

The Freethinker

Edited by G. W. FOOTE.]

[Sub-Editor, J. M. WHEELER.

Vol. XIII.—No. 38.]

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 17, 1893.

[PRICE TWOPENCE.



HEAVEN IS OUR HOME.

DOWN WITH THE BISHOPS.

THE House of Lords has thrown out the Home Rule Bill by an enormous majority, and among the peers who hurried up to Westminster to stab Mr. Gladstone's offspring were seventeen Bishops and two Archbishops. Not a single one of the right reverend fathers in God voted for the measure which had passed the House of Commons. It would be idle, therefore, to assert that they were animated by conviction. On a matter of pure and simple politics Bishops might be expected to differ like other people, but in this case they all went one way like a flock of sheep, headed by their graces of York and Canterbury. We must seek another than a political reason for this wonderful unanimity. The fact is, the Bishops all voted together for a twofold reason. First, they are Protestant ecclesiastics, and the Home Rule Bill is regarded as a blessing by the Irish Catholics. Secondly, the Bill is hated by landlords and all privileged classes, and the Bishops themselves belong to that fraternity. They acted in this instance on the maxim of "Honor among —," well, the reader can complete the sentence for himself.

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Whether the Bishops are true Christians or not, is a question we shall not attempt to determine. They are professed Christians; they are the highest representatives of the established religion; and, considered merely as a sect, the Church of England is the greatest in this country. It is not for Freethinkers to settle domestic disputes among Christians. We take them as we find them. If they wear the Christian uniform we judge them to belong to the Christian army. We decline to regard them otherwise until they are drummed out of the service. As Christians, then, the Bishops must stand; and Christianity—if not as a doctrine, at least as a system—must take the discredit of their time-serving, infamous vote on the Home Rule Bill. These words are strong, but we use them deliberately. Not one episcopal breast was warmed by a generous emotion; the single Bishop who joined in the debate spoke with thinly-veiled hatred and contempt of his fellow men who live in Ireland; and the Bishop of Bath and Wells, who was so infirm that he could not walk from his seat into the division lobby, feared to stay away from the House, lest he should diminish by one vote the overwhelmingly adverse decision of the mob of lords who, if not in

every case their fathers' sons, at least "took the trouble to be born."

"Down with the Lords!" may soon become a popular cry, and we should like to hear it specialised by "Down with the Bishops!" The record of their speeches and votes in the House of Lords is one of the meanest and most nauseous chapters in human history. They opposed the education of the people, they opposed the extension of the suffrage, they opposed the emancipation of Catholics and Jews, they opposed the removal of religious tests, and of course they opposed the abolition of Church Rates. Even on the score of "humanity"—about which they make such a pother in the safe retreat of their pulpits, mouthing the word as if it belonged to them—even here the Bishops are liable to a merciless condemnation. They resisted Romilly's efforts to abolish the death penalty for petty offences, such as stealing goods to the value of five shillings; and, far more recently, they would not support a Bill for putting down the aristocratic sport of pigeon shooting. In this case they were cowards as well as brutes, for while they would not support the Bill they dared not vote against it, so they either stayed away from the House or took no part in the division.

These time-servers, these hirelings of privilege, these friends of God and foes of Man, these rich dignitaries of the religion of poverty, these lordly representatives of the carpenter of Nazareth, these guinea-jingling preachers of "Blessed be ye poor," should at any rate be swept out of what is facetiously called the Upper Chamber. They should be swept out, that is, if the Upper Chamber is to be reformed and turned into a rational Senate. But if it is to remain what it is—a Landlords' League, and a Hospital for Incurables—by all means let the Bishops stay there until the whole peerage is swept away by a storm of revolutionary sentiment. For the Bishops are so admirably in keeping with the institution; besides, they help to make it stink in the nostrils of honest and sensible people. "Down with the Bishops!" then if it is a part of the cry of "Down with the Lords!" But if it is not, let us shout "Up with the Bishops!" They cost a good deal—a hundred times more than they are intrinsically worth; but they have their uses, and in one sense the money is a good investment. They act as a frightful warning; they show us what a state religion comes to; and they also show us what Christianity comes to—when it has the chance.

G. W. FOOTE.

EUSEBIUS ONCE MORE.

"Leave out the date entirely, Trim, 'quoth my Uncle Toby."—*Tristram Shandy.*

WHILE Prof. Johnson has been examining the external evidence, the language and the general scope of the first ecclesiastical history, I have been looking over the internal evidence. When one has a suspicion as to the *bona fides* of an author, it may be easy to detect and perhaps exaggerate characteristics confirming the suspicion. On the other hand, internal evidence being open to all, such exaggerations are easily detected. Whether Eusebius was written in Latin or Greek is mainly a question for scholars. But any reader is competent to judge if the evidence I adduce from Cave's translation in Bohn library corroborates the judgment arrived at by Prof. Johnson.

In the first chapter of the first book my suspicion is aroused. The author (p. 2) craves indulgence "as the first of those who have entered upon the subject." Surely the first Church historian could not write like this unless he knew that others had or were about to enter on the subject, whereas his plea is that he is entering a "trackless and unbeaten path." He goes on to say he has "culled as from some intellectual meadows the appropriate extracts from ancient authors." The language is modern. It might have been appropriate to his *Evangelical Preparation*, where he seeks ancient testimonies. But even Josephus could not be considered an ancient author in the time of Constantine. He goes on to say that "Of these matters I have already heretofore furnished an epitome in my chronological tables," which shows the writer had some scheme before him.

His second chapter is entitled "Summary View of the Pre-existence and Divinity of Our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ." Its critical standpoint may be judged by the barefaced assertion "Of Him, Moses obviously speaks as the second after the Father, when he says 'The Lord rained upon Sodom and Gomorrah brimstone and fire from the Lord.'" He then, as I think, betrays the purpose of founding a new universal empire by saying "He appeared in a human body at the commencement of the Roman Empire." This would be B. C. 27. The next chapter goes to show that the successor of Moses was called Jesus (Joshua), and that the prophets "were typical Christians by reason of their unction." He speaks of Christ as if he had lived long previously. "Even to this day, he is honored by his votaries throughout the world as a king." He is all at sea in his chronology. He says Christ was born in the forty-second year of the reign of Augustus (A. D. 14), when Quirinius was governor of Syria (A. D. 7), and Herod reigned (he died B. C. 4). He confounds an alleged taxing in the time of Herod with that after the banishment of Archelaus, who reigned nine years after Herod's death. Lardner says: "I must confess I ascribe that not to ignorance, but to something a great deal worse." Yet he has the cheek to inveigh against the fraud of those who make Jesus to have died when Pilate was not yet appointed over Judæa, perhaps alluding to the Jewish account of Jeshu, which places him 90 B. C. He goes on to give the forged testimony of Josephus, making the Jew say "This was Christ," and tells how Thaddeus, one of the seventy disciples, was sent to Edessa, and quotes the letter sent from Abgarus, King of Edessa, to Jesus, and the answer of Jesus, in which he quotes the gospel of John! This letter is appropriately said to have been taken by the courier Ananias. Thaddeus, it seems, was sent by "Judas, who is also called Thomas." Abgarus had never seen Jesus, but he says, "I have believed both in him and in his father." So much did he believe, that he says "I had formed a resolution to take forces, in order to destroy those Jews who had crucified him." A similar sentiment is ascribed to Clovis (dated 481-511). Thus is Church history written.

Eusebius gives us a bold story that "Pontius Pilate transmits to Tiberius an account of the circumstances concerning the resurrection of our Lord from the dead." Why was not this valuable document preserved? Eusebius does not pretend to have seen this, but quotes Tertullian. He says "the sound of his inspired evangelists and apostles had gone throughout all the earth, and their words to the ends of the world." Evidently the exaggerations of one living at a late date or far removed from the facts. The Jews are punished; Pilate commits suicide, and Herod dies horribly by divine judgment. Here we see the unscrupulous character of the writer (bk. ii, c. x). He deliberately misquotes Josephus, substituting "angel" for "owl" to confirm Acts xii. He makes Josephus's account of Theudas confirmatory of Acts v. 36; while, in fact, it disagrees with that account so much as to give commentators the utmost perplexity. Then we have a lie as to the Romans having put up a statue "to Simon, the Holy God," and Peter going there against "this pest of mankind." Most notable of all comes the chapter (bk. ii, c. 17) about the Therapeutic monks of Egypt, who Eusebius declares were Christians, and "it is highly probable that their ancient commentaries are the very gospels and writings of the apostles." Then we read how James, the brother of the Lord, "never used a bath." He alone was allowed to enter the sanctuary; his knees were as hard as camels' from much praying. His epistle, he tells us, "is considered spurious." We are told that "Paul does not demur, in a certain epistle, to mention his own wife," and that "John that rested on the bosom of our Lord, was a priest that bore the sacerdotal plate." There were two Johns "both of the same in Asia; there were also two tombs in Ephesus, and both are called John's to this day." As Mr. Johnson points out, he describes Paul's epistles as brief, and declares that Paul sent Crescens into Gaul, though we now read (2 Tim. iv. 10) that it was into Galatia. This suggests that Paul's epistles may have been amplified, and that Gaul was too

important, in the writer's eyes, not to have a special messenger, though so far removed from Galatia.

If Prof. Johnson has not proved his case up to the hilt, he has, to my mind, amply shown there is the strongest ground for suspicion. This suspicion I find not dissipated but confirmed by the English version. There is one point on which Prof. Johnson does not touch, though it has been mentioned by the American writer, "Antichrist." It seems to me of importance. The History is carried down to A. D. 337, and even speaks of the empire being reserved to Constantine and his sons, which implies a date later than the death of Constantine. Now the writer says (iii. 28) "Dionysius obtained the episcopate in our day." Again he tells us (vi. 34, 35) that Dionysius succeeded to the episcopate in the third year of Philip Cæsar, *i. e.*, 246 or 247. So Eusebius's own day must have extended to a time when most men's wits begin to fail. But Polycarp, Irenæus, and all the rest of them were venerable long livers, so that they might easily be connected with the apostles. Now the Council of Nice, at which Eusebius himself is said to have delivered the opening address, and to have been the principal figure after Constantine, is dated 325. Yet this, the most momentous event in the Church History of his own time, is without any mention or allusion by Eusebius. This omission, as even the French editor, Adrien de Valois (better known as Valesius), remarks, is very singular. So singular that it suggests the first Church History is a late concoction, and that the proceedings of the first alleged œcumenical council are a later concoction still. The authority of the father of Ecclesiastical History may continue to prevail with ecclesiastics, but henceforward the name Eusebius will suggest only fraud to

J. M. WHEELER.

DEVELOPMENT AND EVOLUTION.

