

# The Freethinker

Edited by G. W. FOOTE.]

[Sub-Editor, J. M. WHEELER.

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THE METHODIST BOURDIN.

“HOIST WITH HIS OWN PETARD.”

## MR. HUGHES'S ADVOCATE.

As my pamphlet is doing its work, I thought my hurried reply to Mr. Holyoake's communication would close this controversy, at least for the present, in the pages of the *Freethinker*; but a fresh aspect of the matter demands a final statement from me. It is a statement which I have pain in making, and I feel the necessity of keeping within the bounds of sober and dignified speech.

Mr. Holyoake's communication has been a puzzle to the Secular party, if I may judge by my correspondence. I confess it was also a puzzle to me. Points of the greatest significance were neglected, and charges were formulated against me, which could only have been based on a careless or half-honest perusal of what I had written. The whole communication, in short, was less a defence of Mr. Hughes than an attack on myself. I felt this at the time, yet I was loth to speak or think harshly of “the father of Secularism.” But now I see the explanation. Mr. Holyoake's communication was written for the *Methodist Times*, which I have no doubt received it before I did. The *Freethinker* had only a reversionary interest in the document. It appeared last week on the front page of Mr. Hughes's paper. At the end of it was printed the letter of Mr. Hughes in answer to mine in the *Daily*

No. 659.]

*Chronicle*. That letter was so worded as to contain no clue to the contents of mine. The readers of the *Methodist Times* were kept in ignorance of the fact that I had invited Mr. Hughes to submit with me to the adjudication of a Court of Honor.

### Christian and Atheist.

In the *Freethinker* I have been careful to give both sides of the case, as far as I could. I printed Mr. Holyoake's communication without a word of introduction, so that Secularists might read it unbiassed. I have also printed Mr. Hughes's letters and paragraphs in these columns, and have striven to be impartial in giving evidence, whatever I may have been in coming to conclusions. Not that I boast of this. It is in conformity with the tradition of our party. I merely state the fact, in order that the Christian and the Atheist policies may be contrasted. Mr. Hughes has carefully kept every word on the other side out of his paper. He is afraid, as I am not afraid, to let the reader form a judgment on the facts of the case. His policy is the absolute suppression of hostile evidence.

### A Christian Client.

Mr. Hughes has played the part of a client, except for his protests that he is higher and holier than the President of the National Secular Society. In the

whole of this controversy he has not uttered a word in his own defence. He has left it all to Mr. Holyoake, and the *Methodist Times* has published the speeches for the defence, without a sentence of the speeches for the prosecution, or a tittle of the evidence of its witnesses.

#### An Atheist Advocate.

Mr. Holyoake has held a brief for Mr. Hughes. It is evident from his communication that he was consulting his client while Secularists were wondering at his silence. He states a fact (if it be a fact) which he could only have learnt from Mr. Hughes. He has obviously consulted the Sisters. But he did not consult me. To do so was inconsistent with his undertaking. My proffers were ostentatiously slighted. My letters were unanswered and unacknowledged. I asked for an interview, and promised to submit evidence that it would have been imprudent to commit to writing. But I was given no opportunity of doing this. Mr. Holyoake preferred to neglect the evidence that might damage his client.

#### Mr. Holyoake's Methods.

Looking back over Mr. Holyoake's communication, in the light of its appearance in the *Methodist Times*, I perceive that some of its points require a fresh comment. I had said that he simply asked the concoctors of the Atheist Shoemaker story whether it was true, and he replies—"This is in no wise so, for nothing I had read or knew had raised in my mind any question of untruth." Then he carelessly read my "Lie in Five Chapters," for I distinctly stated that Mr. Bradlaugh and Mr. Forder, as well as myself, had challenged the truth of the story.

Mr. Holyoake assumes that he only pitted his "opinion" against mine. But I gave more than an opinion. I was in a position to state, as Mr. Bradlaugh and Mr. Forder had done, that no such person as "John Herbert" had advocated Atheism in London. Mr. Holyoake also gave more than an opinion. He forgets that he made an investigation. And it is the complaint of the Secular party that his investigation was marked by feebleness and partiality.

It makes the matter worse for Mr. Holyoake to say "I was left free," without "suggestions" or "conditions." In that case he shamefully neglected his duty. The conversion of the "Atheist brother" at Northampton, which was so striking an incident in the story, should have alone sufficed to set him on a wider field of inquiry. Had he asked Julia for the address of that brother, he might have found the truth which he affects to "covet."

Not a hair's breadth did Mr. Holyoake go beyond the concoctors of the story. The fact is proved out of his own mouth. Had he merely given the name of Gibson, as he says he was free to, the whole truth would soon have come out. But he kept back the name on his own responsibility, and in so doing he interposed his own reputation as a shield to that of Mr. Hughes, without the slightest regard to my honor or Mr. Bradlaugh's, or the legitimate claims of the Secular party.

What is said about Julia Gibson only shows how Mr. Holyoake clings to a convenient ignorance. He calls her a Catholic, in spite of my statement that she had more recently worn the uniform of the Salvation Army. He repeats that she was "the most likely person to know" her husband's opinions, in spite of my strong assertions, which I offered to support by stronger evidence, as to the value of her testimony. I am pained to feel, as I cannot help feeling, that all this jesuitical pleading was meant for the readers of the *Methodist Times*, who are not in a position to detect its hollowness.

For the same readers, also, must have been meant the references to my "change of front," and to such an Atheist as "Mr. Foote goes upon now." Readers of the *Freethinker* know that I "go upon" the same Atheist as ever; namely, the Atheist of Mr. Hughes's story, who delivered eloquent speeches on Atheism in Victoria-park,

on Clerkenwell-green, and apparently in the Hall of Science. My change of front is entirely imaginary, as Mr. Holyoake describes it. Had I branded the story of the Flood as a fable or a falsehood, would it be an answer to say "we have found Mount Ararat?" And if I admitted the existence of Mount Ararat, would it be rational to say that I had "made a complete change of front" with regard to the Flood?

Seeing that Mr. Holyoake's communication was written for the *Methodist Times*, I am obliged to speak in terms of severe condemnation of his reference to the incident of Charles Alfred Gibson's kneeling down to pray in his father's passage. Mr. Holyoake tells the reader's of Mr. Hughes's journal that I admit the young man "did not" kneel down, which is an absolute falsehood. He even goes on to ask whether the Gibsons were "liars" in telling me so. Surely this is very grotesque in a communication to the *Freethinker*, and something very much worse in a communication to the *Methodist Times*.

#### The Gibsons.

Mr. Holyoake had the Methodist readers in his eye in writing what he did about the Gibsons, who have honestly braved the daylight, unlike the opposite witnesses who still affect a "shrinking" from "publicity." In spite of my statement that Mr. Gibson senior approached Mr. Hughes at Northampton, and that the reverend gentleman was too busy to listen, Mr. Holyoake tells the Methodists that "A copy of the 'Atheist Shoemaker' was given to him four and a half years ago, and from that day until this he had never complained to the author of anything in it." It is added, in order to prove Mr. Gibson ungrateful, that he went into the vestry at Northampton and "thanked Mr. Hughes profusely for his kindness to his son."

Did Mr. Holyoake test these statements? Not he. I cannot get at his witnesses, but he can get at mine; yet he makes allegations affecting their honor, without troubling himself to hear their testimony.

I have written to Mr. Gibson and received his answer. He says it is true that he thanked Sister Lily when he called at Katherine House. "I did thank Sister Lily," says Mr. Gibson, "and I would again for her kindness to my son." It does him credit to say so. I also have admitted the kindness of the Sisters, but it is no proof of their accuracy in cases of "conversion."

Mr. Gibson adds what I expected he would. His visit to Katherine House took place before he had seen Mr. Hughes or his book. Julia Gibson was ill, and he went up to London to see her. How was he to know that a lying story was being concocted about his son? His copy of "The Atheist Shoemaker" was not presented to him until December, 1889, as is proved by the inscription within it in Sister Lily's handwriting.

Mr. Gibson characterises as "a falsehood" the statement that "he had never intimated to Mr. Hughes that there was anything in the story he had published to which he had the least objection." Mr. Gibson went with his wife—the good, kind mother-in-law of Charles Alfred Gibson, and herself a Wesleyan—to a chapel at Northampton to see Mr. Hughes. They did not see him "in the vestry," but at the vestry door. "I told him," Mr. Gibson says, "that I should like to have an interview with him about Julia and his book, and that there were many things false in it; but he said he was in a hurry, and he gave me his card, and said 'Come and see me when you are in London.'" This agrees with what I published in the *Freethinker* for January 28. Mr. Gibson kept the card referred to, which is now in my custody with other documents.

Mr. Holyoake talks of my "standing up for the infallibility of members of the Salvation Army in Northampton." The Gibsons retort that Mr. Holyoake is doing so himself. They are not Salvationists, but Charles Alfred Gibson and Julia were. Both of them wore the Army uniform at St. Albans. It is obvious, therefore, that Mr. Holyoake's bigoted little

joke (intended for his Methodist readers) recoils upon himself.

Mr. Gibson invites Mr. Holyoake, as I have invited him, to hear their side of the case, and to inspect their documents. But he makes this stipulation, that they shall not pass out of my custody until the matter is finally settled. The inspection, therefore, would have to be made in my presence. Mr. Gibson will be no party to any tricks being played upon me. He is an honorable man himself, and he says I have treated him honorably.

So much for Mr. Holyoake's attempt to discredit the Gibsons—persons who had done him no harm, who had simply tried to tell the truth, and had actually invited him (through me) to make the fullest inquiry into their statements. It looks as though the veteran Secularist were contaminated by bad company.

#### Mr. Hughes's Song of Triumph.

"Mr. Holyoake vindicates the truth of the entire story," Mr. Hughes said on the publication of the "report," and the monstrous falsehood was not corrected by "the father of Secularism." Mr. Hughes is now more jubilant than ever. He riots as follows in the *Methodist Times*:

"At Mr. G. J. Holyoake's request we publish a supplementary report from his pen on the 'Atheist Shoemaker.' When his original statement appeared Mr. Foote began a series of attacks on Mr. Price Hughes, Sister Lily, the widow of the 'Atheist Shoemaker,' and Mr. Holyoake. The nature and quality of his attacks will be sufficiently manifest from Mr. Holyoake's reply. We append to that reply the reprint of a letter which appeared in the *Daily Chronicle*, explaining why it was impossible for Mr. Price Hughes himself to have any communication with Mr. Foote. But Mr. Price Hughes requested Mr. Holyoake, a personal friend of Mr. Foote's, a vice-president of the National Secular Society, and one whom Mr. Foote himself has acknowledged to be 'the Father of Secularism,' to investigate the facts of the case. Mr. Price Hughes might quite legitimately have insisted that some one who was a friend of his and a Christian should be associated with Mr. Holyoake in the investigation. But he was so anxious that the inquiry should be made by one who had no bias in his favor or in favor of Christianity, and had also such confidence in the integrity and judicial temper of Mr. Holyoake, that he left himself unreservedly in that gentleman's hands. He made no conditions and no suggestions. From that day to this he has never seen Mr. Holyoake. The friends of truth and courtesy will appreciate the conscientious impartiality with which Mr. Holyoake has completed and conducted his inquiry."

I do not suppose Mr. Holyoake will correct the statement that I have written "a series of attacks" upon him, but the readers of the *Freethinker* know it is a lie. Mr. Holyoake can do as he likes. I will stoop to ask him no favor. I will not even ask him to be just.

"The nature and quality" of my attacks are "sufficiently manifest from Mr. Holyoake's reply." This is Hughes all over. And how characteristic is the allusion to a second investigator. It is worthy of Pecksniff, like the prodigal eulogies on Mr. Holyoake's "integrity" and "judicial temper." Mr. Hughes picks out his own investigator, publishes his report, prints his portrait, smothers him with compliments, which are handsomely reciprocated, and winds up with lavish praises of his "conscientious impartiality."

Was there ever a more nauseous farce? It is enough to sicken a Methodist. Some such creature as Hughes must have been in the mind of the writer of that ancient curse—"Upon thy belly shalt thou go, and dust shalt thou eat all the days of thy life."

