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MRS. LOUISA SAMSON.

(See page 564.)

S U I C I D E .

THE London *Daily Chronicle* is an enterprising paper, and is not bound in by the fastidiousness of its graver Liberal contemporary, the *Daily News*. During the dull season, when the antics of our Collective Wisdom or National Palaver no longer furnish diurnal amusement to the English public, the *Chronicle* generally contrives to start a correspondence on some burning topic—though sometimes it is merely a topic of the hour. Most of our readers will recollect the long correspondence on Theosophy, and the heated dispute on "Is Christianity Played Out?" There is now a discussion on Suicide, suggested by the violent death of young Ernest Clark, who blew his brains out because he had discovered that life is "a series of shams," calculated to excite no other feelings but those of contempt and disgust. Mr. William Archer opened the ball, to be followed by Mr. Page Hopps the preacher, and Mr. Le Gallienne the poet, who preaches too. Many other writers have joined in the debate, and from the earnest way in which they grope about the subject one might imagine it to be a virgin controversy; whereas the theme is almost threadbare to those who are conversant with the history of speculation.

Among the old Romans there was no horror of suicide. The most robust race of antiquity always

regarded it as their privilege to retain the free choice of life or death. It was common for Roman soldiers to slay themselves rather than surrender. During the revolt of the Gauls, when Cæsar was absent in Italy, one of his military stations was attacked by overwhelming numbers. When all hope was gone, the remnant of the legion "died like Romans on each other's swords," says Mr. Froude, who sees in the act "a signal illustration of the Roman greatness of mind." According to Gibbon "the civilians have always respected the natural right of a citizen to dispose of his life." A Roman accused of any capital crime might prevent the sentence by committing suicide, which was a certain refuge to the victims of Tiberius and Nero. They could die but once, and in dying by their own hands they secured a decent burial and the transmission of their property to their families. "The powers of this world," remarks Gibbon, "have indeed lost their dominion over him who is resolved on death, and his arm can only be restrained by the religious apprehension of a future state." There was nothing in the popular belief to deter a Roman from meeting instead of awaiting death. "But the precepts of the Gospel or the church," as Gibbon observes, "have at length imposed a pious servitude on the minds of Christians, and condemn them to expect, without a murmur, the last stroke of disease or the executioner." It was well to say "the Gospel or the church," for there is no law

against suicide in the Bible. When a wish is breathed by Hamlet that "the Almighty had not fixed his canon 'gainst self-slaughter," Shakespeare writes as a Canonist rather than a Christian. It was the Church that branded suicide as a mortal sin. No exception was allowed. Lucretia was declared to be a criminal; a woman was not to take her own life even to escape the vilest dishonor; and this doctrine is still inculcated, although it contravenes every wholesome, unsophisticated instinct of the human heart.

Thus the matter remained until the beginning of the break-up of Christianity at the time of the Renaissance. Hints were scattered that suicide, to avoid dishonor or irretrievable calamity, was far from being a crime. Presently the great dramatists, especially in England, brought characters upon the stage who slew themselves at the fatal crisis of their careers, going down to death like a sinking sun, in crimson glory.

Perhaps the first treatise on suicide was written by John Donne, a famous divine of the Church of England, a poet, a wit, a scholar, and a man of most astonishing subtlety both of thought and expression. The title of this treatise was *Biathanatos*, with this sub-title—"A Declaration of that Paradox, or Thesis, that Self-Homicide is not so Naturally Sin that it may never be Otherwise." Hallam says the book is insufferably dull, and that suicide is preferable to reading it twice; but Hallam had his limitations, and in this criticism he displayed them. Dr. Jessop, who edited Donne's *Essays in Divinity*, calls the *Biathanatos* "one of the most extraordinary books ever written," and praises its "vast learning and the incomparable subtlety of logic which it displays in every page." For our part, we agree with Dr. Jessop, and, we may add, with De Quincey. Donne's book is extremely rare, and few persons have read it; but we do not envy the man who could read it without feeling that he had gone through a splendid piece of gymnastic.

An essay on Suicide was written by David Hume. It appears to have been circulated amongst his friends, and was only published after his death, with another paper on the Mortality of the Soul. The essay is subtle and ironical, and a Christian would find it extremely awkward to answer. Rousseau has a notable chapter on Suicide, there is a characteristic essay on the subject by De Quincey, and a fine fragment by James Thomson ("B.V."), marked by all his severity of logic and stern sincerity of feeling. He holds up the orthodox Christian with superb contempt.

"Modern Christians, who try to believe that they believe in an eternal after life of beatitude, cleave to this miserable and transitory life with most ignominious and abject intensity; will submit to vile doctor's stuff for years and years to keep them in quasi-life or death-in-life, bedridden and miserable, a nuisance to themselves and all around them, all to keep themselves out of heaven! They only resign themselves into the arms of Jesus when all possible means have been exhausted to avoid them."

This is of course a far from exhaustive list of books and essays on Suicide. Recent literature has even produced two important scientific studies on the subject, one by a Frenchman, the other by an Italian. The writings we have mentioned are such as all literary students should be acquainted with, and they are sufficient to prove that, with regard to this particular topic, as with regard to many others, there is nothing new under the sun.

So much for the literature of the subject. Let us now turn to another of its aspects. There is a general impression that scepticism leads to suicide. This impression has been sedulously cultivated by the clergy, but it will not bear investigation. Clericals commit suicide as frequently as laymen; and, although the Catholic parts of Europe show fewer suicides than other parts, the fact may be accounted for by the backward state and the slow life of those places. With an increased strain there will naturally be a greater percentage of breakages. Ernest Clark himself, whose suicide occasioned the *Chronicle* correspondence, was a Christian, and an active member of a Christian church. Mr. Morrison Davidson, too, who is an ostentatious Christian—at least by profession—confesses that six of his personal friends, who at various times committed suicide, were all Christians.

G. W. FOOTE.

(To be concluded)

A WALK THROUGH THE BRITISH MUSEUM.

II.

I DO not see how any thinking student of the antiquities at the British Museum can avoid the reflection that if what children are still taught in Sunday-schools is correct, the most notable things at the Museum are its deficiencies. Vast halls are assigned to Egyptian and Assyrian remains, yet of the mighty kingdom of David and Solomon, "who reigned over all kingdoms from the Euphrates unto the border of Egypt," there is not a single remnant. Conspicuous only by their absence are all antiquities of the Jews and of early Christianity. Reserving till "some other day" notice of the greatest treasure of the Museum, the Codex Alexandrinus (which, in one sense, is certainly a forgery since it purports to be written "by the hand of Thecla the martyr," of the first century, while it contains the Eusebian Canons of the fourth century) and other Christian antiquities, let us now note the Assyrian ones bearing on the Bible.

Did you ever see cherubim, reader? Not Sir Joshua's winged heads of children, with nothing to sit on, who, as the Prayer-book says "continually do cry"; but the creatures described by Ezekiel when he "saw visions of God." They had the head of a man, joined wings, straight legs and calves feet (Ezek. i. 1-12). You must pass between two of these cherubim (called here winged bulls) from the palace of Ashur-Nasir-pal, king of Assyria B.C. 885-860, and enter the Nimroud Gallery. Here the first thing that strikes us is No. 2, the performance of religious rites. Note the tree of life in the centre. This is the Ashera so often referred to in the Revised Version,* and for the real meaning of which I must refer you to my essay on "Phallic Worship among the Jews" in *Bible Studies*. Above is the figure, within a winged circle, of the god Ashur, the progenitor and protecting spirit of Assyria, who bore the same relation to Assyria that Il did to Babylon and Elohim to Israel. The worship of Asherah is still better seen on the opposite side (No. 37), where winged females make offerings to the sacred tree of life. Now notice No. 35, where Ishtar (or Ashtoreth I Kings xi. 23) is depicted with four wings, and observe the fish deity (29 and 30). This may be Oaness or Dagon, with whom Jahveh had a fight in the temple. The fish's head forms a mitre, and was possibly the original of that episcopal covering.† Among the ivory objects in cases, notice the Egyptian character of N.C. 16 and the crux ansata, N.C. 110. In the Central Saloon No. 110, the monolith of Shamsi Rammānu, see the distinct Maltese cross round the neck of the king (B.C. 825-812). Here is the symbol of the Christian knights over a thousand years before their existence. His name is from Shamas the sun-god, who is clearly allied to Samson. Pass into the Kouyunjik Gallery. In case A are tablets giving portions of the Chaldean account of the creation and of the Deluge. The elimination of the polytheistic elements in the Jewish account, while the geographical allusions in Genesis refer to Euphrates, show this latter is a late working up of the Akkadian legends. Indeed, there is no evidence of the Jews having such legends prior to the captivity in Babylon. In other cases are Akkadian and Assyrian omens and incantations against evil spirits and hymns to Ishtar and other deities. Says Mr. W. St. Chad Boscawen, "The Assyrian penitential psalms are full of phrases, word for word the same as those of the Bible."‡ That is to say, the Holy Ghost inspired the men of God to copy in their divinely-inspired records the psalms of idolatrous Polytheists, whose worship was an abomination to God.

Now ascend to the Babylonian and Assyrian Room on the upper floor. The first thing that strikes you is the mutilated black basalt figure of Gudea, King of Babylonia, B.C. 2,500, or before the time of Noah's Flood. We suppose his descendants were in the Ark. In case B, Gudea clearly appears as a phallic worshipper, while in case H, the stone cylinder of

* See especially 2 Kings xxiii. 6, 7.

† See the illustration in *Bible Studies*, p. 26, and "A Fishy Faith," *Freethinker*, March 20, 1892.

‡ Interview by Raymond Blathwayt.

Rammanu Mirari (B.C. 913-891) is of the same shape. Case B contains the gate socket of Eutenna (No. 12061) who, in the official guide, is described (p. 136) as "King of Babylonia B.C. 4,200," or 196 years before the creation of Adam. The ticket-writer seems to have been afraid of antedating Adam, for it appears as "about B.C. 4,000." But Bible credit is not saved, for this case alone contains a host of articles of bronze or stone cut with copper tools, ages older than the date of their alleged invention by Tubal-Cain. In case C we may see flint knives which preceded the use of metal ones. Here, also, an inscription of Cyrus referring to his conquest of Babylon (B.C. 539), and also cylinders of its last King, Nabonidus. Daniel, who doesn't know the name of this king, says it was taken by Darius. Case H contains cylinders of Sennacherib, with an account of the siege and capture of Jerusalem and the defeat of Hezekiah, whereas, according to the Bible, the angel of the Lord defeated the hosts of Sennacherib, slaying in one night 185,000 men. Had any such disaster really happened, it would have meant the downfall of Sennacherib's power, whereas the inscription show him continuing his expeditions. The simple explanation is, the Bible tells a lie.

So in regard to the Moabite Stone, the cast of which is in the Phœnician Room, the original being in the Louvre. The stone has been challenged by a Jew, M. Lowvy, for its record is clearly not to the credit of his nation. It is inscribed to the Moabite god Chemosh, and tells how the altars of Jehovah were prostrated before Chemosh; an incident upon which the servants of Jehovah were significantly silent.

J. M. WHEELER.

CONGREGATIONAL CHRISTIANITY.