WE have noticed in several Christian works, written during the last few years, that the writers have used the terms development and evolution as if they meant precisely the same thing. This is calculated to be misleading to those who have not given the subjects careful study. Of course both systems have much in common, but there are differences between them that should be borne in mind if exactness of thought is to be observed. The development theory undoubtedly was the forerunner of the theory of evolution, and the former is to be found to some extent in many ancient writings. It received a great impetus by the publication of *The Vestiges of the Natural History of Creation* about fifty years ago. It is highly probable, however, that it will soon entirely disappear from scientific thought and speech, and that it will be replaced by the more recent discoveries of evolution. It may be here mentioned that in Thompson's *Dictionary of Philosophy*, there is no mention of development, and in some lexicons recently issued, where the word is cited, the reader is referred to the term evolution as an explanation.

The principal difference between the two theories may be thus briefly stated. Development means addition, or an enlargement. According to this theory, nothing was generated and no new existence appeared; but the germs that had existed from the beginning were developed into a visible form. For instance, the egg contained a miniature chick that developed into a bird. Evolution declares that every living thing is evolved from matter, in which, in its primitive stage, there is found no trace of forms that appear in the adult stage. Evolution teaches that the universe and man did not always exist in their present form; neither are they the product of a sudden creative act, but rather the result of innumerable changes from the lower to the higher, each step in advance being an evolution from a pre-existing condition." Thus it will be seen that there is a substantial difference between the operations of the two systems, a difference which justifies the abandonment of the earlier theory and the adoption of the later. The old idea of development of a series of beings, similar in order to the steps of a ladder, has given place to the new process, which resembles a tree with its trunk, its branches, and its

leaves. In our opinion, evolution is not merely a speculation, but the expression of known facts, and the best and most scientific explanation that has been given of those facts. It is no longer regarded as a heresy, one to be pelted at with Bible texts; neither is it an instrument in the hands of any Providence for confirming the truths of the orthodox religion.

Remembering how the appearance of "The Vestiges" called forth protests from the clergy, we can readily understand the consternation that was created by the advent of Darwin's theory of Natural Selection. It was denounced as rank heresy, because it did not recognise merely "a few forms" that God had commenced with, but included all forms of plant and animal life. The distribution of such life which was discovered by geographical and geological researches played sad havoc with the divine and inspired theory on account of the new demands it gave birth to. To maintain the Bible notion of creation consistently, fresh creations would be required in every quarter of the globe to account for the different species found so widely apart, and so far from the Garden of Eden, where the original creation was supposed to have taken place. But no record could be discovered of God being at those parts of the globe to do what was necessary in the case. At the same time the plants and animals were there, and the puzzle was, like the fly in the amber, how did they get there? It would not do to say they were created only where they could live, as that would clash with the stories of Paradise and the Flood. However, it is useless to expect to find in the records of ancient times a definite account of evolution, because that would have necessitated an amount of accumulated knowledge, which the men of former ages did not possess.

But the supposed divine origin of plants and animals is not the only theological error that evolution has exposed. It has destroyed other fictions that were for centuries promulgated by the Church. In our youth, we were taught by pious persons, not only that man was specially created, but that he appeared at first in a state of perfection. The consensus of opinion which now obtains among scientists is expressed by Mr. Herbert Spencer thus—that life, under all its forms, has arisen by an unbroken evolution, and through natural causes alone. Investigations have also shown that in the early stages of humanity man was less perfect than he is to-day, and that his history has been one of progression, not of retrogression. Another theological romance taught in the past was, that family life, as it at present exists in the domestic circle, was ordained from the beginning. The facts of evolution entirely contradict this statement. True, we find family life at the head of civilisation; but that is a very different matter from its being co-eval with the first appearance of man in tribes or hordes. It is not correct to say that man and woman always lived together as they now do, with a supply of domestic utensils. Evolution is seen in this sphere of life as clearly as it is in other departments of existence. These notions which were implanted in our minds during childhood are fast disappearing, and those who once thought them correct are now professing to believe in the principle of evolution, without apparently having the remotest idea how the theory destroys their faith.

Time indeed works wonders. As theologians have no useful knowledge of their own, they adopt the terminology of astronomy and geology. Now they can no longer suppress the truth, or proscribe the study of the works of philosophers, they embrace the theory of evolution, and endeavor to give it a theological explanation. Perhaps, after all, there is some hope for those theologians who have endeavored to make the flat earth of the Bible into the globe recognised by modern science, and to extend six thousand years into myriads of ages. The theologians could bury Darwin in their sacred temple with sacred rites, but happily they could not bury his teachings, or obliterate his declaration that their way of looking at nature was to be content with the eye of an uneducated savage!

There appear to have been two reasons why the theory of evolution failed to make greater progress than it did before the present century. These reasons

were the imperfection of the microscope, and the opinions of the then leaders of scientific thought. They separated all living things from all else, and represented them as being specially created and cared for by some Divine Being. They assumed that either these living things were created in a mass, or that they were individually brought into existence by some unknown cause. There was no conclusive evidence to them that could sustain a theory that all had proceeded from formless matter, or even from simpler forms of organised life.

During all the time these speculations were going on, there were cultivators of plants, and earnest students of animal life; practical men who, after long experiments, produced variations, and perpetuated such variations in species. Charles Darwin's acute mind led him to seize hold of these proved facts, which he suggested might explain the truths of evolution and establish a law of variation and heredity. Before his time, it was a general belief that all organisms, structures, colors, and forms were originally designed for the benefit of all living creatures themselves, and especially for that aristocratic member of the family—man. In fact, Darwin tells us that he once shared this belief himself, but subsequent knowledge corrected the error in his mind. We think there is no scientific man to-day who believes that all plants and animals originated at one time and from one cause. Evolution is not "the handmaid of religion," it is its mistress, the interpreter of theories, and of all else that has engaged the human mind from the earliest to the latest time. The result of this is a rational interpretation of life, of mind, and of matter, and if their genesis is never certainly determined, Freethought has everything to hope, and nothing to fear, from the truths of evolution that are already established.

CHARLES WATTS.

GOD AMONG THE STARS.

TALMAGE has been preaching again, and the *Christian Age* has printed his remarks. They might appear in the *Freethinker* if this was a comic paper. The text taken was "It is he that buildeth his stories in the heavens" (Amos ix. 6), and Talmage actually said something sensible to start with. His words, just after the first outburst of nothingness, were: "My hearers, it is time that we widened and heightened our religious thoughts. In our pulpits, and Sabbath classes, and Christian work of all sorts we ring the changes on a few verses of scripture until they excite no interest." Talmage was right—for once (!), and as he wishes people to attend in big numbers and contribute plentifully of "the root of all evil," he has started a series of sermons, which may be termed "God among Everything." The first one is "God among the Stars." After a spell of his usual bubble-blowing, he said: "Read on in your Bibles, and after a while the Bible flashes with the Aurora Borealis or Northern Lights." This was very nice, but as he did not tell the congregation what he meant, they doubtless felt a bit confused. Our Bible has always "flashed" with darkness and mystery, but perhaps Talmage paid more for his. Proceeding, he drew attention to the fact that Job knew enough of astronomy to say that the earth had no foundation (Job xxvi. 7), and that Isaiah, when he said "He sitteth upon the circle of the earth," showed that he knew it to be round, whilst everybody else thought it was flat. The great divine had better buy a cheap dictionary, where he will find the word "circle" defined as "a plane figure comprehended by a line, every part of which is equally distant from a point within it called the centre"; so that Isaiah's circle may justly be supposed to be a flat one, especially when we take into consideration the absurdity of imagining a man or God seated on the "circle of a round ball." Poor Talmage! He should learn geometry before he attempts astronomy.

Then he goes on to speak of "the stupendousness of that scene in the life of Joshua," saying "I really suppose the earth only stopped on its axis, and that the sun and moon only seemed to stop." In other words, he does not believe in the accuracy of the Bible. But he says he could easily believe that all

three stopped; what confounds him was the starting. If God could start the sun and moon, he could also stop them with similar ease. In the biblical account, however, it is Joshua who stops them, and since Talmage has such an accommodating belief, it would be as well if he tried it on.

He then went on about the stars, quoting the text "He calleth them all by their names," and saying, "when he calls I warrant they come"; but he conveniently forgot to say from whence they come, where they go to, and how they get back, so that their trip is not noted by the astronomers. He is certainly *Al* at talking rubbish. Further on he said, "But what gladdens me is the thought that these worlds are inhabited. The Bible says so." Why ever didn't he tell us this before? it would have saved all that worry about Mars. He says they are inhabited by intelligent beings, because God would never create anything in vain; and to prove his case and show that Jahveh never wasted his creative power, he instanced the feeding of the multitudes on five loaves and two small fishes. But if there was no waste of creative power, how was it that twelve baskets full remained uneaten?

Well, after a lot of text-quotation in his attempt to *prove* that which astronomers have so far failed to do, he exhorts his hearers to study the heavens, saying, "That is the chief reason why God makes the night, that you may see other worlds." What a pity it is, then, that he should also have caused us to feel sleepy about that time? We wonder how many nights in the course of a year are spent by Talmage in stargazing. Perhaps he only sleeps on those cloudy nights that God occasionally sends; and perhaps he can tell us the chief reason why God hides the stars on such nights! Then he speaks of the great work done in the service of astronomy by John Quincy Adams and Lord Rosse; but found it very convenient to forget James Lick's 1,000,000 dollars given to found the observatory. Talmage ought to be thankful to his maker for the gift of memory. At any rate he thanks God "that we have found out that our world is not halfway between heaven and hell." How does he know unless he can tell us the precise locality of the two places?

Rich as is the first part of the sermon, it is, however, eclipsed by the second part, where, in answer to a self-imposed question as to "Why did God let sin and sorrow come into the world when he could have prevented them from coming?" he says that "it was important in some world somewhere, to demonstrate the gigantic disasters that would come upon any world that allowed sin to enter. Which world should it be? Well, the smaller the world the better, for less would suffer. So our world was selected." This is something new, but we are at a loss to know why a still smaller world was not selected, and why we, poor wretches, should suffer for the example of others. True, the idea is only in accordance with the general idea of the justice (?) of God; but it seems hard that, for the sake of others, we should have a hell especially built for us, where we shall reek in fire and brimstone to all eternity. But how do the other worlds know how naughty we are? Talmage says that "Although we know comparatively little about the other worlds lest we become completely dissatisfied with our own, no doubt the other worlds have heard and are hearing all about this world, in the awful experiment of sin which the human race has been making," and that "in some way interstellar communication is open, either by way of flying spirits or by direct communication with God." Since he knows so much it seems a great pity that he cannot tell us definitely how the communication is made. Still he has cleared up one awkward point for us; for we have often wondered (supposing other worlds to be inhabited) if the Son of God was doing a dying tour amongst them.