#### Mr. Holyoake's Position and Mine.

During the time that Mr. Holyoake, in silence and secrecy, was conducting his "investigation" on behalf of Mr. Hughes, he was in communication with me on other matters, and promising me a copy of his Autobiography when I came to Brighton, in token of his appreciation of the long notice I gave of it with the fine portrait of him I published more than a year ago in the *Freethinker*. When he left me to learn of his "report" in a Christian paper

I felt aggrieved, and I wrote him to that effect, but he did not reply. My patience is now exhausted. I tell him that he was guilty of something scarcely indiscernible from treachery in sending such a document as his second "vindication" to the *Methodist Times*. It was a journal, as he knew, where the other side had been excluded. He wrote what its readers were therefore in no position to judge. He made assertions about me which were untrue, he garbled evidence, he pleaded as Mr. Hughes's advocate, he lent himself to an imposture. It is a grief to me to say so, but the truth has been wrong from me, and I let it go forth. Yet withal it is easy to perceive that Mr. Holyoake is sensible of the weakness of his cause. After vindicating "the entire truth of the story," he is silent now about the eloquent advocate of Atheism in the places indicated by Mr. Hughes, and silent about the "Atheist brother" at Northampton. The very Atheism of Charles Alfred Gibson has to be maintained on grounds of "probability," and dialectic has to eke out the deficiencies of evidence. I therefore leave Mr. Holyoake with a consciousness that he has fallen a prey to Nemesis. He neglected my hints, he scorned my warnings, and deliberately associated himself, for good or ill, with a convicted and branded liar, to the grief and pain of his own friends and the secret laughter of Christians. For the moment he may relish their hollow flattery, but he may live to feel how poor a compensation it is for the distrust of his own party.

G. W. FOOTE.

#### DANIEL'S TOMB.

Less than three miles to the north-east of Samarcand and outside of the extreme limits of the ancient city, is a tomb which is called Khodja-Daniar. This tomb, according to the Mussulman legends, is the burial-place of the Prophet Daniel.

The sepulchre of Khodja-Daniar is built on a sort of terrace or cornice. A half-dozen great masts, from the tops of which hang some sacred rags or *tougs* made of horse-tails, and the height of which is proportioned to the importance of the saint, rise above the sarcophagus, which stands in the open air, sheltered by no building of any kind.

This sarcophagus is constructed with heavy masonry. The saint who reposes there is, beyond a doubt, really dead; but his mode of behavior is more than curious, since, though dead, he continues to grow constantly in his sepulchre. Every two or three years, the mollahs who are the guardians of the place determine by a learned calculation, the date of which I was not able to learn, how much it is proper to lengthen the sepulchre, in order to make its dimensions correspond to those of its tenant. To judge from the present length of the tomb, the height of the prophet Daniel was, or should have been at the date of my visit in 1891, about eighty feet. His height must be a little more now. It should be observed that the growth of the saint is in length only, and not in breadth. The development of the breadth of his shoulders is not in proportion to that of his height.

There exists, in other parts of Islam, other tombs of the Prophet Daniel. Of these others, one of the most celebrated is in Cairo. This fact need not astonish us: the Mussulman's admit, without hesitation, the duplication or even indefinite multiplication of the bodies of holy persons, without their veneration for each of the remains being diminished in the least.—*E. Blanc, "Revue des Deux Mondes."*

Monothoism in Western Europe is now as obsolete and as injurious as Polytheism was fifteen centuries ago. The discipline in which its moral value principally consisted has long since decayed; and consequently the sole effect of its doctrine, which has been so extravagantly praised, is to degrade the affections by unlimited desires, and to weaken the character by servile terrors. The pursuits of practical life were never sincerely promoted by it, and they advanced only by evading or resisting its influence. The noblest of all practical pursuits, that of social regeneration, is at the present time in direct opposition to it. For by its vague notion of providence it prevents men from forming a true conception of law, a conception necessary for true prevision, on which all wise intervention must be based.—*Comte's "General View of Positivism"* (Bridges' translation), p. 291

## EDUCATION AND CRIME.

THE Bishop of Manchester, who was for a while Bishop of Melbourne, has been stating that secular education in Australia has resulted in increased crime. The statement has been repeated by many men of God, including the Bishop of Rochester. But none of them have produced the statistics. Nor can they. They may be able to show that last year there was an increase of convictions upon the previous one. This, I believe, is the solitary grain of fact upon which they have built their bold assertion. For such an increase there is another and, I believe, a truer reason, viz, the commercial depression which has passed over the colony, including the breaking of trusted banks and thousands thrown out of employment. But the Education Act came into operation twenty years ago. It should not need that time to show the ill results of secular education. The results, so far from being ill in this or any other regard, were entirely satisfactory. The statistics of crime and education, so far as I can get them,\* are brought down till 1888. They are as under. Per ten thousand of the population there were in

Year.	Arrests.	Committals.	Convicts.
1861	433	22	13
1871	362	14	8
1881	432	12	7
1888	365	10	6

In this table arrests include all manner of offences; committals refer only to crimes. There is indicated a continuous decrease in crime. The increase of education, on the other hand, is quite marked. The number of pupils under instruction were, in 1861, 130,030; 1871, 312,000; 1881, 671,000; 1888, 783,000.

I am willing to take the Bishop of Manchester's word that since 1888 the number of crimes have increased, but I say this fact, if fact it be, must be taken in connection with the whole statistics of crime and education, and with the special causes of an increase of crime through the breaking of banks, bad seasons, and a largely increased number of unemployed. I further defy the Bishop to show that the criminals are recruited from those who have received secular education. On the contrary, the statistics in Victoria, as elsewhere, show that the Roman Catholics, who are most religiously educated and do not attend the State schools, contribute the largest per centage to the criminal population. I further challenge the Bishop to find any place in the wide world where Freethinkers, or the secularly educated, constitute a larger per centage of the criminal population than those who have been religiously educated.

Victor Hugo said in his poetic way, "There is one light in every village—the schoolmaster; and one extinguisher—the priest." He also said "he who opens a school closes a prison." This of course was poetic rhetoric. Yet it is not altogether baseless. In London three large prisons have been taken down during the last ten years, and are being devoted to schools, postal service, and workmen's dwellings. Mullhall, in his *Dictionary of Statistics*, 1891, says "the increase of schools has been accompanied by a decrease in crime." The returns for England and Wales show—

Period.	Annual Convictions.	School children per 1000 pop.	Criminals per 100,000.
1841-50	24,300	11	122
51-60	21,200	26	98
61-70	17,010	47	68
71-80	13,900	82	50
1887	12,150	125	38

Thus convictions in this period dropped exactly one-half, and crime nearly to a quarter of what it had been in the days when the parson bulked big and the teacher little. Mullhall says, "From 1869 to 1881 there was a decline of 53 per cent. in juvenile crime, thus showing the good effect of reformatories since their introduction into the United Kingdom."

\* They are taken from the American Bureau of Education, Circular of information No. 4, 1893.

In Ireland also the spread of education has been accompanied by a decrease in crime. Again I give the statistics from Mulhall—

Date.	Annual Convictions.	School children per 1000.	Criminals per 100,000.
1851-60	7,705	35	124
61-70	2,918	56	53
71-80	2,492	77	47
1887	1,412	106	29

I am not saying there are no other causes. I avoid the exaggeration of Hugo as well as the bias of Moorhouse. But I do say it is idle, in the face of these statistics, to contend that education leads to crime. If it were so, all the leading governments of the civilised world are on the wrong tack, and should disestablish the schoolmaster and send for the priest. Our Government grants, instead of being made exclusively with respect to the results of secular instruction, should be devoted to encouraging religious training.

Doubtless there are crimes which may be termed those of the lettered classes. The man who has never learned to write does not forge. The thief who is a boor robs while the educated swindles. But it would be extremely difficult, if not impossible, to find a criminal who could attribute his crime to secular education. The teaching of the theology, however, may have made him a hypocrite or a liar, while indiscriminate Bible reading may have excited the germs of lust or brutality. In the case of a person with criminal tendencies, the old records of semi-savagery are decidedly dangerous, while the study of, say, arithmetic, gives less time to dwell upon evil propensities, and may induce the much-needed habit of thinking. The element of time occupied is of some importance. Criminals, on the average, are lazy. The man with plenty of work has little leisure for vice, and little inclination for crime. The scientific and literary class, who are also essentially the Freethinking class, are noted for their small proportion of criminals, while the profession to which Bishop Moorhouse belongs contributes more than its fair quota.

I am far from making intellectual instruction everything. Secular education should include moral and social training. Nay, in its widest aspect it includes the reformation of the social conditions out of which the greater part of crime arises. But it is the clerical obscurantists, who hamper the work of education by their absurd and pernicious dogmas, who are the worst enemies of morality, by placing it on the insecure foundations of theology instead of upon the actual needs of humanity.

J. M. WHEELER.

## EDUCATION AND THEOLOGY.

A GREAT struggle is at present going on between the friends of true education and the supporters of Christian theology. A similar policy is now being adopted by orthodox enthusiasts, in reference to education, to that which was in former times employed against science. Then the clergy bitterly opposed modern science, but they discovered that it was impossible for them to prevent its progress, they, therefore, made strong efforts to deprive it of its legitimate influence, by hampering its teachings with Biblical and theological interpretations. As Professor Huxley observes in his *Lay Sermons*: "In this nineteenth century, as at the dawn of modern physical science, the cosmogony of the semi-barbarous Hebrew is the incubus of the philosopher and the opprobrium of the orthodox. Who shall number the patient and earnest seekers after truth, from the days of Galileo until now, whose lives have been embittered and their good name blasted by the mistaken zeal of Bibliolaters? Who shall count the host of weaker men whose sense of truth has been destroyed in the effort to harmonise impossibilities—whose life has been wasted in the attempt to force the generous new wine of science into the old bottles of Judaism, compelled by the outcry of the same strong party? It is true that, if philosophers have suffered, their cause has been amply avenged. Extinguished theologians lie about the cradle of every

science, as the strangled snakes beside that of Hercules; and history records, that whenever science and orthodoxy have been fairly opposed, the latter has been forced to retire from the lists, bleeding and crushed, if not annihilated; scotched, if not slain. But orthodoxy is the Bourbon of the world of thought. It learns not, neither can it forget; and though at present bewildered and afraid to move, it is as willing as ever to insist that the first chapter of Genesis contains the beginning and the end of sound science; and to visit, with such petty thunderbolts as its half-paralysed hands can hurl, those who refuse to degrade nature to the level of primitive Judaism."

This is precisely what is now happening in the struggle to establish a free and secular system of education; and we have no fear but the results will be the same as those which followed the conflict of the Church with science. From the very inception of our national system of education the clerical party has carried on a persistent warfare against it. Prior to 1870 the clergy had the absolute control of the instruction of the rising generation, and what were the results? True education among children was entirely unknown, and thousands of boys and girls never even entered a school, except perhaps a few on Sundays, when mundane affairs were seldom referred to. In 1820 only six per cent. of the population were receiving even the poor instruction then imparted. *Cassell's History of England*, says that in the reign of George III., "education, either in town or country, was scarcely known. In our time even there was not a school in all the swarming region of Whitechapel, and many other equally poor and populous regions of London, much less in country towns and agricultural parishes. . . . The consequence was, that the condition of the agricultural population was as debased morally as it was destitute physically in the almost total absence of education, the very funds granted by pious testators for this end being embezzled by the clergy or squirearchy."

It is worthy of note that the efforts made in the early part of the present century on behalf of education met with the most determined opposition from the clergy of the Established Church and from some of the dissenting sects. Even Mr. (afterwards Lord) Brougham, in seeking to increase the educational grant and in endeavoring to promote a national scheme of instruction, found that his greatest difficulty lay with the exponents of the Church. Washington Wilks, in his history of the first half of the present century, gives some valuable information upon this subject, showing the opposition offered by the Christian party to all kinds of education but their own narrow and imperfect method. Mr. J. M. Ludlow, in his *Questions for a Reformed Parliament*, mentions that when the first grant of £30,000, in 1839, was proposed by Government for educational purposes, Canon Wray and the Rev. Hugh Stowell headed an organisation in opposition to it. In 1843 the English Dissenters resisted and threw out the Government Factory Educational Bill. If to-day the Church is more energetic in the formation of schools, it is because it seeks to counteract the influence of our Board schools, which sooner or later will destroy the power of that theology which has ever impeded human progress and fettered human thought.

