 11, "Standing Armies: Jewish and Modern"; 3, "Holidays: Christian and Secular"; 7, "St. Paul and Christianity."

Farsley near the Post Office: Saturday, Oct. 1, at 2.30, Stanley Jones, "Creation and the Fall of Man."

LECTURERS' ENGAGEMENTS.

TOUZEAU PARRIS, 28 Rivercourt-road, Hammersmith, London, W.—Oct. 2, Leicester; 23, Hall of Science.

H. SNELL, 6 Monk-street, Woolwich.—Oct. 2, e., Battersea; 16, m., Camberwell; e., Lambeth; 23, Chatham; 30, e., Camberwell. Nov. 13, e., Camberwell; 20, e., Lambeth; 27, e., Libra Hall. Dec. 11, Camberwell; 18, Libra Hall.

ARTHUR B. MOSS, 44 Creton-road, Rotherhithe, London, S.E.—Oct. 2, Camberwell; 9, Westminster.

C. J. HUNT, 48 Fordingley-road, St. Peter's Park, London, W.—Oct. 2, m., Hyde Park; e., Hammersmith; 9, m., Camberwell; a., Finsbury Park; 16, a., Hammersmith; 23, m., Westminster; e., Lambeth; 30, m., Mile End Waste; a., Finsbury Park; e., Edmonton.

C. COHEN, 154 Cannon-street-road, Commercial-road, E.—Oct. 2, m., Bethnal Green; e., Edmonton; 6, Walthamstow; 7, Battersea; 9, m. and a., Victoria Park; e., Edmonton; 13, Walthamstow; 14, Battersea; 16, m., Mile End; e., Edmonton; 20, Walthamstow; 21, Battersea; 23, m., Hyde Park; a., Victoria Park; e., Libra Hall; 27, Walthamstow; 28, Battersea; 30, m., Camberwell; e., Libra Hall.

S. H. ALISON, 52 Vaseall-road, Brixton, S.W.—Oct. 9, m., Finsbury Park; e., Lambeth; 16, m., Victoria Park; 23, m., Finsbury Park; 30, m., Bethnal Green.

STANLEY JONES, 28 Stonecutter-street, London, E.C.—Oct. 1, Bradford; 2, Grimsby; 9, Hull; 16, Sheffield; 18, Cheltenham; 23, Bristol; 30, Cardiff. Nov. 3, Swansea; 6, Liverpool; 13, Manchester; 14, Pendlebury.

J. GREEVZ-FISHER, 78 Harrogate-road, Leeds.—Oct. 3, Bradford.

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