At the conclusion of the sermon he quotes from Revelation, "The stars of heaven fell unto the earth." This will be rather rough on the inhabitants of those worlds, and we are rather at a loss to see how a number of worlds much larger than the earth can all fall upon it. "Our earth," he says, "will go with the rest," but where to? It will go somewhere. Will they all be packed in an odd corner; if so, where is the corner?

Will they all break up; if so, where will the pieces be stored? Will not such destruction be "a waste of creative power?" Talmage has explained things after the Bible fashion, and we are in greater darkness than ever. Verily if God "buildeth his stories in the heavens," Talmage buildeth yet bigger ones in the Brooklyn Tabernacle.

ASHLEY SLADE.

THE RELIGION OF CANT.

As an instrument for conveying ideas the English language is often not only imperfect, but words are so constantly changing their meaning that we frequently find educated persons employed to convey the very opposite meaning from that which they intend. John Stuart Mill has pointed out that all discussions, to be of any value, should consist in the first place of an examination into the meaning of the terms employed, and many a bitter controversy might be avoided if each disputant would endeavor to understand the exact sense in which each word was intended to be understood.

As an example of how words have changed their meaning, let me give one illustration. A person wishes to describe something very large, as for example "a great meeting" or "a big person," and he immediately says "it was a monster meeting" or the individual in question "was a perfect monster"; and yet in using these words he conveys the very opposite of the original meaning of the word "monster," for if he turned to his dictionary he would find that a "monster" was not something that was large, but, on the contrary, something that was small and ugly—something, indeed, that was so horribly fashioned as to be painful to contemplate.

The word *cant* is another illustration, although this is a word that is in the transitory condition in regard to its meaning. It originally meant speaking in a whining voice, and the term might even be applied to a person who was perfectly honest in his views and intentions. But to-day the word *cant* is always associated with the hypocrite, and we say that such and such a person is a "canting humbug." He may not have a whining voice, he may even be a very plausible sort of individual; experience of his conduct, however, soon reveals to us that he professes to believe a great many things, but that his professions are always belied by his conduct. And then we say of such persons that they are "canting humbugs." Now canting hypocrites of the Christian sort abound; they are as plentiful as blackberries in autumn; indeed, Christianity has become so stereotyped a creed, and so utterly irrational and stupid in its character, that no thoughtful man can give his unequivocal adhesion to it unless he repudiate his reason as a guide and relies solely upon faith. And consequently we find a large number of professing Christians, who repeat like parrots the pet formularies of the Church, who proclaim themselves followers of "the meek and lowly Jesus," but who, when the mask is torn from their faces, reveal to the wondering gaze of men the horrid features of the grovelling knave and the canting hypocrite.

Charles Dickens, that great student of human character, understood this "species" with a learned spirit. His Pecksniff, Uriah Heep, and Mr. Stiggins are splendidly-drawn types of the canting humbugs of his day, and we find their counterpart in our day in our Spencer Balfour's, our Mr. Hobbs's, and our Captain Verney's. These men were for ever proclaiming themselves models of virtue, while in reality they were steeped in vice, degraded to the lowest degree, but wearing the badge of the Christian Church, and asking to be honored and respected on account of their professions. Organised Christianity is very largely to blame for this. Christians of every sect have taught for ages that a man is to be respected for his beliefs. That in point of fact a bad man with the right belief was a better man, a more estimable person than a good man with a wrong belief. And so it is no wonder that hypocrites find themselves better treated in every way than honest sceptics; for society puts a premium upon dishonesty, and the knave is encouraged to trade upon religion as

a very good means of promotion in the affairs of the world.

Recognising this fact, we can understand a poet like the late Lord Tennyson, in a fine outburst of manliness and honest indignation, exclaiming—

There is more faith in honest doubt,
Believe me, than in half the creeds.

Take the ordinary Christian, and inquire critically into the question of what he believes. Get him quietly in his home when he can speak out boldly without fear and without reserve, and you will find that Dean Alford was about right when he said that if you pressed a Christian closely concerning his creed, he would have to admit that it was "all fudge." Did he believe in the Bible story of the creation of man out of dust, and woman out of Adam's spare-rib? Not a bit of it. Did he believe in "Noah's Flood," which involved the stupendous task of Noah collecting animals from all parts of the globe, and bringing them into the ark just to get out of the rain? Or the silly story of God confusing the tongues of the people so that they might not build a tower that should reach to heaven; when God, if he were all-wise, must have known that all the materials of the earth rolled out as thinly as possible would not extend as far as the nearest fixed star. Do they believe this? Certainly not; the story has only to be described to them in all its naked absurdity to make them laugh as heartily as any Freethinker, and to declare that the story is worthy of Baron Munchausen. Apply the same sort of inquiry to the narratives of Balaam's excursion, or Samson's invincible jawbone, or Jonah's whaling experiences—then you will discover that the ordinary Christian really *believes* a great deal less than he leads his spiritual pastors and masters to imagine, but living in a world of cant and hypocrisy, he plays the hypocrite to live.

But if he does not give credence to the supernatural element in the Old Testament, is he more sincere in his faith in the New? Does he believe in the Apostles' Creed howsoever often he repeats it? And if he believes in "God the Father Almighty," surely he does not confuse his omnipotent Deity with the Jahveh of the Old Testament, who was neither all-mighty, all-wise, nor all-good, but on the contrary was ignorant, vacillating and impotent. Nor could he be said honestly to believe in "Jesus Christ his only Son our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead and buried." His experience is against a belief in a pure virgin becoming a mother in the manner described in the gospels. In fact, he believes as strongly as any Freethinker, that every effect in this material world of ours has a natural, material cause; and thus, when put to the test, the modern Christian has to confess that it is a little hard to believe in the miracles of the New Testament, whether they relate to a virgin giving birth to a child, or to five thousand hungry people being fed on five loaves and two fishes; Jesus walking on the sea, or healing the sick by word of command, opening the eyes of the blind, raising the dead to life, or even the most stupendous miracle of all—that of Jesus resurrecting himself from the dead and ascending straight to heaven—all these miracles he believes with a sort of mental reservation, to the effect that he only believes them because it is the respectable and proper thing to do.

What is this but a canting hypocrisy? If the Christian were really sincere, he would churn out in his daily life the teachings of Jesus. It is easy enough to endeavor to be poor; to take no thought for the morrow what one should eat or drink. Easy enough to turn the other cheek when one has been smitten; easy enough to part with a waistcoat when one's coat has been stolen. But will the modern Christian practise these teachings? Not a bit of it. He has too much self-respect for that, too much common-sense. And therefore we have no hesitation in saying that his professions are a fraud—unconsciously if you will, but nevertheless a fraud. He is a canting hypocrite, without knowing it sometimes; but often a hypocrite because hypocrisy pays.

As Secularists, we are in favor of truth; of truth-speaking and truth-giving; and we protest against hypocrisy wherever it is found. It saps the foundation of our civilisation. But we believe that falsehood will be exposed in good time wherever it is found. As the poet sings

Falsehoods which we spurn to-day
Were the truths of long ago;
Let the dead leaves fall away,
Brighter will the living grow.

ARTHUR B. MOSS.

"HEBREWS, THIRTEEN AND EIGHT."

MR. EDITOR:—Our landlady belonged to numerous missionary and "Christian endeavor" societies, and we all thought she might have very appropriately bestowed a little of the interest she took in feeding the heathen in Africa upon the food of the heathen that clustered around her own board. She often regaled us with "texts." The one which informs us that it is not what goes into the mouth, but what comes out of it, that defiles the man, was a particular favorite of hers. She repeated it with such an air of triumphant confidence in its truth, that some of the boarders decided that even strychnine could hurt no man so long as he did not expectorate any of it.

The landlady always insisted upon "grace" before meals, and we were each honored, in turn, with an invitation to ask the "blessing." For a time we responded as well as we were able. Those of us who knew no "blessing" by heart, when the Holy Ghost failed to assist us, were wont to adopt the popular method of mumbling. Our thanks sounded something like this: "Hm—hm—hm—hm—mm—mm—mm—mm—ym—ym—mm—hm! for Jesus' sake! Amen!"

This sort of thing always goes among pious folks, and although we were not noted for piety, so long as things were agreeable, we were mutually agreed that to humor our landlady would be the simplest method of getting through the disagreeable. At last, however, one day when our fare was scantier than usual, one of the boarders remarked that it was blasphemy to ask a blessing on a meal that wasn't worth a curse to begin with. And for a time our "hm's" and "ym's" were sullen and guttural. At length a new boarder—a Jew—said he knew no "blessing." He was importuned by our landlady to say anything the ghost suggested. But the ghost laid low; whereupon he was informed that, if the spirit would not ferment for him, a text of scripture would answer. But he only knew one text, he demurred. How could he take time to learn a text twice or thrice a week? She assured him there was no necessity for that—the same text would do any number of times. The word of God could not grow stale. The Jew assented, and bowing his head, he said:

"HEBREWS, THIRTEEN AND EIGHT."

This was rather vague, but not wishing to press her new "convert" too far upon the first occasion, our landlady allowed it to pass.

That evening it was the turn of Grier, the hardware man. He too said: "Hebrews, thirteen and eight."

The landlady was greatly shocked, but decided to ignore his impiety and punish him by showing him he was unworthy of a future invitation to say "grace" at her table.

The next morning Jimmy O'Sullivan, the drug man, varied his "grace" by putting it something about somebody, or some beast, that "ate thirteen Hebrews." But it was delivered solemnly, and nobody even smiled.

This would never do. The landlady insisted that it was not enough to merely refer to a text. It was just as easy to give the exact words, and as this thirteenth chapter of Hebrews, eighth verse, seemed to be a favorite, she would read it. She hoped those who knew no "grace" would remember it, instead of merely referring to it so vaguely. The girl produced the Bible. The landlady struck an attitude. Every head was devoutly bowed, and in a voice of such agony as only a Christian can assume, she read:

"JESUS CHRIST, THE SAME YESTERDAY, AND TO-DAY,
AND FOREVER."

"Hebrews, thirteen and eight," was never quoted again at our table, and saying "grace" fell out of fashion.—*M. H. Veon, Boston Investigator.*

AN ANCIENT SISTER.

A lady belonging to a community called the "Sisters of St. John the Baptist" in New York City, was spending a month not long since in one of the backwoods districts. Going to the post office shortly after her arrival, she asked if any letter had come for Sister Bernardino. The rural postmaster looked bewildered for a moment. "Sister who?" he asked. "Sister Bernardino," repeated the lady—"a Sister of St. John the Baptist." "Well, I should rather think not," replied the man with an uproarious laugh. "I guess he's been dead pretty near a hundred years now."

