

The Freethinker

Edited by G. W. FOOTE.]

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SPECIAL.

Next week's "Freethinker" will be a Special Number, price Twopence.

SAVE THE BIBLE!

THIRTY-EIGHT clergymen, a year or two ago, gave the Bible a fresh certificate of inspiration and infallibility. They signed a "round robin," if we may apply such a vulgar description to their holy document. But somehow the Bible is in as bad a position as ever. It seems, indeed, in deadly peril; and if something strong and decisive be not done for its protection, it will soon be doomed. Such, at any rate, seems the view of a large number of clergymen, who have signed a Petition, prepared by the Rev. E. S. Ffoulkes, of St. Mary's, Oxford, and addressed to "the Most Reverend the Archbishop, and the Right Reverend the Bishops, of the Church of England, in the House of the Convocation of Canterbury assembled." The petitioners call upon the Archbishop and Bishops to use "their sacred office and authority," and either to purge the Church of heresy or to "authoritatively and publicly" recommend certain "orthodox and admirable works," which are calculated to "arrest the spread" of "disastrous errors in the midst of Our Beloved Church."

In order to show the precise nature of these "disastrous errors," we print the following paragraphs from the petition:

"Whereas it is generally known that certain clergymen of the Church of England, in positions of influence and authority, are deliberately and altogether undermining, by their teachings and public writings, the faith of this Church and country in the trustworthiness of the Holy Scriptures, and are altogether repudiating the common faith of Christendom, that the said Holy Scriptures, as received by this Church of England, are the infallible and inspired Word of God;

"Also, that by what is known as the 'New Criticism,' these clergymen do attempt entirely to rob the people of God of the Holy Scriptures and altogether falsify the teaching respecting them of our Lord Jesus Christ and of his Holy Apostles—declaring some parts to be 'myths,' some 'fables,' some 'the work of dramatists,' etc."

Ah then, the enemy is within the camp! It is no longer a question of "infidel" publications. Church professors, and doctors of divinity, are sapping the very foundations of "the faith." Orthodox clergymen cry out—in the language of this petition—for salvation from "the dangers of Rationalism and unbelief within the Church."

What does all this mean? It means that Free-thought is triumphing by the permeation of the Churches; that "advanced" ministers are now doing, in a sober, steady, scholarly way, the very work so brilliantly inaugurated by Voltaire and Thomas Paine; that the Bible is being subjected to rigorous criticism, in England as well as in France, Holland, and Germany; that its documents are being shifted like the pieces in a kaleidoscope, and every turn of the instrument makes them differ more and more from the orthodox pattern. At present, it is true, the

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process is almost confined to the Old Testament. There, however, it is nearly completed. Presently it will extend in earnest to the New Testament; and when it is completed *there*, the Bible will be something worse than Luther's "wax nose," it will be a thing of "shreds and patches."

Old Testament criticism by men like Driver, Cheyne, Ryle, and Gore, is indeed—as the petitioners assert—destroying faith in "the Holy Scriptures" as the "infallible and inspired Word of God." They still pretend it is *inspired*, but not infallible. "Infallible," at this time of day, is a very "large order." Professor Bruce, himself a Christian minister, is obliged to tell his orthodox brethren that "the errorless autograph for which some so zealously contend is a theological figment." "The Bible," he reminds them, "was produced piecemeal, and by the time the later portions were produced the earlier had lost their supposed immaculateness." And he warns the "infallible" gentlemen that their position is really "perilous" when it is considered "in what state we possess the Scriptures now." Yes, it is only country curates who can stand up now for an "infallible" Word of God; even Mr. Gladstone is obliged to admit "errors"—that is, errors in general, for he will not confess any in particular.

The references in the petition to "myths," "fables," and "the work of dramatists," seem to be specially aimed at the Rev. Charles Gore, the Principal of Pusey House, Oxford, and editor of *Lux Mundi*. His essay in that volume on "The Holy Spirit and Inspiration" is horribly distasteful to orthodox parsons. They cannot refute him, but they say "he ought to know better," or "he shouldn't write such things"—in other words, he is guilty of the shocking crime of letting the cat out of the bag. He discards the Creation Story, just like Professor Bruce, who calls the fall of Adam a "quaint" embodiment of the theological conception of sin. He dismisses all the patriarchs before Abraham as "mythical." He admits the late origin of the Pentateuch, and only claims for Moses the probable authorship of the Decalogue. He says the Song of Solomon is "of the nature of a drama." The Book of Job is "mainly dramatic." Deuteronomy is the publication of the law "put dramatically" into the mouth of Moses. Jonah and Daniel are "dramatic compositions." Jesus Christ, it is true, cited both as historical; but he only "accommodated" himself to the prevalent belief. He knew better, but he did not choose to say so; or, rather, the moment was inopportune; so he left us to find out the truth in this matter, as he left us to find it out in everything else.

Canon Driver is perhaps glanced at in "fables," and perhaps also Canon Cheyne. The former has publicly argued against the "reconciliations" of Genesis and Science. He has likewise written very strongly against the "historical" character of Jonah, which he treats as a story with "a moral." Canon Cheyne regards it as "an allegory." Jonah is Israel, swallowed up by Babylon; but, seeking the Lord in exile, the captive is at last disgorged uninjured.

These clerical apostles of the "New Criticism" are accused of attempting "entirely to rob the people of God of the Holy Scriptures." Poor people of God! How anxious the petitioners are for their welfare! Some persons, however, will be apt to regard the solicitude of these gentlemen as *professional*. Robbing the people of the Holy Scriptures, in *their* mouths, may simply mean rendering the clergyman's trade more difficult, or perhaps altogether impossible; and therefore the bitter cry of these "grievously beset" parsons (to use their own words) may be only a parallel to the famous old shout of "Great is Diana of the Ephesians."

Why indeed do not the petitioners refute the apostles of the "New Criticism," instead of appealing to the *authority* of Convocation? They plainly declare that the "New Criticism" rests on "utterly baseless foundations"—which is a curious pleonasm or tautology for a body of "educated" gentlemen. But if the substance of the declaration be true, apart from its logic or grammar, the orthodox parsons may scatter the heretical parsons like chaff before the wind. Principles which are "utterly baseless" may surely be refuted. To quote from Hamlet, "it is as easy as lying." Now that is a practice in which the clergy of all ages have shown great dexterity. We therefore hope the orthodox parsons will *refute* the "New Criticism." Let them try to save the Bible by argument. If they cannot it is lost, and lost for ever.

G. W. FOOTE.

CHRISTIAN MISSIONS IN CHINA.

THE constant recurrence of troubles between the Christian missionaries and the natives of China make it evident there is something very unacceptable to the Chinese either in the missionaries or their religion—probably both. How much of this is prejudice and how much well-founded, we shall leave the reader to judge; but certainly the evidence of missionaries themselves cannot be wholly relied upon when we find it contradicted not only by the natives, but by European settlers in China.

Christianity is no new thing in China, where it has made attempts to gain a footing for at least a thousand years. That in all that time the one wholly divine religion has only gained hatred and contempt for its exponents does not say much for its pretensions. Roman Catholic writers say even that Christianity was introduced into China by the sceptical Thomas. If so, he infused more of his unbelief than of his faith into that still unregenerate people. Arnobius, in the third century, went the length of reckoning the Seres, or Chinese, among the nations that had accepted Christianity in his time. Apart from the possibility that he did not mean the Chinese, it may be argued that in the days of Arnobius Christianity was merely the western form of Buddhist monkery, the eastern form of which the Chinese had then undoubtedly accepted.

The Nestorians, an early Christian sect who regarded the blessed Mother of God as only an ordinary female, and who, persecuted by their brother Christians, found refuge among the heathen and Mohammedans, are said to have sent missionaries to China in the fifth century. A possibly authentic but probably manufactured inscription, discovered by Jesuit missionaries in Sianfu in 1625, records how Olopen and seventy Nestorian missionaries labored in China during the seventh and eighth centuries. In the ninth century Christians were found in Southern China by two Arabian travellers, and Marco Polo, the distinguished traveller of the thirteenth century, who spent more than twenty years in China, for a time holding high office, speaks of meeting with Chinese Christians. Roman Catholic missions to China were established early in the next century,

Pope Clement V. making Johannes de Monte Corvino Archbishop of Peking, with seven suffragan bishops under him. The Jesuit missions in China, headed by Father Ricci in 1581, are well known, and his successors appear to have had considerable success by adapting themselves to the superstitious practices of the lower classes. When the Dominican order appeared on the scene with their stricter notions, the Roman propaganda declined and Protestantism, with its Bible in hand, which has been sedulously seeking to convert China's millions all through the present century, has had but little success, save where it can afford to purchase converts, and has drawn down more dislike to Christianity than ever.

Readers of Mr. A. Michie's book on *Missionaries in China* will learn something of why this is. The missionaries have acted as political catspaws, their presence being forced on the Chinese, and any insult to them being made the occasion of extortionate demands. The sole ground on which the governments claim protection for the missionaries is that they are teachers of virtue. This, in Chinese eyes, they most certainly are not. Morality in China is based on filial respect. When they hear their ancestor worship decried as idolatry; when they learn that in the Bible are such injunctions as to hate father and mother, and let the dead bury the dead; when they see that Christians preach one thing and practise another, it is little wonder the missionaries are generally known as "lie-preaching devils."

As for the missionaries themselves—if they are truthfully described by a Mr. McDonald, who writes in the *Hongkong Telegraph* of Jan. 25—we cannot wonder that the shrewd heathen Chinese see through them. This writer says:

"Missionaries have a very unsavory reputation in Japan and China. They are usually raised from a humble sphere of life, mechanics or small tradespeople, who imagine they have received a 'call.' Their pay and emoluments enable them to live in these cheap countries in a style and splendor far beyond their wildest hopes in their native lands. They do a minimum amount of work and in their leisure hours ape the ways and fashions of local society. Eastern society declines to recognise the Portuguese and half-breeds; and the missionaries do likewise. The leading female medical missionary in Canton refused to treat the two classes professionally for the reason that it would injure her medical and social standing. Many of those missionaries are arrant rogues and hypocrites. [This is rather rough on rats, but as it is probably true we must let it pass.—Ed. *Telegraph*.] In Nagasaki one of them openly cohabited with his *amah* during his wife's absence. On the latter's return they refused to pay the woman her wages, then due for a year, because she had broken her contract by the misconduct named. In Chefoo, a married missionary seduced a female missionary, and when detected in *flagrante delicto* laid all the onus upon the woman who 'tempted' him. In Swatow one of them owned a number of Chinese disorderly houses, from which he drew a very handsome rental. In none of these, so far as I have ever learned, did any of their colleagues take any steps to punish the malefactors."