It is stated in the New Testament, "If a house be divided against itself, that house cannot stand." Supposing this statement to be true, it is evident that the Christian family can no longer maintain its unity. For scepticism, allied with literary criticism, has of late caused serious divisions in the theological house, shaking it to its very foundation. The last blow received by orthodox Christianity has been dealt by the leaders of the Congregationalists, who have entirely given up many of the claims once urged by the principals of that particular sect on behalf of their faith. How serious will be the result to orthodox pretensions of this new departure time will tell. We have long since learnt from private sources that a considerable change in theological views was taking place among the younger ministers of this large body of Christians. The constantly recurring outbreaks of scepticism among the clergy of the Church of England could not fail to influence ministers of other denominations. But no doubt the restricted liberty in dissenting communities, as compared with that of the National Church, tended for a time to keep their ministers in the old path, inasmuch as their training and general surroundings caused them to fear the consequences of being too outspoken. Probably they felt that the public mind would be more inclined to gradually follow the new departure caused by the "higher criticism," than to be led from their long-cherished beliefs by any sudden outbursts of excitement.

It is amusing to read how a man like Canon Driver seeks to ward off the effects of the scepticism that is so prevalent in our midst. He coolly alleges that criticism does not affect the doctrines of his faith, although many of these doctrines of his Church have been either practically given up, or considerably modified in consequence of this very criticism. It would certainly be very remarkable, if the roof has been raised from the house and the walls have been removed from their foundations, that the building should remain as solid as ever. But it appears that the Church that survived the shock produced by the *Essays and Reviews* does not desire to be thought too easily betrayed into a state of alarm. At least its clergy would have us believe they are not apprehensive that the present rapid growth of heresy both in and out of the Church will prove fatal to their religion.

Superstition dies hard, and clergy who have been educated under its influence, and whose position in life depends upon its perpetuation, are loath to give it up. Emerson says he believes that if this whole island were burnt up, we should assemble on the cinders to commemorate the event. So we suppose that if all the once firmly-believed doctrines of Christianity were destroyed, we should find some orthodox enthusiasts clinging to the ruins.

For the most recent aspect of heretical dissenting Christianity, we are indebted to the views presented in the second edition of a work written by nine eminent Congregational M.A.'s and entitled *Faith and Criticism*. It must be admitted that the writers have emulated the pioneers of destructive criticism with great heartiness. If imitation is the sincerest flattery, the clergy of the Church of England have good grounds for being pleased with the exposition of their dissenting brethren, for they have followed with considerable fidelity the example set them by recent writers of the Established Church. The reverend Congregationalists in the work referred to state that they have been drawn together by a desire to help the numerous seekers after truth, "whose minds have been disturbed by the work of criticism on Bible and theological questions." It seems a rather original mode of securing mental peace, by causing further intellectual trouble, which this book will undoubtedly do, for its writers frankly concede many of the demands of the higher scepticism now so prominently before the public. Such concessions cannot but extend the circle that the critical pebbles have already made in the Biblical and the orthodox lakes, an operation which we in no way depreciate. The theological waters were too long stagnant, and while they were in that state progress was necessarily impeded. Now its lifeless condition has been disturbed by secular activity advancement is the result. Although these nine M.A.'s profess to write independently of each other, they are "agreed in the persuasion that Our Lord Jesus Christ—the personal divine and human Christ—is the centre of all Christian life and thought." Some persons may be disposed to think that any nine men who could agree that God and man were united in one person and make that idea the "centre" of their belief, might easily have agreed to almost anything; for to subscribe to such an ecclesiastical fiction as that God and man are one evinces but little independence of thought. They deplore that the Biblical criticism has disconnected Moses and David from certain passages of Scripture, and they regret the disappearance of "the pleasing associations." In matters apart from theology it would not be very "pleasing" to associate the names of men with works with which they had nothing to do, and to part with such "associations" should be rather pleasant than otherwise. It is admitted that some of the "sacred books" are ascribed to an author who is reported to have recorded therein his own death and burial, a fact which must be slightly embarrassing to those who contend for the accuracy of "God's word."

The great point, however, set forth by these Congregationalists is that "We have no data to enable us to name with any degree of probability the authors of the Pentateuch or of any other historical book except the original Ezra and Nehemiah." The same remark applies to the authors of Job and Ecclesiastes. The knowledge about these matters, we are told, is limited to the fact that the traditional statements about them "cannot be correct." Further, not only have "the pleasing associations" of the old names with the old books disappeared, but modern criticism as to the dates of the books is "unwelcome." A Bible dated B.C. 1450 is much more interesting to a Christian, on account of age, than one dated B.C. 450. Still we are assured that the fact that for ages we have been imposed upon in this matter "is not a spiritual loss." Possibly not, but it is a material loss, and one of great significance. For centuries the Church has promulgated certain teachings as to the authors, the dates, and the events of the Bible, the truth of which we were told was verified by inspiration from God. It has now been discovered that there has been a mistake "all along the line." Under these circumstances the Congregational M.A.'s suggest "that the Church must be prepared to say it cannot

answer the polemical sceptic, neither can it allay the doubts of the devout all at once." This really means that Bible difficulties cannot at present be satisfactorily cleared up. The question is, Can those difficulties which the higher criticism has presented in reference to the Bible be removed at any time? If so, the sooner the Church seeks to accomplish this task the better, if it has any regard for truth.

We are informed in reference to prophecy, that the prophet is only a preacher of righteousness, and that prophecy "does not guarantee historical accuracy." This is a death blow to the orthodox idea of inspiration, for if prophecy does not guarantee accuracy, it comes to us under false pretensions, and the Christian church stands convicted of having, in the name of God, imposed for ages upon the weak and the credulous. We are next told (whatever it may mean) that the external forms of prophecy are only "the symbols of the triumphs and defeats of principles and of their champions." Thus the old landmarks of the orthodox faith are given up, and Christians are told that it is no longer necessary that they should be defended. The sceptic will thus be no longer able to triumph over the false positions that have been taken up by his clerical opponents, who have sought to sustain them by arguments "as questionable as they are ingenious." Then we have the confession that:—"It is impossible to over estimate the relief thus given to the Christian conscience and intellect."

Now, what is the meaning of this surrender upon the part of the Congregationalists of the strongholds of orthodoxy? It means this: That the Bible can be no longer defended as containing "the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth," that there is no evidence that the various books in the Old and New Testaments were written by the writers whose names are attached to them; that portions of the Bible are of much more recent dates than formerly they were taught to be; that much of the Old Testament that has hitherto been regarded as a record of fact, should now be looked upon as figurative language, illustrating some principle; that prophesying did not mean the certain foretelling of events that would come to pass; that the orthodox notion of inspiration is no longer tenable, and that persons are allowed to interpret the Bible according to their own reason, and in harmony with the intellectual standard of the nineteenth century. Many divines of the Church of England arrived at these conclusions a considerable time since, and now the advanced minds of the Congregational denomination have done the same. Truly we are living in a sceptical age, and the work of the Freethought party has not been in vain. The teachings, for the expounding of which Freethinkers of the past generation were imprisoned, are now being recognised and taught by those who are accepted as being the leaders of the Christian movement. Such a marvellous change is encouraging to us as Secularists, but it is fatal to the claims of orthodox religion.

CHARLES WATTS.

(To be concluded).

EUSEBIUS' CHURCH HISTORY.

III.

I PROCEED to put forward some arguments in favor of the opinion that this book was really original in the Latin, not as the monks pretend, in the Greek tongue. I give what appears to me the strongest argument first.

1. The New Testament and the so-called Fathers and Doctors come from the monasteries of the West, though it is alleged they had been composed in the East. There was no notice taken of this contradiction until about 200 years ago; and even then the question attracted little notice; and, as usual, indolence, credulity, self-interest gained the day over truth. There has not been the slightest attempt to overcome, what indeed cannot be overcome, the negative decisive evidence on this point. The French Benedictines of St. Maur knew all that was to be known about the Greek writings: I may name Montfaucon in particular, of whom and of whose colleagues' performances in editing the so-called Greek Fathers any good Dictionary of

Biography will give an adequate account. Do you not suppose that had those Greek writings been really the work of men at Cæsarea of Palestine, or of Alexandria, or Cæsarea of Cappadocia, these Benedictine editors would have traced their history downwards to Paris and the Age of Publication? Would they not have shown that they had been preserved, for example, in the famous Greek monasteries of Mount Athos? They have been able to do nothing of the kind; Montfaucon himself is witness that there was no such stock of literature on Mount Athos. The same remark applies to Constantinople, and the East generally. A few Greek MSS. may have been carried out thither, to be brought back again, for the sake of appearances. But the weight of evidence is irresistible in favor of the West as the real workshop of this literature. It has been noticed that the monks never ventured to fix on Athens as one of their ancient literary seats; but they had a legend of "Dionysius the Areopagite." Where was that legend got up? At Athens? Far from it: but on the spot where his splendid temple stands, St. Denis, in the North of Paris. In short, the writings of the St. Maur scholars disprove the statement that the Greek writings were from the East, and raise the presumption that they were composed under the direction of the Latin churchmen, in order to support a false theory.

2. Let the Greek of Eusebius and the Latin of Rufinus be now compared, and it will be seen that the facts are in flat contradiction to the theory. The Latin is *not* a translation, in any proper sense, of the Greek. Therefore, either there must have been an earlier lost Greek original, far superior to any of the existing texts, which is a baseless and absurd notion; or the Greek must be founded on the Latin, though with considerable license. Of course the argument is one especially for those who have some taste for Latin and Greek; but the main facts can, I think, be made clear even to plain men who are in the habit of judicially attending to evidence.

The Greek text is not classical, nor elegant, nor even in a many places readable and intelligible. It swarms with words that you cannot find in the lexicon and which are contrary to the genius of the language. There are readers who can enjoy Plato, sitting "with their feet on the fender," as Macaulay said; who could read the page aloud and be followed easily by fairly instructed students. But to try such an experiment with "Eusebius" would be to set everybody's teeth on edge. It is not only that the forms and meanings of the words are often unusual, but there are actually a number of novel words, invented by the monks for the purpose of their system. The beautiful language of the great days of Athens seems positively to writhe under the tortures which they inflict upon it. You can hardly believe that a genuine Greek could have been guilty of such deeds—at least I cannot.

The ludicrous effect which is produced when a person sits down with a dictionary to write to a foreigner, not having had his ear trained to the niceties of the usage, is the sort of effect produced in this case. You may in the main catch his drift, but you feel that he "would have expressed things differently" if he had possessed the command of idiom which only comes by practice. Fancy a solemn *Church History* being written in that blundering fashion!

What would you think of such English as this:—"K. came into the Church and *out-confessed*, and so passed his time, now *secret-teaching*, now again *out-confessing*." The Greek words are simply a clumsy coinage. What do you make of a writer who refers to a work "*Towards Heresies*" when he means *against*, or of journeying *into* Rome for *to* Rome; "blaspheming *off blushingly*" instead of "*most impudently*"; "leading a man *over* the water" for *unto* the water; "*into* the name" for *in* the name. These and other flowers of speech all occur within the space of a few lines.