ACID DROPS.

The Catholic and Protestant missionaries are again fiercely fighting in Uganda. This time it is on the question of who is to have the education of the princes, who, it seems likely, will have a fair chance of falling into the hands of Mohammedan teachers.

Catholic and Protestant missionaries are also quarrelling in Armenia respecting the conversion of the Nestorians, who are already Christians. Both Romanists and Anglicans agree that those converted by the opposite party are only the worst characters among the Nestorians.

What amusing airs newspapers sometimes give themselves when they notice anything connected with Freethought. The *Manchester Guardian*, for instance, in a paragraph on the Douglas Head affair speaks of "a Secularist named Foote." We do not believe the *Guardian* is quite so ignorant of Mr. Foote's identity; in fact, we may say that we know it is not. The pretence is really ridiculous.

The *Guardian* states Mr. Foote was "conducted away" from the "other," that is, the Christian meeting. Mr. Foote was neither "conducted" nor "removed," as other papers put it. The spot he first selected was out of sight of the Christian meeting, and nearly two hundred yards distant. It would have been better if the *Guardian* had referred to the Christian Evidence meeting, which was started within ten yards of Mr. Foote's.

A Mr. Gregson Wright, who formerly went among the spiritists, now advertises himself to lecture at Foleshill on behalf of the Christian Evangelistic Mission, as a Converted Atheist. On Monday he was to give his "amusing, marvellous, and instructive entertainment," entitled *Psychometry*. The N.S.S. knows nothing of Mr. Gregson Wright. Can any northern friend say if he ever occupied a Secular platform?

The following entry has just been discovered in the Report Book of the Chaplain of Salford Workhouse Infirmary. *Truth* thinks it a pity that such a choice collection of literary flowers should be allowed to bloom unseen:—"4 Aug., 1893—Visited through all the wards in F, G, and H Pavilion, and ministered to the sick and afflicted ones some of those sovereign remedies and divine cordials which are essential to the conviction, rectification, resuscitation, consolation, assimilation, and ultimate restoration of our poor sin-stricken natures, infected and enfeebled by a thousand and one maladies consequent upon and incident to such a state, and which assert and show themselves in in every conceivable form, and amongst all sorts and conditions of men. And which sovereign remedies are alone desirable for that heaven-given and divinely-certified pharmacopœia—the Word of Life."

An Italian prince who had a Sicilian cook was once travelling to his provincial estates, taking with him his cook, together with his entire kitchen force, without which, so fond was he of the delicacies they were wont to prepare, he rarely if ever travelled. At a point where the narrow path along the precipice turned the angle of a projecting rock the prince, at the head of his long cavalcade, heard a shriek and the splash of a body falling into the torrent far below. With a face white with horror he pulled up, and looking back, exclaimed: "The cook! the cook! Oh, do not tell me it is the cook!" "No, your excellency," cried a voice from the rear; "it is Don Prodocemo." The prince heaved a sigh of intense relief, then said: "Ah, only the chaplain! Thank God!"

Archibald G. Brown, the sky-pilot whose official address is the East London Tabernacle, caused a sensation some time ago by a discourse on "The Devil's Mission of Amusement." Generally speaking, the press critics treated him as a sour, old-fashioned Puritan; he, however, considers himself a real Christian in an age of carnal backsliders; accordingly, he has vindicated himself in a "Sequel," where he reproduces some curious advertisements of entertainments given in aid of churches and chapels, some of which are really spicy. If the case rested there, Mr. Brown would have made a hit, a very palpable hit. But he shows himself to be uniscriminating

in his crusade against amusements. One of the cases he pillories is a performance of Shakespeare's "Merchant of Venice," which—we beg to tell him—contains more beautiful, eloquent, and profound lessons in morality than ever emanated from the East London or any other Tabernacle.

"The log-rolling in the literary world," says a writer in the London *Echo*, "is child's-play compared with the log-rolling in the religious world. In almost every character-sketch in the Christian papers the butter is laid on with a trowel, so that the believing reader must come to the conclusion that there is more learning, eloquence, and piety in the last decade of the nineteenth century than in all the centuries that have preceded it. For my part, I have ceased to read these pulpit portraits; for the most part they are so disgustingly sycophantic that they produce nausea."

Parson Thomas, vicar of Eastleigh, has not been re-elected on the local School Board, and he condoles with the inhabitants in his Parish Magazine on the great loss they experience by his exclusion. At the next elections he is confident that "Eastleigh will unmistakably pronounce itself in favor of religion and high morality" by giving Parson Thomas a seat again. What a conceited lot the Black Army are, to be sure!

The Rev. Hay Hill, Vicar of Wethersford, has enrolled himself among the calamity prophets. "If," says he, "the present Government stays in very much longer, you will soon have no clergymen, no squires, no Established Church, and no national schools." How dreadful! Possibly, however, Great Britain might still keep from sinking beneath the sea, even detached from these sacred institutions.

The Church papers are up in arms lest the Parish Councils Bill should lead to charities hitherto administered by the parsons being put under the authority of the people. This is a much-needed reform, the man of God being able to boycott all not subservient to himself from participation in local charities.

Lotteries in connection with enterprising papers have been put down, but lotteries on behalf of enterprising churches are as rife as ever. We have before us a circular, signed by Rev. Michael McAuliffe, St. Richard's, Holbeck, Leeds, announcing a Grand Bazaar and Grand Prize Drawing in aid of the new church of St. Francis of Assisi, with a special line stating that Father McAuliffe sends to every one who sells twenty books of tickets a special prize, post free, on receipt of the amount. Father McAuliffe also advertises that for those who send him help he will offer mass every Friday "for your own particular wants." These beggars know they can do almost anything in the name of religion.

Father Foy (that is, Father Faith) has been preaching at St. Leonard's on the wonderful cures performed at Lourdes through the agency of the Blessed Virgin Mary. He mentions the cases of paralytics who jumped up and joined the procession. Of course this is very interesting, but, after all, it is merely a testimony to the power of excitement. We shall believe in Mary's medicinal powers when she sets broken limbs, saves cholera patients, and turns fools into wise men. Up to the present she has only succeeded in turning some wise men into fools.

At the Jesuit Church at St. Francis Xavier, New York, the prior of the Carmelite fathers put the same issue as in *The Great Alternative: Rome or Reason*. He said: "Protestantism is so split up at the present time that its adherents do not know where they stand. They deny the authenticity and inspiration of the scriptures. They must confess that they are routed and beaten. At present there are only two forces remaining—Agnosticism and Catholicity, Infidelity and Catholicism. You must be a Catholic or you must be an Infidel."

In his latest Encyclical, addressed to the Hungarians, the Pope calls on those in prominent positions to espouse the rights of the Church, and enjoins the clergy to make an open stand against "Godless books and newspapers." This because the press has thrown its influence in favor of civil marriage.

The spookists have been holding a "Psychical Congress"

at Chicago. It proved to be anti-Theosophic, as W. Emmette Coleman contributed a paper entitled "Critical Historical Review of the Theosophical Society," and Mr. R. Hodgson, who showed up Madame Blavatsky in India, contributed a paper on "Human Testimony in Relation to Alleged Psychical Phenomena." Mr. W. T. Stead sent a paper on "The Fourth Dimension of Space." We thought that by this time he would have discovered a fifth.

Rachel Boyle, of Philadelphia, during religious excitement, cut off a part of her lip and broiled it as an offering to God.

A curious superstition is reported among the Jews of Galicia. At Delatyn, one of the places where cholera first appeared, a rabbi told the Jews that if a loving couple would consent to be married on the grave of a person who had died of the cholera, the Jews might be spared, even as those were healed who looked to the brazen serpent in the wilderness. The well-to-do people collected money, and an orphan youth and an orphan girl were found who consented to the ceremony. All the congregation assembled to witness the marriage, and the next morning a man who had been foremost in the affair fell ill and died of cholera, after only a few hours' illness.

A writer in the *Spectator* quotes a passage said to be in the Talmud—Hilcoth Accum cxi. is the reference given—to the effect "If a Gentile or idolater be seen perishing or drowning in a river, he is not to be helped out; if he be seen near to death he is not to be delivered." If this be indeed the teaching of the Talmud, it is time the Jews repudiated it, for it may help to explain Anti-Semitism. The sentiment contrasts very badly with the sentiments of Pagan Greeks and Romans, who were unenlightened by any revelation.

Excellent Things, which calls itself "A Prophetic and Practical Magazine," edited by J. H. Burridge, is giving a series of articles on "Prophecy and its Fulfilment." The naive way in which it cites Genesis v. 29 as a prophecy, and then says, "We find that the first indication of the Flood was given 600 years before it came," shows the writer is quite unaware that the dates of his sacred books are in question. It is no good writing on the fulfilment of prophecy unless you can prove the prophecy was in existence before the fulfilment, and this is evidently a task beyond the writer's powers.

The Rev. Charles Voysey begins, in the *Weekly Times and Echo*, a series of articles entitled "Theism: or the Religion of Common Sense." He dishes up all the treacle of the old faith, without any of the brimstone. Common sense won't long stand a dinner composed entirely of sweets. The sufficient answer to Mr. Voysey is that the world isn't built that way.

The old-fashioned Sabbatarians of Belfast contrived to squash the proposal at the Trades Union Congress for a Labor Day demonstration on the first Sunday in May. The Belfast delegates said they were not accustomed to hold demonstrations on Sundays, and, despite John Burns reminding them that the better the day the better the deed, the proposition was rejected by the narrow majority of sixty against fifty-eight. Considering the high Presbyterianism which reigns in Belfast, this is not much of a triumph for bigotry after all.

The *Pall Mall Gazette* regards the vote as "surprising," coming as it does from "classes which we are always told are falling away from church and faith." Well, we should think that 58 votes out of a total of 118 is a very considerable "falling away."

Another suicide from religious mania. Mr. F. Palmer, of London, an inventor and a civil engineer, committed suicide in a New York hotel on Friday night by putting his mouth over the gas burner and inhaling the gas. He left the following note:—"I am driven wild by the failure of my plans, and for not having known and served our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ."

In the reports of the suicide epidemic readers must have been struck with the frequent repetition of appeals to God. "God bless you," "God help my poor wife," "God forgive

me," and so forth, indicate that the suicides are anything but self-reliant Atheists.