Mr. McDonald, writing in China mind, says the missionaries have the finest houses and grounds, jewellery, and a retinue of servants, who in the Middle Kingdom are ridiculously cheap. Yet, says he, "These *fin de siecle* saints are notoriously close and stingy with their servants, and are often summoned to the consular courts at the Treaty ports for nonpayment of wages." Mr. McDonald further accuses them of securing medicine and surgical goods from liberal manufacturers in England and America on the pretence that they will introduce them among the natives, and so build up a special trade. He says they are also large importers of laudanum, morphine, and other opiates, with the view of curing opium-smoking. The result has been the creation of a morphine habit, worse than the

one it displaced. Mr. McDonald concludes by remarking:—

"The worst Chinese riot in 1891 was occasioned by an English missionary buying four children from their mothers. He paid the penalty of violating both English and Chinese law with his life. If, however, he had escaped, he would have taken the ground that he was justified in his crime because in that manner he could save the souls of the four urchins he purchased from their Pagan surroundings."

The Chinese are extremely tolerant in religion. Millions of Mohammedans hold their faith within the Celestial Empire unmolested. There are three religions recognised by the State—Confucianism, Buddhism, and Taoism. Many Chinese belong to all three faiths without perceiving any incongruity. But Christianity is rejected because it is an arrogant religion, proclaiming it alone is exclusively divine and brooking no rival. An arrogant faith is sure to have arrogant ministers. Our chief concern at home should be that these messengers of peace shall not embroil us in a deadly and costly war, as they are constantly in danger of doing.

J. M. WHEELER.

A BISHOP ON JUDAS.

IN the March number of *Good Words* there appears a lengthy article by the Bishop of Ripon on the character and doings of Judas Iscariot, who is said in the New Testament to have betrayed his master, Jesus of Nazareth. Many efforts have been made to explain the motives that prompted the actions of Judas in the important part that he is supposed to have played in the Christian scheme of salvation. According to the Bishop, Judas was "a type of the man without principle," a shrewd speculator, and one who desired to be on the side most beneficial to himself at any cost. It is rather strange that while referring to the speculations of Whately, De Quincey, and Fairbairn concerning Judas, that the worthy prelate should omit to mention Matthew of Westminster, the historian of the fourteenth century. According to Buckle, Matthew's researches upon the subject were extensive, and resulted in showing that when an infant, Judas was deserted by his parents, that his education was neglected, and that he was allowed to grow up in a very wild state. It is said also that among other atrocious acts, he murdered his father and married his mother. He was certainly a very peculiar character to be chosen by divine wisdom as one of the twelve apostles, and to fill such an important office as treasurer in the Christian community. Christ seems to have been rather unfortunate with more than one of the members of his early band of propagandists. Thomas refused to believe in his Master without material proof was furnished, Peter denied him, and Judas sold him. To make matters worse for Jesus, "all the disciples forsook him and fled."

There are two essential points associated with Judas and his mission, that the Bishop has entirely overlooked. In the first place Jesus must have been thoroughly unacquainted with the early history of Judas and incapable of correctly reading his character, or surely he never would have appointed him "treasurer of the little community," as the Bishop terms it, in Palestine. Secondly upon the hypothesis that the Bible story is reliable, was not Judas an instrument in the hands of what is called divine Providence for the purpose of bringing about the salvation of mankind? Was not his conduct the first leading act in the tragic drama of the Atonement? We are aware that Jesus is credited with saying that it had been better for Judas if he had never been born. But if he had not appeared on the scene of life he would not have been appointed treasurer, and what is far more important to the question at issue, he could not have betrayed Jesus

to his enemies; and in that case what would have become of the crucifixion? Judging from the story as narrated in the New Testament, Judas was an essential factor in the divine scheme of salvation. It matters not what human motives he had, he simply aided in carrying out the will of God, and his memory should, therefore, from an orthodox standpoint, receive due reverence. If ever there should be such a novelty as a really Christian country, a statue to Judas ought to occupy a prominent place therein.

The Bishop does not accept the suggestion that Judas, who used his position as treasurer to perpetrate a series of embezzlements, and to do a little business on his own account, might after all have been actuated by other than base motives. Possibly he was anxious that the promised kingdom should be inaugurated as soon as possible, and finding that Jesus was rather backward in bringing that event about, Judas might have deemed it wise to endeavor to precipitate the movement in order that he might occupy one of the twelve thrones which Christ promised his followers. According to the Bishop, Judas appears to have played the game "heads I win, tails you lose," and he also did a little "hedging." He put "a bit on" both sides, so that whatever happened he was sure to win something. Supposing Jesus did not succeed in securing the twelve thrones, which he did not, Judas obtained a little silver from the other side to purchase a small property. But "there's many a slip betwixt cup and lip," and money obtained in such a way is sometimes attended with evil consequences. It appears to have been so in this case, for we are informed that Judas "went and hanged himself." True, this statement of Matthew is contradicted by the writer of the Acts, where it is said that this same Judas "falling headlong, he burst asunder in the midst, and all his bowels gushed out." If these statements are correct, it must have been a sort of double suicide, but then it was not possible that both acts could have been committed. One account must therefore be false, and probably both are. We can understand that poor Judas might have been so excited over the success of his betraying business, or so depressed at losing his share in the "hundred-fold of lands," etc., that he went mad; for an apprehension upon the part of any man that the principal concern in which he is interested will break up, and that financial ruin will stare him in the face, is enough to unhinge his mind.

The Bishop says that Judas was a man without principle. Well, if he were, he was not the only chosen servant of God who was not an emblem of the sublimest virtue. There were many others of God's Bible friends whose characters could not withstand an impartial examination without coming to grief if the qualification needed was a reputation of spotless purity. Need reference be made to Moses, who lacked mercy for man, woman, and child; to Noah, whose gratitude "for benefits received" took the form of drunkenness, indecency, and injustice; to Lot, with his unnatural conduct with his daughters; to David and his adultery; to Solomon, with his many wives and concubines; to Jacob, with his lying; or to Abraham and his conduct to Sarah? These are a few of the Bible worthies, and most of them were God's special favorites, many of whose actions Jehovah endorsed. Their characters were stained with the worst kinds of criminality.

The *Daily News*, dated Feb. 27, contains a leading article on the Bishop's paper in *Good Words*. The editor is very severe on poor Judas, denouncing him as a thief, a hypocrite, and a traitor. The writer, however, forgets that the object of his wrath was treasurer to a Christian society, and that "Our Lord and Savior" appointed him to the situation; and as God he should have known the qualification of his official before he made the engagement. The editor

gives Judas credit for nothing but that he "went and hanged himself." That was the only "redeeming virtue, unfortunately too rare" among gentlemen pursuing similar occupations. The Bishop of Ripon refers to the view of Professor Fairbairn, that Judas was a disappointed man, and that he took his revenge because he expected a temporal kingdom and it did not come. But the editor of the *Daily News* will not accept that. He says: "This, at all events, does not clear the character of Judas." Perhaps not; but the view we put forward, that he was a divinely-appointed agent, raised up for a great purpose, does clear it, inasmuch as in doing what he did, he was but carrying out his part in the plan of salvation that had been arranged by God "before the foundation of the world."

The Bishop dismisses the theories of Whately, De Quincey, and Fairbairn as unsatisfactory, and sets up a theory of his own. He analyses the motives of ordinary men who join certain movements through conviction, enthusiasm, or self-interest, and attributes the latter motive to Judas. But we submit there are stronger grounds for disputing the Bishop's views than there are for refusing those which he rejects. In our opinion, the only sound position upon this subject, if we accept the Bible account, is the one we propound, namely, that Judas was merely a humble instrument under the control of an almighty power, and that the betrayal of Jesus by Judas was necessary to the carrying out of the Christian scheme of Redemption.

CHARLES WATTS.

JULES FERRY.

JULES FERRY was one of the gallant band who established the present French Republic. His leader was Gambetta, who saw and said that "Clericalism is the enemy." For a long while this was the rallying cry of the party of progress. The Catholic Church strained every nerve in favor of reaction. Its supreme object was to bring about a restoration of the empire or the monarchy. Gambetta could not fail to perceive its machinations. He boldly challenged it before France and the civilised world. It was a terrible struggle; only those who followed every phase of it know *how* terrible. But Gambetta never lacked courage. The man who told his countrymen, after Sedan and the capitulation of Paris, that they had been defeated in consequence of their ignorance and cowardice, had his feet planted on something more solid than popular applause.

Jules Ferry and Paul Bert helped their leader to remedy this grievous state of things. Certainly they acted otherwise than as mere politicians, only anxious for power and the spoils of office. Cheap manuals of history, politics, and sociology were printed and hawked by myriads of copies among the French peasantry. A splendid system of national education was established, and illiteracy was soon banished from the nation, at least as far as the new generation was concerned. The priest was then turned out of the schools, and the schoolmaster made supreme in his own domain. Finally, the unauthorised religious orders were expelled from France. They were nests of intrigue against the Republic, and it was idle to plead for them in the name of toleration. As a matter of fact, religion is State-supported in France, and is therefore subject to control. It can at any moment gain independence by foregoing its endowment.

Gambetta was hated by the Church like poison. Paul Bert was detested and calumniated, but he was the idol of the schoolmasters and teachers whom he had rescued from clerical bondage. Jules Ferry was detested and calumniated in turn; and it is noticeable that, now he is dead, while the Church papers are calling him an enemy of religion, the schoolmasters and teachers all over France are send-

ing telegrams of sympathy to Madame Ferry. This fact is indeed significant. It shows that the great, the abiding work of Gambetta, Bert, and Ferry, and their loyal colleagues, was the establishment of the Republic on a basis of secular education.

Jules Ferry had his failings—like other men. But he was an honest man, who lived clean-handed amidst a good deal of corruption. He was also a hard-worker, a competent man of affairs, and the possessor of a governing faculty. M. Carnot well called him "one of the reserve forces of the Republic." His ostracism was long and cruel; but he reappeared at last as President of the Senate, and a possible candidate for the State presidency. There is a tragic irony about his death at such a moment. Nevertheless he is sure of a place in French history. He was one of the founders of the Republic, one of the educators of France, one of its liberators from priestcraft. Negative as it may have looked to some eyes, his work was really positive and constructive. It helped to create a new spirit, to found a new era.

G. W. F.

IMMORTALITY.