The conflict which has recently been going on amongst the members of the London School Board was produced from the same cause that originally, for a time, paralyzed the educational movement. That cause was the desire to ally with education religious teaching, in reference to which there were and are so many various and conflicting opinions amongst its opponents. Thus it will be seen that a great obstacle to obtaining at first any national system of instruction was the diversity of the views entertained by the many sects of theologians as to what should comprise the religious element in education. The teachings of the Established Church were considered by the Nonconformists to be erroneous and injurious, while the instruction given by the dissenting bodies was pronounced by Churchmen to be "heretical" and "fraught with grave dangers." Ultimately it was conceded by Parliament that the Bible might be read in our public schools, but

that no theological doctrines should be taught. This constituted what is called the "compromise." In Birmingham, however, a determined opposition was offered by the late George Dawson and others to this concession upon the ground that as the meaning of the Bible was a debatable question, it, like all debatable books, should be excluded from public schools: This is the position we take, inasmuch as it appears to us to be the only rational and satisfactory solution of the question. We contend that a National School which is paid for by all, irrespective of their theological opinions, should be an institution for the teaching of that which all require and upon which all are agreed. This agreement experience teaches us, is confined to purely secular knowledge. It is admitted on all sides that it is essential that children should be so educated as to prepare them for properly playing their part in social life, and to afford them a fair opportunity as far as their natural gifts will permit, of their discharging aright their duties of citizenship. In order that this may be done, certain secular teaching, about which there is no dispute, is necessary. Let therefore the duties of the School Board be confined to carrying out the generally acknowledged necessities of education. The moment the question of religious instruction is introduced, discord arises, and the real object of the school is interfered with. To teach any form of religion or to impose Bible reading in our public schools at the expense of the ratepayers, we hold to be unjust and to be a revival of the old Church-rate in a new form. To take a decidedly secular stand, and to insist upon an absolute avoidance of every form of theological teaching, we regard as being the only true course to pursue in opposition to the proposals made by the clerical party on the School Board. To simply exclude sectarian teaching as it is termed is not sufficient while the Bible is retained, for that book is the source of the perplexity caused, and of the contradictions found in the theology which is sought to be inculcated.

The present struggle in London between Churchmen and Dissenters has revealed the wish, upon the part of a large section of the religious party, to use the public schools and the public funds for the purpose of teaching incomprehensible dogmas. In other words, an attempt is being made to convert our Board schools into miniature churches, and the teachers into missionaries, for the promulgation of the doctrines now taught in the orthodox pulpits and in the Sunday-schools. The leaders of this reactionary movement proceed as if Board schools had been established as nurseries for the purpose of supplying the Church with congregations as the old members fall off. Now it is quite certain that nothing of the kind was ever intended by the originators of the institution of the Board schools. The fact is that when it was abundantly proved that millions of children were growing up without any sort of education under the voluntary Christian system, it was deemed desirable to make other provisions to meet the educational wants of the age. The theological party, of all sects, had failed to prepare the young for good citizenship; therefore the State took the matter in hand, and taxed all alike for the common good—for if we efficiently educate those who in the future will wield the destinies of the nation, it must be an advantage, not to one class only of society, but to the whole of the community. Intellect will, henceforth, more than ever rule the world, and the better that intellect is cultivated the better it will be for all sections of the commonwealth.

CHARLES WATTS.

(To be continued).

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#### NEW YEAR'S GIFT TO FREETHOUGHT.

[Where not otherwise marked the subscriptions are one shilling.]

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We have learned that publicity, like the winds of heaven, is a perfect disinfectant as well as a good seed sower.—*Parton's Voltaire*, p. 335.

## RELIGIOUS TEACHING IN OUR SCHOOLS.

HAVING visited nearly all the sects in and around London on the above question, the decision arrived at is, that a plain matter-of-fact explanation of most of the vital parts of the Christian creed would be of use to the children in after life, not to bias their minds, but so they may be able to hand the traditions down in all their grand simplicity of detail. Being asked to prepare some essays suitable to the feeble mind of youth and babyhood, I have chosen the return of the prodigal son, in other words, "The Resurrection and Ascension of Christ." "Now after Jesus had eaten his fish and bread—it says honeycomb in the Bible, but that sounds so waxy—he must have made many trials of going up by springing heavenwards, just keeping his big toe earthwards, and swaying his arms up and down like a musical conductor inciting his orchestra to grand effort—then at last, when his heart grew braver, and he threw himself upwards, the sight must have been very pronounced at the dignified and balloon-like ease he passed the Palestinian chimney-pots, avoiding, with nimble dexterity, the telegraphic wires and sky advertisements of Jerusalem soap, etc., gaining speed as he went on his course, no doubt looking hot, tired and dusty, as he swiftly passed by the other worlds. The comets you sometimes see, my children, may be this self-same Christ returning from other expeditions of the like kind, where he has been engaged in the same performance on other earths, and the luminosity may be the phosphorescence of the undigested fish he takes as light refreshment before starting. He seems not to have carried a portmanteau or Gladstone bag—nor to have specially clothed himself for his cold and dark journey—but the great lesson to be learnt is, that an active life is more conducive to the cure of impaired digestion, than the grovelling stay-on-earth-life of the other gods, and Jesus must have had a god-like activity in escaping the attraction of the numerous worlds and suns he passed. And, my dear children, the object of all this divine exertion was to provide a free show to the inhabitants of this earth and countless other earths in their turn, thereby inculcating the great truth of the kindness and urbanity of God."

I think, sir, a good general description like the above, will help to impress these grand and elevating subjects on the plastic minds of children, more than the generally dry manner of tuition from the pulpit and Sunday-school.

F. A.

## ACID DROPS.

Sir George Stokes is a scientific man of some repute. He is also vice-president of the Christian Evidence Society. In himself he is a dull sort of man. We first saw him many years ago at one of the C.E.S. meetings in the Hall of Science. He was to have taken the chair, but he did not turn up in time, and, after a delay of a quarter of an hour, a substitute was appointed. This gentleman gave a brief introductory speech, and was just calling on the lecturer when Sir George Stokes made his appearance. The chair was vacated for him, and he spent some time in explaining why he was late. The cabman had been in the neighborhood for twenty minutes before he could find the Hall of Science! This was too much for the audience, some of whom could not help laughing.

Not satisfied with his prosy explanation, although by this time nearly half an hour had been wasted. Sir George Stokes took out a roll of paper and began to read the little speech he had prepared, which he evidently thought was far too good to be lost. It was deadly dull, and to our mind stupid, but the audience submitted to the infliction with inward groanings. All were relieved when he sat down and the paper disappeared.

This same Sir George Stokes has been allowed to deliver two courses of Gifford Lectures, having absolutely no qualification for the lectureship. Mr. A. W. Benn, writing in the *Academy*, complains that "for two years the munificent bequest of Lord Gifford has been diverted from the purpose for which it was intended to a purpose expressly precluded by the terms of his will; namely, to subsidising an apology for revealed religion." Mr. Benn sarcastically refers to Sir George Stokes's "taste" for the "solid emoluments of the Gifford Lectureship," and says that the Senate of Edinburgh University are to "blame" for "this deplorable appoint-

ment." We hope the Christian Evidence Society will give publicity to Mr. Benn's comments in its next annual report.

A good story (says *Truth*) is going round of a Lancashire parson. The rev. gentleman, on entering the pulpit, announced that the Bishop of Manchester was making a tour of his diocese, and might shortly be expected to visit this church. He then proceeded, without a pause, to deliver the text: "Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary, the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour" (1 Peter v. 8).

According to a paragraph in the *York Evening Express*, Mr. Alderman Ward, ex-Mayor of Leeds, and Mr. W. Gavazzi King, respectively president and vice-president of the Leeds Sunday Society, are to be proceeded against under the Act of Charles II. for the recovery of penalties for occupying the chair at Sunday lectures in Leeds. We presume the Act of George III. is meant. Messrs. Ward and King are, however, in no danger, if they only take the trouble to make a proper defence; in doing which we shall be happy to give them the advice of one who has studied the law on this point very carefully under the tuition of Charles Bradlaugh.

The Hindus and Mohammedans have again been rioting about their sacred animals. The latter found a dead pig at the entrance of their mosque, at Yeola. In revenge, they killed a sacred cow. And so the feud goes on. What a blessed thing is religion.

The full earnings of 200,000 at £2 per week each, would not cover the annual cost of religion in Great Britain. And yet people wonder that, with such splendid churches, there should be so much poverty.

There is a curious industry in China. It is the manufacture of mock money for offering to the dead. Formerly sham paper money was burned, but now mock coins, made of stamped tin pasted on cardboard, are used. The Chinese are too shrewd to give real offerings. If the money wasted on religion in this country was of similar character, it would be a great advantage.

Mr. W. R. Le Fanu, in his *Seventy Years of Irish Life*, gives the following testimony of an invalid who had been to Knock Chapel, in the hopes of securing the services of Our Lady of Knock. "Indeed, sir, I took all the rounds, and said all the prayers, but it was of no use; not but what its a grand place. It would astonish you to see all the sticks and crutches hanging up there, left behind by poor cripples who went home cured. It's my opinion, sir, that for rheumatism, and the like of that, it's a grand place entirely; but as for the liver, it's not worth a d—n."

The Rev. John Ferguson Macdonald, curate of All Saints, Lambeth, was found dead on the floor of his bedroom, which was in a very dirty and neglected condition. Two bags of gold were found in his room, containing £399 10s. He was apparently laying up treasure on earth in addition to his inheritance in the skies.

Dr. Parker recently held forth on the unpardonable sin, and a religious journal says he was "in his best form." Well, if that be true, we wonder what his worst form is like. He actually condescended to agree with God Almighty. Quoting a saying of Jesus Christ, the preacher added, "And he was right." We hope Jesus Christ appreciates the compliment.

"We have amongst us now, I think," said Dr. Parker, "a sect, with only a few crusts to eat and no butter, calling themselves Freethinkers. Why, I never saw even a well-dressed Freethinker, to go no further." We need not quarrel about the dressing. Christians may, if they choose, take the first prize in tailordom. Nor will we quarrel about the other part of this inspired utterance. Dr. Parker's crusts are better buttered than those of Freethought advocates. He has always looked well after the butter. There are some people who remember how he left Manchester many years ago.

The Rev. Arthur Robins, who is a Queen's chaplain, is the writer of an article on "Our Home-Made Heathen." He points out that in London alone there are 50,000 families living in one room each. True, and the fact shows the

humbug of Missionary Societies. Surely the "heathen" in foreign lands might well cry out to the English missionaries, "Physician heal thy own kindred."

Whenever Mr. Sayce, in his book on *The Higher Criticism and the Monuments*, comes to a point of conflict he writes with the timidity of a man who lets "I dare not" wait upon "I would," and tries to run at once with the hare of orthodoxy while hunting with the hounds of free inquiry. Even when he admits (pp. 418—19), "In calling Seve 'King of Egypt' therefore, the biblical writer has made a mistake; he was commander of the Egyptian army, and at most one of the local knights who abounded in the time of Delta," he goes on to say: "The existence of such inaccuracies in the biblical narrative is the best proof we can have of its conformity with other historical writings." This is the very point for which Freethinkers have been contending for generations—that the Bible shall be judged by the same standards as other literature. Now it is being gradually admitted even by the S.P.C.K.

The Ramsgate magistrates have fined the Rev. Richard Allnutt, vicar of Monkton, for caning a schoolboy named Charles Holme. It is very hard that a man of God should pay ten shillings and costs for such a small luxury.

"May God forgive me," said poor Mrs. Robus, before drowning herself with her infant in a pond near Dunkirk. She had been deserted by her husband, and she was not an Atheist. Talmage and others please note.

Harriet Gilbert, a girl who is a cripple, went to Ashford parish church to be confirmed. While in the holy edifice she tripped over a mat and broke her left hip. It was a sad accident, and a curious illustration of the doctrine of Providence.

A writer in the *Church Times* thinks the Church of England wants more intellect. Referring to a large bookshop at Birmingham, he says that "one may see on a market day in any week, in the course of an hour or two, from one to half-a-dozen feeble and vacuous-looking curates, whose gait, features and voices would secure them a hearty round of applause if they were to appear for five minutes on the stage."

M. Jean Aicard, a French poet, points out that statistics show that no less a proportion than four and a half per cent of the French fishermen who go to the North Sea fishing, are drowned every year. This is the toll taken by their Heavenly Father, whose mercy is over all his works.

The *Bombay Gazette* has been writing on the Aghoris, a cannibal sect found in the mountain districts of India. "Their 'doctrine' is to reverence no one except God and the 'guru,' or religious teacher, to have no care in life, to sleep anywhere, to have no scruples about anything, to subdue the natural tastes by eating human flesh and all else that is human, as well as the carrion of reptiles." How would it do to preach to them from the text, "Except ye eat the flesh of the son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you."

Talmage is described in the *San Francisco Chronicle* as a clerical mountebank. His failure is said to be due to a "lack of moral sincerity," and his career "has been one of false pretences throughout." Everybody knew, says the Frisco paper, that when the receipts dropped off he would leave his Church to grapple with its difficulties alone. What will he do now? Some of the English religious papers are pressing him to come over here. But what has England done to deserve such a punishment?

The ablest Baptist preacher in Virginia is said to be Barnet Grinsley. When a lad of sixteen by an accident he had his skull cracked. The accident, instead of injuring him, proved a benefit, giving more room for the brain to expand; so say brain surgeons. He is of later years known as Grinsley the eloquent. There are hundreds of DD.'s that might be benefited by this treatment. Let some brain surgeon start out with an Indian war-club. Brooklyn, N.Y., is a good starting point.—*Ironclad Age*.