If a writer instead of saying "some *imputation* is made upon some one," were to say "something becomes for a *number* to some one," would he be considered at home in our language? Or if he could not distinguish between *deny* and *abnegate*, or between *age* and *archæ-*

ology, if he uses *absurd* when he means *unjust*, or *untremblingness* for *intrepidity*, or calls Pilate "a self-slayer of himself and a self-hand avenger of the divine judgment," would you not advise him to take a few lessons in English composition? I can assure you these things sound no better in Greek than they do in English.

Nor does it sound well to say "I boast him" rather than "I boast of him," nor "I rid you" for "I absolve you." "Cast outside the truth" is rather clumsy for "aberrate"; and "shorter brothers" is funny for "younger brothers," and so is "growl one's teeth" for "grind" them. The following is in every respect a tit-bit of Eusebian style. Certain heretics are reproved because they prefer science to the scriptures. "Euclid among some of them is industriously *geometered*"—he means "cultivated." He talks elsewhere of "stripping the problem." What does he mean? The French editor Valesius is good enough to explain. It is "ventilating the question." Instead of "stripped and deserted" you read "stripped and become desert."

This wretched monk does not know the force of his Greek prepositions. "Swear *against* the body and blood of the Lord Jesus Christ" is one of his expressions; "disposition *about* another" is given for "disposition *towards* another." The book is a museum of curiosities. He calls the Christian religion "the most holy or the Catholic Hæresis" (heresy). He has the phrase "like a god hymning Christ"; which ought to mean that the *singer* is like a god. He of course does not mean to say that, and you have to check him like a faulty schoolboy. In short, this book reminds one of nothing so much as those curious extracts labelled "English as she is written." His style always betrays him.

Again, there are a number of words in this Greek text which are simply Latin transliterated. *Dux* becomes *doux*, *ducenarius* *doukenarios*, and so on. *Colonia*, *legio*, *præpositus*, *fiscus*, *corrector*, *beneficiales* or *beneficiarii*, *officiales*, *scarius*, *vicarius*, *frumentarius*, are other examples.

In other instances the monk would appear to be thinking in some modern language, whence he draws phrases that are false when turned into Greek. We or the French may speak of an "agonny of fear," but you cannot use "*agonia*" in Greek, as this impostor does. We may say that they who eat of things offered to idols do what is "indifferent," but we may not coin a Greek verb *adiaphorein* to "indifference," for the sake of our meaning, as this bungler does.

The impression grows upon you irresistibly of his ignorance and recklessness in daring to clothe his nonsense in a tongue that he does not command. He writes of the "*bodies*" of a martyr swelling instead of his "*wounds*," and of speaking "*truths*" instead of "truth." And fie upon our superstitious editors who try to defend or explain these vices of the lowest class of literary men!

If you read the Latin text, you can understand what the man is talking about, though you do not approve his meaning and purport. But when you turn to the alleged Greek "original," you find the Latin lucidity all beclouded and befogged; which is an absurd state of things, consider it how you will. The Latin could not have extracted light from the obscurity of a Greek, but the Greek pretender could easily turn a Latin original into jargon.

Take the table of Contents. This is the title of the second chapter, book one, as the Latin gives it: "That Christ is both Lord and Creator of all and dispenser of the universe according to what is written in the law and the prophets." We can understand that. But the Greek gives the title: "A Summary concerning the pre-existence and theology according to our Savior and Lord, the Christ of God." As far as I have noticed, the Greek is always in like manner clumsy where the Latin is precise and even elegant. The Latin writer goes straight to his object; the Greek gropes and fumbles for it. I doubt whether there is a single instance in which there can be an excuse for suggesting that the Latin follows the Greek. Notice the following in reference to a well-known fable, once popularly received as part of authentic Church History (i. 13):—

Greek Reading: "A Story (or History) concerning the Dynast of the Edessenes."

Latin Reading: "A Narration of King Abgarus and a Copy of the epistle of Abgarus to the Lord, and of the Lord to himself, and of those things which consequently were translated out of the tongue of the Syrians."

In the course of a chapter headed "Story about John the Apostle," the Greek has to cite one of his secret *confrères* who poses under the *nom de plume* of "Clement of Alexandria." The thought to be expressed is this: "I have a story to tell you which is no mere story, but an authentic narrative." Positively the Greek cannot do it! He says "Hear a myth, not a myth, but essential logos" (*ὄντα λόγον*); which is one of the most ungrammatical and otherwise blundering sentences that could be written. You cannot "translate" such stuff; you have to break up his bad phrase and take out the kernel of the meaning.

There is a variety of incidental evidence to show that so far from the Greek being really an authority to the Latin, he has to be chastised by the Latins for not knowing his business. Here is a notable example. A certain heretic at Rome whose name is written by "Eusebius" and several other Greek writers *Novatus* or *Nauatos*. Turn to the Catalogue of the "Illustrious Men" (composed in *Latin* under the name of "Jerome"), and there you find a chapter on *Novatianus*, the priest of Rome, who laid down the dogma of the Novitiani, called in the Greek the *Katharoi*. It is added that the author of this dogma was *Novatus*, a presbyter of Cyprian.

This blunder of the alleged founder of Church History has been too gross even for sleepy editors. Valesius, Gieseler, Jachmann, Heinichen have all noticed it. One of them has severely blamed Eusebius for thus confounding a priest of Carthage with a priest of Rome; and has been blamed in turn for his sharp language. Had this discovery been followed up, the whole Eusebian plot might have been laid bare. But that would never do! You may point out the blunder of Eusebius, but you must not assail his credit.

I might almost rest the case for the Latin foundation of the Church History on this discovery alone. The very Latin writer who draws up the List of "Illustrious Men," scattering plausible Greek terms over his pages, the very writer who makes himself sponsor for "Eusebius" and for "Rufinus" alike; and who pretends that the Greek is the foundation tongue: is the source over which Eusebius has blundered with his talk of *Novatus* or *Novatianus*, as in one place he does call the heretic. What happened, in my opinion, was this. The Benedictine monks, being masters of the situation, sketched their system of fable in Latin, giving it as I have said a Greek color, so as to support the false statement that Greek was the primary Church language. They then handed out the scheme to be elaborated in detail by men who had no equal command of Greek. And thus originated this blown-up, blundering, and in any way as far as mere style is concerned, detestable Eusebian *Church History*.

Take again the name *Pilatus*, a Roman name with the *a* long. Do you suppose an authoritative Greek historian ought not to have known the proper pronunciation? Yet you often find it in Greek given as *Pilatus*. Let me tell a little anecdote. One of a certain company of students of the Greek Testament, a man of world-wide fame in *classical* study, heard another member pronounce *Pilatus*. He was startled and shocked, but in the discussion which followed, his colleague held the ground, though the great Doctor protested he would not believe in *Pilatus* till he saw it so scanned in poetry! To so wretched a plight does the professional defence of these rank forgeries reduce men of ordinary classical scholarship.

In another place the name of a legate of Palestine is given in Greek as *Lousios Kyétos*. The Latin gives *Lusius* or *Lucius Quietus* in several texts. Without their aid no one could make out what proper name was signified. Again and again the name *Klēmēs* is given in the Greek; who could know that *Clemens* was meant, without the aid of the Latins? Or that *Kriskēs* was *Crescens*?

Here I must pause. I can only report that the statement that the first historian of the Church wrote in Greek and was rendered into Latin is false on the face of it. The Latin is the original; and the Greek is not strictly a translation from the Latin, but a hurried, windy, bombastic paraphrase and abridgment of the original, written in a style offensive to every principle of good taste. I am of the opinion of Hardouin that this Greek rubbish was written, not so much to be read, as to give visible support to a false theory, and for the sake of quantity rather than of quality. I feel quite sure that if these investigations are carried out in the examination of all the Church writers, it will be established beyond doubt that the Church is committed to the defence of an imposture in attempting to defend "Eusebius" and the secret literary gang to which he belongs.

EDWIN JOHNSON.

I DO NOT KNOW.*

WHEN early faith, drawn from a mother's lips,
By calm-eyed Reason suffers an eclipse—
Uphill thy path and slow,
When friends importune thee, "where dost thou go?"
Enough for thee if Reason lead the way
Right onward; teach thy tongue to say,
"I do not Know."

Read thou the scripture, say they, light thou'lt see,
But if their light be darkness unto thee,
By word and act then show,
That true as to the ocean rivers flow,
So true art thou to Reason's royal sway.
What is beyond her, teach thy tongue to say
"I do not Know."

And one by one thy friends may know thee not,
Or think of thee as one to be forgot;
Then stronger thou shalt grow,
As lonely trees do when the tempests blow,
So thou art true, this friend is friend for aye:
Aught lovelier? Oh, teach thy tongue to say,
"I do not Know."

A time will come, a time to thee of rest,
And in thy weariness it will be best;
If voices whisper low,
Is aught beyond this sad sunset glow?
While night falls gleamless of another day,
Fear not the darkness, teach thy tongue to say,
"I do not Know."

L. J. NICOLSON.

A CHILD'S ESSAY ON SAMSON.

THE life of Samson which I has to give. Samson was the wonderfulest man you ever seed. He was so mighty strong that he thought no more of Lions and Bears than boys do of cats and things. If you think he was a giant, thats just where yer wrong, coz he wasn't a bit bigger than yer father is. But mind yer, he had very long hair, and that's just where it was. It went right down his neck, and under his coat, and then all the way down. That's how it was. Samson became very sinfull, for he got a courtin a young woman who was a relation of the wicked phillistins. Men should never court young women from other countries, except they are good. Never mind abart them being nicet looking, if they are not good. Why, this young woman actshully wurshipped them ugly little imiges wat yev seed Mieshinaries bring in bags, and put in a row on the table. As Samson was goin a-courtin one dark night, a Lion sprung at him from over a garding. And seo yer, Samson just cote it by the chin, and gev it sich a crack betwixt its eyes, that it drophed down dead, like as yev seed cows behind butchers shops. You'll never know how strong he was. When they got marrid, behold Samson arskt a riddle, whilst the Phillistins was all eating their dinners round him. He told them that if they could guess it he would give them without jokin 30 new suits of close apiece. Didn't they try after that; coz they knowed that if they found it out they'd never have to buy no more new close. But they couldn't riddle it, with all their thinkin. Then that nasty imige woman went and told them wot it was. So Samson had to give all of them 30 new suits. How they wood larf while they was a carrying them home, spechully when they was trying them on. But Samson never forgived the imige woman, and he woodnt be marrid t her no longer.—Original English as Written by our Little Ones at School. By Henry Barker, B.A.

* Teach thy tongue to say, "I do not know." A Hebrew proverb.

ACID DROPS.

Mr. Athelstan Riley, the Athanasius of the London School Board, has been interviewed by the *Christian Commonwealth*, which also publishes a portrait of this orthodox gentleman. Mr. Riley looks a self-satisfied "superior" person. Born in 1858, he is only 35 years of age, though he affects the gravity of seventy. He lives in "a palatial establishment at Kensington Court." There now! The secret is out. We understand now why Mr. Riley is so anxious about the "Christian education" of the London children. When one man lives in a palatial establishment, and another occupies a room in a slum, it is evident that something uncommon is needed to make the latter's children grow up with a feeling that this disparity is all right.

