

The Freethinker

Edited by G. W. FOOTE.]

[Sub-Editor, J. M. WHEELER.

Vol. XIII.—No. 14.]

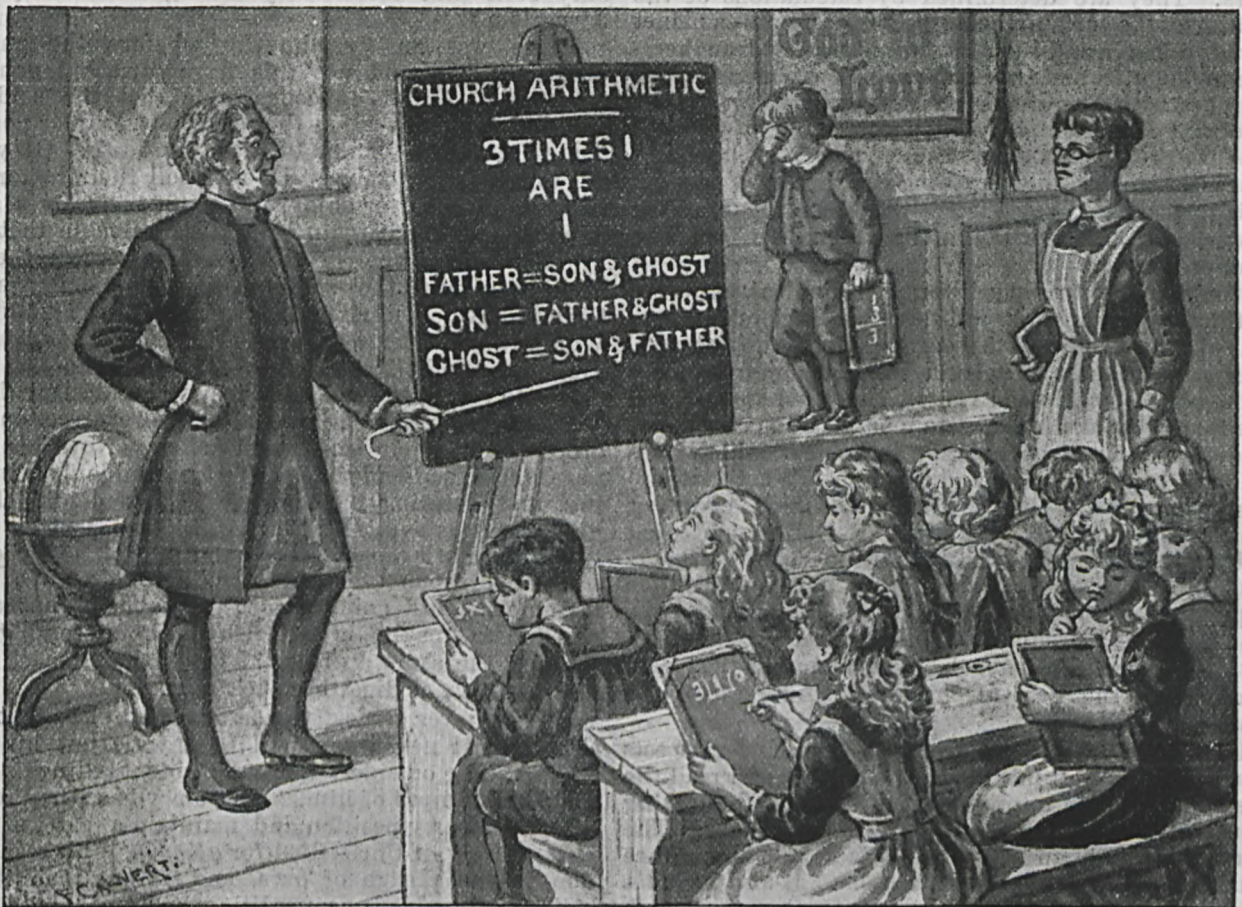
SUNDAY, APRIL 2, 1893.

[PRICE TWOPENCE.

Price 2d.

SPECIAL NUMBER.

Price 2d.



RELIGIOUS EDUCATION.

"Suffer little children to come unto me, for of such is the kingdom of heaven."

AN EASTER EGG FOR CHRISTIANS.

Christian Fellow Citizens.—We are living together in this world, but I do not know whether we shall live together in the next world. You probably consider yourselves as booked for heaven, and me as booked for the other establishment. But that is a question I will not discuss at present. I will only remark that you may be mistaken. Existence, you know, is full of surprises; and, as the French say, it is always the unexpected that happens.

Well, my fellow citizens of this world, it is now the time when you celebrate the death and resurrection of your "Savior." Not being of your faith, I cannot join in the commemoration. I shall, however, regard the season after a more primitive fashion. Your Church adopted an old Pagan festival, the rejoicing at the renewal of the earth in the genial springtide. At the vernal equinox the sun is increasing in power, the world is astir with new life, and begins to reassume its mantle of green. Such a time inspired jollity in human breasts. It was commemorated with feast and dance and song. Perhaps it will be so again,

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even in sombre England, when the gloom of your ascetic creed has lifted and disappeared. Meanwhile I, as a "heathen man and a sinner," will imitate as far as I may the example of the Pagans of old. I will not sing, for I am no adept in that line; and my joints are getting too stiff for dancing. But I will feast, within the bounds of reason; I will leave this million-peopled Babylon and put myself in touch with Mother Nature; I will feel, if only for a brief while, the spring of the turf under my feet; I will breathe air purified by "the moving waters at their priest-like task Of pure ablution round earth's human shores"; I will watch the sea-horses, with their white crests, in endless rank, charging the shore; I will listen to the sound which Homer heard so long before your Christ was born—the sound so monotonous, so melancholy, yet so soothing and sustaining, which stirs a pulse of poetry in the very dullest and most prosaic brain. But before I go I send you this Easter egg, to show that I do not forget you. Keep it, I pray you; study well its inscriptions; and perhaps, after all, you will not pelt me with it at the finish.

I have said, my Christian fellow citizens, that your Church appropriated an ancient Pagan festival—the

festival of spring. I may be told by scholars amongst you that the time of Christ's crucifixion and resurrection was fixed by the Jewish Passover. I reply that the Passover was itself a spring festival, whose original and natural meaning was obscured by priestly arts and legendary stories. That it happened at this time of the year, that it depended on astronomical signs, that its commemoration included the sacrifice of the firstlings of the flock—shows clearly enough that it was a Jewish counterpart of the common Gentile celebration. Has it ever occurred to you that if Christ died, he died on a particular day; and that if he rose from the dead, he rose on a particular morning? That day, that morning, should have been observed in the proper fashion of anniversaries. But it never was, and it is not now. Good Friday—as you curiously, and almost facetiously call the day on which the founder of your faith suffered a painful and ignominious death—and Easter Sunday, when he left his sepulchre, never fall on the same date in successive years. They are determined by calculations of the position of the sun and the phases of the moon—a planet sacred to lovers and lunatics, and naturally dear therefore to devotion and superstition. You decorate your churches with evergreens and flowers as the Pagans decorated their temples and altars. You use Easter eggs like the pre-Christian religionists. You show, and your creed shows, in everything that Easter is really a spring festival. The year springs from the tomb of winter, and Christ springs at the same time from the tomb of death.

I am disposed to regard your "Savior" as a purely mythical personage, like all the other Saviors and sun-gods of antiquity, who were generally, if not always, born miraculously of virgin mothers, mysteriously impregnated by celestial visitors; and whose careers, like that of your Christ, were marked by portents and prodigies, ending in tribulation and defeat, which were followed by vindication and triumph. Whether there was a man called Jesus, or Joshua (the Jewish form of the name), who lived and taught in Galilee and died at Jerusalem, is more than I will undertake to determine, and it seems to me a question of microscopic importance. But I am convinced that the Christ of the Gospels is a product of the religious imagination; an ideal figure, constructed out of materials that were common in the East for hundreds and perhaps for thousands of years.

To confine ourselves, however, to the Easter aspects of the matter, I think you will find—if you read the Gospel story with unprejudiced eyes—that the closing scenes of Christ's career are quite imaginary. The story of his Trial and Crucifixion is utterly at variance with Roman law and Jewish custom. It also includes astonishing incidents—such as the earthquake which rent the veil of the temple, the three hours' eclipse of the sun, and the wholesale resurrection of dead "saints"—of which the Romans and the Jews were in a still more astonishing ignorance. What must have startled the whole of the then known world, if it happened, made absolutely no impression on the Hebrew and Gentile nations, and not a trace of it remains in the pages of their historians. Can you believe that the most marvellous occurrences on record escaped the attention of all who were living at the time, with the exception of a handful of men and women, who never took the trouble to write an account of their experiences, but left them to be chronicled by unknown writers long after they themselves were dead?

All the documentary evidence we possess is Christian. It is the witness of an interested party, uncorroborated by a particle of testimony from independent sources. I do not forget that the literature of your early Church includes a letter from Pontius Pilate to the emperor Tiberius, giving a detailed account of the trial, sentence, crucifixion, and resurrection of Christ; but this is one of the many forgeries of your early Church, and is now universally rejected as such alike by Protestant and by Catholic scholars. To my mind, indeed, this forgery itself proves the falsehood of the Gospel narrative; it shows that the early Christians felt the necessity of some corroborative evidence, and they manufactured it to give their own statements an air of greater plausibility.

Taking the Gospels as they stand, I will ask you to read the story in Matthew (not that I believe *he* wrote it) of the watch at Christ's sepulchre. The Jewish priests come to Pilate, and ask him to let the sepulchre be sealed and guarded; for the dead impostor had declared he would rise again on the third day, and his disciples might steal his body and say he had risen. The guard is set, but an angel descends from heaven, terrifies the soldiers, rolls away the stone and allows Jesus to escape. Whereupon the Jewish priests give the soldiers money to tell Pilate that they had slept at their posts.

How, I ask, did those Jewish priests know that Jesus had said "After three days I will rise again"? According to John (xx. 9), his very disciples were ignorant of this fact—"For as yet they knew not the scripture, that he must rise again from the dead." Could it be unknown to his intimates, who had been with him day and night for three years, in all parts of Palestine; and well known to the priests who had only seen him occasionally during a few days at Jerusalem?

There was an "earthquake" before the angels descended. Would not this have attracted general attention? And is it conceivable that the soldiers would take money to say they had slept at their posts? The punishment for that offence was death. Of what use then was the bribe? Do men sell their honor for what they can never enjoy, and count their lives as a mere trifle in the bargain? Is it conceivable that the priests were so foolish as the story depicts them? Would bribing the soldiers protect them against Christ? If he had risen he was lord of life and death. Would they not have abandoned their projects against him, and sought his forgiveness? He who had the power to revive himself had the power to destroy them.