AMONG the arguments brought up to prove the immortality of the human "soul," great stress is laid by the orthodox upon its necessity for the purpose of compensation. The inequality of human destinies is too well admitted to need either proof or illustration. To harmonise this inequality with the notion of an all-wise, just, and benevolent God, the Theist insists upon a future life which shall solve the enigmas of the present, and shall deal out that kind of justice called *poetical*, because so rarely met with in ordinary life. It must be remembered that with many the essential character of the future life is a reversal of the present. The poor, the feeble, the sickly, the wretched, those whose lot in this world has been miserable, are to find comfort beyond the grave. On the other hand, irrespective of vice or virtue, those who have been prosperous here are to meet sorrow hereafter. This doctrine, common enough among the poor, finds little countenance among established churches or in well-to-do conventicles. Yet it may be distinctly traced among the doctrines ascribed to Jesus of Nazareth. The parallel of Lazarus and Dives clearly conveys this view. In many parts of the gospel we find also denunciations of riches and injunctions to prefer poverty. See in particular Luke vii. 20-26

However this may be, the theistic "compensation argument" has the misfortune of proving too much. Inequalities similar in kind, if somewhat smaller in degree, are to be found in the fate of the lower animals and of vegetables. Two foals, *eg.*, first see the light on the same day. The one is born in a ducal stable better built, drained, warmed, and ventilated than the cottage of a working man. He grows up ignorant of pain or hardship, and he becomes the pet of some lady of rank. His heaviest task is to draw her carriage in the park when the weather is fine. The other, foaled in a damp, windy, tumble-down shed, inured to starvation, blows, and overwork, is doomed to draw the cart of a costermonger, to turn a mortar-mill or to drag barges along the Grand Trunk. Is there no heaven, we ask, where this four-footed mourner may be comforted for his earthly troubles, and learn with devout gratitude that they were all sent for his good? And if not, why not? But it may be said that the inequality among domestic animals is the work of man for which he must be answerable.

Leaving this reply to stand for the little it is worth, let us go out into the woods. Here is a nettle-leaf upon which a female *Vanessa Io* has just deposited her eggs. In a few days the young caterpillars will emerge. What will be their fate? Some will be devoured by birds; some will be attacked by ichneumon wasps who will thrust eggs into their bodies, which developing gradually consume them. Some reach the chrysalis stage and then perish. Some, lastly, emerge from their case as perfect butterflies. But of these not all enjoy their natural quota of light and love. Some at the very outset of their career fall a prey to birds, or dragon-flies, or spiders. Here therefore again, we ask, is there no future life in which these differences are rectified? What is sauce for the goose is, we are told by ancient sages, sauce for the gander also. If the

unequal distribution of joy and sorrow in the lot of individual men proves them to be immortal, why should not the same facts lead to the same inference in all other organic beings?

ALMEIRA.

USELESS PRAYERS.

I do not like to hear him pray
On bended knee about an hour
For grace to spend aright the day,
Who knows his neighbor has no flour.

I do not like to hear him pray,
"Let blessings on the widows be,"
Who never seeks her home to say,
"If want o'ertakes you come to me."

I hate the prayer, so loud and long,
That's offered for the orphan's weal,
By him who sees him crushed by wrong,
And only with the lips doth feel.

I do not like to hear her pray,
With jewelled ear and silken dress,
Whose washerwoman toils all day,
And then is asked to work for less.

Such pious falsehoods I despise :
The folded hands, the face demure,
Of those, with sanctimonious eyes,
Who steal the earnings of the poor.

I do not like such useless prayers.
If wrong, I hope to be forgiven ;
Such prayers no angel upward bears—
They're lost a million miles from heaven.

COLONEL INGERSOLL ON ABRAHAM LINCOLN.

LINCOLN was an immense personality—firm but not obstinate. Obstinacy is egotism—firmness, heroism. He influenced others without effort, unconsciously; and they submitted to him as men submit to nature—unconsciously. He was severe with himself, and for that reason lenient with others.

He appeared to apologise for being kinder than his fellows.

He did merciful things as stealthily as others committed crimes.

Almost ashamed of tenderness, he said and did the noblest words and deeds with that charming confusion, that awkwardness, that is the perfect grace of modesty.

As a noble man wishing to pay a small debt to a poor neighbor, reluctantly offers a hundred dollar bill and asks for change, fearing that he may be suspected either of making a display of wealth or a pretence of payment, so Lincoln hesitated to show his wealth of goodness, even to the best he knew.

A great man stooping, not wishing to make his fellows feel that they were small or mean.

By his candor, by his kindness, by his perfect freedom from restraint, by saying what he thought, and saying it absolutely in his own way, he made it not only possible, but popular, to be natural. He was the enemy of mock solemnity, of the stupidly respectable, of the cold and formal.

He wore no official robes either on his body or his soul. He never pretended to be more or less, or other, or different, from what he really was.

He had the unconscious naturalness of Nature's self.

He built upon the rock. The foundation was secure and broad. The structure was a pyramid, narrowing as it rose. Through days and nights of sorrow, through years of grief and pain, with unswerving purpose, "with malice towards none, with charity for all," with infinite patience, with unclouded vision, he hoped and toiled. Stone after stone was laid, until at last the Proclamation found its place. On that the goddess stands.

He knew others, because perfectly acquainted with himself. He cared nothing for place, but everything for independence. Where no principle was involved, easily swayed; willing to go slowly, if in the right direction; sometimes willing to stop; but he would not go back, and he would not go wrong.

He was willing to wait; he knew that the event was not waiting, and that fate was not the fool of chance. He knew that slavery had defenders, but no defence, and that they who attack the right must wound themselves.

He was neither tyrant nor slave; he neither knelt nor scorned.

With him, men were neither great nor small—they were right or wrong.

Through manners, clothes, titles, rags and race he saw the real—that which is. Beyond accident, policy, compromise and war he saw the end.

He was patient as Destiny, whose undecipherable hieroglyphs were so deeply graven on his sad and tragic fate.

Nothing discloses real character like the use of power. It is easy for the weak to be gentle. Most people can bear adversity. But if you wish to know what a man really is, give him power. This is the supreme test. It is the glory of Lincoln that, having almost absolute power, he never abused it, except on the side of mercy.

Wealth could not purchase, power could not awe, this divine, this loving man.

He knew no fear except the fear of wrong doing. Hating slavery, pitying the master—seeking to conquer, not persons, but prejudices—he was the embodiment of the self-denial, the courage, the hope, and the nobility of a Nation.

He spoke not to inflame, not to upbraid, but to convince. He raised his hands, not to strike, but in benediction.

He longed to pardon.

He loved to see the pearls of joy on the cheeks of a wife whose husband he had rescued from death.

Lincoln was the grandest figure of the fiercest civil war. He is the gentlest memory of our world.—*Oration on Abraham Lincoln.*

A "LAND BOOM" IN JERUSALEM.

In the first place, then, the main cause of the reported increase of Jewish emigration to Palestine during the last three years has been a "land boom" in Jerusalem. And in the second place, the cause of the "land boom" has not been a sudden bubbling-up of zeal for the "redemption of Israel," but the prospects of a railway from Jaffa to Jerusalem, built by Christian capital through a Gentile-governed land. That railway is now completed between the sea-board and the ancient city, the first locomotive having entered Jerusalem on September 13, 1892. It will undoubtedly be a convenience for pilgrims and tourists, however much of an anachronism it may seem, but whether it will ever pay on the existing traffic, or whether it will create new traffic, are matters of considerable doubt.

The first appearance of the engineers on the line of route was the signal for the beginning of such a speculation in Jerusalem as one would look for rather in a Western American than in an Oriental town. The idea was fostered that the railway would make Jerusalem once more a mighty city and a great centre of population; and this idea at once suggested another, that there would be a great demand for building ground. Thereupon ensued one of the wildest of "land booms," during which plots of ground changed hands with rapidity, and at constantly increasing prices, until thousands were paid for what hundreds would have readily bought a few years ago. There was no actual demand for the land, it must be observed, but only the hope and expectation of a rush with the railway.

It was to take part in this "land boom"—to make hay while the sun of speculation was shining—that many Jews hurried to Jerusalem. About the same time many schemes were being discussed for re-stocking the land with Jewish colonists, and it was a not unnatural desire to be first in the field. If "the redemption of Israel" was at hand, why should not some of the Children of Israel have a profit out of the transaction?—*Chambers's Journal.*

The *Freethinkers' Magazine* for March gives a portrait of Mrs. Sara A. Underwood and an article by that lady on the late Ernestine L. Rose, whose services to the cause of woman, Freethought and anti-slavery are highly extolled. The other contents of this advanced magazine are interesting, and we are glad to see it is "booming along" into a better financial position.

ACID DROPS.

The man that broke the bank at Monte Carlo is now doing eight years' penal servitude. Charles Wells was a very vulgar adventurer, who extracted money by false pretences from a number of dupes, all of whom were well-to-do, and most of whom were tempted by cheap promises of large gains. "Both in Clutterbuck's case and in Wells's," says the *Westminster Gazette*, "the Church furnished a considerable number of dupes. What is remarkable therein is not only the colossal stupidity of these clerical gentlemen, but their curiously low morality. Avariciousness was at the bottom of their folly."

There is, it appears, a debt of £60,000 on Talmage's Tabernacle. That is how he and his people follow the text "Owe no man anything."

Talmage's congregations are very large. The auditorium seats about 7,000, but "of these many contribute little or nothing." The annual expenses are about £5,100. "Without money and without price."

The *Christian World* gives a curious account of Dr. Parker's quarrel with his organist, Mr. E. Minshall, who for many years carried on Thursday evening concerts at the City Temple, and has been obliged to remove them to Exeter Hall. According to Mr. Minshall the bother arose from Dr. Parker's resentment "at the fact that Mrs. Parker had not been invited to sing solos in the services often enough." The doctor said his wife had been "shamefully and disgracefully treated"—the real truth being that she does not get younger and her voice is "not quite so good as formerly." Finally the Christ-like doctor shouted, "I dismiss you! I dismiss you! I dismiss you for the hellish position you have taken up!" Such were Parker's parting words to Mr. Minshall for "seventeen years of hard, earnest work, for which he has never received a penny." Parker has had the pennies, we guess. The men of God generally lay hands on the filthy lucre.

"No Church paper ever enters my house," says Archdeacon Farrar. He knows 'em. Some time ago he said they contained the essence of hatred, malice, and all uncharitableness. Generally speaking, they could give the secular press long odds in reckless controversy.