Mr. Riley is particularly concerned about the deity of Jesus Christ. He examined a class one day, and found that "the boys had not the slightest idea that our Lord had a Divine nature." Shocking, to be sure! But how about Mr. Riley's belief in the divine nature of Christ? We tell him plainly that he has not a scrap of sincere belief in that article. How on earth can a man live in a palatial establishment, with alabaster fireplaces, and pianos that took three years to build, and at the same time speak without hypocrisy of the divine nature of one who said "Blessed be ye poor" and "Woe unto you rich"?

Mr. Riley wants the London Board School children to be taught the Incarnation; that is to say, that "Jesus Christ our Lord, born of the Virgin Mary, is both God and Man." Ab, Mr. Riley, that is a ticklish thing to teach children! Try it yourself, and let the children ask questions, and see if you don't get into a nasty corner. Jesus was not the son of Joseph, though his mother Mary was Joseph's wife. What a pretty conundrum is this for children who hear things as they walk the streets! What a nice nut to crack for the teeth of youthful curiosity!

"You can't teach morals," Mr. Riley says, "without a religious basis of some kind." Perhaps not. But it all depends on what you mean by "morals." If it is "moral" for a rich idler living in a palatial establishment to look after the "morals" of the children of poor workers who toil for little more than a bare subsistence, then we admit that morality needs a religious basis. But our view of morality is very different from this. Mr. Riley should leave poor people alone and set about saving his own soul; for, if Christ spoke the truth, he is a long way on the high road to hell.

Protap Chunder Muzoomdar, who is here from India en route for the Parliament of Religions at Chicago, where he will discourse on what the West owes to the East, has been lecturing at Unitarian churches on the views of the *Brahmo Somaj*, to which he belongs. They have a book compiled from the Vedas, the Koran, and other Bibles of the world. They discard most of the Hindu superstitions, but, like the Unitarians, retain the central ghost.

It is calculated every Hindu converted to Christianity costs £84. This is not the extent of it. The inhabitants of India are eminently moral, the crime among them not being a fourth part of that which it is in England. And, grievous to state, when a Hindu breaks caste and becomes a Christian, with caste he often abandons moral restraint. There is a larger proportion of crime among native Christians than among those who retain the ancient faith. Perhaps this is largely because the converts are mainly drawn from the worst castes, or outcasts, and the aboriginal hill-tribes.

Mr. Allanson Picton, M.P., points out that instead of allowing Dissenting ministers to act as marriage registrars, Church parsons should be deprived of that function, and that in all cases where a wedding is not legalised in a registrar's office, a registrar should be present and authorise the ceremony. A return for which he moved in the House of Commons showed that in the single year 1891 there were over 1300 errors or irregularities in the certified copies sent to Somerset House. In 71 instances the entries were not signed by the persons married, or were signed by only one of them, while in 748 cases there was nothing to show where the marriage had taken place. Again, 281 clergymen had failed

to sign the certified copies, and actually in 13 instances the signatures in the spaces for the bride and bridegroom were not those of the persons who had been married. In many cases the blunders are sufficiently gross to invalidate the marriage, so far as inheritance and matrimonial rights are concerned, if any litigious person cared to hunt up the worthless records. There is no reason to suppose Dissenting ministers are not as careless and ignorant as Church parsons. Marriage, involving civil rights and obligations, should be certified by officials of the State.

Alexander M'Ewan Thompson, of the Kingston Branch of the Salvation Army, is doing three months' "hard" for embezzlement. The chairman of the Bench, in sentencing him, said his plan was to go about preaching and defrauding, and he was "a thorough vagabond."

Saturday's *Morning Leader* contained a curious begging letter from a Mr. Ellein, whose health had been seriously undermined by opposing Atheism, and who asked the public for £10 to enable him to take a week's holiday. Monday's *Leader* contained a satirical letter from Mr. George Rutland, a Camberwell Freethinker, stating that he had been converted to Atheism from Christianity, that he had heard Mr. Ellein oppose Mr. Foote, that his health had been seriously undermined in listening to "lecturers against Atheism," that he also proposed to take a week's holiday, and would be glad to receive the wherewithal. "On second thoughts," Mr. Rutland added in a postscript, "I think it will be better to spend my own money, or stay at home rather than cadge."

We know something of this Mr. Ellein, and we fancy he has been working this vein for a considerable time. Several times he wrote to us, begging us to get him some employment, and saying that his Christian friends had treated him uncharitably. Afterwards he solicited a donation from a generous Freethinker whose name we need not disclose (at present) on the ground that he (Mr. Ellein) was known as "the gentlemanly opponent of Atheism." It is scarcely necessary to say that he did not receive a cheque from this quarter.

Mr. Ellein modestly told the *Leader* that he had helped Mr. Gladstone to write his *Impregnable Rock of Holy Scripture*. Gods and little fishes! what a cool piece of impudence! What is the case? Mr. Ellein once received a letter from Sir G. G. Stokes, in reply to a query as to Genesis and Science. From that letter (it is dated so far back as Aug. 14, 1883) Mr. Gladstone quotes the single harmless sentence that "Before the beasts came the plants, which are necessary to their sustenance." This is what the modest Mr. Ellein calls "helping Mr. Gladstone" to write his book. It doesn't occur to him that it was Sir G. G. Stokes who furnished the help—such as it was! and that the letter would have been just as useful if addressed to Smith, Jones, Brown or Robinson.

The *Weekly Register* heads an article on the French elections with "To Vote is to Pray." The real meaning is that it is an article of religion to vote as the priest directs.

"More bishops and better incomes for the clergy" is the cry of all the church papers, in noticing the preliminary announcements of the Church Congress. Of course they want the laity to provide the x's. When they find the laity do not shell out, they will begin to notice the bloated stipends of the existing bishops, ecclesiastical dignitaries, and well-beneficed rectors.

A correspondent of the *Daily News* tells of superstitious practices still carried on by women in Russia to ward off typhus fever. They went at midnight and cut, with a plough, a furrow completely around the village. After this a procession was formed, which traversed the inner edge of the furrow. First came a woman carrying a domestic icon and chanting a prayer. The next carried the decorated skull and horns of an ox. The third came astride an oak sapling—as a boy would ride cock-horse. Behind, in long single file, followed a number of women, singing a half-heathenish (exorcist) doggerel. The males keep closely within doors, and dread interfering with or even witnessing the mysterious ceremonies.

Another instance of superstition is given in rejoicings which took place at the burial of a supposed witch. These

were shadowed by the startling intelligence that one of the merry-maker's cows was bewitched, thus proving the posthumous evil power of the deceased. A stallion horse and rider were immediately hunted up to destroy the dead witch's further machinations by jumping across her grave. The horse shied, and could not be induced to leap. Some of the village elders were then consulted, who advised the opening of the grave, and the piercing of the woman's body with red-hot hay forks, and this was accordingly done.

The American Geary law against the Chinese was calculated to lead to reprisals, yet we cannot wonder at the howling of the religious press against the heathen Chinese for the brutal murder of the two Swedish missionaries, Wikholm and Johanson. Their indignation would be more effective if directed against those who are responsible for sending out, where they are not wanted, enthusiastic young men, and often young women, without previous training, and without the smallest acquaintance with the Chinese language or Chinese prejudices. The *Straits Settlements Advertiser* says "most of the Scandinavian missionaries have no knowledge of any language but their own."

The Hungarian clericals have shrieked and protested vehemently against the new Marriage Laws, which make all marriages civil and dissoluble by lay courts of justice. But even in Hungary the time is over when spiritual threats are of avail against the secular spirit.

"God is the same as bogie, and closely allied to humbug." This is not the assertion of an Atheist lecturer, but of an antiquarian philologist, who traces the Saxon name of God and goat both to the Slavonic name for Deity, which is Bog. Goat, he says, in this following Dr. W. Bell, is the translation of the Slavonic word Bog, which is preserved in the boy's game of "Buck, Buck, how many horns do I hold up?" Bog was a deity, like Pan, with horns and hoofs. Puck, the sprite, he supposes to be a relation of the same family with bugs, bugbears, bogles and bogies. He finds the name extended from Bokkara to Buckingham. But philologists are apt to wander wide in their search for resemblances.

The disastrous floods in Galicia have been followed by others even more serious in Hungary. At Eperies thirty houses were swept away and twenty persons lost their lives. Railway bridges have been swept away and harvest fields lie under water. Destructive floods, doing immense damage to the indigo crop, are also reported from India. Meanwhile other countries are suffering from drought and reporting deaths from sunstroke. He doeth all things well.

What a blessed thing is religion. We read that at a great Mohammedan festival of the martyrs Hassan and Hussein, at Tiflis, the celebrants slashed and wounded themselves and each other in so frightful a manner that several of them now lie in a precarious condition. At the same time we read that at Bombay, when the day of prayer comes round, the authorities have to take extra precautions to prevent any renewal of the riots.

Italian and French priests have been having a race to see which should first to erect an altar on the top of Mont Blanc. The Italians forestalled the French priests, and celebrated mass up there last week. God did not show himself in thunder and lightnings, as on Mount Sinai, or in fire, as on Mount Carmel.

The *Progressive Thinker*, a Spiritist paper of Chicago, says the Bible miracles have not a thousandth part of the evidence that can be brought for those of spiritualism. The *P.T.* forgets that it is antiquity which gives flavor to the incredible. An important condition of all miracles is that they should have taken place a long way off and a good while ago.

Commercial failures have been pretty common of late all over the "civilised" world. Over in Victoria the shareholders in companies are said to be praying in this wise:—"Give us this year our annual dividends, and forgive us our calls. Lead us not into reconstruction, but deliver us from liquidation, for ever and ever. Amen!"

Harper and Co., of Christchurch, New Zealand, recently went bankrupt for £300,000. Their assets will realise about a shilling in the pound. A great deal of the capital

squandered was trust money. Leonard and George Harper are the sons of a retired bishop, and they enjoyed a great reputation for piety.

Moody the Evangelist—so the story goes—was at Rome, and was accosted by a sturdy native, apparently in relation to the great thirst question. "Tell him I am a teetotaler," said Moody to the guide. The peasant smiled blandly but doubtfully. "Tell him it's true," said Moody. The peasant pulled half a loaf out of his pocket, and talked rapidly in Italian, laughing heartily at the finish, as he pointed to the Evangelist's portly figure. "He says," the guide interpreted, "that you may be a teetotaler in drinking, but you are not a teetotaler in eating."

The sky-pilots are growing very wary. Six weeks or so ago they began to pray for rain, but as soon as they saw the weather was obstinate they dropped the game altogether. All they do now—besides mopping their faces like the rest of us—is to look deep, and protest that Providence has a special reason for giving us this little forestate of Hades. What the special reason is we shall probably find out during the next wet summer.

The old story of Joseph and Mrs. Potiphar appears to have been re-enacted in the case of the Rev. Joseph Wilson, curate, and Mary St. Leger, the wife of Rupert St. Leger, vicar of Ridgewell, Essex. The wife of the man of God had the child of God arrested for indecent assault, but he went into the witness-box and swore that the lady invited him to her bedroom, and the case was dismissed.

The Rev. Dawson Burns, of Liberator fame, was present at a Rechabite demonstration at Norwich. In his sermon to these teetotallers with the antique name, he spoke of "the powerful effect of good influence." This is most excellent. It shows that the Rev. Dawson Burns retains his fine supply of what Cobbett used to call "face." None of the Liberator people were deficient in that quality.