The amount of Peter's Pence collected for the Pope's jubilee, and which is about to be presented to him, is

727,434 lire. Cardinal Bembo is reported to have said that the fable of Jesus Christ was a profitable one. It still prove<sup>d</sup> so.

The good old *Church Times*, which is nothing if not Catholic, had scarcely got over its horror at the proposal for holding the Oxford and Cambridge boat race in Holy Week, when it is surprised by a circular from the committee of St. John's College, Cambridge, with the Bishop of Manchester on its board, announcing their dinner for the Friday in Passion Week. What is the world coming to?

A gentleman who started an unsuccessful Christian Evidence paper, and who is apparently in want of a job, writes a long windy letter to the *Church Times* on "The Growth of Non-belief." He says: "I too frequently discover that Radical clubs are homes of infidelity. Heresies generally march two by two." "Everywhere," he says, "disbelief is growing rapidly, surely, and not silently." This foolish gentleman asks, "When will evidential work [his work, forsooth!] become a national movement? When will the Church that can boast of the best theologians take up the systematic teaching of Christian evidence in schools and parishes?" We guess Church leaders are too cute to exhibit their beggarly want of evidence. Freethinkers always rejoice in the teaching of Christian evidences, for nothing tends more to advance our cause, unless it be the methods employed by the Christian Want of Evidence Society.

The *Catholic Times*, reviewing a work on *The Catholic Religion*, by a Ritualist, says of that party, "As members of the Church, they are nothing but rebels, conspirators, and hypocrites." It calls the writer's statements "falsehoods," and speaks of his ignorance and untruthfulness. How they love one another!

According to *Truth*, the proprietors of the magazine of the Chatsworth-road Baptist Chapel supply advertisers with a suitable Bible text. Thus, underneath the name and address of a butcher appears, "Out of the eater came forth meat." A confectioner has, "It shall be in thy mouth as sweet as honey"; a greengrocer, "Every green herb for meat"; a miller, "What is the chaff to the wheat, saith the Lord"; a bootmaker, "Thy shoes shall be iron and brass"; a poulterer, "He rained flesh also upon them and feathered fowls"; a chimney sweep, "Swept and garnished," and a laundry, "Wash me and I shall be whiter than snow."

Those *Clarion* writers have no reverence. Noticing the alleged discovery of a 2ft. 8in. egg in Madagascar, one says: "And so, little by little, all these improbable old tales are being confirmed and justified, and I am looking confidently forward to the time when Bill Holland's Noah's Ark will include Samson's ass's jawbone, the tongue of Balaam's ass, the bones of Eve's serpent, the carcases of the four fiery horses which carried Elias off, the skeleton of the fish which carried Jonah in his belly for seventy-two hours, etc., etc."

The Rev. C. Best Norcliffe, of Langton Hall, Malton, who is lord of the manor of Langton, Yorkshire, is a parson of the good old school, thinking the people made for the benefit of the parsons and the upper ten, and damning education as an influence likely to dispel the good state of things. He refuses to let the School Board of the village have a site for the school or the use of the old schoolroom for a temporary school till the site question is settled. The man of God also wrote: "There is no hurry about a school here, and it is my full intention never to allow any tenant who has a child of an age to attend school to remain thirty days on the estate." People who want education for their children must clear out from Langton.

A correspondent of the *Echo* says that the London Missionary Society spent in salaries, etc., last year, £13,692 1s. 3d. The item for printing, postage, rent, and incidentals was £5,934 13s. 2d. That's the way the money goes.

It appears that the London Congregational Union received from the Church Aid Society, year 1892, £3,246, and gave grants to churches for the year 1892, £1,868, while the expenses of working, rent of rooms, salary, etc., amounted to £1,142, leaving an amount due to the treasurer of over £300.

The Rev. R. Allnutt, rector of Monkton, Thanet, has been fined 10s. and costs for assaulting a little boy, aged eight, whom he severely thrashed with a twig which he cut from his garden. He pleaded that the boy deserved it, and might have quoted Solomon on the advantage of not sparing the rod.

The theory of the Rev. N. Poyntz, vicar of St. Mary's, Shrewsbury, that the spire of his church fell down because of the proposed memorial to Darwin in that town, recalls the charge of the Ven. Dr. R. Thomas, archdeacon of Montgomery, during the Welsh tithe war, in which he suggested that cattle disease was the result of refusing to pay tithes. It was afterwards found that the farmers who had paid their tithes were greater sufferers than those who had refused to do so.

One of the American Messiahs is Thornton Carter, of Coloma, whose sect is known as Carterites. One of their doctrines is that when the devil gets into a person, that individual must be beaten and dragged about until the devil has been expelled. One half-imbecile old man who had willed his property to Carter, died under this treatment about a year ago, and Carter was tarred and feathered by indignant citizens. Recently Carter was discovered beating his half-frozen wife in his barn, and there is talk of repeating the tar and feathers. Carter claims that he had a revelation from the Lord, commanding him to beat his wife. It is quite as likely as that Abraham was ordered to offer up his son Isaac.

The new gallery at the British Museum, devoted to religion, makes a poor show beside the Guimet Museum at Paris. Christian antiquities are very few, being mainly represented by a few old lamps and some glass from the Roman Catacombs, with the pagan symbol of the cross. Buddhism is somewhat better represented, and in the figures of Buddha preaching with an aureole round his head one may even recognise the Christ type.

Last Sunday Protestant Evangelists were molested in the city of Cork, and forced to abandon street preaching in that city. How they love one another.

Hard terms are very reprehensible when coming from Free-thinkers. From the other side 'tis another matter. To one who was distributing the pamphlet on H. P. Hughes outside a Wesleyan chapel in North London, the leader of a congregation assembled outside shouted, "Don't come here with your filthy trash."

The *Christian Globe* reports some recent remarks of the Rev. Hugh Price Hughes, one of which was that he objected to calling England a Christian country. "Christianity," he said, "wanted something more than justice; it wanted brotherly love." That is Mr. Hughes all over. He will give you brotherly love by the bucketful. It is cheap. But justice is a dearer article, and he deals it out gingerly.

According to the *Jersey Express*, there is an evangelist there named Sampson, who at Rotherham "had the joy of seeing one of Bradlaugh's most trusty admirers and followers become converted, burn all his heretical works, and eventually become a town missionary." Name, please. We also learn that a most pronounced Atheist, trained at Cambridge and conversant with six languages, was converted at Fleetwood under the influence of Mr. Sampson's preachings. Old Sampson's exploits with the jawbone of an ass appear to have been trivial compared with those of the modern Sampson.

According to the report of a lecture in *The Behar Times*, Mrs. Besant now urges the Hindus not to neglect their mantras, or spells for aid for the dead, "which were intended to tranquillise the sense of those departed, or to shatter the barriers that kept their soul still imprisoned. By neglecting these mantras, they might be doing injury to their loved ones on the other side." She also spoke in appreciative terms of the idol worship of the Hindus. The idol was endowed with magnetic energy, working good to those around it—it was a living centre of blessing to whole villages and towns. Not only idolatry, but fetishism seems to follow from the possession of the mystic ring of H. P. B.

A Pigeon Show was held in the Mission Hall, Oxford-street, Hull. It is not reported whether the Paraclete was amongst the exhibits.

Two men of God have had a nice scuffle in the Baptist gospel-shop at Foxton, near Leicester. One was named Peden and the other Creek. Each claimed the pulpit, and after a violent struggle the Peden party triumphed. But as the trustees and the police are on the side of Creek, it is probable that Peden will be worsted, despite his singing "He is my Defence, I shall not be moved."

Jabez Balfour, while in detention at Buenos Aires, made a great impression on the gaol authorities by his assiduous study of the Bible. There is something in the "blessed book" for every taste and every interest. Perhaps the worthy Jabez dwelt upon the policy of the Jews in skedaddling from the land of leeks and onions. They borrowed all they could lay their hands on, with the Lord's approval; and Jabez seems to have followed suit.

After all the fuss made about the Rev. W. Pedr Williams, who has levanted to New York, it appears from the *Independent* and *Nonconformist* that a writ was served upon him for a large amount, and one half of the sum was actually supplied to him in response to letters he sent to friends, chiefly connected with his church.

### THE "LIE" PAMPHLET.

THOSE who applied for copies of this pamphlet, and could only get a partial supply, should apply again. Mr. Forder has a large quantity in hand now, and we are still printing. Our friends all over the country should circulate the pamphlet immediately. It is wise to strike hard and quick while the iron is hot.

Mr. Forder has discretion to deal generously with Branches and individuals that undertake to distribute large numbers of copies. Where it is advisable he will supply them quite gratuitously. In other cases the applicants can pay a trifle—a penny, twopence, or threepence per dozen—as they are able or disposed.

We hope our friends will keep an eye on Mr. Hughes's meetings in all parts of the country. Mr. Forder will send parcels at any time for distribution at such opportunities.

We have already passed the £100 we first asked for, but more will be needed if we are to send out copies, as is highly desirable, to Christian ministers, newspapers, members of parliament, etc. Wrappers are being addressed for this purpose, and if we do not receive the money from the party, we shall have to send out the copies at our own expense week by week, as we can afford it. Of course the party has made an admirable response to our appeal, yet it is a pity to spoil the dishing of Hughes. It should be done to perfection.

G. W. FOOTE.

### FUND FOR NAILING DOWN THE "ATHEIST SHOEMAKER" LIE.

E. J. O. £1, J. Lee 5s., T. O. Newton 5s., E. Self 1s. 6d., W. G. Beeby 2s. 6d., Rochdale Lad 1s., J. Thornton 1s., A Friend 1s., T. Dobson 1s., D. Kay 5s., L. C. L. 2s., G. Harding 1s., — Lear 1s., — Bolt 6d., W. R. Munton 5s., O. Featherstone 5s., A. Anderson 2s. 6d., O. B. Hyde 5s., R. Johnson 4s., S. Sloper 3s., Camberwell Branch £3 for two thousand copies, J. R. Campbell 2s., South Shields Branch £1 10s. for one thousand copies, Liverpool Branch £3 for two thousand copies, Glasgow Branch £1 10s. for one thousand copies, R. Brookes 2s. 6d., A. H. Rowbar 2s. 6d., J. Leipper 5s., A. F. 2s., Holloway 2s., Fair Play 5s., Martin Weatherburn 2s. 6d., An Old Lady of Seventy 10s., G. Biggs 5s., G. A. M. 5s., W. Hyde 2s. 6d., John Hardie 1s., G. Brady 5s., T. E. M. 1s., G. and A. Bullock 2s., J. Scarrott 1s., — Tipner 2s., Sunderland Branch 15s. (for pamphlets), Edinburgh Branch 16s. (for pamphlets), Accrington Friend 2s., E. R. 1s., E. F. B. 5s., W. Holroyd 2s., Finchley Friends 7s., E. II. Bull 1s., J. Darby 1s., A. Cayford 1s., H. Fulton 5s., W. Garley 2s., R. S. Johnson 2s., W. S. Hurstleigh 5s., John Phillips 2s. 6d.

Per R. Forder: J. Morton 1s., Jas. and John Crabtree and their Mother 7s. 6d., J. Oram 2s. 6d., O. Shepherd 2s., A. J. Marriott 1s., R. R. 1s., B. H. 1s., T. Edwards 1s., G. Parr (Paris) 10s., C. Shuffebotham 5s., C. T. O. E. 1s., N. Richardson 1s., J. Clark 1s., Z. J. 2s., D. H. Hayes 1s., Home Rule 2s. 6d., F. Holland 2s. 6d., T. S. Barrett 5s., H. Putz 1s., W. Middleton 8s., A. Lewis 2s. 6d., W. J. Gaines 1s.



### Mr. Foote's Engagements.

*Sunday*, March 11, in the Hall, 110 Brunswick-street, Glasgow:—11.30, "How Infidels are Converted; with reference to Rev. Hugh Price Hughes and his Atheist Shoemaker"; 2.30, "Is Christianity True? a reply to the Rev. Professor Bruce"; 6.30. "The Pillars of Priestcraft."

*Monday*, March 12, Northern Friendly Hall, George-street Aberdeen:—8, "Pillars of Priestcraft."

*Tuesday*, March 13, same hall, at 8, "The Daybreak of Humanity."

*Wednesday and Thursday*, March 14 and 15, Dundee.

March 18, South Shields.

### TO CORRESPONDENTS.

**MR. CHARLES WATTS' ENGAGEMENTS.**—March 11, Liverpool; 12 and 13, Derby (debate with Rev. Mr. Hyde); 18, Nelson; 25, Hall of Science, London—All communications for Mr. Watts should be sent to him (if a reply is required a stamped and addressed envelope must be enclosed) at 81 Effra-road, Brixton, London, S.E.