The Rev. R. F. Horton, of Hampstead, is getting a big reputation, although we are quite unable to see any great display of intellect in his utterances. He does indeed infuse a vague heterodoxy into his sermons, but he really preaches all the old dogmas, although considerably diluted. Evidently, too, he understands, like the rest of his cloth, the art of imposing on children. "When we are born, dear children," he recently said to a number of little ones, "we seem to come from behind a great curtain." This is a fresh addition to the childish stock of biology, and will rank with the parsley bed and the gooseberry bush. "When we die," Mr. Horton continued, "we seem to go behind another great curtain." From mystery to mystery, as Carlyle said. Well, perhaps so; but Mr. Horton, while admitting that "we can only see and know what lies between" the two curtains of birth and death, forgot to say that all the sky-pilot fraternity get their living by guessing what is behind the scenes.

We regret to hear that Dr. Allinson's action for libel against the proprietor of the *Vegetarian* will cost him £500. An exorbitant bill was run up by the other side; so exorbitant, in fact, that £200 was taxed off. Such a state of things is simply scandalous. It is an infamy in a nation which calls itself free and civilised, that a man should be put to such a monstrous expense. Jeremy Bentham, if he were living to-day, might repeat his impeachment of this side of the administration of the law in England, without changing a single word.

Our laws are made by lawyers for lawyers, and administered by lawyers; and the judges, who have all been lawyers, will do nothing against the profession. The rules of practice are a labyrinth, the language is as mystical as theology, and the charges are preposterous. Why, if a man libels me, and I sue him, should he be allowed to pay a lawyer fancy prices, and charge me with them if I lose? The costs should be

calculated on a modest and honest scale, and the fancy fees of "great counsel," who are absurdly over-paid, should come out of the pockets of those who have a taste for such luxuries.

One moral of Dr. Allinson's action is this—Never let a Freethinker sue a Christian for libel. Put up with any insult, if you have forbearance enough; if not, give your libeller a thrashing; but don't go to law. A Christian judge and a Christian jury will side with your libeller, and instead of making *him* pay, you'll have to pay *yourself*.

Dr. Allinson has found this out—we hope once for all. Writing to the *Hospital Gazette*, he states that he was not cross-examined as to his Malthusian principles, for advocating which he had been called "immoral." "I was cross-examined," he says, "upon the outside question of my belief in a future state, and my religious opinions. This, too, by Sir Richard Webster, who has received the enormous fee of one hundred and fifty guineas for conducting what was little better than a Church catechism." Dr. Allinson contends that Freethinkers, at any rate where their principles are involved, should be tried by a mixed jury. Of course they should. But they won't be. So don't let them go to law. They should learn to despise Christian insults; or else, if the libeller is too outrageous, let them give him a good thrashing, and leave *him* to find a remedy.

A statue of salt from Winsford, Cheshire, has been shipped for Chicago. It does not represent Lot's wife, but Liberty, and stands 12ft. 6in. high.

Men get more religious the higher they are off the ground. A gentleman who had occasion to go to the Empire Theatre on business was directed to an office at the top of the building. He says he climbed several flights of stairs, and on arriving at the proper door he was tempted to knock and ask "Is God in?"

Last Sunday the Rev. Russell Wakefield, vicar of Sandgate, held a day of thanksgiving to God for his great mercy in taking no lives during the recent landslip. The man who was grateful to space for giving him elbow-room was sensible compared with the folk who thank God for doing no more than destroying their houses.

The Rev. A. Douglas, minister of the Abbey Parish Church, Arbroath, has been lecturing on "The Suspensory Bill a Defiance of God." These sky-pilots always imagine that God must squeak if their toes are trodden on.

The person who, upon a preacher in Rome declaring that Secular education had brought greater dissoluteness of morals than ever was known before, shouted out, "What about the time of Borgia?" has been acquitted on the charge of brawling in church, although the Public Prosecutor demanded his conviction and a severe punishment. The jury refused to convict, and his acquittal was received with enthusiastic applause.

The Rev. Alfred Edward Ormonde Harris, vicar of Stoke, has been found guilty of drunkenness in the discharge of his godly duties, and has been deprived of his living and its emoluments.

The dangers of religion were forcibly exhibited by a fanatical preacher in Latrig, Saratoff, Russia. In the course of a sermon in a cottage, he became so excited with religious ecstasy as to assure his hearers "God had given him so much power through the Holy Ghost, that he could even raise the dead." To make good his pretensions, he went to the bed of the daughter of the house and smothered her before anyone could interfere. Then, à la Jesus Christ, he commanded the maid to arise. As she did not move he proceeded to breathe into her mouth and nostrils, à la Elisha, but the girl was dead and the modern thaumaturgist has to await his trial for murder.

The verger of Llandilo Church was discovered dead in the house of God last Sunday. He had been suffocated by the fumes from the heating apparatus. Providence was absent on this occasion.

St. Patrick's Day was set apart by the Irish Presbyterians for united prayer against Home Rule. We wonder what is Mr. Gladstone's inmost thought upon the policy of petitioning

the skies to avert the action of Parliament. To us it is a funny spectacle.

Mrs. Besant's vested interest in Madame Blavatsky is being contested. Miss Anna Eva Fay, the spiritist, has received a type-written message from the Blavatsky, brought from the other side of everywhere by a Mahatma. The message is in verse, and this is how the Blavatsky beats Shakespeare on his own ground:

Fair is it, that Miss Fay's the Fayrie shawl shall be;

For over all the Fays the Fayrie queen is she.

Miss Fay is on her way to India to receive some spiritual messages which the Blavatsky has promised to deliver to her. They are to be transmitted through a marble bust of the ex-high priestess of Theosophy, standing in the study of her old home in Bombay. We dare say the stone will talk as sensibly as the living woman.

Miss Rachel Callahan, of Sweetwater, Tennessee, has, this Lent, been emulating her Savior, Succi and Dr. Tanner, by a forty-days fast. Her brother whipped her severely to make her eat, but without success. Her motive is religious zeal.

The English Church Union is sending out circulars from its headquarters asking—1. If it is desirable that churchmen should demand the repeal of the clause in the Education Act of 1870, which forbids the use of Catechism; 2. If they should try to get the law altered so that parents may require their children to be instructed in the Church Catechism at Board schools; 3. If they should agitate that Churchmen should be allowed to allocate their rates to Church schools. What modest proposals! We wonder how the Nonconformists throughout the country will receive them.

At Portsmouth a meeting of the E.C.U. was called to consider these propositions, under the presidency of the Rev. R. B. Dolling, who gave his opinion that it would be a wise thing if Board schools taught no religion at all. A resolution was carried that a negative answer should be returned to all three questions. A resolution was passed declaring that religion taught in Board schools is so unsatisfactory it cannot be amended, and the best course of action would be to abolish religious teaching in the future, and that such teaching should be carried out by voluntary effort.

The Rev. Athelstan Riley is still going about agitating the introduction of Catechism into Board Schools. The cheek of the clergy is superb. Not content with absolute control over their own schools, which, though termed voluntary, draw from public money, nearly ten times as much as subscribed by Churchmen, they demand to control the Board Schools, that is, the schools set up as neutral or common places of education; now they find these schools are becoming more popular than their own.

Choice examples of Christian meekness and forbearance are exhibited in the screechings against the Welsh Suspensory Bill in the Church papers. The *Church Times* writes of the Welsh Nonconformists as vilely coveting their neighbours' goods. To see how much Christian charity is worth, you have only to mention the word disendowment to a clergyman.

Wm. Coy, hanged at Pittsfield, Mass., on March 3, announced on the scaffold that he had "given his heart to God." His crime was killing a man, of whom he was jealous, with an axe while his victim slept.

David and John Deems, who claim to be inspired from on high, have founded a new religious sect in Columbus, Kan. It combines the old faith-cure doctrine with a literal interpretation of the scriptures. It is gathering in converts from all the surrounding country. According to the Deems, the present are the dark days which precede the millennium. These dark days will last for only a few years, and then the millennium will be ushered in. As a result of the Deems' teachings husbands and wives have separated, children have been deserted by their parents, and four men have already been sent to the insane asylum. David Deems, the teacher, works not. He reads the Bible literally and says the Lord will provide. The fact is that his disciples provide for him.

The Catholic priests are foaming at the bill brought in by the Italian Minister of Justice, making civil marriage obligatory before any religious ceremony is performed. Signor

Crispi is reported to have said that "Catholicism, like every other institution, has had its day." He is doing what he can to get it under earth, for he knows that while it lives it is a menace to Italian unity as well as to all liberty.

Pope Pecci thanks the Bishop of Autun for his diatribe against the late Ernest Renan, and congratulates himself on his own exposure of "the impious and lying romance invented by the French writer, upon the life of Christ Our Lord." Poor old Pope! He's in a very bad temper.

The Romish Church is infallible, but all the same it has its internal differences. There appears to have been a quarrel between the Pope's Envoy at Washington and the American Bishops, who therefore abandoned their intended pilgrimage to Rome, and now the Pope is angry. How the Lord feels is a matter of speculation.

The Pope is doing good business with this year's Peter's Pence. Pilgrims are shelling out handsomely. The Italians bring 1,000,000 francs, and nearly as much comes from North America. The Austrian emperor sends 100,000 francs, and the Austrian aristocracy 600,000 more. Even the poor, pig-and-potatoes Irish send 875,000 francs. The Duke of Norfolk handed the Pope two cheques, one from himself for £40,000, and the other from English Catholics for £75,000. Thus the golden stream rolls its glittering waves towards Rome, while myriads of honest men are pining for work, and thousands of little children are crying for bread.

Mr. Walsh, editor of the *Protestant Observer*, has been lecturing at Halifax on "The English Church Union a Romanising Confederacy." We think Mr. Walsh is right if ultimate tendency is distinguished from avowed purpose. He was tackled by the Rev. E. Winter, who boasted that the E.C.U. now numbers 34,000 members. The bitter feud exhibited between High and Low Church will tend to the profit of honest outsiders, if there is any truth in the utterance of a certain teacher, that "a house divided against itself cannot stand."

In the dining-room of an English hotel a scriptural text is hung on the wall as follows: "Wait on the Lord and he shall exalt thee to inherit the land, and alongside of it is a warning from the landlord, reading, "Watch your hat and overcoat, as the proprietor is not responsible for them."

Spook-inspired Mr. Stead is now patronising astrology and second sight in the *Review of Reviews*. His Civic Church, to include Atheists, promises to be the queerest menagerie collected since the days of Noah.

"We wish we could persuade all men to give up smoking," says the *Methodist Times*. Yet a short time ago we read in another religious journal that the Rev. Hugh Price Hughes loves a good cigar.

We once knew the editor of a goody-goody paper, who used to advise his readers to study Proverbs instead of Shakespeare, and never, never to touch alcohol. He might have been seen, however, almost any morning at the Gaiety bar, lowering half a dozen whiskies before dinner.