Ernest Clark, the young man who shot himself dead at Liverpool-street Station, left a letter for the world, which was printed in the *Chronicle*. Before taking his life he had spent a capital holiday in the country, and amongst the authors he had been reading was George Meredith. It is a great pity he did not imbibe a little of George Meredith's philosophy. Had he done so, he would have seen that there was something to live for, if a man will only trample on his egotism and share the fate of his fellows, while helping to improve it.

Theological thimble-rigging is the order of the day. Even a comparatively orthodox paper like the *Christian Commonwealth* is going in for it. "We do not even claim at present," it says, "that all the Bible is the Word of God; we are quite willing to say that it contains the Word of God." The "at present" is good. It leaves the door open for future possibilities. But our contemporary must be very sanguine if it fancies there is a ghost of a chance of recurring to the old doctrine of plenary inspiration. Nor does it display much knowledge of the problem in chuckling over the disagreements of the "Higher Critics." To cry out that Kuenen says this, and Wellhausen that, and Driver something else, is only uttering stuff for the groundlings. These critics don't pretend to be inspired, for one thing; and, for another thing, it is easier to detect an ancient forgery than to show exactly how it was perpetrated, for the forgers are all dead and cannot be cross examined.

By the way, we observe that the *Christian Commonwealth* describes Cardinal Vaughan's dedication of England to St. Peter as "so much buffoonery." We are far from quarreling with this description; but how our pious contemporary would prick up its ears—and they are noticeable appendages—if we were to apply the term "buffoonery" to the antics of Protestantism.

The Rev. Mr. Hiley has left a chapel at Dalston for another at Broadmead, Bristol. He has also left £500 a year for £800 a year. Some of the newspapers have drawn attention to this financial fact, but a Christian journal regards this as mean, and says that "Mr. Hiley is worthy of any remuneration he may get." This is a good business view of the

matter, but how does it square with the text "Blessed be ye poor"?

"Why," asks the *Methodist Times*, "do the Churches leave the earnest advocacy of peace to Socialists?" Why, indeed? But it would be just, if not prudent, to include Secularists. During the Egyptian trouble, years ago, it was Charles Bradlaugh, the Atheist, who convened a mass meeting in Hyde Park on behalf of peace; and it was Christian roughs who assaulted him, and almost took his life. Of course the Churches were all mum. Never until the eleventh hour do they come to the assistance of any righteous cause.

In A. H. A. Hamilton's *Quarter Sessions from Queen Elizabeth to Queen Anne* is recorded (p. 308) that "Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego were quoted by George Fox as example, having worn their hats when they were cast into the burning fiery furnace." Here is a tip for Samuel Fox when he is next run in.

At length the meaning of the conclave of Benedictine abbots at Rome last April, under the presidency of Cardinal Dusmet, has oozed out. The *Tablet* publishes a decree by his Infallible Holiness Joachim Pecci, declaring that the Benedictines are henceforward to have an Abbot Primate, who at the same time must be Abbot of the New Pontifical College of St. Anselm at Rome. The Abbot Primate's term of office is to be for twelve years, but the Pope chooses the first for as long as he likes. He has nominated his beloved son the Right Rev. Hildebrand de Hemptinne, who designed the new Pontifical College, first Abbot Primate. The *Tablet*—i.e., Cardinal Vaughan—says "This important step cannot fail to have far-reaching results." Just so. The effect, it says, will be to "bring the whole order more into touch with the Holy See, and to make it a more effective instrument for the promotion of ecclesiastical interests." Precisely. These black monks have wrought largely in Church interests in the past, and hope to do so in the future; but human interests are a very different matter.

It appears from the report of the Salvation Army Bank, that its liabilities on deposit are, in round numbers, £62,000. On the other side are some curious figures. "At Bank of England and elsewhere, £10,000," and "invested in Government and other securities, including mortgages on property, £53,000." In view of falling values in land, to class mortgages with Government securities is almost as absurd as the statement that cash is at the Bank of England and elsewhere. Are the mortgages on S. A. barracks and other such property? The Guarantee Fund for insuring the Bank against contingencies is only £253 10s. 5d.

"Christ is the solution of all problems," says Mr. Hughes's journal. But Christ himself is a problem; certainly the Christ of the gospels is not a real person. And how one problem can be the solution of other problems, is itself a problem, which cannot be solved, nor even understood.

The religious papers gravely announce that his grace the Archbishop of Canterbury has kindly placed his grounds, at Lambeth Palace, for the purpose of a Donkey Show on Monday, Sept. 4. It is only fitting that the head of the Church should encourage the breed.

SHILLING MONTH.

RECEIVED.

[When no figures follow the name the amount is 1s.]

Liverpool Branch: Rosenfeld 2s., Ross, Roberts, Cheshire, Gilbert, W. Ross, Cummins. T. Roo, J. Marshall, W. B. Jovons 3s.

HOW TO HELP US.

- (1) Get your newsagent to exhibit the *Freethinker* in the window.
- (2) Get your newsagent to take a few copies of the *Freethinker* and try to sell them, guaranteeing to take the copies that remain unsold.
- (3) Take an extra copy (or more), and circulate it among your acquaintances.
- (4) Display, or get displayed, one of our contents-sheets, which are of a convenient size for the purpose. Mr. Forder will send them on application.
- (5) Leave a copy of the *Freethinker* new and then in the train, the car, or the omnibus.

MR. FOOTE'S ENGAGEMENTS.

Sunday, August 27, Oddfellows' Hall, St. Anne-street, Liverpool:—11, "The Book of God"; 3, "A Search for the Soul"; 7, "The Daybreak of Humanity."

September 3, Douglas Head, Isle of Man; 10, Glasgow; 11 and 12, Dundee; 17 and 24, Hall of Science, London.

October 1 and 8, Hall of Science.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

- A. X.—Wellhausen's is a great name in Biblical Criticism, and has frequently been referred to in our columns. It seems superfluous to give "authorities" for standard Christian doctrines.
- A. J. PAGE is highly pleased with our Summer Number, and approves of the change in the price of the *Freethinker*.
- W. CALLOW informs us that the Freethinkers in Victoria Park have helped C. Elfslein with money on four occasions. Twelve months ago he actually wrote to the Bethnal Green Branch asking for the sum of £12!!
- L. N. BROWN.—We don't know whether we have got your initials right. Is the subscription for the Shilling Month? Pleased to have your high opinion of our editorial articles. We always aim at being clear and vivid; fit words are better than fine ones. Mr. Calvert shall be informed of your admiration for his cartoons, especially the last.
- R. CROOK.—See "Sugar Plums." We shall be delighted to deliver a Freethought lecture at Oxford, if only a few of the local Freethinkers will get together and make the necessary arrangements. It might lead to the formation of an Oxford Branch.
- J. ROUTH (Hawes).—(1) Pleased to hear that your sale of the Summer Number has been double that of the ordinary number. This is not the general rule. Up to the present, we calculate that two out of every three of our readers have purchased the Summer Number. (2) Abraham Lincoln appears to have been a Freethinker, and Ingersoll is justified (we think) in calling him so. Mr. Rensburg has just forwarded us from America a copy of his book entitled *Abraham Lincoln: Was He a Christian?* We shall give a full account of his book shortly. Meanwhile we may say that it contains the testimony of a great many persons, including Mrs. Lincoln, to the fact of the great President's heresy.
- J. W. SIMMS (Christchurch).—Very pleased to hear from you. Thanks for the batch of cuttings.
- W. HOLLAND.—Shall have attention as soon as possible.
- X. is thanked for taking an extra copy of the *Freethinker* weekly, and circulating it. He has sent a copy, from time to time, to all the Church and Dissenting ministers in the Bristol directory—378 in all.
- W. R. STANSELL (Sunderland).—We have previously declined to publish communications from N.S.S. Branches to the Executive before they have reached their proper destination. When the Executive has received your communication and considered it, the matter will doubtless appear in the monthly report which will be sent to the *Freethinker* by the secretary. We hope you will see, on reflection, that this is the right policy for us to pursue; if you do not, we must still act on our own sense of duty.
- S. STANDING.—Such a matter should be dealt with, if at all, by the Executive.
- ETHICUS.—It is too late in the day for a sonnet on Charles Bradlaugh's death. With respect to space in the *Freethinker* for discussion on special topics, we may say that we are always ready to insert a well-written letter; but "heaven defend us" from an indiscriminate correspondence on Church Literature when Professor Johnson and Mr. Wheeler have finished. How many persons have enough information on this subject to give their opinions the slightest value?
- T. W. PHILLIPS.—See "Acid Drops."
- R. FORREST.—See "Sugar Plums." Sorry to hear you are so badly situated for halls at Newcastle. Mr. Foote has written you. Despite the heavy rent of the Circus (£8 10s.), he will take it at his own risk for a Sunday in October or November, sooner than see Newcastle neglected.
- N.E. SECULAR FEDERATION.—J. H. Summerfield, 61 Grove-street, Newcastle-on-Tyne (treasurer) acknowledges:—Mr. Foreman, 5s.; J. H. S., 7s.
- W. SUYNHAM.—It is not customary to discuss reviews. Why not read Mr. Edwards's book for yourself?
- T. CHARLTON (Hanley).—Shall be glad to see you at Douglas on Sept. 3.
- W. BERTRAM.—The "Suppressed Poem, by Robert Burns" has frequently been printed. It does not seem to us to bear any marks of his genius.
- P. HATCHARD.—See "Acid Drops."
- H. PROSSER CHANTER, who is known to Surrey and Portsmouth Freethinkers, has removed to 41 Cloughton-street, St. Helen's, Liverpool. Mr. Chantor finds the Liverpool Branch is doing "a splendid work." He will be at the Isle of Man on Sept. 3.

E. S.—(1) The infinite divisibility of matter is only a metaphysical notion, and can be disproved by *a priori* logic. (2) To say that there cannot be succession without a beginning, is to beg the question. Can anyone imagine a beginning of succession? Why was there no succession before? (3) We do not know of a single Temperance Society that would admit an Atheist. (4) We may take your suggestion of a series of papers on the Resurrection.

J. R. ROBSON.—See paragraph.

N.S.S. BENEVOLENT FUND.—Miss Vance acknowledges: R. T. Nichols, £1 1s.; Heckmondwike Branch 5s.; parcels of clothing from Mr. and Mrs. Samson and an anonymous friend.

W. DICKINSON.—Glad to hear you are pleased with the Summer Number "as a whole." You cannot expect to be equally satisfied with every item.

JOHN SKINNER.—We should have inserted your letter had we not printed one from Samuel Fox himself.

G. GROVE.—We agree with most of your letter.

W. B. JEVONS writes—"You have done quite right in raising the price of the *Freethinker*. I consider it cheap at twopence. Personally, I appreciate your good work immensely, and trust you may have health and strength to carry it on."

T. DUNBAR.—We do not know the price. The publisher's name and address were given in our review.

E. J. HART.—Shall appear. We note what you say—"I am very pleased that you have raised the price of the paper to twopence; it is certainly worth it, and I am sure it is quite time you stopped giving it away."