The Rev. Osborne Jay, of Holy Trinity, Shoreditch, has published a little book on *The Social Problem*—which, as the Americans say, is a large order. Whether he has written the book seems open to question. He is proved in the *Times* to have quoted, not in inverted commas, nearly word for word from Mr. Gissing's novel of "The Nether World." Mr. Jay is a clergyman, and Mr. Gissing is something of a Freethinker. The borrowing is therefore all the more peculiar. The clerical Jay struts about in a sceptic's feathers.

George Scheur is a prominent business man of Scranton, Pa., his wife a member of the German Presbyterian Church. While George was doing business down town, Rev. Weiswasser, their pastor, was doing business at his home. Unsuspecting George thought it very nice that the holy man had time to entertain his wife through the hours made lonely by his absence. Singing sacred songs was their diversion. But it was anything but a sacred song that George sung when he found a note of farewell pinned on his pillow and that his wife and the reverend had flown to New York. The reverend leaves a wife and five children.

Alice Sarah Hockley applied at the Croydon Borough Police-court for an affiliation summons against a clergyman, said to be chaplain of a public institution. She left her child at the house of the Rev. Mr. Closs, and was punished for child desertion, but was not granted a summons.

The culture of the representatives of the C.E.S. is only surpassed by their courtesy. Last Sunday one gentleman in Finsbury Park informed his audience that the word for slave in the Old Testament was *doulos*. He afterwards mentioned that Wat Tyler was a Secularist who was killed for attempting to steal the king's watch. The Christian religion needs to be wealthily endowed to adequately repay the services of gentlemen so highly gifted with erudition and urbanity.

The Rev. C. Edwards, pastor of the Baptist Church at Freeport, put forward anonymously *A Visit to the Infernal Regions and the Return*, in which he said "Did I believe in the existence of a material hell, I never would have written the following satire. Neither do I believe that any aquatic animal, swimming in a geographic sea, ever swallowed Jonah." Some of his congregation suspected the authorship, and waited on him asking the question. He owned up, and sent in his resignation.

A bull was employed in drawing a cart laden with stones for building the Recoleta Church of La Paz, in Bolivia. A few days afterwards he was put into an arena to fight a lion, whom he succeeded in impaling and slaying. The edifying spectacle was witnessed by six thousand persons, including the President and his ministers. Of course Bolivia is a Christian country.

At Alford Petty Sessions, Benjamin Driver, a well-known Wesleyan Methodist pietist, also connected with the Salvation Army, has been fined heavily for cruelly ill-treating his son Ernest, aged eleven years. Complaints as to the cruelty practised upon the boy have for some time past reached the ears of the police, and large numbers of weals and bruises were found upon his arms, ribs and back. Benjamin Driver seems a worthy follower of Solomon. His case should be brought to the attention of the Rev. Mr. Waugh and the Bishop of Chester.

Zola has been interviewed a deal about England of late. What he most objects to is English cant and hypocrisy. He says: "You English turn up your noses in holy horror when mention is made of my works, yet you are amongst the most eager to filch me by translations, and to devour the work of my brains in private." He declares there is more obscenity in our newspaper reports of the divorce courts than in all his works put together.

Mr. Richard Vaughan, of Bath, was a good Christian. He studied the texts, "Blessed be ye poor" and "Lay not up for yourselves treasures on earth." The result was that he died worth £742,000, a considerable part of which he has left to

religious bodies, probably in order that they may manufacture sincere and earnest Christians like himself. £6,000 is devoted to the maintenance of a curate at Failand, and £1,000 to the Bristol General Hospital; £10,000 to augment Wraxall living, and £1,000 to the Bristol Blind Asylum. A halfpennyworth of the bread of real charity to all that sack of superstition!

Mr. F. O. Gould, the caricaturist of the *Westminster Gazette*, drew six delicious "heads of peers" for the report of the debate and division on the Home Rule Bill. Those heads belong to what the Catechism calls our "betters." Well, it would be hard to better them—in imbecility.

The summonses issued in connection with the prosecution of Sunday traders at Yarmouth are lithographed, showing that they are kept in stock ready to be issued wholesale. Possibly they are supplied by the Lord's Day Rest Association, which incites these prosecutions.

This precious L.D.R.A. issues large numbers of a leaflet entitled "Plain Objections to the Opening of the People's Palace and similar Institutions on the Lord's Day." Though it sets out with its main affirmation—Because the Day of Holy Rest is the *Lord's Day*, and not a day for mere amusement or secular pursuits or labor—the rest of its reasons, being grounded on some pretence of secular utility, as, for instance, the undesirableness of a continental Sunday, shows a perception that the authority of the Church or the Word of God no longer suffices on this or any other matter.

What a pretence it is though. The Lord's Day Rest Association moved for the evening opening of the British Museum and similar institutions on purpose to thwart their being opened on the people's one day of leisure. They thereby entailed far more hours' work on the attendants than would Sunday opening, and with little advantage to the public, for it has been shown that working men will not take a journey to attend such places after being tired with a day's labor. What is wanted is Sunday opening, with a fresh staff of attendants, or shorter hours on other days.

An agent of the governor of South Carolina sent to investigate the extent of the damage done by the recent cyclone on the islands off the coast reports that over 20,000 persons, mostly negroes, are on the verge of starvation. God has done the damage; the governor has made an appeal to the public for relief.

What would be the feelings of the relatives and the public if an individual should force himself to the side of a grave where a religious service was being conducted, and insist upon reading passages from an infidel work? This question is suggested to us by an extraordinary incident which occurred in Margate at the burial of Mr. Francis Adams. The grave was prepared in unconsecrated ground, and the body was being buried without any religious ceremony, when, to the astonishment of the friends present, an individual ran up, stationed himself at the side of the grave, and removing his hat, hastily began, "So teach us to number our days —" Mrs. Adams begged him to desist, an appeal which he disregarded; whereupon a friend remonstrated with him in a more forcible manner. This intruder, however, concluded his sentence—"that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom"—and then condescended to explain that he was Mr. Samuel Pointon, a magistrate, and chairman of the Burial Board, and that he had taken this course because he "felt it was his duty to do so." We beg to call Mr. Asquith's attention to the peculiar ideas of his duty entertained by this Margate magistrate.—*Daily Chronicle*.

Mr. Grant Allen's *Fortnightly* article has roused the ire of the religious press. He makes it so clear that Christianity was a backward sea in religion. He calls it, indeed, a Semitic religion, the religion of a burying people in the savage stage, when resurrection of the body was expected. He says "It surged up from below, from the dregs of the world; it arose among an obscure sect of local fanatics, even in its own narrow provincial birthplace; and it brought with it to cultivate Rome and Hellas, the common ideas and practices of the less civilised medium in which it had its origin."

Mr. Foote's Engagements.

Sunday, September 17, Hall of Science, 142 Old-street, E.C. :
at 7, "Christ and Democracy."

September 24, Hall of Science, London.
October 1 and 8, Hall of Science; 15, Camberwell; 22, Manchester; 29, Bristol.
November 26, Leicester.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

LECTURE NOTICES, ETC., should be written on postcards or the envelopes marked outside.

WINIFRED.—Pleased to hear that you consider our Summer Number "splendid" and have lent it to several of your friends; also that you think our weekly issue "well worth twopence."

J. BOYCE.—We do not insert challenges to debate. Mr. Cohen represents the Bethnal Green Branch, which will doubtless be happy to arrange for a debate with the representative of a respectable Christian society.

J. R. ROBSON.—Omitted last week owing to editor's absence. We regret to hear of Mrs. Sanderson's death. She was a good wife and a superior woman.

R. F. FOX.—Your notice arrived last week on Wednesday afternoon. Tuesday morning is the latest time for insertion.

J. BARTON.—Thanks for cuttings.

H. P. CHANTER.—Sorry to hear of your illness, and hope you will speedily recover. Mr. Foote was much benefited by his holiday at the Isle of Man.

F. V. SPOONER (Trinidad).—Darwin did not call himself an Atheist, and we cannot forward you any such book as you require. Mr. Foote's *Darwin on God* contains every important passage in Darwin's works, autobiography, and letters bearing upon his religious views. You could not strengthen the case by putting in the whole of his printed works, unless your Christian opponent disputes the accuracy of Mr. Foote's quotations, which is rather a mean thing to do unless he has found them to be incorrect.

R. WALLER.—See "Acid Drops."

G. HERBERT.—Your notice was too late for *Freethinker* last week. What is the locality of the proposed new Branch? Your letter does not indicate.

BENEVOLENT FUND.—Miss E. M. Vance begs to acknowledge: D. Colville, 7s. 6d.

F. J. BOORMAN.—The Chatham friends have selected a good candidate in Mr. W. B. Thompson, whom we should like to see at the head of the poll.

W. BRONIE.—It is an old joke, which has done duty in many different dressings. Thanks all the same.

A. A. WATTS.—Some one has been hoaxing you. Mr. Holyoake has never written in the *Freethinker*, or anywhere else to our knowledge, that "immorality was very rife amongst the younger exponents of Atheism."

SHILLING MONTH.—H. J. C., 1s. 6d.

J. BAKER.—H. M. Kennard's *Hebrews and Philistines* is published at 6s.; Mr. Edwards' *Witness of Assyria* at 3s. 6d.

J. C.—Cuttings are always welcome.

J. KEAST.—Thanks for your letter. Pleased to hear have been defending the cause at Portsmouth.

A. W.—The parody is too late. Everybody is tired of Lottie Collins's famous song.

J. G. R.—You have certainly spotted a weak place in our outdoor propaganda. The remedy, however, is not so easily discovered or applied. Still, the Christians who oppose our lecturers should be kept to time and subject, and prevented from starting lectures on their own account from our platforms.

JOSEPH BROWN.—Mr. Foote will offer you dates in a day or two, to cover two Sundays and intervening week-nights.

G. S. M.—The paragraph was based on what appeared in the newspapers. Send us the balance-sheet and we will look into the matter.

MISS VANCE, secretary of the National Secular Hall Society (Limited), requests the following ladies and gentlemen to send their present addresses to 28 Stonecutter-street, E.C., recent communications having been returned:—J. W. Bray, T. Taylor, E. Barlow, W. G. McLeod, P. Gibson, H. Brownwood, E. Briggs, and R. G. Jones.

J. M.—Jokes are always acceptable.

P. W. BALDWIN.—Only one received, which will appear in due course.

LOT HILL.—Thanks. See "Acid Drops."

E. P.—The best way is to order the *Freethinker* through your local agent; there ought to be no difficulty.

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

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

PAPERS RECEIVED.—Der Lichtfreund—Boston Investigator—Open Court—Freidenker—Two Worlds—Der Arme Teufel—Western Figaro—Liberator—Liberty—Clarion—Flaming Sword—Echo—Truthseeker—Fritankaren—La Raison—

Lucifer—Secular Thought—Independent Pulpit—Tablet—Progressive Thinker—Twentieth Century—De Dageraad—La Vérite Philosophique—Ironclad Age—Church Reformer—Liverpool Mercury—Commonweal—Spy—South Shields Free Press—Staffordshire Sentinel—Surrey Independent—Birmingham Daily Argus—Manchester Guardian—Ulster Echo.