The appearances of Jesus, after his resurrection, are grotesque in their self-contradiction. Now he is a pure ghost, suddenly appearing and suddenly vanishing, and entering a room with shut doors. Then he appears as solid flesh and blood, to be felt and handled. He even eats broiled fish and honeycomb. Such conditions are quite irreconcilable. We may imagine a ghost going through a keyhole, but is it possible to imagine broiled fish and honeycomb going through the same aperture? Or is the stomach of a ghost capable of digesting such victuals?

Has it never struck you as strange, also, that the risen Christ never appeared to anyone but his disciples? No outsider, no independent witness, ever caught a glimpse of him. The story is a party report to prove a party position and maintain a party's interests. Surely, if Christ died for *all men*, if his resurrection is the pledge of ours, and if our inability to believe it involves our perdition, *the fact* should have been established beyond all cavil. Christ should have stood before Pilate who sentenced him to be crucified; he should have confronted the Sanhedrim who compassed his death; he might even have walked about freely amongst the Jews during the forty days (more or less) during which, as the New Testament narrates, he flitted about like a hedge-row ghost. He should have made his resurrection as clear as daylight, and he left it as dark as night.

To ask what became of the body of Jesus if he did not rise, is an idle question. There is not the slightest *contemporary* evidence that his body was an object of concern. On the other hand, however, the story of the Ascension looks like a convenient refuge. To talk of a risen Christ was to invite the question "Where is he?" The story of the Ascension enabled the talkers to answer "He is gone up." It relieved them from the awkward necessity of producing him.

Space does not allow of my discussing this subject more extensively. I could swell this Easter egg into gigantic proportions, but I must leave it as it is. It goes to you with my compliments, and a hope that it will do you good. If it leads any of you to "take a thought and mend," if it induces one of you to review the faith of his childhood, if it stirs a rational impulse in a single Christian mind, I shall be amply rewarded for my trouble.—Christian fellow citizens, Adieu! — Yours for Reason and Humanity,
G. W. FOOTE.

"HE DESCENDED INTO HELL."

THIS is a doctrine of the Christian Church which, although recited every Sunday in the Apostles' Creed, is not often dilated upon by ministers. The reason is obvious. The subject is beset with numerous difficulties, and bears too evident traces of its adaptation from Pagan Mythology. It is not easy to see why Christ, who when on the cross said to the dying thief, "To-day shalt thou be with me in Paradise," should instead take a journey to the other place; nor is it plain from the Apostles' Creed why he went there at all. It is true Peter, in a very enigmatic passage (1 Pet. iii. 18—20), says "he went and preached to the spirits in prison." In Acts ii. 25—27 he says: "David speaketh concerning him . . . thou wilt not leave my soul in hell, neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption." Of course David by hell simply meant the underworld, *Sheol*.

Justin Martyr, in his Dialogue with Trypho the Jew (chap. lxxii.), says the Jews deliberately cut out from their prophet Jeremiah a passage which said: "The Lord God remembered his dead people who lay in the graves; and he descended to preach to them his own salvation." Irenæus (*Against Heresies*, bk. iii., ch. 20) also cites this missing passage of the Old Testament, but says it is in Isaiah. Christ, says St. Cyril of Jerusalem, descended into the bosom of death and awake the bodies of saints which slept the sleep of the tomb. St. Chrysostom asks, "Who but an infidel would deny that Christ was in hell?" He tells us, "Hell was a dark and dismal place, illuminated by no single ray of light until the sun of righteousness entered, illuminated it, and turned it into heaven." This allegorical image was common in the writings of the Pagan Neo-Platonicians. Proclus, in his Hymn to the Muses, has a similar comparison. "Expand, pure light, within my soul," he exclaims; "dissipate the darkness, that I may know the immortal God and escape the demon." Synesius calls the Son of God the sensible type of the intellectual Sun. He makes him come from hell as a star from the darkness of night.

Clement of Alexandria, early in the third century, says (*Miscellanies*, bk. vi., ch. 6): "Wherefore the Lord preached the gospel to those in Hades. Accordingly the Scripture says, 'Hades says to Destruction, We have not seen his form, but we have heard his voice.'" Now this Scripture is missing, but we have something very similar in the gospel of Nicodemus, one of the most valuable of the many apocryphal gospels. A portion of this gospel is occupied with the descent of Christ into the infernal regions. Death and Hell and Satan are seized with fear at the advent of the King of Glory. They speak together in dismay at the loss of their victims. This lets us into the secret of the Christian mystery. All is poetical symbolism. Jesus Christ is no more a real historical character than Death and Hell. He is the personification of life, which every spring bursts the bands of winter and rises afresh from its tomb in the underworld. The triumph of Jesus coming from Hades surrounded by his saints is but a revised version of the old Egyptian myth of Horus-Osiris triumphing over the underworld of Amenti, where Apophis, the principle of Death, is personified as a serpent. This was the theme of all the ancient mysteries, which at bottom were symbolical representations intended to act as charms to influence Nature's operations. In the Orphic mysteries, Orpheus descends to hell to bring back Eurydice. In the Eleusinian, Ceres descends to recover Proserpine. Hercules, Baldur Adonis, Ishtar, and other mythical Pagan heroes descend into hell and rise again from the dead, just because they symbolise the life of nature. In the gospel of Nicodemus we see the hand of ignorance at work transforming personifications into real beings, lending life to abstractions and making allegory into history. The most popular scene in the mysteries of the Middle Ages, which were prolongations of the ancient mysteries, was always "the harrowing of hell." This subject was also a favorite in early Christian art, just as the rape of Proserpine was in Pagan art, both really symbolising the same thing, the descent of seed into the earth that

it may rise again. It was on this fact man's hopes of immortality was based in the mysteries, and when Paul says (Rom. vi. 4), "Therefore we are buried with him by baptism unto death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life," he is expounding the central idea of both the Christian and Pagan mysteries.

J. M. WHEELER.

THE EMANCIPATION OF HUMAN THOUGHT.

THE record of the struggles for both physical and mental freedom reveals some painful yet interesting chapters in the history of the human race. The emancipation from a cruel bondage of the slaves whose servitude was for ages believed to have had a divine sanction, has been effected by friends of liberty who were treated as impious enemies of an established order of things which was based upon the teachings of the Bible. Pious men of nearly every section of the Church failed to see the infamous nature of the system they upheld, and therefore they not only did nothing to assist in its removal, but they strongly opposed those who worked for the emancipation of the downtrodden slave. The initiation of this great movement, the abolition of slavery, which was one of the grandest events in history, must be placed to the credit of Thomas Paine, the Deist, and to what Wilberforce called "Infidel France." It was a long and bitter conflict with "the powers that be," involving the expenditure of millions of money and causing the sacrifice of thousands of human lives. The struggle is not over, for the gospel of equality has yet to reach untold numbers of our fellow-creatures, who are still held in a state of degraded serfdom. But we are glad to know that during the period of the American Civil War slavery received its death-blow in the greatest Republic the world has ever seen.

Besides the desire to enslave the bodies of men, there has always existed a strong disposition upon the part of a certain class of the Christian community to be master of their thoughts, and to control the workings of their mental force. This determination to dominate, if possible, the intellect of the world, has not been directed to one particular subject, but it has manifested itself more or less in the domain of politics, science and religion. With pride and delight, however, we can record the fact that there have never been wanting heroic men and women who were ready and willing to oppose this arbitrary dictation upon the part of the enemies of progressive ideas. The history of the persistent struggles of these noble emancipators of thought, forms a new and valuable "Book of Martyrs," in which are to be found inscribed the names of those whose memories have too long been obscured by the hatred, malice, and bigotry of the opponents of freedom. An intelligent and a grateful posterity will appreciate the record of the labors of those thinkers, who were the servants and the friends of truth and humanity, and who, in the face of fearful odds, fought against the priestly usurpation of their day. Sympathetic minds cannot be indifferent to the memory of those to whom they are indebted for the progress of personal and national freedom. Those who undertake to record the events attending the various stages of the development of the human mind, will have a prolific theme to dilate upon, inasmuch, as the facts referring thereto, extend over vast periods of time, and include an account of the severest conflicts between authority and despotism. It is a subject which is as a thousand rills flowing down the many ages that have elapsed from the dawn of civilisation.

The emancipation of human thought, so far as it has hitherto been accomplished, has been effected despite overwhelming opposition from those who have combined to prevent the spread of knowledge and the acquirement of individual liberty. It is said that some men love darkness rather than light, but it is worthy of note that darkness has prevailed chiefly through the influence of the very men who claimed to be the lights of the world and the guardians of true religion. We are told that even the gods themselves

were apprehensive of man having access to the tree of knowledge, lest it should make him as wise as themselves.

It would be a mistake to suppose that the persecutors of the race have always been in the wrong, and that the persecuted have always been in the right, upon the matters that caused the persecution. Despotism attempts to stifle thought and to limit its publication have by no means been confined to any one party. This fact has been often verified in the growth of general movements, but more particularly in the theological matters. For instance, in England, under the reigns of King Henry VIII, Queen Mary, and Queen Elizabeth, orthodoxy the persecutor, and heterodoxy the persecuted, were continually changing their position from the assailant to the assailed. Although this is true, it should be remembered that the act of persecution itself always was, and still is, criminal, and deserves the severest condemnation. Liberty is the birthright of all, and he who seeks to deprive his fellow men of this precious heritage is the worst foe of his kind.

The persecuting policy of the orthodox Church adopted to bend thought to its own narrow and stern will, may perhaps be explained, but it can never be justified by an appeal to justice and reason. Buckle attributes this theological exhibition of the ferocious element in man's nature to the ignorance, zeal, and sincerity of the true believer, who perpetrated such enormities in, as he believed, the interest of his faith. Paradoxical as it may appear, it is quite true that the more love religious fanatics have professed for God, the more hatred have they manifested for men when they differed from their contracted notions. It is equally strange that strenuous efforts should have been made against the recognition of progressive opinions for the avowed purpose of promoting the good of those who held such opinions. Hence we find that when persons ventured to express new views that were opposite to the Church, they have been branded as heretics, and tortured in this world for the purpose of preventing their unlimited suffering in a world to come.

Those of us who believe that the thorough emancipation of the mind is but a question of time, and that freedom will ultimately triumph, must not overlook the importance of constantly endeavoring to realise the condition which we hope and believe will sooner or later obtain. When we reflect upon the nature and power of kings and priests in the past, we need not wonder that the Freethinker's lot has been one of interminable strife and sacrifice in his defence of freedom against the opposition of Church and State; also against the influence of the popular fashion, produced by blind belief and intellectual laziness. In the face of such obstacles the marvel is that Freethought has made so much progress as it has. But these calamities not only always existed, but they still pursue the liberators of thought, embittering their toil and impeding their usefulness. Disraeli, in writing of men who gave the world brilliant gems of thought, recounts the sufferings of Aristotle, Anaxagoras, Socrates, Galileo, Descartes, and other mental illuminators of the past, and concludes as follows: "This persecution of science and genius lasted till the close of the seventeenth century." We wish that, for the sake of the honor of human nature, it had lasted no longer. Unfortunately, however, the same foe to freedom of thought continued to exercise its pernicious influence; and in the following age it marred the splendid labors of such men as Daniel Defoe, Chénier the poet, Lavoisier the chemist, Dolomieu the naturalist, Priestley the philosopher, and Thomas Paine the reformer of the world, and the enemy of priestcraft and kingcraft. Following these a vast multitude of the redeemers of the world in England alone, during the present century, paid the penalty attached to assisting in the spread of liberty and light.