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

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

PAPERS RECEIVED.—Der Lichtfreund—Boston Investigator—Open Court—Freidenker—Two Worlds—Der Arme Teufel—Western Figaro—Liberator—Liberty—Clarion—Flaming Sword—Echo—Truthseeker—Fritzkaren—La Raison—Lucifer—Secular Thought—Independent Pulpit—Tablet—Progressive Thinker—Twentieth Century—De Dageraad—La Vérité Philosophique—Ironclad Age—Post—Newcastle Evening Chronicle—Reading Observer—Morning Leader—Straits Settlements Advertiser.

LITERARY communications to be addressed to the Editor, 14 Clerkenwell-green, London, E.O. All business communications to Mr. R. Forster, 28 Stonecutter-street, London, E.O. 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* will be forwarded, direct from the publishing office, post free, at the following rates, prepaid:—One Year, 10s. 6d.; Half Year, 5s. 3d.; Three Months, 2s. 8d.

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.

SUGAR PLUMS.

Mr. Foote lectures three times to-day (Aug. 27) in the Oddfellows' Hall, Liverpool. This may be the last opportunity the Liverpool friends may have for some time of hearing special Freethought lectures. We regret to say that the local champions of Christianity, finding that they cannot put down "infidelity" by argument, have worked upon the orthodox bigotry of a section of the Oddfellows, and the result is that the Liverpool Branch of the N.S.S. has had notice that the hall will no longer be available for its lectures. We have known of this paltry intrigue for many months, but we kept silence in order not to precipitate the catastrophe. Silence, however, is not necessary now; and we hold up the conduct of these Christian Evidencers to public opprobrium. At the same time, we must express our profound regret that the more tolerant section of the Oddfellows have allowed themselves to be overborne by the more bigoted section, whose fanaticism has been inflamed by the venom of these special champions of the meek and lowly Jesus.

On the following Sunday (Sept 3) Mr. Foote will be at the Isle of Man, and during the afternoon he will exercise the same right as the Bishop of the diocese, and address an open-air meeting on Douglas Head. It will be a great novelty, and local bigotry may resent it, which is one good reason why the lecture should be delivered. Some of our readers tell us they will be there on the occasion, having timed their holiday for the purpose. Should there be any disorder, we beg them to do nothing more than deprecate any interruption around them, and leave all the rest to Mr. Foote.

On the next Sunday (Sept. 10) Mr. Foote will open the lecture session of the Glasgow Branch, with three discourses in the Brunswick-street Hall. On the Monday and Tuesday he will lecture at Dundee, where the N S S. Branch has just been reformed with a considerable number of members. In order to get at the people more effectively, Mr. Foote has arranged to have a part of the hall thrown open free. As he takes the risk of the experiment, and will probably get nothing himself, it will be seen that he is keeping the promise he made on raising the price of the *Freethinker*.

Returning to London from Dundee, Mr. Foote will begin the new experiment at the London Hall of Science. He will occupy the platform there on four successive Sundays, from Sept. 17 to Oct. 8, giving his lectures gratuitously. The usual charge will be made for certain seats, but all the rest of the hall will be free. Our London friends should advertise this experiment among the people they meet with, and help the management to crowd the building on Sept. 17. We may add that Mr. Foote is preparing a special course of lectures for the occasion.

Last year's excursion of the London Secular Federation was spoiled by rain, and on a wet Sunday it is hard to imagine a more dismal place than Werthing. This year's excursion, which took place on Sunday, was favored with beautiful weather, and the hundreds who went to Brighton by special train could not have had better conditions for a delightful day. A fine breeze cooled the air, and it was glorious to see the sunlight on the tumbling waves. In future the Federation will do well to avoid July, which is the rainiest of the summer months. August or even September is far preferable.

At Brighton we met for the first time for a long while Mr. J. P. Adams, who wrote in the *Reasoner* as far back as 1846. Mr. Adams is now well up in years, but he retains his interest in the cause, as his presence at the Federation excursion testifies, and his mind is full of reminiscences of past struggles in the good old cause.

Mr. A. B. Moss had a very fair audience at the London Hall of Science on Sunday evening, and his lecture gave great satisfaction. This evening (Aug. 27) the platform is to be occupied by Mr. George Standing, who will discourse on "The Parsons and the London School Board." We hope there will be a good meeting. Our readers know that Mr. Standing is a humorist, and those who attend his lecture will be amply compensated for their trouble.

Our readers will find in another column a letter from Samuel Fox, the Quaker, who got into trouble by keeping his hat on in St. Paul's Cathedral. Though we do not quite agree with Mr. Fox, we cheerfully give him space for an explanation. Quakers have done a great deal of good in their time, and we should be sorry to assume an unnecessarily hostile attitude to any member of their body.

One of our readers is surprised to find a newsagent brave enough to display the *Freethinker* contents-sheet at Oxford. His address is, Mr. Volters, St. Clement's. Our correspondent asked him how he came to sell the paper. The reply was that a University man paid for two shillings' worth every week on condition of a fair display being made, and a good many more than that are sold now.

The following resolution has been passed by the Jarrow Branch:—"That this meeting desires to place on record its high appreciation of the gentlemanly conduct and intellectual ability displayed by Mr. Charles Watts during the recent debate in Jarrow, and while rejoicing that the debate has taken place, believing the cause of Freethought has been advanced thereby, we cannot but regret (after witnessing the conduct of Mr. Watts's opponent during the debate) that Mr. Watts should have been humiliated by having had to meet a person of the low, mental, and moral capacity of James Marchant."

The Newcastle Branch is arranging for a Debating Class and a Smoking Concert to be held monthly at Yeilder's Café, New Bridge-street. The first Smoking Concert will be held on the first Wednesday in September, and the Debating Class will meet for the first time a fortnight later. The hour for both is 7.30 p.m. Considerers please note!

James Thomson ("B.V.") will yet have his day of quotation as a standard poet. It was pleasant to find his beautiful and powerful "By the Sea" reproduced in the London *Echo* the other evening. Appearing so seasonably, it must have attracted the attention of some readers who are able to appreciate such lovely verses.

Morley College, Waterloo-road, London, has a magazine published in connexion with it, a recent number of which contains the report of a paper read by Mr. Joseph Clough before the Debating Club. Speaking of George the Third's attempt to oppress North America, the writer rejoices that he was defeated, "Thanks to the able pens of Thomas Paine and Benjamin Franklin, and the sword of George Washington." It is good to see that Thomas Paine is now being spoken of respectfully in circles where he was once treated with insolence and contumely.

Sunday Music has scored a point at Dover, and the Lord's Day Observance Association has received a nasty slap in the face. Handbills were circulated last Sunday, even at church doors, announcing that the band would play on the pier but no money would be taken. The bandsmen even had tickets, and although they were stopped at the entrance they were allowed to proceed. They played what is called sacred music to a very large audience. An attempt was made to stop the performance, but it failed as public sympathy was strongly in favor of the band. At Ramsgate, too, we notice that the Granville Hotel band is allowed to play sacred music in the East Cliff gardens on Sunday evenings, though only a short time ago the local authorities refused to allow any Sunday band whatever.

In the *Open Court* Mr. Moncure D. Conway is giving a series of articles on William Johnson Fox and the movement which led up to South Place Institute. Another writer, Miss Marie Snell, undertakes to answer the question, "Why we Call God He." It is a delightful bit of nonsense. The lady says that though God is sexless, yet in a certain sense bi-sexual, and all his creative activity constitutes a true Maternity, yet He is the only pronoun which fits, because God is "the Lover, the Bridegroom of the Soul." Evidently God is masculine because Miss Snell is feminine.

There is to be a Woman's Day at the International Freethought Congress at Chicago, when the relation of women to Freethought will be discussed by members of the fair sex.

Fritänkaren gives its readers a reproduction of our illustration "God is Love," supplementing it with a number of Bible texts bearing on the subject. We notice there is to be an important Freethought demonstration at Stockholm on Sunday, Sept. 3.

Lord Coleridge presided at the trials of Charles Bradlaugh and G. W. Foote for "blasphemy" ten years ago, and his lofty, impartial bearing were worthy of the best traditions of the English bench. We were particularly struck by his stately manners. Never shall we forget the tremendous dignity with which he half rose with uplifted hand to stop the applause when Charles Bradlaugh was acquitted. "This is not a theatre," said his lordship, as the applause was suddenly discontinued. We see that Lord Coleridge has just been rebuking applause in his court at Leeds, and a young fellow, whose mouth was open too widely, was sentenced to forty-eight hours' imprisonment on the spot for contempt of court. At the close of the case, however, his lordship had the young fellow brought before him, and said he was perhaps wrong in not making allowance when better educated people set such a bad example. The young fellow was then set at liberty, and the next morning he was summoned to the judge's lodgings. Lord Coleridge was too ill to see him, but sent him a kindly message by Lady Coleridge, with a half sovereign. It is a pretty story, and does his lordship honor. All men are liable to give way to their indignation, or to be victims of a momentary attack of "nerves"; it is only the true gentleman who confesses his error and makes amends.

There has been an unforeseen delay in publishing Mr. Foote's new brochure, *Will Christ Save Us?* It will not be ready till next week, when the orders received will be executed. We state this to prevent those who have ordered copies from wondering at the delay.

THE LORD'S WORK IN INDIA.

The good people in England and America, who "live at home at ease" and secure their passages to the New Jerusalem by subscribing liberally towards the cost of spreading Christianity in heathen lands, will no doubt be pleased to learn, from one quite unconnected with mission work in India, how the gospel business is carried on in this country.

Every shade of Christianity is represented here, and the competition among the various sects is keen and very refreshing. To one "without the pale" it affords considerable amusement to watch the progress of the work and note "how these Christians love one another" when brought face to face in the Lord's vineyard. To see a missionary of the Church of England and an American Methodist parson smile and shake the hand of brotherhood in the "field" is one of the loveliest sights of the East. There are many honest, disinterested workers among these missionaries, who have left comfortable homes in England and come out to this country on a bare pittance, or who possess independent means and make free use of their money here with the full knowledge that they have left starving thousands of their own countrymen behind them. These are the fanatics, who are only partially affected by the present article.

The first thing a missionary does on reaching his station in India is to provide himself with a comfortable and well-furnished residence and a complete set of servants. The latter are invariably selected from among the benighted heathen, the Christian menials being generally dishonest and too prone to take advantage of their position as brothers in Christ. The next thing is to invest in a cart and horse, if a pony carriage is too much at first. The missionary then makes his usual round of calls. He visits and introduces himself to the principal civil and military officers of the station, and to the non-officials who are known to be in society, and who possess a fair share of the good things of this world. The last duty is to visit his poor European and native parishioners.

The missionary in India "moves in society," attends tennis parties, plays cricket, goes in for bicycle racing, shooting, and fishing; knows what it is to keep a good table; sometimes does a little something in the way of money-lending, like a pious clerical friend of mine at Lucknow; and wishes the world to know generally that he is not such a bad fellow after all. Being in society, he is permitted to attend Viceregal levées, gubernatorial *durbars*, and other State functions to which only the *élite* are admitted. He is also very successful in swelling the census statistics in his own family at the expense of the mission funds, which very considerably make due provision for all the olive branches. The lady missionary, as she loves to call herself, is one who, failing to find herself a husband at home, receives a "call," and comes out to this country at the expense of some mission and "devotes her life" to the task of converting the female members of the great heathen family. It must not, however, be imagined that she has abandoned all ideas of matrimony. The call only lasts while the switor is wanting. Bless you! I have known one of these dear creatures to marry an infidel. These lady missionaries also "move in society," and are on very friendly terms with the male missionaries, particularly the unmarried ones, with whom they frequently mate. It does not take them long to learn the meaning of the word "caste" as used in society, and they are then not slow to resent any familiarity on the part of those lady missionaries, many of them of mixed parentage, who have been unfortunate enough to be born and bred in this country, and who have also taken to religion in consequence of the overstocked condition of the matrimonial market.