**W. M. C.**—Should have been happy to insert the verses, but are overcrowded with matter at present.

**T. D. HARRIS.**—It got torn in opening. Send us a copy in an envelope.

**WELL-WISHER OF SEVENTY (Manchester).**—Have put it into the "Lie" fund. Many thanks. Mr. Hughes is reckoned "a ladies' man," but he doesn't appear to *your* taste.

**G. BIGGS.**—Overlooked. Acknowledged this week.

**R. BROOKES.**—The thanks of Atheists are acceptable.

**JAS. LEIPPER (Glasgow).**—Hope we have your name right. Thanks for subscription.

**W. JOHNSON.**—See our paragraph. They are really in no danger.

**JAMES A. RICHARDSON.**—If you send us your real name, it shall be kept in the strictest confidence. We should like to be in communication with you.

**T. NESBIT.**—Thanks for cuttings. Nature is the totality of what we know, and we should add of what we can know.

**W. J. GOTT** is distributing a thousand of the "Lie" pamphlet at Bradford. "I intend," he says, "to get as many as possible into club-rooms, where many persons will see the same pamphlet. If our friends will try that plan, the exposure will be much wider than if the pamphlets are all given to individuals."

**JOHN HARDIE.**—Mr. Foote is making arrangements to give himself a little more time for literary work, and hopes to get the *Crimes of Christianity* (with Mr. Wheeler) and other work completed during the next twelve months.

**A. LE LIEVRE.**—Too thin.

**H. L. S. (Yeovil).**—No harm done. We hope the matter will end satisfactorily.

**J. READ.**—Thanks. See paragraph. Yes, we think Liverpool is making good headway. We have always found the Branch ready to do the maximum of work with the minimum of grumbling.

**J. HERRING.**—We don't intend to give the blackguard an advertisement in these columns. No doubt you will agree with us on reflection.

**THE FINSBURY BRANCH** sends us a copy of the resolution it passed on Sunday, expressing sympathy with the relatives of the late Miss Robins, admiration for her good and faithful work for the N.S.S., and hope that her bright example will find many imitators.

"**ATHEOS**" defines God as the being who always departs at the approach of science and forgets to leave his address. We have no room for all the letters sent on this question.

**G. BRADY (Perth)** finds Mr. Holyoake's attitude "strange and painful," and contrasts his "kid-glove attitude towards Mr. Hughes" with his "finical fault-finding" to Mr. Foote. This correspondent hopes we shall get more than the £100, so as to give the pamphlet the widest possible distribution.

**T. E. M.**—Dr. Murphy is honest in the matter. Baptism is necessary to salvation, or it is a mere farce.

**J. G. DOBSON (Huddersfield)** circulated seventy copies of the "Lie" pamphlet in a Christian Evidence Class, and the demand was greater than the supply.

**TOBY KING**, the grand old stalwart of Hastings, says it does not appear to him that Mr. Holyoake's "preferences" are "on the side of the Secular party," but "strongly in favor of Ananias Hughes." After citing the dictionaries of Johnson and Nuttall as to the meaning of "intervene," Toby King continues—"If education and refinement enable a person to tell or write a lie in such a manner as not to be considered a lie, I hope I may never become educated and refined, but remain the same practical navvy I am, calling a spade a spade."

**W. ROGERS (Manchester)** denies that only three or four questions were put to Mr. Holyoake, and those at his own instigation. In the morning, at any rate, Mr. Holyoake did not allude to the matter in every one's mind. People got up and

questioned him of their own accord. Our correspondent felt that Mr. Holyoake would have kept silent if he had not been pressed.

**A. BULLOCK.**—Order the two dozen copies of the *Freethinker* through Mr. Forder. That will be the cheapest way. We believe Mr. Forder could supply your friend with the American journals he requires.

**MOORE AND BRISTOW.**—We have no recollection of your previous communication. The great Frenchman referred to by Mr. Foote was Pascal.

**R. AXELLEY.**—A soldier has a perfect right to read the *Freethinker*. The officer who threatened to get your friend "six months" for doing so is a bigot and a braggart. Kindly inform us if there is any further trouble.

**H. WOOLTON.**—Of course, if Branches undertake to supply all the clergy and ministers in their respective districts, it will lessen our task to some extent. We shall be glad to hear from them. Glad you will do so at Wolverhampton.

**H. THATCHER.**—The fellow is even beneath contempt. You waste your time in listening to him, much more in writing about him.

**C. DORG.**—See to it immediately.

**D. F. GLOAK.**—Brighton logic will hardly do in Dundee. *Cela va sans dire*. Glad to hear of Mr. Gilmour's success amongst you as a lecturer. It is a pity he cannot be more frequently occupied on the platform.

**N.S.S. BENEVOLENT FUND.**—Miss E. M. Vance, sec., acknowledges:—Blackburn Branch, 4s. 6d.; balance from Children's Party, £2 3s. Donations of cast-off clothing will be gratefully received (and distributed) by Miss Vance, at 28 Stonecutter-street, London, E.C.

**F. LANSDALE.**—The date was offered in response to your own invitation. However, the prospect may brighten for you presently.

**A. GUEST.**—Thanks. See paragraph. Will write you about the other matter.

**E. T. N.**—Much obliged.

**E. H. DALY.**—Thanks for cuttings.

**R. CHAPMAN.**—Mr. Foote will come to Shields from Dundee.

**E. BAYLIFFE.**—May prove useful. Thanks.

**R. S. JOHNSON.**—Pleased that you "admire Mr. Foote's action in the matter, and that you will distribute the pamphlet freely whenever Hughes visits Northampton.

**J. MOORE.**—Pleased to have your approval.

**E. S. ANDREWS.**—Copy in hand.

**O. TRUMPER.**—We will look into it. Thanks for the reference.

**H. BISHOP.**—Your friend can have what you require of the pamphlet by applying to Mr. Forder.

**W. CHIVERS.**—Glad to hear from you. Pamphlets sent.

**P. T. WHELAN.**—Shall appear.

**J. P. SILKSTONE.**—There is great force in your letter, but if we once begin inserting letters from Freethinkers on Mr. Holyoake's action we shall invite a deluge of correspondence, and all of it apparently on one side.

**H. W. L. & W. S. P.**—Shall appear as we find room.

**E. H. BULL.**—The Northampton Branch has only a nominal existence at present. There are curious obstacles to an active propaganda there.

**G. C. H. CARTER.**—We did not know there was any difference, and are sorry that the report was annoying to yourself; but we must decline to have such a personal matter discussed in the *Freethinker*.

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

**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.

**LECTURE NOTICES, ETC.**, should be written on postcards or the envelopes marked outside, and be sent to 14 Clerkenwell-green, London, E.C.

**PAPERS RECEIVED.**—Der Lichtfreund—Boston Investigator—Open Court—Freidenkor—Two Worlds—Der Arme Teufel—Western Figaro—Liberator—Liberty—Clarion—Flaming Sword—Liver—De Dagerand—Progressive Thinker—Post—Secular Thought—Truthseeker—Ironclad Age—Pioneer—Twentieth Century—Independent Pulpit—Islamic World—Dundee Advertiser—Isle of Man Times—Crescent—Rad—Jersey Express—La Vérité Philosophique—South Shields Free Press—Daily Chronicle—Vegetarian Messenger—Star.

**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.

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**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.

## SUGAR PLUMS.

Nelson is a small town, and the weather on Sunday was mixed. The result was that Mr. Foote's audiences were only moderate, though several Freethinkers came in from various places in the surrounding district, such as Colne, Burnley, and Blackburn. The lectures were appreciated and relished, and the meetings will help to advertise Mr. Watts's visit to Nelson next Sunday (March 18), when we hope he will have decent weather and fair audiences.

Mr. Johnson, a member of the Nelson School Board, took the chair in the afternoon and evening. He is the son of an Atheist, who was a warm admirer of Charles Bradlaugh. Mr. Johnson is a Socialist as well as a Secularist, but he declines to pocket his "unbelief" for the sake of those who are weak or cowardly in regard to religion. He belongs to the Nelson Branch of the N.S.S., and takes an active part in its propaganda. Mr. Johnson is a young man of bright intelligence and transparent character, and we are not surprised that the go-ahead political and labor party look to him as their candidate for parliamentary honors.

Mr. Johnson spoke out very strongly on the Atheist Shoemaker Story, and the Nelson Branch is distributing a thousand copies of Mr. Foote's pamphlet. We are informed that the matter has excited a good deal of attention in the town, especially in Wesleyan circles.

Mr. Watts had fairly good week-night meetings at Bristol last week. There was a good deal of rowdiness on the first night on the part of Christians who believe with Pistol that "base is the slave that pays." The result was the suspension of "free admission" on the two following evenings. Mr. Watts lectured for the Chatham Branch on the Friday, and formed a good opinion of their hall and themselves. To-day (March 11) he lectures at Liverpool.

On Monday and Tuesday evenings, March 12 and 13, a public debate on Life after Death, will take place at the Lecture Hall, Wardwick, Derby, between Mr. C. Watts and the Rev. J. Hyde, Swedenborgian minister. The chair will be taken at 7.30, by the Rev. J. Birks (Unitarian). We hope there will be a good attendance.

Readers of the *Freethinker* who may at any time have to communicate with Mr. Watts should note his change of address. He is now settled down in London.

The Social gathering at the London Hall of Science on Wednesday, Feb. 28, was fairly successful. Nearly a hundred persons were present, who appeared to enjoy themselves. Another "social" will be held on the last Wednesday in March (28th).

Mr. A. B. Moss lectured at the London Hall of Science on Sunday morning, his subject being "Practical Work for Radicals." In the afternoon he helped to amuse the Children's Party at Camberwell, and in the evening he lectured in the Camberwell Hall to an excellent audience.

The Huddersfield Branch regrets the action of Mr. Holyoake and expresses its unabated confidence in Mr. Foote.

At a meeting of the Islington Branch, held on Sunday last, a unanimous resolution was passed expressing entire approval with Mr. Foote's action in the matter of the Rev. Hugh Price Hughes's romance, and with his method of carrying out the exposure.

The annual general meeting of the Lambeth Branch will take place at Mr. V. Roger's, 114 Kennington-road, on Sunday, at 7.30. Freethinkers of the district are invited to attend and join the Branch.

*The Crescent*, a Moslem organ published in Liverpool, copies, with acknowledgment, the paragraphs we wrote on Talmage and other Christian libellers of Mohammed. We regret to notice the death of W. Oosid Ullah Cunliffe, a Moslem convert and a writer of great promise in *The Crescent* and *The Islamic World*.

The *Liver* of March 3 has the following explanation and handsome apology: "In our issue of January 6, in an article written by a correspondent referring to a noisy meeting under the auspices of the Christian Evidence Society, occur these words: 'Secularists or those who imitate them, by holding noisy and rowdy meetings on Sundays,' etc. We are informed on authority which we do not doubt that the meetings held by the Secularists are neither noisy, rowdy, or conducted in any improper manner whatever. We therefore regret that such a statement, even from a correspondent, found its way into our columns.—EDITOR, *Liver*."

*De Dageraad* for March gives prominence to a Manifesto on the maintenance of all-round education issued by the congress of the teachers held in Ghent. Most of the leading spirits appear to have been Freethinkers like Prof. Hector Denis, of Brussels University. Dr. Ludwig Büchner follows with an article on "The Natural Development of the Human Spirit."

*Progress*, edited by E. dos Santos, Port of Spain, Trinidad, is a lively Freethought monthly now in its second volume. It deserves support from all Freethinkers in the West Indies.

In Mr. Walter Besant's recent life of the Huguenot, Admiral Gaspard de Coligny, he gives the opinion that his hero "had earned the gratitude of everyone who can realise, even imperfectly, what a great, what a priceless thing it is to be born beyond the power of priests." He goes on to say that "the deliverance of mankind from this pretence of authority is yet far from complete. Complete liberty of thought can only dwell in the world when for many generations mankind have put into practice Coligny's dream of like education for all rich and poor men and women."

Martin Weatherburn, of Hartford Colliery, Cramlington, Northumberland, is a relative by marriage of Mr. Thomas Burt, M.P. He is a man of high character and intelligence; the very finest type of the Northumberland miner. He is also an old acquaintance of Mr. Holyoake's. We therefore set a special value on his warm approval of our action in regard to the Atheist Shoemaker story. "Although you will not," he writes to us, "be able to stop the lying tongue of the man in the pulpit, your achievement must necessarily, and to an incalculable extent, prevent even people with less than ordinary common sense from being imposed upon by his self-exalting (all for the glory of God) falsehoods. This piece of work, which you have done so well, by itself entitles you to an honorable position in the roll of champions of Freethought; and our party especially ought to be proud that their leader has so promptly and so thoroughly run this respectable liar to ground."