Up to the present time the same spirit that obstructed the progress of thought and that lighted the fires of Oxford and Smithfield still survives in a modified form. The advocates of science and of biblical criticism have not been the subjects of that charity which thinketh no evil. With all our boasted freedom we have witnessed the closing of the prison doors on

two of our personal friends, Mr. G. J. Holyoake and Mr. G. W. Foote. The idle excuse given in defence of these outrages on independence of thought was that the victims of theological spite adopted the wrong mode of expressing their opinions. The person who can be deceived by such a pretence as this is but little acquainted with the method adopted by orthodox persecutors who, as a rule, regard neither truth nor character in their treatment of unbelievers. Well might J. S. Mill suggest that if Christians wished Freethinkers to treat them fairly they would do well themselves to set an example. "Physician heal thyself" is advice that orthodox professors would profit by adopting.

We have reason to rejoice that, despite political misrepresentation and religious perversion and bigotry, one to whom the emancipation of thought is largely indebted—Thomas Paine—has had his memory vindicated from the obloquy of a hundred years. To Mr. M. D. Conway are our thanks due for this great act of justice which he has accomplished. Inspired by the genius of freedom and encouraged by the noble triumphs already won in the struggles for liberty, let us go on persistently working to destroy all that impedes the onward march to the goal of individual and national liberty of mind and body. In our ranks never let it be said:

Men grow pale
Lest their own judgments should become too bright,
And then Freethought be crimes, and earth have too much light.

CHARLES WATTS.

SYNOPSIS OF THE CREDO.

Of things unknown 'tis claimed we need,
With priest and church, a sacred creed,
To tell us how the world was made,
And why the walls of hell were laid;
How man was made, and how he fell—
Just how the snake made Eve rebel
And pluck the fruit all love so well;
To teach us what we must believe
About a Devil and Adam and Eve;
To let us know, what no one knows,
Where after death the sinner goes;
And in the morn of eternity,
How 'twas decreed that a deity
Should come through some virginity,
And stand on earth and dwell with man,
A few to save, the rest to damn;
How came the God in nick of time
And proved his claim by many a sign:
Turned water into festal wine,
On two small fishes some thousands fed,
And cast out devils and raised the dead—
This king of the New Jerusalem,
This scion traced to old David's stem;
And how in sorrows the earth he trod,
This singular, this plural God—
One equal three, three equal one—
A Christian puzzle for Christians dumb!
How on a cross he suffered death,
And sacrificed his godly breath;
How rose from tomb and went somewhere
To sit and listen to Christian prayer;
How again will come with angel host,
This Father, Son, and Holy Ghost,
The elect to judge in heaven to dwell,
The reprobates with the Devil in hell.
This is the creed the priest hath made,
Our mites to get, and make afraid;
We may not ask the why or wherefore:
"Thus saith the Lord," he shouts, and therefore
We must believe and chip the cash in,
Or suffer an eternal thrashing.
Of things unknown a creed is made
To fortify a priestly trade.
O shame on the priest who knows that we know
The lies that he tells he knows are not so!

—*Truthseeker.*

L. G. REED.

DANIEL.—Supposing that so remarkable a work, dealing in a spirit of prophecy with the destiny of the great empires of the world, had been known to the Jews at the time that the group of "the Prophets" was formed, is it probable that it would have failed to receive a place in that portion of the Canon? It is, I believe, most improbable. The inference is obvious. Either the book was not known at the conclusion of the third century B.C., or it had not yet been compiled.—*Dr. H. E. Ryle, "Canon of the Old Testament," p. 136; 1892.*

HUXLEY ON THE BIBLE BOOKS.

Now, it is quite certain with respect to some of these books, such as the Apocalypse and the Epistle to the Hebrews, that the Eastern and the Western Church differed in opinion for centuries: and yet neither the one branch nor the other can have considered its judgment infallible, since they eventually agreed to a transaction by which each gave up its objection to the book patronised by the other. Moreover, the "fathers" argue (in a more or less rational manner) about the canonicity of this or that book, and are by no means above producing evidence, internal and external, in favor of the opinions they advocate. In fact, imperfect as their conceptions of scientific method may be, they not infrequently used it to the best of their ability. Thus it would appear that though Science, like nature, may be driven out with a fork, ecclesiastical or other, yet she surely comes back again. The appeal to "antiquity" is, in fact, an appeal to science—first, to define what antiquity is; secondly, to determine what "antiquity," so defined, says about canonicity; thirdly, to prove that canonicity means infallibility. And when Science, largely in the shape of the abhorred "criticism," has done this, and has shown that "antiquity" used her own methods, however clumsily and imperfectly, she naturally turns upon the appealers to "anti-

quity," and demands that they should show cause why, in these days, science should not resume the work they did so imperfectly, and carry it out efficiently.—*Essays upon Some Controverted Questions.*

GRACE BEFORE MEAT.

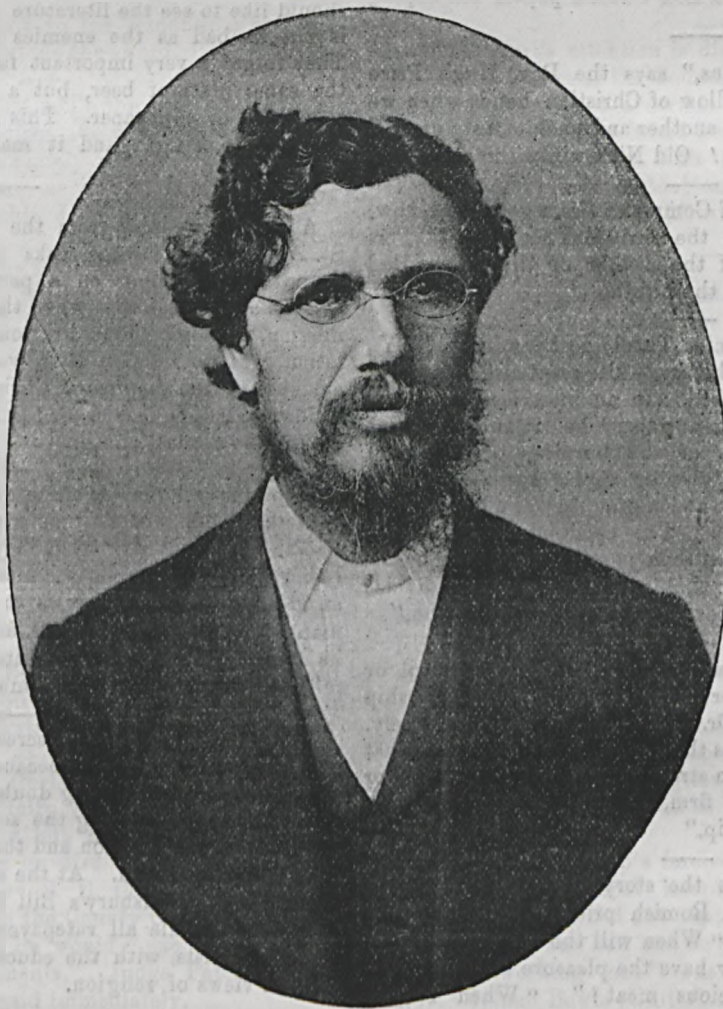
When Julia carves at household feast—

A figure so benignly sweet—
Across my brain will often flit
The saying of an old-time wit,
"Grace before meat."

When Julia carves with dainty hands,
Whose every touch is light and neat,
The toughest breast should tender grow,
The dryest joints new flavor show—
"Grace before meat."

When Julia carves, her gracious smile,
Which gives to me a welcome sweet,
Sends through my heart a curious thrill—
Devotion doth my spirit fill,
"Grace before meat."

X.



JOSEPH SYMES.

JOSEPH SYMES.

We first met Joseph Symes at Newcastle early in 1877. He was our chairman in the four nights' debate with Dr. A. J. Harrison. Mr. Symes had recently joined the Secular party, and was lecturing with "much acceptance." He had previously occupied a Wesleyan pulpit. Some time afterwards Mr. Symes was stationed at Leeds, and subsequently he removed to Birmingham, where he opened a high-class school, which was ruined by his heterodoxy. When we started the *Freethinker* he became our first regular contributor. During our imprisonment in Holloway Gaol he paid us a visit, having obtained a special "permit" from the Home Office. He had accepted the offer of a Freethought lectureship at Melbourne, and was come to say good-bye. We did not shake hands with him, for the prison regulations made it impossible; but we wished him all success in Australia, with a feeling that we should never see him again. Mr. Symes was not allowed to leave England without a substantial testimonial from the Freethought party, which had learnt to regard him with respect and affection. In Australia he has worked like a Trojan; lecturing, writing pam-

phlets, conducting classes, and editing *The Liberator*. Mr. Symes is now fifty-two years of age, having been born on Jan. 29, 1841. He enjoys good health, and is as active and energetic as ever, despite the troubles he has experienced. Neither strife within the camp, nor the Attorney General's prosecution, succeeded in damping his ardor or depressing his spirits. We hope he will live long to uphold the banner of Freethought in the southern hemisphere. Mr. Symes is a man of genial and loyal nature. He has a very powerful voice, and an easy, pleasant manner of delivery. His writing is pregnant and forcible. In debate he is alert and skilful. His resources, we should say, are always at command. Our readers have now and then a taste of his quality, and they will join us in shaking hands with him (in spirit) across the lands and seas. When this copy of the *Freethinker* meets Mr. Symes's eyes he will see that he is far from being forgotten by his old friends in England.

So long as there are classes of men, who have interests adverse to the rest of the community, the most important opinions will be the most offensive to those, too frequently the most powerful classes of the community.—*James Mill.*

ACID DROPS.

A Sunday paper, the other week, referred to certain persons as "personal friends of royalty," and then added, "if it may be said without irreverence." But the *Christian Commonwealth* is not so profoundly loyal, especially when the Ark of God is in danger. It takes the Queen to task for having Mr. Irving and his company at Windsor to perform "Becket" on a Saturday evening. The performance did not terminate till close on midnight, after which supper was served to the actors, actresses, and stage assistants, who subsequently travelled back to London, where they arrived at two o'clock on Sunday morning. This is a sort of thing which "no true Christian can approve," and our pious contemporary, in its haughtiest editorial manner, hopes there will be "no repetition" of such an "incident."