Archdeacon Farrar has been preaching on "Fleshpots or Manna?" He says we should all decide for manna. Not bad for a gentleman with £2,000 a year!

Dr. Clifford, the "democratic" preacher, who even goes in for Socialism (but of the Christian sort), is not able to do more than "hope for a hope" in regard to the fate of sinners (and, we suppose, unbelievers) in the next life. Poor sinners! But after all Dr. Clifford is—or should be—in the sight of Omnipotence just as good or bad as the worst of them. A common Creator made all men just as they are; which is a fact, at least on the Theistic hypothesis, that Dr. Clifford and his like would do well to ponder.

Theosophy has reached the Divorce Division. Mr. Thomasset, against whom a decree of judicial separation was granted yesterday, attributed his domestic shortcomings to the influence of a Mahatma. He had learned from that high authority that he had been wrongly united, and so took on with a destitute young lady whom he rescued as she was in the act of throwing herself off London Bridge. Thereafter

Mr. Thomasset devoted himself with such energy to hypnotic inquiry that his wife felt constrained to appeal to Mr. Justice Barnes; only Mrs. Thomasset did not call it hypnotism. She described it as desertion and adultery, and said the Mahatma was a female named Gray. The moral of it is that those who wish to keep their happy homes had better steer clear of Mahatmas; and that the impulse of heroic persuasion late at night on London Bridge may be exercised at too great a cost.—*The Star*.

There have been horrible doings as far north as Inverness, happily not allowed to pass undenounced by the Free Presbytery. A troupe of Indians are enlivening that pious town with performances at the theatre. This is not the worst of it. After the fashion of theatrical troupes, they travel on Sunday. Worse still, crowds assembled at the Inverness station to witness their arrival. The Presbytery entered a vigorous protest against such proceedings, which, said the Rev. Mr. Connell, were a disgrace to the community.

Worse still; an opera company has had the effrontery to give a Sunday evening sacred concert in Inverness, and one evidently relished by those who attended. The Presbytery were unanimous in denouncing this unheard-of wickedness. Said the Rev. Mr. Cameron, "You cannot conceive of a meaner thing, taking advantage of this place, which is noted for its Sabbath keeping, and trying to show a kind of piety in the way of having sacred music." This mean attempt to get some of the sky-pilots' business was "disgraceful."

The Rev. Macdonald declared they were drifting even in the north of Scotland into a sort of continental Sabbathism. "If things go on as they are now doing, we shall soon find ourselves with a Sabbath not better than that prevailing on the continent. There is a great laxity as to Sabbath keeping here. There is a great amount of walking during the summer evenings, and it is very demoralising to the young people. The question is—What can we do to prevent it?" Aye, there's the rub. People read and travel nowadays, and the power of the parish god-almighties diminishes in proportion. Oh, for the good old days, when Sabbath breaking was visited with imprisonment in the stocks or "jugs."

The very same number of the *Northern Chronicle* which contains the report of the Inverness Presbytery mentions that juvenile crime is largely on the increase. The number of persons arrested for drunkenness has advanced from 88 in 1889 to 134 in 1890; in 1891 there was a further increase to 156; and last year the total was 193. This although in this period the publichouses have been closed earlier, viz., at ten. The Presbytery said nothing of their city's crime and drunkenness. Everyone knows that is a matter for the police. The men of God, like the silversmiths of Ephesus, only cry out when their craft is in danger, and then they attribute every evil to the failure to attend their ministrations.

Echoes of the discussion on "Is Christianity Played Out?" still reverberate in provincial pulpits. The Rev. T. Cockburn, M.A., at Hawick, has been discoursing on this topic, and gave vent to some new and original lies on the occasion. After relating the good old fable about the Emperor Julian crying, "O Galilean, thou hast conquered," he said "Christ is dead!" exclaimed Shelley and Paine, and yet, when in danger of perishing on the deep, they both cried to Christ to help them." We challenge the Rev. T. Cockburn, M.A., to produce a scintilla of evidence in support of these assertions.

The Rev. Professor J. Agar Beet, D.D., lecturing on "Genesis," told his auditors "they had historical evidence that the flood was true. In every nation there were traditions of a flood, and those traditions were wonderfully alike." But he did not tell them that the Chaldean story of the flood was older than the Bible one, and that they are so wonderfully alike that it is evident the Bible story is borrowed.

The inference Dr. Beet would have his auditors draw was that the Bible story was corroborated by history—as though traditions of a flood were any evidence that all animals went in by pairs into a menagerie of the dimensions of Noah's Ark.

Then Dr. Beet went on to observe that "he did not think the whole of the earth was covered with water." This although Genesis vii. 19 distinctly says, "All the high hills

that were under the whole heaven were covered." Dr. Beet well knows there is no evidence of any such universal flood as this.

Dr. Beet proceeded to say, "Everybody admitted there was once one language for the world before the dispersion of the nations." Will Dr. Beet name the philologists who admit this, or name a single one who believes that every variety of human speech has come from a single source since the time of Noah? Remains of Egypt, Assyria, China, and Mexico, prove there were diverse languages long prior to that time.

Mohammed Alexander Russell Webb is creating some stir in the States by his efforts to convert his fellow countrymen to the faith as it is in Islam. He cannot well be less successful than Christian missionaries are in Mohammedan lands.

The sect of Jezreelites is not yet extinct despite the death of their founder, Jezreel James White and his wife "Queen Esther." Their organ, modestly called the *Pioneer of Wisdom*, is sent to us, and it appears the disciples are still gathering in the 144,000. Some appear to be in Scotland, others in Wales, and others again in America. The Jezreelites unite the Anglo-Israelite mania to a belief in the femininity of deity and the creation of evil by this double-sexed nondescript.

The stupid and dirty practice of Bible kissing in law courts is likely to fall into gradual disuse now that instructions have been sent to all magistrates' clerks, telling them the Scotch fashion of raising the right hand is permissible. The editor of the *Market Rasen Mail* says: "We remember upon one occasion in Market Rasen we had the oath administered to us upon a greasy old 'ready reckoner,' and when the mistake was noticed we had to repeat the dose upon an equally 'ancient' and 'greasy' Testament in calf binding. The idea is dirty in the extreme and is no use whatever. A man who will lie would do so quite as readily with the Testament to his lips as he will without it, and have not the slightest compunction about it. The sooner the dirty custom is abolished the better."

The Rev. Mr. Story, a popular Scotch minister, in view of the threatened attack on the Presbyterian Establishment in Scotland, laments that Britain's destinies are guided by a rank Anglican and a blank Atheist—Mr. Gladstone and Mr. John Morley.

Dr. March, of Rochdale, lecturing on "Stone Implements," noted the changes that had been made in people's views by the doctrine of evolution. "A few weeks ago he was talking with a clergyman who was what was called an evolutionist. This clergyman said he did not believe there were ever such persons as Adam and Eve, and that he did not think any minister in the Rochdale parish believed in their existence." Some day people may discover that the second Adam is just as mythical as the first.

Jules Ferry, when stricken to death with his last attack of heart disease, said to his brother "You will not be able to save me this time; I am a lost man." Of course the words have absolutely no theological significance, but ignorant Christian apologists will doubtless tell their audiences, "Ah that infidel Jules Ferry cried out 'I am lost' when he was dying." They did the same in the case of Gambetta, though every one who knows French is aware that "Je suis perdu" on Gambetta's lips simply meant "It is all over"—that is, the doctors could not possibly save his life.

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. Fordor 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, March 26, Secular Hall, Rusholme-road, Oxford-road, Manchester:—at 11, "Shakespeare's 'Hamlet': its Philosophy and Lessons"; at 3, "Can we Follow Christ?"; at 6.30, "Did Jesus Rise from the Dead?"

Monday, March 27, Athenæum Assembly Rooms, Queen-street, Wolverhampton:—at 8, "Is there a God?"

April 2 and 9, Hall of Science; 16, Liverpool.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

MR. CHAS. WATTS' ENGAGEMENTS.—March 26, 27, 28, Glasgow. April 2 and 9, Birmingham; 11 and 12, Chester; 16, Hall of Science; 17, Battersea; 23, Hall of Science; 26 and 27, debate at Jarrow-on-Tyne; 30, Bolton. May 7, Manchester; 14, Birmingham; 28, Hall of Science, London. —All communications for Mr. Watts should be sent direct to him (with stamped envelope for reply) at Baskerville Hall, The Crescent, Birmingham.

G. L. MACKENZIE.—Verses and sketch may both be useful.

A. WALLER.—The enclosure was noticed a week or two ago.

F. RYAN.—Received with thanks.

HALL OF SCIENCE BUILDING FUND.—Collected at Mr. Foote's lecture, March 19, 19s. 10d.

A. SIMSON.—Thanks. We shall be glad to hear of a real organisation at Brighton.

THE HULL FUND.—Staleybridge Branch, 7s.

JOSEPH TAYLOR.—Our compliments to your members. Miss Vance will send receipt for renewals.

NIL DESPERANDUM.—Lecture Notices must be written on separate slips of paper, on the model of our printed list. We are glad to hear that the Luton Branch is increasing its membership, and hope Mr. Rudd will be successful in his candidature. What is "the row" relative to placing the *Freethinker* on the Reading Room table?

H. SANTEN.—Your translation of the story, leading to the expulsion of Baruch Spinoza from the Amsterdam Synagogue is interesting, but too long for our columns.

J. M. WALKER.—Thanks for the advertisement of the *Freethinker*. Mr. Foote will write in a day or two as to an early visit to Tyneside.

BRUNO.—No hold at all. The girl is legally her own mistress.

L. SPURGEON.—(1) Some house property was left to the Bolton Branch, and retained by the residuary legatee. The same thing occurred at Manchester in the case of the Spencer bequest of £500. Members, O. Bradlaugh and G. Payne were the trustees nominated in Mr. Spencer's will, and a Christian is enjoying the money. (2) We cannot give particulars of the Jenkins trust. Perhaps Mr. Holyoake will give them in our columns. (3) The National Secular Hall Society's shares are of course transferable, at a very trifling expense.

S. STANDRING.—We have heard nothing further from Melbourne as to the Baildon legacy. Kindly send us your present address.

J. P. ADAMS.—Received with thanks. The pamphlet is of no intrinsic value, but the pencilling at the end does seem Bentham's. Pleased to hear from you at any time.