Colonel "Bob" Ingersoll has a "high and mighty" regard for women. At a Sunday evening at home he lately met the pretty wife of a rising novelist. She said to him: "I have heard that you are an Agnostic." "Have you, indeed?" he replied. "Yes; and Agnostics are doubters of everything and everybody; and I have heard even worse than that of you, Colonel—that is, that you are a scientific Atheist." "I believe in nature and woman," was the grave, epigrammatic answer.

### FUNERAL OF MISS ROBINS.

THE funeral of the late Miss Robins took place on Tuesday afternoon at Finchley Cemetery. A large concourse of London Freethinkers, including most of the prominent frequenters of the Hall of Science, stood around the grave as Mr. Foote delivered a brief address. He described the deceased as a true servant of Humanity; and while deploring her early death, he said it was better to know that she had gone to her rest than to feel that she was subsisting only as the wreck and parody of herself. As the funeral party broke up, the general opinion was expressed that Freethought had lost a brave and devoted worker. Floral tributes were sent by the Finsbury Park Branch, "Her Fellow Workpeople," Mrs. Hancock, Mrs. Robins, Mr. and Mrs. Forder, Mr. and Mrs. Standring, Mr. Davies, Mrs. Anderson, Mr. Ward's children, the Rowes, Batterssea Branch, and Islington Branch. The flowers were afterward presented to the Great Northern Hospital—a fitting close to Miss Robins' long years of work on behalf of the London hospitals. A welcome report of the funeral and of the speech of Mr. Foote appeared in the *Daily Chronicle* for Wednesday.

SOME PULPIT ARGUMENTS.

WHEN the arguments which are commonly used in the pulpits are collated, they are found to comprise but an inconsiderable number. The reason is simply because they are not necessary in a community where all are practically agreed. But it has been the custom of the Church even in her palmiest times to suppose an antagonist where none existed, so that she might launch her shafts of defiance and sarcasm, to prevent the germ of scepticism gaining a resting-place and for the general promotion of virtue. Now she has real antagonists to deal with, yet her stock of arguments is not large. They are, however, often enough repeated to make them count for much, and are insisted on with all the force that rhetoric can impart. Scepticism, itself very full of life, has galvanised dogmatism into a semblance of life. The pulpit has had to rouse itself to meet the advancing tide of adverse criticism that flows upon it from many sources. The "Arian heresy" must be combatted on one side, Agnosticism on the other. Secularism must be shown up here, Pantheism attacked there. Positivism, Theosophy, Humanitarianism, must be met as they come on. The influence of science must be held in bounds by the statement that scientists may possibly know something of the human body, but are not worthy of attention when they presume to speak of the soul. Blank Atheism, "the empty eye-socket," must be denounced with all the force of argument at command, which must—and necessarily—be supplemented with the terrors of divine wrath. The disbeliever must be confounded and overthrown by the simple statement that he does not believe what he says, that he is a sceptic from the teeth out, and that no man ever believed there was no God. Having thus summarily disposed of these enemies, the pulpit has liberty to turn its attention to the criticism that comes, as it were, from within the churches' own four walls. The Higher Criticism is fiercely condemned or else timidly handled by divines who naturally do not know what to make of a destructive force which the Church has fostered and set a-going to undermine her own bulwarks. But as a rule the appeal is not to reason, but to the emotions. It is sought to enlist the listener's sympathy for the essentials of Christianity—for its tenderness, for its pathos—for the tenets of a religion which men have been taught from infancy to revere. This appeal is generally successful, and men, accepting the substance, are not careful to reject inessentials and absurdities.

A mode of procedure which, from its frequent adoption, must be considered as very effective, is that of turning the tables on the would-be critic and asking, If this plan, which is the emanation of divine wisdom, is not good enough, can you suggest a better? This is suggestive of a certain section of the inhabitants of these islands who are supposed to answer difficult questions by asking others. The would-be critic may not be prepared with a ready-formulated religion to supplant Christianity, and consequently the pulpit comes triumphantly out of the argument. Yet that which would supply the place of Christianity would be neither a new religion nor an entire change of method, but a recognition of the principles which have underlain all religious systems since the earth began. It would be the setting-forth of the religious idea in native purity, freed from the monstrous superstructure with which it has been burdened nigh to extinction. Anything that fed this religious idea—science, ethics, general knowledge, even hygiene and economics—would be welcomed to the pulpit of such an ideal church.

Another common pulpit argument which is used to prove the goodness and beneficence of the deity is, that he has left men free to help him in perfecting human nature instead of making it good and perfect at once. And this at first sight would seem to be a strong argument for orthodoxy, for, that man should be instrumental in fulfilling the will of an entirely pure and perfect being, himself the essence of all goodness, might be counted as an inestimable privilege. But when we consider the alternative which is presented by orthodox religion, for the man who does not help but hinders the cause of good in the world—endless, insufferable torture and implacable, unrelenting wrath—ideas over which shame would fain draw a veil—we cannot consider God good to give men liberty to fall into such a hideous doom. And whilst upon this subject of Gehenna and its tortures, it is only necessary to say that, considering civilised man's acquaintance with equitable and just laws, it is unaccount-

able how any should hold this belief to the present day. Leaving out of the question the revolting cruelty of it, the criminality of it might strike the dullest. That any sin so frail and weak a creature as man could be guilty of would deserve such a doom, even were justice pushed to its extremist limits, is inconceivable. But what is to be expected from men so lost to all semblance of logic that they can ascribe to their deity the perpetration of such horrible atrocities, and with the same breath pronounce the text, "God is love"?

Another favorite pulpit argument against scepticism, if argument it may be called where proof is none, is to the effect that without Christ in the heart—which may be taken to mean belief in Christianity—no man can remain free from moral taint. From this premiss, in itself a mere unsupported assumption, it is argued that scepticism is simply a kind of moral disease which attacks an enervated religious sense, as germs of fever attack a lowered bodily vitality. Can the river be pure when the source is polluted? it is asked. Can the limb live when it is separated from the body? And what can the righteous do when the foundations are destroyed? I once heard a clergyman describe unbelief as a species of moral leprosy which gains ground slowly over the sound flesh until all be corrupted; and the more deadly is the evil, he said, from the fact that the work of the disease is carried on painlessly. Rendered into plain terms, this might mean that the morality of the doubter is corrupted without his being aware of the fact. Prayer is taken to be an actual connection of man's spiritual nature with God, the source of all spiritual life, by which the moral health is renewed. Or it is represented as the refilling of a half-emptied vessel at a great reservoir, without which the vessel must inevitably run dry. As it is true that a limb dies when dissevered from the body, and as it is also true that a vessel cannot be used and remain full, unhappily many are satisfied with the sound of these truisms taken in their actual sense, without considering whether they are strictly applicable to the spiritual life. Before we talk so glibly of the spiritual side of man's nature, it were well that we knew a little more about it. We may go by the tests that the scriptures have themselves furnished us with. By their fruits ye shall know them. By the fruits of scepticism we shall know whether it be a kind of moral disease or no; by the fruits of scepticism we shall know if the prayerless man is devoid of spiritual vigor; and by the fruits of Christianity and scepticism placed side by side we shall know which is fullest generally speaking of spiritual life. This is the only straightforward way of putting the question, and it is one from which neither party can wriggle out without immediate loss of credit. Scepticism challenges such a comparison; and although the avowed sceptics are too far behind avowed Christians in point of numbers to allow of a numerical comparison, it asks that men be taken at random from the ranks of the two opposing forces to discover if scepticism is indeed in spiritual force, in force of love, of gentleness, of long-suffering, and of all other virtues which may be regarded as essentially spiritual, so much in arrears of Christianity. The result might go far to settle the question. If the Christian instances Voltaire, the sceptic replies that Voltaire was a man of many weaknesses, but a sound heart, and retorts by citing Laud. Shall scepticism ask for a parallel to its gentle and righteous Spinoza, Christianity will doubtless produce some pure-living father of apostolic fame. Does Christianity speak of Jeremy Taylor; scepticism replies with David Hume, between which two men there was considerable resemblance. And what Wesley or Whitfield shall be counted to excel the Atheist Shelley in purity of motive, in passionate desire for the moral and material well-being of men? Little, so far, has been gained but this, that scepticism shows itself equal to orthodoxy in the goodness of its actual fruits; and even this may be accepted thankfully by a section of men who are reviled and held up to execration as moral disease germs and foul spiritual parasites.

T. E. M.

(To be concluded).

A pessimist arithmetician thus sums up his philosophy:

	s. d.
This world's a scene as dark as Styx,	
Where hope is scarce worth . . . . .	2 6
Our joys are borne so fleeting hence	
That they are dear at . . . . .	0 7
And yet to stay here some are willing,	
Although they may not have . . . . .	1 0

## WOMAN AND CHRISTIANITY.

SIR H. S. MAINE, the great authority on Ancient Law, says:—The situation of the Roman woman, whether married or single, became one of great personal and proprietary independence; but Christianity tended somewhat from the commencement to narrow this remarkable liberty. The prevailing state of religious sentiment may explain why modern jurisprudence has adopted these rules concerning the position of woman which belong to an imperfect civilisation. No society which preserves any tincture of Christian institutions is likely to restore to married women the personal liberty conferred on them by the middle Roman law. Canon law has deeply injured civilisation. See Maine's *Early History of Institutions*, *Roman Law*, and *Ancient Law*, for further information on this point.

Under the canon law daughters could not inherit with brothers. In Rome it was different. Says Blackstone: "The preference of males over females in succession was totally unknown to the laws of Rome. Brothers and sisters were entitled to equal parts of the inheritance."

The Christian view of woman is well shown by this paragraph from Loredano's *Life of Adam* (published at Amsterdam in 1696): It was the effect of God's goodness to man that suffered him to sleep when Eve was formed, as Adam, being endowed with a spirit of prophecy, might foresee the evils which the production of Eve would cause to all mankind, so that God perhaps cast him into that sleep lest he should oppose the creation of his wife."

Of woman and the church Elizabeth Cady Stanton says: "As the Christian church grew stronger, woman's fate grew more helpless. Even the Reformation and Protestantism brought no relief." The old Christian view of woman survived to this century, to this generation, to this day, despite the humanising, the enlightening, the liberating influence of rationalism and science. In 1843 the Hopkinson Association of Congregational Divines of New Hampshire adopted this rule to govern the conduct of women in their churches: "But as to leading men, either in instruction or devotion, and as to any interruption or disorder in religious meetings, 'Let your women keep silence in the churches'; not merely let them be silent, but let them keep or preserve silence. Not that they may not preach, or pray, or exhort merely, but they may not open their lips to utter any sounds audibly. Let not your women in promiscuous religious meetings preach or pray audibly, or exhort audibly, or sigh, or groan, or say Amen, or utter the precious words, 'Bless the Lord,' or the enchanting sounds, 'Glory! Glory!'"

In New Jersey in 1876 Dr. See had admitted two women temperance speakers to his pulpit. He was put on trial for this offence, which Rev. Dr. Craven, the prosecutor, declared was "an indecency in the sight of Jehovah." For four hours Dr. Craven devoted himself to the task of proving from the Bible woman's subjection to man. *And he proved it.* He knew the Bible and Christianity better than do many of his brethren who have been partially civilised by Freetbought. Here follow a few of his asseverations: "I believe the subject involves the honor of my God. I believe the subject involves the headship and crown of Jesus. Woman was made for man and became first in the transgression. My argument is that subordination is natural, the subordination of sex. Dr. See has admitted marital subordination, but this is not enough; there exists a created subordination; a divinely arranged and appointed subordination of woman as woman, to man as man. Woman was made for man and became first in the transgression. The proper condition of the adult female is marriage; the general rule for ladies is marriage. Women without children, it might be said, could preach, but they are under the general rule of subordination. It is not allowed woman to speak in the church. Man's place is on the platform. It is positively base for a woman to speak in the pulpit; it is base in the sight of Jehovah. The whole question is one of subordination."

He was sustained by the Synod of New Jersey, which censured Dr. See for his anti-Christian liberality. An appeal was taken to the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of the United States, which confirmed the verdict of the Synod. Woman's subjection to superstition is brought into painful prominence by the fact that, in the face of this shameful Christian treatment of the sex by the Presbyterian Church of the United States, hundreds

of thousands of women remain members of that church. The baleful influence of Christianity upon women could not be demonstrated more conclusively than by this slavish submission to the power that denies them equal rights as human beings.—*Truthseeker.*

## STATISTICS OF CRIME.

THAT system of religion which most fully restrains its votaries from the commission of crime, must be the best religion. That system which brutalises the race, and plunges its adherents in the deepest in crime, must be the most objectionable. If either is inspired, it must be the one which exercises the best influence over its subjects, and directs its action for good.