The Queen stepped out of the frying-pan into the fire by having a performance of "Becket" on Saturday. It was put off from Friday on account of remonstrances from High Churchmen, but its performance on Saturday led to a desecration of the Sabbath, and the Low Church papers are hoping it will never occur again.

"The House of Commons," says the Rev. Hugh Price Hughes, "will lie in the hollow of Christian hands when we give up quarrelling with one another and unanimously quarrel with the Devil." Yes, when! Old Nick winks the other eye.

By the way, the House of Commons *lies* a good deal now. Will it lie any better when the Christians control it? Perhaps it will. Especially if the author of that Converted Atheist story has a share in the bossing.

Professor Briggs, of the Union Theological Seminary, N. Y., has recently been tried for heresy. His scepticism, however, doesn't seem very pronounced. In an interview with the representative of a Christian paper, he talked a great deal about baptism. One of the burning questions of the moment appears to be dipping *versus* sprinkling. Dr. Briggs thinks the original orthodox practice was a compromise between the two extremes. The candidates waded into the water, and some of it was then poured upon their heads. It is instructive to reflect that a matter like this divides people after eighteen centuries of "the only true religion."

"If we could only discover an old three-legged stool or table, made by the Carpenter of Nazareth, what workmanship it would display!" says Dr. Hiles Hitchens. Very likely. One of the early gospels says that Joseph made furniture that didn't fit, and Jesus had to stretch it. No doubt a chair or table made by the same firm, or by the junior partner, would display "workmanship."

Chief Rabbi Adler tells the story of a grand banquet, at which a Rabbi and a Romish priest sat side by side opposite a joint of pork. "When will the time come," said the priest, "in which I may have the pleasure of serving you with a slice of this delicious meat?" "When I have the gratification," the rabbi replied, "of assisting at your reverence's wedding."

Some of the old Rabbis held that Eve was seduced by an ape, and a similar theory is propounded by the Rev. Stephen S. Maguth, LL.D., of Emmanuel College, Cambridge, in his recent bulky work on *The Fall of Adam*. According to this learned gentleman, the "serpent" that tempted Eve was the chief of a tribe of inferior anthropomorphous beings. Adam had illicit intercourse with females of the same race. From these cross-breeds sprang the human race as we know it. The savage aborigines of Africa, America, and Australia are not human beings at all, but descendants of the pre-Adamic races. It is absurd to try to convert them to Christianity. Dr. Maguth says it would be better to shoot them. Such is the latest wisdom and benevolence of Christian theology!

An evangelical paper thinks that "London is the place for Dr. Talmage," and hopes he will be invited over "at once." No doubt America could spare him. It will have to some day, when he is compelled to go to heaven.

Moody is evangelising at Baltimore, and raking in souls—perhaps also shekels: "Mr. Sankey's singing," it is likewise

reported, "has been largely instrumental in leading many others to Christ." Conviction worked by a solo must be very profound. It shows the intellectual grandeur of Christianity.

Henry Varley, ex-butcher, revivalist, and ex-libeller of Charles Bradlaugh, is serving God (temporarily) in India. Having a fine nose for filth, he has discovered that a "certain prominent priest who officiates in one of the Hindu temples in Kolhapur is a degraded sensualist." Really he needn't have gone so far as India to make a discovery like that.

A story is told that Varley began one of his lectures by saying, "There's a fortune lying in wait," when an auditor cried out, "Right you are, Varley; many a butcher has made his fortune by lying in weight." Whereat there was a laugh at the retired meat merchant.

The Rev. Charles Leach, who has been lecturing on London, found the theme too great for his intellect. He talked a lot of nonsense about a certain workmen's club, which spends £52 a year in literature and £6,300 in liquor. Of course the figures look very disproportionate, and we should like to see the literature bill increased. But the case is not so bad as the enemies of Radical clubs make out. They forget a very important fact. Two men cannot drink the same glass of beer, but a hundred men can read the same book or newspaper. This is a fact which the Pharisees leave out of sight, and it makes a great difference in the estimate.

A begging circular from the Rev. A. B. Goulden, vicar of St. Alphege, Southwark, asks for "a solid gift of £10,000 to put the buildings on a permanent basis." One of the reasons assigned is that when the man of God entered on his mission, in this benighted region of South London, the population "as to religion they were heathen." To give such evidence of the failure of Christianity, with all its wealthy endowments, as a reason for asking for another ten thousand, is just like clerical cheek.

How far religion is running off the old lines may be gathered from a definition given by Haliday Sparling, a Fabian and endorsed by Sidney E. Dark, a member of the Labor Church. A religious man, he says, is a man who has an ideal and tries to live up to it; an irreligious man is a man who never had an ideal, and would not live up to it if he could. At this rate, Atheists may be reckoned among the religious and the Christians among the irreligious.

The *Church Times* is still screeching about the "piece-meal robbery" of the Church, because the Welsh Suspensory Bill will prevent curacies being doubled with a view to compensation, as they were during the seventeen months that elapsed between the introduction and the passage of the Irish Church Disestablishment Bill. At the same time it warmly endorses the Bishop of Salisbury's Bill in the House of Lords, which proposes to saddle all ratepayers, whether Jews, Atheists, or Nonconformists, with the education of Church children in Church views of religion.

It appears from the *Official Year-Book of the Church of England* that the whole of the communicants of the Church in England and Wales can only be reckoned at a million and a half. Since it is only these who have any pretence to be members of the Church, save in the general sense in which every member of the nation is a legal member of the national Church, the figures are a sufficient refutation of the pretence that the English Church is the Church of the English people. It must be remembered that the majority of the communicants are women. Judged by confirmations, the Church is still more behind. Last year they were actually 8,000 less than in 1889.

In all the dioceses the bishops and clergy are loudly calling for large sums to put the Church schools in order. Although the immense bulk of the money for the support of these schools is drawn from the State, they find they are being out-distanced by the Board schools. This is one of the reasons for the clerical attempt to make those schools sectarian.

We always get news of our royalty and aristocracy from American sources. In the *Progressive Thinker*, of Chicago, Dr. Theo. Hausmann says the Queen is a spiritist. "John Brown was a materialising medium. The Queen sat, and her

husband came and talked to her often through the mediumship of John Brown." He also says that "a sister of the Prince of Wales is a writing medium." It is not mentioned which sister is referred to. Looks like a Yankee yarn.

Booth, at Glasgow, said that servants of God here must give themselves, money, and time entirely to his work. "In heaven, however, it would be quite different—it would be delightful. They could lie on their backs floating down the stream of life, kicking their heels and shouting "Hallelujah." The angels with their songs, music, weather wings—everything would be with them. God himself would be with them." Booth plays the same old game—"Work for me here, and take your reward in kingdom come." Some, however, may think such a reward not worth having even were it less problematical.

Mr. A. Morton, M.P., astonished the House of Commons in the debate on Uganda by declaring that all missionaries, from the time of Jesus Christ, had been adverse to the use of gunpowder. Evidently the gentleman has sources of information unknown to common historians. J. C. certainly did not invent gunpowder, but he said he came to bring a sword, and his followers took to the gunpowder as soon as they found it likely to supersede the sword.

It will be remembered that while the Holy Coat at Trèves was drawing crowds of devotees, the Holy Coat at Argenteuil was also put on view and solemnly proclaimed to be the only genuine article. The Bishop of Versailles was deputed by the Pope to report upon this delicate matter; and he has recently done so in a spirit of Christian compromise. The coat at Trèves is genuine, he says; but then so also is the one at Argenteuil. One was an inner garment, the other an outer one. As there are, or were, twenty or more other rival holy coats, it would appear the poor carpenter had a large wardrobe.

G. C. Kentish, the witness in the Liberator case, who admitted having robbed right and left, appears from his letters put in evidence to have been a very pious man. He refers to the Lord's good pleasure, and says, "May the Lord, the giver of all good things, in his mercy bless her in this most sacred matter." The sacred matter being the marriage of his sister to his fellow-swindler Hobbs.

Mrs. Selina Blackmore, who is accused of constantly starving and beating the girl Hettie Alderton, is a distinguished member of the Church of Plymouth Brethren in Chelmsford. The poor girl got this Christian situation through the aid of the Salvation Army.

Here is a nice sample of Christian ethics. The Rev. Mr. Scott, late vicar of Holy Trinity, Barnstaple, spent a fortune in building the church, and left his family destitute. An offertory was recently taken on Mrs. Scott's behalf, but £8 of it was stuck to by the Rev. S. E. Cornish, late curate in charge. Being summoned to the County Court, this Christian gentleman telegraphed that he would "pay £5 on Wednesday and the rest in instalments." Judge Paterson ordered that the money should be paid immediately.

This poor widow has had a painful experience of clergymen. Parson number one leaves her destitute, and parson number two appropriates the money given to her in charity. She couldn't have been served much worse by a couple of Free-thought lecturers.

A lecture on "Nuns and Nunneries," published by the Church Association, is denounced by the Rev. A. P. Canon Wilson as containing "foul, slanderous, and unchristian charges." It is always instructive to hear the opinion held of each other by the various Christian sects.

The chaplain of the house of representatives of Montana made a "terrible fool of himself," in the eyes of all the members, according to the newspaper report. He prayed: "O, Lord, we have been earnestly requested to pray that the minority of this house may see the error of their ways and fall into line with the majority." The first ballot after the prayer showed that the "Lord" did not influence any of the members, for the vote remained just the same as before the prayer.

The Rev. R. Titley, rector of Barwell, continues to talk the

old twaddle about the Bible being "the oldest book in the world." If he would but refer to such an orthodox work as the *Bibliotheca Sacra*, he would find that the Egyptian maxims of Ptah-hotep are immensely older. We defy the Rev. R. Titley to prove any part of the Bible of greater antiquity than the days of Solomon.

The pansy (*pensée*), which is used by Continental Free-thinkers as their symbol, has been adopted as their badge by the Koreshan cranks. Some persons have even proposed it as a national flower for America.

Since it has been decided that the World's Fair shall be closed on Sunday, some of the Chicago workmen have asked that the factories and workshops may be shut on Monday, offering to work on Sunday instead, in order that they may visit the exhibition on Monday.

The Rev. W. W. Howard is lecturing in the Chester-le-street district. His friends are advertising him as the man whom Mr. Foote dare not meet. Mr. Howard was never, in our opinion, the most dignified of men, but we hardly thought he would stoop to this.

Mr. Mivart's attention is directed in the *Civita Catholica* to the Catechism of the Council of Trent, published by order of Pope Pius V. as a correct exposition of the Creed. It defines hell as "a dark and horrible prison where the souls of the damned, together with the impure infernal spirits, are tormented in perpetual and inextinguishable fire." But perhaps Mr. St. George Mivart will say you can get used to anything.