S. SMITH.—Thanks for the information. The resolution is worded to beg the whole question.

R. WILLIAMS.—The following is the passage in Lord Coleridge's summing-up at Mr. Foote's trial for Blasphemy in the Court of Queen's Bench:—"Mr. Foote is anxious to have it impressed on your minds that he is not a licentious writer, and that this word does not fairly apply to his publications. You will have the documents before you, and you must judge for yourselves. I should say that he is right. He may be blasphemous, but he certainly is not licentious, in the ordinary sense of the word; and you do not find him pandering to the bad passions of mankind."

H. JONES (Manchester).—Etiquette requires that the resolution should be submitted to the Executive before publication. We therefore hold it over. For the rest, see paragraph.

ERNEST.—We cannot undertake to explain or to defend other person's views and opinions; nor do we read the papers you refer to.

"FREETHINKER" SUSTENTATION FUND.—Connie West, £5; W. Pratt, New Zealand (second quarterly subscription), £5.

F. FOX AND E. POWNCEBY.—We wish the Rowing and Athletic Club all success.

R. FORDER (treasurer, Hall of Science Children's Party) acknowledges:—Mr. Hele, per J. Anderson, 5s.

F. TODD, secretary, West London Branch, writes—"The Branch was much gratified with the success of your lecture at Hammersmith on Thursday, and intend carrying on a vigorous propaganda in the district during the forthcoming season. The collection amounted to £1 0s. 3d., and the sale of front tickets realised 13s."

CORRESPONDENCE should reach us not later than Tuesday if a reply is desired in the current issue. Otherwise the reply stands over till the following week.

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

PAPERS RECEIVED.—Der Lichtfreund—Boston Investigator—Open Court—Freidenker—Two Worlds—Der Arme Teufel—Western Figaro—Liberator—Liberty—Clarion—Flaming Sword—Echo—Truthseeker—Fritankaren—La Raison—Lucifer—Secular Thought—Printer's Ink—Natural Food—Progressive Thinker—Spinning Wheel—Twentieth Century—Merthyr Times—Freethinker's Magazine—North Middlesex Chronicle—Pioneer of Wisdom—Market Rasen Mail—Hawick Advertiser—North Eastern Daily Gazette—Jersey Express—Post—Rochdale Observer—Northern Chronicle—Lucifer—Catholic Church Evangelist—Modern Thought—Atherston News—Willesden Chronicle—Keighley News—Ally Sloper's Half Holiday—Halifax Guardian—The Liver—North Middlesex Chronicle.

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

The Freethinker (including the twopenny special number for the first week in each month) will be forwarded, direct from the office, post free, at the following rates, prepaid:—One Year, 7s. 6d.; Half Year, 3s. 9d.; Three Months, 1s. 10½d.

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.

OUR SPECIAL NUMBER.

Our Special Number idea has "caught on." Each issue has sold better than its predecessor, and this has caused a slight improvement in the sale of the ordinary numbers. Of course we are expending a considerable sum on the Special Numbers, but we feel justified in doing so—and even in contemplating still further expenditure—by the success which is attending the enterprise. Instead of giving an occasional Cartoon, for instance, we hope to give one every month. We also intend to make the July special a Summer Number. It will contain twenty-four pages, and will be profusely illustrated. The price of that issue will be threepence, and we shall issue a similar number at Christmas.

Next week's *Freethinker* will be a Special Number. It will contain a first-rate Cartoon by the artist who drew "Is Christianity Played Out?" There will also be another illustration, besides portraits of Mr. Edward Truelove, Dr. T. R. Allinson, and probably Mr. Joseph Symes.

P.S.—As we go to press very early next week, lecture notices must reach us on *Monday*.

SUGAR PLUMS.

Mr. Foote had a good audience at the London Hall of Science on Sunday evening, when he lectured on "The Breaking of the Bible." After the lecture he announced that henceforth, at all his lectures in London and the provinces, he would have a collection taken for the Hall of Science Rebuilding Fund. Whatever was realised would be invested in shares for the National Secular Society, whose property and power of control would be thus increased. No great amount might be received on any one Sunday, but a box would always be held at the door, and in course of time the total would be something considerable.

One lesson of the late trouble at Hull is that the Secular party absolutely must have its own halls. The way to realise this desideratum is for the party to support the National Secular Hall Society, which may thus be enabled to extend its operations into all parts of the country. It need hardly be said that properties will be safer under the control of a strong central Board. We appeal to Secularists to take up shares promptly and generously. Mr. George Anderson offers to give £300 if the number of shares is increased to 3,000 by the end of August. Surely this handsome offer will stimulate

the zeal of others. The shares are easily payable, and the poorer as well as the wealthier members of the party may all contribute to the success of the scheme.

Mr. Robert Forder acted as honorary secretary to the National Secular Hall Society for the first twelve months, and deserves very warm thanks for his valuable services. He is still on the Board of Directors. Miss Vance is now the Society's secretary, and will be happy to send application forms for shares post free to any address. We hope she will receive a hundred postcards during the next week.

Mr. Foote lectures in the Secular Hall, Manchester, to-day (March 26). His morning lecture is the one which drew such a fine Wednesday evening audience to the London Hall of Science—"Shakespeare's 'Hamlet': its Philosophy and its Lessons." The afternoon and evening lectures are very reasonable. On Monday evening Mr. Foote lectures in the Athenæum Assembly Room, Queen-street, Wolverhampton, on "Is there a God?"

After his afternoon lecture at Manchester, Mr. Foote requests the Branch members to remain for a few minutes, in order that he may confer with them on a matter of business.

Mr. Charles Watts had two important counter attractions against him at Bristol last Sunday. Keir Hardie, M.P., was lecturing at the same time close to the Secular Hall, and the Bristol Research Society had their annual excursion. Mr. Watts, however, had good audiences, the hall in the evening being well filled. Our colleague was, as usual, most enthusiastically received, and some slight opposition was offered at the morning and evening lectures. We are glad to hear that the Bristol Branch of the N.S.S. is rapidly increasing in numbers.

Mr. Watts lectures three times to-day (Sunday, March 26) in Glasgow, and to-morrow and Tuesday evenings he debates at the same place with the Rev. Joseph Deans on "Secularism the True Philosophy of Existence."

The Character Sketch in the March *Review of Reviews* is that of Mr. Frederick Courteney Selous, the South African traveller and naturalist. Mr. Selous is described as a well-educated English gentleman, of many accomplishments, with an iron constitution and a passionate love of adventure. His mind has been nurtured on Byron, Darwin and Buckle. He has emerged from his South African wanderings a materialist in philosophy. "Mr. Selous," we are told, "sees everywhere the working of a great scheme of law, of iron law often horribly unjust to the individual, however beneficial it may be to the race; and it inspires in him feelings quite other than the reverent childlike faith of General Gordon."

Livingstone held that the bite of a wild beast acts as a kind of anæsthetic, but Mr. Selous dismisses this theory as unfounded. "He has interviewed numbers of men who have escaped literally from the mouth of the lion, and he finds that they all suffered horribly both from fear and from the physical agony of the tearing teeth and claws. He has heard the pitiful lowing of cattle seized by lions, and listened as the wild horrible moaning bellow of the victim became weaker and weaker as the lion proceeded on its meal, but never ceased until life was extinct." Mr. Selous, in fact, has seen that "nature red in tooth and claw" does shriek against the optimistic creed of the Theist.

|| The Rev. E. Gough is a Congregational minister of Barrowford who has studied the New Testament and old Fathers for himself, and has come to some curious conclusions upon which he sends a long letter to the *British Weekly*. Mr. Gough holds, and challenges all Christian ministers to discuss the matter with him, that the gospels contain an inspired allegory or moral history, but not literal history, and that Christ was an ideal and Jesus never lived in visible form in Palestine. This shows a curious revival of Gnosticism in the present day. We wonder what Mr. Gough makes of 1 John v. 3. He may at any rate take it as proof that in the earliest days there were those who denied that Jesus Christ had come in the flesh.

Despite the "ungodliness" of this sceptical age—or perhaps in consequence of it—crime has greatly diminished. Since 1867-8 criminals have decreased from 87,668 to 51,095, while the population has largely increased. Sir

Edmund Du Cane also points out, in his *Nineteenth Century* article, that trivial and often not really criminal offences are included in the present convictions, such as breaches of the Education Acts, Vaccination Acts, Vagrant Acts, Borough Acts, etc. This is a matter which the clergy would do well to ponder before composing fresh jeremiads.

The better the day the better the deed. On this principle the West London Branch is going to have a social gathering on Good Friday. It will take place at the West Kensington-park Radical Club, Faroe-road, Blyth-road, Hammersmith. Tea at 5.30, entertainment at 6.30. Tickets 1s. (for both) and 6d. The secretary, F. Todd, 59 Tunis-road, W., will be glad to hear from any musical friends willing to assist at this function.

Mr. Foote's lecture at Hammersmith for the London Secular Federation on "The Doom of the Gods" drew a crowded audience. There was no discussion, however, though several persons asked questions. Mr. George Anderson, in moving a vote of thanks, said it was the first time he had ever heard Mr. Foote lecture, and he was more than pleased, he was electrified. He had known the Freethought party and its leaders for half a century, and he thought that Charles Bradlaugh and Mr. Foote were the two best leaders the party had ever had. Such men ought to be better supported. Men who were themselves freed from superstition were mean and contemptible in refusing to support the movement for liberating those who were still enslaved. Mr. Anderson's remarks were heartily applauded, and the vote of thanks was carried with acclamation.

We have been asked to reprint the Cartoon in our last Special Number for general distribution, at (say) a shilling per hundred. One reader offers to take two thousand copies. We think we shall strike off ten or twenty thousand for a trial. Each copy will serve as an advertisement for the *Freethinker*.

Members of the Nottingham Branch should all attend the annual meeting to-day (March 26), at 3. Serious business has to be discussed. Tea at 4.30; tickets 6d. Songs, readings, and recitations at 7, and Mr. Hooper will address the meeting.

The *Beverley Independent* reproduces without comment our "Acid Drop" on Canon Quirk in last week's *Freethinker*.

London members of the N.S.S., and country members who may be coming to town, are reminded that another Conversation will be held at the Hall of Science on Wednesday evening, April 5, from 8 till 11. The President and his colleagues of the Executive will be present to chat with the members. During the evening there will be some good music and one or two readings. All members are heartily welcome to this "At Home."

A sound mind in a healthy body is a consummation devoutly to be wished; and we commend to the attention of our readers interested in physical training the newly-formed Rowing and Athletic Club at the Hall of Science, with which a very promising start has been made. The "curriculum" includes rowing, swimming, boxing, athletic and gymnastic exercises, musical drills, etc., in all of which branches proficient instructors or "coaches" have volunteered their services. Intending members should communicate with the secretary, Mr. Fredk. Fox, at the Hall. The subscription is very moderate—6d. per month—and the entrance fee of one shilling will not be charged to those joining before April 1. The Club meets this morning (March 26) at 11 for rowing practice at the "Jolly Anglers," Lea Bridge-road.