A late statistician, in reviewing prison reports and the history of crime in all civilised countries, shows that Mohammedan Turkey has a smaller per cent of murders than any other European country. Greece, alongside of Turkey, influenced by Grecio-Catholic, shows an average annually of one murder to each 2,800 population. Ireland, under Roman Catholic control, comes next to Greece in its percentage of crime. Spain and Italy follow close alongside of Ireland. Crime is far less common in Protestant countries than in Catholic. Those countries where liberal religious views are most prevalent, as in Germany, England and Scotland, show the least crime.

Coming to America, the statistics show a lower per cent than in any other country. In the State of Illinois, where Liberalism has probably the best foothold, the same table shows but one murder to 50,000 population. And here it should be observed, the criminal classes are those taught in Sunday-schools, a very large majority of whom are Catholics, with very rarely an Infidel or a Spiritualist in the list.

Every Liberal should load himself with these astounding facts, and discharge them in volleys at propagandists who visit their homes in the interest of the Christian religion—a system built on dreams, extended by the sword, and sustained by beggary.—*Progressive Thinker.*

## THE REAL BLUEBEARD.

THE person who gave rise to the legend of Bluebeard was a historic character and a Marshal of France. His name was Gilles de Laval de Rais. He lived in the beginning of the fifteenth century, and his family—that of De Retz, gave many men of renown to France. He was both brave and pious, but had a perfect mania for cruelty, and in the dungeons of his castle committed the most horrible atrocities upon little children. For a long time this went on with impunity, but at length, in 1440, he was arraigned for his crimes before commissioners of the Duke of Brittany, his cousin. A letter sent by the criminal Marshal to the Duke acknowledged having sinned horribly again and again, but reminded his cousin and Sire that he had never failed in his religious duties, having heard many masses and vespers, always having fasted at Lent, and on vigils, and confessed and communicated regularly. He was ready to acknowledge and expiate his crime by retiring into a monastery, there to lead a *good and exemplary* life, and by distributing his goods among the poor.

He wound up this extraordinary document by signing himself "In all earthly humility, Friar Gilles, Carmelite in intention."

On his trial, the Marshal saluted his judges, begging them to expedite his matter, as he was peculiarly anxious to consecrate himself to God, who had pardoned his great sins. He also added that he intended to endow several charities in Nantes, and distribute the greater portion of his goods among the poor, for the salvation of his soul.

Pierre de l'Hospital gravely bade him remember that though it was always well to think of the salvation of one's soul, what they were now concerned about was the salvation of his body.

And this was the man-monster's reply, tranquilly spoken; "I have confessed to the father-confessor of the Carmellites, and through his absolution I have been able to communicate. I am therefore guiltless and purified!"

It does not appear to have entered the Marshal's mind that he could possibly be condemned to death for his crimes. He seems to have made sure that his godliness and piety would procure him that admission to a monastery which he craved. His case gives a good idea of what religion was in its palmy days, before unsettled by the Renaissance and the Reformation.

## Independent Department.

### IS THERE A GOD?

THIS great question of the ages, resolves itself really into three answers. (1) That there is no God; (2) That there is a God who lives simply away in space, which is the general belief; or (3) That there is a God who is identical in parts, form and passions with nature. Which is the most reasonable and likely to be the true answer?

H. C. S. falls into a common error by saying that the word "Atheist" means without God. This is quite wrong and misleading. The right translation is "Without [any knowledge of] God," which shows the true sense, as it is at once seen that a knowledge of anything and the thing itself are very different matters.

The fact of the existence of God is, to all persons possessed of intuition self-evident; the question carries its own answer in the light and life of nature, and further affirmed beyond any doubt by the fact there could not possibly exist a person who could truthfully say there is no God. All one can say (if they prefer it) is, "I do not know of God." Then a person is an Atheist. But if all the world were Atheists, the existence of God would still remain a fact. All great Freethinkers such as Voltaire, Spinoza, Paine, Rousseau, and the ancient pagan philosophers believed in the existence of God, because they were men of reason and common sense.

There is also a serious confusion over God considered as Being. The Theist and Atheist fall into the same error of limiting the word to some animalistic idea of that being; but any dictionary will explain the matter by giving the "Being" as existence—that is to say all existence is God. What could be truer or more simple. If it is said this is Pantheism, let it be so. Call it what you like, the fact remains that God is all that is. No man wants more for a God, no one ought to require less.

THOMAS MAY.

It is useless to discuss this question further with one who, after what has already been said here, can still write as N. M. X. does. In his first contribution he told us that his "God" was a being other than the universe. He now says that his "mysterious and omnipotent something" is identical with what I term the infinite, *i.e.*, Nature. In other words, he first says "God" is NOT Nature, and then that "God" is Nature. The fact is, N. M. X. is like the hero of the song one now hears every boy in the street singing "'E dunno w'ere 'e are!'"

A. LIDDLE.

## CORRESPONDENCE.

### ANIMAL TREATMENT.

TO THE EDITOR OF "THE FREETHINKER"

SIR,—I have read Mr. J. M. Wheeler's article in your edition of Feb. 11 upon the above subject, with great pleasure. I consider it a most eloquent plea for mercy to the animal creation, and it should, at least, command the earnest attention of all interested in the subject of "Man's duty to Beast." There was one aspect of the question which Mr. Wheeler left out of sight, but which, I trust, he will favor your readers with an article upon in the near future, namely, the right of society to inflict torture, in the expectation of increasing the sum of scientific knowledge. This torture is carried on to an alarming extent in England to-day. Last year's victims reached a total of 3,960, and these will soon be considerably increased with the erection of a "Pasteur Institute" on the Thames Embankment at Chelsea. I am, however, glad to read in the London papers, that a vigorous opposition is aroused against this Institute, on the ground of its danger to the public health, by its likelihood to spread disease in the cultivation of germs, and I trust that this opposition will even now be successful in preventing the erection of the Institute among the people of Chelsea. I invite the attention of your readers to the whole question of scientific cruelty, both upon its moral and utilitarian conditions, and I observe, with pleasure, that Mr. A. Westcott frequently lectures before the Branches of your Society upon this aspect of the subject, and I remember, with some gratification, a very patient and friendly hearing accorded to myself by the members of your Portsmouth Branch, in attempting to present this controversy before them last November. Perhaps you would give me the liberty to say that I am willing to lecture before any of your

Branches, should they be interested enough to communicate with me at my address.

In an article entitled "Man, Disease, and the Lower Animals," which appeared in the *National Reformer* in August 1886, over the well-known signature of "D.," I extract the following: "Those who think that morality may be discarded in the pursuit of science may learn a useful lesson. . . . The moral law is *solidaire*. . . . Those who commence with cruelty will end with lying, or something worse. Why should a person who has no scruples in his experiments scruple to tell a falsehood about their experiments. . . . So soon as any secondary end, however important, is made a supreme object of devotion, there is no guarantee whatever that the whole scheme of morals will not be subverted. . . . We deny that any body of men can claim exemption from ordinary moral obligations. . . . What knowledge could compensate for the widespread moral deterioration which must result from such practices [*vivisectional*]. . . . The knowledge gained is just the most problematical element of the whole affair. . . . Some of the ablest and most enlightened physiologists doubt or deny its existence. . . . Are men who have passed through such a hellish training of (experimentation) fit confidants in the hour of physical danger, fit persons to whom to trust the care of children and of our women in the most solemn and [necessitous moments of their lives]."—Yours etc.

T. WILLIAMS,

(Lecturer to the Bristol and Clifton  
48 Martin-street, St. Paul's, Anti-Vivisection Society.)  
Bristol.

### TRUTH v. LIES.

TO THE EDITOR OF "THE FREETHINKER."

SIR,—I have been much interested in your exposure of the Rev. H. P. Hughes and his "Converted Atheist Shoemaker." I had previously read the rev. gentleman's story, and also your pamphlet, entitled *A Lie in Five Chapters*, and I must say that when I heard there was going to be an investigation, I felt sure the verdict would be against the Secularists. I was brought up in the Methodist faith, and was a staunch believer in the Rev. H. P. Hughes, so that when Mr. Holyoake's report was published, you may be sure that myself, as well as all good Methodists, "rejoiced" and were exceedingly glad to think that we had triumphed. So far so good; but behold another investigation takes place, and at first we pay but little attention to it, as we expect that our chief has got ample proof, and will presently make the sceptics such an answer as will silence them completely. We wait in vain, and I now speak for myself, and say that when I saw the reply that the Rev. Hughes made to your offer in the *Daily Chronicle*, all hope left my heart. I could see that he was entirely beaten, and, worse than all, was not man enough to own it. I really could not believe that Mr. Hughes intended to remain silent, so I wrote a letter to the *Methodist Times* (a copy of which I enclose), suggesting that it would be much better to submit the whole affair to a council (as offered by you), than to remain in such an ignoble position; but the *Methodist Times* seems perfectly oblivious of the fact that numbers of Methodists are downright disgusted at the way in which the Rev. Hugh Price Hughes has beaten his retreat, as there is not a syllable to be found in that paper in answer to the many inquiries it has received on this subject.

Now, Sir, I have come to the conclusion that if religion requires such trickery and deception to keep it on its legs, there must be something wrong with it, and I now wish to wash my hands of all such cant and hypocrisy, and become a member of the National Secular Society. I enclose a small donation for the Fund for Nailing Down the Lie, and wishing you every success in your task of unmasking such despicable lying, I beg to remain,—Yours sincerely,  
FAIR PLAY,

Paul on Humber, Hull.

[The writer of this letter is a soldier, and evidently understands the rules of fighting better than Mr. Hughes.—EDITOR.]

"The man of the world despises Catholics for taking their religious opinions on trust and being the slaves of tradition. As if he had himself formed his own most important opinions either in religion or anything else. He laughs at them for their superstitious awe of the Church. As if his own inward awe of the Greater Number were one whit less of a superstition. He mocks their deference for the past. As if his own absorbing deference to the present were one tittle better bottomed or a jot more respectable. The modern emancipation will profit us very little, if the *status quo* is to be fastened round our necks with the despotic authority of a heavenly dispensation, and if in the stead of ancient Scriptures we are to accept the plenary inspiration of Majorities."

—John Morley.

## CHRISTIANITY AND ISLAM.

THOSE who hold that Christianity and civilisation are synonymous should consider the state of the Christians in Abyssinia, where a brutal barbarity has recently been committed by the king. Another and sufficient instance that Christianity is not synonymous with civilisation may be found in the condition of Spain under Mohammedan and under Christian rule. The contrast is pointedly put by Mr. Stanley Lane-Poole in the preface to his history of *The Moors in Spain*, in "The Story of the Nations" series. This is how he begins:—

"The history of Spain offers us a melancholy contrast. Twelve hundred years ago, Tarik the Moor added the land of the Visigoths to the long catalogue of kingdoms subdued by the Moslems. For nearly eight centuries, under her Mohammedan rulers, Spain set to all Europe a shining example of a civilised and enlightened State. Her fertile provinces, rendered doubly prolific by the industry and engineering skill of her conquerors, bore fruit an hundredfold. Cities innumerable sprang up in the rich valleys of the Guadalquivir and the Guadiana, whose names, and names only, still commemorate the vanished glories of their past. Art, literature, and science prospered, as they then prospered nowhere else in Europe. Students flocked from France and Germany and England to drink from the fountain of learning which flowed only in the cities of the Moors. The surgeons and doctors of Andalusia were in the van of science; women were encouraged to devote themselves to serious study, and the lady doctor was not unknown among the people of Cordova. Mathematics, astronomy and botany, history, philosophy and jurisprudence were to be mastered in Spain, and Spain alone. The practical work of the field, the scientific methods of irrigation, the arts of fortification and shipbuilding, the highest and most elaborate products of the loom, the graver and the hammer, the potter's wheel and the mason's trowel, were brought to perfection by the Spanish Moors. In the practice of war no less than in the arts of peace they long stood supreme. Their fleets disputed the command of the Mediterranean with the Fatimites, while their armies carried fire and sword through the Christian marches. The Cid himself, the national hero, long fought on the Moorish side, and in all save education was more than half a Moor. Whatsoever makes a kingdom great and prosperous, whatsoever tends to refinement and civilisation, was found in Moslem Spain.