The *Woolwich Herald and Advertiser* makes a stupid mistake as to the proposition that Prophet Baxter should make over his property to a charity "on the day after the world was to come to an end." This was not the proposal, but that he should make such an assignment to take place on April 12, 1901, the day after the one on which he prophesies the termination. This proposal has followed the Prophet about rather persistently, and he and his friends evidently do not relish it.

Famine in Armenia, where wheat fetches four times its usual price; severe storms in America, wrecking many buildings and taking many lives; with hurricanes in the New Hebrides and New Caledonia, ruining three-fourths of the settlers, attest that our Heavenly Father is still active.

The High Church people have got another bishop in the shape of Bishop Sheepshanks, of Norwich, whereat the Evangelicals are much aggrieved. Sheepshanks is supposed to be going far on the road to Rome.

The clericals got up a farcical deputation of working men to the London School Board asking for more Christian education. It turned out that the deputation did not represent anybody, and had had no children in Board schools. One of the "working men" was a noted comic singer. The Rev. Copland Bowie (Unitarian) asked the deputation if they all understood the doctrines of the Trinity. One of the members of the deputation replied, amidst laughter, that they did not, neither did anybody else. These worthies want the noddles of other people's children crammed with nonsense they don't pretend to understand themselves.

For four months, during the cotton dispute in Lancashire, the parsons have been praying for a settlement. The men and masters have at last happily effected one without the aid of the Lord, whose ministers will yet probably give him all the credit.

The pious landlord who ejected his theatrical tenants for playing poker on Sunday, and had to pay £2 as damages, was anxious to have the case adjourned in order that he might attend a race-meeting.

It appears that despite the efforts of rival Christian missionaries, Mohammedanism is on the increase in Sierra Leone, the followers of the prophet now numbering one-tenth of the population. The Church of England there receives State aid. The faith of Islam appears better suited to the Africans than Christianity, which only makes them drunken hypocrites.



DR. T. R. ALLINSON.

DR. T. R. ALLINSON.

DR. T. R. ALLINSON was born on March 20, 1858, and is therefore only thirty-five. He was brought up in the Church of England. His mother married a Roman Catholic, and he turned one himself, but his religion was shaken by medical students at Edinburgh. Afterwards he was assistant to an Atheist doctor, whose views he adopted. This doctor was humane in the best sense of the word, owing no man anything, and being quietly generous to the needy and distressed. Dr. Allinson married a Freethinking lady—a niece of Mrs. Ernestine Rose—at the registry office, since which time his mother considers him as dead. He lost his early sweetheart, and many friends and patients, by his Freethought; but his large practice testifies that he has won the confidence of a considerable section of the public. Dr. Allinson is stubborn, and looks it, though anything but ill-tempered. A year ago he wouldn't pay Church Rates, and the Marylebone magistrates sent him to prison. For advocating a drugless system of cure, as medical editor, in the *Weekly Times and Echo*; for opposing vaccination, and for advertising his books, as in the *Freethinker*; he has had his name struck off the Medical Register. This, however, does not prevent him from practising. Dr. Allinson is founder of and physician to a Hygienic Hospital, perfectly unsectarian, and conducted on drugless, teetotal, and vegetarian lines. He is the author of a number of common-sense medical books. Nature is the only god he recognises. He believes in learning the laws of health, and living up to them. Dr. Allinson is about the most thorough-going heretic in England. He is a Malthusian, on the top of all his other heresies. Being libelled in a vegetarian paper as "immoral," and bringing an action against the proprietor, he was questioned as to his religious beliefs, and the Christian jury gave a verdict against him, apparently on the ground that an Atheist has no character. For this lesson he has had to pay £500. Christians are now free to call him anything they please. Freethinkers, however—some of whom may drink a glass occasionally, smoke a pipe, or eat a chop—will not unanimously endorse Dr. Allinson's views as a teetotaler, a non-smoker, and a vegetarian; but many of them do sympathise with him in these respects, and all will admire his bold stand against medical despotism and open avowal of Freethought.

THE LORD'S A-COMING.

One day a man came into the office who was a neighbor of Lowell's in Cambridge. Lowell told us that his parents were Millerites, that is, believed in the second coming of Christ and the approaching end of the world. The mother was a devout believer, the father holding the same faith, or, for the sake of domestic peace, pretending to hold it. Late one night, when there was a heavy fall of snow on the ground, the old woman was awakened by a noise from downstairs, which she at once supposed meant the end of the world, and she accordingly woke her husband up, saying: "John, the Lord's a-comin'. I hear his chariot wheels." He replied: "You old fool, to think the Lord would come on wheels when there's such good sleddin'."—*E. S. Nadal, in the New York "Critic."*

THE DYING GOD AS A SCAPEGOAT.

If we ask why a dying God should be selected to take upon himself and carry away the sins and sorrows of the people, it may be suggested that in the practice of using the divinity as a scapegoat we have a combination of two customs which were at one time distinct and independent. On the one hand we have seen that it has been customary to kill the human or animal god to save his divine life from being weakened by the inroads of age. On the other hand, we have seen that it has been customary to have a general expulsion of evils and sins once a year. Now if it occurred to people to combine these two customs, the result would be the employment of the dying god as a scapegoat. He was killed, not originally to take away sin, but to save the divine life from the degeneracy of old age; but since he had to be killed at any rate, people may have thought that they might as well seize the opportunity to lay upon him the burden of their sufferings and sins, in order that he might bear it away with him to the unknown world beyond the grave.—*J. G. Frazer, "The Golden Bough," vol. ii., p. 206.*

Charlie (age six), looking at print of the picture of the Sistine Madonna, in which the Virgin and child are represented among clouds: "How did she get up there?" Mamma does not know. Then, half to himself, "It must have been a 'plosion."

MR. FOOTE'S ENGAGEMENTS.

Sunday, April 2, Hall of Science, 142 Old-street, E.C. :- 11.15, "Local Option and Clubs"; at 7, "Did Jesus Rise from the Dead?"

April 9, Hall of Science; 16, Liverpool; 23, Bradford.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

MR. CHARLES WATTS' ENGAGEMENTS.—April 2 and 9, Birmingham; 11 and 12, Chester; 16, Hall of Science, London; 17, Battersea; 23, Hall of Science, London; 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.

E. H. B. STEPHENSON.—Not a bad idea. We will bear it in mind. For the present we shall confine ourselves to the Special Number idea, which is a success.

W. JANNAWAY.—Your Lecture Notice for last week arrived on Wednesday. You dated March 20, but the Portsmouth post-mark was March 21.

GEORGE WISE (Liverpool).—(1) Mr. Foote has lectured at Northampton since the death of Charles Bradlaugh. It was on a week-night, in the large Temperance Hall. (2) It is impossible, we understand, to hire a good hall in a central position, for Freethought lectures there on Sunday.

F. R. BIRD, 8 Goldsmith-road, Leyton, is the new secretary of the Leyton and Walthamstow Branch.

ANTI-HUMBUG.—Thanks. See paragraph.

J. ROBSON.—(1) We have already, and more than once, explained the break-down of the negotiations for a debate between Mr. Foote and the Rev. W. Howard at Spennymoor on "Has Man a Soul?" Mr. Foote was asked if he would debate this question with Mr. Howard. He replied, Yes, and a committee was appointed to make arrangements. Mr. Howard afterwards insisted on *propositions* being drawn up. Mr. Foote did not see the necessity for them, but he complied so far as to say he would draw up a proposition, but he would not let it be edited or amended; and, on the other hand, he would leave Mr. Howard equal liberty. Mr. Howard drew up his proposition, and Mr. Foote drew up his. Mr. Howard and his committee then objected to Mr. Foote's proposition, and sent him a long, argumentative letter of instructions as to how it ought to be framed. Mr. Foote likes discussion, but he does not like Christian dictation; he therefore declined to alter his proposition in the slightest degree; *how* he would oppose the soul idea was entirely his own business; in any case, he refuses to argue the question on lines that suit the preference or convenience of Christians. Mr. Foote is still ready to debate the question "Has Man a Soul?" with Mr. Howard, with or without propositions; but if propositions are to be drawn up each disputant must frame his own as he thinks proper. This is Mr. Foote's position, which he takes up out of regard for the interests of truth and the dignity of his own party; and he will not be moved from it by taunts and misrepresentations. (2) The "Goliath" you refer to was cornered by the Sheffield Secularists with a direct offer for a set debate, when he explained that he did not think debates did any good. Three separate invitations were inserted in the public press by Mr. Samuel Peacock, president of the North Eastern Secular Federation, when the "Goliath" was at South Shields, but he took no notice of either.

OLD FREETHINKER (Hull).—Pleased to hear you have succeeded in getting the *Freethinker* placed on the table of the Working Man's Free Reading Room.

HALL OF SCIENCE BUILDING FUND.—Collected at Mr. Foote's evening lecture at Manchester, £1 10s.

G. F. DUNNEN.—Mr. Forder supplies the *Freethinker* to news-agents on sale or return at the rate of 1s. 6d. per quire (27 copies). Your suggestion as to Thursday evening lectures shall be considered.

C. E. FORD.—We hope you will succeed with Mr. Simson in re-establishing the Brighton Branch. Mr. Foote will be happy to inaugurate it with a lecture. Could it be arranged for in April?

SOCIAL DEMOCRAT.—We believe that table rapping is always the result of humbug. It has often been *proved* to be so.

T. MACGREGOR.—You don't say *what* pamphlets you wish sent. Let us know. Glad to hear that you and your mates are fond of the *Freethinker*. Archdeacon Farrar's "Seven Questions" are answered in Mr. Foote's pamphlet, *Ingersollism Defended*.

A. GUEST.—(1) Celestine Edwards has never "personally challenged" Mr. Foote to debate. (2) The written debate between Mr. Foote and the Rev. J. M. Logan was postponed to suit Mr. Logan's convenience. He said something about "the spring." Mr. Foote appointed Mr. K. Hunt, of Bristol, as his agent in the matter. We suppose he will hear when Mr. Logan is ready.

F. FISHER.—The verse you send us has for years been printed on one of our Tracts as "The Parson's Creed."

A. N. STAIGER.—We agree with you that parsons are a growing nuisance on School Boards and Boards of Guardians. Their adoption on the "Progressive List" shows what poor notions of progress are entertained by many Radicals and Democrats.

W. M. KNOX.—We will get a list of Free Libraries open on Sunday if possible. No doubt it would, as you say, be very useful to many of our readers.

C. GRASON.—Will answer in our next.

ANTI-HUMBUG.—May be useful.

A. B. MOSS.—Next week; too late for this.

E. COLVILLE, secretary of the West Ham Branch, has removed to 2 Norwich-road, Forest Gate. Lecturers, etc., please notice.

W. B. THOMPSON.—Too late. We stated, as usual, that we had to go to press early with our Special Number. We hope your Good Friday tea and concert at the Chatham Secular Hall will be a great success.