LITERARY communications to be addressed to the Editor, 14 Clerkenwell-green, London, E.C. All business communications to Mr. R. Forder, 28 Stonecutter-street, London, E.C. It being contrary to Post-office regulations to announce on the wrapper when the subscription is due, subscribers will receive the number in a colored wrapper when their subscription expires.

The *Freethinker* 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 had capital audiences at Glasgow on Sunday, the hall being well filled during the day, and crowded at night, notwithstanding the counter attractions in the city. Glasgow audiences are pretty critical, and, as the lectures seemed to give great satisfaction, Mr. Foote inferred that he was, as he felt, in good form. There was very little discussion, but eight new members were enrolled. The Glasgow Branch is fortunate in retaining the services of such men as Messrs. Forrester and Gilmour; it is also fortunate in having a number of younger members who are studious and zealous, and quite capable of "speaking with the enemy at the gate."

Mr. Foote had an interview on Monday morning with a Scottish Freethinker who desires to leave a handsome legacy to the National Secular Society. This is a matter which can be arranged, despite the infamous state of the laws against Freethought. We mention this simply in order to "encourage the others," as the French say. There are many Freethinkers who could leave something in their wills to the N.S.S., without injury to their relatives. It is hardly necessary to tell them that they ought to do so. Having been freed from superstition themselves, they should help, especially where help is easy, to free their less fortunate fellow men. Mr. Foote will be glad to hear from some of them shortly.

Mr. Foote begins this evening (Sept. 17) the new experiment at the London Hall of Science. An attempt will be made to bring Secularism into closer touch with the masses of the people, and to this end the hall doors will be open free. The pay-box will be open as usual for those who are able and willing to pay for seats in the body of the hall, but this will not interfere with the "free admission," for every person who chooses can walk in and take a seat in the gallery without payment. Mr. Foote gives his first four lectures gratuitously; he has therefore a clear right to ask the Freethought party in London to do their share towards the success of this enterprise. They can do this in two ways; first, by attending themselves and occupying a paid seat; second, by telling all their friends and acquaintances that they can go to the Hall of Science and hear the Gospel of Freethought without money and without price.

Mr. Foote has announced a special list of subjects for these four lectures. They are all interesting, both to Freethinkers and to those who are strangers to our movement. Special handbills have been printed, and Miss Vance (28 Stonecutter-street, E.C.) will be happy to send a packet of them to any person who will undertake to distribute them. In this way it is open to Freethinkers to make themselves useful at a very small cost of trouble.

The official program of the International Congress of Freethinkers, to be held at 517 W. Madison-street, Chicago, from October 1 to October 8 inclusive, is now published in the American papers. The presiding officers will be Judge Waite, S. Putnam, and Captain R. C. Adams. Mr. Watts is down for an address on Tuesday, October 3. Mr. Foote was also to have spoken on the same day. Wednesday will be the Ladies Day, when addresses and papers will be delivered by Lillie B. White, Mattie P. Kregel, Dr. Juliet Severance,

Voltaire de Cleve, Mrs. M. A. Freeman, Susan Wixon, and Mrs. Lulie Monroe Power. Friday is devoted to the World's Fair, and Saturday to other places of interest in and around Chicago. The rest of the time will be devoted to business, the last Sunday being a field-day, when all the principal speakers will deliver addresses.

Many papers have reached us from various parts of the country containing a report of Mr. Foote's lecture on Douglas Head. This wide publicity will be helpful to the cause of Freethought.

The Manchester Branch's committee has passed the following resolution, proposed by Mr. Walter Payne and seconded by Mr. H. Brownworth—"That we send our hearty congratulations to Mr. Foote on the resolute and successful stand he made in defence of liberty of speech on Sunday, September 3, at the Isle of Man; and we trust that his action will result in the extension of our principles in the island."

Mr. W. B. Thompson, the active and zealous secretary of the Chatham Branch, is put forward as a Secular candidate in the elections for the new School Board to be established in the parish of Gillingham. A subscription has been opened to meet his expenses, and contributions can be forwarded to Mr. F. J. Boorman, River View Villa, Napier-road, New Brompton.

The chairman of the Liberty of Bequest Committee would be greatly obliged to any of the secretaries of provincial Branches of the National Secular Society who would furnish him with the names and addresses of the most distinguished representatives, in their districts, of the following denominations—Church of England, Unitarian, Congregational, Baptist and Wesleyan. He wishes to ascertain, by communicating with them, how far they are disposed to concur in a measure which appeals to the sentiment of Christian honesty. Address, 17 Johnson's-court, London, E.C.

The North-Eastern Secular Federation's annual report is encouraging. Despite the strikes and trade depression in the district, Mr. Brown says that "there has been no great falling off in our propaganda, and our financial condition is fairly satisfactory." The year's income has been £108 14s 8½d., and the expenditure £112 14s. 6d. The deficit is therefore very slight. All that is wanted is a liberal response to Mr. Brown's appeal for funds for a good winter's work. Those who can afford to subscribe, and there are many, should send at once to Joseph Brown, 86 Durham-street, Bentinck, Newcastle-on-Tyne.

The South Shields *Free Press*, a broad Radical paper, gives the local C.E.S. and its late champion, some severe rubs over the ridiculous figure cut in connection with the recent debate.

Profanity is spreading. A correspondent sends us some cuttings from the *Manchester Weekly Times* which, twenty years ago, would have raised a storm about the editor's ears. Nowadays such items are generally relished.

The *Manchester Spy* evidently has not the fear of the Blasphemy Laws before its eyes, for it devotes over a column to chaffing Satan whom it represents as taking down the old signboard, "Abandon Hope," from the gates of hell, and putting up the notice "To Let."

The Science Classes at the Camberwell Branch of the N.S.S., which are entirely free, commence on Friday, Oct. 6, at 8 p.m. Mr. J. B. Coppock, F.C.S., late of Nottingham University, is lecturer, and the classes are carried on under the direction of the Science and Art Department. They comprise courses in physiography, mathematics, geology, and biology. Young men, and young women too, in the neighborhood, should send in their names to T. J. Bartlett, 61 New Church-road, S.E., and take advantage of this free instruction.

The first Freethought meeting at the Broadway, Wimbledon, appears to have been a decided success, and is well reported in the *Surrey Independent*. It has been resolved to form a Branch of the N.S.S., and a preliminary meeting will be held at Hartfield-road Coffee-house on Sunday at 11 a.m. Freethinkers in the neighborhood should attend. Sixteen have already given in their names, and a nice hall has been secured for Sunday evening lectures.

It is some time since regular propagandist work was done in Southampton, and it is rather late in the season to commence. However, next Sunday (Sept. 24) two Freethought addresses will be delivered there in the open-air by Mr. Harry Courtney. We hope the local friends will support him on the occasion.

Ingersoll has recently been visited at his law office by some pertinacious pietists, who flopped on their knees and prayed for him while he was engaged in an interview with a client. He has accordingly had a placard printed in big black letters on a piece of white cardboard, and hung in a conspicuous place in the main office:

NOTICE.

I DON'T NEED SALVATION.

All persons who wish to pray for me have my permission to do so.

BUT

kindly keep out of my private office until after business hours.

ROBERT G. INGERSOLL.

A Committee of an Old Age Pensions League has been formed at Birmingham, the object of which will be the nationalisation of tithes and similar funds for the creation of pensions in old age. A national conference will be held at Birmingham within a few months, when the movement will be fairly inaugurated.

The *Bookseller* (Sept. 6) devotes over a column to a sketch of the career of Mr. Edward Truelove, who is now selling off his stock with a view of retiring from business at the age of eighty-four. It concludes by saying "The worthy veteran has always occupied an honorable position in the ranks of the trade, and we sincerely hope that his remaining years may be passed in the placid serenity which crowns a useful life." In this hope we cordially join.

AN INDIAN PRINCE ON CHRISTIANITY.

THE Maharajah of Kapurthala, who is head of a population of over two millions and a half of the most warlike inhabitants of the Punjab, is now in America. By religion he is a Sikh, and he has confided to an interviewer that he has but a poor opinion of Christianity. He is reported in the *St. Louis Republic* as saying:

"The Christian religion has proved a huge failure in India. That is my opinion, and I am prepared to cite several reasons which I think quite weighty enough to justify me in holding it. If I adhere to the form of worship of my forefathers, it is not because I have failed to study the Christian system and compare it with that of the Hindoos, but because I am firmly convinced of the superiority of the latter. The Christian worships one God; so does the Hindoo. The God of the Christians, however, says he is a jealous God, and that he will punish the progeny of those who worship other gods. Our God says: 'Those who from their hearts worship other gods involuntarily worship me, for I am the same to all mankind.' You teach man to love mankind; we teach mankind to love the whole animal kingdom. You teach children to honor their parents; we also inculcate the duty parents owe to their children. Our poet says: 'Sweet is the music of the lute to him only who has not heard the voice of his own children.' Our religion has, it is true, become overlaid with various superstitious forms, ceremonies and sacraments, but so did Christianity in the Middle Ages. Your religion managed to emerge from the depth to which it had been sunk by priestcraft, and the future will, I think, see Hindoo philosophy so moral, so ethereal, occupying the same high altitude that it did generations before the birth of Christ.

"Your missionaries expend a vast amount of energy and money to achieve a most unsatisfactory result. No high-class Hindoo will accept Christianity, since there is nothing to commend it to him for acceptance. If he is an uneducated man, he knows how pure a system of ethics is contained in his own religion, and is satisfied with that. If antiquity is to be revered, then his own philosophy is far superior to the one which you send him. He can compare, weigh, judge, examine, test, and finally he is forced to conclude that, divested of its external covering, the Chris-

tian religion owes its origin to the great philosophers of his native land.

"The Hindoo looks at the Christian countries. Does he see a high standard of morality there? He is told the restrictions of caste lead to incalculable evil. Does caste not exist in Christian lands? Have you no prejudices on that score here in America? Are you yourselves willing to dine at the same table seated next to a Chinaman or a negro? Are other Christians any more tolerant? Not a bit.

"The lower class of the population of India may accept Christianity, but it is from interested motives. They see that the European merchants prefer as employes or servants those who have accepted the tenets of their faith, so they become converted. Yet I doubt if one out of a hundred could give the meaning of the creed he has signified his belief in, or could point out wherein lies the superiority of the new religion over the old one.