The Manchester Branch held its annual meeting on Sunday. Mr. Brownworth resigned the secretaryship, and Mr. H. Jones was elected in his stead. Mr. Walter Payne, who took the treasurer'ship during Mr. King's illness, retires now that Mr. King is happily restored to health. The report states that twenty new members have been enrolled during the past six months. The balance-sheet is a healthy document.

We beg to call attention once more to the *Freethinker* as an advertisement medium. It will be seen that we have rearranged our advertisement pages, placing reading matter at the top, so that the business announcements below may

stand a better chance of being noticed. Those who have tried the *Freethinker*, and given it a fair chance, have found it worth their while. The proof is that they continue. Why then do not other tradesmen follow their example? We venture to say that those who neglect to advertise in our columns are missing a good opportunity.

ON MORAL GOODNESS.

MANY persons imagine that, apart from the idea of the existence of an all-wise, all-good God, morality has no existence; consequently, they argue that if the God idea were destroyed, man would be reduced to the level of the lower animals; that he would no longer cultivate his intellectual qualities (which, after all, enable him to understand how to act wisely and avoid foolish conduct), but that he would abandon himself recklessly to the gratification of the lowest passions and to every conceivable act of wickedness. That this idea is an altogether erroneous one, it requires very little examination of human character and history to determine. Let us consider this moral question from the point of view of the rationalist. In the first place, let us inquire into the origin of moral goodness as manifested in human conduct, and briefly trace its development in the history of the world.

To answer the question as to how man first came to understand how to act morally, we have to go back in imagination to a time when there was not a solitary house existing upon the earth; no machinery, no railroads, no carriage roads, nay, not even foot paths; indeed we have to go back (in imagination) to the time when the world was a howling wilderness for naked savages and wild beasts. Further, we have not only to eliminate from our imagination all those things that make up what we call civilisation, but we have to conceive of a creature called man, who was destitute of everything save the rudest ideas—without weapons, without tools, with no shelter from the inclemency of the weather but a mud hut, or a hole in the earth. We have to consider man in this savage and uncultivated condition, and see how he first came to be a moral being.

Now it is perfectly safe to say that man, in this savage state, was neither moral nor immoral. He does not yet understand the result of his actions; he does not yet know that any one course of conduct is likely to promote happiness more than another. To him the words right and wrong have as yet no meaning; and obviously we must not apply our present standard of thought and action when we are considering our primitive ancestors. These savage creatures did not know anything about the laws of nature; they merely acted as their appetites and passions prompted them. The multifarious phenomena of nature frightened and bewildered them. They saw the stars in the heavens and wondered; they beheld the sun in all his glory and fell on their knees in fear and adoration; they felt the winds, but understood not the cause of them; indeed, nature to them was a perfect enigma.

Man in this uncivilised condition, then, could neither be said to be moral nor immoral; he was simply *unmoral*. Moreover, the more isolated the life of the savage, the less the element of morality could be said to enter into his conduct. For if a being lives by himself like a hermit, he can neither be moral nor immoral; he can neither contribute to the happiness nor to the misery of his fellows. What, then, are the powers that moved this savage creature and converted him into a moral being. First, his fear of natural forces. As Mr. Savage finely puts it: "The first thing he [the uncivilised man] recognises is this external world. And he learns gradually that here are forces and powers that he must guard against. Here are heat and cold and tempest. Here is the danger of starving unless he supplies himself with food. Here are wild beasts and wilder men. Here are all these forces of the external world—the winds and the storms that beat upon him, the cold that freezes him, the earthquake that makes the world tremble beneath his feet. These shape him and mould him into certain courses of conduct, driving him along the pathway that begins to point towards the modern world. How do they do it?"

Simply by making him feel that he must do certain things, or else suffer or die. And besides the power of this external world, there is another that takes him into its hands; and that is the political power. Someone in his tribe gains prominence, and becomes chief, a despot, ruling with an iron hand, controlling the destinies of the tribe. This political force takes him and shapes him; compels him, perhaps, to respect some of the rights of his fellow tribesmen, prevents him from killing his fellows, and directs his murderous feeling only towards his enemies. This political force touches him at every point and shapes all the habits of his life. And then, in the third place, there comes the power of society, the estimation in which he is held by his fellows—the same power which is the mightiest of all controlling forces upon us to-day. This we shall find in the lowest condition of barbarism quite as imperious, and even more so, perhaps, than it is now. The young brave must do something to win an honorable position in his tribe. He must accomplish some feat of daring before any of the maidens of his tribe will look upon him as manly and honorable enough to claim and win her affections. And so, one after another, these social forces seize upon him and shape the courses of his conduct. And then mightier than all the rest are the religious forces that deal with him. They control his thinking, the schemes of his brain, and the emotions of his heart" (*The Morals of Evolution*, p. 45).

By "religious forces" Mr. Savage evidently means the superstitious fears and fancies of our primitive ancestors. For he goes on to say that uncivilised man has "no idea of one God; he has thoughts of many. All the powers about him he thinks of as separate beings. He is afraid of the spirits of his dead ancestors. He is afraid of the power of the scorching sun; he is afraid of the sweep of the hurricane; he is afraid of the current of the stream that makes it dangerous for him to cross, or that drags under the comrade swimming on its surface; he is afraid of ten thousand forms and forces. The universe is just alive with these imaginary beings that either love or hate him, which he seeks to propitiate or make friends of. Now this religious power comes in and restricts his conduct, compelling him into certain activities and driving him away from certain other courses of action" (*Ibid.*, p. 46). Still, all these combined forces—fear of natural phenomena—social, political, superstitious, or theological fears and fancies, do not result in making man a moral being. They are only steps on the road; they are important factors undoubtedly; they lead ultimately to the recognition that these natural forces are not mere haphazard occurrences, but occur according to definite laws inherent in these forces, and which are eternal, inexorable. And when man understands this fact he knows for the first time that these powers, for all practical purposes, are the conditions of life to him; that he cannot defy them without suffering the consequences; that all attempts to ignore them are futile, and must ultimately end in his death.

Thus, in time, he learns self-control. Further, he learns that what is true of the external world is true also of himself; that his mind is governed by fixed principles; that he cannot think as he likes; that his thoughts are governed by inexorable laws; and that his actions carry with them consequence—results which affect him just as much as they do his fellows. And thus he gradually comes to grasp, in a crude and imperfect way, the first principles of morality.

ARTHUR B. MOSS.

A curious ecclesiastical dispute is proceeding in the little parish of St. Valery-en-Caux, in Normandy. The Freethinkers of the neighborhood object to entering the church even to attend funerals or marriages, and complain that during the religious portion of such ceremonies they are obliged to wait in the various wineshops at hand. So they request the Church to build a "neutral shelter" adjoining the sacred building, where they can wait without violating their opinions. The clerical authorities refuse, and the Freethinkers propose to take legal proceedings. It must be remembered that the Church in the Republic is a directly-paid department of the State.

NATIONAL SECULAR SOCIETY.

President, G. W. FOOTIE.

PRINCIPLES AND OBJECTS.

SECULARISM teaches that conduct should be based on reason and knowledge. It knows nothing of divine guidance of interference; it excludes supernatural hopes and fears; it regards happiness as man's proper aim, and utility as his moral guide.

Secularism affirms that Progress is only possible through Liberty, which is at once a right and a duty; and therefore seeks to remove every barrier to the fullest equal freedom of thought, action and speech.

Secularism declares that theology is condemned by reason as superstitious and by experience as mischievous, and assails it as the historic enemy of progress.

Secularism accordingly seeks to dispel superstition; to spread education; to disestablish religion; to rationalise morality; to promote peace; to dignify labor; to extend material well-being; and to realise the self-government of the people.

MEMBERSHIP.

Any person is eligible as a member on signing the following declaration:—

"I desire to join the National Secular Society, and I pledge myself, if admitted as a member, to co-operate in promoting its objects."

Name

Address

Occupation

Active or Passive

Dated this.....day of.....18

This Declaration should be transmitted to the Secretary with a subscription; and, on admission of the member, a certificate will be issued by the Executive.

The minimum subscription for individual members is one shilling per year; all beyond that amount is optional, every member being left to fix his subscription according to his means and interest in the cause.

Members are classed as active or passive. Passive members are those who cannot allow their names to be published. Active members are those who do not object to the publication of their names, and are ready to co-operate openly in the Society's work.

Fill up the above form and forward it, with subscription (as much, or as little, as you think just to yourself and the cause), to Mr. Robert Forder, sec., 28 Stonecutter Street, London, E.C.; or to a local Branch Secretary.

INGERSOLL AND THE MINISTERS.

"I SAW 'Pagan Bob' Ingersoll entertain a crowd of Methodist preachers once, and it was, perhaps, the most appreciative audience the great Agnostic ever had," said Major Charles Edwards at the Southern, to a reporter. "I was en route from St. Louis to Indianapolis. Travel was light, and I had the chair car all to myself when we reached Vandalia. Ingersoll, who had been lecturing at some point on the Central, got on there. He was pining for society and we became well acquainted in about two minutes. He was fairly overflowing with animal spirits, and the stories he told that night would make the fortune of a dozen humorists. A few stations beyond Vandalia we picked up a contingent of Methodist preachers who had been attending some kind of a gathering of the faithful. Ingersoll winked at me and proceeded to make himself agreeable to the old brethren. He was a veritable magnet, and soon the entire party was hanging about him enjoying his flow of wit. Men who looked as though they had not cracked a smile for twenty years, laughed till they cried.

"At Marshall the party left us with many expressions of regret. They all told us who they were, where they had been, etc., but Colonel Ingersoll was not equally confidential. Finally, one good old brother, whose laughter had cracked the paint of the coach, asked his name. Ingersoll handed him his card. He look at it and let it drop as though it had

burned his fingers. His jaw fell, and he looked as though he had seen a ghost. 'All off for Marshall!' yelled the porter, and they hustled out. They congregated on the platform, the old man who had dropped the card, whispered hoarsely, 'Brethren, we've been talkin' to that awful Atheist, Bob Ingersoll!' 'Lord have mercy upon us!' ejaculated a pious brother, as his chin dropped down behind his paper collar. The young member of the party appeared to rather enjoy the confusion of the elder, and as the train pulled out I heard one of them say: 'Well, men and brethren, they do say that the devil is not as black as he is painted. Pagan Bob is a daisy.' I thought Ingersoll would explode with laughter after his visitors had departed."—St. Louis Globe-Democrat.