In 1492 the last bulwark of the Moors gave way before the crusade of Ferdinand and Isabella, and with Granada fell all Spain's greatness. For a brief while, indeed, the reflection of the Moorish splendor cast a borrowed light upon the history of the land which it had once warmed with its sunny radiance. The great epoch of Isabella, Charles V., and Philip II., of Columbus, Cortes, and Pizarro, shed a last halo about the dying moments of a mighty State. Then followed the abomination of desolation, the rule of the Inquisition, and the blackness of darkness in which Spain has been plunged ever since. In the land where science was once supreme, the Spanish doctors became noted for nothing but their ignorance and incapacity, and the discoveries of Newton and Harvey were condemned as pernicious to the faith. Where once seventy public libraries had fed the minds of scholars, and half a million books had been gathered together at Cordova for the benefit of the world, such indifference to learning afterwards prevailed, that the new capital, Madrid, possessed no public library in the eighteenth century, and even the manuscripts of the Escorial were denied in our own days to the first scholarly historian of the Moors, though himself a Spaniard. The sixteen thousand looms of Seville soon dwindled to a fifth of their ancient number; the arts and industries of Toledo and Almeria faded into insignificance; the very baths—public buildings of equal ornament and use—were destroyed because cleanliness savored too strongly of rank infidelity. The land, deprived of the skilful irrigation of the Moors, grew impoverished and neglected; the richest and most fertile valleys languished and were deserted; most of the populous cities which had filled every district of Andalusia fell into ruinous decay; and beggars, friars, and bandits took the place of scholars, merchants, and knights. So low fell Spain when she had driven away the Moors. Such is the melancholy contrast offered by her history."

## HEARD AT AN ENTERTAINMENT AT MAIDSTONE.

(Ventriloquist seated with a doll on each knee.)

Ven. (to doll on left knee): "What is one of the slowest things on earth?"

Doll gives it up after a minute's reflection.

Doll (on right knee): "Please, sir, I know."

Ven.: "Oh. Well, what is it?"

Doll: "The South Eastern Railway?"

Ven.: "Indeed! And who made the S.E. Railway?"

Doll: "Please, sir, God did."

Ven.: "Oh! How do you know that?"

Doll: "Because it says in Gen. i. 25 that he 'made every-thing that creepeth upon the earth.'"

## BOOK CHAT.

Messrs. Bickers and Son, of Leicester-square, who issue Selections from the Philosophical and Poetical Works of Constance Naden, will issue the whole of that talented young lady's poems in one large volume, with an introduction by Dr. Lewins

\* \* \*

Messrs. Longmans and Company have published a work on the gospel of Peter by the author of *Supernatural Religion*, which we shall further introduce to the notice of our readers shortly.

\* \* \*

*Satan's Biography* is a disquisition by F. G. Jannaway, who is a Bible believer who has discovered that the Devil is only an allegory. If he goes on he may find that God and Jesus Christ are in the same category.

\* \* \*

Under the title *The Next Revolution*, T. Robinson and J. Burrows, of Hoylake, Cheshire, propose co-operative farming, with small holdings and spade culture, as a remedy for distress. Their pamphlet (price 3d.) can be obtained from C. Kelly, 2 Castle-street, City-road, E.C.

\* \* \*

The edition of the writings of Thomas Paine which Mr. Moncre D. Conway has in hand will be in four volumes, and the materials, some of which are new, are being arranged chronologically. The first volume, covering the years 1774—1779, is now ready for publication.

\* \* \*

Miss Helen Zimmera has been writing on "Elisée Réclus and his Opinions" in the *Popular Science Monthly*. She says: "As great a geographer as Humboldt, he surpasses him in the fact that, like all Frenchmen, and unlike most Germans, he is a fine stylist." In detailing his views, she says: "Religions, which from his point of view are most undesirable plagues, invented to keep the human mind in bondage, are but springs ever welling up afresh from the relics of the past. Thus, Christianity uprose from the relics of Paganism."

\* \* \*

Prof. Arnold Dodel's *Moses Oder Darwin*, which has gone through several editions, in Switzerland and Germany, has been translated into English by F. W. Dodel, and is published by the Commonwealth Co., Boston.

\* \* \*

In Sir M. E. Grant Duff's *In Memoriam* volume on Ernest Renan there is a capital story of a Franciscan monk, who said to a friend of Renan: "Your friend has written some very bad things, but he has spoken very well of St. Francis, and St. Francis will arrange all that for him."

\* \* \*

Mr. Leslie Stephen, in his article on James Mill in the *Dictionary of National Biography*, vol. 37, makes the curious statement that "Although the Bentham circle disbelieved in Christianity, its members observed a studied reticence in their writings." This is only partially true of Mill, since in his *Westminster Review* articles, as well as in his *Analysis*, he lets his scepticism appear pretty plainly. Of Bentham itself it is quite untrue, as his MS. in the British Museum remains to prove. From his papers Grote wrote the masterly *Analysis of the Influence of Natural Religion*. He wrote *Not Paul, but Jesus*, while it is possible that Bentham or Mill had some share in the pamphlet *What is God?* which goes under the name of R. Carlile.

\* \* \*

Professor Huxley's "Collected Works," now being issued in five-shilling volumes, are having a large sale, especially in America, where he has a great number of ardent admirers.

\* \* \*

In an article on Fossil Man by J. G. Rothermel, in the March number of the *Popular Science Monthly*, he declares that "fossil man existed in pre-glacial or inter-glacial times long anterior to the close of the glacial period," which he believes closed from ten to fifteen thousand years ago.

\* \* \*

Mr. C. M. Williams is author of "A Review of the Systems of Ethics founded on the Theory of Evolution," which is published by Macmillan and Co. He expounds and passes in review the teachings of Darwin, Wallace, Hæckel, Spencer, Fiske, Rolph, Barratt, Leslie Stephen, Carneri, Hoilding, Gzycki, Alexander and Ree.

\* \* \*

HEARD IN THE STREETS OF ALDERSHOT.—Salvationist (meeting soldier)—"Good-night, soldier." Soldier—"Good-night, cummy." Salvationist (turning round)—"I say! why didn't you call me *soldier*?" Soldier—"Call you '*soldier*'! I didn't know you were one! What regiment do you belong to?" Salvationist—"Oh, a grand regiment. The army of Christ." Soldier—"You do, do you? Well, you're a devilish long way from barracks then."

**A KAFFIR'S IDEA OF HEAVEN.**

One calm and very hot Sunday in South Africa I found myself an interesting spectator at a Regimental Church Parade of the 92nd Highlanders, who were then stationed in South Africa.

All at once the service was disturbed by a number of bullocks rushing frantically among the tents, and after them, doing his utmost to keep them together, was a Kaffir bullock driver, cursing and swearing in the vilest English I ever heard.

I went up to him as fast as I could, and remonstrated with him for using such fearfully bad language, more especially on the Lord's Day, and wound up by telling him that if he did not cease swearing he need not expect to get to heaven.

He looked up at me, a broad grin on his black face, and said :

"Heaven no good, sir. If heaven any good England take it long ago."

And off he went, swearing as hard as ever.

**LONDON SECULAR FEDERATION.**

Council Meeting, March 1, 1894. Present: Miss Vance, Messrs. Renn, J. Neate, Dowding, J. M. Wheeler, G. Standring, W. H. Baker, R. O. Smith, F. Schaller, Wood, G. H. Baker, H. Rowden; Mr. G. W. Foote presiding. The minutes having been read and confirmed, the proposed lectures at Leyton, the coming School Board election, and other matters were discussed. The election of secretary was again postponed, and the council adjourned till April 5, when a special meeting will be held.—JAS. ANDERSON, sec. (*pro tem.*)

**SUNDAY LECTURE NOTICES, ETC.**

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

**LONDON.**

Hall of Science, 142 Old-street, E.C.: 11.15, Touzeau Parris, "Evils Wrought in the Name of Liberty" (free); 6.30, musical selections; 7, Touzeau Parris, "The Mystery of the Death of God" (admission free; reserved seats 3d. and 6d.) Wednesday at 8.15, J. Rowney will lecture.

Battersea Secular Hall (back of Battersea Park Station): 7.45, T. Shore, "Freethinkers and Board School Education" (free). Tuesday at 8, social gathering (free). Wednesday at 8, Marjowe Dramatic Company (free).

Camberwell—81 New Church-road, S.E.: 11.30 (small hall), debating class, W. Needs, "The Aim of Socialism"; 7.30 (large hall), Rev. S. D. Headlam, "some Popular Mistakes about the Church's Teaching." Friday at 7.30, free science classes in chemistry and astronomy.

East London—Swaby's Coffee House, 103 Mile End-road: 8, A. J. Herzfeld, "Christianity—Seed, Tree, and Fruit."

Hammersmith Club, 1 The Grove, Broadway: Thursday, March 15, at 8.30, W. Heaford, "God and Man" (free).

Lambeth—Mr. Roger's, 114 Kennington-road: 7.30, members' annual general meeting.

Wimbledon—Liberty Hall, Curtis's Coffee House (Broadway entrance): 7, short address and entertainment (free); collection for General Fund.

Wood Green—Star Coffee House, High-street: 7.45, Mr. Thompson, "Cromwell in Ireland."

**OPEN-AIR PROPAGANDA.**

Battersea Park-gates: 11.30, W. Heaford, "Reason and Revelation."

Hyde Park (near Marble-arch): 11.30 and 3.30, C. J. Hunt will lecture.

Regent's Park (near Gloucester-gate): 11.30, Sam Standring, "The Converted Atheist—a Reply to R. Dunn (C.E.S.)"

**COUNTRY.**

Aberdeen—Northern Friendly Hall, George-street: Monday at 8, G. W. Foote, "The Pillars of Priestcraft." Tuesday at 8, G. W. Foote, "The Daybreak of Humanity."

Blackburn—Secretary's House: 3, members' monthly meeting.

Brighton—Star Athletic Club, 6 Whitecross-street: 7.30, A. Simon, "Co-operation."

Bristol—Shepherd's Hall, Old Market-street: 7, J. Keast, "The Philosophy of Secularism."

Chatham—Secular Hall, Queen's-road, New Brompton: 11 members' monthly meeting; 2.45, Sunday school; 7, "The Bottle," a drama in two acts, with new and special scenery (free).

Derby—41 Copeland-street (off Traffic-street): 7, members' meeting. At the Lecture Hall, Wardwick, on Monday and Tuesday at 7.30, debate between Charles Watts and the Rev. J. Hyde on "Is there a Life Beyond the Grave?"

Dundee—Cutlers' Hall, Murraygate: 11.30, mutual improvement class, A. Smith, "Light"; 2.30, concert; 6.30, Agnostic, "A Lay Sermon from Genesis i. 1."

Glasgow—Ex-Mission Hall, 110 Brunswick-street: G. W. Foote, 11.30, "How Infidels are Converted, with special reference to the Rev. Hugh Price Hughes and his Atheist Shoemaker"; 2.30, "Is Christianity True?—a Reply to the Rev. Prof. Bruce (Glasgow Free Church College)"; 6.30, "The Pillars of Priestcraft."

Hanley—Secular Hall, John-street: 7.30, lecture by a member. Thursday at 8, improvement class.

Jarrow—Co-operative Hall (small room), Market-square: 7.30, business meeting.

Liverpool—Oddfellows' Hall, St. Anne-street: Charles Watts, 11, "The Bible Up to Date"; 3, "Religion v. Theological Fanaticism"; 7, "Does Death End All?"

Manchester N.S.S., Secular Hall, Rusholme-road, Oxford-road, All Saints': 6.30, A. Newell, "The Formation of Hills and Valleys."

Newcastle-on-Tyne—Good Templar Hall, 2 Clayton-street, East: 7, R. Mitchell, "Christ's Gospel of Hell."

Nottingham—Shortland's Café, 3 Derby-road: 7, W. P. Redfern, "England's Ideal."

Portsmouth—Wellington Hall, Wellington-street, Southsea 11, C. Cohen, "Epicurus"; 3, ethical class; 7, C. Cohen, "Gods and God Makers" Tuesday at 7.30, C. Cohen will lecture.

Reading—Foresters' Hall, West-street: 7, G. Fraser, "Our Civilisation."

Sheffield—Hall of Science, Rockingham-street: Stanley Jones, 11, "The Christian Religion"; 3, "God, Man, and Design"; 7, "Miracles and Medicine." Wednesday at 8, dancing class.

South Shields—Capt. Duncan's Navigation School, King-street: 6.30, ethical class; 7.30, W. Cook, "Licensing System."

Sunderland—Bridge End Vaults, Bridge-street: 7, T. R. Fox, "Christ and Socrates."

**LECTURERS' ENGAGEMENTS.**

C. COHEN, 12 Merchant-street, Bow-road, E.—March 11 to April 14, Portsmouth; April 15, m., Battersea; a., Victoria Park; e., Camberwell; 22, m. and a., Victoria Park; e., Battersea.

ARTHUR B. MOSS, 44 Oredon-road, Rotherhithe, London, S.E.—April 1, Camberwell; 15, m., Hyde Park; e., Hammersmith; 22, m., Wood Green.

TOUZEAU PARRIS, Clare Lodge, 32 Upper Mall, Hammersmith, London, W.—March 11, Hall of Science; 18, Camberwell. April 1, Grimsby; 8, Liverpool; 15, Sheffield; 22, Camberwell.

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