"The progress of Christianity in my country I think a question of no importance. The advancement of education is one of vital significance. Educate a people, show them the progress of modern thought, introduce them to the telegraph, the railway, to the telephone and all the other adaptations of science, and then they will be in a position to investigate a religion and to throw lustre upon it if they accept it. At present, it seems to me, an ignorant convert is not a very great deal to be proud of."

SUNDAY ON THE RYE.

(A FACT.—SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 3.)

Tune: "Comin' thro' the Rye."

ONCE, a goody, silly, body,
Down on Peckham Rye,
Pointed to the solar body
Shining in the sky:
"Now," said he, "each lass and laddie
Here I will defy,
To say what's round the other side
Of that there sun on high!"

"T'other side," he said, poor body!
"Dwells the Lord on high."—
An altitude of forty-five
Degrees 'bove Peckham Rye!
"Well," said I, "a pound of treacle
Once I did espy,
Far, far beyond yon distant sun,
That's beaming on the Rye!"

Whereupon this goody body
And his friends did cry:
"Did anybody ever hear
A more prepos't'rous lie!"
All, except those goody bodies,
Knew that my reply
Expressed a simple fact, too deep
For "goodies" on the Rye.

Motion, likewise gravitation,
Seems but "all my eye";
So say some God-guided noodles
Down on Peckham Rye.
All the lettered folk that listened
Knew that they and I
Revolve around the sun with earth—
Including Peckham Rye.

All the treacle shops in Peckham
On our planet fly,
Once a year, right round the sun
That's seen from Peckham Rye;
Ev'ry side is soon the "other,"
Circling round the sky.
This the "goodies" cannot fathom
Down on Peckham Rye!

Thus each pound of earthly treacle
Round the sun doth hie;
Treacle, thus, on t'other side,
Last March, I did espy.
O, ye godly Peckham "goodies"!
Do, now, really try
To read and think before you start
To spout on Peckham Rye!

G. L. MACKENZIE.

The Sketch gives an excellent portrait of Georg Brandes, the famous Danish writer and critic, and remarks that his being an Atheist in thought and a Jew by birth has been among the hindrances of his receiving recognition.

CHAPTER FROM THE NEW APOCRYPHA. IN THE BEGINNING.

SATAN, having knowledge of the purpose of the Lord concerning creation, waxed curious thereupon.

So he gat him straightway to heaven, and having entered therein, he sat down, as well as he could, poor devil, because of his tail.

Tell me now, O Lord, said he, what is this that I have heard with my ears concerning thy purpose?

Then the Lord explained unto Satan.

And Satan hearkened politely till the explanation was overpast, and said, This is a big contract that thou hast undertaken, O Lord.

And the Lord admitted that it was.

I can see, said Satan, that thou canst mix chaos like dough, and spin worlds like tops.

But when it comes to making a man in thine own image, O Lord, thou wilt get badly left.

With that Satan gat him upon his feet, and chuckled, and said good day, and went forth unto his own place.

Not many ages after that—to wit, in the Azoic age, Satan came again to heaven, quite early.

And rag, and was let in.

O Lord, said he; but thou art getting on finely with thy creation.

And the Lord admitted that he was.

Thou hast mixed thy chaos like dough, and spun thy worlds like tops. But where is thy man that thou didst brag of aforetime?

Then did the Lord not kick Satan out of heaven because of his incredulity.

As the manner of so many who pass for his disciples now is. No, not a bit of it, but he sent one of his angels out into the backyard for a morsel of protoplasm.

Which when Satan saw he could make nothing of but mud, or, at most, that it was like unto jelly.

Thou thought he that the Lord had been too previous.

So he smiled and said, Is this thy man?

And the Lord answered and said unto him, It hath the makings of one.

But, and if it be made in thine image, O Lord, said Satan, this protoplasm is a mighty poor likeness.

Then would Satan have gone; but the Lord told him not to be in a hurry, but, if he must go, to call later on.

The next morning, therefore, Satan called around again, when he found the jelly had become a moneron.

At which he only smiled and went his way.

But nevertheless—for he was a persistent devil—Satan called the following day about noon.

Then had the moneron grown into a tadpole.

And the tadpole wiggled.

And Satan perceived the wiggling, and was frank and said, It wiggleth.

And the Lord admitted that it did.

But thy man, O Lord, said Satan, ought he not to more than wiggle?

And the Lord admitted that he ought.

Shall I call again? said Satan.

And the Lord answered and said unto him, Call again.

So Satan did call yet other times.

And the mud which was like unto jelly, and became a moneron, and a tadpole.

Yea, verily the same grew fins and was a fish, and scales and was a turtle, and wings and was a bird, and hind legs and was a pterodactyl, and four hands and was an ape.

When Satan saw the fish he chirruped unto it that it leave the Lord and come to him.

But the fish took no notice of Satan whatsoever.

And the same was the case with the turtle and the bird and the pterodactyl and the ape; for neither had regard unto Satan whatsoever.

Neither for his chirruping nor any beguiling, for they were of this world and wiser in their generation than the children of light.

But about the going down of the sun on the sixth age came Satan yet again.

And as he looked over the picket fence of the garden he saw and beheld the ape, that he had lost his tail and had grown a thumb.

And Satan was confounded and communed among himself, and concluded that this did, after all, begin to look like business.

So Satan tried his old trick and chirruped.

And lo! the man, pricking up his ears, spoke saying, Who said apples?

When Satan knew that it was of a truth a man who had thus spoken.

And then he was frank once more, and said unto the Lord that he owned up.

For verily thou hast mixed thy chaos like dough and spun thy worlds like tops, and now I perceive that thou hast made thy man.

And I perceive also that he is made in thine image, not because of any strong personal resemblance, nor yet by a strawberry mark.

But because when I chattered unto him he harkened, now know I that he hath the power to choose between thee and me.

So Satan went away, and communed yet again among himself.

And bethought him that the Lord had not invited him—as he had aforetime cordially—to call again.

Yet did Satan resolve that he would call again.

And he has called again—many times, for he is a persistent devil—even unto this day.

—Open Court.

HUDOR GENONE.

BOOK CHAT.

J. A. Symonds' last book, which is entitled *Walt Whitman: a Study*, is pronounced by Walter Lewin in the *Academy* to be "an adequate estimate" of the good grey poet.

* * *

Wm. Reeves, of 185 Fleet-street, issues as No. 17 of "The Bellamy Library" *The Anatomy of Misery*, by John C. Kenworthy. It is a course of lessons on Social Economics. The author writes vigorously and concisely. He is a Christian Socialist, and we should say rather an idealist than one with a clear outlook on reality. He traces misery and crime alike to the action of "property laws."

* * *

Herr Specht, the editor of *Menschenhum*, has brought out a fourth revised and improved edition of his Freethought work on *Theology and Science*.

* * *

An article on George Fox, the founder of the Quakers, appears in *Macmillan* for September. It mentions that Cromwell could find little fault with Fox's hat fad, since he himself stalked up the nave at Ely Cathedral with his hat on his head, and roughly bade the Rev. Mr. Hitch to "Leave off that fooling and come down."

* * *

Open Court for Aug. 21 is a very interesting number. First, Prof. G. J. Romanes makes critical remarks on Weismannism; then Hudor Genone has some fun on God and Satan in the beginning, which we reprint in our columns. M. D. Conway continues his story of South Place Society. Amos Waters has a paper on William Maccall, who is described as "a misfortunate genius who narrowly missed eminence."

* * *

During the past year Lady Shelley has donated to the British Museum, one of the only three known copies of Shelley's *Edipus Tyrannus, or Swellfoot the Tyrant*, the entire impression of which was destroyed with the exception of seven copies. The set of original editions of Shelley's works in the Museum is now complete with the exception of the unfindable poems by Victor and Cazire.

* * *

We have received two important medical pamphlets by the Surgeon to the Queen's Household, Sir Spencer Wells, F.R.C.S. One is entitled the *Prevention of Preventible Disease*, and the other *Cremation and Cholera*. Sir Spencer Wells is an earnest advocate of cremation, which he holds would be the surest means of extinguishing epidemics. The latter pamphlet can be obtained for threepence from the Cremation Society of England, 8 New Cavendish-street, W.

* * *

De Dageraad for September continues its articles on "Doubt in Certainty," in reply to Dr. Chantepre de la Saussaye's "Certainty in Doubt." We are pleased to see that these articles are to be republished in book form. In its "Universal Review" *De Dageraad* gives many items from the *Freethinker*.

OBITUARY.

I AM sorry to have to record the death of Mrs. M. A. Sanderson (widow of the late Henry Sanderson, of Jarrow) on Monday, Aug. 28, at the age of 52 years, after a long and severe illness. She bore her trouble patiently, and died like her late husband, very firm in her convictions. Mr. Samuel Peacock, of South Shields, read the Austin Holyoake Burial Service over her grave to a large and sympathetic gathering, chiefly composed of women.—J. R. ROBSON, Sec.

We are laying the foundations of the grand temple of the future—not the temple of all the gods, but of all the people—wherein, with appropriate rites, will be celebrated the religion of Humanity. We are doing what little we can to hasten the coming of the day when society shall cease producing millionaires and mendicants—gorged indolence and famished industry—truth in rags and superstition robed and crowned. We are looking for the time when the useful shall be honorable, when the true shall be the beautiful, and when Reason, throned upon the world's brain, shall be the King of kings and God of gods.—*Ingersoll*;

MOUNT SINAI.

"WHERE was Mount Sinai?" is the question posed by Prof. A. H. Sayce in the current *Asiatic Quarterly Review*. Now I don't suppose it matters a fig where Mount Sinai was, except to the foolish pilgrims who go out to trace the scenes of the blessed Bible, and I expect they won't thank Prof. Sayce for pointing out to them that it cannot possibly be either Mount Serbal, as indicated in modern guide books, or the Jabel Musa, the Mount of Moses, believed in by the natives of the Sinaitic Peninsula. But the question of Bible geography is important, for it is one that shows that the places supposed to be the scene of Bible events were really discovered long afterwards—were, in fact, invented by the monks to fit their legends. Prof. Sayce shows that Josephus, like Paul (Gal. iv. 25), regarded Sinai as in Arabia. It was the monks who found Mount Sinai and Mount Horeb—which, by the way, Lepsius thought was the true Sinai—as they did so many other places. Prof. Sayce says: "The hermits had before their eyes the great examples of Moses and Elijah, who, like themselves, had fled into the wilderness out of the world, and it was necessarily not long before they had persuaded themselves that the wilderness into which the Hebrew prophets had fled was the very one in which they were themselves living." The traditional site has been questioned before Prof. Sayce by Dr. Beke, Mr. Baker Green, and Lepsius, whom Mr. Sayce does not mention. Travellers ought to have been on their guard before, when they found one mountain named after Moses and another after St. Catherine—the latter name indicating that the tradition is later than even Mr. Sayce supposes. I certainly shall not follow the professor in his hunt through the wilderness, when confessedly he is only groping his way from indications in the Pentateuch. He comes to the conclusion that "we have to look for it on the borders of Midian and Edom." He might as well tell us to look for the jawbone of the ass, out of which sprang a fountain, at the foot of Samson's ribs outside Edinburgh. Prof. Sayce has yet to discover that the sites are just as genuine as the stories, and the stories just as fictitious as the sites. He says: "If the exact position of the mountain itself is thus a matter of dispute, we need not be surprised that the identification of the other sites sanctified by the wanderings of the Israelites should be still more a subject of controversy. There is hardly one of them which is settled." Fancy hunting up the stations on a journey between Egypt and Palestine, said to occupy forty years, but which ought to have been traversed without divine assistance in as many days. Well, there is some amusement in watching what fools religious fanatics will make of themselves. UNCLE BENJAMIN.