The printed reports of missionary work in India, which are so widely circulated in England and America, and which are the means of bringing grist to the mill, are too highly flavored for digestion here, and it ought to be permissible to say something on the other side occasionally. For instance, the good people in America who send out Methodist Episcopal missionaries to this country, and who pay married men at a higher rate in consideration of the work done by their wives among the women of heathendom, ought to be told that the higher rate is very seldom earned. I have read in a recent report how some of these ladies, the wives of missionaries, have, though burdened with domestic cares, visited quite a number of heathen habitations in cold and heat, sunshine and rain, and succeeded in leading many souls to the Lord. The people who read these reports in America are no doubt under the impression that the wives of their missionaries may be seen, during the terrible heat which prevails in India from about the beginning of May to the end of September, moving about in the lanes and back-slums of our cities and villages, preaching the gospel of glad tidings and breathing comfort and consolation in the sweltering heat to the poor heathen around them. This is the ideal. The real is that these lady missionaries, as soon as the weather becomes uncomfortably warm, find that there is work of a very urgent nature for them in the Lord's vineyard in the cool shades of the Himalayas; and only a small percentage of them brave it out in the plains. At the present moment I can name at least five Methodist missionaries' wives who are supposed to be working in the plains, but who are spending the summer at Simla, Mussoorie or Naini Tal.

This is a little item which does not appear in the annual printed reports, and it is as well that the Methodist Episcopalians in America should know it.

And now for the real gospel business—the conversion of the heathen. This is usually done through street preaching and village itinerations by native workers. The European missionaries as a rule do not go in for much of this sort of work. The value of the native preacher's services is gauged by the number of candidates that he can manage to secure for baptism. These native workers are invariably men whom Christianity has raised from the position of hard-working, ill-clad, and ill-fed laborers on threepence a day to that of deputy shepherds on two pounds a month, and this is the native worker's strongest point in argument with the benighted heathen. "Look at me," he says; "what was I before Christianity rescued me from the darkness and ignorance of heathenism? A poor laborer, with hardly enough to eat and less to put on; and now, thank the Lord! you see me as I am." This simple way of putting it is too much for the scavengers and *chamars*, or leather-workers—the scum of the population of an Indian city—who are always in the majority at these street gatherings; and, of course, "the harvest is great." You people in England do not seem to believe the stories you hear of whole villages being converted and hundreds of people being gathered into the fold, and I am hardly surprised at it. The Salvation Army has certainly executed some very successful "bombardments," but there is little doubt that the picture has been overdrawn; at least I have heard of no such performances, with such results, by the Salvation or any other Army this side of the country. It is true, however, that the number of persons subjected to baptism is sometimes very large. I have myself been present at a function where between forty and fifty adult persons were brought to the foot of the cross and baptised in due and ancient form. The statistics, if we exclude the Salvation Army exaggerations, are fairly correct, and if you are also hankering after figures, and will send me over a few thousand pounds—say about fifty—I will guarantee not only to work up to the figure of merit attained by the Christian missionaries, but to win over to Freethought a large number of native Christians, late of the lower castes, whose change of religion has not benefited them pecuniarily to the extent that they had anticipated or were led to expect.

It is in regard to the *value* of these so-called conversions that the mission reports do not give anything like truthful information. One incident alone will suffice to show how much Christianity these native Christians really imbibe. A couple of years ago I received an official visit from a reverend gentleman who had got into a scrape through using indiscreet language during an open-air gospel-grinding performance. He was accompanied by one of his catechists, who had been seven years in the mission, and who was then in the running for holy orders. He was a fine-conditioned, well-dressed, intelligent native, who had forsaken father, mother, brother, sister and wife, as also the occupation of a skinner of dead and slaughtered animals, and taken unto himself the Bible and a new wife from among the daughters of Zion. At the close of our business interview the worthy missionary took me to task for my well-known antipathy for mission work in India, save in the medical and educational branches. He found in me a most willing subject for clerical assault. The conversation eventually turned on the genuineness of the conversions, and he challenged me to prove that native Christians as a rule do not know what Christianity really means. I was fortunate enough to find material at hand which more than answered my purpose. I called up the reverend gentleman's catechist and put to him the apparently simple question "Who is God?" With truly oriental flattery this seven-year Christian and would-be shepherd of future flocks mutely pointed to his reverend benefactor! That was the only God he knew—the God who, with the assistance of mission funds, had rescued him from the miserable occupation of a flayer of carcases and put him on £2 a month with nothing but talking to do.

I do not think you know what plural baptisms are. I will tell you. The approaching visit of a big bug of the clerical fraternity is invariably the signal for much activity on the part of the missionaries in the matter of baptisms. There is then much street preaching, with the view of securing candidates, and all baptisms by missionaries are temporarily interdicted, the candidates being held over for the great function which is being organised in connection with the approaching "visitation." If, on the day fixed for the public baptism under the presidency of the premier shepherd, the number of candidates for the sacrament is not such as to reflect credit on the energy of the missionaries, a large number of those who have previously passed through the ordeal of entering the fold by means of a few magic words and a liberal sprinkling of water, are induced, at a trifling cost to the mission of from one to threepence a head, to re-enact the farce of being admitted into the Church. These are the plural baptisms. They were common enough twenty years ago, but are now steadily dying out, being only resorted to by one or two of the sects. It is very interesting to see the spiritual happiness on the faces of these dear creatures as they finger the coppers received from mission funds and blissfully accept salvation as often as the missionaries care to dole it out to them. I knew a man who had

received grace in this manner for the ninth time. He believed he held the record.

This must suffice for the present. In a future article I hope to deal more fully with the private lives of some of the shining lights in our Indian Missions; show how the meek and lowly spirit works here; and expose the real facts in regard to the missionary's avowed hatred of the mammon of unrighteousness. I would only wish to add that I have, for the past quarter of a century, been in constant touch, both officially and unofficially, with missionaries and mission work in India; so that all my facts have been derived from personal knowledge, and are not dependent on hearsay. On the other hand, it is but fair to admit that I am one of those "miserable infidel creatures" who slipped off the "Impregnable Rock of Holy Scripture" many years ago to bask in the sunshine of intellectual freedom.

ISCAAC JACKSON.

MRS. LOUISA SAMSON.

MRS. LOUISA SAMSON, whose portrait appears on our front page, was born at Reading on April 18, 1864. Her father was a captain in the Second Life Guards (Blue), and belonged to a family whose unbroken tradition was orthodox and Tory. Mrs. Samson is the first Radical and Freethinker that has appeared in the whole lineage. Most of her male relatives are in the Church, and, as a child, she herself was nurtured in Church of England doctrines. But being unfortunately inquisitive, and very delicate, she was naturally inclined to reading "grown up" books. At the age of fourteen she paid a surreptitious visit to the Rev. Rodolph Sufield's little Unitarian Church, and was greatly impressed with a discourse on "Religion and Dogma." After this she paid many stolen visits to the place, and at length became a professed Unitarian. On coming to London to reside she was for some time a frequenter of Rosslyn Chapel, Hampstead, of which the late Dr. Sadler was minister. Having read Theodore Parker, Francis Newman, Darwin, and Huxley, she came to the reading of Buckle, and at last to Paine and Ingersoll. Finally, on the invitation of a friend, she went to hear Charles Bradlaugh. It will be seen, therefore, that Mrs. Samson's progress towards Freethought was a slow process of reasoning. She is not a person likely to undergo a sudden conversion. With respect to her tastes, they lean towards art and literature. After leaving school, Mrs. Samson opened a studio for private pupils, and taught drawing and painting. Subsequently she had a few years of "governessing" near Nottingham. During all this time she was contributing pen and ink sketches and occasional articles to various London papers. After coming to London, Mrs. Samson was for some time sub-editor on the *Liberal and Radical*, doing many of the political skits and caricatures. Later she was connected with the *Political World*, for which she did some of the cartoons. In 1886 she published a volume of essays, which has had a good sale. Mrs. Samson is at present working for two well-known London papers. She has been an authorised lecturer of the Women's Liberal Federation, and for some time she was secretary of the North Hackney Women's Liberal Association. Her resignation of this post was necessitated by an increase of journalistic work. Mrs. Samson is also greatly interested in the Peace Movement, and is strongly in favor of the political enfranchisement of women. She believes in interesting women in Freethought, as mental independence is the only effective instrument of their social and political emancipation. Mrs. Samson's lecture on "Why Women should be Secularists" is able and forcible, and should be widely circulated. Although of somewhat delicate appearance, Mrs. Samson must possess a great deal of nervous energy to get through all the work she has undertaken. Her voice is clear, penetrating and well modulated; she may be listened to with pleasure as well as instruction. We hope she will still be able, at least occasionally, to occupy the Freethought platform. Some aspects of Freethought can be presented best by women, and it is well to have them presented by one who is a lady—not in the shallow conventional sense of the term, but in the higher sense of culture, refinement, and that mixture of modesty and dignity which it is easier to appreciate than to define.

"HOW IS IT?"

Mr. John Smith, an inhabitant of a certain country village which shall be nameless, is an enthusiastic cricketer, and often officiates as umpire at the local matches. One Sunday evening last summer an amusing incident occurred at the parish church. The vicar was preaching, and not being an eloquent man, and the weather being rather warm, two-thirds of the congregation, including Mr. John Smith, were fast asleep. This annoyed the vicar, who made several attempts to rouse the guilty ones. "How is it," said he in a loud voice, and gazing sternly at the unconscious John, "that you cannot give me your attention even for one short hour—how is it, I ask?" "Not out, sir!" roared our friend, and sank back once more into a mental contemplation of the previous day's match. He has never slept in church since.

CORRESPONDENCE.

HAT-WEARING IN CHURCHES. TO THE EDITOR OF "THE FREETHINKER."

I SHOULD like to supplement the remarks of "A Krank," with most of which I am in hearty accord, in thy last issue. But first let me emphatically deny the report I understand to have been circulated in a previous number, namely, that I paid the fine of forty shillings imposed upon me. After being relegated to the cells, some members of the Society of Friends, to which I belong, came and paid the fine without my knowledge. My imprisonment lasted for ten hours altogether.