BOOK CHAT.

A Quaker, one Edwin Rickman, in his anonymous *Diary of a Solitaire*, 1835, after citing Hannah More on infidels, says: "Yes, I fully join this devoted Christian writer in the belief that the pangs which the soul of the infidel Voltaire is now suffering for its earthly sins against God and his revealed truth, are co-existent with every instance in which his poison becomes infused, for the first time, into the breast of a new reader; and that another and another throb of agony torments his spirit, as one by one the earthly posterity of his readers sits down to his poisonous work." Further on this pious Christian speaks of "his satanic brother Paine."

The fifth and last volume of the English translation of Graetz *History of the Jews*, is adorned with a photographic portrait of the author. The work is a terrible indictment of Christian persecution. The German edition is in eleven volumes.

Prof. Arnold Dodel-Port's *Moses oder Darwin?* has been translated, and is published by the Commonwealth Co., New York. We trust it will have the same success in America that it has had on the Continent.

Mr. R. Le Gallienne, the juvenile poet and critic, who came to the rescue of Essential Christianity against the assaults of Mr. Robert Buchanan, is about to publish his opinions in book form under the title of *The Religion of a Literary Man*. It is announced that he will treat his subject from "a reverential but entirely untheological standpoint."

M. Maspero is preparing for the Chicago Congress on Folklore a paper on the subject of Ancient Egyptian Superstitions which have descended to modern times. We wonder if he will include the Trinity.

General M. M. Trumbull, editor of *Open Court*, who has done much to promote free trade in America, sends us a well-written pamphlet entitled *Earl Grey on Reciprocity and Civil Service Reform*.

The Christian has always the dread before him that God, in a fierce displeasure or infinite mercy and loving kindness, may see fit to thwart all his schemes, destroy his property, bereave him of family, and wreck his earthly happiness; but he tries to enjoy the consolation that it will be for his spiritual and everlasting welfare. The Secularist, on the other hand, is free from this element of uncertainty in his calculations. If his plans are well laid, his efforts commensurate, his knowledge sufficient, and his work in accord with nature's conditions, he will succeed, and he need not fear that a loving but meddling father will interfere, snatch away the fruits of his toil, and give them to some lazy scoundrel who has done nothing to deserve them. If he does fail, it is owing to the limitations of human knowledge; and its lesson is not submission to God and the study of apology for conduct on his part, which, if indulged in by a fellow-man, would be considered mean and cruel, but the misfortune stimulates to a study of its causes and to future efforts to remove the obstacles to human progress, which are solely those that man's conquest of natural forces will overcome.—Robert C. Adams in *Pioneer Path*.

N.S.S. SUBSCRIPTIONS.

GENERAL FUND.—M. Walton, 1s. 6d.; W. Marsh, 6d.; E. Seed, 1s.; W. Jackson, 1s.; P. W. Baldwin, 1s. SPECIAL ADVERTISING FUND.—W. H., 10s.

LECTURE NOTICES, ETC.

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

LONDON.

Battersea Secular Hall (back of Battersea Park Station): 3, members' quarterly meeting: 5.30, tea and soiree (6d) Tuesday at 8, dancing (free). Good Friday at 8, social gathering.

Bethnal Green—Libra Hall, 78 Libra-road, Roman-road: 7.30, H. Snell will lecture.

Camberwell—61 New Church-road, S.E.: 7.30, C. Cohen, "Evolution v. Special Creation." Friday at 7.30, free science classes (hygiene and astronomy).

Edmonton—North Middlesex Hall, Fore-street: 7, J. B. Coppock, F.C.S., "Animals and Plants" (illustrated).

Hall of Science, 142 Old-street, E.O.: 11.15, Touzeau Parris, "The Scope and Limit of Individualism" (free); 6.30, musical selections; 7, Touzeau Parris, "Blood Sacrifices" (3d., 6d., and 1s) Wednesday at 8.15, J. Rowney, "Holy Moses and Company" (free).

Hammersmith—Hammersmith Club, 1 The Grove: Thursday at 8, Stanley Jones, "Noah and Lot: Flood and Fire" (free).

West London—West Kensington Park Radical Club, Faroe-road, Hammersmith: Good Friday at 5.30, tea; 6.30, entertainment and dance; tickets 1s.; entertainment only 6d.

Westminster and Lambeth Branches N.S.S., "Duke of Ormonde," Prince's-street: 8, conversazione.

OPEN-AIR PROPAGANDA.

Battersea Park-gates: 11.15, F. Haslam, "The Devil Tempting God Almighty."

Hyde Park (near Marble-arch): 11.30, C. J. Hunt, "The Resurrection."

COUNTRY.

Aberdeen—Oddfellows' Hall Buildings (Hall No. 5, upstairs): 6.30, W. N. Allan, "Geology and the Bible."

Bath—Corridor Rooms: 8, meeting of members and friends.

Birmingham—Baskerville Hall, Crescent, Cambridge-street: Stanley Jones, 11, "The Cooling of Hell"; 7, "Genesis and Science."

Bolton—Spinners' Hall, St. George's-road: A. B. Moss, 11, "What does the Bible Teach?"; 3, "The Last of the Gods"; 6.30, "Why Christianity is Played Out"; the afternoon and evening lectures preceded by recitals.

Bradford—Unity Lodge Rooms, 85 Sunbridge-road: 6.30, members' annual meeting

Chatham—Secular Hall, Queen's-road, New Brompton: 11, W. B. Thompson, "Life Without God"; 2.45, Sunday-school for children; 7, Rev. Stewart Headlam, "Some Popular Fallacies regarding the Teaching of the Church."

Derby—Mr. Moore's Restaurant, Station-street; Monday at 6.45, quarterly meeting, tea, and social gathering.

Glasgow—Ex-Mission Hall, 110 Brunswick-street: Charles Watts, 11.30, "The Church and the Labor Question"; 2.30, "Is Christianity Played Out?"; 6.30, "Happiness in Hell, Misery in Heaven." Monday and Tuesday at 8, debate between Charles Watts and Rev. Joseph Deans (New Jerusalem Church; Monday, "That Secularism as a Philosophy of Life is fitted to meet the highest needs of Mankind"; Tuesday, "That Secularism as a Philosophy of Life is not fitted to meet the highest needs of Mankind.")

Hanley—Secular Hall, John-street: 7.30, quarterly meeting.

Hull—St. George's Hall, 8 Albion-street: 7, music, etc.

Ipswich—Co-operative Hall (small room), Cox-lane: Mrs. Thornton Smith, 11, "Evolution of Conscience"; 7, "Responsibility: from a Freethought Standpoint."

Jarrow—Co-operative Hall (small room), Market-square: 7, business meeting; 7.30, Mr. Belkirk, "The Christian God an Impossibility."

Liverpool—Oddfellows' Hall, St. Anne-street: 11.30, Tontine Society; 3, philosophy class; 7, Mr. Small, B.Sc., "Shakespeare's 'Macbeth.'"

Luton—Rudd's Coffee Tavern, Cheapside: 7, F. Dockrill, "The Church Creed" (free).

Manchester N.S.S., Secular Hall, Rusholme-road, Oxford-road, All Saints: G. W. Foote, 11, "Shakespeare's 'Hamlet': its Philosophy and Lessons"; 3, "Can we Follow Christ?"; 6.30, "Did Jesus Rise from the Dead?"

Newcastle-on-Tyne—Eldon Hall, 2 Clayton-street: 3, members' monthly meeting; 7, debate between Messrs. Robertson and Pearson on "State Socialism v. Anarchist Communism."

Nottingham—Secular Hall, Beck-street: 3, annual meeting; 4.30, tea.

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

Reading—Foresters' Hall, West-street: 7, W. Butler, a reading.

Sheffield—Hall of Science, Rockingham-street: 7, Professor de Gaunt, "Ancient and Modern Magic" (practical illustrations.)

South Shields—Capt. Duncan's Navigation School, King-street: 7, business meeting; 7.30, entertainment.

Sunderland—Bridg End Vaults, Bridge-street: 7, Mr. Stansel, "A Few Facts relating to the Antiquity of Man."

Wolverhampton—Athenaeum Assembly Room, Queen-street: 3, Stanley Jones, "An Impeachment of Christianity"; 7, A. Member, "Why I am a Vegetarian" (free). Monday at 8, G. W. Foote, "Is there a God" (3d., 6d., and 1s.)

LECTURERS' ENGAGEMENTS.

TOUZEAU PARRIS, Clare Lodge, 32 Upper Mall, Hammersmith, London, W.—March 26, Hall of Science. April 2, Camberwell; 16, Bristol; 30, Hall of Science. May 7, Camberwell.

H. SNELL, 8 Monk-street, Woolwich.—March 26, Libra Hall. April 2, Manchester; 9, m., Finsbury; e., Battersea; 14, m., Battersea; e., Camberwell; 23, Birmingham; 30, m., Westminster; a., Victoria Park. May 7, m., Clerkenwell Green; a., Woolwich; 14, m., Camberwell; 28, m., Hyde Park; a., Regent's Park.

ARTHUR B. MOSS, 44 Credon-road, Rotherhithe, London, S.E.—April 2, New Brompton; 16, Hyde Park; 23, Hammersmith; 30, Wood Green. May 7, m., Camberwell; 14, e., Camberwell; 21, m., Westminster; a., Finsbury; 28, m., Wood Green; e., Hammersmith.

C. COHEN, 154 Cannon-street-road, Commercial-road, E.—March 26, Camberwell.

C. J. HUNT, 48 Fordingley-road, St. Peter's Park, London, W.—March 26, m., Hyde Park. April 2, m., Bethnal Green; a., Victoria Park; 9, m., Islington; 16, m., Mile End; a., Finsbury Park; 23, m., Battersea; 30, m., Hyde Park; a., Finsbury Park; e., Hammersmith. May 7, m., Bethnal Green; a., Victoria Park; e., Walthamstow; 14 to 21, annual tour; 28, m., Islington e., Kilburn.

S. H. ALISON, 52 Vassall-road, Brixton, S.W.—April 9, m., Wood Green; 16, Manchester. May 7, m., Wood Green; e., Lambeth; 14, m., Battersea; a., Islington; 21, m., Camberwell; 28, m., Midland Arches; e., Lambeth.

STANLEY JONES, 53 Marlborough-road, Holloway, London, N.—March 26, Birmingham; 30, Hammersmith. April 2, Reading; 12, Hall of Science; 24 and 25, Sunderland; 29, Arbroath; 30, Aberdeen. May 7, Edinburgh.

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