CORRESPONDENCE.

ETHICAL CULTURISM.

TO THE EDITOR OF "THE FREETHINKER."

SIR,—The Secretary of the London Ethical Society, Mr. Muirhead, took the mournful opportunity of Ernest Clark's death, to recommend his Society to such as "are of regard to truth and reality, reject the illusions offered by religions." "To combat the evil" of suicide, he acknowledged frankly, that "the axe must be laid at the root of an ideal of life, which much of the religious teaching of the day does all it can to encourage." But the attitude of his Society is not so frank, for in the declaration of its principles, the Society states that it "is not concerned with negative theological criticism." It reserves its solicitude only for those who have rejected the illusions offered by religions,—in short, those who have finished their Hall of Science course. Then I submit that the Secretary made an ill-founded claim for his Society. Ernest Clark, still falteringly haunting chapels and churches, muddled by much of the teaching there, can get no assistance from such a Society. The Secretary, himself, not long ago, in an Ethical meeting, was tunefully playing second fiddle to a Unitarian minister on the ancient melody, "The Kingdom of God," in a fashion, too, entitling him to the coveted diploma of Mr. Athelstan Riley. After his performances—he was in the chair—he would have none of the listeners' usual criticism upon the Unitarian minstrel's sacred music. That for the absence of audible prayers, we were verily in a House of God, and it was the gate of heaven. In spite of Mr. Muirhead's tall talk of laying the axe at the root of things, I have seen only one axe at his meetings, and that was borrowed: axes are not kept in stock. And as to "combating," it cannot, perhaps, be expected from the carpet knights of the London Ethical Society,—the highly respectable extension lecturers who meekly murmur platonic platitudes to a "congregation," chiefly consisting of daintily-clad ladies.

W. LLOYD DAVIES.

158 Drayton Park, N., Aug. 30, 1893.

"The Lords' name be praised," is the latest Anti-Hom Rule prayer.

HAPPINESS HEREAFTER.

The argument is often advanced that justice requires that man should live hereafter: that there is so much wrong and misery in this life that another life is necessary to complete the purpose of existence. To begin with, who knows that misery is not the purpose of existence as much as happiness? If there were justice in Nature, then it might do to predicate a future life for humanity, but is there? We see no effort in Nature to do right by her creatures. It is hard for a human being to be the victim of misfortune, so it is hard for a poor fly to be caught in a web and devoured by a fat spider. But what else is the fly for? The storm of disease appears to be as natural as the calm of health. If all that are wronged and injured on earth are to have a heaven to compensate them for suffering, then everything that lives will have another life.—*Boston Investigator.*

HOW TO HELP US.

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

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.: 6.30, musical selections; 7, G. W. Foote, "Christ and Democracy" (admission free; reserved seats 3d. and 6d.)
- Battersea Secular Hall (back of Battersea Park Station): 7.45, J. B. Coppock, F.C.S., "The Origin of Life," with lantern illustrations (free.) Tuesday at 8, social evening (free).
- Camberwell—61 New Church-road, S.E.: 7.30, C. J. Hunt, "The Inquisition."
- South Essex Secular Society, Enterprise Club, 33 Salway-road, Stratford: 7.15, Charles Ivatts, "Struggle for Progress; or what might have been" (free).
- Wimbledon—Harfield-road Coffee House: 11, a meeting to form Branch of N.S.S.

OPEN-AIR PROPAGANDA.

- Battersea Park-gates: 11.15, St. John, "Christianity and Progress."
- Camberwell—Station-road: 11.30, H. Snell, "Christianity and Progress."
- Clerkenwell Green: 11.30, J. Rowney will lecture.
- Edmonton (corner of Angel-road): 7, A. B. Moss, "The Bible and Evolution."
- Finsbury Park (near the band stand): 11.30, J. Fagan will lecture; 3.30, S. H. Alison will lecture.
- Hammersmith (corner of The Grove): Thursday, Sept. 21, at 8.30, C. Cohen will lecture.
- Hammersmith Bridge (Middlesex side): 6.30, W. Heaford, "Christian Miracles: are they Credible?"
- Hyde Park (near Marble-arch): 11.30, W. Heaford, "A Freethinker's View of Christ"; 3.30, Stanley Jones, "The Creation." Wednesday at 8, St. John, "Curiosities of Superstition."
- Kilburn (corner of Victoria-road, High-road): 6.30, C. Cohen, "Relief and Prayer."
- Kingsland—Ridley-road (near Dalston Junction): 11.30, Stanley Jones, "Miracles and Medicine."
- Lambeth—Kennington Green (near the Vestry Hall): 6.30, Stanley Jones, "Christian Religion."
- Leyton—High-road (near Vicarage-road): 11.30, C. Cohen, "Christianity and Slavery."
- Midland Arches (corner of Battle Bridge-road): 11.30, S. H. Alison will lecture.
- Mile End Waste: 11.30, W. J. Ramsey, "What must I do to be Saved?"
- Newington Green: 3.15, W. Heaford, "Religion: as it is and as it should be."
- Old Fimlico Pier: 11.30, F. Haslam, "The French Revolution and Atheism." Collection in aid of Benevolent Fund.
- Regent's Park (near Gloucester-gate): 3.30, C. J. Hunt will lecture.
- Victoria Park (near the fountain): 11.15, E. Calvert will lecture; 3.15, C. Cohen will lecture; 6, Stanley Jones will lecture.
- Walthamstow—Markhouse-road: 6.30, C. James, "By their fruits ye shall know them."
- Wood Green—Jolly Butchers'-hill: 11.30, R. Forder, "The Holy Ghost."
- The "Queensberry" R. and A. Club: Saturday, Sept. 16, 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. Tuesday, general meeting of members at the hall.

COUNTRY.

- Birmingham—Baskerville Hall, Crescent, Cambridge-street: 11, members' meeting.
- Failsforth—Secular Sunday-school: 6.30, P. Percival, "Gutenberg—Modern Industry."
- Glasgow—Ex-Mission Hall, 110 Brunswick-street: 12, discussion class, business meeting and literary selections by members; 6.30, Zosimus, "The Labor Movement and the Law of Population."
- Liverpool—Oddfellows' Hall, St. Anne-street: 3, logic class, L. Small, B.Sc.; 7, Mr. Smith, "Behold your God."
- Manchester N.S.S., Secular Hall, Rusholme-road, Oxford-road, All Saints': 3, Mr. Doeg, "The Man after God's own Heart"; 6.30, "Greasy Piety." Tuesday at 8, debating circle, Mr. Kelly, "The Unemployed."
- Reading—Foresters' Hall, West-street: 7, members' meeting.
- Sheffield—Hall of Science, Rockingham-street: Touzeau Parris, "Socialism and Individual Liberty"; 3, "Serpent Worship"; 7, "The Christian Religion: a form of Devil Worship."
- South Shields—Capt. Duncan's Navigation School, King-street: 7, business meeting.
- Sunderland—Bridge End Vaults, Bridge-street: 7, J. Clare, "Is Neo-Malthusianism Immoral?"

OPEN-AIR PROPAGANDA.

- Brighton (on the Level): 3, R. Rosetti, "Is Easter a Christian Festival?"

LECTURERS' ENGAGEMENTS.

STEPHEN H. ALISON, Democratic Club, Essex-street, Strand, W.C.—Sept. 17, m., Midland Arches; a., Finsbury Park.

C. COHEN, 12 Merchant-street, Bow-road, E.—Sept. 17, m., Leyton; a., Victoria Park; e., Kilburn; 24, Barnsley. Sept. 25 to Oct. 31, on tour. Nov. 4, South Shields; 5, Blythe.

STANLEY JONES, 53 Marlborough-road, Holloway, London, N.—Sept. 17, m., Bethnal Green; a., Hyde Park; 24, m., Victoria Park; a., Hyde Park.

ARTHUR B. MOSS, 44 Oredon-road, Rotherhithe, London, S.E.—Sept. 17, e., Edmonton; 24, m., Westminster; a., Victoria Park; e., Kilburn. Oct. 4, North Camberwell Radical Club; 15, Hyde Park; 22, m. and e., Camberwell; 29, Westminster. Nov. 5, Chatham.

TOUZEAU PARRIS, Clare Lodge, 32 Upper Mall, Hammersmith, London, W.—Sept. 17, Sheffield. Oct. 1, Camberwell. Nov. 26, Camberwell.

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COUNCIL meeting at the Hall of Science, Thursday, Sept. 7. Mr. G. Standing in the chair. Present: Messrs. R. O. Smith (treasurer), J. Anderson, Callow, Dowding, Mrs. Fisher, Renn, Rowden, Schaller, Miss Vance, Ward, Williams, and the secretary. The minutes of the previous meeting were read and confirmed. The experimental series of lectures at Ridley-road, Kingsland, was discussed; and Mr. R. O. Smith was requested to attend and report thereon. The secretary reported that he had received several applications in the matter of the proposed training class for speakers, and some other names were given in during the meeting; the committee was then instructed to arrange for those gentlemen to be heard. A statement of contributions by Branches to the funds of the Federation was brought forward; and the secretary was instructed to write to those Branches in arrears with their subscriptions and collections. The arrangements for the Conference of London members, at the Hall of Science in October, were referred to the committee to carry out. Mr. Renn then moved, and Mr. Anderson seconded, "That the publication of the Monthly List of Lectures be suspended"; carried. An application for a grant was discussed, and deferred for a financial report to be presented at the next meeting. It was decided to hold, shortly, a tea and soirée in aid of the funds of the Federation, and the arrangements were left to the committee. After some business details the Council adjourned.

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