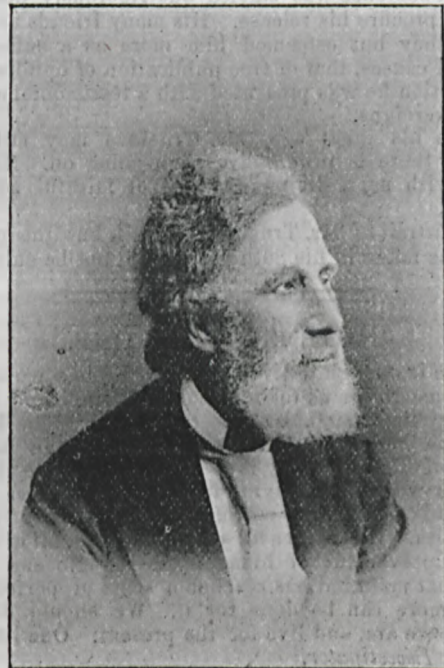
CORRESPONDENCE should reach us not later than Tuesday if a reply is desired in the current issue. Otherwise the reply stands over till the following week.

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—Cambria Daily Leader—Daily Chronicle—Independent Pulpit—De Dageraad—Hull Daily News—Boston Globe—Christian—Los Amichs Tintores—Catholic—Port Elizabeth Telegraph—Club Journal—Newcastle Daily Chronicle—Pioneer of Wisdom—Curtice's Index and Register—Glasgow Weekly Herald—Woolwich Herald—Leicester Mercury.

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.



EDWARD TRUELOVE.

MR. EDWARD TRUELOVE, whose portrait we have the pleasure of presenting to our readers, is a striking proof that activity does not diminish longevity. Born October 29, 1809, he is consequently in his eighty-fourth year. A life-long reformer, age scarcely diminishes his activity. His well-known figure is still seen at almost every important meeting where there is work for human progress. He retains not only the sentiments and activity, but the elasticity of youth, and this very year we have heard him sing "A Jolly Young Waterman" and "Then Farewell, my Trim-built Wherry," in a style that many a youth might envy.

Mr. Truelove's connection with advanced movements in the metropolis goes back to the days of Robert Owen,

a teacher for whom he retains the greatest respect and admiration. He threw in his lot personally with the experiment in communal life at Harmony Hall, Queenswood, Hampshire, and remained there until the experiment was abandoned. Upwards of fifty years ago he assisted in organising a great procession through London to protest against the observance of a Public Fast at the instance of Sir Andrew Agnew. For nine years he was secretary of the Institution in John-street, Tottenham-court-road, then the headquarters of the followers of Owen, and where Robert Cooper, Bronterre O'Brien, G. J. Holyoake, and other reformers lectured. Taking charge of the bookshop here, he was led to emulate his friends James Watson and Henry Hetherington in becoming a Freethought and Radical bookseller and publisher. He has worthily fulfilled his noble ambition of supporting a free press. For fifty years he has sold works tabooed by the trade, not because they pandered to passion, for Mr. Truelove has never dealt in "pornographic" literature, but because they ran counter to political, social, or religious prejudices. He has sold all the publications for which Carlile and others so persistently fought, and has himself published the works of Voltaire, Paine, d'Holbach, Robert Taylor, E. P. Meredith, and others. He also published the *Investigator*, the first paper edited by "Iconoclast." He was prosecuted in 1858 for a pamphlet on *Tyrannicide*, by W. E. Adams, who has since for many years edited the *Newcastle Chronicle*, but the prosecution was abandoned.

He has taken a leading part in the agitation for political reform, for an unstamped press, for a free Sunday, being for many years on the committee of the National Sunday League; against compulsory church rates, which he firmly refused to pay; and against compulsory oaths, which he refused to take. In 1871 Mr. Truelove was instrumental in getting up the commemorative festival in connexion with the centenary birthday of Robert Owen, held at Freemasons' Hall on May 16. On this occasion he received letters from Mill, Huxley, Fawcett, Bright, Lord Amberley, and others, testifying to their respect for the memory of Owen. One of the most respected friends of Mr. Bradlaugh, he has been a vice-president of the National Secular Society since its first formation, and had attended the meetings of its executive and conferences with exemplary regularity.

In 1877 he was indicted, before Lord Chief Justice Cockburn, for publishing two pamphlets, one entitled *Individual Family and National Poverty*, the other being Robert Dale Owen's *Moral Physiology*. His defence was ably conducted by Dr. W. A. Hunter, M.P., and the trial resulted in the discharge of the jury, who were unable to agree on a verdict. He was subsequently tried at the Old Bailey, found guilty, and sentenced to four months' imprisonment and a fine of £50. The cruel sentence was carried out rigorously despite many efforts to procure his release. His many friends and admirers showed they but esteemed him more as a sufferer in the noblest of causes, that of free publication of opinions; and on his liberation he was presented with a testimonial and a purse of 200 sovereigns.

Despite his great age, Mr. Truelove may still be seen wherever there is progressive work going on. May he long remain with us, a living example of faithful adherence to principle.

[Our portrait of Mr. Truelove is small, but the photograph, which was taken in his 80th year, could not be enlarged.]

ONE LIFE AT A TIME.

One life is enough to live at a time. While we are on earth there is enough for us to do to make this life happy and perfect without giving thought or care to another. The here comes before the hereafter, the present before the future. The instruction of Christianity is to live two lives; to give thought to another world while living in this. We believe this to be wrong, and calculated to rob our life on earth of its highest possibilities. Let us give all of our thought, all of our efforts, to the improvement of humanity here. No one can justly declare that mankind has reached a stage of perfection when nothing more can be done for it. We should do our best wherever we are, and live for the present. One life at a time. —*Boston Investigator*.

JEREMIAH.—In the case of the Book of Jeremiah, we have clear evidence that some interval of time elapsed between the decease of the prophet and the age in which his prophecies were edited. This may be shown by the fact that chap. xxxix. 1—13 is condensed from 2 Kings xxv. 1—12, and that the concluding chapter (lii.) is derived from 2 Kings xxiv. 18, etc., and xxv. 27—30. It would also appear from the dislocated order of the prophecies. The existence, again, of great variations in the text of the LXX. version points to the probability of Jeremiah's prophecies having once been current in some other form, as, for instance, in smaller collections of prophecies. —*Dr. H. E. Ryle, "Canon of the Old Testament," p. 105; 1892.*

The man who is mentally honest stops where his knowledge stops. At that point he says he does not know. Such a man is a philosopher. —*Ingersoll*

SUGAR PLUMS.

We have printed an extra quantity of this Special Number, and we ask those who are pleased with it (if they can afford to do so) to take an extra copy or two for circulation among their liberal-minded friends. By this means they will introduce the *Freethinker* to new readers, and probably secure it some fresh subscribers.

Our next Special Number will contain portraits and biographies of Messrs. Peacock and Brown, the president and secretary of the North Eastern Secular Federation, besides other illustrations which will be announced in due course.

The remarkably fine weather a little thinned Mr. Foote's morning and afternoon meetings on Sunday, but the hall was crowded at night with a most enthusiastic audience. Some opposition was offered by an ill-tempered sort of Spiritist and an extremely foolish Christian, who kept the meeting in roars of laughter, not *with* him but *at* him. This is the farcical gentleman who, a few months since, was reported in a Christian Evidence paper as having pulverised a leading Freethought lecturer.

The Manchester friends gave excellent reports of Mr. Cohen's recent lectures. All regarded him as an acquisition to the Secular platform. Another promising young lecturer, Mr. Snell, lectures to-day (April 2) for the Manchester Branch. We hope he will meet with a cordial reception.

On Monday evening Mr. Foote lectured at Wolverhampton. There was a very fair week-night audience, which would probably have been larger if Wolverhampton had not been "off its head" on account of the victory of its football team. The crowded streets resounded with "See the Conquering Hero Comes." Mr. Foote's lecture was evidently relished, judging from the laughter and loud applause. Mr. Davidson took the chair. Mr. Clifton, the energetic secretary, was looking after "business." He is the life of the Branch at present, and we are happy to hear he has sixty paying members on his books, besides others who are more uncertain. Wolverhampton is going to have an open-air Freethought propaganda this summer.

To-day (Easter Sunday) Mr. Foote lectures at the London Hall of Science. In the morning he will deal with "Local Option and Clubs." In the evening he is to discourse on "Did Jesus Rise from the Dead?" It is a particularly seasonable subject, and Freethinkers should try to bring some of their orthodox friends to hear the Resurrection discussed from a Secular standpoint.

Last Sunday Mr. Charles Watts lectured to capital audiences in Glasgow, whose applause was exceedingly hearty. It is very gratifying to us to hear that many ladies were present. On Monday and Tuesday last our colleague debated with Mr. Joseph Deans, of Glasgow. We hope next week to give an account of the discussions in these columns. To-day (April 2) Mr. Watts lectures in the Baskerville Hall, Birmingham.

Mr. Watts is very active just now in the field of debate. He is engaged to discuss shortly in Jarrow and in Newcastle-on-Tyne. Negotiations are also going on for a four-nights' debate in Birmingham with Mr. Robert Roberts, who some years ago discussed with Mr. Bradlaugh. Mr. Watts is always happy in discussion, particularly when he gets a good opponent, which is rather a rare advantage at the present time.

Next Wednesday (April 5) is the evening for the *Conversazione* at the London Hall of Science. The President of the N.S.S. and his colleagues of the Executive invite the members to meet them on the occasion. All are heartily welcome, and they are free to bring a friend. Mr. Foote begs all who wish to speak with him on any matter to accost him without an "introduction." They can introduce themselves. Most of the time will be devoted to conversation, but there will be some good music at intervals. It may be added that the *Conversazione* will not begin till 8.15, to give time for the Executive meeting which precedes it. If there is a few minutes' delay members will know the reason.

N.S.S. Branches will please note that all new forms of membership should be sent in to the central office, with remittance, before the close of the financial year (April 18). Branches will only be able to vote at the Conference for the members whose subscriptions are paid up in the Executive's books. This is the rule, and a very wise one; and it will be useless to complain of any "disfranchisement" if the rule is neglected. Due notification is made, and made to all alike.

The North West London Branch held its general meeting on March 16. Mr. C. T. Brown (late of Hull Branch) was elected financial secretary, and Miss Vance corresponding secretary. The new committee is determined to carry on a vigorous propaganda in Regent's Park. Mr. James Rowney opens the ball on Easter Sunday at 11.30. Morning lectures are a new departure for the Branch. Freethinkers in the district can be enrolled as members at any time by applying at 24 Kentish Town-road.

The Finsbury Branch holds its third annual Smoking Concert at the Hall of Science on Good Friday. The chair will be taken at 7. Tickets 6d., to be had of Mr. James Anderson at the Hall. It is hoped there will be a large gathering.