On looking back over the wide field—the continually widening field—of the advancement of knowledge, it must be confessed that Freethinkers have played no insignificant part in the intellectual enlightenment of mankind. Perhaps they were the first to openly attack, with an unsparing hand, the superstitions of religion. At any rate, their uncompromising attitude has induced many to investigate their beliefs with the greatest care, and has kept pushing open the gates of toleration and inquiry, whose hinges are made on the self-closing principle in accordance with the laws of gravitation. But we are now arrived at a period when theoretical knowledge has far outsped the practical, when the knowledge we possess, instead of rendering life sweeter, embitters it to us by showing us clearly the chains upon our limbs, and when knowledge is no longer power, but weakness and abject fear. The reason for this is, to my mind, plain. Freethinking has not gone beyond freethinking. It has resisted gravitation or custom just sufficient to open the gates of toleration and inquiry by a breathing space. It has bargained for fresh air—not freedom. Inexorable custom—the ruinous gravitation of society—has been compelled to allow free thought, but it still denies men the freedom of action to which thought leads, still keeps them in the same servitude as those who do not think around them. Of course things must have time to develop, and it is very conceivable that fresh air might be a preparatory stage to freedom. The hat-wearing that I and others advocate, is a deliberate attempt to go on a stage further. We are not content with freethinking, but demand free action as well, to put our thoughts into a tangible shape, and to actually possess the manly independence we have so long esteemed. We are told that knowledge is power, and we find the laws of gravitation declaring: "It is not the custom for people to use their knowledge, don't you see? Therefore you must not either, but be content to be weak and frightened like the rest." To which we answer, "We don't see it at all. We don't know what we should have to fear, though religion teaches it and many other absurdities. We shall use our estimable knowledge, in spite of all the foolish customs to the contrary." The consequence is, that we fearlessly enter public buildings ostensibly erected for the propagation of truth with our hats on, and don't remove them unless we choose. Not having "swallowed a poker," we don't choose to conform to a custom dictated and enforced by religious bigots. And when we ask why these hypocrites should bear sway and force us to take off our hats, we only get the miserable subterfuge—it is the custom. Down with such customs! we say, and, putting our sincerity to the proof, *using our thought*, we go and do it. Whereupon there is breach of the laws of gravitation; there is outrage of custom; fear trembles to its base; whilst religion and superstition seem ready to sink into their graves, long since dug for them by Freethought.

SAMUEL FOX.

WHAT WILL BE LEFT?

But they say to me, "If we let the churches go, what will be left?" The world will still be here. Men and women will be here. The page of history will be here. The walls of the world will be adorned with art, the niches rich with sculpture; music will be here, and all there is of life and joy. And there will be homes here and the fireside, and there will be a common hope without a common fear. Love will be here, and love is the only bow on life's dark cloud. Love was the first to dream immortality. Love is the morning and the evening star. It shines upon the cradle; it sheds its radiance upon the peaceful tomb. Love is the mother of melody, for music is its voice. Love is the builder of every home, the kindler of every fire upon every hearth. Love is the enchanter, the magician that changes worthless things to joy, and makes right royal kings and queens of common clay. Love is the perfume of that wondrous flower, the heart. Without that sacred passion, that divine swoon, we are less than beasts, and with it earth is heaven, and we are gods.—Colonel R. G. Ingersoll.

GOD AND MAN.

I would rather see priests in rags than working men. I would rather see the houses of God tumbling down than the homes of men. I would rather hear thanks to man than prayers to God. If human beings have enough to eat we need not worry if the gods all starve. One dollar spent for earthly happiness is better than a thousand dollars spent for heavenly joys.—L. K. Washburn, "Helps to Happiness."

L.S.F. EXCURSION TO BRIGHTON.

THE powers above being propitious in the matter of weather, there was a large muster of saints at London Bridge last Sunday, their train being joined at New Cross and East Croydon by other contingents. At London-by-Sea they enjoyed the breezes until the afternoon, when those who were not only on pleasure bent made their way to the Level, where Mr. Fagan had been orating before the time appointed. On the appearance of Mr. Foote, specially imported Christian champions set up rival meetings, one on either side. One of these by woolly wit kept a good sized audience, the other was almost deserted. The Secular demonstration was in every way a success; the force of Freethinkers being far too numerous to allow the threatened disturbance. The meeting was presided over by Mr. Foote, and was addressed by Messrs. Forder, Standing, and Ward, and was sufficiently large to tax the powers of the speakers.

At the invitation of Mr. Tripp, some sixty or so of the Brighton Society and excursionists took tea with him at the Eagle Hotel, a collection being made for Mr. Potter, a Freethinker now eighty-five years of age, whose memory goes back to the time of Carlile. At 8 p.m. the friends took train for London, with the conviction of having passed a well-spent day.

J. M. W.

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.

Hall of Science, 142 Old-street, E.C.: 7, musical selections; 7.30, G. Standing, "The Parsons and the London School Board" (3d., 6d., and 1s.)

Battersea Secular Hall (back of Battersea Park Station): 8.15, free entertainment. Tuesday at 8.15, social gathering (free) Wednesday at 8.15, dramatic club (members wanted).

Wedgeley at 8.15, dramatic club (members wanted). Camberwell—61 New Church-road, S.E.: 7.30, Touzeau Parris, "Devil Worship, the Current Religion."

OPEN-AIR PROPAGANDA.

Battersea Park-gates: 11.15, C. J. Hunt, "True Salvation"; 7.15, A. Johnson, "Ye Book of Acts."

Bethnal Green (opposite St. John's Church): 11.15, Stanley Jones will lecture.

Camberwell—Station-road: 11.30, W. Heaford, "Christianity at the Bar of Morality."

Clerkenwell Green: 11.30, C. Cohen will lecture.

Edmonton (corner of Angel-road): 7, C. Cohen will lecture. Thursday at 8, C. Cohen will lecture.

Finsbury Park (near the band stand): 11.30, C. James, "Confucius, Buddha, and Christ"; 3.30, C. J. Hunt, "The Book of Common Prayer."

Hammersmith (corner of The Grove): Thursday, Aug. 31, at 8.30, Stanley Jones will lecture.

Hammersmith Bridge (Middlesex side): 6.30, F. Haslam, "Modern Science and Revelation."

Hyde Park (near Marble-arch): 11.30, H. Snell, "What think ye of Christ?"; 3.30, a lecture. Wednesday at 8, C. Cohen will lecture.

Kilburn (corner of Victoria-road, High-road): 6.30, C. J. Hunt will lecture.

Lambeth—Kennington Green (near the Vestry Hall): 6.30, St. John, "Evolution and Design."

Leyton — High-road (near Vicarage-road): 11.30, F. Haslam, "Who was Jesus and what did he Teach?"

Midland Arches (corner of Battle Bridge-road): 11.30, F. Haslam will lecture.

Mill End Waste: 11.30, S. H. Alison, "His Satanic Majesty."

Newington Green: 3.15, G. Standing, "Bible Teaching in Board Schools."

Old Pimlico Pier: 11.30, W. J. Ramsey, "What must I do to be Saved?"

Regent's Park (near Gloucester-gate): 3.30, H. Snell will lecture.

Victoria Park (near the fountain): 11.15, E. Calvert will lecture; 3.15, C. Cohen will lecture.

Walthamstow — Markhouse-road: 6.30, C. James, "Does the New Testament Teach Eternal Torment?"

Wood Green—Jolly Butchers'-hill: 11.30, A. B. Moss, "The Wandering Jews."

The "Queensberry" R. and A. Club: Saturday, Aug. 26, at 5.30 and Sunday at 10.30, at Reader's Boat-house, Lea Bridge-road, rowing. Monday and Friday at 8, at the "Central" Baths, Clerkenwell, swimming.

COUNTRY.

Bristol—Shepherd's Hall, Old Market-street: 7, T. Roe, "The Land Question."

Chatham — Secular Hall, Queen's-road, New Brompton: 7, Stanley Jones, "How we Got our Bible."

Hull—St. George's Hall, 8 Albion-street: 7, W. Hudson will lecture.

Liverpool—Oddfellows' Hall, St. Anne-street: G. W. Foote, 11, "The Book of God"; 3, "A Search for the Soul"; 7, "The Day-break of Humanity."

Manchester N.S.S., Secular Hall, Rusholme-road, Oxford-road, All Saints': 6.30, A. B. Wakefield, "Secularism; is it a Success?" Tuesday at 8, debating circle, Mr. Rogerson, "The Study of History."

Newcastle-on-Tyne—Eldon Hall, 2 Clayton-street: 3, members' monthly meeting.

Sheffield: Members and friends meet at Victoria Station at 8.30, a.m. for excursion to Grimsby and Cleethorpes.

South Shields—Free Library Hall, Ocean-road: J. M. Robertson, 11, "The God Hallucination": 3, "The Meaning of Materialism"; 7, "Concerning Jesus of Nazareth."

Sunderland—Bridge End Vaults, Bridge-street: 7, Hall Nicholson, "The Exodus from Egypt."

OPEN-AIR PROPAGANDA.

Bradford—Market-ground, Godwin-street: 6.30, H. Smith will lecture.

Manchester—Stevenson-square: 3, A. B. Wakefield, "Some Historic Characters who were Not Christians."

Sunderland—On the Green, at Ryhope: 11, Hall Nicholson, "The Established Church and National Progress." At 6, opposite the "Wheat Sheaf," Monkwearmouth, an address.

LECTURERS' ENGAGEMENTS.

STEPHEN H. ALISON, Democratic Club, Essex-street, Strand, W.C.—Aug. 27, Mile End. Sept. 3, m, Wood Green; 10, m, Camberwell; 17, m, Midland Arches; a, Finsbury Park.

C. COHEN, 12 Merchant-street, Bow-road, E.—Aug. 27, m, Clerkenwell; a, Victoria Park; e, Edmonton; 30, Hyde Park. Sept. 3, Reading; 5 and 6, Portsmouth; 10, m, Mile End; a, Victoria Park; e, Edmonton; 13, Hyde Park; 17, m, Leyton; a, Victoria Park; e, Kilburn; 24, Barnsley. Sep. 25 to Oct. 31, on tour. Nov. 4, South Shields; 5, Blythe.

STANLEY JONES, 53 Marlborough-road, Holloway, London, N.—Aug. 27, Chatham. Sept. 3, m, Mile End; a, Hyde Park; e, Hammersmith; 10, m, Wood Green; a, Hyde Park; 17, m, Bethnal Green; a, Hyde Park; 24, m, Victoria Park; a, Hyde Park.

ARTHUR B. MOSS, 44 Oredon-road, Rotherhithe, London, S.E.—Aug. 27, m, Wood Green. Sept. 3, m, and e, Camberwell; 17, e, Edmonton; 24, m, Westminster; e, Kilburn.

TOUZEAU PARRIS, Clare Lodge, 32 Upper Mall, Hammersmith, London, W.—Aug. 27, Camberwell. Sept. 3, Hall of Science; 17, Sheffield. Nov. 26, Camberwell.

H. SNELL, 6 Monk-street, Woolwich.—Aug. 27, m, Hyde Park; a, Regent's Park. Sept. 3, m, Clerkenwell Green; 10, m, Hyde Park; e, Battersea; 17, m, Camberwell; 24, m, Battersea; a, Regent's Park.

SAM STANDING, 16 Gray's Inn-road, E.C.—Aug. 27, a, Stoke Newington. Oct. 14 and 15, Salford; 16, Rochdale.

ST. JOHN, 8 Norland-road North, Notting Hill, W.—Aug. 27, a, Hyde Park; e, Kennington. Sept. 3, m, Victoria Park; e, Kilburn; 10, m, Bethnal Green; e, Hammersmith; 17, m, Battersea; 24, m, Finsbury Park.

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But away the evil cast
Of a rude and barbarous age.

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Is a better rule by far
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