At the tea and soiree to be given on Good Friday by the West London Branch at the West Kensington Park Radical Club, the members of the North-West London Dramatic Society will enliven the proceedings with one or two sketches. An excellent program of songs and recitations will also be carried out. The hall is situated in Faroe-road, Blyth-road, Hammersmith, within a short distance of Addison-road Station.

The Battersea Branch held its quarterly meeting last Sunday afternoon. Balance sheet was submitted showing income to be £19 11s. 0d., expenditure £18 18s. 2d. leaving 12s. 10d. in hand. Five new members had joined during the quarter. The old officers were re-elected, and other business disposed of; after which members and friends sat down to a substantial tea. Then followed a musical and dramatic entertainment, and dancing wound up an enjoyable evening. Friends are reminded of the social gatherings to be held on Good Friday and Easter Monday, admission free.

The Cricket Club of the Bristol Branch meets on Good Friday at 2.30 by the reservoir. A good time is expected. We are happy to hear the Club is making progress, and helping to knit the Branch members together.

Mr. A. B. Moss lectured at Bolton on Sunday, and had excellent audiences and a hearty reception. We are glad to see the Bolton Branch once more active in Freethought propaganda.

Mr. Cohen is going for a week's lecture tour from May 7 to May 14 under the auspices of the N.E. Secular Federation. We hear also that a debate is being arranged at Newcastle between Mr. Charles Watts and Mrs. Hardinge Britten, and hope it will not turn out a fiasco like a previous attempt in the same direction. On Easter Sunday (to-day) the Federation holds a Freethought demonstration in the Ryhope and Senham district. Messrs. Brown, Wrightman and others will address the meeting.

Mr. Wallace Nelson has returned to Brisbane from Sydney where he made himself very popular, as in New Zealand.

The *Independent Pulpit*, of Waco, Texas, has in its March number some excellent articles, notably on "Teaching Morals," by Judge Richardson, and a "Creed for Cowards." Our remarks on the controversy, "Is Christianity Played Out?" are reprinted in this number.

We receive from Trinidad a four-page leaflet, entitled "An Apostle on Freethought, by a Freethinker." It is a reply to the Rev. Father Olunes, who has been lecturing on the subject at Prince's Town. We are gratified at noticing this sign of activity on the part of our friends in Jamaica.

In the *Popular Science Monthly* of New York, Mr. Grant Allen concludes his able and interesting papers on "Ghost Worship and Tree Worship," which latter he thinks was

evolved from trees growing up out of graves. Mr. Allen accepts all the remarkable conclusions of Mr. J. G. Frazer's *Golden Bough*, a work throwing a flood of light on the savage bases of Christianity, but believes that in order to understand to the very bottom the origin of tree worship, we must directly affiliate it upon primitive ancestor or ghost worship, of which it is an aberrant and highly specialised offshoot. Mr. Allen holds that there were three main stems of worship. 1st, the ghost; 2nd, the sacred stone; 3rd, the sacred tree. But he holds with Tylor and Spencer that the ghost is the core and central reality of the whole vast superstructure of faith and practice.

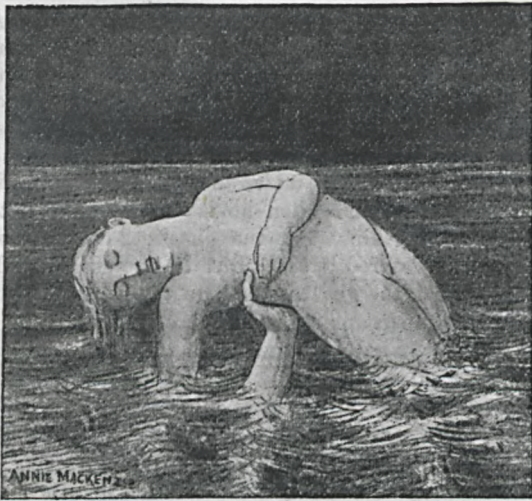
BRUNO.

THAT the New Spirit would prove ultimately intransigent to Christian theology was clearly demonstrated by its last and noblest representative in Italy. Bruno's life was cut short at the comparatively early age of forty-four, yet he left behind him voluminous writings, from which an adequate idea may be formed of his philosophy. As a personality, endowed with singular courage and remarkable independence, Bruno towers eminent among the powerful characters of that age, so rich in individualities. The two currents of Renaissance curiosity, which had produced criticism and naturalism, met and blended in his intellect. As a thinker his chief merit was to have perceived the true bearings of the Copernican discovery. He saw that the substitution of a heliocentric for the former geocentric theory of our system, destroyed at one blow large portions of the Christian mythology. But more than this. Copernicus had failed to draw the logical conclusions of his own hypothesis. For him, as for the elder physicists, there remained a sphere of fixed stars, enclosing the world perceived by our senses within walls of crystal. Bruno asserted the existence of numberless worlds in space illimitable. Bolder than his teacher, and nearer to the truth, he passed far beyond the flaming ramparts of the universe, denied that there were any walls, and proclaimed the infinity of space. Space, he thought, is filled with ether, in which an infinite number of solar systems resembling our own, composed of similar materials, and inhabited by countless living creatures, move with freedom. Not a single atom in this stupendous complex can be lost or unaccounted for. There is no such thing as birth or death, as generation or dissolution, but only a continual passage of the infinite and homogeneous substance through successive phases of finite, differentiated existence. This general conception of the universe, which coincides with that accepted at the present time by men of science, led Bruno to speculations involving a theory of evolutionary development and, to what would now be called, the conservation of energy. Rejecting as untenable the dualism of mind and matter, he argued, from the presence of the intellect in man, and from the universality of form in all phenomena, that the essence of the whole can best be grasped by our imagination under the analogy of life and spirit.

This brief summary of Bruno's system makes it evident to what a large extent he anticipated, not only the philosophies of Descartes, Spinoza, Leibnitz, Hegel, but also the most recent conclusions of natural science. In his treatment of theology and ethics, he was no less original and prophetic. He solved the problem of evil by defining it to be a relative condition of imperfect development, not evil in itself, but evil to our partial vision. He denied that any Paradise or Golden Age preceded human history. In his opinion, the fall of man from a primal state of innocence and happiness is an absurdity in itself, contradicting all we know about the laws of growth. In morals he inclined towards determinism. Passing to theology, in the strict sense of that term, he sketched in outline the comparative study of religion. It is obvious that he regarded no one creed as final, no sacred book as exclusively inspired, no single race as chosen, no teacher or founder of a faith as specially divine, no Church as privileged with salvation.

To this point had the New Spirit advanced when outraged Catholicism, very naturally, logically, and consistently with the instinct of self-preservation, burned Bruno in 1600.—*John Addington Symonds in the "Fortnightly Review," March.*

An amusing mistake took place at a complimentary dinner given to a Glasgow ex-bailie of the Hebrew persuasion. A number of Roman Catholic gentlemen signified their intention of being present, and, it being Lent, a separate table with fish only was spread for them. Three only turned up, and they preferred to dine with the rest. Eight Hebrews, however, appeared, and, asking for a separate table, were shown to the one provided for Catholics, and, moreover, were served with nothing but fish, while the rest were regaled on chickens, ducks, venison, turkeys, etc. They are never likely to again turn Catholics.



JEHOVAH'S WATER-CURE.

ONE rainy day—Lord, how it rained !
 Jehovah, high and dry,
 Looked down on earth, with eyes that strained
 To pierce the murky sky.

He said, because disgusted with
 His work, the sons of men,
 He'd drown them all, save Noah's kith,
 And then begin again.

The torrents raged with thund'rous roars ;
 His children rushed about ;
 The water drove them all indoors,
 And then it drove them out.

The water fell—Lord, how it rose !
 It swamped the shrubs and trees ;
 All living creatures—friends and foes—
 On hill-tops swarmed like bees.

The deadly tide, midst cries and sobs,
 The life-clad hills did gain,
 Whence s'ried sorrow's anguished throbs
 Thrilled hollow heav'n in vain.

Her child, a drowning mother raised
 In mute appeal for help ;
 A struggling wolf howled, " God be praised !"
 'Twill buoy my sinking whelp !"

The wolf went up, the child went down,
 The waters covered all ;
 A grin relaxed Jehovah's frown,
 Above the heaving pall.

He rubbed his hands with fiendish glee,
 And hissed " revenge is sweet !"
 Then bellowed to the murd'rous sea,
 " Thy work is done—retreat !"

" At last they're gone ! the hateful brood !
 The proofs of my mistake ;
 The Ark's contents, select and good,
 A better race will make !"

Alas ! no sooner had the flood
 Below the mountains sunk,
 Than Noah scrambled through the mud
 And then got beastly drunk.

This second father of our race—
 Blessed flotsam of the flood—
 Became, through drink and heav'nly grace,
 Mere jetsam on the mud !

These pets of Heav'n's Almighty Ghoul
 Went wrong in re-beginning ;
 The drunken father played the fool,
 Then cursed his son for grinning.

The Lord is good !—he rescued eight—
 O would that sinners knew it !
 His pow'r to save is just as great
 As is his wish to do it !

If earth be swamped again by Pa,
 Than Noah we'll be snugger ;
 We'll laugh at floods, methinks, ha ! ha !
 When once " on board the lugger !"

G. L. MACKENZIE.

BOOK CHAT.

Mr. William Morris is a versatile man. Besides being a poet of grace and distinction, he is a writer and lecturer on Socialism, and even Communism. His *News from Nowhere* (our old friend Utopia under an English name) is a delightful picture of English life as it is to be in that coming society, which, we suspect, will never exist outside Mr. Morris's imagination. It is a more romantic dream than Mr. Bellamy's; for the American writer, while making tremendous changes in social environment, leaves life pretty much as it was. His men and women, in fact, have precisely the same ways of thinking and feeling as the men and women of to-day, while the men and women—and especially the women—of Mr. Morris's Utopia are free from all conventions, and talk and act with the most delicious abandon.

But this is a digression. Mr. Morris, the poet, prose writer, and lecturer, is an authority on architecture, and has issued many a blast against the vandalism of the modern "restoration" of ancient buildings. He is also a decorator, and his wall papers are famous. He is likewise a designer of artistic furniture. Latterly he has taken to printing. The productions of his "Kelmscott Press" are the envy of poor bibliophiles. They are printed with special old-fashioned types on fine paper; the tail-pieces and other embellishments are wonderful; and the ink is as black as Satan. But then *the price!* Mr. Morris's books are only a rich man's purchase. It is strange to see the ardent apostle of Socialism printing books that a well-paid artisan could never hope to possess—unless he stole them. It is another illustration of Coleridge's dictum that "extremes meet."

Discussion has been raging in the *Daily Chronicle* as to whether Mr. Morris's printing is really artistic. Some say it is an attempt to revive a dead form of art, which can never be anything but artificial. Others—the initiates, the virtuosi—declare it "the printing of the future." On this point we will not attempt to decide. We do not wish to run the risk of assassination. But on another point we shall express ourselves emphatically. We hope Mr. Morris's book-prices will not be "the prices of the future"—unless the said future is a good while after our own decease. If books are to cost three guineas apiece in Utopia it will be a sad thing for book-lovers. Mr. Morris carries his Communism to an extreme. He says he does not want a book to himself. It is good enough for his use in the public library. Yes, that is all right in the case of books of reference. But who would "go snacks" in a Shelley or a Shakespeare? As well ask a lover to regard the maiden of his heart as common property. No, you contract a love for the very material presence of the book whose thought, whose poetry, whose diction, has thrilled and delighted you. Your own pencilling is in the margin. To hand it about carelessly is like wearing your heart on your sleeve.

Another controversy has been raised in the *Daily Chronicle* on "Dod Grile," the American humorist. Some have supposed him dead. This is not strange, for in introducing his *Nuggets and Dust*, he made out that the writer had been struck dead by lightning—probably for his blasphemy. However, a work in his own name (Ambrose Bierce) was published by Chatto and Windus less than a year ago. This work (*In the Midst of Life: Tales of Soldiers and Civilians*) has been commended for its quaint originality and imagination.

Ambrose Bierce is an irreverent cynic. His *Fiend's Delight*, the recent purchase of which by Mr. Gladstone has called renewed attention to "Dod Grile," professes to be inspired "by my scholarly friend, Mr. Satan." "While the plan of the work is partly my own, its spirit is wholly his." This view would probably be endorsed by old-fashioned believers in his scholarly friend. For Dod Grile's blasphemy is as pronounced as his cynical humor. His *Midsummer's Day Dream of the Resurrection* and some of his Bible Sermons, concluding "Brethren let us prey," have been reprinted in Christmas numbers of the *Fræthinker*.

In *Nuggets and Dust*, the scarcest of his productions, Dod Grile gives his *credo*, which includes "a Trinity, three gods united by a rope at the waist being about the only sort of *Tria Juncta in Uno* that our humble intelligence can accurately comprehend, and a heaven wholly uninhabited except by the angels who were born there; for only a limited number of human beings have ever been good enough to go there, and these do not wish to spend an eternity of useless indolence." "Au reste," says Dod Grile, "we believe the doctrine of election without understanding it, and revere the doctrine of redemption without believing it. We believe the world was created out of nothing, but don't know how the nothing was held together, and don't think it could be done again. We believe in baptism, for we have seen it done. We believe in divine mercy, without wishing to take any of it. We admire the wisdom of Solomon, and wish he had chosen to

display it; and are amazed at the miracles of the prophets, so little inferior to those of our own *prestidigitateurs*, and in some respects superior to the corresponding ones of their heathen predecessors and contemporaries." Our readers will see this too little known American humorist has a shrewd head. We should like to hear the Grand Old Man dilating on *The Fiend's Delight*.

LECTURE NOTICES, ETC.

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

LONDON.

Battersea Secular Hall (back of Battersea Park Station): 7.45, C. James, "Some of our Great Dead." Monday and Tuesday at 8, social gathering (free).

Bethnal Green—Libra Hall, 78 Libra-road, Roman-road: Good Friday at 5.30, public tea (6d.); 7.30, free concert. Sunday at 7.30, Mr. Campbell, F.T.S., "Karma." Monday at 5.30, public tea (6d.); 7.30, free concert.

Camberwell—61 New Church-road, S.E.: 7.30, Touzeau Parris, "Serpent Worship." Friday at 7.30, free science classes (hygiene and astronomy).

East London—Swaby's Coffee House, 103 Mile End-road: Good Friday at 6, tea and concert (10d.)

Finsbury Park Branch, Minor Hall of Science: Good Friday at 7, third annual smoking concert (6d.) April 2, at 12, members' monthly meeting.

Hall of Science, 142 Old-street, E.C.: 11.15, G. W. Foote, "Local Option and Clubs" (free); 6.30, musical selections; 7, G. W. Foote, "Did Jesus Rise from the Dead?" (3d., 6d., and 1s.) Wednesday at 8, Conversazione for N.S.S. members.

OPEN-AIR PROPAGANDA.

Battersea Park-gates: 11.15, A. Johnson, "Religion in Board Schools."

Finsbury Park (near the band stand): 11.30, A. Guest, "Christ's Resurrection"; 3.30, E. Calvert, "Secularism, the Light of the World."

Hammersmith Bridge: 6.30, Mr. St. John, "God and his Friends."

Hyde Park (near Marble-arch): 11.30, F. Haslam will lecture; 3.30, J. Rowney, "Did Jesus Rise from the Dead?"

Mile End Waste: 11.30, S. H. Alison, "Darwinism and Design."

Regent's Park (near Gloucester-gate): 11.30, J. Rowney, "Did Jesus Rise from the Dead?"

Victoria Park (near the fountain): C. J. Hunt, 11.15, "What is Secularism?"; 3.15, "God: where and what?"

Old Pimlico Pier: 11.30, W. J. Ramsey, "Jehovah."

COUNTRY.

Aberdeen—Oddfellows' Hall Buildings (Hall No. 5, upstairs): 6.30, a Night with the Poets, Musicians, and Best Authors.

Bristol—Shepherd's Hall, Old Market-street: 7, Mr. White, a Paper.

Chatham—Secular Hall, Queen's-road, New Brompton: Good Friday at 4.30, anniversary tea and social evening. Sunday, A. B. Moss lectures at 11 and 7; 2.45, Sunday-school for children. Monday at 8, special dramatic performance of "The Secret" and "My Wife's Mother."

Glasgow—Ex-Mission Hall, 110 Brunswick-street: 12, discussion class, Henry Wishart, "The Philosophy of Socrates"; 6.30, J. P. Gilmour, "The Unseen Universe."

Hanley—Secular Hall, John-street: J. Hooper, 11, "Missionaries and Missionary Work"; 3, "The English Church: its Origin and Deeds"; 7.30, "How Secular Advocates are Treated by their Opponents."

Hull Sunday Association, St. George's Hall, 8 Albion-street: 2.30, Conference, "Why Working Men and Women do not Attend Church"; Introducer, G. E. Naewiger.

Liverpool—Oddfellows' Hall, St. Anne-street: 7, Mr. Gowland, "The New Faith"

Manchester N.S.S., Secular Hall, Rusholme-road, Oxford-road, All Saints: H. Snell, 11, "Lay it all on Jesus"; 3, "The Story of the Atheists in the French Revolution"; 6, "Is there a Moral Governor of the Universe?"

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

Reading—Foresters' Hall, West-street: Stanley Jones, 3, "The Cooling of Hell"; 7, "An Impeachment of Christianity."

Sheffield—Hall of Science, Rockingham-street: W. Heaford, 3, "Why did Christ Die?"; 7, "The Errors and Terrors of Theology."

South Shields—Capt. Duncan's Navigation School, King-street: 7, business meeting; 7.30, D. R. Bow, "Some Modern Applications of Electricity."

OPEN-AIR PROPAGANDA.

Sheffield, near the Monolith, Fargate: 11, W. Heaford, "Why I Cannot be a Christian."

LECTURERS' ENGAGEMENTS.

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

H. SNELL, 8 Monk-street, Woolwich.—April 2, Manchester; 9, m., Finsbury; e., Battersea; 16, 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 Oredon-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.—April 2, Leicester; 9, m., Mile End; a., Victoria Park; e., Edmonton; 16 and 17, Portsmouth; 23, a., Victoria Park; e., Camberwell; 30, Ipswich.

O. J. HUNT, 48 Fordingley-road, St. Peter's Park, London, W.—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 2, m., Mile End Waste; 9, m., Wood Green; 16, Manchester; 23, m., Hyde Park. 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.—April 2, Reading; 12, Hall of Science; 24 and 25, Sunderland; 29, Arbroath; 30, Aberdeen. May 7, Edinburgh.

ST. JOHN, 8 Norland-road North, Notting Hill, W.—April 2, e., Hammersmith; 16, m., Finsbury Park; 23, m., Victoria Park. May 14, m., Hyde Park; 21, m., Victoria Park; e., Hammersmith; 28, m., Bethnal Green.

SAM STANDRING, 2 Morton-street, C-on-M, Manchester.—April 16 Hull.

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A 'POSSUM PRAYER.

GREAT consternation, followed by wild laughter, was an innovation of the chapel exercises at Columbus Penitentiary recently. It was occasioned by a 'possum prayer from old Mose Allen, a South Carolina negro with one leg, who was dreaming of Thanksgiving Day in the near future. Chaplain Dudley opened the prayer meeting as usual and the prisoners followed briefly. When all heads were bowed in reverence old Mose jumped at the opportunity and delivered the following prayer:—

"Dear beloved bredderin and sister'n, I tank de Lord for permittin' me ter kum ter church dis yer beautiful Sabbot morn. Ye all dunno know dat beautiful Thanksgiving Day is near at han'. On dat day some folks will eat turkey, some eat chicken, some eat duck, some eat lamb, and some eat sheep. But us niggers, we would like dat good old 'poss. Koch 'im, bring 'im in, take all the haar off 'im, put 'im out two nights and let 'im fross. Bring 'im in. Parberl 'im. Stuff 'im like you would a turkey, an' base 'im. Put 'im in de pan. Put sweeten taters all round dat 'poss. Put 'im in de stove and shet dat stove doah. Go way tinkin' 'bout Booregard, Jeff Davis, Lincoln, and Grant. Let 'im stay in dere a while. Open dat stove doah. Ol' 'possy all turned brown and de gravy drippen in de pan declare dat 'poss am cooked. Bring dat 'poss out dat stove. put 'im on de table. Don't cut 'im while e's 'ot. For Christ's sake, Amen."

Chaplain Dudley stood aghast at the conclusion of the prayer. A moment afterward the chapel re-echoed the wild and wicked shouts of the prisoners. For nearly five minutes consternation reigned, at the end of which time prayers were resumed, with no further expressions from the colored brethren.—*Cleveland Leader*.

The Lord Bishop of Cork was a strict teetotaler. At a dinner party, it is told, it happened that the wine was passed to him. He did not pass it on, being engaged in conversation, occasioning a gentleman at the lower end of the table to remark that: "My Lord Cork stopped the bottle!"

A WICKED SUGGESTION.—Reporter: "If you will allow me to have the sermon which you are to deliver on Sunday, I will copy it and print it in Monday's paper." Clergyman: "I cannot allow my sermon to go out of my hands. If you will come to church on Sunday, you can hear it and take notes." Reporter (with dignity): "I do not work on Sundays, sir."

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The hell or heaven of every man is his own breast; the evil which he does is his only Devil, and the good he does his only God.—*Wm. Burdon, "Materials for Thinking," vol. ii., p. 365; 1820.*

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The Sabbath-breaking host.
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